

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**EFFECTS OF STUDENTS' HOME ENVIRONMENT ON THEIR
EDUCATION IN THE YENDI MUNICIPALITY IN THE NORTHERN
REGION, GHANA**

ANYEYAMBORO FRANCIS AGIKI



MASTER OF EDUCATION

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ANYEYAMBORO FRANCIS AGIKI
(220034341)

**A dissertation in the Department of Social Studies,
Faculty of Social Sciences, submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Education
(Social Studies)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

JUNE, 2023

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Anyeyamboro Francis Agiki, hereby declared that this dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:

Date:

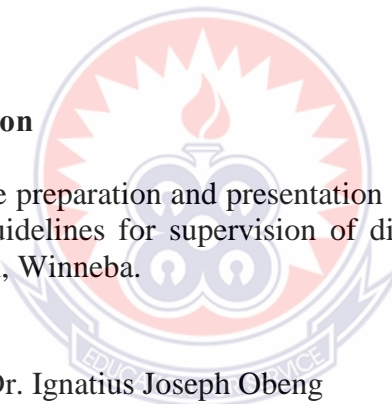
Supervisor's Declaration

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

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Ignatius Joseph Obeng

Signature:

Date:



DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my wife, Esther Nligman, my parents, Mr & Mrs Akakumdoa Akanmotichaab and my sisters; Nyamekye and Teni.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Without God gift of life and good health, this work would not have been completed successfully. I, therefore give thanks to God, for giving me life.

My supervisor, Dr. Ignatius Joseph Obeng deserves a special word of gratitude for giving me all the assistance I needed throughout my research studies. I, therefore, wish to thank him for his support and effort given to me throughout my work. I sincerely appreciate and thank my family for the encouragement and understanding that they accorded me.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Pages
DECLARATION	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	ix
FIGURE	x
ABSTRACT	xi
CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION	
12	
1.1 Background to the Study	
12	
1.2 Statement of the Problem	2
1.3 Purpose of the Study	4
1.4 Objectives of the Study	4
1.5 Research Questions	4
1.6 Significance of the Study	5
1.7 Delimitation of the Study	6
1.8 Limitations of the Study	6
1.9 Organisation of the Study	6
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 Theoretical Framework	7
2.3 Parents' Economic Status on Students' Education	9
2.4 The Influence of Family Involvement on Students' Education	14
2.5 The Effect of Family Size on Students' Education	20

2.6	Empirical Studies	23
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY		38
3.0	Introduction	38
3.1	Research Approach	38
3.2	Research Design	39
3.3	Study Area	39
3.4	Population	41
3.5	Sample and Sampling Techniques	41
3.6	Instrument for Data Collection	42
3.7	Reliability and Validity of the Research Instrument	43
3.8	Data Collection Procedure	44
3.9	Data Analysis Method	45
3.10	Ethical Considerations	
	Error! Bookmark not defined.	
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION		45
4.0	Introduction	48
4.1	Socio-Demographic Characteristic of Respondents.	48
4.2	Presentation of Findings	50
4.2.1	The influence of Parents' Economic Status on Students' Education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality.	50
4.2.2	The effects of the Education Level of Parents on Students' Education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality.	51
4.2.3	The effect of Family Size on Students' Education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality.	64

CHAPTER FIVE:	SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND	
	RECOMMENDATIONS	72
5.1	Introduction	72
5.2	Summary	72
5.3	Conclusions	74
5.4	Recommendations	73
REFERENCES		75
APPENDIX A:	Questionnaire for Students	79
APPENDIX B:	Interview Guide for Headteachers	83
APPENDIX C:	Interview Guide to the Parents	84



LIST OF TABLES

Table		Pages
3.1:	Sample Determination	42
4.1:	Socio - Demographic Characteristic of the Respondents	49
4.2:	Influence of Parents' Economic Status on Students' Education	50
4.3:	Effects of the Education Level of Parents on Students' Education	57
4.4:	Effects of Family Size on Students' Education	64



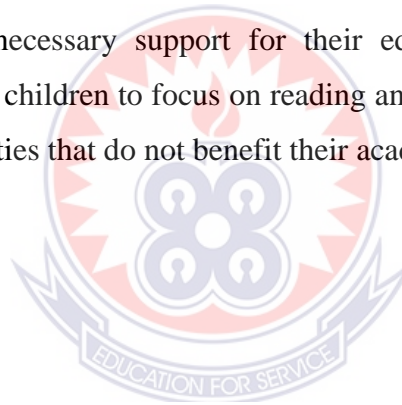
FIGURE

Figure	Page
2: A map of the Yendi Municipality	40



ABSTRACT

This study assessed the effects of students' home environments on their education in the Yendi Municipality, Northern Region, Ghana. A descriptive survey research design was used. The target population included 144 students, 8 headteachers, and 8 parents, with a total sample size of 160 respondents. Data was collected using questionnaires and interview guides and analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The study found that parents with higher levels of education provided more support for their children's education, such as textbooks, exercise books, and other learning materials. In contrast, parents with lower levels of education offered less support, which negatively impacted their children's academic performance. Students from more supportive home environments performed better in school, while those with less support faced academic challenges. It is recommended that teachers should act as a bridge between students and their home environments to ensure students receive the necessary support for their education. Additionally, parents should encourage their children to focus on reading and completing homework, rather than engaging in activities that do not benefit their academic progress.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Education is the process of instructions aimed at the all-round development of the individual, facilitating realization of self-potential and latent talents of an individual (Anderman, 2021). Education makes learners right thinkers and effective decision-makers. It is through education that knowledge and information is received and spread throughout the world. Without education, humans as though in a closed room but with education they find themselves in a room with all its windows open towards the outside world (Anderman, 2021).

The primary environment of a student is the home which stands to exert tremendous impact on students' education (Hoover-Dempsey *et al.*, 2018). Moreover, the home is the primary agent of education of the child. Thus, the way the child lives, the food he/she eats and his/her life styles are influenced by the home. The type of family system the child is exposed to could influences his or her academic achievement in school (Keith, 2020). The academic success of a child therefore depends largely on various conditions at home. The home learning context has been studied extensively, especially in the area of developmental psychology, and has been linked to the child's cognitive and social development (Bradley, 2016).

Many authors (Harris & Gibbon, 2015; Hofferth & Sandberg, 2017; Wallis & Cole, 2019) discuss factors in a home environment that provide children with educational tools needed to achieve academic success. Jameson (2014) specifies the importance of a quiet time and place for homework. There is also a discussion on the negative

impact of television, but the positive impact of praise. Harris and Gibbon (2015) state that communication is a vital component for school success. A study by Hill (2014) revealed that a child's home environment has significant effect on his or her learning and school performance since it provides foundation for learning.

In Ghana, the environmental factors have got a big influence on the academic performance of the learner. The environment affects learners in different ways throughout the world. Kapinga, (2014) found that home environmental factors (such as parents' educational level, parents' occupations, parents' income, learning environment within home, parental motivation, and availability of learning facilities at home such as tables, books and maps) greatly affect the academic performance of students.

However, Yendi Municipality in the Northern Region of Ghana, also faces the challenge of poor academic performance among the students. Parents' commitment is needed to improve the performance of students but that is not adequately visible in the Yendi municipality in the Northern Region of Ghana.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Home environment is as important as what goes on in the school (Siraj, 2019). It comprises parents' involvement in their children's education, how much parents read to young children, the extent of time allowed for children to watch TV programs. Achievement gap is not only about what goes on once pupils get into the classroom. It is also about what happens to them before and after school. Parents and teachers have a crucial role to play to make sure that every child becomes a high achiever (Hammer, 2017).

A number of initiatives have been implemented in Tanzania to encourage home and school links such as the Ghana Education Act of 2015 and Education Policy of 2016, which promote the right of parents and the community to participate in the school government structure. It is the role of the government to supervise education policy from nursery to tertiary level. The main purpose is to provide education to individuals that may compete with the political, and economic development (Jacobs & Harvy, 2018). Despite government's efforts in the supervision of education, through encouraging good environment at school, home environment is another factor which needs to be considered in promoting pupils' education. Pupils need to be provided with educational resources such as textbooks and playing resources which may enhance cognitive development (McMahaon, 2020). There are number of problems that children face at home caused by poor parenting, unconducive environment for child learning at home and lack of tables and chairs for doing home works, distractions from children's participation in domestic chores and poor lighting, among others. All these factors appear to negatively affect students' education (Lareau, 2015).

Several studies have been carried out on the effects of home environment on students' education (Kamuti, 2015). However, none of the studies has focused on the Yendi Municipality of Northern Region, Ghana. Therefore, this study sought to examine the effects of students' home environments on their education in the Yendi Municipality in the Northern Region of Ghana.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine the effects of students' home environments on their education in the Yendi Municipality of the Northern Region, Ghana.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. determine the influence of parents' economic status on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality.
2. examine the effects of the education level of parents on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality.
3. investigate the effect of family size on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the influences of parents' economic status on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality?
2. What are the effects of the education level of parents on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality?
3. What are the effects of family size on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality?

1.6 Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. **H₀:** Parents' economic status has no significant influence on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality.

H₁: Parents' economic status has a significant influence on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality.

2. **H₀:** The education level of parents has no significant effect on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality.

H₁: The education level of parents has a significant effect on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality.

3. **H₀:** Family size has no significant effect on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality.

H₁: Family size has a significant effect on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The study will guide the head teacher in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality of the Northern Region in Ghana to understand how home environment affects students' education and assist the students to perform better. Also, the students will be able to intervene in the case of poor performance to offset the negative effects of changing dynamics of the family. This study will also help the parents to understand the effects of the home environment on academic performance of student's hence improving their home environment so as to improve student's academic performance.

Also, this report would be a source of reference for other researchers intending to study the effects of student's home environment on their education.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

This study was restricted to four public primary schools in Yendi Municipality instead of all the primary schools in Yendi Municipality which is over 40 in number. However, there are many factors affecting the students' education, but this study was only investigating the home environment.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

A number of limitations were anticipated during the study. One of the aspects of this study was to determine parental economic status. As such, some respondents hesitated to provide useful information for the study due to embarrassment of exposing their poverty level. The researcher overcame this by assuring the respondents that the findings of this study would be used for academic purposes only. Also, some parents were not willing to give their family details due to fear of exposing their private life.

1.10 Organisation of the Study

The study consists of five chapters. Chapter One presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, the purpose and specific objectives of the study. In addition, the research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, and delimitations of the study. Chapter Two reviews the literature related to the study. Chapter Three presents the methodology used for the study. Chapter Four concentrates on the findings and discussion. Finally, Chapter Five presents the summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to the study, under the following sub-headings: theoretical framework, the influence of parents' economic status on students' education, the influence of family involvement on students' education, the effect of family size on students' education, empirical studies, conceptual framework and research gap.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Human Development and Socio-Cultural Theory

Many theorists have developed the theory of home environment towards children academic achievement. Among them is Vygotsky (2015). Home environment as the immediate social environment of the child and thus refers to it as the ecology of child development. Vygotsky (2015) defines ecology of human development as the scientific study of the progressive mutual interaction between an active growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives. The process of development is affected by relations between the settings and the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded. In this regard, Bronfenbrenner emphasizes that the developing person is not passive to the environment; rather dynamic and progressively helping to restructure the environment in which she/he lives.

The environment, on the other hand, exerts its influence on the developing and growing person through shared interactions between the person and other people, objects, and symbols found in the environment. Referring to the home environment as

a social setting puts the opinion also in the perspective of sociocultural theory. Sociocultural theory emphasizes that human development results from dynamic interaction between a person and the surrounding social and cultural forces. According to Vygotsky (2015), the child's learning is enclosed with social events occurring as the child interacts with people in the environment. The child participates in various social tasks through language (Vygotsky, 2015).

Three main features of the two theories, the Ecological Theory of Human Development and Socio-Cultural Theory are important to consider in relation to the development of the child. First, the theories set the child in her/his social setting and emphasize the role of the environment in the child's development. Second, the child's environment is considered relevant to the developmental processes. Third, the theories view the child as an active person who not only influences the environment but is also influenced by the environment. The relationship between the child and the environment is therefore reciprocal. Based on the main features emanating from the two theories, the thesis regards the home environment as a micro-system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

A study by Bronfenbrenner (1979) revealed that the micro system is a pattern of activities, roles and inter-personal relations experienced by the developing person in a given setting with particular physical and material characteristics. The micro system of an individual therefore includes the culture in which that individual is educated and lives in, and the other people with whom the individual interacts (Zastrov & Kirst-Ashman, 2013). Therefore, home living and home literacy environments are identified and related to the development of phonological awareness, and reading and writing ability. In order to fully base the study on the ecological model, and use it in

the process of assessing the influence of home environment on the development of phonological awareness and reading and writing ability, the elements process and time would have had to be included. The criteria for the ecological model include four proposed elements; process, person, context and time.

2.2.2 The System Theory of In-put and Output Model

The theory adopted for this study was derived from the System's theory input-output model developed by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in 1956. The theory, according to Wehrich (1988), postulates that an organized enterprise does not exist in a vacuum; it is dependent on its environment in which it is established. They add that the inputs from the environment are received by the organization, which then transforms them into outputs. As adopted in this study, the students (inputs) are enrolled in schools, from different home environment, and from different social economic backgrounds, when they get into the school setting system, the teachers of primary schools transforms them through the process of teaching and learning and the children output is seen through their academic achievements (tests and exams). According to the input-output model, it is assumed that the students from high social economic background and good pre-primary (Nursery) school background will perform well if the school facilities are good.

2.3 Parents' Economic Status on Students' Education

Significant studies have suggested that economic status is one of the best predictors of student achievement (Bryk & Smith, 2020). Hill and O'Neil (2016) found that increasing family income in USA by \$10,000 per year is associated with an increase in student achievement of 2.4 percentile points. Grissmer, Kirby, Berends and

Williamson (2016) had similar findings on the relationships between income and mathematics as well as income and reading achievement.

Parent educational status is considered one of the most stable aspects of socio-economic Status (SES) because it is typically established at an early age and tends to remain the same overtime (Sirin, 2018). To date, many studies have established the effect of parent's socio-economic status on parental involvement. One consistent finding is that parents from the higher economic status are more involved in their children's education. In this case, the higher the parent's educational level, occupation status, income and their household incomes, the higher would be the parent's involvement in their child's education. As a result, the strength of parental involvement enables the children to achieve education success at school (Sirin, 2018).

Lueptow (2018), in his study, found that students who achieved high academic performance were from urban areas, who had educated parents with a higher occupation status and a higher income. Consistent with Lueptow (2018) in a study found that parents' socio-economic status has a significant and positive relationship with parent's involvement in their children's education. These studies found that the parents from higher socio-economic status exert greater involvement in their children's education.

In addition to the studies discussed above, many other studies (Baker & Stevenson, 2015) have acknowledged parents' educational level as one of the important indicators that determines parental involvement.

Shaver and Wall (2019) went a bit further to investigate the impact of parental involvement on children's educational achievement. The authors did a study on reading and mathematics achievements of grade 8 students, and found that the

children from higher socio-economic background achieved higher academic success due to effective parental involvement. On the other hand, Desimone's (2021) study on grade 8 students indicated a positive and significant relationship between parents socio-economic status, parental involvement and students' achievement. The higher the parent's income, the higher was their involvement. Hence, the students gained high achievement in reading and mathematics. Lockheed *et al.* (2013) who carried out a study on grade 8 students in Thailand also reported that a child whose mother was highly educated, and a father also a professional obtained high score in Mathematics. Another study carried out by Lockheed *et al.* (2013) on grade eight students in Thailand also reported that a child whose mother was highly educated, and father who was a professional obtained high score in Mathematics.

There were also studies that have been focused on parents' social class rather than socio-economic status. For example, Lareau (2015), in her studies on first grade classrooms in a working-class community and a middle-class community found that parents in the middle-class community tended to help their children more due to their better skills, occupation status, income and time compared to the working-class parents. Reay (2004), in one of her studies found that mothers from the middle class have a good educational background that enabled them to inculcate academic values in their child, thereby promoting self-confidence and participation which are transformed by the child into a more positive attitude of learning towards academic success. In Sewell and Hauser's (2018) study, a better financial resource among the middle-class parents enhanced the motivational support to their children; thereby encouraging the latter to have high aspirations in education. Although the above studies ascribe parent's social class to parental involvement, it shared the same indicators as parents' socio-economic status.

Using historical and cross-cultural data, several researchers have found that although parents love their children, their willingness to invest in their education (and other aspects of their well-being) is affected by the number of children in the family, public expenditures on education, and their assessment of the financial return of such investment to the family. When education must be financed by the family, additional children reduce the amount of investment in each child, particularly in low-income families (Becker & Tomes, 2015; Rosenzweig & Schultz, 2019). However, poor and middle-income parents are more willing to invest in their children if they believe that such investment increases children's potential for financial contribution to the family and that children can be counted on to care for their elderly parents (Becker & Tomes, 2015).

The family plays a meaningful role in a child's academic performance and development (Cornell & Grossberg, 2015). Education and family incomes influence adolescent educational outcome expectancy beliefs (Rhea & Otto, 2017). Balli (2019), in his study of grade 6 students found that parents with higher level of education were more prominent in helping with their child's homework compared to parents with low level of education who need help from schools to help their children.

Dave (2020) found that higher percentages of rank holder belong to homes with higher parental education and higher percentage of failed students belong those who have lower parental education. Rumberger (2016) found that students' family background was widely recognized as the most significant important contributor to success in schools. Rumberger's research supported the findings of earlier researchers who argued that the home had a major influence on student school success (Swick &

Duff, 2015), and that it is the quality of relationships within students' home environments that has an important effect on school performance.

Previous studies have showed that students who come from families with illiterate parents have significantly less school success than students from educated parents (Martini, 2016) and intact families (Amato & Keith, 2014) Some potential explanations were that parents in such settings reported lower educational expectations, less monitoring of children's school work and less overall supervision of social activities compared to students from highly educated and intact families (Jacob & Harvey, 2018). More educated parents are assumed to create environments that facilitate learning (Williams, 2018), and also involve themselves in their children's school experiences and school environments (Useem, 2017). However, there are students who come from low-income and single parent homes who are high achievers and many students from high socio-economic and intact families who are low achievers. Students may also come from homes where the parents are highly educated and involved in their children's education, yet achieve poorly at school (Jacob & Harvey, 2018).

The literature suggests that home environment factors affect school achievement, and home environment factors may be influenced if the family culture follows the current trend. The essence of a 'traditional American family' has deteriorated with the stress in many of today's families because of poverty, single parenting styles and working mothers. Stress in the home deteriorates the environment and these stressors affect school achievement. Hopefully, this study will help to examine home environment factors that may impact children's academic achievement.

2.4 The Influence of Family Involvement on Students' Education

In today's fast-paced society, families are finding it more difficult to stay connected with their children's education (Epstein, 2017). Increasingly, in the modern family, both parents work outside of the home (Benson, 2019). In the report "Every Child Learns, Every Child Succeeds," Alberta's Commission on learning (2017) found that often the family is led by a single parent with little or no help from extended family members. Furthermore, the extended family has become significantly less extended as mobility has increased. Parents are becoming isolated from their children, and finding it difficult to keep a careful watch on what needs to be done to help them succeed in school.

Many families are not even led by a parent, but by grandparents, guardian, or some other adults (Benson, 2019). In what is sometimes called a traditional family environment, parents, usually, including a stay-at-home mother, were able to monitor the school work of their children carefully, and in turn to ensure a much greater degree of success than in today's non-traditional family that student performance remained high with factors such as engagement, academic achievement, attendance and attitude toward school (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2018).

Parents attended parent/teacher interview sessions and found at first hand, just how productive and engaged their children were in the process of school (Weiss *et al.*, 2019). Report cards were valued and trusted in the home as an accurate reflection of pupils' academic achievement (Guskey, 2019). Parents were able to keep in touch with the school and the lives of their children in the institution, and to monitor success or otherwise. When children came home from school, homework was completed,

assignments finished, tests written and snacks eaten, more often than not at the kitchen table under the watchful eye of a parent (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2018).

Just as this traditional family may have existed, it may also have been a figment of society's collective imagination. Whether it existed or not, however, there is no denying that the school-to-home connection, at least, for middle class America, was in place and effective at keeping parents involved in the educational process. Many parents worked closely with their children, in cooperation with the school, and marked academic success occurred (Epstein, 2017). With the changes in family life, and indeed, in societal makeup, schools are now finding it increasingly difficult to keep parents informed of, and actively engaged in the day-to-day progress of their children (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2018). Teachers and administrators are discovering that the support they once received in getting students to do their homework is no more there because the parents are not at home to insist that their children complete their assignments. Even if parents are present, homework turns out to be a major issue within the home environment (Allen, 2020). A 2014 report by Public Agenda Online states that homework is the vortex where teacher complaints and parental pressures seem to converge. In many households, it is tinder that ignites continuous family battles and a spawning ground for mixed signals and even some resentment between teachers and parents.

For parents, staying connected to the day-to-day school life of their children has become difficult. Perhaps they will find it easier to stay connected through the use of technology. Many web-enabled software management programs are available, such as Students Achieve Desire to Learn, and Edline. In a study of computer use in the home in 2017, Statistics Canada (2004) found that 64 percent of Canadian households had at

least one member who used the Internet regularly. This was a 5 percent increase from 2019, an increase that built on gains of 19 percent and 24 percent respectively observed in 2020 and 2017. The trend certainly indicates an increase in these numbers in future years, and a potential avenue of communication that schools can explore.

However, even if the possibility exists for increased parent involvement, a basic question arises whether there is a relationship between the type of parent involvement and high school student performance factors such as engagement, academic achievement, attendance and attitude toward school. Researchers, such as Epstein (2017) and Allen (2020) claim that increased parent involvement will result in greater student engagement, productivity and academic success. Epstein's research, for the most part, relates to the influence of parent involvement in the lives of elementary aged students.

Research findings show that parental involvement in children's learning activities positively influences their levels of achievement and motivation to learn (Epstein, 2017). Many studies indicate that the influences of parental involvement upon students' in primary school education make a difference. Similarly, parental influence on a student's academic success in high school may be a factor that cannot be ignored. In high schools, parental involvement of drops as parents loosen their daily supervision of their teenagers, but parents become more concerned about the learning opportunities that high schools provide. Parental involvement during high school increases parent-school communications about school programs and student progress, and parent participation as volunteers at school (Catsambis & Garland, 2014). As children move from the middle grades to the last years of high school, parents also crystallize their educational expectations for their children. As students near high

school graduation, parents become increasingly concerned about their teen's further education and about the effects of high school programs on post-secondary opportunities (Catsambis & Garland, 2014).

Investigations show that the effects of family practices on students' academic success tend to vary by age, and are strongest for elementary school children (Singh et al., 2016). By far the most important effect that is consistent across studies is that of parents' educational aspirations for their children. High parental aspirations tend to positively influence students' levels of achievement in primary and secondary education (Astone & McLanahan, 2014).

A number of studies reported that the academic achievement of secondary school students is positively affected by other indicators of parental involvement, including parent/student discussions regarding school experiences and academic matters (Keith *et al.*, 2020). Lee (2016); Sui-Chu and Willms (2015; Muller (2020) argued that the general parental supervision and monitoring of student progress and to a lesser extent, parent participation in school-related activities (volunteering and parent-teacher organizations) (Stevenson & Baker, 2015). Most of the above studies examined the effects of parental involvement in middle school rather than in high school.

Some negative effects of parental involvement in students' achievement have also been reported for a number of parental involvement indicators: parents' close supervision of homework and after school activities (Milne et al., 2015; Muller, 2020), frequent contacts with school or Parent-teacher conferences (Ho & Wilms, 2015; Lee, 2016; Muller, 2020) and frequent talks with children (Astone & McLanahan, 2014). Thus, both positive and negative effects are reported by different

researchers for parent communications with the student or school, and for parental monitoring of students' behavior.

In cases where negative effects are reported, researchers interpret them as indicating parents' efforts to help children with low academic performance or behavioral problems. In a study by Sui-Chu and Willms (2015), some of the negative effects of frequent communication with schools on eighth grade achievement is mediated by students' problematic behavior and performance. The authors recognize the need to include more detailed measures of behavioral and learning difficulties in order to fully account for this negative effect.

Csikszentmihalyi and Schmidt (2019), argue that the fact that students' performances were positively associated with parental involvement highlights a basic understanding about the important role of parents at this stage in their children's lives. Parents should not place undue limits on adolescents' movement and freedoms, nor excuse them from responsibility. They should rather establish expectations for adolescents that are reasonable yet challenging. They should not isolate adolescents from adult role models. Parents need to be available for their adolescent children to discuss issues of relevance and importance to them. Finally, parents should not look to limit adolescents' boundaries, but work to expand their horizons.

Despite the ambiguity in measuring the academic impact of parental involvement, various in-depth studies have established a relationship. Henderson and Berla (2016) have over sixty studies regarding the effects of family involvement on student achievement. Their work identifies parental involvement effects as higher grades and test scores, increased homework completion, improved school attendance, more positive attitudes, fewer discipline problems, increased high school completion rates,

decreased school leaving rates, and greater participation in postsecondary education. Importantly, like Epstein, Henderson and Berla suggest parents' involvement can contribute to these outcomes from early childhood through to high school.

Studies conducted among specific grades and subject areas support the contention that parental involvement can influence students' academic achievement, regardless of the student's age or subject. For example, Stegelin (2017), Wirtz and Schumacher (2017), and Hertz-Lazarowitz and Horovitz (2019) focused on early childhood education and literacy, noting a link between families who engage in literacy activities at home and their children's success with reading and writing. Strategies such as reading with the child, discussing stories, and creating a book-friendly environment contribute to the development of children's literacy skills and positive attitudes toward reading.

Many studies have documented the importance of parental involvement in children's homework. Callahan, Rademacher and Hildreth (2019) opine that parents' involvement with at-risk sixth and seventh grade students improves their homework performance. Central to this success, however, is the school's development of training for parents which aim to provide them 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. Balli, Demo, and Wedman (2019) report that when teachers prompt parents to become involved with maths homework, their 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.

Although certain types of parental 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 (2020) found 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 the 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 they made homework completion more difficult for the student.

2.5 The Effects of Family Size on Students' Education

Children from large families are not likely to receive the same amount or same type of verbal stimulation from adults which children from smaller families obtain and consequently, children from large families tend to do less well academically (Balli, Demo & Wedma, 2019). The reason could be that children from large families are unlikely to take full advantage of educational opportunities provided due to inadequate family resources, hence resulted in backwardness in school.

Chatterji *et al*, (1972) made an attempt to study the effects of family size on the academic achievement of children. The sample consisted of 230 students, both boys and girls reading in class VI and class VII, in eight Bengali schools in Calcutta. The students were divided into high, medium and low intellectual ability groups. Total marks obtained in the annual examinations were taken as a measure of achievement. The results showed that family size and the number of siblings were inversely related to the classroom achievements of the children. The same trend was observed when Mathur and Hudal (2004) conducted a study to find the relationship between family

size and academic achievement of children. The sample consisted of 100 school-going children, studying in class X in a high school in Amrutsar. The result revealed a negative correlation between the size of the family and academic achievement, which indicated that the bigger the family, the lower was the academic achievements of the children.

Similarly, Cherians (2017) conducted a study on family size and academic achievements of children. The sample consisted of 369 boys and 652 girls in the age range of 13 to 17 years old in Transkei. The marks obtained by the pupils at the 7 standard external examinations conducted by the Department of Education of the Government of Transkei was taken. The results revealed a negative relationship between the sizes of the families where the children came from and the academic achievements of the children. Poonam and Balda (2017) revealed that family size was negatively correlated with IQ of children.

Muola (2019) argued that parents with small families will not only find it easy to provide for the physical needs of the children but also be in a good position to give them attention, encouragement, stimulation and support them with school work. Parents of large family are always busy trying to look for basic needs for survival and thus could not be in a good position to give them attention, encouragement, stimulation and support them with school work.

One study attempted to find the relationship between family size and vocabulary, and block-design performance, among Black and White students separately (Steelman & Doby, 1983). The results of the study indicated that family size was inversely related to the vocabulary performance for both Black and White children. On the other hand,

family size was not significantly related to block design performance for both Black and White children.

Roodin, Broughton and Vaught (1974) observe that the large-sized families, to some extent, are related to the culture of poverty, and there is a relationship between family size and economic status. Therefore, the negative correlation found between family size and academic achievement is expected. Also, the intellectual activity of a child is a function of the intellectual environment of the home which is dependent on the ability level of all the members of the family who are older than the child. Therefore, when the number of children in the family increases, by comparison with the number of adults, the home environment will be less stimulating for intellectual development (Steelman & Doby, 1983). In other words, when the number of children in a family increases, the attention each child receives from the parents will be reduced (Steelman & Doby, 1983), even though this attention might in part be substituted, for the younger children, by attention from older siblings.

In a similar vein, there are some possible explanations for deficiency in language development in large families. Steelman and Doby (1983) contend that language learning requires interaction with other persons. In other words, the amount of stimulation that is provided by people, such as parents, affects the development of verbal abilities of children.

Therefore, in large families, the parental attention, or the amount of stimulation that is provided by the parents, will be reduced. Consequently, family size can affect the verbal ability of the children (Steelman & Doby, 1983). Munroe and Munroe (2017) reported that family size correlates score performance among school children from western Kenya. Munroe attributed the variations from confluence model to social-

cultural factors that may have affected the quality of intellectual environment of the children.

2.6 Empirical Studies

In an earlier study, Hanushek's (2020) research showed that parents' educational background has a significant impact on the academic performance of children, and that the higher the parents' educational background, the better the academic performance of the children. Students' level of educational attainment is strongly linked to the level of schooling and their parents expect them to attain and the level of education reached by them. Parents with higher levels of education have higher encouragement for college; discuss with their children about school and higher education, and promote students' college aspirations and preparation. This has also been supported by Marjoribanks (2013) that the high achievers had a high socio-economic status and they hailed from highly educated families. Parents' level of education, parents' enthusiasm for school and attitudes toward education, and learning are directly related with parental aspirations for their children's achievements. Parents with higher levels of education verbally encourage their children to "do well in school" and give them rewards or punishment based on grades. Even, when parents with low levels of education are involved in their children's school activities, students are more successful even if the parents do not speak English.

Reay's study (2018) also found that most middle-class mothers have a good educational background and that has influenced their children's educational success building their self-confidence and participating in their academic work. A high level of education among parents also allows the children to have more opportunity to develop motivation and educational aspirations to involve in various educational

activities. In addition, the high level of education of parents which most often goes with high occupational status means that the parents will be able to provide the necessary learning facilities and to assist the child with schoolwork. This parental involvement which could be lacking in parents whose education and occupation are low may have a motivating effect on the child.

In another study, Kaplan, *et al.*, (2017) showed that parents who have low level of education and high negative self-feeling may not have high expectations of their children in educational achievement. McEwan (2013) adopted the survey data to study grade 8 students' academic performance in Chile in 2015. His research showed that parents' educational background, especially the mother has a significant positive impact on students' academic performance. Some research findings strongly indicate that parents with higher educational level are more engaged in working directly with their children on learning activities at home, supporting their work on homework assignments. On the other hand, when students perceive that their parents have high educational expectations and goals, they have more interest in school, greater academic self-regulation, and higher goals pursuit. Parents' educational aspirations and expectations influence their children's aspirations and expectations of themselves and this in turn, affects their children's achievement. For example, when students perceive that their parents value education, they are also more likely to feel competent and motivated in their schoolwork. The fact could be said that parents who have a high level of education have a high level of commitment to their children, set high standards, monitor their student's progress continuously, support achievement and become upset when grades are low. This shows that parents educational level plays a significant role in their wards education as in their academic performance.

Bhatnagar and Sharma (2020) carried out a research to investigate the relationship between education of parents and academic achievement of their children in semirural setting. A total of 85 school-going children of Rajasthan city were studied. The results revealed that the children whose parents attended school performed better in class work than the children whose parents did not attend school. This indicates that parental education was positively related to the academic achievement of children. Likewise, Chakrabarti (2020) conducted a study with 100 boys, selected randomly from English medium schools in Pune, and found that the children whose parents were highly educated and involved in their studies had better performance in both school examinations and achievement tests than those whose parents were rich, but less educated, and not involved in the children's daily activities and studies.

Furthermore, in their study, Chatterji et al. (2018) showed that parents' educational level was directly related to the scholastic achievement of their children. Similarly, the study by Mathur and Hudal (2016) revealed a positive correlation between parents' educational level and academic achievement of the children. Krishnan (2013) conducted a study with 180 students from 6th to 9th studying in central school Tirupati. The sample was divided into 3 groups, depending on their parents' education as high, middle and low. The results showed that parents' educational status had significant influence on the academic achievement of the children.

Another study conducted in Nigeria, on 370 boys and 112 girls showed that students of educated parents performed higher in class than those of uneducated parents (Amalaha, 2015). In another study, Cullen (2012) showed that almost half of the parents of high achieving children had no more than primary education which was regarded as the first level of education. This was in contrary to the general expectation

that, parents' education level is positively related to the academic performance of children. These findings indicate that parents' education and the academic performance of children are not always positively related. Hence, this shows that there are other factors that influence the academic performance of children, such as encouragement and help, where necessary.

Kamuti (2015), in a research of the influence of home environment on academic performance of students in public secondary schools done in Kitui-Kenya found that parents' economic status influenced students academic performance. This is because the parents were able to pay school fees in good time and provided other learning materials such as books. This made the students to perform well in their academics. For the case of parent or family involvement in students' academic performance in public secondary schools, this can be done by attending the school education days, checking on the student's academic performance and motivating the student. This is likely to go a long way in improving the students academic performance.

Egunsola (2014), in a study of the influence of home environment on academic performance of secondary school students came up with the following relationship between parents' educational qualification, economic status, occupation and home location. In fact, he observed that the named factors have greater influences on students' academic performances in Agricultural Science in Adamawa State secondary schools. These results are vital information for all stakeholders in educational administration, practice and evaluation. Several researchers, including Bloom (2016) and Rosman (1973) and Zajonc (2017) found that there is a relationship between home-environment, parental occupation, father's educational qualifications, family size on one hand and school performance on the other hand.

Lueptow (2018), in his study found that students who achieved high academic performance were from urban areas, who had educated parents with a higher occupation status and higher incomes. Consistent with Lueptow (2018), SuiChu and Willms's (1996) study indicated that the parents' socio-economic status has a significant and positive relationship with their involvement in their children's education. These studies found that parents from higher socio-economic status exert greater involvement in their children's education.

In addition to the studies discussed above, many other studies (Balli et al., 2019; Baker & Stevenson, 2020; Poston and Falbo, 2018) have acknowledged parents' education level as one of the important indicators that determine parental involvement. As stated by Lockheed et al. (2017), the higher the standard of the parents' education level, the higher would be the parent's academic aspirations for their child.

Shaver and Wall (2019), and Desimone (2013) went a bit further to investigate the impact of parental involvement on children's educational achievement. According to Shaver and Wall's (2019) study on reading and mathematics achievements of eighth-grade students, they found that children from the higher socio-economic background achieved academic success in reading and mathematics due to effective parental involvement. In addition, Desimone's (2013) study on grade 8 students indicated a positive and significant relationship between student's socio-economic status, parental involvement and students' achievement. The higher the parent's family income, the higher would be the parental involvement. Hence, the students gain high achievement in reading and mathematics.

Lockheed *et al.* (2017) who carried out a study on grade eight students in Thailand also reported that a child whose mother has highly educated, and the father as a professional obtained high score in mathematics. Another study carried out by Lockheed *et al.* on grade 8 students in Thailand also reported that a child whose mother was highly educated, and the father as a professional obtained high score in mathematics.

There were also studies that have been focused on parent's social class rather than socio-economic status. For example, Lareau (2017) in her studies on first grade classrooms in a working class community and a middle class community found that parents in the middle class community tend to help their child more due to the better skills, the occupation status, income and time compared to the working class parents. Reay (2018), in one of her studies found that mothers from the middle class have a good educational background that enables them to inculcate academic values in their child, thereby promoting self-confidence and participation which are transformed by the child into a more positive attitude and behavior of learning towards academic success. In Sewell and Hauser's (2013) study, a better financial resource among the middle class parents enhanced the motivational support to their children, thereby encouraging the them to have high aspirations in education. Although the above studies ascribe parent's social class to parental involvement, it shares the same indicators as parents' socio-economic status.

Using historical and cross-cultural data, several researchers have found that, although parents love their children, their willingness to invest in children's education (and other aspects of their well being) are affected by the number of children in the family, public expenditures on education, and their assessment of the financial return of such

investment to the family. When education must be financed by the family, additional children reduce the amount of investment in each child, particularly in low-income families (Becker & Tomes, 2020; Rosenzweig & Schultz, 1982). However, poor and middle-income parents are more willing to invest in their children if they believe that such investment increases children's potential for financial contribution to the family and that they can be counted on to care for elderly parents (Becker & Tomes, 2020).

Researchers also argue that non-monetary factors such as parenting (measured by parents' educational expectations for their children and the attention parents give to their children's education) and home environment (measured by the presence of books, newspapers, and other learning materials at home) can be more important for children's academic achievement than money. They found that regardless of family income, high parental expectations and more parental attention to and effort toward their children's education help raise children's academic achievement (Bradley et al., 2017; Mayer, 2015).

In a well-designed cross-cultural study, Stevenson (2020) showed that teaching styles and educational structures also affect children's academic achievement. The researcher found that on the same mathematics tests, the first- and fifth-grade students in Beijing, China did so much better than their counterparts in Chicago that the average score of only 1 of the 20 Chicago area schools "was as high as the worst" of the ten Beijing schools (Stevenson, 2020). On a computation test, only 2 percent of the Beijing first graders scored as low as the mean for their Chicago counterparts. Although the variable Family income was not used in Stevenson's study, the fact that 98 percent of Beijing children scored higher than the average score of American children means that many poor Chinese students did as well or better than well-to-do.

Unlike American children, Stevenson attributed Chinese children's higher achievement to China's educational system; well-prepared, enthusiastic teachers; and academic and social activities that make school an enjoyable place for students. Using the 2013 survey of Chinese eighth graders and the 1988 National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS) of American eighth graders, the study explored the relationships among family income, parenting, home environment, and mathematics achievement of children in China and the United States. Although a positive relationship between family income and children's mathematics achievement in both countries was expected, it was also expected that Chinese children in general do better than their American peers. Because Chinese parents have only one child, regardless of income, parents' expectation for children's education will be higher in China than in the United States. Furthermore, because high parental expectations have been found to lead to higher academic achievement, it was expected that high parental expectations among poor Chinese families would help mitigate the effects of low income on children's academic achievement. In other words, the relationship between income and achievement was weaker with Chinese children than with American children.

Another study by Baker and Stevenson (2020), on mothers of eighth-grade students from middle school indicated that well-educated mothers have more knowledge of their child's schooling, are more aware of their child's education and his/her achievement and they take greater effort to monitor their child's academic progress than the less-educated mothers. A study conducted by Poston and Falbo (2018) also found that parents who were highly educated often communicate and interact with their children. Consistent with the studies above, Lueptow (2018) in his study also

found that students who are high achievers at school are from urban areas, who have educated parents with a higher occupation status and a higher income home.

A study by Campbell, Hombo and Mazzeo (2013), using NAEP data indicated that students who reported higher parental education levels tended to have higher average scores. Parent educational status as an indicator of SES reflects the potential for social and economic resources such as household incomes that are available to the student.

Dave and Dave (2016) found that higher percentages of rank holder belong to homes with higher parental education and higher percentage of failed students belong those who have lower parental education. Rumberger (2019) found that students' family background is widely recognized as the most significant important contributor to success in schools. Rumberger's research supported the findings of earlier researchers who argued that the home has a major influence on student school success (Swick & Duff, 2021) and that it is the quality of relationships in students' home environments that has an important effect on school performance.

Previous studies have showed that students who come from families with illiterate parents have significantly less school success than students from educated parents (Martini, 2019; Walker *et al.*, 2019) and intact families (Amato & Keith, 2015) Some potential explanation was that parents in such settings reported lower educational expectations, less monitoring of children's school work and less overall supervision of social activities compared to students from highly educated and intact families (Jacob & Harvey, 2014). More educated parents are assumed to create environments that facilitate learning (Williams, 2013; Teachman, 2017) and involve themselves in their children's school experiences and school environments (Steinberg *et al.*, 2020; Useem,

2020). However, there are students who come from low-income and single-parent homes who are high achievers and many students from high socio-economic and intact families who are low achievers. Students may also come from homes where the parents are highly educated and involved in their children's education, yet achieve poorly at school (Jacob & Harvey, 2014).

Several studies (Baharudin, 2019; Gerris & Dekovic 2015; Harris & Liebert 2017; Hines 2015) show the role of the family and the specific interactions between a child and parent have been determined to be powerful indicators of development. Some specific interactions include regular family discussions, encouragement, limit setting, warmth, daily routine, praise, and intellectual stimulation. These studies have shown all of these connections to produce an impact on academic achievement.

Children have an unbelievable thirst for knowledge, and if parents do not tap into that drive in early childhood it could be lost before the children even enter the school system. The parents that do not foster learning are easily identified. It is truly amazing how little children mention their parents. Parents' encouragement to achieve and interest in school performance are significantly related to student motivation and student achievement (Hawley *et al.*, 2016). Hawley, cited Walberg when he found what might be called "the curriculum of the home" predicts academic learning twice as well as the socio-economic status of families. This curriculum includes informed parent/child conversations about everyday events, encouragement and discussion of leisure reading, monitoring and joint analysis of tele viewing; deferral of immediate gratification is to accomplish long-term goals, expressions of even occasional doses of caprice and serendipity. In 29 controlled studies conducted during the past decade, 91 percent of the comparisons favored children in programs designed to improve the

learning environment of the home over children not participating in such programs. Although the average effect was twice that of socioeconomic status, some programs had effects 10 times as large.

Because few of the programs lasted more than a semester, the potential exists for even greater benefits from programs sustained over all the years of schooling. Rosenblatt, (2018) spoke about the importance of taking time for children and playing with them. He quoted Neitzsche when he said that there is nothing so serious as a child at play. The decision parents make to either thrust themselves into their children's worlds of amusement or allow them to be unsupervised will make a profound impact on the children's life. The most vulnerable and dangerous time for children is between 3:00 PM and 8:00 PM. This period is known as "Crime Time". Many people would love to think their children would never be involved in something like a violent crime. They may not be the perpetrators, but they very well could be the victims. Victims outnumber perpetrators 10 to 1 (Alter, 2019).

Walberg, Bole and Waxman (2013) declare the importance for families to share interests in hobbies, activities and games. Reading material should be abundant and discussed on regular intervals. The study states that cultural activities and parental involvement show a significant relationship to academic achievement. Some cultural activities include going to the museum, zoo or public library. It does not take money to be enthralled by culture. School Success Strategies Watkins (2015) theorized that parents' involvement has made an impact on a child's learning and motivation. The study looked at various types of involvement including home instruction, volunteering in the classroom and participation in school governance. His comments on achievement goal theory was particularly interesting.

Hofferth and Sandberg (2017) did a study on how American children spend their time. The authors were careful not to try and determine causality, but rather examined some activities significantly associated with achievement. The study showed that the amount of time spent at home eating, sleeping and reading is linked to children's achievement and behavior. Other activities thought to affect academic success were: household work, household conversations, group leisure activities, and family meals.

Individual differences in children's achievement were studied by Baharudin and Luster (2019) relative to differences in the home environment. They found the quality of the children's home environment to be positively related with achievement. Children with higher test scores came from more supportive homes. The parents of preschool children were asked about conveying positive feelings, answering child's questions, taking trips to the museum, eating meals as a family, requiring the child to keep play area clean, conversing with the child, and encouraging the child to develop and sustain hobbies.

The literature suggests home environment factors affect school achievement, and be influenced if the family culture follows the current trend. The essence of a 'traditional American family' has deteriorated with the stress in many of today's families because of poverty, single parenting styles and working mothers. Stress in the home deteriorates the environment and these stressors affect school achievement.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework is the basis of investigators research problem. It has been constructed on the basis of home environmental factors which are affecting students' education. This study aims to examine the effects of students' home environments on

their education. The conceptual framework based on the System's theory Input-Output model advanced by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in 1956.

In this study, the researcher focused on how Parental Education status (non-educated, graduates of primary, secondary post-secondary schools university graduates, or post-graduates) parents' academic status and family size influenced the academic performances of children.

Educational background of the parents can be expressed in the frequent use of English Language as a medium of communication at home (John, 2014). This will help in laying a good foundation for self expression, confidence in speaking good English in public and understanding the basic English concepts in school since English Language is used for communicating in schools.

Gustsson et al, (2011) reported that parental expectations and parents function as role models are important mediating mechanisms to account for the effects of Parental Education on children's achievement. However, they added that it is reasonable to expect that the number of books in the home can play an important part in mediating mechanisms. They identified another path between Parent Education and achievement which was unexpected, that is, the relationship between NumLitAct and ability which implies that in homes where there is stronger emphasis on literacy activities than numeric activities, there is a positive effect on the ability to perform both numeric and literacy tasks at the beginning of primary school. In some instances, there was a direct effect (positive or a negative) of Parental Education on NumLitAct, while in others, there was an indirect effect via Books.

The influence of family educational climate is defined by the amount and the style of help that children receive from the family: that is determined by elements of the family context, like dynamics of communication and affective relationship, attitudes towards values and expectations (Diaz, 2014). Along the same lines, Marchesi and Martin (2012) reported that parental expectations have a notable influence on academic results, even when controlling for initial knowledge and socio-economic context.

On the aspect of Parental Economic Status as related to children's education, much emphasis was laid on the ability of the parents to provide necessary facilities or materials that can help in making the learning school subjects easy for the children. This involves the provision of mini library for the children which include textbooks, story books, picture books and spelling charts which will help the children to learn word identification, correct spellings, correct sentences, master the use of correct tenses in line with pictures. Azakiwe(2008) maintained that the implementation of the reform/innovation can not do much if the basic instructional materials are in short supply.

In terms of family size on children's Education, the researcher was concerned with the socio-metric factors such as the kinds of special activities in and around the child's home environment. For insurance, a child who lives in a large extended family house where there is a lot of noise and many house chores and, or a child that lives near the market square will adopt the language of the people around him/her. This could affect the child in learning good English at school.

Furthermore, children from homes located in an environment where there is noisy traffic and noisy sound of machine from ply-wood industry will be affected negatively in their academic performance in school because the noisy environment will disturb them from concentrating while reading and studying at home and even in listening to to educative radio programs. Hence Ogbemudia and Aiasa(2013) maintained that physical and psychological conditions of the home environment affect the children academic performance.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter concentrates on the methodology used for the study and it discusses the research approach, research design, study area, population, sample and sampling techniques, instrument for data collection, validity and reliability of the questionnaire, data collection procedure and data analysis method.

3.1 Research Approach

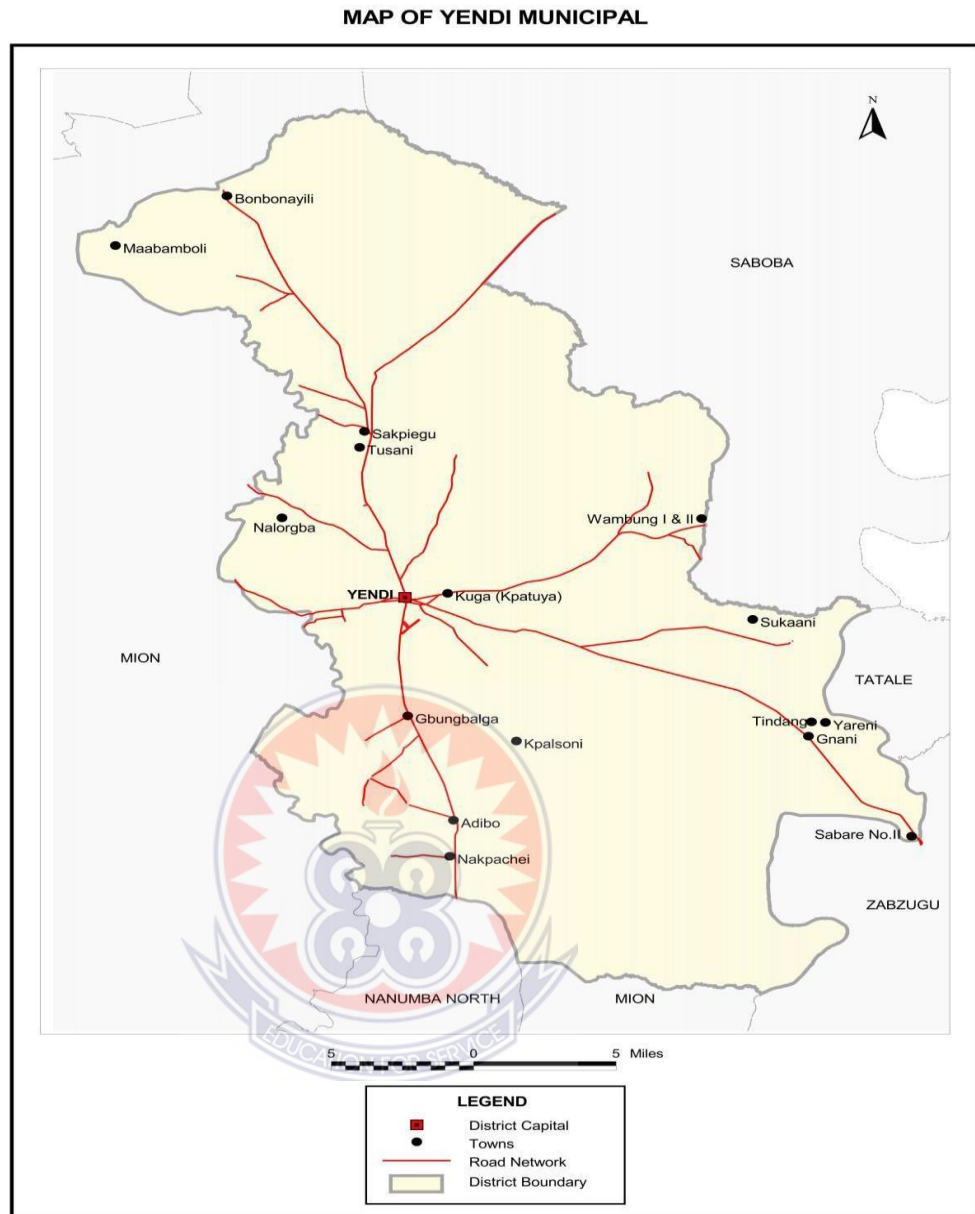
According to Bryman, (2012) a research approach is simply a technique for collecting data. It is a general research strategy that outlines the various ways by which a research is carried out. The choice of any research approach should largely be appropriate to the research questions under consideration (Bryman, 2012). This means the choice of methodology is dependent on the type of research problem and the theoretical approach. The collection, analysis and interpretation of data for a research purpose take three broad forms. These are quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods (i.e. the integration of the quantitative and qualitative methods). The selection of any of these research approaches by a researcher is always based on the philosophical assumptions the researcher brings to the study (Creswell, 2014). The selection of a research approach is also based on the nature of the research problem or issue being addressed, the researcher's personal experiences, and the audience for the study (Creswell, 2014). The research approach used for the study was the mixed method.

3.2 Research Design

The researcher used descriptive survey design to investigate the effects of students' home environments on their educations in Yendi Municipality of the Northern Region, Ghana. According to Koul (2020) descriptive survey research design objectively allows for the accurate description of activities, objects, processes and persons. The purpose of descriptive survey is to observe, describe and document aspects of a situation as it naturally occurs (Amedahe, 2019). Descriptive survey research has the ability to obtain data regarding persons or groups of persons who possess some identified features, perceptions, behaviours, and beliefs with questioning and soliciting of responses concerning the current status of the subject of the study. Since the study involved a large number of respondents, the descriptive survey design was the most suitable.

3.3 Study Area

This study was conducted in Yendi Municipality, one of the 56 Municipalities nationwide and 2 in the Northern Region (MLGRD, 2013). The Municipality, located at the center in the eastern corridor of the region, shares boundaries with Saboba, Zabzugu and Tatale/Sanguli to the east; Nanumba North to the south, Mion to the west, and Gushegu to the north. Its estimated population stands at 117,780 comprising 50.0 percent each for males and females (GSS, 2021). The ethnic composition of the municipality are the Dagombas who form the majority, Konkomba, Basare, Chokosi, Hausa, Moshie, Ewe and Akan (Yendi Municipal Assembly, 2013). A map of the study area is shown in Figure 2 below:



Source: Ghana Statistical Service, (2021)

Yendi, the Municipal Capital, as well as the traditional capital and seat of Ya-Na, the OverLord of Dagbon, is located about 98 km east of Tamale, the capital of the Northern Region of Ghana.

The municipality is faced with development issues of inaccessible quality education, lack of grassroots participation in local development decision making, high incidence of youth unemployment and lack of employable skills (Awedoba, 2009). Yendi also faces problems of poor access to healthcare; potable water and sanitation; road network, educational and communication facilities; environmental degradation; and low electricity coverage.

3.4 Population

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), a population is a group of individual, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement. The population for the study was all the head teachers and students of the 28 public primary schools in the Yendi Municipality of the Northern Region, Ghana. It also included the parents of the selected students for the study.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Out of the 28 public primary schools in Yendi Municipality, the researcher studied a sample of 8 head teachers from the four selected schools which is 30% of the total population of schools. In each of the selected school, the researcher selected 10% of the students, making a sample 144 out of a population of 1440 students. This is sufficient according to Gay (2017) who stated that a sample size of at least 10% of the population is sufficient.

Table 1: Sample Determination

Respondents	Population	Sample size	Percentage	Sampling technique	
Head teachers	28	8	30	Simple sampling	Random
Students	1440	144	10	Simple Sampling	Random
Parents	28	8	30	Simple Sampling	Random
Total	1496	160	70		

Source: Field Survey (2023)

The researcher employed simple random sampling because it allowed all members of the population an equal chance of being selected. The researcher, first of all, wrote the names of students on small pieces of paper and put them in a small box, and then randomly pick the names until the required sample size was met. Teachers were also randomly picked. These were class teachers from selected schools. Moreover, the parents were selected too by using random sampling because they were used as key informants to capture important information.

3.6 Instrument for Data Collection

The data collection instruments which were used in this study were a questionnaire and interview guide. The researcher developed closed-ended questions because they are easy to fill in, time saving and keep the respondents focused on the topic. The questionnaire was in the form of a Likers Scale asking respondents to show whether they strongly disagreed (SD), disagreed (D), not sure (NS), agreed (A), or strongly agreed (SA).

Also, the questionnaire was easily administered to the respondents and suitable in collecting information within a short span of time. They were also helpful in producing more truthful answers than it was possible for an interview. Moreover,

questionnaire is suitable as a survey data collection technique because each respondent is asked to act in response to the same set of questions and thus provide a well-organized way to accumulate responses from a huge sample. The researcher prepared one questionnaire for pupils.

Interview guide was used for the random selected teachers and parents on the study and their responses either recorded or documented and analyzed.

3.7 Reliability and Validity of the Research Instrument

3.7.1 Reliability

According to Ogula (2015), reliability is the extent to which a research instrument yields measures that are consistent each time it is administered to the same individuals or yields consistent results after repeated trials. In order to ensure the reliability of the questionnaires, a pilot study was undertaken to test whether the aim of the study was achieved, whether there is any ambiguity in any item or whether the research objectives are appropriately addressed.

A Pre-test was conducted to verify and confirm the face and content validity so as to amend any aspect of the questionnaire that might look ambiguous to the respondents. In effect, the pre-testing of the instrument helped to make the questionnaire relevant and valid for assessing the phenomenon under study. The pre-test was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient reliability. The data gathered from the pre-test was subjected to Cronbach's Alpha a coefficient of reliability that gave an unbiased estimated of data generalized. An alpha coefficient of higher than 0.6 indicates that the gathered data had a relatively high internal consistency and could be generalized to reflect the opinions of all respondents sampled for the study.

3.7.2 Validity

Validity is defined as the extent to which a research instrument measures what is intended to measure (Fraenkel & Wallen 2019). The validity of the instrument was established by being given to experts, research assistant and my supervisor who approved the instruments for data collection. The academic experts in carrying out content validity were able to assist the researcher omit any items that were viewed as contravening known knowledge. Content validity was also critical in omitting some items which the experts felt were not going to provide adequate information and which sounded repetitive. Based on the face validity, the researcher allowed her colleagues to look over the research and decide if it looks good to assess what the research says it is going to.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Head, Department of Social Studies Education, University of Education, Winneba. The letter spelt out the purpose of the study. After establishing the necessary contact with the head teachers of the selected schools, two assistants were trained on how to talk to respondents, how to explain certain difficult questions to them and other equally important information that enabled the researcher to have uniform information. The researcher together with the assistants explained the purpose of the study and procedure for responding to the questionnaire to respondents. In order to ensure clarity of how the questionnaire could be completed, the researcher together with the assistants again administered the questionnaire personally during regular school time. After they had responded to the items, the questionnaires were collected by the researcher. The assistance given by the research assistants helped to maintain discipline, orderliness and cooperation of the

respondents. The researcher primarily relied on the primary sources of data. However, it took only three weeks to complete the collection of data process.

3.9 Data Analysis Method

Data analysis method refers to examining what has been collected in a survey or experiment and making deductions and inferences; It includes scrutinizing the acquired information and making inferences (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Both quantitative and qualitative techniques were used to analyze the data. The data was then entered into the computer for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Research ethics ensure that researchers uphold the dignity, rights, and welfare of participants during the research process. As highlighted by Fouka and Mantzorou (2011), it is crucial to maintain ethical standards in research to safeguard human dignity. In this study, several ethical principles were adhered to, including obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, and maintaining the privacy and anonymity of respondents.

Informed Consent

Before any data collection began, informed consent was obtained from all participants. The researcher provided detailed information to the respondents about the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits. This was done through an introductory letter accompanying the questionnaire, clearly outlining the voluntary nature of participation. Participants were informed that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any point without any consequences. Consent was documented by having participants sign a consent form or provide verbal agreement for those who could not sign, which was then noted by the researcher. Participants were also informed about how the data would be used, analyzed, and reported.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

To maintain the confidentiality of the participants' responses, several measures were taken. No personal identifiers such as names, addresses, or specific demographic details were collected, ensuring that responses could not be linked back to any individual. The data were anonymized, meaning that the questionnaire responses were stored without identifying information. Only the researcher had access to the raw data, and all electronic data were stored securely using password-protected files. Additionally, any physical data, such as filled-out paper questionnaires, were securely stored in a locked location. The data collected was used solely for the purposes of this research and will be destroyed after the study is completed.

Respect and Privacy

Throughout the research process, the researcher treated all participants with respect, ensuring that their rights to privacy were upheld. Participants were assured that their information would not be shared with anyone outside the research team and that findings would be presented in aggregate form, preventing any individual from being identified. The researcher followed all necessary protocols and guidelines at every stage of the study to ensure ethical standards were upheld.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discussions of the study. The purpose of the study was to examine the effects of students' home environments on their education in the Yendi Municipality in the Northern Region of Ghana. The chapter has two sections. The first section covers the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents while the second section covers the main findings of the study, based on the research objectives.

4.1 Socio- Demographic Characteristic of Respondents

This section discusses the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. The characteristics involved are: age, marital status, religion, education level and years of teaching experience. The demographic characteristics of respondents are very important in addressing validity by involving relevant respondents in the study.

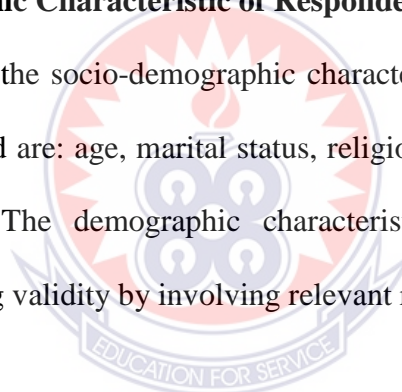


Table 1: Socio - Demographic Characteristic of the Respondents (N = 160)

Socio-demographic characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
≤ 30 years	144	90.0
31-40 years	7	9.4
41-50 years	6	3.8
>51 years	3	1.9
Total	160	100
Marital Status		
Single	144	90.0
Married	15	9.4
Divorced	1	0.6
Total	160	100
Religion		
Christian	115	69.0
Muslim	45	31.0
Total	160	100
Educational Level		
Primary Education.	144	90.0
Advanced Diploma.	4	2.5
Bachelor's Degree	10	6.3
Master's Degree	2	1.3
Total	160	100

Source: Field Data (2023)

As shown in Table 1, 144 (90.6%) of respondents were ≤ 30 years, while 7 (4.4%) were 31-40 years, and 6 (3.8%) were 41-50 years, and 3 (1.9%) were 51 and above. The results also show that, 144 (90.1%) of the respondents were single while 15 (9.4%) were married and 1 (0.6%) were divorced. This result implies that the single participants exceed the married and divorced participants. On the other hand, 115(69.0%) of the respondents were Christians and 45(31.0%) were Muslims. This result implies that the Christians exceeds every other religion that was sampled.

Furthermore, 51(31.9%) of the respondents had advance diploma, 89(55.6%) of the respondents had Bachelor's degree. while, 20(12.5%) of the respondents had Master's degree. This result implies that majority of the respondents had Bachelor's degree.

4.2 Presentation of Findings

4.2.1 The influence of Parents' Economic Status on Students' Education in

Public Primary Schools in the Yendi Municipality

The first objective of the study was to determine the influence of parents' economic status on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality. The information on this variable was obtained from the respondents of the study. The findings are presented in Tables 3.

Table 3: Influence of Parents' Economic Status on Students' Education

Statements	Disagree		NS	Agree	SA	Mean	S.D
	SD	DA					
I have enough teaching and learning recourses at home (e.g. story books, dictionary and writing materials).	3.3% (2)	3.3% (2)	16.7% (10)	40.0% (24)	36.7% (22)	4.03	0.991
I'm comfortable with the means I use to go to school.	6.7%(4)	6.7% (4)	11.7% (7)	43.3% (26)	31.7% (19)	3.87	1.142
I have enough lighting system at home	5.0% (3)	5.0% (3)	20.0% (12)	43.3% (26)	26.7% (16)	3.82	1.49
I'm provided with enough uniforms and school a bag.	5.0% (3)	15.0% (9)	18.3% (11)	43.3% (26)	18.3% (11)	3.55	1.111
I'm always given enough food at home.	1.7% (1)	8.3% (5)	11.7% (7)	40.0% (24)	38.3% (23)	4.05	0.999

Source: Field Data (2023)

Table 3 provides valuable insights into how students perceive the availability of resources and the impact of their home environment on their education. The statement, "I have enough learning resources at home," saw 76.7% of respondents agree (mean = 4.03, SD = 0.991). This high level of agreement suggests that the majority of students feel adequately supported with learning materials at home. However, it is important to explore what these "learning resources" entail. The respondents may refer to basic materials such as textbooks, but the data does not clarify whether these resources include modern learning aids like computers, internet access, or supplementary materials, which can significantly enhance learning outcomes in today's digital age. This suggests that students' perception of having "enough resources" may still be shaped by a minimal standard of materials, highlighting potential gaps between perception and actual resource sufficiency. This finding aligns with resource-based theories (Coleman, 1988), which assert that access to educational resources is one of the key determinants of student achievement. The availability of textbooks, stationery, and other learning tools at home can directly influence academic performance. However, it is also critical to assess the quality of these resources to ensure that they adequately support 21st-century learning. Similarly, 75% of the respondents agreed with the statement, "I'm comfortable with the means I use to go to school" (mean = 3.87, SD = 1.142), indicating that most students are content with their mode of transportation.

While this might suggest that logistical barriers to school attendance are minimal, it is important to consider the nuances. Comfort does not necessarily imply efficiency, and in rural or economically disadvantaged areas, students may face long commutes or unreliable transportation despite feeling “comfortable.” These factors, even if not explicitly recognized by the students, can still impact attendance and energy levels, thereby affecting academic performance. Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory (1979) supports this interpretation, as the mesosystem (interaction between home and school environments) plays a pivotal role in shaping students’ educational experiences. Transportation issues, even when unacknowledged, can disrupt students’ ability to focus and participate fully in school.

The statement, "I have enough lighting system at home," was agreed upon by 70% of respondents (mean = 3.82, SD = 1.049). This finding highlights the significance of home infrastructure in academic performance. Adequate lighting is essential for students to study effectively after school hours, and any insufficiency in this area can limit study time, particularly for students from low-income families. Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943) emphasizes the importance of fulfilling basic physiological needs such as proper lighting and a conducive study environment before students can fully engage in academic tasks. Inadequate lighting is often linked to broader issues of energy poverty, which disproportionately affects families in lower socioeconomic brackets.

Further, 61.6% of respondents agreed with the statement, “I’m provided with enough uniforms and school bag” (mean = 3.55, SD = 1.111). The provision of essential school materials, such as uniforms and bags, is critical in ensuring that students attend school regularly and maintain self-esteem. However, the relatively lower level of agreement on this statement compared to others suggests that some students face material shortages that could impact their school experience. Bourdieu’s theory of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) can be applied here, as uniforms and school supplies represent more than just material goods they are symbols of preparedness and belonging within the educational environment. Students lacking these materials may experience social exclusion or feel less equipped to succeed academically, which could hinder their performance.

The statement, “I’m always given enough food at home,” was agreed upon by 78.3% of respondents (mean = 4.05, SD = 0.999), suggesting that most students feel their nutritional needs are met. However, the 10% who disagreed may represent students experiencing food insecurity, which can have severe consequences for academic performance. Research consistently shows that hunger impairs cognitive function and concentration, reducing students' ability to perform well in school (Jyoti et al., 2005). Maslow's hierarchy of needs also applies here, as students cannot reach their full academic potential without having their basic physiological needs such as food. Hunger and malnutrition remain significant barriers to academic achievement, especially in economically disadvantaged households.

Qualitative Analysis

Financial Constraints and Access to Educational Resources

Many respondents emphasized the direct impact of parents' economic status on students' ability to access essential educational resources, such as textbooks, uniforms, and learning materials. A common theme that emerged from the interviews was the struggle of economically disadvantaged families to provide the necessary tools for their children's education.

One parent stated,

“It is difficult to afford school uniforms, books, and sometimes even food for my children. This affects their concentration in school because they worry about things I cannot provide.”

Teachers also echoed these sentiments, explaining that students from low-income families often came to school without the necessary learning materials, which affected their academic performance. The inability to provide these resources emerged as a significant barrier to education.

Parental Involvement and Economic Stability

Another recurring theme was the connection between parents' economic stability and their level of involvement in their children's education. Parents with more stable economic backgrounds were reportedly more involved in their children's schooling, attending parent-teacher meetings and following up on academic progress. Conversely, parents facing economic hardship tended to be less involved, as they were preoccupied with meeting basic needs.

As one teacher remarked,

“Parents who are financially stable make time to check on their children's progress. But those who struggle economically are rarely able to do so because they are busy working long hours to provide for their families.”

This theme highlights how economic challenges can lead to a lack of engagement in children's education, which can have a detrimental effect on academic outcomes.

School Attendance and Economic Strain

The issue of irregular school attendance due to financial difficulties was another theme that emerged during the analysis. Many students from low-income families were forced to stay home on days when their parents could not afford transportation or basic school supplies.

A school administrator commented,

“Some children miss school because their parents can't afford to send them every day, and this affects their performance. Continuous absenteeism has a cumulative effect on their ability to keep up with lessons.”

The analysis revealed a clear link between economic hardship and inconsistent school attendance, which in turn impacted students' academic progress.

Psychological Impact of Economic Pressure

Interviews also highlighted the psychological burden placed on students due to their families' financial struggles. Several participants mentioned how students felt anxious and distracted in class, worrying about financial issues at home.

One student noted,

“When I am in school, I think about my mother and how she works hard to get money. Sometimes I feel guilty, and it is hard to focus on my studies.”

This theme points to the emotional and psychological toll that economic instability can have on students, further affecting their ability to perform well in school.

Economic Inequality and Educational Disparities

Finally, the theme of economic inequality and its role in creating educational disparities was a consistent finding across interviews. Respondents highlighted how wealthier families were able to provide private tutoring and additional educational

support for their children, giving them a significant advantage over their peers from lower-income families.

As one teacher explained,

“Students from richer families often get extra classes, which helps them perform better. This creates a gap between them and those whose parents cannot afford such services.”

This theme underscores how economic status contributes to unequal educational outcomes, further widening the gap between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds.

Implications for the Theoretical Framework and Prior Research

These findings are consistent with Desimone’s (2021) study, who identified two categories of family backgrounds: elite and traditional households. Desimon' research showed that family socio-economic status significantly influences students' academic outcomes. Students from wealthier families are more likely to have access to necessary resources, while those from lower socio-economic backgrounds face more challenges, including material shortages and reduced parental involvement. This disparity in access and support manifests in differing academic performances, as seen in this study.

The findings point to the need for interventions that support students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Schools could implement programs that provide necessary resources such as uniforms, school supplies, and after-school study spaces with adequate lighting. Additionally, policies aimed at addressing food insecurity among students would help ensure that no child’s academic potential is limited by hunger.

4.2.2 The effects of the education level of parents on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality

The second objective of the study was to examine the effects of the educational level of parents on students' education in public primary schools in the Yendi Municipality. The information on this variable was obtained from the respondents, and are presented in Tables 4.

Table 4: Effects of the education level of parents on students' education

Statements	Disagree			Agree		Mean	S.D
	SD	DA	NS	A	SA		
My parent helps me in my assignments at home	10.0% (6)	13.3% (8)	10.0% (6)	36.7% (22)	30.0% (18)	3.63	1.314
My parent checks my books when I go back home to see what I was taught	3.3% (2)	3.3% (2)	16.7% (10)	40.0% (24)	36.7% (22)	4.03	0.991
My parent consults with my teacher about my performance and also visits the school to know how am doing	6.7% (4)	3.3% (2)	15.0% (9)	50.0% (30)	25.0% (15)	3.83	1.060
My parent talks to me about my academic performance	6.7% (4)	5.0% (3)	13.3% (8)	35.0% (21)	40.0% (24)	3.97	1.164
My parent encourages me to listen to educative programs over the radio or TV	1.7% (1)	5.0% (3)	15.0% (9)	46.7% (28)	31.7% (19)	4.02	0.911

Source: Field Data, (2023)

Table 4 presents important insights into parental involvement in students' academic performance. The data reveals that 66.7% of the respondents agreed that their parents help them with assignments at home, while 23.3% disagreed. The mean score of 3.63 (SD = 1.314) suggests that most students experience some level of parental assistance with their homework. This finding aligns with theories of parental engagement, particularly Epstein's (1987) model, which emphasizes the critical role of parents in supporting academic activities at home. The variation in responses, indicated by the standard deviation, suggests that while a majority receive support, a significant

portion of students may not benefit from parental help, likely due to factors such as lower parental education levels or busy work schedules.

Regarding the statement, “My parents check my books when I go back home to see what I was taught,” 76.7% of respondents agreed, with a mean score of 4.03 (SD = 0.991). This high level of agreement indicates strong parental involvement in tracking academic progress. According to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler’s (1995) model of parental involvement, this type of behavior monitoring academic progress can directly contribute to improved student performance. The relatively low percentage of disagreement (6.6%) may highlight the importance of understanding why some parents, possibly those with lower educational backgrounds, might not engage in this type of support. This could reflect social dynamics where parents with less education may feel less confident in providing academic oversight, as suggested by the teacher’s remarks during interviews.

The data also shows that 75% of respondents agreed that their parents consult with teachers about their academic performance. The mean score of 3.83 (SD = 1.060) reinforces that many parents are actively engaged in school communication, a practice that Epstein’s framework refers to as “school-home communication.” This involvement is crucial as it fosters collaboration between parents and teachers, which can enhance student outcomes. However, the 15% who were unsure and 10% who disagreed reflect potential barriers to this form of engagement. It is possible that parents with lower education levels or limited time might find it difficult to meet with teachers regularly, echoing the teacher’s observation that parental educational background significantly influences engagement in school matters.

Further, 75% of students agreed that their parents discuss their academic performance with them, with a mean score of 3.97 (SD = 1.164). This direct communication between parents and children about academics is essential for reinforcing the importance of education, a point highlighted in Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory, where parental feedback is a key factor in shaping students' self-efficacy and motivation. The 11.7% who disagreed might indicate a subset of students whose parents, due to educational limitations or cultural factors, may not engage in these discussions, thus leaving students without crucial guidance or encouragement.

Again, the statement regarding parental encouragement to listen to educational programs over the radio or TV saw 78.4% agreement (mean = 4.02, SD = 0.911), suggesting that most parents promote educational media. This behavior can be linked to Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, where exposure to intellectual resources like educational programs enhances a student's academic performance. However, it is notable that 6.7% of parents were reportedly not involved in this activity, which may correlate with the educational levels of parents, as suggested by the teacher's interview comment.

Qualitative Analysis

Parental Education and Academic Support at Home

One of the dominant themes that emerged from the analysis was the role of parental education in shaping the level of academic support students receive at home. Parents with higher levels of education were more likely to assist their children with homework, provide guidance, and actively engage with their learning progress.

A teacher noted,

“Parents who are educated tend to help their children more with schoolwork. They understand the importance of education and make sure their children are prepared for school.”

In contrast, parents with lower levels of education expressed difficulties in supporting their children academically. As one parent stated,

“I didn’t go far in school, so I struggle to help my children with their studies. Sometimes I don’t understand their homework, and they end up doing it on their own.”

This theme suggests that parental education directly impacts the level of academic engagement and support students receive at home, which can significantly influence their academic performance.

Value of Education and Parental Aspirations

Another key theme was the variation in parental aspirations based on their education level. Interviews revealed that parents with higher levels of education placed greater value on academic achievement and had higher educational expectations for their children. They actively encouraged their children to pursue further studies and recognized the long-term benefits of education. One respondent, a parent with tertiary education, remarked,

“I always tell my children how important education is. I want them to go to university and have better opportunities than I had.”

In contrast, parents with lower levels of education were less likely to emphasize the importance of higher education. This often resulted in lower aspirations for their children’s educational attainment, as indicated by one parent:

“I didn’t go far in school, so I don’t push my children too hard. I just want them to pass and finish primary school.”

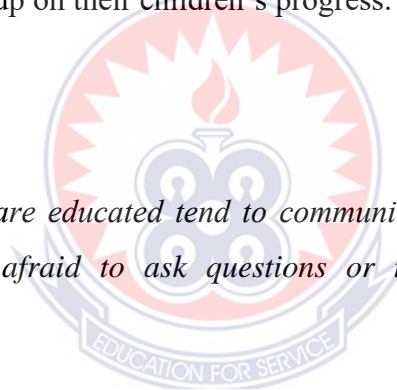
This theme demonstrates how the educational background of parents influences their expectations for their children’s academic future, which can shape the students' own educational goals and motivation.

Communication with Teachers and School Involvement

The education level of parents also affected their communication with teachers and involvement in school-related activities. Parents with higher educational attainment were more confident in engaging with teachers and were more proactive in attending meetings or following up on their children’s progress.

A teacher observed,

“Parents who are educated tend to communicate better with the school. They are not afraid to ask questions or talk about their children's performance.”



However, parents with lower levels of education often felt intimidated or lacked the confidence to engage with teachers, which limited their involvement in their children’s education.

One parent admitted,

“I don’t talk much with the teachers because I don’t understand everything they say. I just listen and hope my child is doing well.”

This theme highlights how parental education affects the level of involvement in the school community, which is crucial for fostering a collaborative relationship between home and school to support student learning.

Parental Education and Access to Educational Resources

The analysis also revealed a connection between parental education levels and the ability to provide access to educational resources. Educated parents were more knowledgeable about the importance of supplementary materials, such as books, learning apps, and extracurricular activities, and made efforts to provide these resources.

One respondent shared,

“I buy extra books for my children, and we use educational apps at home. I want them to be ahead of their peers.”

Conversely, parents with lower educational attainment were often unaware of additional resources that could aid their children’s learning. As one parent expressed,

“I don’t know much about other materials apart from what the school provides. I trust the school to teach my children everything they need to know.”

This theme underscores the role of parental education in equipping students with additional learning resources, which can enhance their academic performance.

Attitudes Toward Teachers and Educational Authority

Another recurring theme was the difference in attitudes toward teachers and educational authority based on the parents' education levels. Parents with higher levels of education were more likely to engage in critical discussions with teachers and question educational practices.

A teacher remarked,

“Educated parents are more likely to challenge decisions or ask for explanations about teaching methods or curriculum choices.”

On the other hand, parents with lower education levels tended to view teachers as unquestionable authorities and were less likely to challenge or discuss school-related issues. As one parent noted,

“I don’t argue with the teachers. They know better than me, so I let them do their job.”

This theme reveals how parental education influences interactions with educators and potentially affects the quality of feedback and engagement that children receive in their learning environment.

The teacher's observation that parental education level significantly affects their involvement aligns with Chakrabarti's (2020) findings, which revealed that children with highly educated parents perform better academically compared to those with less educated parents. The teacher's insight highlights a critical social dynamic: parents with lower education levels may lack the confidence or resources to support their children's academic efforts effectively, leading to disparities in student performance. This observation not only supports the current data but also reinforces the importance of addressing educational inequalities at the parental level to enhance overall student outcomes.

Implications for the Theoretical Framework and Prior Research

The findings from this study clearly align with existing research on parental involvement, particularly the works of Epstein (1987) and Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995), which emphasize the multifaceted role of parents in their children's education. The data shows that parental education levels may serve as a significant barrier to active involvement, a factor that both theoretical frameworks and empirical studies (e.g., Chakrabarti, 2018) have recognized as influencing student achievement.

4.2.3 The Effects of Family Size on Students' Education in Public Primary

Schools in the Yendi Municipality

The third objective of the study was to examine the effects of family size on students' education in public primary schools in the Yendi Municipality. The information on this variable was obtained from the respondents of the study. The findings are presented in Tables 5.

Table 5: Effects of family size on students' education

Statement	Disagree		NS	Agree		Mean	S.D
	SD	D		A	SA		
I have many siblings in my family, and this interferes with my studies.	3.3% (2)	3.3% (2)	16.7% (10)	40.0% (24)	36.7% (22)	4.03	1.991
I experience a lot of distractions while studying at home	6.7% (4)	6.7% (4)	11.7% (7)	43.3% (26)	31.7% (19)	3.87	1.142
I share reading materials with my siblings	5.0% (3)	5.0% (3)	20.0% (12)	43.3% (26)	26.7% (16)	3.82	1.49
I share room with my siblings	5.0% (3)	15.0% (9)	18.3% (11)	43.3% (26)	18.3% (11)	3.55	1.111
Foods is always not enough	1.7% (1)	8.3% (5)	11.7% (7)	40.0% (24)	38.3% (23)	4.05	1.999

Source: Field Data, (2023)

Table 5 provides crucial insights into the socio-environmental factors affecting students' academic performance, particularly in relation to family dynamics. Regarding the statement, "I have many siblings in my family and this interferes with my studies," 76.7% of the respondents agreed, with a mean score of 4.03 (SD = 0.991). This high level of agreement indicates that students perceive having many siblings as a significant barrier to their academic work. The demands placed on resources, time, and space in larger families can create an environment less conducive to focused study. According to family systems theory (Bowen, 1978), large families may experience challenges in allocating individual attention and resources, which can negatively impact academic performance. The data suggests that students in larger families might struggle to find the necessary support and quiet space for study, thus affecting their overall academic success.

The statement, "I experience a lot of distractions while studying at home," received 75% agreement, with a mean of 3.87 (SD = 1.142), again showing that distractions at home are a significant issue. This finding highlights the broader social dynamic of students' home environments, where noise, shared spaces, and competing responsibilities can interfere with academic focus. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979) supports this notion, as the microsystem (home environment) can have a profound effect on a student's academic life. Distractions may stem from household chores, sibling interactions, or other domestic responsibilities, which can undermine academic performance.

The issue of sharing resources is further illuminated by the finding that 70% of respondents agreed with the statement, "I share reading materials with my siblings" (mean = 3.82, SD = 1.049). Sharing educational materials such as books or other

learning aids may dilute their effectiveness and hinder individual study progress. This aligns with the resource dilution theory (Blake, 1989), which posits that in larger families, resources such as time, attention, and material goods are spread thinner, limiting each child's access to the support needed for academic achievement. The 20% of students who were unsure might indicate that sharing resources is normalized in their environment, though it may still detract from their academic focus.

Furthermore, 61.6% of respondents agreed with the statement, "I share a room with my siblings" (mean = 3.55, SD = 1.111). Sharing a living space can create additional challenges, as competition for quiet study areas may hinder concentration and limit the time available for academic work. These findings reflect the struggles of students living in overcrowded conditions, where personal space is limited. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943), the absence of a conducive physical environment can prevent students from achieving higher-level cognitive tasks like learning, as basic physiological and safety needs may not be adequately met.

The statement "Food is always not enough and this affects my studies" was agreed upon by 78.3% of respondents, with a mean of 4.05 (SD = 0.999). This high level of agreement underscores the role of food insecurity in academic performance. According to Maslow's hierarchy, students who lack access to sufficient food may find it difficult to concentrate on academic tasks, as their physiological needs are unmet. This is consistent with studies like that of Jyoti et al. (2005), which found that food insecurity is closely linked to poorer academic performance and lower test scores among students. Hunger not only affects physical well-being but also impairs cognitive functions such as memory, attention, and problem-solving, all of which are critical for academic success.

Qualitative Analysis

Resource Allocation and Academic Performance

A dominant theme that emerged from the data was the strain that larger family sizes place on household resources, which directly affects students' academic performance. Parents with more children often reported difficulty in providing adequate financial support for each child's educational needs, such as school fees, uniforms, and learning materials.

As one parent of five children remarked,

“With many children, it’s hard to provide for all of them equally. Some have to do without books or uniforms until I can afford them.”

Teachers also expressed concern that students from larger families frequently lacked the necessary materials for school, which negatively impacted their academic performance. One teacher noted,

“Students from larger families often come to class without basic materials like notebooks and pens. This puts them at a disadvantage compared to their peers.”

This theme highlights how limited resources in larger families can result in lower academic performance due to insufficient support.

Time and Attention Divided Among Siblings

Another key theme was the division of time and attention among children in larger families. Parents expressed that it was difficult to provide individualized attention and academic support when they had many children to care for. As one parent of six children explained,

“I try my best, but with so many children, it’s hard to give each one the attention they need for their homework or studies.”

Teachers echoed this sentiment, observing that students from larger families were often left to complete homework or study independently, leading to inconsistent academic outcomes. One teacher shared,

“In smaller families, parents seem to have more time to help their children with schoolwork, but in larger families, the children are often left on their own.”

This theme illustrates how family size affects the amount of parental attention devoted to each child’s education, which can influence their academic success.

Sibling Influence and Peer Learning

An interesting theme that emerged from the interviews was the role of siblings in larger families as both positive and negative influences on educational outcomes. In some cases, older siblings were seen as role models or tutors, helping their younger siblings with homework or sharing knowledge.

One parent noted,

“My older children help the younger ones with their schoolwork, which makes things a bit easier for me.”

However, in other instances, older siblings were seen as distractions, particularly when they struggled academically themselves or engaged in activities that diverted the younger siblings' attention from schoolwork. A teacher observed,

“Sometimes, the older siblings in larger families can be a bad influence, especially if they are not doing well in school themselves.”

This theme indicates that sibling dynamics in larger families can both support and hinder the educational outcomes of younger students, depending on the circumstances.

Emotional and Psychological Impact of Family Size

Another theme identified in the data was the emotional and psychological impact of growing up in a large family. Students from larger families reported feeling overlooked or stressed due to the competition for attention and resources within the household. One student shared,

“There are so many of us at home, and sometimes I feel like no one notices when I’m struggling in school.”

Teachers noted that this emotional strain could affect students' motivation and focus in the classroom. One teacher commented,

“Students from larger families sometimes seem distracted or unmotivated. They may feel like their efforts are not being noticed at home, which affects how they perform in school.”

This theme highlights how family size can influence not only the material aspects of a child's education but also their emotional well-being, which in turn impacts academic performance.

Family Responsibilities and School Attendance

Finally, a recurring theme was the impact of family responsibilities on school attendance, particularly in larger families. Students from bigger households often had more chores or caregiving responsibilities, which sometimes conflicted with their school attendance. One parent explained,

“My older children help take care of the younger ones when I’m not around. Sometimes, this means they miss school.”

School administrators also pointed out that absenteeism was more common among students from larger families, as they were required to contribute to household duties. One administrator remarked,

“In larger families, especially in rural areas, students are often kept home to help with household chores or to look after their siblings.”

This theme underscores how family size affects school attendance and, by extension, students' academic progress.

Implications for the Theoretical Framework and Prior Research

These findings reveal that socio-economic factors, including large family size, resource scarcity, and food insecurity, can have a significant negative impact on students' academic performance. The data align with family systems theory (Bowen, 1978), which highlights the interconnectedness of family members and how resource distribution within the family can affect individual outcomes. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979) also helps explain how the immediate environment of the home, including its distractions and resource limitations, directly affects a student's ability to focus and perform academically.

Additionally, resource dilution theory (Blake, 1989) provides a framework for understanding how the sharing of both material and emotional resources in larger families can impede academic success. Students from larger families are less likely to have access to adequate learning materials, space, and quiet time for studying, leading to poorer academic outcomes compared to their peers from smaller families.

The findings related to food insecurity are especially concerning, as they underscore the need for addressing basic physiological needs before students can achieve academic success, as per Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Prior research, such as that by Cherians (2017), has similarly found a correlation between food insecurity and lower academic achievement, confirming that hunger is a critical barrier to learning.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses summary of the study, conclusions, and recommendations drawn from the study.

5.2 Summary

5.2.1 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. determine the influence of parents' economic status on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality.
2. examine the effects of the education level of parents on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality.
3. investigate the effects of family size on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality.

5.2.2 Research Procedure

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of students' home environment on their educations in the Yendi Municipality of the Northern Region, Ghana. Data was collected, using questionnaires and interview schedules. The data collected from respondents were tabulated and systematically organized and analyzed with the aid of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 21) while the qualitative data were analyzed using thematic approach.

5.2.3 Major Findings

The major findings of the study include the following:

1. The study found that students with parents of high academic status performed better in their education. However, students whose parents were of low academic status were unable to do well in their education.
2. The study revealed that if parents education level was high, they supported their children's education with the provision of textbooks, exercise books and other resources to support children's education. However, if parents education was low, their support for their children's education was low.
3. The study also found that majority of the students were unable to learn well because they experienced a lot of distractions while studying at home, and also shared reading materials with their siblings.

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. The study concludes that, though the academic status of parents play a crucial role in enhancing their children's education, there are several school children whose parents have poor academic status, yet do well academically.
2. The study concludes that parents are willing to improve their involvement in their children's education by assisting them in their home work, providing their children basic needs, including paying their school fees for better academic achievement.
3. The study concludes that students' achievement in their education may not occur from only their individual efforts, but also the support from their families as a home environment, as well the school environment. If students are not supported by their families, their education will never be successful.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions findings of the study, the following recommendations have been made:

1. The study recommends that teachers should serve as bridge between students and their home environment to ensure that students are given the necessary support to improve their education.
2. The study recommends that PTAs must team up to identify and support children with special problems in order to improve their academic work.
3. Since the study has revealed that economic status of parents affects their children's education, the government should make available the necessary teaching and learning materials for all schools to improve teaching and learning.
4. Parents should endeavor to encourage their children to read and do their homework at home rather than spending their time on things that will not benefit them academically.
5. The District Assemblies should team up with various to organize programs that will bring parents and other stakeholders together. At such programs, parents should be encouraged to play their role well to improve their children's education.
6. The community including religious institutions, traditional authorities and other identifiable groups should work together to encourage families to play their respective roles in promoting a successful children's education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Instruction to Respondents

Please read questions and tick [] appropriately or supply responses where applicable.

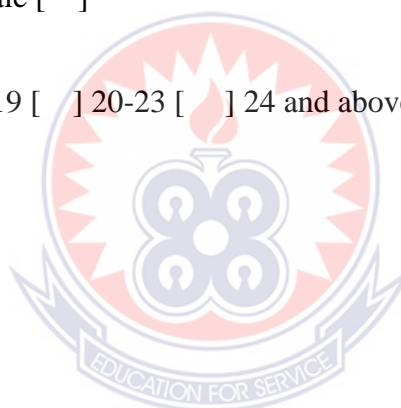
SECTION A

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF RESPONDENT

1. Name of School.....

2. Sex: Male [] Female []

3. Age: 12-15 [] 16-19 [] 20-23 [] 24 and above []



SECTION B**INFLUENCE OF PARENTS' ECONOMIC STATUS ON STUDENTS' EDUCATION**

What is the influence of parents' economic status on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality? Please indicate by ticking your level of agreement.

Key: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Undecided, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
I have enough learning recourses at home (e.g. story books, dictionary and writing materials)					
I'm comfortable with the means I use to go to school					
I have enough lighting system at home					
I'm provided with enough uniforms and school bag					
I'm always given enough food at home					

SECTION C**EFFECTS OF THE EDUCATION LEVEL OF PARENTS ON STUDENTS' EDUCATION**

What are the effects of the education level of parents on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality? Please indicate by ticking your level of agreement.

Key: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Undecided, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
My parent helps me in my assignments at home					
My parent checks my books when I go back home to see what I was taught					
My parent consults with my teacher about my performance and also visits the school to know how am doing					
My parent talks to me about my academic performance					
My parent encourages me to listen to educative programs over the radio or TV					

SECTION D
EFFECT OF FAMILY SIZE ON STUDENTS' EDUCATION

What are the effects of family size on students' education in public primary schools in Yendi Municipality? Please indicate by ticking your level of agreement.

Key: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Undecided, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
I have many siblings in my family					
I experience a lot of distractions while studying at home					
I share reading materials with my siblings					
I share room with my siblings					
Foods are always not enough					

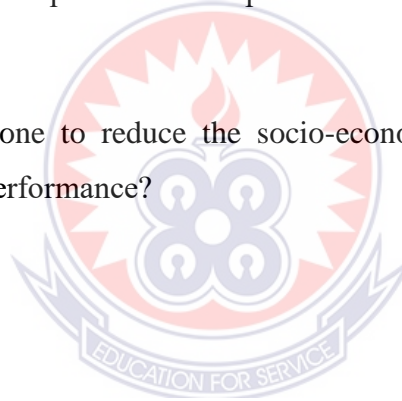


.....THANKS FOR YOUR COOPERATION.....

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEADTEACHERS

1. How do you think the parents' education level affect pupil's academic performance?
2. What are other factors affecting pupil's academic performance?
3. How does parents' socio-economic status affect pupil's academic performance?
4. How does the parent's degree in school involvement affect the pupil's academic performance?
5. What is the relationship between the parent's involvement and pupil's academic performance?
6. What should be done to reduce the socio-economic problems that hinder the pupils' academic performance?



APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE TO THE PARENTS

1. How does your education level affect the academic performance of your child?
2. How does your socio-economic status affect the academic performance of your child?
3. What are other factors affecting the academic performance of your child?
4. What is the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance?
5. How does your degree in school involvement affect academic performance of your child?
6. What should be done to reduce socio-economic problems that hinder the academic performance of your child?

