

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

It is now generally, accepted that it is human resources of a nation that ultimately determines the peace and character of its economic and social development. The education system constitutes the principal mechanism for the development of the necessary knowledge and skills. According to Harbison cited by Forojalla (1993) Human resources are passive course of production, human beings are the active agents who accumulated capital, exploit natural resources, build social economic and political organization and carry forward national development” Page 94 - 101. Clearly, a country which is unable to develop the knowledge and skills of its people and utilize the effectively in the national economy will be able to develop anything else.

The experiences of the United States of America, the former USSR, Japan and Great Britain in their development process provide concrete evidence which cannot be overlooked. The Japanese studies support studies in the United States of America and the former USSR that though in 1960, the value of the stock of education capital was 18% of the value of the stock of physical capital. It yielded proportionately greater returns (Forojalla 1993, p.110). Thus in most nations, it is strongly believed that the quantitative expansion of academic opportunities hold the basic key to national development. African countries are no exception. All the countries of the continent have committed themselves to the goal of universal primary education as far as resources can permit due to the

recognition of the development of every country which depends on its human resources for development.

Everyone regardless of his or her social class deserves to be educated according to his or her ability and potential because of the observation the education is great benefit to society in general and not just to specific individual who are educate. Schultz (1961), at the center of his address on Investment in Human Capital was of the idea that education is not only a form of consumption but is also an individually and productive population. Education is said to play a major role in economic development through the provision of skills and techniques designed to improve competencies. In the education act of 1961, “every child who has attained the school going age as determined by the Minister of Education shall attend a course of instructional as laid down by the Minister”.

To make realization of the academic dreams, the various governments put various structures in place. For example, during the time of President Kwame Nkrumah, he introduced the northern scholarship scheme which students in the northern and upper regions enjoyed. The 1992, Constitution of the Fourth Republic of Ghana (p. 21) made for a policy on education within two years of its coming into force, this led to the policy of free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE). It was realized that a participatory literate citizenry is the foundation of a democratic process, economic growth and social well being of a nation.

As students of education, I always become perturbed when student’s results are released and the performances are low. Again as inhabitants of Akwasiho till now and also who had her basic school at Akwasiho, I have a total concern for the total well being of the

place, more especially the academic aspect. Thus reason therefore motivated me to undertake this study.

Statement of the problem

It is quite regrettable that despite attempts by various governments to provide Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) we see many illiterate, semi - literates and children who should be in school but are on the street inspire of the seriousness of the problem, studies have been conducted in the district let alone Akwasiho in particular. This has been of much concern to all stake holders in education in the district. It is my intention to study this problem (cause that account for low academic performance in basic schools) that has given way to this research.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to find out the problems of high illiteracy rate among children in basic schools. It is also aimed at identifying the causes of high school drop out of children in basic schools. Moreover, the study will find out the causes of low academic performance of pupils and whether parents are interested towards the children education. Finally, the study will identify the knowledge base of parents towards the low academic performance of their pupils.

Research questions

The study therefore seeks to answer the following questions:

1. In there a relationship between family size and their children academic performance in Akwasiho?

2. Is it true that parent's socio - economic conditions have an influence on the academic performance of their children?
3. How does the children's academic performance?
4. Can family socialization affect children's academic performance?
5. Can rural urban dichotomy also have an influence on children's academic performance?
6. Can the perception on gender have any impact on children's academic performance?

Significance of the study

The research findings of the study will help the public to have a better insight into the cause of low academic performance of Junior High School (J.H.S) pupils. Moreover, this research will serve as valuable guide and a useful material for educational planners, policy makers in the district to find solutions to the causes of problems that account or low academic performance of pupils.

The significance of the study also rests on the fact that it will serve as a valuable material for academic purpose for generations to come. Again, the result may contribute to knowledge about the problem in the form of handbooks for those who are interested in helping in the eradication of this menace from the society.

Finally, the result will serve as base for any individual who may develop interest to further research into is area.

Delimitation

There are so many factors that affect the low academic performance of children in general. The area of the study is the Akwasiho circuit Junior High Schools. The target population of the research is confined to only student of Akwasiho Junior High School, a town in the Kwahu East District. However, I found it very crucial to concentrate on this study on the low academic performance of pupils which at present is becoming very common all over the world.

Limitations

The research should have been made to cover a wide area outside Akasiho in the Kwahu East District. This could not be done due to inadequate time and financial constraints, in other words, some of the respondents were unable to answer the questionnaire very well due to high rate of illiteracy and also the pupils also refused to contribute to the research questions for fear that they will make mistakes in their reportage. However, all these factors limited the work of me to supply extra questionnaire to other respondents to acquire detailed information for my finding.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Basically, we expect academic improvement to be positively related to academic performance. A lot of research has been done to explain what account for low academic performance of children. Some of the findings include family size, household wealth, family structure, parents' academic level and occupation and gender of the child.

Family size and children's academic performance

It is argued that the number of brothers and sisters had an influence on academic performance. Knodel and using a sample of 6,775 ever married women aged 15 to 49 years as the target population. They attempt to find out whether or not family size exerts a negative effect on children's academic performance. This was conducted against the background of the fact that in Thailand over the last two decades, the economic cost of child are largely the rather than a wider kinship network.

Knodel and Wongsith found a negative relationship between sibling size and academic performances. They argued that although family size clearly affect the children's education within the total the different subgroups of the may very within the different with the wealth level of the family resources, particularly material resources per child. Downey

(1995) studied the relationship between the number of siblings and children's academic performance in the United States of America. He used data from the National Education Longitudinal study of 1988 and random selection of students for various schools. He came to the conclusion that the availability of parental resources decreases as the number of siblings increase and those parental resources explain most of inverse relationship between the sibling's size and academic outcome.

Shavit and pierce (1991) studied the relationship between siblings size and extended families of three groups in Israel Ashkanazi Jews, oriental Jews and Muslims Arabs. They interviewed a sample size of 2,444 Jewish men born in 1954 but interviewed in 1980, 81 and 1931 Arab men born in 1954 and 19 inver60. The Israeli study showed that per the two Jewish groups (Ashkanazi and Oriental), the number of siblings has a negative on academic performance. This is so because among the Jews, the nuclear family has no other supportive agency. However, this pattern is not the same for Muslims whose social organization is based largely on the extended family and patrilineage (Humula). Among the Muslims the extended family plays an active supportive role vis-à-vis the nuclear family. The size of the nuclear family does not accept academic performance for Muslims in Israel, this suggests that for Muslims, when the nuclear family draws on the support of an extended kinship, its size it less important for the academic performance of children.

The united sates study show a that children from large families obtain less schooling on the average that children with fewer brother and sisters, this was because large families spread their resources (economic, cultural and effective) more thinly than families with fewer children, and so invest less money, time emotional, psychic energy and attention to

each child(blake,1989). Therefore from the study of the Israel Jews, there is a positive effect of small siblings size on its transition to secondary education, in other words while large families are disadvantaged in the economic performance process among the Jews, the family size has no significant effect on academic performance among Muslims.

Parent's socio Economic Status and children's academic performance

Research has show that parents' socio economic conditions have an influence on academic performance. Havemann and his associates (1991) studied the effect of family economic and circumstances in young adulthood and growing up in a family with more children on competition. They used a sample size of 1300 children, aged between 19 and 27years. They found that parent's income had an important effect on the children's education. Of particular interest they found that having a mother who works and contribute to family income also has a significance association with high school completion especially when the child is a teenage. The mother serves as a model and a source of inspiration. Downey (1995), cited above, also made similar findings.

Kalmijn (1994), studied the influence of mothers occupational influence status on children's academic performance. He questions, "if mothers are employed, do their occupational status have a significant effect on their children academic performance?". He found that, a one – point increase in mothers Socio – Economic Index (SEI) score, measured on a nine – point scale is associated with a 24 percent increase in the odds of entering and college and an 11 percent increase in odds of obtaining a bachelor degree.

Therefore, the influence of a mother's occupational status appears to be strong statically significant and independent of a father's occupation. Therefore, the substantial affects on employed mothers on their children's schooling are as strong as the influence of father's occupation dual learner families. The relative importance of parent's socio economic status persists across the schooling career. Singleman and Wojtkiewicz (1993) also found that socio economic causes have little effect on vocational training in Germany. This is due to the fact the in Germany; vocational tanning after high school is more expensive than college or university education. Therefore, families with low socio economic status found it difficult to see their children through, according to Havemnn noll (1991), fathers occupation was found to be positively and significant associated with children's academic performance,

Shavit and pierce (1991) found that the effects of fathers and mothers education for Askenazi are positive and significant. This is because their academic level becomes a challenge to both parents and children. Children strive harder to achieve what their parents had and above. The parents on the other hand, know the essence of education and so devoted their time, money and other resources to educate their children and see to their higher academic performance. Asrone and Mclanahan (1991) also cited that high aspiration of their parents associated with high aspiration of their children because parents transmit their aspirations to their children, counsel them and supervise them in their studies.

Havemann and associates (1991) cited above found that father's education was associated positively with the child's academic performance. Leibuvitzs (1974) research

result cited by Kalmiln (1994) noted that the influence of mothers education on school related outcome is stronger than that of fathers education. This is because an educated mother sets example for the children and she gives help in school related work. The reviews so far thus show that parent's education level which determines his socio economic status has a positive and significant influence on children's academic performance.

Effects of household structure on children's academic performance

It is reported that household structures have an influence on academic performance. Singleman and Wojtkiewicz (1993) studied the effect of the house hold structure on school performance and vocational training in Germany. The purpose of the study was to consider whether growing up with a single parents have a negative effect on academic vocational performance of children in Germany. They collected data through interview and class structure survey on person's age 18 and 19 years of age. This age restriction yielded a sample of 979 respondents. Similar research in America who concluded that Americans who grew up with one parents were likely to drop out of high school than those with both parents (Astone and McLanahan 1991, p.320) (Krein and Beller 1998, p.221-234) (Sandefur, McLanahan and Wojtkiewicz, 1992, p.999-1017).

They explained that single parent families have less economic resources to support their children than two parents families. They further explained that most single parent families consist of a single mother. Married fathers earned more and more hours than single mothers. Moreover, less income of divorced parents is not compensated for by either support of public assistance. While research about the effect of single parent family status in the united states of America concentrated on academic performance, academic level

become a challenge to both parents and children. Children strive harder to achieve what their parents had and above. The parent on the other hand knows the importance of education and so devotes their time, money and resources to educate their children and see to their higher academic performance.

Astone and McLanahan(1991) also cited that high academic aspirations of their children, because parents transmit their aspirations to their children, counsel them and supervise them in their studies. Havemann and associates (1991) cited above found that father education was associated positively and significantly with the child's academic performance. Leibuvitzs (1974) research cited by Kalmijn (1994) noted that the influence of mothers education on school related outcome is stronger than that of father education. This is because an educated mother sets example for the children and gives assignment which is school related work. The reviews, so far, show that parents academic level which determines his socio-economic status has a positive and significant influence on children's academic performance.

Family socialization and children academic performance

Several reports have it that family socialization has an influence on children's academic performance. Schickedan (1995) tried to find out whether it was true that despite the fact that school and teachers efforts are extremely important, conditions outside the school(e.g. family socialization) hold the key to increasing academic performance and academic performance substantially. He researched on Japanese and Taiwanese children in the first and fifth grades. He found out the children with secure attachment histories, when compared to the children with anxious histories, as most likely are toddlers do engage in

purposeful behaviors, to be deeply involved in activities, to be persistent and show enthusiasm. Therefore, toddlers and young pre-scholars with secure history are more accepting of adult suggesting for completing task. Toddlers with secure attachment are also more likely to obey than to disobey and tend not to destroy materials.

Again, children of authoritative parents typically were serious about their school work and are more competent cognitively than children reared by permissive parent. In other words, warm. Supportive and accepting parenting accompanied by high but appropriate alerting (monitoring) is associated with high performance in school pride and persistent in working on and completing tasks. Aspirations to complete high levels of education, specifically on Asian families. Mothers show more devotion towards their infants than most American mothers. Not surprising the incidence of secure attachment is high among Asian Americans, Japanese mothers are also extremely proactive, do far more than don'ts while other Asian are excellent examples of an inductive parent because they exert control through reasoning rather than forces.

Japanese women also show the child how to do something and expected the child to practice and cooperates with long hours of training. The child entered the classroom determined to achieve the ultimate. Korean mothers also teach their children to read before they enter school and they consider this extremely and important obligation. Moreover, studies of elementary age children indicate that help on homework given by Korean parents account for considerable variances in performance between Korean and Caucasian-American students. Therefore, early socialization is strong and positive in increasing academic performance.

Rural –urban dichotomy and academic performance

According to Knodel and Wengsith (1991) on children academic performance, the population they used to lived in both rural and urban areas. They found that children from rural household are far more likely to enter low secondary school than their urban counterparts, this result stems from the fact that in urban areas there exist good facilities, more qualified teachers among others in urban areas than in rural areas.

Gender and academic performance

Gender has an influence in children's academic performance. Knodel and Wongsith (1991) found out that, in Thailand parents' academic aspiration for sons are higher than for daughters. Shavit and pierce (1991) also found out that, education for the gender groups are dominated more by boys than girls. Gender discrimination in terms of religion also shows that Muslims cherish their sons more than their daughters as compared to Christianity where there is gender balance in the distribution of resources. Form the discussion, it can be concluded that academic performance is accountable for a lot of causes among which are socio-economic status of the family, household structure and family size.

Empirical review

It is worth emphasizing that the above cause's accounts for the low academic performance of children or students of various places were gotten from researches carried out by various scholars. They used population sample, size and sampling procedure which differed in one way or the other yet they had the above discussed causes common to their researchers. This research work is the same vein seeks to compare the empirical view of

scholars and see how for those causes applied to students in Akwasiho in the Kwahu East District of Eastern Region in Ghana. Knodel and Wongsith (1991) conducted a similar research on the topic at Thailand using a sample of 6,775 ever married women aged 15 to 49 as the target population. The above sample was taken from national education longitudinal study. Most of the respondents were literates and they used questionnaire throughout the research. They could have gotten different results if they had included unmarried people of the same target group.

Similarly, they used only literates in their research. They should have used illiterate and literates alike in their research. This research seeks to fill the gap. Stephenson also conducted a similar research in Apewosika and Amamoma in Cape Coast municipality in 1997. He targeted (120) within the age of 18 to 49 years. He used semi-literate as his respondents. Questionnaires and interview methods were used to gather his data. The things that he should have included students within a specific age range and should have designed different questionnaires for them to cross check with the parents. On the contrary however, I intend to use questionnaire and interview as the methodology. With regards to this research, the population constitutes students, parents and opinion leaders at Akwasiho.

Out of the population a sample of two hundred and forty (240) respondents comprising one hundred and twenty (120) students, 100 parents within the ages of 13 to 55 years and 20 opinion leaders. The students were randomly selected on a house to house basis until the required number was conducted. Opinion leaders such as pastors, assembly and heads of schools were also consulted for their opinion about the low academic

performance of pupils in basic schools in Akwasiho in the Kwahu east district of the Eastern Region.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter deals with the research methodology adopted for the study. This covers research design, population and sampling instruments, data collection producer and data analysis.

Research design

The study was a case study. It is intended for the study of low academic performance of pupils and its effects on the child's education in Akwasiho in the Kwahu East District of the Eastern Region of Ghana. According to Newman and Newman (1983) case study is defined as in-depth description of a simple person, Family or a social group. A case study is also defined as a detailed study of an individual conducted for the adjustment of the person who is the subject of the investigator (Traxier, 1916). From the description of what a case study is, I consider it beneficial to employ such research for this study.

Population and sampling

The target population is made up of 940 people. This comprises parents, pupils and opinion leaders. Due to the busy schedule of the people involved, I chose a sample size of about 240 people for the study. The sample comprises 120 low academic pupils, 100 parents and 20 opinion leaders, with such a number; I could conveniently obtain the necessary information. I visited the selected schools, the community and discussed the purpose of the study with individuals involved before carrying out the exercise. View if the people in the town were also sought.

Sampling procedure

The three basic schools in the town were selected on cluster random sampling basis. The thirty (30) students were randomly selected in basic six (6) to nine (9) from each class. The parents were selected on house to house basis until the required number was the questionnaire themselves were interviewed. With regard to the selection of the opinion leaders, such as pastors, assembly and unit committee members, teachers and heads of schools, random sampling was used to select twenty of them. The names of some of the

opinion leaders were written on pieces of paper put in a box and it was shaken to shuffle. After these, twenty names were randomly picked and leaders whose names were picked were served with the questionnaires to begin the project.

Research instruments

Structured questionnaires and interview guide were used as instrument for the data collection. Two categories of questionnaires were designed, one for students and the other for opinion leaders. Some of the parents were interviewed because I could not guarantee their ability to read and answer the questionnaires appropriately as the students and opinion leaders could do. Each of the questionnaires has two sections A and B. sections B was also design to illicit the main information from the respondent.

With regards to questionnaire to parents and opinion leaders, section A had 4 item on criminally data; section B had twenty (20) items in all. Item four to eight asks questions on the socio-economic status of the parents and opinion leaders. Item nine to fourteen asks questions on socio capital while item fifteen to twenty needed answers to self concept. Questionnaires for students also had thirteen items. Section B was the main data. Item one to five asks various questions on the one responsible for the students education, occupation, payment of school fees, level of education of payment and the ones whom the students are studying with an item six to ten asks questions on self concept of students and parents attitude towards them in school. It must be emphasized that both open and close ended question were set for the respondents thus students, parents and opinion leaders respectively. The open needed questions for on third of the questionnaire and they were used to seek various opinions from the students, parents and opinion leaders.

Close ended questions for two thirds of the questionnaire and they also used to seek specific responses which will intend to facilitate easy analysis of the data. In order to avoid ambiguities and other problems in the instruments, they were pre-tested on 20 people who did not form part of the chosen sample but who had similar characteristics as the sample.

Data collection procedure

I administered for questionnaire comprising of structured, unstructured, open and close ended questions to parents, opinion leaders, teachers and pupils. Due to time factor I was with the respondents and gave them thirty minutes to complete. In less than thirty minutes to complete. In less than minutes, the whole questionnaires were ready and I collected it at once. I later on assured the respondents that their responses would be confidential.

Data analysis

The study was intended to examine the causes that account for low academic performance of pupils in the basic schools. Simple frequency counts and percentages were used to analyze the data. The responses Strongly agree and Agree on one hand and Strongly disagree and Disagree on the other were regarded as positive and negative depending on the nature of the items in the questionnaire. The responses to the item were thus translated.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter deals with the analysis of data. This was done in two ways the first part analyses the data of the parents and opinion leader while the second part analyses the response of the students.

Analysis of Biographic Data

Table 1

Distribution of family size

Family size	Respondents	Percentage (%)
1 – 3	18	13.7
4-5	49	42.0
6 +	53	44.3
Total	120	100

From table 1, 53 respondents representing 44.2% with ages above 6 years grew up in large families. The average size of the family was about five times which is considered to be extremely large. This indicates that parent's inability to send their children to school is due to large family size. This has proven the research work carried out by Knodel and Wongsith (1991) in Thailand that family size clearly affects children's education with the total sample. Downey also came to the conclusion that the availability of parental resources decrease as the number of siblings increase.

Table 2

Distributions of parent's occupation

Occupations	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Farming	66	55
Teaching	6	6.7
Note at all	39	30.8
Others -	9	7.5
Total	120	100

From table 2, 66 respondents representing 55% were predominantly peasant farmers. This implies that the majority of the respondents were famers while others were working as semi-skilled workers. Considering their socio-economic status, their incomes were low and this suggests that poverty is prevalent in the town under study. This agrees with Downey (1995) that parental income has a great effect on children's education. However, my research disagrees with Singleman and Wojtkiewicz (1993) that socio-economic causes have little effect on education of children.

Table 3

Distribution of household structure of the respondents

Household	Respondent	Percentage(%)
Intact	20	27.8
Broken homes	100	72.2
Total	120	100

Table 3 shows that majority of the respondent grew up in broken homes. From the study, 100 respondents representing 72. 2% comes from broken homes who lived with their father or mother only or with other relatives. This study has shown that there was significant correlation between family structure and children academic performance. This is in agreement with earlier finding by Singleman and Wojtkiewicz (1995) that Americans who grew up in broken homes are likely to drop out of high school than those raised by intact homes. The children inability to attain higher education is due to the fact that most of the children lived with single parenthood.

Table 4

Religious denomination

Religion	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Christian	88	85.3
Islam	24	12.0
Traditional	8	2.7
Total	120	100

Respondents were asked whether religion has something to do with academic performance on the people. From table 4, 88 (85.3%) of the respondents were Christians. The implication is that the area under study is Christian dominated community. This disagrees with Stephenson's research work in 1987 in cape coast that the more religious the people in the community the higher the academic performance. Even though 100 percent of the people are religious, majority are having low academic performances.

Table 5

Distribution of parents' academic background

Level	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Elementary	28	30.1
Secondary	16	18.3
Post secondary	6	5.0
Tertiary	4	3.3
Not at all	66	43.3
Total	120	100

From table 5, it must be emphasized that 66 respondents representing 43.3% did not attend school at all. The analysis show that most of the respondents' parents, guardian and relatives were not educated at all while others had a little education. The reason may be that nobody was being observed as a role model. This study has shown that the higher the level of education of parents, the higher the level of their children's education. Children

strive harder in order to achieve what their parents had and beyond. The parents on the other had know the essence of education and so devote their time, money and other resources in educating their children and seeing to their higher academic performance.

Table 6

Distribution of payment of schools fees by parents

Reasons	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Extremely difficult	32	16.7
Difficult	76	73.3
Not difficult	12	10.0
Total	120	100

Respondents were asked whether they have difficulty in the payment of their school fees. From table 6, 76 respondents representing 73.3% had difficulty in the payment of their schools fees. Additionally besides the payment of schools fees, the respondents also said that there were other problems that prevented them from completing school. For example their parents were unable to afford to buy school uniform, books, sandals and other relevant materials. This suggests that the financial background of the parents accounted for the children's inability to achieve higher academic level.

Parents' attitude to education and their children's academic performance. Respondents were asked about parents' reaction towards them when they refused to go to school. Ninety three (77.5%) said parents were not worried while 22.5% responses gave

evidence that parents have negative attitude towards their children's , the more children's achieve higher education levels. This confirms the despite the fact that the school and teachers efforts are extremely important, condition outside school (family socialization) held the key to increase academic performance of the children. This research found, among others, that Taiwanese children of authoritative parents were serious about their school work and were much more competent cognitively than children reared by permissive parents. in other words, warm, supportive and accepting preventing accompanied by appropriate monitoring is associated with high performance in school.

Table 7

Parents' attitude towards absenteeism of their children

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Not worried	93	77.5
Worried	27	22.5
Total	120	100

Parents school experience and their academic performance

Table 8 shows whether the parents used to tell their children the benefits of education or not

Table 8

Benefit of education

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	26	21.7
No	94	78.3
Total	120	100

Respondents were asked whether parents used to tell them the benefits of education. From the table 8, 94 (78.3%) said “NO” while 26 (21.7%) said “yes”. This means that parents fail to tell their children the benefits of education as they themselves have little knowledge about the importance of education to individual and society.

Table 9

Distribution of Academic performance of parents

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Good	67	55.8
Average	30	25.0
Below average	23	19.2
Total	120	100

From the table 9, 67 b(55.8%) respondents said that their academic performance was good. 30 (25%) said it was average whiles 23 (19.2%) indicated that their academic performance was below average.

Table 10 shows the distribution of respondents distance from their home to school.

Table10

Distance of respondents from home to school

Distance	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Less than 1km	110	98.2
1km and more	10	1.8
Total	120	100

Respondents were asked about the distance from their homes to the schools when they are young. Table 10 shows that 110 respondents representing 98.3% have very short distances to cover (less than 1km) from their homes to school while 10 (1.8%) covered long distances which is more than 1km. this indicates that schools were within the reach of the respondents while in schools. The respondents' inability to attain higher education was due to distance from home to school but their parents' inability to pay their schools fees and provide them with the necessary materials. In conclusion it can be said that parental attitude may either retard or enhance children's academic performance. The more positive attitude of parents, the higher the possibility of high academic.

Biography of respondents

The following tables show the biography of the respondents

Table 11

Gender distribution of students

Gender	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	70	60
Female	50	40
Total	120	100

Respondents were asked about their gender. From table ii, majority of the respondents 70(60%) were males while 50 (40%) were females.

Table 12

Age distribution of respondents

Gender	Respondents	Percentage
10-12	20	18.3
13-15	41	32.5
16-18	59	49

Total	120	100
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From table 12, respondents between the ages of 16-18 were 59 (49.2%), which implies that most of the respondents were between the ages of 16-18 and as such, one is expecting more youth to be educated at this tender age.

Table 13

Place of birth of respondents

Place of birth	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Natives	93	77.5
Non-natives	27	22.5
Total	120	100

From table 13, 93 (77.5) which forms the majority were natives whilst 27 (22.5%) were not natives representing the minority of the respondents.

Table 14

Religious background of respondents

Religion	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Christian	78	60.5

Islam	39	39.3
Traditional	3	3.2
Total	120	100

From table 14, 78 (60.5%) which forms the majority of the respondents were Christians while 39 (36.3%) and 3 (3.2%) were part of the Islamic and traditional religion respectively.

Analysis of parents' attitude to education

Table 15

Parents Attitude towards their children's education

Attitude	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Not encouraging	80	61.7
Encouraging	40	38.3
Total	120	100

From table 15, 80 (61.7%) responded that their parents did not encourage them even when they refuse to go to school. They feel happy or somewhat because they may use them on their farms and other household chores. On the other hand, 40 (38.3%) responded that their parents do encourage them and use to tell them the benefits of education. Similarly, if

they refuse to go to school, their parents become unhappy. This shows that parents attitude towards their children's education is poor. This testifies that, the research work conducted by Sschickeddanz (1995) that the parents' poor attitude to education has significant influence on the children academic performance.

The number of children in the family and children's academic performance

I wanted to find out the number of children the family has and its effect in the children education. Table 17 illustrates the family size and its effect on academic performance.

Table 16

The distribution of family size of the students

Children	Respondent	Percentage(%)
1-2	22	18.4
3-4	67	55.8
5-6	31	25.8
Total	120	100

Table 17 illustrates that, respondents who have brothers and sisters between three and four were 67 representing 55.8% being the majority. This shows that majority of the respondent are having brothers and sisters between 3 and 4 who are in school. This

suggests that the number of children invariably affects the academic performance of the children. This study has shows that there was significant correlation between number of children in the family and children's academic performance. This is in agreement with earlier findings by Knodel and Wongsiths (1991) in Thailand that family size clearly affect children's education. Downey (1995) also came to conclusion that the availability of parental resource decrease the number of sibling increase.

Parents' education and their children's academic performance

Table 17

Parents' educational background

Level	Respondent	Percentage (%)
Elementary	37	31.2
Secondary and above	20	16.3
Not at all	63	52.5
Total	120	100

The respondents were asked to indicate the level of educations reached by the parents. From table 18, it must be emphasized that those who did not attend school at all were 63 representing 53.5% which formed the majority of the respondents. This shows that the academic level of students' parents is very low. This confirms earlier research conducted by Shavit and pierce (1991) who found that the effects of fathers and mothers education for Ashkenazim are positive and significant.

This is because their academic level becomes a challenge to both parents and children. Children tend to strive harder to achieve what their parents had and beyond. The parents on the other hand, know the essence of education and so devoted their time and money and other resources in educating their children and seeing to higher academic performance. This goes on to confirm that wealthy parents have the chance of educating their children more than parents who are poor.

Table 18

Distribution of respondents by occupation of parents

Occupation	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Farming	73	60.8
Teaching	17	14.2
Others	10	8.3
Not at all	20	16.7

Total	120	100
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The respondents were asked to indicate the actual occupation of their parents. From table 19, 73 out of 120 respondents representing 60.8% said their parents are peasant farmers. This analysis indicates that the area under study is basically a farming community. This study agrees with the research work conducted by Downey (1995) and Kalmijn (1994) that parents occupational status has significant correlation on children's academic performance.

In conclusion, it has become evidently clear from foregone analysis that, irregular and low income generating occupation of parents, large family sizes, poor parental attitude to their children's education have been found to be the contributing causes affecting the low academic performance of pupils in Akwasihu in Kwahu East District.

Discussion of findings

This research question ask the extent to which distribution of family size influence the low academic performance of pupils is analyzed in table 1, the table shows that majority of children who are having ages between 6+ representing 44.2% are unable to attend school due to the large size of the family. This goes to affirm the research's work carried out by Knodel and Wongsiths (1991) in Thailand that family size clearly affects children education with the total sample.

Downey also came to the conclusion that the availability of parental resources decrease as the number of siblings also increase and this also goes on to prove that the

distribution of the size of the family also contribute to low academic performance of pupils in the basic schools. Again, it was found out that, socio –economic status (occupational status) of parents also influences the academic performance of pupils negatively. From table 2, 66 respondents representing 55% were predominantly peasant farmers. This implies that majority of the respondents were farmers and considering their socio –economic status, their incomes were low and this suggest that poverty is prevalent In the town under study. This agrees with Downey (1995) that parental income has a great effect on children’s education. However, my research disagrees with Singleman and Wojtkiewicz (1993) that socio –economic causes have little effect on education of children.

In another respect, the study has shown that there was significant correlation between family structure and children’s academic performance. From table 3, it was observed that 100 respondent representing 72.2% lived in broken homes with their father or mother only relatives. This agrees with earlier finding by Singleman and Wojtkiewicz (1993) that Americans who grew in broken homes are likely to drop out of high school than those raised by intact homes. The children inability to attain higher education is due to the fact that most of the children lived with single parents.

Another area of great concern to me was the influence of family socialization on children’s academic performance. Schickedanz (1995) found out that children of authoritative parents were tropically serious about their school work and are more competent cognitively than children reared by permissive parents. In other words, warm, supportive and accepting parenting accompanied by high but appropriate alerting (monitoring) is associated with high performance in school. Moreover, a study of

elementary age children indicates that help on home work given by Korean parents accounts for a considerable variance in performance between Korean and Caucasian American Students. Therefore, early socialization is strong and positive in increasing academic performance.

Rural –urban dichotomy also poses a challenge to children’s education. According to Knodel and Wongsith (1991), they found out that children from rural household are far more likely to enter lower secondary school than their urban counterparts. The general perception here is that, children from the rural areas lack so many educational facilities to improve upon their counter parts in the urban centers. We must also not lose sight of genders influence on the education of the child. Knodel and Wongsith (1991) found out that in Thailand parents academic aspirations for sons are higher than for their daughters. Shavit and Pierce (1991) also found out that education for the groups is dominated more by boys than girls.

From the discussions, it has been observed that, drastic measures have to be put in to place to curb the causes of low academic performance of pupils in the basic schools especially if not in the present then in the future. Numerous studies have come to support the idea that parents’ income influence their children’s growth and educational attainment significantly. For children of parents of higher socio-economic status, do not only have greater access to education, better nourished, better prepared in position to achieve higher educational attainment than children from low socio-economic groups.

It must be said that research has found out that poor parents give birth the more. The irony here is that the idea of more children does not need success. Rather siblings' size has found to be one of the factors that account for differences in children's educational attainment (Downey 1995). The reason is further explained in Blake's resources dilution model. The model posits that parental resources are finite and additional children dilute the total quality of resources any child receives, which in turn decrease their educational output and causes their low academic performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introductions

The final chapter gives a summary of the relevant features discussed In the study. It concludes with the findings of the study and makes suggestions to how low academic performance of pupils at the basic education level can be improved and sustained.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to find out the causes that influence low academic performance of pupils in Akwasiho in the Kwahu East of the Eastern Religion. Before the research was conducted, there was a review of the related literature on the various variables including family size, household structures parents' academic level and occupation among others. Based on the variables, research questions were formulated and I designed questions for the respondent. I used percentage and simple frequency in the analysis of the data.

This study has shown that more positive parents attitude towards their children's education the higher their academic performance. This confirms the finding of Schickedenz (1995). Secondly, the study affirmed that the ability to pay school fees is strong and significant factor in determining higher academic performance of pupils. The third research questions were whether or not parents education was a factor of determine children's education. This confirms earlier research conducted by Shavit and Pierce (1991) who found that the effects of fathers and mothers education for Ashkenazim are positive

and significant. The next research questions were that whether or not there is correlation between the numbers of children's academic performance.

This study further establish further established that the number of children in the family affects the children's education. This confirms earlier finding of Knodel and Wongsith (1991) in Thailand. Additionally, family structure has insignificant correlation of children academic performance. This confirms Singleman and Wojtkiew (1993) earlier finding in Americans that those who grew up with only one parent are likely to drop out of high school than those raised by two parents.

Conclusion

This part is an attempt to give possible interpretation of the findings made by this research. This research found that both fathers and mothers education influence the academic performance, their children were also affected with low academic performance. Because of their low academic performance, they were unable to secure lucrative jobs. This implies that poverty level is high and children could not get financial assistance. The conclusion that can be drawn from this is that because of parents academic level, they ended up in low paying jobs.

As their incomes were low, they cannot finance their children's education. Traditionally, fathers are responsible for the upkeep of their children whatever the child may be, the father has to accept responsibility. However, most of the fathers have shirked out their responsibilities leaving the children to their own fate with regard to the issue of education. This is the reasons why family structure has influence the academic

performance of pupils in Akwasiho. Additionally I found that there is a relationship between family size and academic performance.

Even though the extend family systems makes it imperative for the people in the extended family and other wealthy people to cater for some of the family members education, little efforts could be seen because of the large family size, this has contribution to low academic performance of pupils in Akwasiho.

Recommendations

In attempt to reduce or eradicate the problem of low academic performance in Akwasiho the following recommendation were made.

1. The opinion leaders should establish academic fund to help needy but brilliant students to further their education.
2. The District Education Office should provide enough teaching and learning materials in schools.
3. Counseling service should be provided for the children at school.
4. Government should put up schools, provide equipment and materials for deprived communities and materials for deprived communities in the district. Government should enact laws restricting children in the study area from engaging in any form of trading. This will keep children in school.

5. The district assembly should put measures in place so that needy students get scholarship to further their education. The assembly should enact in trading or selling after school.

Suggestions for future research

Though the research questions posed at the beginning of study have been thoroughly dealt with, there are still more reasons for further investigation of some issues and new areas which cropped up during the research. The research covered only the pupils of Akwasiho Presby Junior High School. It is thus suggested that further researchers would extend their study to cover other perception of parents, towards the low academic performance of their children could be improved.

Finally, a fellow up research needs to be conducted to crosscheck whether parents, stakeholders and opinion leaders need to make provisions in improving the low academic performance of pupils in the basic schools instead of pushing them to labour.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

University of Education, Winneba

Institute for educational development and extension. Questionnaire for students/

Pupils

This questionnaire is intended to find out causes that account for low academic performance of basic schools in Akwasiho in Kwahu East of Eastern Region of Ghana. It is purely an academic study and you are assured of confidentiality. May you please answer the following question. Thank you.

Instruction: please tick (☐) against the one which applies

1. Sex : Male (☐) female (☐)

2. Age (in years)
3. Birth : native () non-native ()
4. Religion : Christianity () Islam () traditionalist ()
- Others (please specify)
- Not at all ()

Section B

MAIN DATA

5. Who is responsible for your education?
- Both parents ()
- Father only ()
- Mother and step father ()
- Father and step mother ()
- Other specify
6. What work does on responsible for your education do?
- Farming ()
- Teaching ()
- Driving ()
- Others (please specify)
- Not at all ()

7. How do you find payment of school fees?
- Extremely difficult ()
- Very difficult ()
- Difficult ()
- Somewhat difficult ()
- Not at difficult ()
8. What level of education did the one responsible for you reach?
- Elementary school level ()
- Secondary school level ()
- Post secondary school ()
- University ()
- Not all ()
9. With whom are you staying?
- Both parents ()
- Father only ()
- Mother only ()
- Mother and step father ()
- Father and step mother ()
- Other specify
10. How many siblings do you have?
11. How many of them are in school?.....

12. If not all your siblings are in school why were you given the chance to go to school?

.....

13. what do you do at home after closing from school?.....

14. Do you find going to school to school enjoyable?

Yes () No ()

Give reason for your answer in 14 above

15. Do your parents encourage you to learn at home? Yes () No ()

16. How do your parents feel when you refuse to go to school?

Very happy () not happy () happy ()

not at all () somehow happy ()

17. What do you want to do after school?

.....

Appendix B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS/OPINION LEADERS

This questionnaire is intended to find out causes that account for \low academic performance of basic schools in Akwasiho in Kwahu East District of the Eastern Region of Ghana, it is purely an academic study and you are assured of confidentiality. May you please answers the following questions. Thank you.

Instruction: Please tick (✓) against the one which applies.

1. Sex : male () female ()

2. Age (in years).....

3. Birth : native () non-native ()

4. Religion :

Christianity () Islam () Traditionalist () others (please specify)

..... Not at all ()

Section B

5. With whom did you live when you were about 16 years old?

Both parents ()

Father only ()

Mother only ()

Mother and step father ()

Father and step mother ()

Other specify

Local

6. Considering where you live during your childhood, what did you think of it? Large

village () big town () small town () city ()

Distance

7. In your childhood, what was the distance from your home to the nearest school?
(please state in km)

Socio economic status

8. What level of education did you attain?
.....
9. What level of education did your father attain?
.....
10. What level of education did your mother attain?
.....
11. What was father's occupation?
.....
12. What was your mother's occupation?
.....

Social capital

13. When I was young my parents or guardian used to tell me the benefits of education.
Very true () not true () true () not at all () somewhat
true ()

Appendix C

Response to open-ended items

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

1. Because I am the only child of my family ()
 Because I am academically good ()
 Because my parents have money ()
 Because my parents know the essence of education ()
2. I go to farm ()
 I do my homework ()
 I help my mother in the kitchen ()
 I go to market to sell ()
 To play football ()
 I watch T.V ()
 I do not do anything ()
3. Because my father doesn't give me money to school ()
 Because I don't have school uniform ()
 Because my father find it difficult to pay my school feed ()
 Because my parents do not encourage me ()
 Because my parents provide me with all the necessary materials ()
 Because I am academically good ()
4. Doctor () Lawyer () Teacher () Pastors () Manager ()
 Minister () Director () Pilot () Soldier () Chief ()
 Police ()