

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC SELF EFFICACY AND SELF-ESTEEM ON
SCHOOL DROP OUT INTENTION AMONG JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS IN THE AHAFO ANO SOUTH WEST DISTRICT

BY

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This thesis submitted to the Department of Educational and Psychology of the
Faculty of Educational Foundations, College of Educational Studies, University
of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of
Master of Philosophy degree in Educational Psychology.

DECEMBER 2024

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature..... Date.....

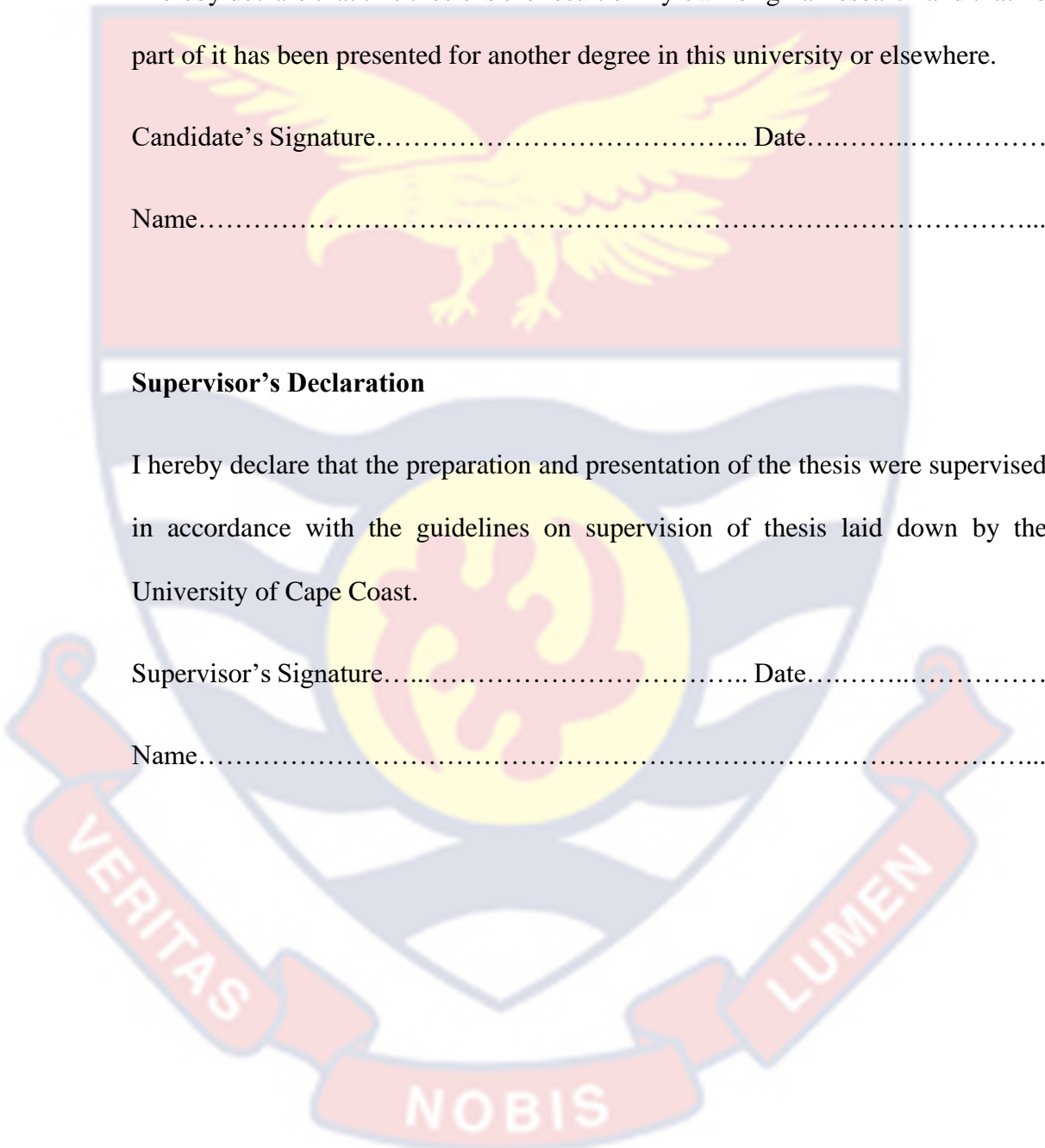
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Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

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ABSTRACT

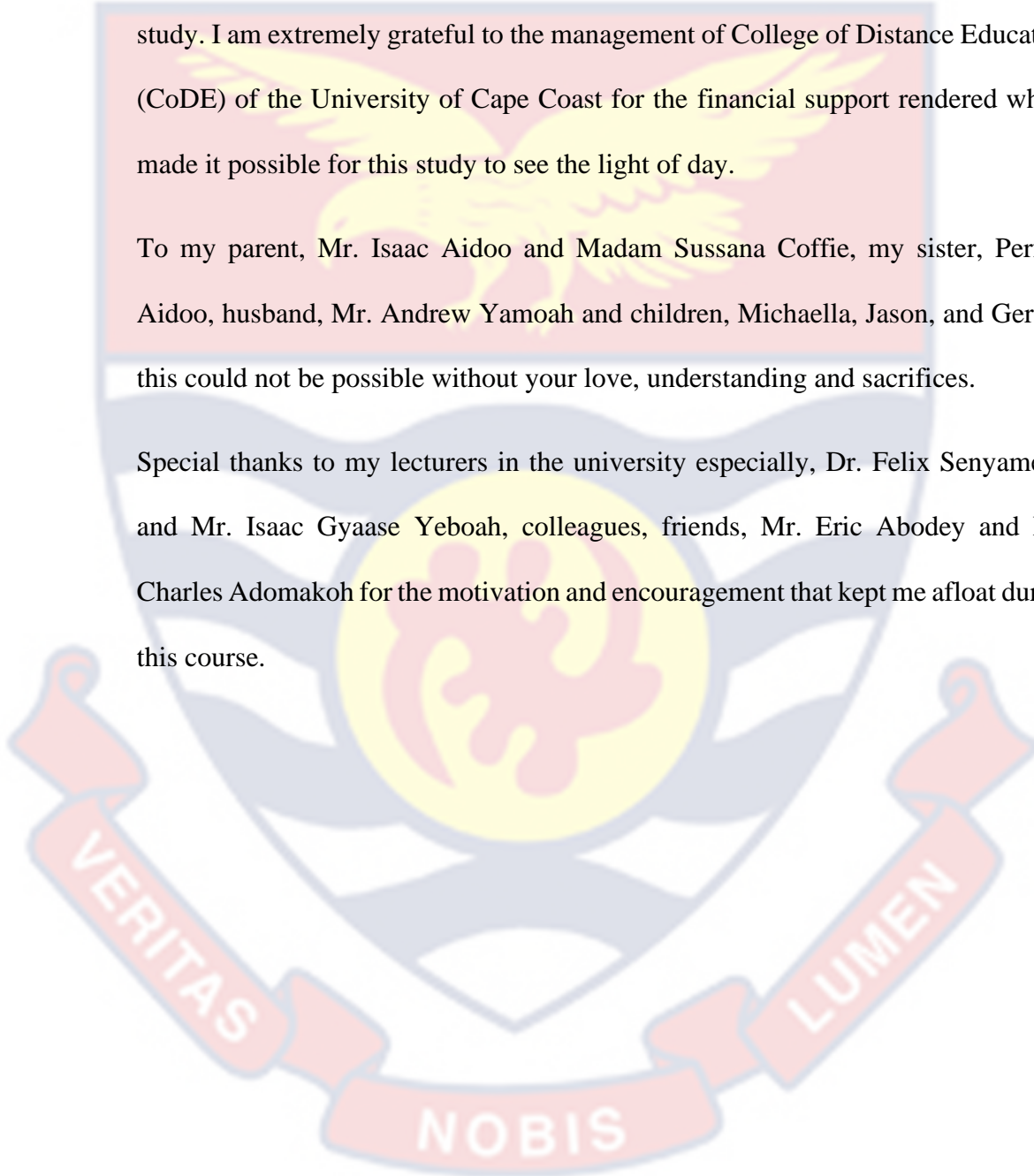
The purpose of the study was to investigate influence of academic self-efficacy and self-esteem on school dropout intention among junior high school students in the Ahafo Ano South West District of Ghana. All public junior high school students in the Ahafo Ano South West District made up the target population of this investigation. 291 selected form two students from five clusters or circuits comprised the sample size. The quantitative approach using a correlational study design was employed in this study. Questionnaire which was the main instrument for data collection. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations as well as independent sample t-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient with the Statistical Package for Service Solution (SPSS). The outcome of this investigation proved that junior high school students in the Ahafo Ano South West District have high levels of academic self-efficacy and self-esteem but low levels when it comes to school dropout intention. This investigation revealed that there was no gender difference in academic self-efficacy, self-esteem and school dropout intention. Furthermore, it was found in the investigation that there was a significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and school dropout intention as well as a significant relationship between self-esteem and school dropout intention among participants used. It was therefore, recommended that teachers and parents who are major stakeholders in the education of students endeavor to help raise the academic self-efficacy and provide students with unconditional support, feeling of safety and emotional attachment to help raise the self-esteem of students since these variables have the potential of impacting the school dropout intention of students.

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DEDICATION

To my lovely husband, Mr. Andrew Yamoah and children Michaela, Jason, and Gerald.





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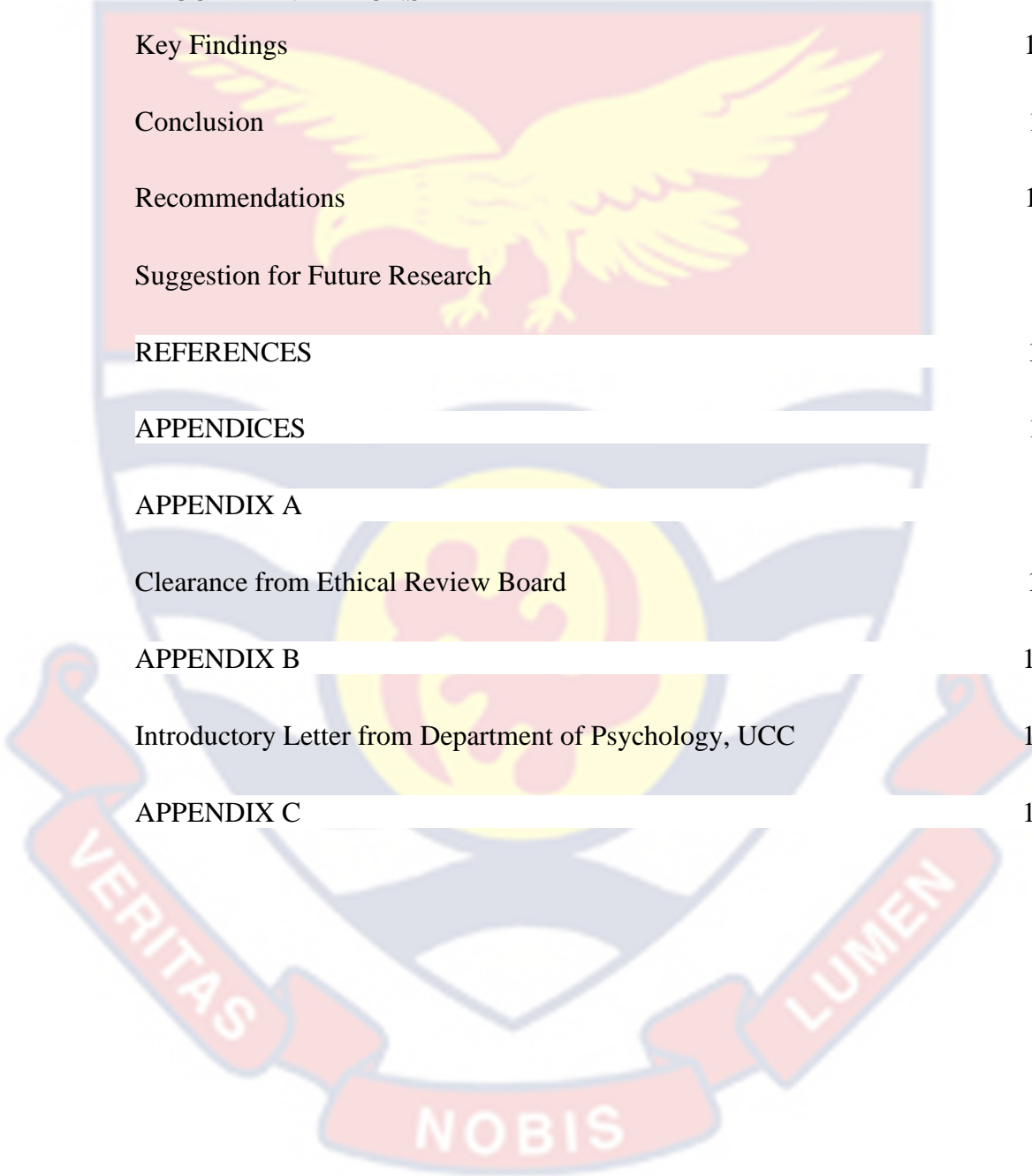
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Globally, education has been seen among the keys to achieving prosperity, knowledge, and self-preservation. Education provides individuals with opportunities to thrive as well as an understanding of morality, tenacity, personality, and dignity. Education contributes to a more secure, productive, more successful, and environmentally sustainable society, while also promoting social, economic, and cultural advancement, tolerance, and collaboration across borders, (Agbedahin, 2019). Although to a large extent, the development of a country depends on modernized infrastructure that includes dams, roads, telecommunication services, ports, and so on, to some degree, education is recognized to be a major predictor of economic and social advancement. It has been proven that high-quality and suitable education and learning can unlock opportunities to alleviating hardship, long term growth, equity, justice, and the inclusion of society's underprivileged and vulnerable groups (Nnabuo & Asodike, 2012). Tagoe (2014) asserted that much of a country's development depends on adequate investment in the human resources, especially, the children and youth of the country. This, therefore, makes it expedient for the country to develop innovative ways to ensure children and youth attend school for the appropriate amount of time so they can learn the necessary information, skills, and abilities. There has been a paradigm shift from education being a privilege to some groups of children to it being considered a fundamental human right to all children who are old enough to attend school. According to the Sustainable Development

Goal 4 (SDG 4) of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), there is an aim to make sure an inclusive and quality education that promotes possibilities for everyone to continue learning by the year 2030. Of primary interest is the need to make sure that all children, both boys and girls, receive a free, unbiased, as well as primary and secondary education of the highest caliber that leads to effective and beneficial learning outcomes. Through the establishment of new educational policies and techniques, several organizations have struggled to promote education. Among such organizations are; United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (Wiseman & Anderson, 2014) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Successive governments of Ghana have put varied measures in the form of reforms and policies in place all in line to ensuring that all school-age children, regardless of gender, gain quality education. There was the introduction of the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) which aimed to help reduce poverty by way of creating a learning culture and improving Ghana's human resource, (Tagoe, 2014). The Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education Programme (fCUBE) was implemented to create the policy structure, methods and initiatives necessary to ensure that all children of school age get free and mandatory basic education, (Nudzor, 2013; Nkrumah, Zittoun, Buchanan, & Fischer, 2018).

The capitation grant which is a per capita allocation of financial resources to school was introduced to take care of the additional fees and expenses for extra cost like exams, management of facilities, security fees, games, and sports which

parents had to pay as school fees for their children, (Adu-Ababio, Osei, & Pirttilä, 2016; Nashiru, 2017).

To increase school enrolment, attendance and retention, the Ghana School Feeding Program (GSFP), was started in order to provide pupils in public schools and kindergarten among the most disadvantaged communities within the nation with one daily nourishing meal, (Atta & Manu, 2015) . The number of students attending junior high and primary school has increased as a result of these initiatives (Agbozo, Atitto, & Abubakari, 2017). Irrespective of these policies and strategies put in place to ensure every child has a safe, formal, quality education and access to lifelong learning, some students are not able to finish their schooling. Owing to a number of factors, many students are forced to drop out of school while others never have the opportunity to go in the first place. Chirtes (2010) asserted that, globally, a major problem faced by educational systems is the dropping out of school.

School dropout is someone who leaves school before the last year of the educational level at which he or she is enrolled. School dropout in education occurs when a pupil fails to complete an educational course irrespective of the fact that he/she has the capacity to do so. Dropping out of school without completing have enormous repercussions on people, organizations and the general population. Apart from the lost time, private expense, and probable psychological damage for the individual, dropouts experience a lasting impact in the manner of increased marginalization and unfavorable fallouts in the job market (Ghignoni, Croce & d'Ambrosio, 2019). On rare occasions do pupil who have dropped out of schools

achieve success in life because it reduces an individuals' chances of securing a job in a cooperate world. Though students do not necessarily learn everything about life in a school, schools have been identified as a major source of the socialization process. Not only does dropping out of school cause failure in social integration, it equally hinders an individual's opportunity to succeed in life (Chirtes, 2010).

Data from the UNDP indicates that Ghana is on track to meeting the SDG4 of ensuring universal primary education (UNDP, 2015). However most educational indicators in Ghana shows that the proportion of pupils graduating from junior high school is still below average, (Ansong & Alhassan, 2016). The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) performed the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey Six (MICS6) in 2017/2018 with the help of numerous stakeholders and found that 7% of children who should be in junior high school are not. According to the report, elementary and junior high school completion rates are 71% and 83%, respectively. Quite a great deal of time and effort is given to encouraging pupils to enroll in school, but very little is put into encouraging them to finish junior high school. Little to no study has been done on the difficulties that learners deal with in finishing school.

Several factors account for students dropping out of school. The determining factors of dropout are numerous and intricate with limited agreement on exactly what combination of characteristics is most crucial. To give one example, Tinto (as cited in Sosu & Pheunpha, 2019) crucial student integration model proposed an extensive series of risk factors spanning students' pre-entry qualities, ambitions, and dedications, in addition to academic and interpersonal interactions at university. Chirtes (2010), grouped the causes of dropout into three,

namely; personal factors, family and school environment related factors. The personal factors include; attention deficit hyperactive disorder, memory deficiency, low learning abilities, low level of self-efficacy, motivation and lack of interest. The family factors include, death of parent(s), parental lack of interest, parental neglect and divorce. Furthermore, the school environment related factors are school adjustment failure, repetition, discipline issues, violence in schools, and confrontations (with teachers and classmates) and gender and ethnic discrimination. Similar to chronic truancy, academic failure, bullying and fear of certain teachers can contribute greatly to dropout. Children from poor socioeconomic backgrounds, the marginalized are more inclined to leave school early.

Gender inequality remains a problem in Ghana that has been unresolved for quite some time, especially in rural Ghana. Differences in gender remains a major issue in that, some children, especially girls, do not complete the full cycle of basic education. Engagement in early sex/marriage, poverty and pregnancy happened to be one of the main reasons why girls leave school early, (Murphy-Graham, Cohen & Pacheco-Montoya, 2020). Pregnancy frequently puts an end to the educational careers of many girls, largely through the girls withdrawing from school or by being expelled from school with little to no possibility of returning after giving birth. In Ghana, the age range for junior high school is between about 11 years to 16 years. Data from the Ghana Health Service District Health Information Management System (DHIMS, 2021), indicates that between 2016 and 2020, about 13,444 pregnancies occurred in teenagers between the ages of 10 and 14, with Ashanti region recording 2,165 which happened to be the region with the highest cases.

There is the likelihood that a greater percentage of these pregnant girls will drop out of school.

A major factor accounting for school dropout in the Ahafo Ano South West District is the involvement of children in socioeconomic activities like illegal mining and the commercial driving of tricycles. The Ahafo Ano South-West District which is situated in the Ashanti region of Ghana is endowed with abundant arable land, hence making agriculture the dominant sector in the district's economic activities. According to the District Medium -Term Development Plan (2014-2017), illegal mining (galamsey), has become a new rampant socioeconomic activity in the district. Azumah, Baah and Nachinaab (2021) asserted that children who are made by their parents to engage in illegal mining (galamsey), and other economic activities drop-out of school commonly in areas where the activity is predominant. These children see this activity (illegal mining), as financially lucrative and hence drop out of school in pursuit of the activity.

Over the past few years, research has accumulated facts that suggest school dropout should be considered a continuous process as opposed to a single instance, with dropout marking the conclusion of a protracted progression of academic separation and failure that often initiates in early childhood, frequently prior to children reaching school, (Rumberger & Rotermund, 2012; Cornell, Gregory, Huang & Fan, 2013; Ogresta, Rezo, Kožljan, Paré, & Ajduković, 2021). This long-term perspective has greatly improved our comprehension of the causes of dropout and indicated important ramifications for the early detection and the avoidance of disengagement from school. Determining factors that are risky and safeguarding

against for both dropout intentions and actual dropout is therefore essential to understanding and preventing school dropout and its long-term effects.

The conscious and expressed desire to leave school or to stop studying is referred as a dropout intention. Ozaralli and Rivenburgh, (2016) argued that key antecedents of actual behavior are pupils' intentions. Intentions are mental states where a person instructs themselves to exhibit a certain behavior or to achieve a specific result (Webb & Sheeran, 2006). Behavioral Intentions are generally understood to be mental states that represent an individual's willingness to undertake a specific action and dedication or encouragement in order to execute a behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen, 1991; Webb & Sheeran, 2006; Gollwitzer, 2012). Several distinct types of behaviors have been predicted by employing intentions, including purchasing choices, reducing weight, smoking, betting and driver behavior. Bean (as cited in Woods 2016), asserted that intentions to quit school have a significant direct impact and account for the greatest percentage of the differences in actual attrition behavior. These results are in agreement with a variety of theoretical models intended to describe and envision human behavior such as the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Mindset Theory of Action Phases.

Although many youths are successful in high school, there is still an ongoing concern for the increased number of students who choose to leave the system before graduating. Past research has focused on background and school-related characteristics of the dropout. The factors identified in the past are relatively static, have the potential to impact learning and need to be studied. Furthermore,

there is mounting evidence that a number of factors, including poor self-confidence in academics, poor cognitive educational attainment, low educational goals, unruly conduct in school, lacking a feeling of belonging at school, the absence of school colleagues, school abandonment, and low socioeconomic status, all increase the risk of actual school dropout, (Samuel & Burger, 2020).

Academic self-efficacy has been discovered to be a strikingly constant determiner of school dropout intention among dropped out students. Peguero and Shaffer (2015) affirmed that an increase in academic self-efficacy can enhance scholastic advancement and achievement, in addition, reduce the likelihood that students will drop out.

Self-efficacy is a person's assessment of their potential and capacity to carry out the measures necessary to achieve particular goals (Drnovšek, Wincent & Cardon, 2010). As a result, it can be construed as a psychological tool that makes it easier to handle several types of responsibilities. Self-efficacy functions by means of having an impact on the mental, emotional, motivational, and decision-making processes. It has an impact on whether one thinks positively or negatively, in ways that are beneficial to oneself or ones that are detrimental to oneself. Beliefs about self-efficacy influence the desires of individuals, ambitions and expected outcomes as well as their resilience when faced with of challenges and obstacles, (Samuel & Burger, 2020). Additionally, these ideas influence how people view possibilities and obstacles. The more challenging objectives people set to accomplish and the more thoroughly they are committed to them, the more strongly they believe in their

own efficacy, (Bandura & Wood, 1989). In the light of this, perceived self-efficacy could have a relationship with both intended and actual dropout.

In the social sciences, the premise that self-esteem affects behavior as well as the proposition that elevating one's sense of self-worth can lead to more productive and socially desirable behaviors have long been the core concepts. Cordova and Steiker (2011) defined self-esteem as the feelings or attitude that refer to the emotional experiences of the subject upon perceiving and evaluating his own attributes and behaviors. The idea that possessing a high sense of self-esteem is believed to match and foretell socially desirable behavior and successful adjustment is greatly oversimplified. It is expected that deviant behavior will be linked to low self-esteem.

A student's psychological well-being which is characterized by affective components such as academic self-esteem and behavioral indicators such as school dropout have been regarded as indicating school-related psychological health (Perez, 2012). Self-esteem is described as a broad assessment of one's own importance and worth that steadily grows during childhood and adolescence and then stabilizes at the early stages of adulthood, (Bianchi et al., 2021). Studies using Rosenberg's model from 1965 have revealed that self-esteem is comprised of positive and negative components, acting as two complementing dimensions. (Boduszek, Hyland, Dhingra, Mallett, & differences, 2013). Positive academic self-esteem (satisfaction with the self) can be taken into consideration as a positive indication of psychological wellness at school, due to the fact that it prevents depression and anxiety, as well as being positively related to school involvement

and academic achievements. In contrast, during adolescence, having low academic self-esteem (being dissatisfied with oneself) is associated with poor outcomes for development which includes academic failure and dropout, mental diseases, depression and anxiety.

It is crucial to identify the psychological and social elements that first contributes to dropout intentions before ultimately leading to a dropout. Vijeila (2019) did a qualitative investigation following an interpretative phenomenological analysis research methodology on the underlying causes of self-efficacy beliefs of persistent high school dropouts using seven distinct individuals that reflects a purposeful selection of versatile dropouts. The objective of the study was to build knowledge by examining the essence of the phenomenon of leaving school and coming back through the eyes of individuals who traversed through it. Liao, Edlin and Ferdenzi, (2014) conducted a quantitative descriptive survey to study the relationships between the following variables: self-efficacy for self-regulated learning and self-efficacy for academic achievement, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and college persistence or re-enrollment, it was found that self-efficacy for academic achievement was unable to determine persistence directly.

There has been a recent upsurge in public and professional awareness of the fact that academic self-esteem and academic self-efficacy ought not to be disregarded if we intend to effectively deal with issues like school dropout, dropout intention, re-entry, alcohol abuse and academic performance (Klassen & Usher, 2010). It is against this background that this study intended to look into the

influence of academic self-efficacy and self-esteem on school dropout intention among Junior High School students in Ahafo Ano South West district.

Statement of the Problem

The Government of Ghana's policy direction regarding basic education has turned out to be influenced by the universality and inclusion principles and supported by an approach based on right during the last two decades. According to Braimoh (2010), the fCUBE program, school feeding, free uniforms, and free sandals are just a few of the interventions that have enhanced accessibility and enrolment rates, particularly at the basic level of schooling. Even though there has been a recent increase in Ghana's basic school enrollment, the country still faces substantial difficulties attributable to a high rate of dropout, (Adam, Adom & Bediako, 2016).

With regard to policymakers, educational leaders, parents, and communities in Ghana, the problem of high school dropouts continues to be an issue of worry. A study conducted by Sasu (2021) found out that as of the year 2020, 265,188 children who are old enough to go to basic school had dropped out of school in Ghana, compared to the year 2019 which recorded 35,432, this was an astronomical rise. Furthermore, according to the survey conducted by the MICS6 in 2017/2018 by the GSS, about 29% of boys and 40% of girls are susceptible to the risk of dropping out of junior high school in Ghana. The Ghana Education Fact Sheets 2020, asserted that the Ashanti region of Ghana is one of the regions with the lowest rate of school dropouts of about 7%. Although the Ahafo Ano South West District (AASWD) is situated in the Ashanti region, the district has a school

dropout rate of 12.3% which is greater than the region's average dropout rate, according to a report by the Ministry of Education (2020). This high dropout rate is possibly as a result of the low socioeconomic status of the people in the district, teenage pregnancy, engagement in illegal mining and commercial motorbike operations. That notwithstanding, some dropout students take advantage of policies such as the GES Girls Re-entry policy and return to school. In spite of the reentry policy in education which enables pregnant school girls to reenter to school in order to complete their education as part of the drive to eradicate the gender imbalance in education, the education of school girls who drop out as a result of pregnancy or other factors have not been fully achieved. The decision to leave school is not only a hasty one made by learners; instead, it is the product of a process of development that evolves over time and completes with the learner leaving. The learners' plans to drop out of high school are seen as a serious social issue in addition to being an educational one.

The majority of research on dropouts has usually concentrated on preventing dropping out and the variables that lead to dropouts (White & Kelly, 2010), and the consequences of school dropout in the foreseeable future. Adam et al., (2016) suggested that the main reasons for dropout in the Asunafo South District are poverty, child labor, teenage pregnancy, and a lack of transportation to school. Additionally, they discovered that teachers' attitudes, harsh discipline, parent mortality, and parent health conditions all contribute to school dropouts. Numerous research works have been conducted on the influence of academic self-efficacy and academic self-esteem on school dropout. Studies such as Peguero and

Shaffer (2015), utilized data from the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 and incorporated a multilevel modeling techniques to investigate the correlation between academic self-efficacy and dropout. Samuel and Burger (2020) used a longitudinal design over 4 years to investigate the degree to which a combination of adverse life circumstances, overall self-efficacy, and perceived social support can predict dropout intents and dropout. Parr and Bonitz (2015) did a longitudinal study and found out that, the social cognitive construct self-efficacy added little explanatory power to school dropout.

Martínez-Martí and Ruch (2017) performed a cross sectional quantitative survey using 363 participants on character strengths predict resilience over and above positive affect, self-efficacy, optimism, social support, self-esteem, and life satisfaction. The basic purpose of the present study of Tras, Arslan, and Hamarta (2013) was to ascertain whether or not self-esteem and social self-efficacy within university students predicted resilience using a quantitative correlational study with 532 university students. Brewer & Yucedag-Ozcan, (2013) carried out a quantitative experimental study with 512 participants on educational persistence: self-efficacy and topics in a college orientation course. Samuel and Burger (2020) did a study on negative events in one's life, self-efficacy, and social support: risk and protective factors for school dropout intentions and dropout in Switzerland. Cortes, Mostert, and Els (2014) performed a cross sectional survey study to find out if University students' intention to drop out is significantly predicted by their basic self-evaluation attributes (self-esteem and self-efficacy), burnout, disengagement, social support, and difficulty making career decisions in South

Africa. Davidse (2016) did a quantitative cross sectional assessment of the relationship that exists between pupil and instructor motivation, as well as pupil and instructor self-efficacy in tandem with students' intent to leave school in South Africa. Lawrence and Adebawale (20-';22) equally undertook a study on teenage dropout risk indicators: Family composition, psychological well-being, and self-esteem using a quantitative approach in Nigeria.

However, it appears no empirical study on the influence of academic self-efficacy and self-esteem on school dropout intention has been conducted in the Ahafo Ano South West District. Moreover, there appeared to be limited literature on academic self-efficacy and self-esteem on school dropout intention in Ghana since quite a number of the identified literature focused on students who have dropped out of school and factors that caused the drop out but not students in school who might be harboring the intention to drop out. These identified geographical gaps made it necessary to undertake this study so as to better understand academic self-efficacy and academic self- esteem on school dropout intention of Junior High School Students in the Ahafo Ano South West District.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the academic self-efficacy and academic self-esteem on dropout intention of Junior High School students in Ahafo Ano South- West District. Specifically, the objectives of this study were to;

1. ascertain the level of academic self-efficacy of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District.

2. find out the level of academic self-esteem of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District.
3. determine the level of school dropout intention of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District.
4. determine if there will be gender difference in academic self-efficacy among Junior High School students in Ahafo Ano South-West district.
5. determine if there will be gender difference in self-esteem among Junior High School students in Ahafo Ano South-West District
6. ascertain if there will be gender difference in school dropout intention among Junior High School students in Ahafo Ano South West District.
7. find out if there will be a relationship between academic self-efficacy and dropout intention among Junior High School students in the Ahafo Ano South-West District
8. find out if there will be a relationship between self-esteem and dropout intention among Junior High School students in the Ahafo Ano South-West District

Research Questions

1. What is the level of academic self-efficacy of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District?
2. What is the level of self -esteem of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District?
3. What is the level of school dropout intentions of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District?

Research Hypotheses

The following null and alternate hypotheses were formulated for testing;

H₀₁; There will be no statistically significant gender difference in academic self-efficacy among junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District.

H₁; There will be a statistically significant gender difference in academic self-efficacy among Junior High School students in Ahafo Ano South-West district.

H₀₂; There will be no statistically significant gender difference in self-esteem of Junior High School students in Ahafo Ano South- West District.

H₂; There will be a statistically significant gender difference in self-esteem among Junior High School students in Ahafo Ano South-West District.

H₀₃; There will be no statistically significant gender difference in school dropout intention among Junior High School students in Ahafo Ano South West District.

H₃; There will be a statistically significant gender difference in school dropout intention among Junior High School students in Ahafo Ano South West District.

H₀₄ There will be no statistically significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and dropout intention among Junior High School students in the Ahafo Ano South-West district?

H₄; There will be a statistically significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and dropout intention among Junior High School students in the Ahafo Ano South-West District.

H₀₅; There will be no statistically significant relationship between self-esteem and dropout intention among Junior High School students in the Ahafo Ano South-West District.

H₅; There will be a statistically significant relationship between self-esteem and dropout intention among Junior High School students in the Ahafo Ano South-West District.

Significance of the study

The outcomes of this investigation will be utilized by teachers to guide the creation of programs and school policies that will improve academic self-efficacy and self-esteem of students since it affects students' intention to drop out of school. This will enable teachers put in preventive measures to assist students who exhibit signs of having the intention to drop out, taking their academic self-efficacy and self-esteem into consideration.

The study will further give guidance by way of information to policy makers and the Ghana Education service on how to enhance intervention policies and processes to rescue children who could be at risk of quitting school.

Finally, the study will add-on to existing literature by serving as a source of literature for scientists undertaking comparable research in the future.

Delimitations

Only junior high school students from public schools were included in the study despite the existence of private junior high schools in the district. The reason for this exclusion was the fact that the conditions regarding the management of the private schools were quite different from that of the public schools. The private

schools were quite semi-autonomous in their management hence students in the private schools enjoyed different environmental conditions from their colleagues in the public schools.

This current research was further restricted to students in form two within 10 selected public junior high schools from the five educational circuits of the Ahafo Ano South- West District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Form two students were used because the form ones were just transitioning from primary school to junior high school and the students in form three were equally preparation towards their final external examination. Also, school dropout was more prevalent among the form two students.

Furthermore, the study was restricted conceptually to academic self-efficacy and self-esteem on school dropout intention.

Limitations

Based on the nature of the study, some students felt that the questionnaire was demanding too much personal information from them hence they felt initially reluctant to choose their true state for the questions asked.

Definition of Terms

Beneath are some ideas that have been given operational definitions.

Academic self-efficacy: Students' attitudes and beliefs about their chances of succeeding in school as well as their confidence in their ability to accomplish academic assignments and successfully learn the subject are referred to as academic self-efficacy.

Self-esteem: Self-esteem is one's general perception of oneself, as well as their beliefs about their strengths and weaknesses.

School dropout intention: School dropout intention describes the ideas, aspirations, and intentions that students have about the potential of leaving school before they graduate.

Organization of the Study

The research work was structured into five chapters. Chapter one provided the framework for the remaining parts of the study. It addressed the introductory part of the study which covers the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions that served as the study's direction, research hypotheses, significance of the study, delimitations of the study, definition of terms and organization of the rest of the study. The second chapter examined literature that was pertinent to the study being conducted which included conceptual, theoretical and empirical reviews for the study. The process and techniques adopted to conduct the study were discussed in the third chapter. This entailed the research design, the population, the sample and sampling method, the instrument, the validity and reliability of the instrument, the data collection method, and the data analysis. The study's findings and discussions were covered in detail in the fourth chapter. The fifth and concluding chapter entailed the summary, conclusions, recommendations and proposals for future research study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The objective of the study was to examine the academic self-efficacy and self-esteem on school dropout intention of junior high school students in the Ahafo Ano south- west district. In this chapter, literature relating to the study was reviewed theoretically, conceptually and empirically.

Theoretical Framework

This section of the literature review looked at the theories relevant to the Albert Bandura, the Theory of Planned Behavior by Icek Ajzen and the Theory of Institutional study that was being undertaken. Theories such as the Self-Efficacy Theory by Bandura and the Theory of Departure by Vincent Tinto were looked at.

The self-efficacy theory

Although Albert Bandura is given credit for coming up with the term "self-efficacy", self-efficacy has turned out to be investigated by psychologists from several angles. In his own words, Bandura suggested the idea of doing a personal evaluation of one's ability to put into practice the necessary steps for dealing with prospective situations (Kishore, 2021). Self-Efficacy is a belief system that specifies how successfully an individual is able to execute a plan of action in a specific circumstance. From a different perspective, an individual's self-efficacy is their optimism that they can succeed in some specific situation. According to Bandura (as cited in Pajares,2012) people build their self-efficacy beliefs by the

analysis of information obtained from four key areas of impact. These areas of influence are mastery experience, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and emotional and psychological state.

Mastery experiences are those that occur when someone takes on a new task and succeeds. One of the most efficient methods for learning about a new skill or raising one's level of competence in a particular activity is to practice. People unconsciously educate themselves that they have the ability to learn new skills during the process of practice and this generally works so well. This optimistic mindset, the feeling that any individual can accomplish the goals they set for oneself, is a good thing since developing oneself as well as studying something new requires one to have the conviction that one has the ability to carry out the work in question in an efficient manner.

The term "vicarious experience" refers to the act of observing someone else execute a task successfully. "Seeing people similar to oneself accomplish a task through persistent effort boosts observers' beliefs that they, too, possess the potential to master comparable tasks to succeed", Bandura (as cited in Pajares, 2012). When people aspire to be like successful people (most notably those with a balanced level of self-efficacy), they have a greater chance of internalizing a minimum of a part of those encouraging ideas.

Obtaining encouraging verbal comments while executing a difficult task convinces an individual to believe they have the necessary abilities and skills required for a successful outcome. The impact of positive and negative feedback on a person's accomplishment or capacity to execute has an effect on self-efficacy, (Redmond, 2010). The persuasive use of language is a skill that can be adopted at

all ages, however, the earlier it is employed, the more feasible it becomes to foster the growth of self-efficacy.

An individual's emotional, physical, and psychological well-being can influence what they believe their personal capabilities are in a particular circumstance. For, it could be more challenging to maintain a good level of well-being in a situation when one has suffered from sadness or anxiety. When one is feeling healthy and well, it is much simpler to boost their self-efficacy. Individuals with a great sense of efficacy have a greater tendency to see their level of affective arousal as an empowering enhancer of effectiveness, as opposed to individuals who are plagued with insecurity see it as delimiting factor. Thus, by mastering how to control their anxiety and elevate their general state of mind in trying circumstances, people can feel more capable of handling life's challenges.

James Maddux (2013) proposed that "imaginal experiences" can be used as a fifth route towards self-efficacy. This is the art of visualizing oneself doing well or effectively in a given circumstance. Imaginary experiences (or visualization) are essentially effort to make one's ambitions seem achievable. Visualization is the process of putting oneself in a situation to be able to accomplish everything one's mind is set on. To be able to use this method to increase one's or a child's self-efficacy, the focus should be on creating a scenario in which success seems to be the most possible result, (Maddux & Meier, 1995).

Summarizing the main ideas of his theory, Bandura asserted that, "what people think, believe, and feel affects how they behave" (Bandura, 1986, p. 25). People possess the capacity to exercise influence over their emotions and thoughts, and behavior, (Bandura, 1986). In 1977, Bandura proposed the idea that a person's

ideas about their abilities and effort have a significant impact on how they behave. Self-efficacy possesses a substantial impact on students' confidence in accomplishing a task (as cited in Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2016). Bandura's (1986) theory states that, a person's sense of self-efficacy will affect their decision-making, level of effort, and level of tenacity and resiliency when faced with difficulties. The degree of anxiety or calmness people experience when working on projects will also depend on how confident they are in their own abilities. (Bandura, 1986). People actively assess the connection between what they believe they are capable of and the consequences of a certain task while critically evaluating their capabilities and performance, (Cervone, 2000). The belief that significant life events can be managed increases a person's motivation to take on life's problems, which reduces stress, according to Skinner (1995). Self-efficacy, according to Bandura (1986), is a crucial cognitive technique that promotes a variety of behavioral traits in people.

The self-efficacy theory by Albert Bandura relates to this research about the possible role that the academic self-efficacy of a student plays in his /her intent to leave school. The theory proposes that, before a person executes a particular course of action, he / she assesses if he has the ability and the requirements to be able to execute that action. The choice to stop attending school is not capricious; rather, it follows the intention to really stop attending. There are different determinants and causes of an individual's intention to dropout. A major activity that goes on in a school is academic work and to a large extent, a student's ability to persist in school depends on his/her academic prowess. Students in the Junior High School assess their potential to handle the academic requirements of the school as these factors have a tremendous influence on their intention and actual decision to remain in

school or dropout and this is well explained in Bandura's self-efficacy theory hence it being chosen to support this study.

The Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which later became the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), was created in 1980 to predict how likely people are to act in specific ways at specific times and places. The theory was developed by Icek Ajzen for the objective of enhancing the theory of reasoned action's (TRA) predictive capability. Perceived behavioral control, (a concept that was not a part of TRA), was to be incorporated into TPB in Ajzen's view. All the behaviors that humans can exercise self-control over were intended to be clarified by the theory.

A cognitive theory known as The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen proposes the choice of an individual to indulge in a particular behavior, such as dropping out or not dropping out can be determined by their intent to carry out such behavior, (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1973). It links beliefs to actions. The motivating factors that impact a behavior are usually represented by intentions, which show how much effort someone is willing to put forth to carry out the behavior, Ajzen (as cited in Thong & Olsen, 2012). As a rule of thumb, behavior that is more likely to be carried out has a stronger intention to be engaged in.

Intentions, according to TPB, are determined by three core factors: individual attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Behavioral intention, in turn, is the direct predictor of human social behavior, according to the postulate of TPB. The likelihood that a particular action will have the anticipated

impact and the subjective assessment of the positive and negative aspects of that result have an effect on behavioral intentions.

Personal attitudes are our individual opinions about a particular behavior. It describes the degree to which a person has a favorable or adverse opinion about the behavior of interest. It involves considering how a behavior will influence the outcome. When we reflect on our behavior, we analyse the totality of our knowledge, prejudices as well as attitudes. For example, each of us may have a different perspective about smoking, such as, "tobacco is soothing and makes me feel good, nevertheless, it results in me coughing in the morning, costs a lot of money, and smells bad."

Subjective norms consider how we interpret other people's perspectives of a certain behavior, like smoking. This is the belief that the majority of individuals either concur with or disagree with the behavior. This involves an individual's view regarding whether or not colleagues and close associates believe that an individual should engage in the behavior, (Ham, Jeger, & Frajman Ivković, 2015). This might describe how your friends, family, and co-workers feel about smoking. Our assessment of other people's attitudes is of greater significance in contrast to what other people may think. In an effort to shift the subjective norm away from drug usage, anti-drug campaigns regularly offer information on the number of individuals who engage in dangerous activities that include smoking or using drugs. Teenagers that smoke tend to be associated with a peer group that smokes, hence they may believe that smoking is the norm. However, since most adolescents do not smoke, data that shows the true prevalence of smoking may need to re-evaluate what they consider as normal.

The extent to which a person thinks he /she can regulate his / her behavior is termed perceived behavioral control. This is reliant upon how we view both internal (such as our aptitude and tenacity) and external (such as the resources and assistance that are at our disposal.) elements, (La Barbera & Ajzen, 2021). How we perceive behavioral control, according to the theory, has two outcomes. Our intentions to behave in a particular manner are influenced by it, for example, the more intention we have to behave in a certain way, the greater our perception of our ability to manage the behavior. Furthermore, intentions have a direct influence on our behavior; if we believe we are in control, we will push ourselves harder to accomplish our objectives.

The current understanding of perceived behavioral control, nonetheless, is very consistent with the concept of perceived self-efficacy proposed by Bandura which deals with evaluation of how well one can implement the measures that need to be taken to handle anticipated scenarios, (Bandura, 1982). The TPB was created in order to foresee behaviors that people may not fully be able to control on their own. The TPB elaborates on the idea of perceived behavioral control considering self-esteem and self-efficacy. Ajzen (as cited in Setyorini & Indriasari, 2020) asserted that perceived behavioral control which is the perceived easiness or uneasiness of carrying out the behavior of interest suggests that a person's motivation is impacted by how challenging the behaviors are viewed to be, as well as how successfully they are thought to be carried out by the person. The view and conviction that one can positively affect one's own behaviors is hindered if one has a low sense of control, self-efficacy, or self-esteem, (Maropamabi, 2014). The way a person perceives behavioral control varies based on the circumstance due to

variations in perceived behavioral control between situations and actions. The eventual addition of this concept led to the replacement of the Theory of Reasoned Action with the Theory of Planned Behavior.

According to the theory of planned behavior, perceived behavioral control, can be utilized to predict prospective behavioral achievement along with behavioral intention. TPB has been used to study the relationships between attitudes, convictions, behavioral intentions, and behaviors in a variety of human domains.

This theory was considered relevant in this current research since the research focuses on the academic self-efficacy and self-esteem on school dropout intention. It suggests that a one's intention to take part in a particular behavior might serve as a basis for determining whether they will actually do so. It goes further to talk about how intention (which is a cognitive activity) is formed taking into consideration, personal and social determinants. A student's inclination to quit school is influenced by important individuals like parents, instructors, and classmates as well as by individual variables including perceived behavioral control (self-efficacy). The Theory of Planned Behavior makes the underlying assumption that people behave rationally by their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. This is how the Ajzen Icek theory of planned behavior relates to the research conducted.

The theory of institutional departure

The connection between students and the academic and social systems of their institutions serves as the basic foundation for the institutional departure model. Vincent Tinto's Institutional Departure Model, which was first proposed in 1975 but did not achieve its full form until 1993, places more accountability upon the

student as they establish a connection with the institution. Tinto came to the realization that first year students come with expectations and associations. He outlined a procedure that starts with the learner's earlier affiliations and enables for those to be strengthened or diminished depending on how the learner is integrated into the academic community. The capacity of the learner to engage in the institution's academic and social processes serves as a defining characteristic of the social component of resilience, according to Tinto's theory of institutional departure. As a result, a student's decision to stay in school or leave reflects whether they were successful or unsuccessful in completing the necessary steps to become a part of the institution's community.

According to Tinto, new college students have to isolate themselves from their old social circles, such as those from their immediate families and high schools, because these groups adhere to different standards of morality and conduct than the new social circles at their academic institution. A student is said to be in the transition stage by Tinto once they have begun the process of severing ties to their former communities, before they fully assimilate the rules and values of the new college community.

Finally, having completed these phases successfully, the student can start the process of integrating into the college's new community. Tinto's Model of Institutional Departure (1993), in its final form, asserts that schools are composed of two systems: social and academic. To stay enrolled in their academic institutions, students must be incorporated into both systems. Academic integration can be assessed by a student's academic accomplishments and intellectual growth, while

social integration can be assessed by a student's engagement with peers and professors in college.

According to the approach, a student begins school with a set of commitments and ambitions. These early commitments and ambitions are shaped by the student's pre-entry characteristics, which include their family history, skills, and academic background. The model predicts that a student's school experience (academic performance and social integration) would continuously alter (weaken or strengthen) the degree of initial commitments and goals. According to the model, a student's decision to remain in or withdraw from school is influenced by their subsequent (changed) level of goals and commitments (Tinto, 1975, 1993). The most significant modification Tinto made to his model was the idea that the student's level of external commitments, such as those of his or her family and job, has an impact on both the initial and subsequent levels of those commitments.

Conceptual Framework

Academic Self - efficacy

Conceptual Review

Literature will be reviewed conceptually based on the following th

Acade

Self - esteem

School – dropout intention

at people are proactive social agents

that actively adapt to their surroundings in lieu of passively enduring events that

exploit their personal vulnerabilities. (Amitay, Gumpel, & Youth, 2015; Sachitra & Bandara, 2017). According to Bandura (1989), people exhibit a self-mechanism that permits them to have some extent of influence regarding their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. This self-system that embodies the individual's psychological and emotional structures, enables one to conceptualize, learn from others, plan alternate courses of action, control one's own actions and practice self-reflection. Additionally, it is crucial in offering reference mechanisms and an array of sub-functions for recognizing, regulating, and evaluating behavior that comes about as a result of the interaction within the self-system and its external environmental sources of impact. As a result, the self-system offers a self-controlling role by giving people the power to change their surroundings and exert impact over their own behavior.

Bandura (as cited in Dewar, Servos, Bosacki & Coplan, 2013), considered self-reflection the greatest distinctively human trait due to the fact that it enables individuals to examine and implement changes to their own attitudes and behaviors. These self-assessments encompass self-efficacy perspectives, that is, "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations". As a result, self-efficacy beliefs are a key component for generating motivation to regulate occurrences which have an influence on a person's life.

A person's confidence in his / her ability to attain success in a certain circumstances is self-efficacy (Schwarzer & Warner, 2013). These notions about one's own competence influence behavior in various ways. They have an impact on people's decision-making and course of action. People perform activities when they

feel competent and confident and stay away from doing so when they do not. Efficacy beliefs affects the extent of effort someone will put forth, the length of their tenacity in the face of challenges, and how resilient they will be when faced with challenging circumstances. Greater effort, perseverance, and resilience are associated with stronger feelings of efficacy.

Although ability and motivation are not the same as self-efficacy, they are closely linked, (Hsia, Huang & Hwang, 2016). The subjective assessment of one's own capacity to handle a certain activity is known as self-efficacy. In his conceptualization, Bandura, (as cited in Nasa, 2014) asserted that self-efficacy is a method for organizing and carrying out plans of action in order to accomplish certain goals. It also serves as a means of clarifying and predicting one's thoughts, emotions, and actions. It is less concerned with the aptitudes and talents that people possess. It gives higher priority to what people think they can accomplish with their innate talents and abilities. He further noted that individual's behavior can frequently better be predicted by the perceptions of their own talents than by their actual capabilities.

Individuals may feel confident in their abilities in general or in a specific context, such as school, work, parenting, friendships, sports, hobbies, and other areas, where they are optimistic about succeeding. In Education, academic self-efficacy is crucial in the achievements of learners because it has an impact on the choices they make and the things they do, (Schunk & Mullen, 2012; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2016). Academic self-efficacy is the confidence that a person can successfully accomplish a designated level of academic work or attain some specific academic objectives. It is one's conviction that they can effectively

accomplish particular academic tasks at a particular level. A comparable definition is provided by Alkharusi, Aldhafri, Alnabhani and Alkalbani, (2014) states that academic self-efficacy pertains to the opinions of students on their ability to complete their academic work.

Self-efficacy theory serves as the foundation for academic self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). According to this theory, task difficulty may have a bearing on the level of academic self-efficacy. Some people might think they perform at their best on challenging jobs, while others might only perform well on simpler ones. As a result, self-efficacy is thought to be contextual rather than a persistent feature (Bandura, 2012). As a result, beliefs in one area may or may not influence beliefs in another. Thus, the concurrent decline in academic self-efficacy can affect attitudes about social and emotional self-efficacy. Students effectively distinguish between their self-efficacy assessments across many academic fields, which together constitute an unstructured multidimensional hierarchy, (Aryani, 2018; Ifeakor & Erutujiro, 2021; Nasa, 2014). Since it is a task-specific assessment, self-efficacy differs from self-esteem or self-concept, which represent more comprehensive affective assessments of oneself.

Academic expectation beliefs have been divided into two broad categories. Academic outcome expectations are a student's convictions that certain specific acts will result in particular outcomes (e.g., "If I do homework my grades will improve"). Academic efficacy assumptions are a student's faith in their capacity to engage in the behaviors required to generate a particular result (e.g., "I have enough motivation to study hard for this test"). It's crucial to comprehend how both types of anticipated beliefs differ as "individuals can believe that a certain behavior will

produce a certain outcome (outcome expectation), but may not believe they can perform that behavior (efficacy expectation)” (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002)

Self-efficacy beliefs are essential for understanding academic results because they produce certain behaviors and reasons that can either support or undermine effective performance. Students with high academic self-efficacy are committed to their academic goals and tend to be more genuinely motivated by the tasks they seek. They regard obstacles as challenges to be tackled rather than threats, and they make goals to fulfill the challenges (Pajares, 2012; Wery & Thomson, 2013). Failure and difficulty are not signs of defeat; rather, these people intensify their quests and search for innovative solutions.

Individuals with low self-efficacy usually view challenging tasks as obstacles they should avoid. Due to this, they often avoid setting goals and show little commitment to the ones they set. They usually give up easily when obstacles are encountered. They are more likely to feel like hopeless and inadequate because they lack confidence in their potential for success. Stressful situations can be quite challenging to handle, and persons with low self-efficacy seem less versatile or able to recover from them. Numerous empirical findings affirm Bandura's assertion that people's self-efficacy beliefs have a major impact on almost every aspect of their life including their ability to inspire themselves, their susceptibility to depression and stress, and the decisions they make in life (Coalter, 2016; Davids, 2015; Fakolade, 2014; Mata & Tarroja, 2022; Nasa, 2014).

Generally, four key factors have an impact on one's self-efficacy: enactive mastery experiences, or hands-on experience; vicarious experiences, or other

people's experiences; verbal persuasion, or evaluation or feedback from others; and; physiological and affective states, such as pain, exhaustion, stress, emotion, and mood (Nasa, 2014; van Dinther, Dochy, & Segers, 2015; Webb & LoFaro, 2020). The most major source of efficacy is thought to be mastery experiences (Capa-Aydin, Uzuntiryaki-Kondakci, & Ceylandag, 2018). The greater the effect, the more closely these circumstances resemble those in which self-efficacy has been enhanced.

Self-efficacy can be evaluated using a variety of methods. Among them is Chen, Gully, and Eden's (2001) New General Self-Efficacy Scale. Another scale, the Academic Self-Efficacy Scale which deals with views about learning consists of 40 items. Items are graded on a scale of 1 to 5, and the scale score overall is determined by adding the factor scores. An equal survey, the Strengths Self-Efficacy Scale (SSES) by Tsai, Chaichanasakul, Zhao, Flores & Lopez (2014), assessed a person's confidence in their capacity to develop a sense of inner fortitude and utilize it in their daily lives.

Self- esteem

Self-esteem is an all-encompassing evaluation of one's own importance and value that steadily develops throughout infancy, adolescence, and early adulthood before becoming stable, as defined by Rosenberg (as cited by Bianchi et al.,2021). It can be explained simply as having self-respect and confidence in one's subjective assessment of one's own worth or ability. Simply put, it is the perception of one's value formed in response to feelings like joy, happiness, pride, and guilt as well as beliefs about how one behaves or fits into various life circumstances (Lawrence & Adebowale, 2022; Tan & Tan, 2014).

Rosenberg (as cited in Abdel-Khalek 2016), a major pioneer in this discipline claimed that self-esteem refers to a person's general positive impression of themselves. An individual with an exceptional person self-esteem respects and values himself, he continued. Along the same lines, according to Abdel-Khalek (2016), the subjective evaluation of one's own sense of self-worth, self-respect, self-confidence and the degree to which one has positive or adverse thoughts about oneself is known as self-esteem. He further stated it entails assessing oneself before responding emotionally to that assessment. All current definitions and theories of self-esteem consists of emotive and evaluative aspects.

For one's sense of self to develop, the process of adolescence is crucial. Parents, as well as teachers, can promote and stimulate the development of self-esteem. Teenagers' attitudes and behaviors, both at home and at school, are a reflection of their degree of self-esteem (Abdel-Khalek, 2016; Mogonea & Mogonea, 2014). The traits of adolescents who have high degrees of self-esteem include: having the capability of constructively influencing the thoughts and actions of others; approaching novel conditions with confidence and positively; being able to tolerate frustrations; accepting early tasks; correctly assessing circumstances; communicating positive thoughts about oneself; and successfully demonstrating good self-control (Lavoie, 2012). Adolescence, thus is an important stage for the growth of self-esteem and self-identity, and low self-esteem may compromise teenage emotional control. High self-esteem, however, plays a resilience or constructive adaption role. Previous research revealed that self-esteem had both positive and negative components (Bianchi et al., 2021; Orth & Robins, 2014). Academic success and school involvement are seen to be well-correlated

with high self-esteem, which reflects self-satisfaction (Bianchi et al., 2021; Ogle et al., 2016). Contrarily, poor self-esteem, which is sometimes considered to be unhappiness with oneself, has a connection with undesirable developmental results which includes academic failure and school dropout, particularly throughout adolescence (Lawrence & Adebowale, 2022).

Several elements contribute to the emergence of high self-esteem during adolescence. According to Lawrence and Adebola, attachment, unwavering parental support, and a sense of stability or safety that the person feels during adolescence help to stabilize the development of self-esteem. Significantly, among school-age adolescents, high levels of self-esteem have apparently been linked to high levels of personal issues and school adjustment (Harrison, Loxton, & Somhlaba, 2021; Lawrence & Adebowale, 2022). In comparison to students with poor self-esteem, individuals with high levels of personal wellbeing, coping with stress and perseverance in the face of adversity are more likely to continue in school (Akhtar & Bilour, 2020). The research further showed that sadness, hopelessness, and suicidal thoughts which are leading causes of school dropout were linked to teenagers' low self-esteem.

The concept of school dropout Intention

All young people and educational stakeholders remain concerned about dropout rates. This is as a result of the education and related skills needed to succeed in the modern global economy which has made finishing school a must for many types of success in adulthood. Quite a number of definitions on drop out exists in literature. Some of these definitions make use of synonymous words such as non-

completion, attrition and withdrawal while others use anonymous words such as, success, completion, retention and persistence (Xavier & Meneses, 2020).

The academic community, as well as governmental and social actors, have all produced different definitions of student dropout, leading to a variety of views and enrichment of the conversation (Kehm, Larsen, & Sommersel, 2019). As said, the variety of definitions is a result of different analysis goals, and they can work in tandem to provide an in-depth understanding of dropping out.

Various thought-streams have emerged to inform and shape new literary works on dropout issues across the globe (Adom & Mordzeh-Ekpampo, 2017). Although these streams share a lot of concepts, they do not contribute to a single coherent conceptual model for defining the concept dropout. Dropout is the most obscure and difficult topic to define. A student may skip a few days of school and will eventually return to it. Similarly, a student may change his or her school, which, to begin with, makes any attempt to coin a meaningful phrase based on withdrawal time generally challenging. As indicated by Adom and Mordzeh-Ekpampo (2017) it is extremely hard to build up a straightforward meaning of dropout based on the duration of withdrawal. The school dropout wonder is regularly a continuous procedure instead of a solitary occasion that is gotten under way by a scope of components.

A dropout is someone who discontinues their studies without transferring to a different private, public, or other educational institution before completing their high school education or a program of study. The definition of a dropout is “any student who leaves school for whatever motive before graduating or finishing a program of studies without enrolling in another elementary or secondary school”

(Rumberger, 2012). According to De Witte, Cabus, Thyssen, Groot, and van Den Brink (2013), “Dropout often refers to a student who has permanently left school.”. Mocetti (2012), described a school dropout as a person who quits school before the end of the level of education in which they are enrolled. The latter definition implies that dropping out of school after basic school without moving on to the next levels is not technically a dropout.

UNESCO (2009) defined dropout as the number of students from a group enrolled in a certain school year who are not enrolled in the next school year. That is pupils leaving school without completing. The Ministry of Education (EFA) Pakistan in 2000 also defined the term dropout being the removal of students from school before they finish their primary schooling at any point. A critical look at both definitions agreed on the point of ‘completion’ which makes a student a dropout whether completion or no completion.

Rincón, Moreno, and Cala-Vitery (2022) further defined dropout as the termination of participation of the student in the higher education training program before a degree is acquired. A complicated, multifaceted, and systemic occurrence that can be interpreted as a cause or impact, a setback or refocusing a training procedure, an option or a required action, or as a measure of the effectiveness of the system of education. This term covers the evaluation of certain variables and the models created. As a result, its application enables the conceptual basis of student dropout to be viewed from a comprehensive perspective, incorporating the viewpoints of academia, the government as well as social stakeholders. The research on dropouts has been conducted from multiple disciplines with this combination of views, emphasizing the interactionist, sociological, organizational, psychological,

and economic approaches (Guzmán, Barragán, & Cala Vitery, 2021), which has led to an inquiry into factors that are both within as well as those external to the learner.

The sociological approach serves as the framework for studying dropouts and evaluates how outside forces affect the learner. The contributions provided by Spady (1970) elaborated the incident in terms of Durkheim's suicide theory, which contends that this behavior results from the subject being cut off from the social system. As a result, dropout is defined as the failure of students to integrate socially into the school setting (Guzmán et al., 2021). This strategy also took into account elements like family, expectations, and demands that have a bearing on a student's academic achievement in addition to factors like social integration in the classroom.

The interactionist and organizational techniques became the foundation for the mainstream research of drop-out, which explains this occurrence through the student's intellectual and social interactions in school. The model created by Tinto (1975; 1987) is an illustration of this strategy; it used the learner's psychological and mental background as a reference point and then included several personal, academic, and family traits that entirely influence the learner's persistence in the school. From a psychological standpoint, the student's individual traits and qualities were taken into account, incorporating values, aspirations, motivation, personality and anticipation of success, such that the person and his or her variables connected with dropout were noted (Guzmán et al., 2021).

The definition of the word "dropout" itself is ambiguous. How to determine dropout rates and what causes understudies to leave school vary by location and furthermore from nation to nation. What counts as a dropout in a country or district could not be regarded one in another. Comparing dropout rates may therefore seem

like juxtaposing apples with oranges. The most important idea is who should be considered a dropout, (Peguero & Shaffer, 2015). It is mainly due to the lack of consensus over the conditions that should qualify as the out-of-school time duration or the events that caused the interruption in schooling. The standards vary per nation. Dropouts in South Africa are people whose education has been interrupted, either temporarily (for one month) or irrevocably (never to return). Instead of institutional consequences, human circumstances are what's causing the disruption. The absence is not taken into consideration as a drop-out incidence beyond this. Therefore, incidents of student suspension or expulsion are not included in the dropout category. This distinction makes it easier to decide who counts as an ex-dropout participant. Review of literature on the definition of dropout in Online Higher Education European Distance and E-Learning Network (EDEN) used quitting a particular course, but other authors have suggested another approach (Lehan, Hussey, Shriner, & Learning, 2018), i.e., failing to complete an educational course. However, the time period is also a cause of worry because students may take a vacation (of multiple terms) before returning and enrolling again later in their academic careers.

Terminology that is incoherent is problematic as it affects how dropout is monitored, addressed, and investigated (Guzmán et al., 2021). The absence of a standardized concept makes surveying school execution troublesome and looking at schools and educational systems is practically difficult, (Adom & Mordzeh-Ekpampo, 2017). The percentage of pupils who drop out of high school is known as the dropout rate (Jia, Konold, & Cornell, 2016). Dropout rates have

been examined from several perspectives based on the different definitions identified of which some are, event, status and cohort dropout rates.

In a study, Xue et al. (2017) described event dropout rate as a rate, which is the proportion of a population who encounters a specific event over a specific duration. It calculates the percentage of learners who quite school in one year without finishing a specific amount of coursework. Furthermore, this rate describes the proportion of both public and private high school students who drop out of school in a given year (between the inception of one school year and the commencement of the subsequent year) without receiving a diploma or an equivalent. For example, the event dropout rate shows the proportion of students who leave school during a certain academic year without earning a certificate. A yearly dropout rate is another name for this percentage.

Status dropout rate is a percentage of the population that, at any given time, belongs to a certain group (Aud & Wilkinson-Flicker, 2013), (e.g., the proportion of people in the U.S. who are without a high school diploma). Status dropout rates give total data on young adults who drop out within a given age interval (typically: 15 to 24, 16 to 24, or 18 to 24 years old). Regardless of when they left school, they calculate the percentage of people who are not enrolled in school and do not possess a high school certificate or an equivalent. This rate, is usually greater than event rate and shows the severity of the dropout issue in the general population (Schargel, 2013). Instead of focusing on specific individuals, this rate considers a whole age cohort. Status dropout rates measure the percentage of a certain age group that has not finished a specific level of education and is not presently enrolled.

A cohort rate is obtained based on longitudinal data on a group of people that exhibit a distinctive feature at one point in time, such as starting high school (Mabel & Britton, 2018). Cohort dropout rates look at how many students left school within a single group or cohort over a specific time period. There are various methods for evaluating dropout rates, and each one yields results that are somewhat different. The "leaver" rate or departure-classification index is the most widely used formula (McKeever, 2019). The ratio of pupils who completed high school to those who dropped out is used to calculate dropout rates. The Annual Dropout Rate is derived by dividing the number of pupils who have dropped out of school (adjusted for attrition) by the number of 14 to 18-year-old students who were enrolled in the K–12 system in the past school year (Age Specific Cohort), less attrition.
$$\text{Count of Students who Drop Out (adjusted for attrition)} / (\text{Count of 14–18-Year-Old Students in One Year (Age Specific Cohort)} - \text{Attrition}) = \text{Annual Dropout Rate}$$

Kronick and Hargis proposed a classification of dropouts that incorporates individual traits, educational experience, and the time of absence from school, (Bowers & Sprott, 2012). They differentiated between high and low achievers. High-Achiever Pushouts obtain excellent marks yet get dismissed from school for misconduct, however, the low-achieving group tends to produce more dropouts. Kronick and Hargis proposed three categories of dropouts within this category: Low-Achiever Pushouts, Quiet Dropouts, and In-School Dropouts. Low Achiever Pushouts are students who become angry and rebellious due to the frustration of ongoing academic failures. Their misconduct leads to disciplinary actions, which starts a never-ending cycle that only halts once the student is dismissed.

Theoretically, a prevalent dropout type, quiet dropouts have a record of failing academically but, contrarily, low-achiever pushouts are unresponsive with resentment and rage or have externalized behavioral issues. They, therefore, go unknown till they quit. The last group of students is the in-school dropouts, who complete 12th grade yet fail their final exams due to severe knowledge gaps.

There are many different personal and social traits that dropouts exhibit. Dropouts give a variety of justifications for why they stopped attending school (Doll, Eslami, & Walters, 2013; Gairín et al., 2014). There are personal, interpersonal, and contextual school dropout risk factors that can be identified in every area of a child's social development (e.g., poverty, community, school characteristics). While minority students from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds seem to be disproportionately at risk, dropouts come from all socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, (Archambault, Janosz, Dupéré, Brault, & Andrew, 2017; de Haan, Boon, Vermeiren, Hoeve, & de Jong, 2015; Haan, Boon, Vermeiren, Hoeve, & Jong, 2015). Hence, although some risk variables (such as low SES and poor school performance) seem to be relatively prevalent among dropouts, it is highly doubtful all dropouts share common personal, family, school, and social experiences, and follow the same developmental routes.

Guzmán et al. (2021) conceptualized four main determinants or possible causes of school dropouts which are, individual, socioeconomic, academic and institutional. Individual identifies the qualities of the student and his or her home environment that directly impact the decision to abandon the study process. Age, gender, number of siblings, marital status, health issues at enrollment, family external surroundings, met expectations, personal and family responsibilities,

motivating students during the teaching and learning process, self-control, and time management are some instances of variables associated with this determinant. The term socioeconomic describes the effect of the student's social and economic environment, which might hinder the student from completing the higher education process. The strata, employment position, family income, earnings of students, economic reliance, and the macroeconomic environment of the nation are some of the factors that are associated with this determinant.

Furthermore, Academic determinants include all the aspects of the instruction and learning process in both higher education and earlier levels of education that may cause students to quit school. The following stand out among the factors that make up this determinant: past academic achievements, courses completed before higher education, secondary school graduation exams, outcomes of admission exams to higher education, teaching credentials, and degree of contentment with the academic program. Lastly, institutional determinants entail all the elements of the educational program that support the proper progress of the learning process as well as elements specific to the student that, if they cause him or her to feel unsatisfied, might prevent them from completing their education. Institutional policies, financial assistance, instructional resources, the extent of interaction between teachers and pupils, and academic support are a few instances of explanatory factors connected to the determinant.

Studies demonstrate that difficulties with behavior (rebelliousness, lawbreaking, substance use), academic failure (low grades, grade retention), low motivation, low intellectual capabilities, and bad parenting behaviors (supervision, assistance, and academic expectations) collectively influence the prediction of

leaving school (Fortin, Marcotte, Diallo, Potvin, & Royer, 2013; Gasper, DeLuca, & Estacion, 2012; Norem-Hebeisen & Hedin, 2014; Rumberger & Rotermund, 2012).

High dropout rates in Ghana have been linked to a number of causes, including insufficient school supplies and books, poor instruction, shortage of teachers, long distances to school, expensive school supplies, pregnancy, early marriage, etc. (Abotsi, Yaganumah, Obeng, & Research, 2018; Adam, Adom, Bediako, & Practice, 2016). Adam et al. (2016b) cited two broad categories of factors that causes children leaving school in Ghana, which are the out of school and school-related factors. The out of school factors were mainly related to poverty. Many pupils left school because of their parents' low socioeconomic condition. They furthermore cited many school-related factors as additional reasons why children leave school. The primary ones were low academic achievement, self-efficacy, distance to school and occasionally school climate, discipline by instructors, and cited lesser issues as children detesting school and crumbling school blocks among others. Okoh, Emenike John, Doma and Akinsola (2020), who stated that children's interest in or indifference to school influences school dropout, corroborated this.

Dropping out of school has detrimental effects for students, their families and the nation at large. Dropouts are subject to social stigma, have fewer career opportunities, have lower incomes, and are more susceptible to end up in trouble with the law (Rumberger, 2012). Life-altering negative consequences may result from this choice. Every area of the person's life may and probably would be impacted by these choices. One significant impact is the potential difficulty in

gaining employment. Finding a decent, secure career to support oneself and the family could be problematic. Dropping out of school does not only affect the individual but people around him or her as well. High school graduates have significantly different lives than dropouts. Consequently, if a dropout intends to have children in future, the possibility of that offspring looking up to them and thinking dropping out is accepted since their parent dropped out cannot be ruled out. Statistics indicate around 70% of crimes in the US are committed by high school dropouts (Kearney, Harris, Jácome, & Parker, 2014).

As demonstrated by Respondek, Seufert, Stupnisky, and Nett (2017), early studies in this field had one major drawback: all of it occurred after dropout took place. To address this flaw, Bean and Cabrera et al (as cited in Morelli, Chirumbolo, Baiocco, & Cattelino, 2022) examined the likelihood of leaving school and discovered it to be highly correlated with and indicative of actual dropout rates. The intentions of students significantly influence their actual behavior. Intentions are mindsets that direct oneself to engage in a behavior or bring about a particular result. Wide-ranging behaviors, such as purchasing decisions, losing weight, smoking, gambling, and driving behavior, have all been predicted using intentions. Bean (1982) stated that intentions to quit university possess the greatest immediate impact and account for the majority of differences in actual attrition behavior. These results are consistent with other theoretical models intended to clarify and foresee human behavior, notably the Theory of Planned Behavior.

As behavioral intents for quitting are a reliable indicator of actual dropout, concentrating on dropout intentions can help shed light on the dropout issue and pave the way for preventive actions for eventual dropout. For instance,

understanding the causes of dropout intentions may help with the creation and evaluation of potential intervention initiatives.S

Numerous researches have focused on this topic since there is substantial evidence linking adolescent dropout intentions and actual dropouts from school. Intention to drop out is visible and measurable as early as primary and junior high school, according to recent studies (Bianchi et al., 2021). Programs for intervention can be created by schools to stop students from carrying out this intention if they detect students who are considering dropping out of school very early (i.e., recognize warning indicators of dropout), (Morelli et al., 2022).

Empirical Review

Literature will be reviewed empirically based on the following themes;

Levels of Academic Self-Efficacy

The concept of self-efficacy is related to the belief that everyone has to evaluate their abilities to perform a given task successfully. This concept has a strong influence on the approach to the task, the persistence to accomplish the same, as well as the level of effort. It is not enough for individuals to possess the requisite knowledge and skills to perform a task; they also must have the conviction that they can successfully perform the required behavior(s) under typical and, importantly, under challenging circumstances. People have more incentive to act when they believe they can produce desired effects by their actions. Efficacy belief, therefore, is a main basis of action.

Locke and Latham (2002) asserted that, individuals with high levels of self-efficacy tend to set loftier goals than do individuals with lower levels of self-

efficacy. They further indicated that those with higher levels of self-efficacy also tend to be more committed to assigned goals, find and use better task strategies to attain the goals, and respond more positively to negative feedback than do people with low self-efficacy. The tendency for efficacious people to expend more effort and persist longer is of particular importance because most personal success requires persistent effort. As such, low self-efficacy becomes a self-limiting process, Artino (2012). In effect, the level of academic self-efficacy possessed by an individual determines the individual's choice of activity, efforts, commitment and persistence in putting up a behavior.

In a study conducted by de Fátima Goulão (2014) on the relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement in adult learners, the results indicated a high level of self-efficacy for both males and females in the sample used for the study. Similarly, The results of Wei, Shi, MacLeod and Yang (2022) in their study exploring the factors that influence college students' academic self-efficacy in blended learning, a study from the personal, interpersonal, and environmental perspectives it was revealed that students' overall academic self-efficacy was above average hence considered high. Furthermore, with the analysis of the data for the study on the relationship between self-efficacy and academic motivation it was indicated that students' level of self-efficacy was medium, (Husain 2014). The results of this study suggest that the self-efficacy levels of the majority of the learners are high and that most of them feel that they are competent to achieve their academic goals.

Levels of Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is a positive evaluation of one's value and importance. That is, an individual's evaluation of being a person. Self-esteem is defined as the positive or negative attitude towards oneself. It is also considered a characteristic of liking or disliking oneself. In the educational environment, it is the students' positive or negative perception of self-value and capability. It denotes the perception of ourselves, how we evaluate ourselves, and our self-evaluation of ourselves as individuals

The level of students' self-esteem or their expectations of success and growth determines how well students strive to achieve their goals (Roshanzadeh Tajabadi, Dehkordi and Mohammadi, 2021). Expectancy-value theory suggests that individuals' positive self-evaluation can predict academic outcomes (Fang, 2016)

The results of Zhao, Zheng and, Zhou (2021) on self-esteem and academic engagement among adolescents showed that adolescent self-esteem positively predicts academic outcomes such as engagement. Students with high levels of self-esteem can consequently increase the academic outcomes such as academic engagement of adolescents. The findings of Casino-García, Llopis-Bueno and Llinares-Insa (2021) in their study on emotional intelligence profiles and self-esteem/self-concept, an analysis of the relationship in gifted students revealed that self-esteem was high with a minimum mean of 2.20 and a maximum mean of 5. To describe nursing student self-esteem prior to the influence of nursing education and to explore the relationship between self-esteem and dropout, Dancot et al. (2021) explored the relationship between first-year nursing student self-esteem

and dropout and the result showed that students had medium, and potentially fragile, self-esteem when starting their nursing education, and that self-esteem was associated with dropout. In the study of adolescence dropout risk predictors, family structure, mental health, and self-esteem, it was established in the study that participants decided to drop out of school due to their low levels of self-esteem (Lawrence & Adebowale, 2023).

Levels of School Dropout Intention

The learners' intentions not to complete their school career is not just an educational problem but is considered a major social problem as well (Kearney, 2021). Previous studies have clearly demonstrated that before making the decision to terminate their studies, students who eventually dropped out had thought more about quitting school compared to their peers who remained in school (Eicher, Staerklé & Clémence, 2014; Frostad, Pijl, & Mjaavatn, 2015).

To investigate to the extent to which dropout intentions and dropout could be predicted by an interplay between negative life events, general self-efficacy, and perceived social support, the main result was that individuals with above-average levels of time-averaged self-efficacy, reported below-average levels of dropout intentions (Samuel & Burger 2020). Similarly, in determining the relationship between learners' intention, motivation, and self-efficacy to drop out of low and high socio-economic schools, more learners in low socio-economic schools considered and intended to drop out of school youth (Roman, Davidse., Human-Hendricks, Butler-Kruger & Sonn, 2022). Zava, Barbaresi, Cattelino and Vecchio, (2022), investigated adolescents' academic aspirations and intentions to drop out as

proxy indicators of school success in high school and participants used in the investigation exhibited very low level of school dropout intention.

Gender Differences in Academic Self-Efficacy

Previous studies in this area indicated that gender difference in academic self-efficacy results were inconsistent. Different research works have different data on how gender influences academic self-efficacy levels. Some research works have shown significant gender-based differences showing males have higher levels of academic self-efficacy while others show that girls also have higher levels of academic self-efficacy. In contrast, some research found no appreciable variations in the measurement of academic self-efficacy within males and females.

According to Sachitra and Bandara (2017), substantial evidence exists supporting the idea that males and females will display varying degrees of academic self-efficacy. In their investigation, it was revealed that male and female undergraduates had very distinct degrees of academic self-efficacy with females depicting higher academic self-efficacy than males. According to the study's findings on gender disparities, female undergraduates' feeling of being part of the formal educational setting, dedication and good study techniques may increase their academic self-efficacy.

With the understanding that a variety of external variables might impact the extent of a person's academic self-efficacy, Chokkalingam, Armum, Kuan, and Chellappan (2016) aimed to evaluate adolescents' academic self-efficacy while taking into account gender variations. In comparison to male respondents, female respondents seemed to have greater levels of academic self-efficacy.

Satici and Can (2016) sought to find out if students' level of academic self-efficacy varied when examining various socio-demographic characteristics. The findings of the investigation suggested that gender and academic self-efficacy differed significantly. Males scored higher on academic self-efficacy than females did. The outcome of a t-test used to find out if the variation between males and females was statistically significant revealed that it was. The outcome of some other research works in the literature align with the study's finding that male students have higher academic self-efficacy than female students.

To evaluate the factor structure and see whether there are any gender or grade level disparities, a study examined the relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy, and implicit concept of intelligence (entity and incremental) in a sample of 6th and 8th-grade Norwegian students. Although having higher grades in eighth grade, girls showed lower levels of self-efficacy than boys (Diseth, Meland, & Bredablik, 2014). Girls' lower academic self-efficacy than males, even though they perform better in school, may be seen as a conundrum. Boys' greater academic misidentification may be one explanation: their self-confidence is less dependent on how well they succeed in school.

Findings of the work of Husain (2014) failed to support the study's second hypothesis that there was a gender disparity in academic self-efficacy. The findings showed no variation in academic self-efficacy between the sexes. Though earlier studies have found a gender gap in respondents' levels of self-efficacy, they also found that this gap is context-dependent, changing with age and subject area.

A study carried out by Tenaw (2013) to determine the relationship between self-efficacy, academic achievement and gender revealed that there is no

statistically significant difference in self-efficacy among the two genders. Despite females having a slightly lower overall self-efficacy score than males, the difference was not statistically significant.

Gender Differences in Self-Esteem

The topic of gender disparities in self-esteem has been the subject of numerous reviews, both qualitative and quantitative. While the predominant findings of current assessments are uncontested, males have a little advantage over females in self-esteem (Zuckerman, Li, & Hall, 2016). Consistent with prior research, Sprecher, Brooks, and Avogo (2013) discovered that men have stronger self-esteem than women.

Few research undertaken in sub-Saharan Africa found gender disparities in older youths' self-esteem (Asare Doku & Awuah-Peasah, 2012; Imhonde, 2013). The second hypothesis by Asare Doku and Awuah-Peasah asserted that male adolescents are greater likelihood than female adolescents to possess strong self-esteem. The statistical analysis revealed that the mean scores for males and females differed, supporting the idea that boys had higher self-esteem than girls.

To investigate how self-esteem, self-efficacy, and implicit concept of intelligence (entity and incremental) can vary by gender and grade level in a selected group of 6th and 8th-grade Norwegian students, an assessment of gender disparities revealed that females' sense of self-esteem was significantly lesser within the 8th graders than within boys in the same grade, (Diseth et al., 2014). With the absence of a widely agreed conceptual model to explain gender disparities in self-esteem growth from childhood to adolescence, numerous clarifications have been put forth, including puberty-related developmental modification and sociocultural setting

related to how males and females are treated in the educational setting, and gender disparities in ideals of body image.

Bhardwaj and Agrawal (2013) investigated gender disparities and preadolescent children's self-esteem during the formative period between the sexes (with ages between 9 and 12 years.). When data from male and female participants were analyzed, no considerable variations were discovered in overall, social, intellectual, and parental self-esteem. Girls held higher overall/ general self-esteem than their male counterparts, which was the sole significant variation was observed.

To explore the patterns in self-esteem in adolescents pertaining to gender disparities, a significant statistical discrepancy in the variable of adolescent self-esteem was observed, (Bhamani, Jamil, & Mohsin, 2014). Analysis of data showed that female adolescents outperformed boys on the self-esteem metric. This reflects the fact that in their study's sample, female adolescents had higher self-esteem than male adolescents.

Dissatisfaction with one's appearance can influence the quality of life of a person, particularly one's self-esteem (Yahaya, Apaak, & Hormenu, 2021). To ascertain whether senior high school students within the Offinso Municipality exhibit gender disparities in physical appearance, self-esteem, and health related behavior, Yahaya, Apaak and Hormenu found a large discrepancy in self-esteem levels between both genders. Compared to male pupils, female students exhibited significantly higher self-esteem scores.

The study conducted by Ajmal, Batool, Abid, and Iqbal (2018) aimed at the investigation of the relationship between students' self-concept and self-esteem. A significant hypothesis of the research was to find the gender variation between adult

males and females on self-esteem. Test performed to consolidate the hypothesis of the differential influence of self-esteem between male and female deduced that no notable differences existed on scores of self-esteem between males and females.

Cudjoe and Sarfo (2019) investigated the self-esteem levels of junior high school students in Ghana using planned classroom exercises incorporating local sociocultural concepts to increase students' self-esteem levels. They looked at the gender disparity among pupils and how it related to their self-esteem scores. Using an Independent t-Test, a review was undertaken to see if gender differences had any impact on self-esteem. It was indicated that the mean self-esteem scores for male and female did not significantly differ.

Childhood insecurities can influence many aspects of personality development, including adolescent self-esteem. Nyarko, Addai, and Amissah (2015) investigated the impact of early affixation on teenage interpersonal relationships and self-esteem among University of Ghana undergraduate students. No gender disparities in teenagers' self-esteem were discovered after data were evaluated using the multivariate analysis of variance. The participants' everyday interactions with the diverse student population on the university campus, together with their level of education, could be one explanation for this finding. The university's diverse student body and the equal interaction between male and female can have an influence on the quality of males' and females' interpersonal relationships and self-esteem.

The self-esteem of participants in one rural and one urban junior high school was measured to determine the general level of self-esteem among junior high school students in two districts in Ghana's Central Region. The independent sample

t-test showed no statistically significant difference among male and female students' level of self-esteem, (Nkyi, 2018). This finding suggests that gender is not a major factor of self-esteem. According to the present investigation, there is no discernible variation in males' and females' levels of self-esteem. The current study contradicts prior studies that reveal that generally speaking, male students score higher on self-esteem than their female counterparts. The people who constitute these communities believe they share a common ancestry and hence identify themselves as single people, regardless of gender. As a result, both men and women seem to have a sense of worth without prejudice toward the other gender.

Gender Difference in School Dropout Intention

Early detection of dropouts is crucial for the implementation of preventive measures, it is crucial for students, school administrations, and society as a whole.

Finding the causes of student's failure to complete their computer science (CS) courses was the focus of a study in this area. The study of Pappas, Giannakos, and Jaccheri (2016) aimed to investigate empirically how factors such as age and gender affect students' intention to finish their education (retention) in CS. By determining which variable affects dropout in computer science studies, they might be able to concentrate on how to enhance features linked to these variables to lower dropout rates. Contrary to earlier research that indicated gender to have an impact on students' decisions regarding their CS majors, gender and age did not alter students' intention to complete their CS studies. Males exhibited greater intent to complete their courses, but the distinction was not substantive, perhaps because a most of CS students are males and the few females show interest.

Xu (2008) investigated the low number of females in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) by juxtaposing the intentions of dropout and turnover among males and females in research and doctoral universities. The intention of both genders to leave academia did not vary, but women faculty were substantially more likely to change their position inside academia. Regarding their intent to depart for a part-time academic position or a position in full-time non-academia, men and women did not differ considerably from one another. This suggests that the low representation of women faculty in academic STEM sector may not be adequately explained by their departure from such fields.

In a study to investigate the intention to drop out of school and self-esteem among foreign and native kids affected by impoverishment only gender emerged as a significant factor in the variations intention to drop out of school over time in the two cohorts (Bianchi et al., 2021). This finding supported the notion that boys are prone to drop out of school early and demonstrated that gender in both indigenous people and immigrants poses a risk.

Using a quantitative approach, male students demonstrated a greater desire to drop out compared to female students, and they saw greater challenges to finishing their degree program in forestry (Cocoradă, Curtu, Năstasă, & Vorovencii, 2021). This outcome conflicts with research that indicates male and female students have relatively similar dropout probabilities.

Evolving from the literature of two major constructs, high school dropouts and school engagement, a study examined the responses to the High School Survey of Student Engagement provided by 431 11th- and 12th-grade students in two economically disadvantaged urban high schools in southeastern Virginia. Finally,

the intent to drop out of high school varied among males and females with females indicating a higher intent to dropout than males (Robinson, 2016).

Academic self-efficacy and school dropout Intention

Education has long been thought to be the bedrock of developing a nation and advancing the economy in every nation (Hon-Chan, 2017). Any nation's democracy depends on education, and getting a basic education is absolutely necessary to improving citizens' wellbeing. In addition to offering opportunities for students to master the fundamentals of courses like mathematics, geography, and history, primary and secondary education also enables the development of skills. These abilities include knowledge-seeking tendencies (which frequently develop into research and critical thinking abilities), the growth of self-efficacy and capacity to make enquiries and seek answers, and in doing so, become agents of change impacting communities and society.

There is enough proof to demonstrate that leaving school has negative effects on many facets of society, especially a nation's future development, (Roman, Davidse, Human-Hendricks, Butler-Kruger, & Sonn, 2022). They emphasized that in terms of the individual, the effects could be low self-esteem and diminished motivation, impediments in obtaining and retaining employment, a reduced earnings, becoming a passive worker, higher rates of committing crimes and being imprisoned, living in poverty, being susceptible to violent relationships, single parenthood, and teen pregnancy/parenting, being more probable to require the assistance of the government for medical services and welfare, and being less likely to pay taxes. The ripple impact will be observed with the increased rate of dropout in schools on the economy, likely stalling economic and social development, once

there are issues with education, the education system, and rising dropout rates (Biamba, 2013).

Self-efficacy is the idea that one can start and finish a task successfully. It is a person's confidence in what they can accomplish rather than what they will accomplish. Self-efficacy may possess a significant impact on a student's academic and school success, (Ghonsooly, Khajavy, Mahjoobi, & Sciences, 2014; Lee, Mao, & Tourism, 2016). Therefore, self-efficacy can be viewed as the source of inspiration, tenacity, and personal success. It could also be the motivating factor, influencing whether students plan to finish their education or drop out. The most detached students have little faith in their academic prowess and blame their academic struggles on their low self-esteem.

Self-efficacy is an essential component of behavioral regulation and a crucial element in the growth of behavioral intentions and behavior (Cho & Lee, 2015). Further, according to Nemtcán, Sæle, Gamst-Klaussen, and Svartdal (2020) psychological model of academic attrition, self-efficacy is a crucial prerequisite for both students' intentions and actual perseverance.

Ahmadl, Said, Awang, and Yasin (2014) believed that by promoting self-efficacy as one strategy to establish a loving and supportive learning environment, the problem of school dropout can be lessened. Young individuals indicated fewer dropout intentions when they felt very supportive of one another and capable of handling challenging situations (Samuel & Burger, 2020). Samuel & Burger, found accumulating evidence in their investigation that poor academic self-efficacy is a signal that predicts actual school dropout, and higher levels of social aid and time-averaged self-efficacy were linked to lower levels intentions to drop out, and vice

versa. Their results revealed that young people who felt they had greater than average levels of academic self-efficacy had decreased impact of bad life occurrences and dropout intentions. Additionally, even in the face of unfavorable life situations, young people are substantially less likely to consider abandoning their academic or career pursuits when they feel more efficacious than usual.

According to Peguero and Shaffer (2015), higher academic self-efficacy can help students succeed in school and reduce their risk of dropping out. Within the participants of Peguero and Shaffer's study, it was realized that increasing their academic self-efficacy reduced the probability of dropping out for both male and female members of racial and ethnic minorities.

In research conducted by Brown, Galindo, Quarles, and Cook (2019) to examine the links between academic and general self-efficacy, dropout status (non-leavers, temporary-leavers, and permanent-leavers), and school context, results found minor variations between temporary and permanent leavers. Compared to non-leavers, dropouts reported lower levels of academic self-efficacy yet better overall self-efficacy (non-dropouts). In essence, both self-efficacy and academic experiences have a favorable influence on academic performance.

Baier (2014), found out in a study on the role of academic factors, self-efficacy, mentoring relationships, and learning communities in persistence and academic success of freshmen college students that, academic self-efficacy was a major indicator of the intention to persist and hence not dropout. The study by Baier (2014), opined that students' first-year college self-efficacy and mentorship views were the best predictor of their intentions to finish college. Similarly, according to

Cortes et al. (2014), lower self-efficacy among students increases their tendency for deciding to leave school.

The aim of the study of Roman, Davidse, Human-Hendricks, Butler-Kruger and Sonn, (2022) was to evaluate and contrast students in high and low socioeconomic schools' intentions to drop out, motivation, and self-efficacy of learners (Grades 9 and 11). Overall, the results revealed notable disparities between both sets of learners, particularly in terms of desire to drop out, motivation, parental and community support, leisure, independent learning, and academic accomplishment. The study's findings imply that most students have high levels of self-efficacy and believe they will be able to achieve their academic objectives. Overall, both students from high and poor socioeconomic schools experienced this. In spite of this fact, more students in low socioeconomic schools considered and wanted to quit school. This shows that, learners' intention to dropout was related to other factors and not their self-efficacy.

Self-esteem and school dropout Intention

The concept of psychological well-being at school has received extensive literary analysis (Tomás, Gutiérrez, Pastor, & Sancho, 2020). Affective elements and behavioral signs of a positive adjustment are its defining features (Renshaw & Bolognino, 2017). School dropout as a behavioral indication and personal self-esteem as an affective element have both been regarded as indicators of psychological well-being (Bianchi et al., 2021). Self-esteem which is a broad evaluation of an individual's own value and significance (Rosenberg, 1965) steadily emerges during infancy and adolescence and grows more permanent in early adolescence.

According to research on Rosenberg's model (1965), self-esteem has a positive and a negative element that functions as two complementing aspects (Bianchi et al., 2021). Positive self-esteem (happiness with the self) may be regarded as a great predictor of psychological health within the school given that it prevents despair and anxiety and is positively correlated with academic success and school involvement. Negative developmental results, such as academic failure, mental disease, depression, anxiety and dropout are associated with negative self-esteem (self-dissatisfaction) during adolescence.

The objective of the study conducted by Cortes et al. (2014) sought to ascertain whether basic self-assessment qualities, burnout, withdrawal, social support, and professional decision-making challenges are important indicators of students' desire to drop out. Non-probability sample and a cross-sectional design were employed. At the concluding phase of the logistic regression analysis, the absence of self-esteem was one of the key determinants of the intention to drop out. They further opined in their study that pupils with lower levels of self-esteem have the greater likelihood of planning to leave school. People with strong self-esteem, therefore, believe their opinions matter and are less likely to consider quitting.

Klepfer (2015), did a quantitative investigation of the relationship between self-esteem and motivation for high school graduation as self-esteem demonstrated to be a key indicator of on-track for graduation. Similar to the results of Klepfer is the study of Park et al. (2016), that made the assumption that academic success and school life happiness are positively correlated with self-esteem. Students who lack self-confidence are therefore less motivated to learn, which increases their risk to cultivate the intention to dropout and eventually leave school compared to students

with higher self-esteem. The results of Handanos and Aktan (2018), in their research concluded that individuals chose to leave school because they possessed low levels of self-esteem which supports the assertion of the earlier authors. In accordance with previous studies, the work of Bianchi et al. (2021) demonstrated that low self-esteem was positively correlated with plans to leave school. The investigation of Lawrence and Adebowale (2022) demonstrated a link between low self-esteem and adolescent dropout.

Although poor self-esteem in nursing students is frequently mentioned, little is known about its starting point prior to enrolling in nursing programs and the factors that affect it. When beginning their nursing education, students' self-esteem was discovered to be medium and possibly fragile, and dropout rates were linked to low self-esteem (Dancot et al., 2021).

Lawrence and Adebowale (2022) on predictors of adolescent dropout: family composition, mental health, and self-esteem concluded that self-esteem was a predictive variable of school dropout. The research established a link between adolescent dropout rates and self-esteem.

Chapter Summary

This chapter was dedicated to a description of the literature about the variables within the study. Concepts on academic self-esteem, self-efficacy and school dropout intention were reviewed. Theories adopted for this study and hence discussed in this chapter were self-efficacy theory by Albert Bandura, Ajzen's theory of planned behavior and Tinto's institutional departure model. The self-efficacy theory basically is how a person assesses his/ her own potential to carry out actions needed to handle prospective situation. This, the person obtains through

practice, watching other people successfully execute similar courses of action, receiving positive feedback and having a good emotional, physical, and psychological well-being. The planned behavior theory talks about the selection of a particular behavior by an individual such as dropping out of school being based on the behavior they intend to perform. Institutional departure model postulated that how a student is incorporated into the academic and social environment of the school determines the student's persistence or departure from the school. The chapter also discussed the empirical underpinnings of variations between the sexes in academic self-efficacy, self-esteem, gender variations in school dropout intention, academic self-efficacy and school dropout intention and finally, self-esteem and school dropout intention.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

This chapter deals with how the study was undertaken. It discussed the study's design, the study area, population, sample and sampling procedure, data collection instrument, data collection procedure and data processing and analysis.

Research Design

Apuke (2017) defined methodology as the comprehensive procedures followed by researchers at the start of a research project. In this particular study, a quantitative research approach was utilized, which is built on the foundation of the scientific method. This approach employs deductive reasoning, where the researcher develops a hypothesis and collects data to investigate the subject, subsequently using the study's data as evidence to determine the validity of the hypotheses.

The primary focus of the quantitative research approach is on the quantification and analysis of variables (Mohajan, 2020). It involves using numerical information and statistical tools to analyse data in order to address questions related to who, how much, what, where, when, how many, and how (Apuke, 2017). Idha et al. (2022) further elaborate on this concept, defining quantitative research methods as the process of describing a phenomenon by collecting numerical data and analysing it using mathematical techniques, particularly statistics. In contrast, according to Liutov and Kolosova (2017), a quantitative study involves gathering data to quantify and subject it to statistical analysis, aiming to confirm or refute alternative knowledge assertions.

For this study, the quantitative approach was chosen because data was collected through a structured research questionnaire, comprising measurable characteristics of the participants. The information was presented in numerical form, facilitating the drawing of generalizations. Tables and figures were utilized to represent large sets of data and illustrate the nature of relationships among variables.

Within the quantitative approach, a correlational research design was employed for this study. In correlational research, the researcher does not directly influence or manipulate any factors. It is a type of non-experimental study where data on two variables is collected, and the statistical relationship (correlation) between them is analysed. The main objective of correlational research is to determine the existence and strength of a link between two elements. Researchers often choose correlational research when it is impractical or undesirable to manipulate the independent variable of interest through experimentation.

Correlational research allows the evaluation of behavior as it occurs in individuals' daily lives and enables testing of anticipated correlations between variables, as well as prediction-making (Stangor, 2011). It is useful when experimental research is not feasible because the predictor factors cannot be changed. However, correlational research has a significant limitation in that it cannot establish causal relationships between the observed variables. The presence of a third unidentified variable (a mediating variable) influencing both variables simultaneously make it challenging to claim that one variable causes the other.

Given that the study did not aim to determine if academic self-efficacy and self-esteem were causative factors for students' intention to drop out of school, a correlational design was deemed more appropriate. The research investigation sought to establish a connection between students' academic self-efficacy, self-esteem, and dropout intentions, and to identify which of the two independent factors is more strongly associated with the dependent variable. The study did not involve assigning students to experimental groups to observe changes in academic self-efficacy and self-esteem affecting changes in student dropout intentions.

Study Area

The Ahafo Ano South West District is one of the districts located in the Ashanti Region of Ghana, comprising 2.6% of the region's total area. Originally part of the Ahafo Ano District, it was separated to form the Ahafo Ano South District in 1988. Subsequently, in 2018, the Ahafo Ano South District was further divided into two, leading to the creation of the Ahafo Ano South West and Ahafo Ano South East districts. The district's administrative center is situated in Mankranso.

Covering approximately 645.54 square kilometers, the Ahafo Ano South West District shares boundaries with the Ahafo Ano South East District to the north, Atwima Mponua District to the south, Atwima Nwabiagya Municipal to the east, and Ahafo Ano North Municipal to the west, all within the Ashanti Region. Geographically, it lies between longitude 1o45'W and 2o20'W and latitude 6°42'N and 7o10'N. The district is located within the forest zone of Ghana.

As of the 2010 Population and Housing Census, the Ahafo Ano South West District had a total population of 62,529, representing 1.3% of the Ashanti Region's population and 0.3% of Ghana's population. The male population accounts for 51.8% (37,172) of the total, while females make up 48.2% (34,589). The higher number of males can be attributed to the presence of cocoa farms, farming activities, and mining operations that predominantly attract male workers.

Young individuals under the age of 15 constitute 43.0% of the district's population, while youths aged 15-24 represent 17.6%, and the elderly aged 65 and above account for 4.6%. This indicates that the young population (0-24 years) comprises a significant portion (60.6%) of the district's total population, presenting

opportunities for socio-economic growth. However, this also brings about challenges in areas such as education, health, environment, and security.

The age dependency ratio of the district stands at 90.8%, higher than the regional and national averages of 72.5% and 75.6%, respectively. This indicates that for every 100 individuals in the working age group (15-64 years), there are about 91 dependents (children and elderly) in the district. The economy of the Ahafo Ano South West District primarily relies on agriculture, employing approximately 74.9% of the economically engaged population aged 15 years and older. Agriculture contributes significantly to the district's socio-economic development, generating around 75.0% of the people's income. The key agricultural activities include crop cultivation, livestock rearing, fisheries, agro-forestry, and nontraditional commodities. Notably, the district also possesses valuable mineral deposits such as gold, bauxite, manganese, clay, and sand.

In terms of education, there are 201 basic schools in the district, consisting of 75 KG, 75 primary, and 51 Junior High Schools (JHS). These schools are organized into five educational circuits, with an accessibility rate of 85.2% and an average walking distance of 3.5 km. Additionally, there are two senior high schools in the district, one public and one private, located in Mankranso and Wioso, respectively. Regarding employment, the majority of workers (74.9%) are engaged in skilled agricultural, forestry, and fishery occupations. This is followed by service and sales workers (8.2%) and craft and trade workers (7.6%). Skilled workers, including professionals and technicians, account for 5.0% of the employed individuals. Males dominate in most occupational categories, except for service and sale workers and elementary occupations, where females are more prevalent. Both

male and female workers show a high proportion in skilled agricultural, forestry, and fishery occupations, constituting 77.3% and 72.5%, respectively.

Population

Banerjee and Chaudhury (as cited in Asiamah, Mensah and Oteng-Abayie, 2017) states as that a complete group about which some information must be collected and ascertained is referred to as a population. Each member of the population must share at least one trait of interest. This trait qualifies participants to be part of the population.

All Junior High School pupils in Ahafo Ano South-West District comprising 3,420 made up the target group for this study. 1,153 form two students from the district's 3,420 Junior High School students were available for the study and formed the accessible population of the study. Students in Form 2 were explicitly chosen as the accessible population since it was thought that they had sufficient exposure to the Junior High School system. However, because form one students had just started junior high school and form three students were getting ready for their final examination, form one and form three pupils were not used. Additionally, Adam et al. (2016) indicated in their research that form two students of junior high schools mostly record the greatest dropout rates.

Sampling Procedure

Based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling size determination, the expected sample size for this research was 291 out of a total population of 1,153. The degree of sampling error in a test result is determined by the sample size. The sample was obtained by a multistage sampling technique. The process of choosing

individuals that are representative of the group being investigated is known as sampling (Polit, 2017). It is involved with selecting a subset of people from a statistical population to estimate population characteristics. To put it another way, sampling is the process of picking a subset of a population to represent the complete population.

Multistage cluster sampling method was employed for this study because the population was widely spread, geographically. The junior high schools within the district were already grouped into five circuits which were Wioso, Mpasaaso, Kunsu, Barniekrom and Mankranso circuits. The researcher, therefore, used the pre-existing groups/ circuits as the clusters constituting five clusters named, A, B, C, D and E. Using the lottery method, two junior high schools each were randomly selected from each cluster or circuit yielding a total of 10 schools. Simple random sampling is a sampling strategy that uses an unbiased selection process to ensure that each member of a population has an equal probability of being picked (Sharma, 2017).

Any of the units in the subset has an equal probability of being picked. Because every member of the target population has an equal chance of being picked, it is the least biased sampling approach (Jawale, 2012). The goal of simple random sampling is to provide each person an equal chance of being picked. This is intended to give a group representation that is devoid of researcher bias. Tables 1 and 2 include data on the sampled circuits and schools, respectively.

A**B****C****D****E**

1.Domeabra	1.Mpasaaso	St.	1.Kunsu R/C	1.Ohiapae	D/A	1.Mankranso
D/A	Peters		2.Nyameadom	D/A	2.Barniekrom	Methodist
2.Wioso	St	2.Tabiri	Gyansah	3.Kunsu A	D/A	2.Mankranso
Peters	D/A		4.Kunsu B	D/A	Dunyan	“B”
3. Hwibaa	D/A	3.Adadekrom	D/A	5.Kunsu Al Aziz	4.Nyamebekyere	3.Beposo
4.Wioso	D/A	4.MpasaasoII	D/A	6.Bonkrom	D/A	III D/A
5. Abodease	D/A	5.Achiase	D/A	7.Asibe Nkwanta	5.Nyinanufu	5.Holy Prophet
D/A		6.Dotiem	Mpasaaso	8.Kunsu-Camp	D/A	D/A
6. Anitemfe	D/A			9.Kunsu	Dotiem	6.Afreseni
D/A		7.Ango	D/A	D/A	7.Nkyesedanho	D/A
7.Pewodie	D/A	8.Mpasaaso	Manhyia			7.Bonkwaso
8.Adiembra	D/A					8.Abaasua
D/A		9.Asuokor	D/A			D/A
9.Bonsukrom						
D/A						

Table 1- Cluster of schools

Source; AASWD GES, (2020)

Table 2- Random sample of Junior High Schools from the clusters

Schools	Population	JHS2 Population	Boys	Girls
Wioso St. Peters R/C	128	41	22	19
Mankranso Methodist	151	51	30	21
Hwibaa D/A	78	26	15	11

Nkyesedanho D/A	35	11	8	3
Mpasaso St. Peters R/C	131	43	19	24
Tabiri Gyansah D/A	129	43	26	17
Barniekrom D/A	67	20	13	7
Nyinanufu D/A	54	18	7	11
Kunsu R/C	140	47	29	18
Kunsu B' D/A	110	36	13	23
Total	1023	336	182	154

Source: AASDW GES (2020)

The proportionate sampling approach was used to determine the number of students to be sampled from each sampled school. This approach was used since the researcher noticed large differences in the number of pupils in each sampled school. The researcher was able to gather a proportional representation from the participating schools as a result of proportional sampling.

The researcher divided the Junior High School form two population of each selected school by the total population of all Junior High School form two students in the selected schools and multiplied it by the total sample size required for the study; the formula used to obtain the sample size proportionately from the accessible population is shown below.

$S = m/M * N$ Where

S represents the number of students selected from each school

m represents the total population of form two students in each school

M represents the total population of form two students in all the 10 selected schools

N represents the total number of students needed to conduct the study.

Furthermore, the same proportionate sampling technique was used to determine the number of boys as well as the number of girls to be selected from each sampled school. This was done because there were differences in the population of boys and girls in the sampled school.

Table: 3 shows the breakdown of the sample size of the selected schools

Name of schools	No. of students selected	Boys	Girls
Wioso St. Peters R/C	36	19	17
Domiabra D/A	44	27	17
Hwibaa D/A	23	13	10
Abodease D/A	10	7	3
Mpasaso St. Peters R/C	37	16	21
Tabiri Gyansah D/A	37	22	13
Barniekrom D/A	17	10	7
Nyinanufu D/A	15	6	9
Kunsu R/C	41	25	16

Kunsu B' D/A	31	11	20
Total	291	165	126

Source: Field Survey, (2020)

Because the study used human beings, the figures obtained in table 3 were rounded up to the nearest whole numbers.

Data Collection Instrument

Data from respondents was collected using a self-administered questionnaire, which consists of a set of questions or items designed to gather information about their attitudes, experiences, and views. Questionnaires have limitations in data collection, but they offer significant advantages, such as providing original data on individuals' behavior, experiences, social interactions, attitudes, opinions, and knowledge of events. They also offer insights into societal trends, processes, beliefs, attitudes, and interpretations. Additionally, questionnaires are a practical and cost-effective research technique, allowing for comprehensive studies over a broad or geographically scattered population (McGuirk & O'Neill, 2016).

For this study, the questionnaire was developed using previously defined measures from other researchers. The data collecting tool consisted of three scales: the Academic Self-Efficacy Scale (Sachitra & Bandara, 2017) with a reliability of 0.79, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965) with a reliability of 0.90, and the Hardre and Reeve (2003) dropout intention questionnaire with a reliability of 0.79. The questionnaire was divided into four sections (A-D), with section A collecting information on respondents' demographic attributes, and sections B, C, and D

collecting data on students' self-esteem, academic self-efficacy, and school dropout intentions.

The instrument used a four-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree," with a total of 35 items across the four sections. These included two items on respondents' demographics, 10 items on self-esteem, 20 items on academic self-efficacy, and three items on school dropout intentions. Respondents were asked to respond to the items on the same sheet without seeking further clarifications.

Before the main survey, the instrument underwent pilot testing to ensure clarity of instructions, questions, and scale items. Forty form two students from schools that were not included in the main study were randomly selected for the pilot test, as they shared similar characteristics with the students involved in the study. The reliability of the instrument was assessed during the pre-testing stage, with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient used to measure consistency. The adapted instrument showed reliable as Cronbach's Alpha values exceeded 0.70, the established threshold for reliability. The Cronbach's Alpha values were 0.73, 0.87 and 0.83 for the Academic Self-Efficacy Scale, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Hardre and Reeve dropout intention questionnaire respectively.

Validity of the instruments was also assessed during the pre-testing phase. Criterion and construct validation were established by presenting the instrument to teachers and specialists knowledgeable in the field for critical analysis. The researcher's supervisor also contributed to establishing the validity of the tools, with

their evaluation results considered and incorporated into the questionnaire to ensure validity.

Data Collection Procedure

Ethical clearance was taken from the Institutional Review Board of the University of Cape Coast as well as an introductory letter from the Department of Education and Psychology. Furthermore, a formal permission from the District Education Office and then from the headteachers of the schools that participated in the research was sought. Permission from parents/ guardians of the students was equally sought for. The instrument was delivered and collected personally by the researcher with the help of a research assistant. A period of one month was used to collect data with the help of two trained research assistants who were academic colleagues. The choice of using academic colleagues was based on the fact that they possessed knowledge in the mode of data collection. The participants were informed on the nature of the instrument and how it should be answered.

Data Processing and Analysis

Given that this was a study that was quantitative in nature, the use of quantitative statistical methods was crucial. The three research questions were answered using means and standard deviations. The study hypotheses one, two, and three were tested using the independent samples t-test. The fourth and fifth hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment correlation.

Chapter Summary

The chapter provided information on the research design that was used for the study, how data for the study was collected, organized, analyzed and presented

for easy understanding. The chapter further provided information on statistical techniques and systematic enquiry into the study.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This fourth chapter presents the results of the entire research preceded by the discussion of the results and their implication. The purpose of the investigation was to investigate the academic self-efficacy and self-esteem school dropout intention among Junior High School students in Ahafo Ano South West district. The analysis and interpretation were carried out depending on findings of the research questions and hypotheses that were set for the investigation. The 291 respondents that were randomly chosen for the study had a 100% data return rate. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages, means and standard deviations) as well as inferential statistics (Independent samples t- test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation) were utilized to analyse the gathered data. Results of the demographic characteristics of respondents covers the first part of this chapter whilst the study's research questions and hypotheses are used to inform the presentation of the results in the second section.

Demographic Results

The purpose of this aspect of the instrument aimed to get the respondents to divulge personal information. This information included respondent's age and gender. Table 4 presents demographic information of respondents:

Table 4- Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Variable	Response	
Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	165	56.7
Female	126	43.3
TOTAL	291	100.0
Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
11-14	128	44.0
15-17	158	54.3
18 and above	5	1.7
Total	291	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table 4 presents results on the demographic characteristics of respondents. It had two characteristics which are gender and age range. With regards to respondent's gender, male participants dominated the sample with 165 respondents representing 56.7% whilst female respondents were 126 representing 43.3%. Respondents' ages were put in three different age ranges which were, 11-14, 15-17 and 18 and above. Majority of respondents were within 15- 17 which were 158, representing 54.3%, followed by 11-14 with 128 respondents representing 44.0%,

with the least being those within 18 years and above which were five respondents representing 1.7%.

Research Question One: What is the level of academic self-efficacy of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District?

The focus of this research question was to ascertain the level of Junior High School students' academic self- efficacy in Ahafo Ano South West district. This subsection of the instrument for this investigation entailed 20 items which were scored on a four-point Likert type scale. The scale had four codes, each with a designated value in a descriptive manner. Code 1 represented Strongly Disagree (SD), code 2 represented Disagree (D), code 3 represented Agree (A) and code 4 represented Strongly Agree (SA). The item with the number 16 was reverse-coded. A criterion mean of 2.50 ($(1+2+3+4 = 10/4)$), which is the average mean, together with means and standard deviations, were used in the study. Those respondents whose mean values were higher than the criterion mean were deemed to agree with the statement, while those whose mean values were lower than the criterion mean were deemed to disagree.

Table 5: Distribution of Responses on Academic Self-Efficacy

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I ask questions in class	291	2.91	.83
I respond to questions asked in class	291	2.97	.86
I draw up a personal time table	291	2.33	1.08
I ask for help from my teachers	291	2.47	1.02

I write up additional notes	291	2.29	1.19
I plan my time for examination	291	3.18	.84
I ask for help from my friends	291	2.96	.93
when I have issues in subject matters			
I explain subject matters to my friends	291	2.79	1.55
I engage in academic discussions with my friends	291	2.89	.93
I make a good attempt to answer questions in class	291	3.12	.84
I pay attention during lessons in class	291	3.38	.76
I produce my best work in examinations	291	3.28	.74
I submit my assignments on time	291	3.09	.88
I make an attempt to submit group assignments on time	291	3.17	.97
I express my opinion when I do not understand the lesson	291	2.75	.91
I feel nervous when I am doing presentations	291	2.40	1.03

I come forward to do presentations in group assignments	291	2.79	1.00
I make use of feedback on my examinations	291	2.89	.94
I make use of feedback on my assignments	291	3.08	.87
I feel confident I can complete my JHS within 3 years	291	3.69	.75
Valid N (listwise)	291		

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table 5 shows results of the level of academic self- efficacy of respondents. The analysis was done using a criterion mean of 2.50, from which mean values greater than the criterion mean represent agreement whilst mean values lower than 2.50 represents disagreement.

The majority of the replies had mean values that were higher than the criterion mean (2.50). For example, respondents concurred that they ask questions in class (M =2.91, SD= .8). They agreed that they answer questions in class (M=2.97, SD= .836). On the contrary, respondents disagreed with the statement that they draw up a personal timetable (M=2.33, SD= 1.08). They disagreed to the statement, they ask for help from their teachers (M= 2.47, SD= 1.02) and disagreed they write additional note to add up to those given in class by their teachers (M= 2.29, SD= 1.189).

Furthermore, on the issue of whether they plan their time for examination, they agreed ($M= 3.18$, $SD= .84$) and also agreed to asking for help from their friends when they have issues in subject matter ($M= 2.96$, $SD= .93$). They equally agreed they explained subject matter to their friends ($M= 2.79$, $SD= 1.55$) and engage in academic discussions with their friends ($M= 2.89$, $SD= .93$). In relation to making an attempt to answer questions in class, they agreed ($M= 3.12$, $SD= .84$) and also pay attention during lessons in class ($M= 3.38$, $SD= .76$). During examinations, they agreed they produce their best work ($M= 3.28$, $SD= .74$) and submit their assignment on time ($M= 3.09$, $SD= .88$) as well as making an attempt to submit group assignment on time ($M= 3.17$, $SD= .97$).

When it comes to expressing their opinion when they do not understand the lesson, they agreed ($M= 2.75$, $SD= .91$). Even though they disagreed to feeling nervous when doing presentations ($M= 2.40$, $SD= 1.03$), they agreed to coming forward to do presentations in group assignments ($M= 2.79$, $SD= 1.00$). On the use of feedback on their examinations they agreed ($M= 2.89$, $SD= .94$) as well as agreed on the use of feedback on their assignments ($M= 3.08$, $SD= .87$), hence agreeing to feeling confident to complete their JHS within 3 years ($M= 3.689$, $SD= .75$).

In sum, respondents showed a grand average mean of 2.92, which is higher than the criterion mean of 2.50, indicating a strong level of academic self-efficacy. Conclusion can, therefore, be made that students in the Ahafo Ano South West District have a high level of academic self-efficacy.

Research Question Two: What is the level of self-esteem of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District?

The core of this research question was to find out the level of Junior High School students' academic self-esteem in Ahafo Ano South West district. This subsection of the instrument for this investigation had 10 items which were scored on a four-point Likert type scale. Descriptively, the scale was with four codes with their respective designated values. Code 1 represented Strongly Disagree (SD), code 2 represented Disagree (D), code 3 represented Agree (A) and code 4 represented Strongly Agree (SA). Item numbered two, five, six, eight and nine were reversed coded. A criterion mean of 2.50 ($(1+2+3+4=10/4)$), together with means and standard deviations, were used in the study. Respondents with mean values above the criterion mean were considered to agree with the statement whilst respondents with mean values below the criterion mean were considered to disagree with the statement.

Table 6: Distribution of Responses on Self-esteem

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	291	3.07	1.08
At times, I think I am not good at all	291	2.52	1.03
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	291	3.57	.71
I am able to do things as well as most people do	291	3.16	.81

I feel I do not have much to be proud of	291	2.47	1.07
I certainly feel useless at times	291	3.17	1.11
I feel that I am a person of good value at least on an equal plane with others	291	3.40	.86
I wish I could have more respect for myself	291	1.59	.73
In all, I am likely to feel that I am a failure	291	3.14	1.05
I take a positive attitude towards myself	291	3.39	.81
Valid N (listwise)	291		

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table 6 represents the results of the self-esteem of respondents. A criterion mean of 2.50 was used as the basis of the analysis where mean values higher than the criterion mean of 2.50 was considered to be in agreement whilst mean values less than the criterion mean indicated disagreement.

A good number of the responses by respondents had mean values higher than the criterion mean of 2.50. Out of the 10 items, only 2 items were in disagreement. Respondents agreed that, on a whole, they are content with who they are (M= 3.07, SD= 1.08). They agreed that at certain times they believed they are not good at all (M= 2.52, SD= 1.03). They equally agreed that they believe they possess a variety of positive traits (M= 3.57, SD= .71) and are competent in performing tasks on par with the majority of individuals (M= 3.16, SD= .81).

The respondents dissented from the statement that they felt they had little to be proud of ($M= 2.47$, $SD= 1.13$) yet agreed that without a doubt, there are times when they feel worthless. ($M= 3.17$, $SD= 1.11$) as well as feeling they are people of good value at least on an equal plane with others ($M= 3.40$, $SD= .86$). In relation to whether they wished they could have more respect for themselves, they disagreed ($M= 1.59$, $SD= .73$). Nonetheless, they agreed to likely feeling that they are a failure ($M= 3.14$, $SD= 1.05$) and taking a positive attitude towards themselves ($M= 3.39$, $SD= .81$).

Averagely, respondents showed a high level of self-esteem with a grand average mean of 2.95, above the criterion mean of 2.50. It can, therefore, be concluded that that students in the Ahafo Ano South West District have a high level of self-esteem.

Research Question Three: What is the level of school dropout intention of junior high school students in the Ahafo Ano South West District.

The principal focus of this research question was to find out the level of Junior High School students' school dropout intentions in Ahafo Ano South West district. This subsection of the instrument for this study had three (3) items which were scored on a four-point Likert type scale. The scale had four codes on it, each with a designated value that fit the description. Code 1 represented Strongly Disagree (SD), code 2 represented Disagree (D), code 3 represented Agree (A) and code 4 represented Strongly Agree (SA). The analysis was done using means and standard deviations with a criterion mean of 2.50 ($(1+2+3+4 =10/4)$). Respondents with mean values above the criterion mean were considered to be in agreement with

the statement whilst respondents with mean values below the criterion mean were considered to disagree with the statement.

Table 7: Distribution of Responses on School Dropout Intentions

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I sometimes consider dropping out of school	291	1.94	1.12
I intend to drop out of school	291	1.71	1.05
I sometimes feel unsure about continuing my studies year after year.	291	2.10	1.25
Valid N (listwise)	291		

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table 7 contains results of the school dropout intentions of respondents. 2.50, which was the established criterion mean was used the basis. Values greater than the criterion mean indicates agreement and values less than the criterion mean indicates disagreement. Out of the three items of the school dropout subsection of the instrument, respondents were in disagreement with all items. Respondents disagreed with considering dropping out of school sometimes (M= 1.94, SD= 1.12) as well as having developed the intention to drop out of school (M= 1.71, SD= 1.05). They further disagreed to sometimes feeling uncertain about continuing their studies year after year (M= 2.10, SD= 1.25).

In total, respondents showed a low level of school dropout intention with an average mean of 1.92, below the criterion mean of 2.50. that students in the Ahafo Ano South West District have a low-level school dropout intention.

Research Hypothesis One: There will be a statistically significant gender difference in academic self-efficacy among junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South-West district.

To test the first hypothesis of this study, the independent sample t-test was employed. In choosing a particular statistical tool such as the independent sample t-test, certain assumptions need to be met. Normality of data is one of the major assumptions that need to be checked. Hence the researcher checked for normality of the variable (academic self- efficacy) before conducting the main t-test. Figure 1 shows the normality test for the variable.

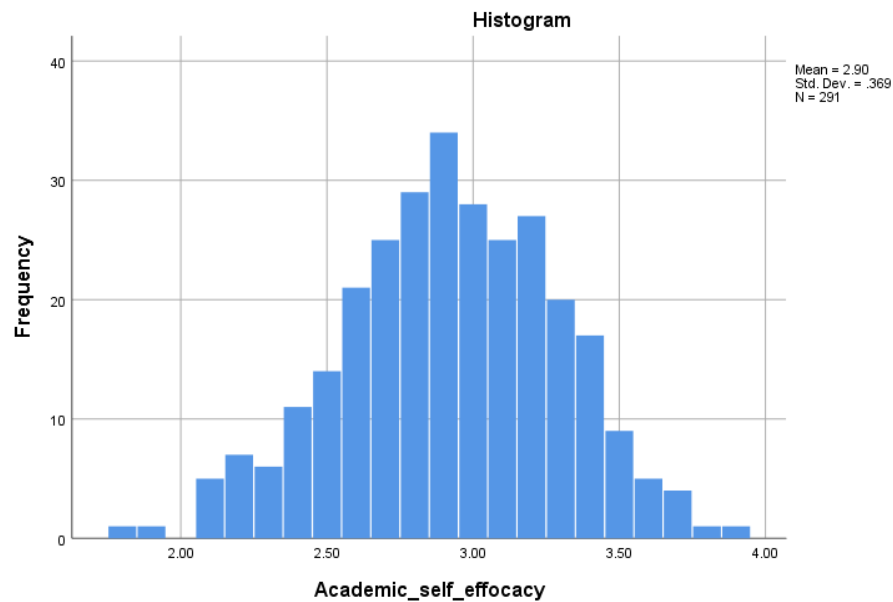


Table 8: *Result of Independent Sample t-test comparing the academic self-efficacies between male and female participants*

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	sig. (2-tailed)
Academic	Male	165	2.95	.36	1.438	289	.152
Self- efficacy	Female	126	2.89	.32			

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table 8 shows the result of the test of difference in academic self-efficacy between males and females using independent sample t-test. The result indicates that there was no statistically significant difference in the scores for males ($M = 2.95$, $SD = .36$) and females ($M = 2.89$, $SD = .32$); $t(289) = 1.438$, $p = 0.152$ at .05 level of significance. It implies that the level of male participants' academic self-efficacy is not higher than the female participants. Therefore, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis.

Research Hypothesis Two:

H_{02} ; There will be no statistically significant gender difference in self-esteem among junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District.

H_2 ; There will be a statistically significant gender difference in self-esteem among junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South-West District.

The second hypothesis was to ascertain if or not there was a difference between the self-esteem of male and female respondents. After considering further statistical methods, it was determined that the independent sample t-test proved to

be a suitable method for testing this hypothesis after the assumption of normality was satisfied. Table 9 presents the results of the test.

Table 9: *Result of Independent Sample t-test comparing the self-esteem between male and female respondents.*

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	sig. (2-tailed)
Self-Esteem	Male	165	2.95	.36	.207	289	.836
	Female	126	2.94	.39			

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table 9 shows the findings of the test comparing the self-esteem levels of male and female respondents. The result shows that the scores for males did not differ statistically significantly from those for males ($M = 2.95$, $SD = .36$) and females ($M = 2.94$, $SD = .39$); $t(289) = .207$, $p = .836$ at .05 level of significance. This suggests that the level of male participants' self-esteem is not higher than the female participants. Therefore, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis.

Research Hypothesis Three:

H_{03} ; There will be no statistically significant gender difference in school dropout intention among junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South West District.

H_3 ; There will be a statistically significant gender difference in school dropout intention among junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South West District.

The study further investigated if there was a difference in the school dropout intention among male and female respondents. After assumption of normality was satisfied, the independent sample t-test was employed for testing this third hypothesis. The results are presented in table 10.

Table 10: *Result of Independent Sample t-test comparing the school dropout intention of male and female respondents.*

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	sig. (2-tailed)
Self-Esteem	Male	165	2.00	.84	1.927	289	.055
	Female	126	1.80	.89			

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table 10 presents the findings of the test of difference in school dropout intention among male and female respondents. The result depicts that in terms of the scores for males, there existed no statistically significant difference ($M = 2.00$, $SD = .84$) and females ($M = 1.80$, $SD = .89$); $t(289) = 1.927$, $p = .055$ at .05 significance level. This suggests that the level of male participants' school dropout intention is not higher than the female participants. Due to this, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis.

Research Hypothesis four:

H₀₄ There will be no statistically significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and dropout intention among junior high school students in the Ahafo Ano South-West district?

H₄; There will be a statistically significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and dropout intention among junior high school students in the Ahafo Ano South-West District.

As a way of achieving the purpose of the study, the researcher tested the hypothesis to ascertain if there is a statistically significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and school dropout intention of participants. To achieve this, Pearson correlation was computed among the two variables after the assumption of normality was achieved.

Table 11: *Pearson Product Moment Correlation between Academic self-efficacy and School Dropout Intention*

		School dropout Intention
	Pearson Correlation	-.155
Academic Self-Efficacy	Sig. (2- tailed)	.008
	N	291

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Source: Field Survey (2022)

The outcome of the findings as shown in table 11 revealed that Pearson Product Correlation of academic self- efficacy and school dropout intention was found to be negatively weak and statistically significant, $r = -.155$ ($p = .008$). In this study, a weak negative relationship was observed with enough evidence to suggest that this correlation exists in the sample, hence the result being statistically significant. The researcher, therefore, needed to reject the null hypothesis. As academic self-efficacy increased, school dropout intention of the students in the study decreased and vice versa. The weak nature of this relationship presupposes that knowing one of the variables gives only a small/weak prediction of the value of the other.

Research Hypothesis Five:

H₀₅; There will be no statistically significant relationship between self- esteem and dropout intention among junior high school students in the Ahafo Ano South-West District.

H₅; There will be a statistically significant relationship between self-esteem and dropout intention among junior high school students in the Ahafo Ano South-West District.

Table 12: *Pearson Product Moment Correlation between self-esteem and School Dropout Intention.*

School dropout Intention	
Pearson Correlation	-.373

Self-Esteem	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000
	N	291

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table 12 indicates the result of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation between self-esteem and school dropout intention. Results from table shows a negatively weak and statistically significant relationship $r = -.373$ ($p = .000$) between respondents' self- esteem and school dropout intention. With this result, a weak and negative relationship which was also significant was observed between self-esteem and school dropout intention. It follows that as self-efficacy increased, school dropout intention decreased, though there was a small chance of this observation occurring. The researcher, therefore, rejected the null hypothesis.

Discussion

The study was about academic self-efficacy and self-esteem and their relationship with the school dropout intention of Junior High School students in the Ahafo Ano South West District.

RQ1: What is the level of academic self-efficacy of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District?

The study revealed that students exhibited a relatively strong level of academic self-efficacy. This implies that students in the Ahafo Ano South West District have a high level of academic self-efficacy even though they may have the intention to drop out which may eventually cause them to actually drop out. This

finding shows that students in the Ahafo Ano South West district believed that they can achieve most of the academic activities needed for them to succeed in school.

Similar to the result of this study, Samuel and Burger (2020) found in their study that self-efficacy levels were moderate-to-high even though dropout intentions were low. The findings of Kolo, Jaafar & Ahmad, (2017) in their study of the relationship between academic self-efficacy belief of college students and academic performance revealed that majority of the respondents (80.82%) had higher levels of academic self-efficacy in the College. Meaning, majority of the respondents in the study believed that they can deal with their academic tasks and all related school activities positively. On the contrary, in the quest to measure the levels of academic self-efficacy of B.Com. undergraduate students by Sachitra & Bandara, (2017), the analysis revealed that many of the undergraduates suffered from low levels of academic self-efficacy with respect to a range of academic activities.

RQ2: What is the level of self-esteem of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District?

The findings of the study showed a relatively high level of self-esteem among students. This means that the thoughts, feelings and sense of worth that students in the Ahafo Ano South West District have about themselves are on a high level hence they have a greater chance of being successful in their academic endeavor. They are less likely to be affected by negative experiences at school and have the greater tendency of recovering from negative school experiences in an event that they encounter such.

Consistent with the findings of this study is that Noronha, Monteiro and Pinto, (2018). In their study on the self-esteem and academic performance among students, majority of the respondents (76%) had moderate to high levels of self-esteem and remaining 24% had low levels self-esteem. The high self-esteem was more among children and those children were very good in participating in various school activities. Contrarily, in Basco and Han (2016) study to examine the level of self-esteem, motivation, and anxiety of university English learners, the results of the analysis of data showed that in the affective factor of self-esteem, students had moderate level of self-esteem.

RQ3: What is the level of school dropout intention of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District?

After the analysis of data for this study, it was identified that students in the Ahafo Ano South West District had a low-level school dropout intention. This shows that, the intention to leave school which is cognitive in nature and has the potential of resulting in actual dropout was quite low in the district under study. Consistent with the findings of this study is that of Samuel and Burger, (2020) who used a 4-year longitudinal design to investigate the extent to which dropout intentions and dropout can be predicted by an interplay between negative life events, general self-efficacy, and perceived social support. On average, dropout intentions and actual dropout were found to be low after the analysis of data available to them.

Gender Difference in Academic Self-efficacy

The researcher put the hypothesis to the test to figure out if there were any variations in the academic self-efficacy of male and female pupils. According to the

findings of the study, there was no difference in test results between male and female pupils. This means that male students did not have a higher academic self-efficacy than their female counterparts. Both genders were on an equal footing in terms of their academic self-efficacy.

The result of this test is in line with the work of Husain (2014) who also reported that there was no gender difference in self-efficacy with males and females recording almost the same mean scores on self-efficacy. Likewise the study by Tenaw (2013) who discovered that there was no statistically significant difference in self-efficacy between the two gender. The overall self-efficacy score of the females was somewhat lower than that of the males, but this difference did not achieve statistical significance.

However, the finding is inconsistent with the findings of quite a number of studies. It is inconsistent with Satici and Can (2016) who sought to find out if different socio-demographic characteristics have an influence on university students' levels of academic self-efficacy such as age and gender and found out that there was a substantial differences between academic self-efficacy and gender. Academic self-efficacy scores were higher for males than for females. Furthermore, the outcome contrasted with what was found in the study by Diseth et al. (2014) to investigate the relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy, and implicit theories of intelligence (entity and incremental) in a sample of Norwegian kids in grades 6 and 8, in a way to assess the factor structure of these variables and see if there are any gender or grade level differences. Although grade 8th girls had better academic

achievements than their boys, the boys scored higher in their academic self-efficacy than the girls according to the study.

Yet another set of research findings that are inconsistent with the result of this investigation that found females to be higher in self-efficacy than males. Sachitra and Bandara (2017), found in their study that there were significant differences in the levels of academic self-efficacy between male and female undergraduates with females displaying higher academic self-efficacy than males. Similarly, female respondents seemed to possess higher level of academic self-efficacy in contrast to their male counterparts, Chokkalingam et al. (2016)

Although some researches such as those cited above do demonstrate a significant variation in the level of self-efficacy of respondents with regard to their gender, this study identified that these differences are possibly contextual and differ among the subjects being studied. Opportunities for females by government and non-governmental organizations like the Alma Mater Education in the Ahafo Ano South West District probably helped to boost self-efficacy of female students and bridge the gap that exist in academic self-efficacy between male and female students in the district.

Gender Difference in Self-Esteem

The second hypothesis was tested to determine if there were differences in the self-esteem of male and females. The findings of the current investigation contradict prior studies that revealed that generally speaking, male students score higher on self-esteem than their female counterparts. The study found that no differences existed between male and female on their level of self-esteem. The

revelation suggests that male participants did possess different level of self-esteem than the female participants. The findings of this investigation supports the result of Ajmal et al. (2018); Cudjoe and Sarfo (2019); Nyarko et al. (2015); (Nkyi, 2018). They looked at the gender disparity among pupils and how it related to their self-esteem levels. In their tests performed to consolidate the hypothesis of the differential effect of self-esteem between male and female, it was deduced that there were no significant disparities on the mean scores of self-esteems between males and females. The results of these researchers do not consider gender to be a major element in self-esteem which is in accordance with this study's result.

Contrary to the findings of this research, Zuckerman et al. (2016) as well as Sprecher et al. (2013) discovered the self-esteem of men to be higher than that of women. Similarly, Asare Doku and Awuah-Peasah (2012) and Imhonde (2013) whose statistical analysis of gender difference in self-efficacy within sub-Saharan Africa endorsed the hypothesis that males have higher levels of self-esteem than females. In the same vain, in their quest to find out the relation between self-esteem, self-efficacy and implicit theories of intelligence (entity and incremental) and how they may differ according to gender and grade level, Diseth et al. (2014) realized that girls' levels of self-esteem were significantly lower than those of boys. A variety of reasons have been offered, which include puberty-related maturational changes and social setting factors in terms of how boys and girls are treated in the school, and gender disparities in idealized body types, despite the fact that there is no universally recognized theoretical model that accounts for these gender disparities in the development self-esteem from childhood to adolescence.

Inconsistent to both the result of this study as well as to the findings that males have higher self-efficacy is another group of research findings that realized that females are higher in self-esteem than males. In their investigation, Bhardwaj and Agrawal (2013), found that girls possessed higher general self-esteem than their male counterparts. Bhamani et al. (2014) and Yahaya et al. (2021) also found significant differences between male and female students' self-esteem scores, with female students reporting much greater levels of self-esteem scores than male students.

Given the diversity of the student population that participants interacted with on a regular basis in the schools, one explanation for the result of this investigation might be offered in this regard. The quality of how males and females interact with one another and their self-esteem can be strongly affected by the diversity of the student body at the school and the equitable interaction of males and girls. With no regard for gender, the students see themselves as belonging to a single community and as such see themselves as one people. As a result, both boys and girls seem to have high self-esteem and no biases against the other gender.

Gender Differences in School Dropout Intention

This aspect of the study tested the hypothesis that in terms of wanting to leave school, there were discrepancies with regard to male and female students. The outcome of the t-test analysis proved that no gender differences existed within the students used in terms of their school dropout intention. To wit, the students' intention to drop out of school is not dependent on whether the student is a male or a female.

This revelation corroborate with the findings of Pappas et al. (2016) who found out in their study to empirically investigate how students' intention to finish their studies (retention) in Computer Science is impacted by various factors such as age and gender. Male students exhibited higher intentions to complete (not dropout) their studies, yet the variation was not significant. Hence, the goal of students to complete their studies in computer science was unaffected by gender or age. The finding of the study also corroborate with that of Xu (2008), who examined the underrepresentation of females in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) by contrasting the intentions of attrition and turnover between genders in Research and Doctoral universities. It was discovered that the intentions of males and females to leave (dropout) from academia were the same. Regarding their intents to depart for a non-academic job, whether it be full-time or a part-time academic post, females and males did not significantly differ from one another.

Inconsistent to the outcome of this study is that of Bianchi et al. (2021) whose findings supported the notion that boys are more prone to drop out of school early and that gender is a risk factor for both native-born people and immigrants. Also inconsistent is the result of Cocoradă et al. (2021) that, male students demonstrated a greater desire to drop out than female students, and they felt that there were more obstacles to completing the forestry degree program.

Similarly, Robinson (2016) found a contradicting finding to that of this study which stated that the intention of leaving high school varied among males and females with females indicating a higher intent to dropout than males in two economically disadvantaged urban high schools in southeastern Virginia.

Several factors account for a student's intention to drop out of school and subsequently drop out of school. These factors can be internal or external. A possible explanation to the fact that no gender differences exist in school dropout intention of students according to this study was the availability of adequate role models. Even though, the Ahafo Ano South West District is made up of predominantly farming communities with a high school dropout rate, there are quite a good number of schools, health centers, banks with both male and female educated personnel. Students, therefore, have the opportunity of meeting male as well as female educated personnel like teachers, nurses, bankers etc. This, thus, neutralizes the idea that a certain group of people who belong to a particular gender have reduced prospect in relation to education. This encourages the perception of students of equality in educational advancement. With this in mind, in an event of having an intention to drop out of school or not, this intention will not be based on a particular gender.

Academic Self-efficacy and School Dropout Intention

The fourth hypothesis of this investigation was that "there was no statistically significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and school dropout intention of Junior High School students in the Ahafo Ano South West District. Result from the analysis of this hypothesis showed that the academic self-efficacy of students was related to students' intention to drop out of school. This means that students' perception or actual believe in their capacity to carry out actions in relation to the academic work does play a role or relate to their desire to withdraw.

The finding of this study is backed by the Icek's Theory of planned behavior which claims that, one's intention to carry out a particular action depends on the extent to which he/she believes he can control that action. This he termed perceived behavioral control. Similarly, this perceived behavioral control is congruent with Bandura's idea of self-efficacy, which is associated with assessments of one's capacity to execute the strategies required to deal with potential events (Bandura, 1982). This presupposes that the academic self-efficacy of students in this investigation is related to their school dropout intention of which the study's result proved.

The outcome of this research is consistent to Nemtcan et al. (2020) who found self-efficacy as a necessary element for pupils' persistent intentions and actions (not dropout). Similar consistent finding to that of this study is the finding of Samuel and Burger (2020) who believed that adolescents showed fewer dropout intentions when they felt highly self-effective (both routinely and under different conditions).

The finding of Brown et al. (2019) in the work to examine the relationships between academic and general self-efficacy, dropout status (non-leavers, temporary-leavers, and permanent-leavers), and school context does corroborate with that of this study. Their work revealed that self-efficacy affects school outcomes such as dropping out and that in-school experiences influence school completion. Self-efficacy related to school dropout in a way that increasing the academic self-efficacy of their participants reduced racial and ethnic minority males and females' likelihood of leaving school (Peguero & Shaffer, 2015).

Baier (2014), opined in a study on the importance of academic elements, academic self-efficacy, mentorship connections, and learning communities in freshmen college students' perseverance and academic achievement, where academic self-efficacy was a major indicator of the intention to persist and hence not dropout which agrees to the finding of this research work. Likewise the prior findings, Cortes et al. (2014), realized in his work that lesser levels of self-efficacy in students are related to a propensity to drop out, which also agrees with the finding of this study.

Inconsistent with the result of this investigation is that of (Roman et al., 2022) who found that despite the fact that a large number of students have high levels of self-efficacy in both low as well as high socioeconomic schools, numerous pupils in low socioeconomic schools thought and wanted to quit school. This shows that, students' intention to dropout was related to other factors and not their self-efficacy.

According to Bean and Cabrera et al. (as cited in Morelli, Chirumbolo, Baiocco, & Cattelino, 2022), the intention to drop out is highly correlated with and predictor of actual dropout. Students' intentions are significant antecedents of actual behavior. As postulated by the Theory of Planned behavior, intentions are influenced by variables that are both external to the individual as well as factors that are within the individual (perceived behavioral control or self-efficacy). In accordance with the finding of this research hypothesis, students in Ahafo Ano South West District's intention to dropout (if any) was related to elements that are personal to an individual, like their academic self-efficacy. Possible explanation to the inconsistent

results with the findings of this study may be caused by location and nature of the participants.

According to Tinto's Model of Institutional Departure (1993) there are two systems in schools: academic and social and to stay in their academic institutions, students must be absorbed into the two systems. The model explains that the intellectual and social integration that a pupil experiences at school will constantly change (weakening or strengthening) the student's degree of dedication to goals and the altered degree of ambitions and obligations influences the student's desire to remain or depart the school. Based on this model, how effectively students are incorporated into the academic work of the school and in effect their belief in their ability to function well academically, relate to the high dropout rate in the district.

Self-esteem and School Dropout Intention

The fifth hypothesis was tested to ascertain whether there is a relationship between self-esteem and school dropout intention. Analysis and subsequent results demonstrated a connection between self-esteem and school dropout intention even though the relationship was a weak one. The observed relationship was such that as self-esteem of students increased, school dropout intention of students decreased. This indicates that students with high self-esteem possess low intentions to quit school, whereas students with low self-esteem have high intentions to quit school, hence the relationship being termed negative.

Students' self-esteem which is the way they think about themselves and the value they place on themselves relates to their decision-making process. The findings validated the hypothesis that those with high levels of self-esteem would

exhibit lesser school dropout intention than those who lack self-confidence and vice versa. One explanation for this outcome can fit within the definition of self-esteem. The idea of having high self-esteem involves liking or appreciating oneself as well as believing oneself to be capable of dealing with the world he perceives and situations he encounters. The low self-esteem person, on the other hand, is viewed as despising, devaluing, and believes that they are incapable of managing their environment. As a result, the person with a great sense of self-esteem would depict great confident in his or her capacity to handle situations, which would make them less vulnerable to the pressures of society and persuasions. Furthermore, due to that same confidence, the person with high self-esteem would not be hesitant to behave in tandem with her attitude.

This finding is in accordance with that of Cortes et al. (2014) who opined in their investigation that whereas pupils with strong self-esteem will show fewer plans to quit school, pupils who possess poor levels of self-esteem are more likely to have such ambitions. The result of the work of Klepfer (2015) that asserted that there was a correlation between self-esteem and the drive to complete high school and that self-esteem was strong predictor of graduating on time agrees with the findings of our current study.

Consistent with the outcome of this research is that of Park et al. (2016), which assumed that, due to their lack of interest in learning, students with low self-esteem are far more susceptible compared to those with higher self-esteem to form the desire to drop out and to actually do so. The results of Handanos and Aktan (2018); Bianchi et al. (2021); Dancot et al. (2021); Lawrence and Adebowale (2022)

which showed intention to leave school was associated with the self-esteem of adolescent students also corroborates with this study's results.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main objective of this research work was primarily to look into the academic self-efficacy and self-esteem on school dropout intention of Junior High School Students in the Ahafo Ano South West District. The subsequent research questions and hypotheses guided the study:

1. What is the level of academic self-efficacy of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District?
2. What is the level of self -esteem of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District?
3. What is the level of school dropout intentions of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District?

H_{01} ; There will be no statistically significant gender difference in the academic self-efficacy of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District.

H_{11} ; There will be a statistically significant gender difference in the academic self-efficacy of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South-West district.

H₀₂; There will be no statistically significant gender difference in the self-esteem of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South- West District.

H₂; There will be a statistically significant gender difference in the self-esteem of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South-West District.

H₀₃; There will be no statistically significant gender difference in the school dropout intention of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South West District.

H₃; There will be a statistically significant gender difference in the school dropout intention of junior high school students in Ahafo Ano South West District.

H₀₄ There will be no statistically significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and dropout intention among junior high school students in the Ahafo Ano South-West district?

H₄; There will be a statistically significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and dropout intention among junior high school students in the Ahafo Ano South-West District.

H₀₅; There will be no statistically significant relationship between self- esteem and dropout intention among junior high school students in the Ahafo Ano South-West District.

H₅; There will be a statistically significant relationship between self-esteem and dropout intention among junior high school students in the Ahafo Ano South-West District.

Correlational study design was used for the study to quantitatively assess the connection between academic self-efficacy, self-esteem and school dropout

intention. An adapted Academic Self-Efficacy Scale, Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale and Hardre and Reeve (2003) dropout intention questionnaire was used to gather data from 291 students. The means and standard deviations, independent samples t-test, and Pearson product moment correlation were statistical tools used for analyzing the data collected.

Key Findings

1. The research revealed that students had higher academic self-efficacy which was higher than the criterion mean of 2.50, with a composite mean score of 2.92.
2. It was found in the study that students exhibited high levels of self-esteem, with an overall mean of 2.95 that was higher than criterion mean of 2.50.
3. The analysis showed that the school dropout intention of students was low with an overall mean of 1.92 that was less than the criterion mean of 2.50.
4. Male participants in the study did not hold a distinct level of academic self-efficacy than females as revealed in the investigation. Male and female participants had similar level of academic self-efficacy.
5. Participants' levels of self-esteem among male and female did not vary statistically as revealed in the study.
6. The research found no statistically significant variation in the level of school dropout intention between male and female participant.
7. Academic self-efficacy and intention to drop out of school were observed to be negatively correlated statistically. In other words, the study established that, the higher a student's academic self-efficacy, the lower the student's school dropout intention.

8. A significant statistical negative relationship between self-esteem and school dropout intention was observed in the study. In other words, the study established that, the higher a student's self-esteem, the lower the student's school dropout intention.

Conclusion

According to the study's findings, it can be asserted that academic self-efficacy and self-esteem is pertaining to pupils' intention to leave school in the Ahafo Ano South West District even though the relationship is not a strong one. The findings proved that the intention of students can be reduced when their academic self-efficacy and self-esteem are raised or increased.

Furthermore, though the school dropout rate in the Ahafo Ano South West District is relatively high, the intention of student to drop out of school which is an antecedent to actual dropout is low. This presupposes that the school dropout situation in the district may be an impulsive, spur of the moment one.

Recommendations

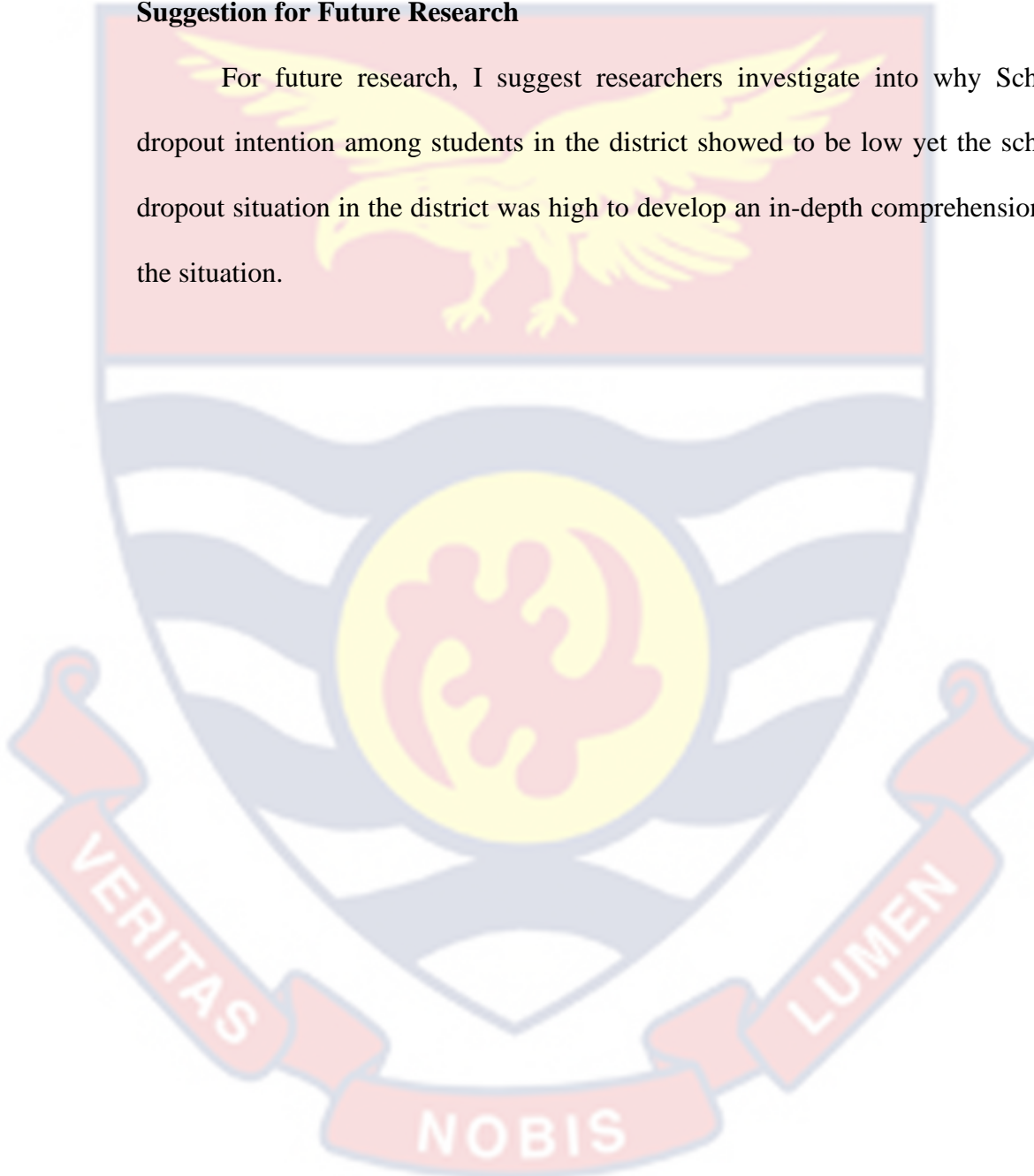
Given the results of the investigation, the following recommendations are made;

1. Since a high academic self-efficacy reduces students' intention to leave school according to the research, teachers who are a major stakeholder in the education of a students should endeavor to help raise the academic self-efficacy of students. This they can do by giving students appropriate hands-on experience, inviting individuals who completed school despite adverse environmental conditions and giving students regular encouragement.

2. Parents and teachers should endeavor to provide students with unconditional support, feeling of safety and emotional attachment to help raise the self-esteem of their adolescent students.

Suggestion for Future Research

For future research, I suggest researchers investigate into why School dropout intention among students in the district showed to be low yet the school dropout situation in the district was high to develop an in-depth comprehension of the situation.



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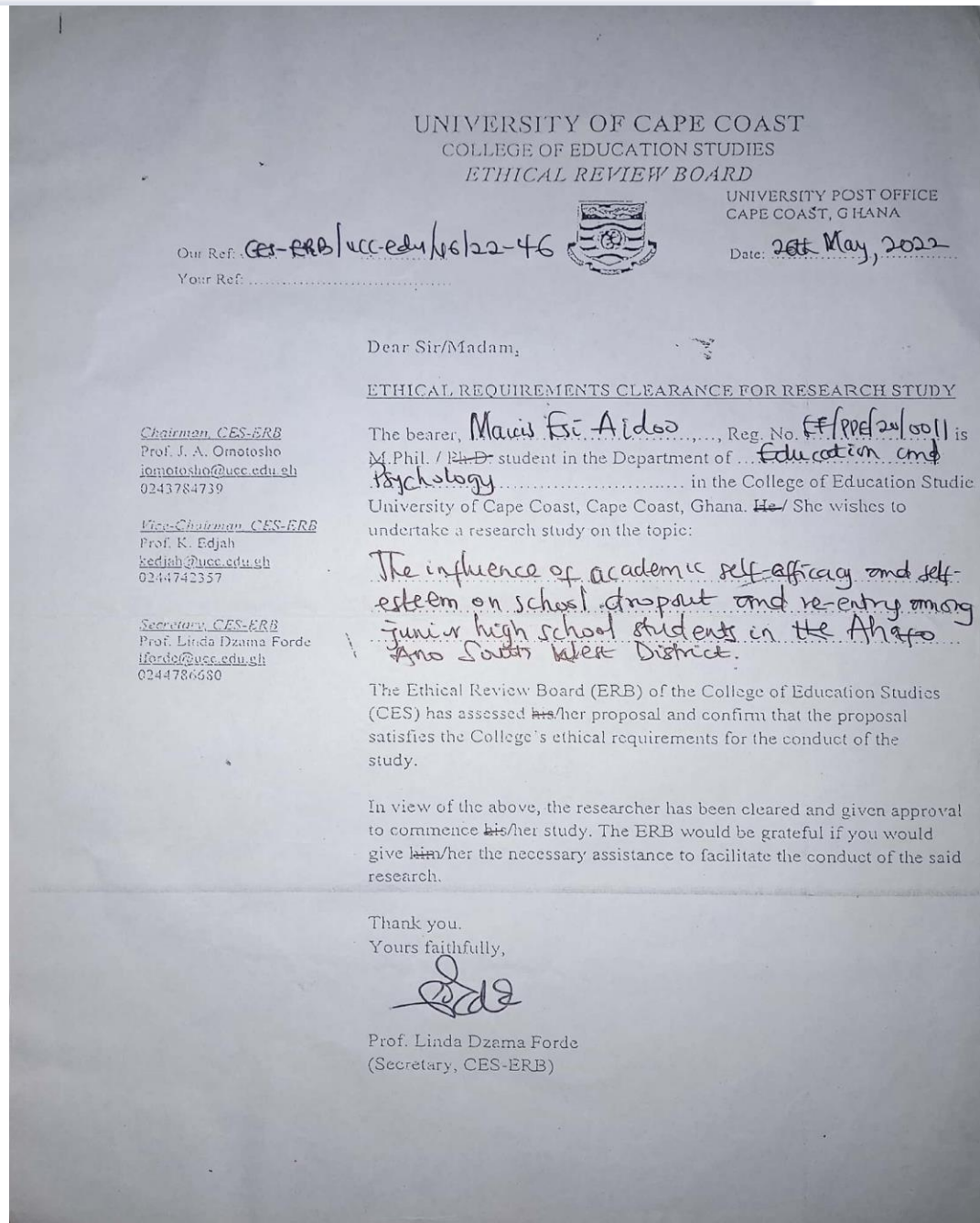
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APPENDICES

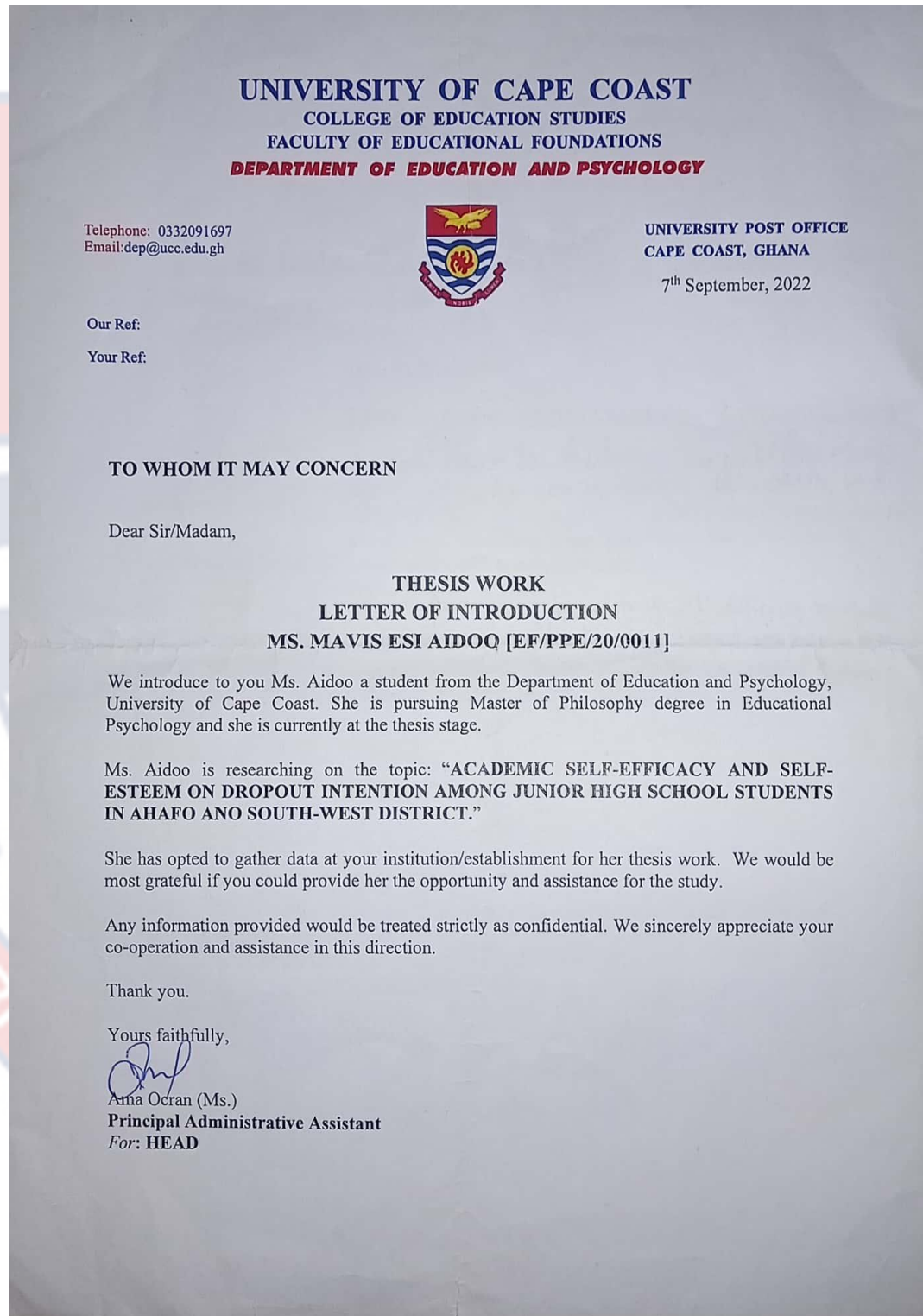
APPENDIX A

Clearance from Ethical Review Board



APPENDIX B

Introductory Letter from Department of Psychology, UCC



APPENDIX C**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS**

Dear Respondent,

The purpose of the study is to assess the influence of academic self-efficacy and self-esteem on school dropout and re-entry among Junior High School students in the Ahafo Ano South West District. The study is for educational purpose and your readiness to respond appropriately will make its outcome beneficial to other students. I wish to assure you that your identity and whatever information you may provide will not be disclosed to anyone.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

Section A: Demographic Data

1. Sex: Male Female
2. Please tick the age range that applies to you.
 11-15 15-17 18 and above

SECTION B: SELF-ESTEEM

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. Strongly Disagree = SD, Disagree =D, Agree = A, Strongly Agree = SA.

SN	STATEMENT	SD	D	A	SA
1	On the whole, I am satisfied with my self				
2	At times, I think I am not good at all.				
3	I feel that I have a number of good qualities.				
4	I am able to do things as well as most other people do.				
5	I feel I do not have much to be proud of.				
6	I certainly feel useless at times.				
7	I feel that I am a person of good value, at least on an equal plane with others.				

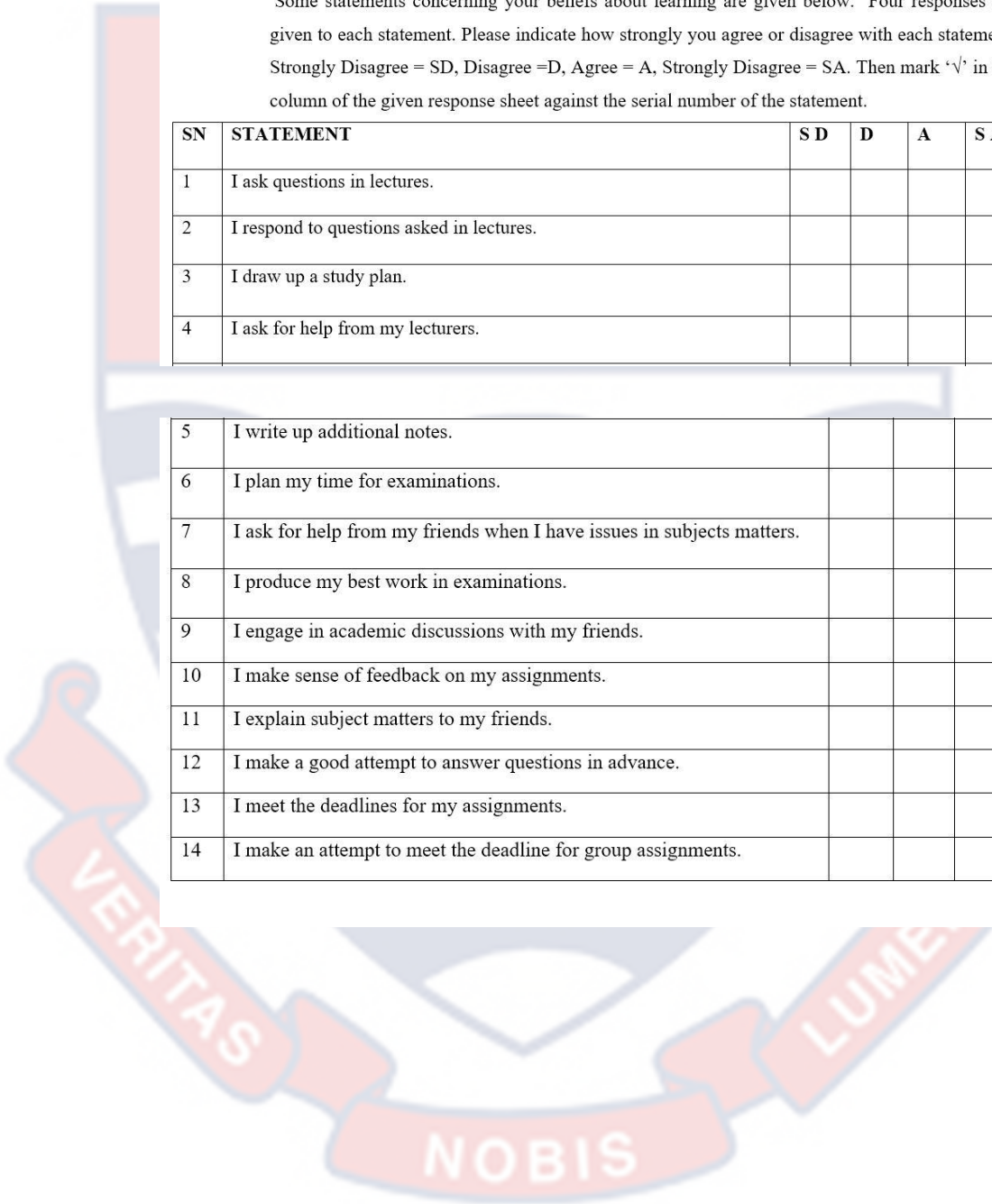
8	I wish I could have more respect for myself.				
9	In all, I am likely to feel that I am a failure.				
10	I take a positive attitude towards myself.				

SECTION C: ACADEMIC SELF-EFFICACY

Some statements concerning your beliefs about learning are given below. Four responses are given to each statement. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. Strongly Disagree = SD, Disagree =D, Agree = A, Strongly Disagree = SA. Then mark ‘√’ in the column of the given response sheet against the serial number of the statement.

SN	STATEMENT	SD	D	A	SA
1	I ask questions in lectures.				
2	I respond to questions asked in lectures.				
3	I draw up a study plan.				
4	I ask for help from my lecturers.				

5	I write up additional notes.				
6	I plan my time for examinations.				
7	I ask for help from my friends when I have issues in subjects matters.				
8	I produce my best work in examinations.				
9	I engage in academic discussions with my friends.				
10	I make sense of feedback on my assignments.				
11	I explain subject matters to my friends.				
12	I make a good attempt to answer questions in advance.				
13	I meet the deadlines for my assignments.				
14	I make an attempt to meet the deadline for group assignments.				



15	I pay attention during every lecture.				
16	I express my opinion when I do not understand the lectures.				
17	I feel nervous when I am doing presentations.				
18	I come forward to do presentations in group assignments.				
19	I feel confident that I can complete the degree within 4 years.				
20	I make sense of feedback on my examinations.				

SECTION D: SCHOOL DROPOUT INTENTION

Instruction:

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. Strongly Disagree = SD, Disagree =D, Agree = A, Strongly Disagree = SA. Then mark '√' in the column of the given response sheet against the serial number of the statement.

SN	STATEMENT	SD	D	A	SA
1	I sometimes consider dropping out of school.				
2	I intend to drop out of school.				
3	I sometimes feel unsure about continuing my studies year after year.				

