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INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL CARE AND SCHOOL READINESS ON BASIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN THE KOMENDA- EDINA- EGUAFO- ABREM MUNICIPALITY

MARY OFORI- KABLAH

2023

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INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL CARE AND SCHOOL READINESS ON BASIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN THE KOMENDA- EDINA-EGUAFO- ABREM MUNICIPALITY

BY

MARY OFORI- KABLAH

Thesis submitted to the Department of Education and Psychology of the Faculty of Educational Foundations, College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Master of Philosophy degree in Educational Psychology

NOVEMBER 2023

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

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

Candidate's Signature…… Date……

Name: ……

Supervisor's Declaration

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

Supervisor's Signature: …… Date……

Name…….

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the influence of parental care and school readiness on basic school attendance. The study employed the Quantitative approach and the descriptive survey design. A sample of 553 respondents, consisting of 313 students and 240 parents was selected for the study using simple random and stratified proportionate sampling procedure. Three adapted questionnaires scales were used as data collection instruments (perceived parental support scale, primary school readiness scale and school attendance checklist). The perceived parental support had a reliability of .79, Primary School Readiness Scale and School Attendance Checklist had reliabilities of .987 and .89 respectively. The data was analysed using descriptive (means and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Independent Sample t-test, Regression and One-way multivariate analysis of variance [MANOVA]). The study revealed that parental care and school readiness impact school attendance. It was revealed again that the level of parental care was low among students in the Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abrem (K.E.E.A) Municipality. It was recommended that the government, as a major stakeholder in education, should create avenue for educating and sensitizing parents on their all- important role in caring for their wards in achieving formal education. Policies on education should also factor the role of parents in achieving them.

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KEYWORDS

School Readiness

Parental Care

School attendance

Parents

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Last, but not least, I acknowledge the Graduate Studies Board of UCC for awarding me the scholarship, which enabled me, carried out this research work.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to Rose Amihere family.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

All over the world, education has been the priority of most economies. Many countries have taken pragmatic measures to ensure that all learners get the best of education and the quality thereof. This has led to the assertion that education is the key. According to Banerjee (2012), the economy of every country depends on the human capital, working force, and education level of its working class. A country with a low level of educated workers is greatly handicapped. A person's wellbeing and chances for a better quality of life are both connected with education, which is an important aspect of the development of human capital (Battle & Lewis, 2002). It is commonly accepted that a nation's progress is influenced by the quality of education provided to its population. Adane (2013) reinforced this by stating that the development of human resources must be the starting point for any sound development.

Background of the Study

Globally, education has created an avenue for people to be literate and informed. The world has become a better place through education. Several educational policies have been made and implemented for children of school going age, which include the Sustainable Development Goals (2012) [SDG]with goal four on education, Literacy for All by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2004), and Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE, 1995) of Ghana. These measures are all intended to improve education and make it accessible to all. In recent times, basic education has often been seen as an obligation rather

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than a right; governments are typically expected to maintain access, while citizens are frequently obligated by law to complete education programmes up to a specific level. For accessible education, there is a need for measures to be put in place. Such measures include; readily available schools, teachers, and the needed materials and resources, so that the aim of education can be achieved. Nevertheless, with these measures and others put in place, there are still issues with education deficits on the rise. Thompson and Casely-Hayford (2008), stated that, US$1 billion was spent on the Ghanaian education sector in 2006. It is on record that these reforms and investments have somewhat failed to address the fundamental issues which affect child education. Ankomah et al. (2005), reiterated same that, despite all these huge financial interventions, and expenditures, the quality of basic education leaves much to be desired. There are still sub-Saharan African nations with literacy rates below 50% among the youth (Achoka, Wakwabubi, Shiundu & Ejakait, 2018).

In Ghana, the issue of school attendance still lingers in the regions. According to the Ministry of Education's report on education (2020), there is a downtrend in school attendance and general enrollment. This means there are other vital factors to be looked at as compared to the factors stated earlier to ensure good educational attainment. This raises the issue of parental care and the student's readiness to go to school as other relevant measures of educational attainment. Parents, as major stakeholders in education, are one key area to which attention needs to be drawn. For the success and good attainment of children's education, the role of parents cannot be overlooked.

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According to Emerllahu and Dali (2001), the family is a unit that governs understanding, affection, sacrifice, and childcare. It acts solely out of love and respect. This then explains the important duty of parents in the lives of children and their education. Giving a child the assistance, they need to grow up physically, emotionally, socially, and intellectually or cognitively is referred to as parenting (Baydar, Akcinar, & Imer, 2012). Parents need to care for the total well-being of their children, which encompasses all their domains of development. Parental care is the legitimate responsibility of parents and guardians toward the care of their wards. Being a parent puts a legal responsibility on you to care for your children as a biological parent or a guardian.

Over the years, research (Marchant, Paulson & Rothlisberg, 2001; Desforges, 2003; Puccioni, 2015) has shown that parental care has contributed to children's school interest and academic performance. In this sense, for children to achieve education, there is a need for parental care. Parents, by their nature, provide family bounding, warmth, and a sense of belongingness, which promote children's cognitive abilities and state of well-being in school and life in general. Children's feelings of readiness and stability in school are significantly impacted by this phenomenon. More cognitive stimulation and less low socio - economic status are associated with better outcomes on a variety of broadband cognitive outcome measures, such as IQ and academic success.

According to Bradley, Corwyn, Burchinal, McAdoo, and Coll (2001) and Evans (2004), children's abilities to be well psyched and stimulated with less pressure from economic constraints improve their cognitive abilities,

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which lead to higher learning outcomes and intelligence. According to Dercon and Krishnan (2009), children who are from low-resource homes and experience a lack of resources have lower cognitive and social-emotional outcomes. This means that proper parental care has a lasting effect on children's cognition and places them in a good position in education. A child's school readiness can be related to a lot of factors, such as interest, reinforcement, and drive, but, nevertheless, without emotional and psychological stability, it becomes difficult to achieve. Readiness means the psychological preparedness of an individual to perform or accomplish a task (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024). School readiness, on the other hand, means being prepared for academic work and possessing some competencies to actively engage in school work and activities (Brown, 2018).

According to Snow (2006), school readiness is defined as the certain set of abilities, knowledge, and skills needed to succeed in formal education, which for most kids starts in kindergarten. Janus and Duku (2007) define school readiness as the development of an infant's nervous system, enabling them to acquire diverse talents based on incoming stimuli. They further explain that these stimuli help their success in school. It emerges from the implementation of formal education. From these two definitions, it can be deduced that school readiness is the set of competencies a child acquires and uses in school in order to succeed academically. In typical fishing and farming communities, school readiness is an important element to help learners go to school and stay in school. Thus, school attendance can be increased and promoted through the element of school readiness. When learners feel ready for school, school attendance naturally increases. The ability to realise one's

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full potential both within and outside of the classroom depends on a child having a good sense of self-confidence (Marlborough School, 2019). This implies that children who are prepared for school have good traits, including self-assurance, a sense of ease at school despite the absence of parents, are more curious about the outside world, are motivated to learn, and have great social skills to engage with other kids. On the contrary, unprepared children are more likely to need special education assistance, repeat a grade, and leave school before they complete (Doherty, 2007). Also, they frequently encounter academic challenges, such as issues relating to behaviour and social skills (Connell & Prinz, 2002).

The development of a child's physical health, mental health, emotional stability, learning preferences, language and cognitive abilities, and communication abilities are just a few areas that affect whether or not they are ready for school (Snow, 2006; Doherty, 2007). In this work, the abilities that set the basis for formal schooling and academic performance were referred to as "school readiness." These abilities include: 1) cognitive abilities; 2) affective abilities 3) psychomotor ability; 4) self-care abilities; and (Bay & Bay, 2020).

Cognitive readiness emphasizes learner's ability to intellectually operate in school, be able to read and recite words, compute numbers, synthesize, compare and contrast, and do more mental drills. These abilities, when acquired, set them up for cognitive readiness. Affective readiness focuses on the learners' ability to manage their emotions and also be able to collaborate with others in school settings. According to Bay (2020), being able

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to share one's feelings, communicate with new people, and collaborate with them shows that they are emotionally ready for school.

Psychomotor readiness deals with learners' ability to write and control the pen, make eye and hand coordination, engage in physical work and activities, play, and mingle with peers. Having the confidence to work on your own and with peers in and around the school environment builds learners psychomotor readiness for school and increases their chances of always being in school.

Self-care readiness focuses on learners' ability to handle their bodies and keep them clean and safe in school. One's ability to care for his or her body and keep clean for school shows they are ready in terms of self-care. Being able to keep away from danger and prevent such tells them they are prepared in self-care. Naturally, when learners exhibit these abilities, it shows they are ready for school and will have the willingness to go to school.

The Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality is grappling with the problems of inadequate parental care and low school attendance. Looking at the rate of teenage pregnancy in the Municipality, there is not much to be said about parental care in the region. According to Ghana Health Service (2021) statistics on teenage pregnancies, the Municipality recorded the highest rate of teenage pregnancies in the Central region. Coupled with less economic opportunities in the Municipality, influence parents care for their children and general home management. To support their families and make a living, some parents tend to petty trade, farming, fishing, masonry, and other activities. These activities do take much time of parents to the extent of these parents leaving home at dawn and returning late, making them neglect their children at

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times. These tend to have effects on the children. They stay back at home following few peers to engage in petty activities to earn wages at the expense of their education; causing low school attendance and quality of students' education in general.

According to Ministry of Education report (2020), there is a downtrend of students' attendance and general enrolment, including disparity in turnout among males and females' students. This narrative is visible and being experienced in the study area. Many research works have focused on the school readiness of preschoolers' (Snow, 2006; Doherty, 2007; Kentucky, 2019 & Snow, 2006) as well as educational measures to get all learners into school to attain education (Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education and Literacy for All). However, less research works has been done on the impact of parental care and school readiness on school attendance. This study looks at how parental care and school readiness impact learners school attendance with the main objective of bridging this gap.

Statement of the Problem

School attendance is a problem in many fishing and farming communities. Students frequently miss class for a number of reasons and end up engaging in bad habits and dropping out of school. In Ghana, policies have been formulated and implemented by the government to get all learners of school going age enrolled for school education, in order to address the problem of illiteracy and low attendance among its populace. The likes of Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE), Free Secondary school education and School Feeding Programme are government policies to increase school attendance yet, much is desired of school attendance most especially in

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the fishing and farming communities in Ghana. According to Fryer and Levitt (2006); Halle, Forry, Hair, Perper, Wandner, Wessel and Vick (2009) and Reardon (2011) these initiatives have suffered challenges due to the fact that low-income and/or single-parent homes' children fall behind their better-off peers in terms of cognitive and social development even before they start school, making them feel unqualified to learn alongside their peers.

According to the United Nations report on Education (2020), the level of school attendance had declined globally especially in Sub- Saharan Africa and is estimated to decline more about 148 million after the COVID pandemic. The Ministry of Education (2019), reported that there had been a rise in educational spending over time. Ghana spent 4.0% of its GDP on education alone in 2018. As a result of its ongoing attempts to fully implement "free" senior high school education, it is anticipated that it would spend more in the years to come. This demonstrates that the government is devoting a significant amount of state funds to education with the goal of improving educational standards. Other stakeholders, however, still have a lot of work to do because the government cannot carry all of the weight and duty of providing education. Parents must support the government's efforts. Desforges (2003) and Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford and Taggart (2004) and have reiterated the effects of parental care and on students' education.

According to Sahin, Arseven and Kilic (2016), one of the main reasons why students are frequently absent from school is a lack of parental attention. Altinkurt (2008) also made the finding that absence from school is a result of families not being able to meet students' educational needs and using

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them as labour to generate income. This means there are still gaps in policy formulation that need pragmatic steps to fill or bridge them. For more pragmatic measures and steps to be taken about these challenges, there is a need for more research work to find solutions and a way out. Several studies on school attendance and parental care (Havik, Bru & Ertesvg, 2015; Zinyemba, Pavlova & Groot, 2021) have shown that students' absence in school is due to lack and proper parental supervision. This is seen more among adolescence. These adolescences are left on their own, with little or no care and attention at all. This then, outline the gap of student's absence to school due to parental care.

Though parental care is important for students' education, one vital factor that cannot be overlooked is school readiness. Studies on school readiness (McCoy, Zuilkowski, Yoshikawa, & Fink, 2017; Manfra, 2019; Gennetian, Marti, Kennedy, Kim & Duch 2019; Bay, 2020) have shown a relationship between preschool and school readiness. When children get cognitive stimulation through constant interaction and family bonding, it increases their competencies, including intellectual abilities, language and communication skills, social and emotional skills, and psychomotor skills, and places them in readiness to interact with others and mingle with new children in school (Doherty, 2007). The pivot of the above studies focused on preschool contributing to children's school readiness and their entry competencies when enrolled in school, and how these skills ensure children's success in school with less emphasis on how these abilities can help sustain students' interest in school to ensure they go to school every day.

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Furthermore, there is the issue of gender-related school attendance, of which literature have shown a bias for males (Hysing, 2015; Chege & Sifuna, 2006; Zinyemba, Pavlova & Groot, 2021) and thus, there is the likelihood of males being in school as compared to females (Wolf et al., 2006). Even if they are enrolled, many children may find it difficult to attend school frequently due to competing family and employment obligations (Sakurai, 2013; UNICEF, 2013). Also, conventional sociocultural views on gender roles continue to influence families' choices regarding which children to send to school (Tanye, 2008; Iverson, 2012). Though statistics suggest this direction, there is the need to find whether there are differences still existing in school attendance among male and female education. These challenges have led this research work to investigate whether parental care and school readiness have any influence on school attendance of students in the Komenda- Edina-Eguafo- Abrem Municipality.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to examine the influence of parental care and school readiness on school attendance.

Specifically, the following research objectives were formulated to:

i. Determine the level of parental care among J.H.S students in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality.
ii. Determine the level of school readiness among J.H.S students in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality.
iii. Investigate the influence of gender on school attendance among J.H.S students in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality.

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iv. Examine the influence of parental care and school readiness on school attendance in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the level of parental care among J.H.S. students in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality?
2. What is the level of school readiness among J.H.S. students in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality?
3. What are the differences in school attendance among male and female J.H.S students in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality?

Hypotheses

For this study, five research hypotheses were examined. They comprised;

1. H_o1: There is no statistically significant influence of parental care on school attendance among J.H.S. students of K.E.E.A Municipality.

   H_11: There is statistically significant influence of parental care on school attendance among J.H.S. students of K.E.E.A Municipality.
2. H_o2: There is no statistically significant influence of school readiness on school attendance among J.H.S. students of K.E.E.A Municipality.

   H_12: There is statistically significant influence of school readiness on school attendance among J.H.S. students of K.E.E.A Municipality.
3. H_o3: There is no statistically significant relationship between parental care and school readiness on school attendance J.H.S. among students of K.E.E.A Municipality.

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$H_1$3: There is statistically significant relationship between parental care and school readiness on school attendance among J.H.S. students of K.E.E.A Municipality.

4. Ho4: There is no statistically significant difference in parental care on the basis of gender.

   H_1 4: There is a statistically significant difference in parental care on the basis of gender.

   5. Ho5: There is no statistically significant difference in school readiness of J.H.S. students in K.E.E.A Municipality on the basis of gender.

   H_1 5: There is a statistically significant difference in school readiness of J.H.S. students in K.E.E.A Municipality on the basis of gender.

Significance of the Study

This work is expected to be helpful to relevant stakeholders in a variety of ways. The findings will, first and foremost, be considerably beneficial to JHS students in the Komenda- Edina-Eguafo - Abrem Municipality. The purpose of the study is to educate and inform the students about the importance of being ready for school in order to support their academic success and ability to remain in school.

Secondly, the study's findings are very relevant to teachers such that it will help them understand the JHS pupils in Komenda- Edina- Eguafo- Abrem Municipality in terms of their abilities and help them develop their school readiness and also assist them develop the essence of attending school always. Teachers with this knowledge can help pupils to overcome these challenges.

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Additionally, challenges of student's strength and weakness will come to the forefront of the students' awareness. This will enable them to put in conscious effort in increasing their school attendance and quality attainment of education.

Furthermore, the study's conclusions are to provide stakeholders and policy makers with empirical evidences, knowledge, ideas and alternatives in solving educational problems through policy formulation and implementation. Policy makers will use this knowledge to get all these stakeholders involved in policy making concerning education.

Similarly, the findings is to create avenue for educating and sensitizing parents on their all-important role in caring for their wards in acquiring formal education, most especially parents from farming and fishing communities. The knowledge of these results is to consciously make parents to know that their roles as parents and guardian are also needed in helping their children attain formal education.

Delimitation

The study was delimited to public J.H.S 2 students and either one of their parents or guardian in the selected schools in the KEEA Municipality.

In terms of content coverage, it was delimited to parental care, school readiness and school attendance.

Limitation

The study was to cover 313 parent respondents in the selected study areas. Due to their unwillingness and their withdrawal, only 240 parents participated in the study. This in one way or the other might have affected the percentage of parents' responses for the study.

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Operational Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the keywords were defined contextually. This is to explain concepts based on this study.

Parental care: It pertains to parents' and guardians' rightful obligations to provide for their children (pay uniform, give money for school, supervision etc.).

School readiness: Is the abilities that serve as the basis for formal education and success in school, such include cognitive, affective, psychomotor and self-care skills.

School attendance: It is described as a measurement of the number of times pupils are present to school.

Parent: Any one of a child's biological father or mother, guardian or relative they are staying with.

Gender: Biological traits of being a male or female.

Organisation of the Study

This work is divided into five chapters. The first chapter contains the following: the study's background, the problem statement, the objectives, the research questions and hypotheses, the significance, the delimitation, the limitations, and the definition of terms. The review of the literature, which includes a theoretical framework, conceptual review, empirical review, and conceptual framework, is the primary focus of Chapter 2. The third chapter contains a description of the research techniques. It offers details on the population, sampling procedures, tools, validity and reliability, data gathering method, and analysis of the sample. Chapter Four presents the results and

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discussions. The study's findings are summarised; conclusions are drawn, as well as recommendations and suggestions for further studies are given in Chapter five.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical framework, conceptual review, empirical review, and conceptual framework are all included in this chapter. The following areas were examined for the purpose of this study.

1. Theoretical Framework
    i. Thorndike's (1898) Instrumental Learning theory
    ii. Bandura's (1986) Social – Cognitive theory
    iii. Vygotsky's (1962) Socio- Cultural theory
2. Conceptual Review
    i. Parental care
    ii. School Readiness
    iii. School attendance
3. Empirical Review
    i. Level of parental care among students
    ii. Level of school readiness among students
    iii. School attendance among male and female students
    iv. Parental care and school attendance
    v. School readiness and school attendance
    vi. Parental care and school attendance on school attendance
    vii. Parental care among male and female students
    viii. School readiness among male and female students
4. Conceptual Framework

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Thorndike's (1898) Instrumental Learning theory

The most significant type of learning, according to Thorndike's theory of connectionism (1898), is the establishment of associations (connections) between sensory experiences—perceptions of stimuli or events—and brain impulses—reactions that show up behaviorally. According to Steph (2020), connectionism encompasses all innate or learned connections between inputs and reactions in the mind. Trial and error (selecting and linking) is a common way for learning, according to Thorndike. He believed that by practicing something repeatedly, we become more skilled and make fewer mistakes in our performance. The primary emphasis of the researcher's study was the Law of Readiness, which states that taking action when one is prepared to do so is rewarding and taking action otherwise is punitive. When one is hungry, actions that result in food are in a state of readiness, while those that do not result in food are not. It is punishing to be made to exercise if one is exhausted. Relating this concept to learning, we may state that actions that promote learning will be rewarding when students are prepared to learn a certain action (in terms of developmental level or past skill acquisition). Learning is punishing and a waste of time when students are not prepared to learn or do not have the necessary abilities. The following are the key principle for the study;

Law of readiness

This principle states that, the individual is by nature ready to act unless a series of connection (reinforcement, stimulation and drive) has been chained together to achieve an action. This means for learners to show readiness for school and achieve academically, they need to be 1) stimulated

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cognitively 2) provided with the basic needs; food, cloths, books and other learning materials 3) reinforced and 4) cared for in order to make them more stable and cognitively ready for school work and activities. According to Nutrition International (2021), by nourishing their bodies, children are better able to concentrate in class and grow stronger and greater cognitive abilities.

Law of exercise

This principle can be explained that, as children are constantly engaged in learning and activities that help improve their skills, they become more capable and willing to go to school. If parents, guardians and caregivers are able to live up to their responsibilities, children will change and be encouraged to go to school. In the home parents can buy learners the needed materials and books for them to read and learn so to improve their cognitive abilities. Again, learners should be appreciated for the little effort day in and out in other to boost their confidences. There is a link between young children's cognitive development, levels of exploratory play, and accessibility to learning resources, according to research done by Belize, Kenya, Nepal, and American Samoa (Gauvain & Munroe, 2009).

Law of effect

This principle states that developing pupils' ability to apply knowledge in a variety of settings and ways is one of education's primary goals. But because this anticipated "transfer" does not always take place, the learned skills cannot be flexibly applied in many circumstances. (Hajian, 2019). As students are exposed to readily available materials and practice continuously, they become capable of transferring what they have learned to new situations and problems, especially in classroom settings. This makes them more ready

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for the tasks given to them. But in a situation where there are no materials for practice and for their studies, they will lack the knowledge and ability to even transfer to similar situations. This phenomenon frustrates them and makes them not ready for schoolwork since they lack the necessary knowledge and skills. This theory explains the study in the sense that without the level of readiness or preparedness through the needed motivation, learning becomes a challenge hence affecting school attendance of students.

Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory

Learning occurs in a social context where an individual's environment, environment, and behaviour interact dynamically and reciprocally, in accordance with Bandura's (1986) theory. What distinguishes social cognitive theory is its emphasis on social influence and on both internal and external social reinforcement. It considers the ways people learn and employ particular behaviours, as well as the different social contexts in which they are employed. The theory takes into account how an individual's prior experiences influence their inclination to act in a certain way. The reinforcements, expectancies, and expectancies that are shaped by past experiences influence an individual's likelihood of engaging in a particular activity as well as the reasons behind it. As opposed to passively absorbing knowledge from environmental inputs, people actively influence their learning by interpreting the outcomes of their actions, which in turn influences their settings and personal traits and defines subsequent behaviour, according to social cognitive theory. The previously given details clarify how people learn new behaviours by observing the actions and outcomes of others. This indicates that in a social setting, people's behaviour is influenced by other people as they engage

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in a shared space. For instance, when children see their peers miss class to work and earn money outside of the classroom, it may inspire them to do the same, resulting in their own absence.

Bandura (1986) emphasized the effects of behavior once more. Based on this, students who imagined they skipping class and experiencing no immediate penalties thought that not showing up for class or not being prepared to learn had no real impact. Education might not be as important in a society where individuals are more interested in trade and menial work. The theory relates to this work by outlining the influence of the environment and behaviours from the society on students and how its impacts them, especially those from the fishing and farming areas.

Vygotsky's (1962) Socio- Cultural theory

The necessity of social connection for psychological growth is explained by Vygotsky's theory (1962). It contends that human learning is fundamentally a social process and that our interactions with "skilled" individuals influence the development of our cognitive capacities. According to the socio-cultural approach, mentors in our lives, such as parents and teachers, direct their charges' psychological growth. Our interactions with members of our social groups and our participation in cultural events can occasionally aid in the formation of our worldviews and beliefs. This idea says that, unlike animals, which just react to their surroundings, humans have the ability to change the environment for their own benefit. It also places a strong emphasis on parental involvement.

According to Vygotsky's theory, the integration of interpersonal (social), cultural-historical, and individual elements is the secret to human

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development (Tudge & Scrimsher, 2003). Developmental processes and the growth of the mind are stimulated and promoted through interactions with other individuals in the environment (such as apprenticeships and collaborations). Interactions, on the other hand, are not valuable in the classic sense of imparting knowledge to children. Rather, youngsters restructure their brain structures and modify their experiences based on their knowledge and features. The manner in which learners engage with people, things, and institutions in their environment alters how they think. Concepts' meanings evolve as they become entangled with the world (Gredler, 2009). Vygotsky believes parents are agent for change and learning in the child's immediate environment. The various areas of development are interconnected both among themselves and in relation to the results for children. They are improved and contributed to by early positive contact with parents and other caregivers. Since one area of development's function affects another over time, these early connections can have a lasting ripple effect on development throughout the life cycle (Masten & Cicchetti, 2010).

According to Vygotsky (1962), the interactions children have with parents do influence them highly. Relating this assertion to this study, it can be explained that parental care has a great influence on learners as well as their attendance to school. When learners are supported physically, emotional and psychologically its help them develop well and increase their achievements in school as well as their attendance while the opposite affect their development including education. Tatjana (2006), assert that until a child is independent and prepared to confront the problems of their society, parents are responsible for overseeing their whole physical and intellectual development. This

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indicates that parental care is crucial to the growth of their charges. Furthermore, parental care increases learners' readiness for school and makes them prepared for school work. When children are shown love, attention, food and concern for their education, they develop into readiness for school and its increases their achievement, general attendance to school and adoption of good moral values (Gjylymsere, 2013).

Wolf and McCoy (2016) and Schoellman, (2016) have shown in their studies that, the socioeconomic background of most families/ parents influences their care for their wards. Financially sound parents are capable of taking care of their children and their academic needs. On the other hand, a less/ lower socio-economic levels of parents adversely affect their children and their development as a whole. Poverty does affect parents' involvement in the education and their care for their children in general. This challenge affects children development and readiness for school. Students from poorer socioeconomic origins face widespread marginalisation in society, which can make it difficult for them to fit in at traditional schools (Janus & Duku, 2007; Jencks & Phillips, 1998, as cited in Brooks-Gunn, Rouse, & McLanahan, 2007). Children from low-income families and neighborhoods have difficulties in the educational system, and these discrepancies can be seen as early as in the children's preparation for school entry (Oliver et.al, 2007). This means, parents' interaction with children is very vital and critical for their development. Thus, the roles of parents/ caregivers cannot be overlooked. In an environment of constant interaction, bounding and share of affection, children develop well and become psychologically balanced as compared to an environment of hostility and fear. The theory stress on the impact of

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interaction and social connections and thus, when children get the needed care, attention and warmth, it impacts them positively in their academics and even their attendance to school.

Conceptual Review

Parental care

Parental care refers to the legal responsibility for the care of one's children. Parental care as an aspect of parenting involves protecting, providing food, shelter, clothes, and emotional and psychological care for one's children. Giving birth alone does not qualify one as a parent; one's ability to perform the responsibilities that come with it makes them parents. Thus, parental care begins at the onset of conception. Parental care takes qualitatively distinct forms from infancy to adulthood. Parents have a duty to care for their children when they transition from dependent to independent states. Three primary goals are highly prioritised by parents worldwide. These goals include supplying children with cultural values, preparing them for maturity, and guaranteeing that they have access to the resources necessary for their health and safety (American Psychological Association, 2010). The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (2000) assert that parents have a responsibility to protect and secure their children. By security, they intend to keep children safe from harm and anything that could ruin their future. It is imperative that children receive care that facilitates their development, ensures their survival, and provides them with protection from danger, including physical and sexual abuse. These are the safety necessities of every child. However, as they typically lack the means to defend themselves, young children in particular need to have them satisfied. Rather, to secure their safety

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and healthy development both within and outside the home, young children rely on their parents and other important caregivers to speak up for them (Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, 2015).

Furthermore, parental care refers to the monitoring and care given to a child in their own home, regardless of whether the child's parents are doing so (Cater & Forssell, 2014). This means parental care includes all the responsibilities given by biological parents, guardians, and caregivers to increase the development of children. Parents care for their children by instilling good moral values in them. It is the duty of parents to instill in their children's strong moral principles. Through positive interpersonal relationships parents have with their children, it helps them develop social competence, making them able to get along with people and respect their opinions and ideas in any given situation. These fundamental social skills cover a range of helpful actions that can be encouraged by parents and other caregivers, including cooperation, sharing, and perspective-taking.

Baydar, Akçnar, and Mer (2012) also defined parental care as providing children with the assistance they need to grow emotionally, physically, socially, intellectually, and cognitively. By this definition, parental care is a broader spectrum that encompasses the holistic development of children. Parents have to look at the physical wellbeing of their children, including their health and protection from harm and danger. Cognitively, they are to ensure their children develop some skills like language acquisition, numeracy, and problem solving. These are made possible when parents cognitively stimulate their children by buying the relevant materials and books.

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It is the responsibility of parents and other primary caregivers to assist their children through their helplessness by managing their emotional arousals and certain coping mechanisms (Osofsky & Fitzgerald, 2000).

Parents' attitudes also influence parental care. It refers to how parents engage and relate to their kids in light of their views, knowledge of the internet, understanding of culture and society, and past parenting experiences (Cabrera & Tamis- LeMonda 2000; Cheah & Chirkov, 2008). The attitudes parents put up towards the care of their children are sometimes based on their belief, goals and aims for their children. Several goals for a child's development have been discovered by studies, and these goals may have an impact on attitudes toward parents' duties and the promotion of various parenting techniques. Different perspectives on gender roles, objectives for children, and attitudes toward childrearing are all examples of how cultural communities' beliefs and traditions can be seen in action.

School Readiness

Over the years, researchers in Early Childhood Education (ECE) have given several definitions for it (Sauluja, Scott-Little, & Clifford, 2000). The definition has undergone major shifts during the past decades. Gesell, IIg, and Ames (1974) and Pandis (2001) have defined it based on the maturity levels of children that allow them to focus and make them stable for school. They believe the age of children helps them become ready and equipped with the needed competencies and skills for school. Other approaches stress education. The focus of the educational approach looks at children's literacy and numeracy abilities in school. From these perspectives, when children are able to perform basic numeracy and construct simple sentences, which align with

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the pre-primary school curriculum (Organisation for economic co-operation and development (OECD), 2006), Children who fall into this category are perceived as ready and prepared for school. Murphy and Burns (2002) stressed a bi-directional approach to the definition, which emphasizes the child and his or her environment. The definition stresses the importance of child support from his or her immediate environment as a factor in their readiness for school. Thus, the child's immediate family (parents, siblings, and loved ones) contribute to his or her growth. The constant interaction and bonding propel them and make them ready to interact and bond with other children in school.

Kagan (1995) and Snow (2006) also took a dimensional approach to the definition of the term. They viewed school readiness as competencies in the domains of development, such as cognitive, affective, learning approaches, and social skills.

Children must have the knowledge and abilities necessary for school in order to learn efficiently and excel academically. Being equipped with the appropriate competencies helps learners stay focused and fit well into school. Given that school readiness is a crucial component of academic performance, it is prudent to comprehend how it impacts students' ability to succeed and reach their full potential in the classroom. If school readiness is important in ensuring children's success in school, then efforts should be put in place to make sure children acquire the needed competencies and skills for school.

According to High (2008), if children do not have access to resources or basic and preventative medical and mental health treatments, suitable nutrition, financial stability, adequate clothing and housing, and appropriate education among the basic necessities, school readiness becomes impossible to

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achieve. These measures put learners into stability and preparedness for school. As a construct with lots of definitions and dimensions, it still does not give conclusions as to which dimension measures the readiness of children in totality.

School Attendance

School attendance is a powerful predictor of students' outcomes in school. A measurement of the number of students who attend school and their presence for how long is known as school attendance (Collins dictionary). It involves one's regularity and punctuality at school. School attendance emphasizes a conscious effort to always be present at school. Increased student attendance at school is an indication of their readiness for school and preparedness for academic work and success in school. According to Skinner (1988), activities that are rewarding are more readily engaged in. Based on this assertion, higher attendance at school shows school is more rewarding and pleasant to them. The reverse also indicates their unpreparedness and unwillingness to go to school.

The new Webster's Dictionary (1995) also defines attendance as "the act of habitual practice of attending or being present". Therefore, the term "school attendance" refers to the routine behavior of showing up for class. Being present in school all the time enhances learning and promotes learners' achievement and success in school. The act of constantly being in school is not automatic. It is propelled by factors such as good nutrition, parental care and involvement in learners, and the right frame of mind or preparedness (Sahin et. al, 2016).

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Children's and students' abilities to be regular and punctual in school depend on a lot of factors. These factors include student's school readiness, peer influence, the socioeconomic status of parents, and parental attitudes towards children's attendance at school.

School readiness

School readiness is the competencies and entry preparedness of children for school. These competencies include intellectual abilities, language and communication skills, social and emotional skills, as well as psychomotor abilities. Students who possess their skills are well balanced and feel fit for school, whereas those who lack them feel they are not ready, do not belong there, or are unfit for school (Doherty, 1997). These children tend to find learning difficult and develop problems dealing with others (The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), 1999; Connell & Prinz, 2002).

Peer Influence

A group of individuals within a given age range who share interests and accomplishments are said to be peers. Children tend to have a stronger influence on themselves in the school environment as compared to their teachers (Myers & Pianta, 2008). This influence can cause them to conform or become rebellious toward school norms and rules. In an environment where children are influenced by their non-academic peers, these children tend to follow suit by not attending school and staying at home. Children who have dropped out of school attempt to lure some of their classmates into the street, according to Wigg (1994). Because of this, students suffer from a lack of focus, drop out of school, and engage in a variety of social vices.

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Socio-economic status of parents'

Most children lack the care and support they need sometimes. This raises the issue of the socioeconomic background of parents. The financial backgrounds of parents towards their care for their wards tend to influence their school attendance McCoy et al. (2016). Children from financially stable homes are provided for and well catered for, with the provision of their needs and materials for school. On the other hand, financially unstable families have a pattern of going to school sometimes on an empty stomach, with fewer books and materials and even stunted growth (Grantham- McGregor et al., 2007). This occurrence affects children's stability in school and eventually their attendance at school.

Parents' attitudes towards their children's school attendance

In most civilizations, it is commonly acknowledged that students should acquire a good education in order to support the country's development. This means that parents have a responsibility to make sure their kids attend school on a regular basis. In the majority of houses, parents don't worry as much about their wards going to school and consequently don't give them the necessary support (such as paying for school supplies and other expenses) at school. Students at school experience emotional and psychological effects when these crucial demands are not met. They experience internal discontent. At this point, going to school no longer holds much interest for them, and they are less interested in what their parents have to say about schooling, this in the long round in absenteeism in school (Benasich & Brooks- Gunn, 1996). There are a few students who also skip school as a result of their parents' perturbed attitudes toward engaging in other petty jobs to fend for them.

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Empirical review

Level of parental care among students

Researchers Wilk, Clark, Maltby, Tucker, and Gilliland (2018) examined how much parental involvement there was among students in London and Ontario. A conceptual model connecting parental support and parental physical activity (PA) was also tested in this study. Questionnaires were used to gather information about parental support and how children perceived that support. To test the conceptual model, the researchers used structural equation modeling techniques. The study involved 467 boys and 469 girls in all. The study's findings showed that students showed a higher degree of parental concern.

Again, further investigation showed that both boys' (b = 0.319) and girls' (b = 0.326) PA were positively impacted by students' perceptions of their parents' support for PA. The results showed that parental support for PA by students was not significantly influenced by parental PA. However, the perception of parental support by children for both boys (b = 0.352) and girls (b = 0.584) were significantly and favorably impacted by parent-reported support for PA. In terms of the indirect impacts, parental PA did not have a statistically significant impact on children's PA levels in either group; however, parental support for PA did, as was expected. The study's findings showed how crucial children's views of parental support were in determining their PA behaviors.

Naite (2021) examined the degree of parental involvement among students. This study sought to investigate further concerns regarding parental

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care at Crescent International School in Bangkok, Thailand, and to ascertain whether the parents' demographic characteristics affected their concern for their children's education. For the current study, 12 participants' responses whose kids attended elementary schools were used as examples. To gauge the extent of parental care and participation, interviews were performed and a questionnaire about the demographics of parents was issued. The main findings of this study demonstrated that there was a higher level of parental participation since teenagers whose parents were very concerned in their education outperformed their peers in school and on all examinations. The results also demonstrated that parental wealth had no effect on the level of parental involvement in the education of their kids. The age, marital status, work status, and educational background of the parents had a greater impact on parental participation. Parents were counseled to see how important it is to visit and support their children in school. Additionally, it was recommended that parents actively support their children's education because they are their primary teachers both at home and at school.

Erdem and Kaya (2020) also sought to evaluate the degree of parental involvement among students in a different study. With regard to home-based and school-based parental care practices, the goal of this study is to investigate the impact of parental care, particularly when it comes to students' academic attainment at the preschool, elementary, and secondary levels. The data came from fifty-five separate English-language research papers that were published between 2010 and 2019. These studies were located in databases such as PsycNet, Academic Search Complete, Science Direct, ERIC, and Wiley Online Library. The study found that pupils' parental participation was neither

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extremely high nor extremely low. Research has demonstrated that children's academic progress was somewhat influenced by parental participation.

To determine the extent or size of parental caring among students, Oyoru (2023) also looked into the topic. For this study, a descriptive research approach was chosen, and 200 respondents—who were chosen at random from among the students in the different schools—took part. Data were gathered using a questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. The data was analyzed and explained using a frequency distribution table and a straightforward percentage. The study's findings showed that the students thought their parents were more involved in their lives. Thus, it was determined that strong parental guidance aids in easing the strain that kids experience in their academic environment. The study came to the additional conclusion that adolescents' levels of peer group association are significantly influenced by their parents' quality of parenting. Parents should always encourage their kids by showing them love and attention and instilling in them the value of education, according to recommendations provided.

Gyamfi and Pobbi (2016) investigated Ghanaian students' level of parental participation. The study specifically looked at the Junior High School's parental care and monitoring practices in order to identify the pertinent elements of parental supervision required to raise A child's performance in school. For the study, a sequential explanatory mixed design approach was employed. 810 randomly chosen basic school pupils from five Ghanaian regions had their parents surveyed in order to gather primary data. Several steps in the sampling process were used to select a sample of respondents for this study. Initially, Ashanti, Greater Accra, Central, Northern,

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and Eastern regions were selected as a deliberate sample. Each of the three randomly selected schools within each Region then conducted a basic random selection of ten students per grade, from Grade 1 to Grade 6.

The results of the study showed that very few pupils shown any parental involvement. Consequently, it was found that there was little parental concern and involvement in any activity related to tracking their children' academic progress. As a result, it was suggested that parents offer their children better attention and care.

Level of school readiness among students

In 2020, Bay examined how prepared Turkish pupils were for school. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the preparation of primary school pupils for school in relation to some socio demographic factors. One of the quantitative research approaches, the general survey model, was used to perform the study. Four hundred and two first-graders in the province of Eskişehir who were enrolled in elementary school took part in the study. Each participant's teachers completed the "Primary School Readiness Scale" (Canbulat & Krktaş, 2016) for the study. The sub-dimensions of the scale measuring cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and self-care skills were used to assess the students' readiness for school. Descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), ANOVA, Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis H tests, and Scheffe Post-Hoc tests were used in the data analysis. According to the study, the following student groups had significantly higher primary school readiness levels ($p<0.05$) than the other groups: those who had received preschool instruction compared to those who did not; those who were 72–84 months old compared to those who were 60–72 months old; those whose

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mothers had received more education than those who had not; and those whose fathers were employed versus those who were not. Furthermore, there were significant differences in the degree of preparedness for elementary school among certain subgroups in the following domains: females were considerably more equipped in the affective domain; students with working mothers were better prepared in the cognitive domain; and students with bachelor's degree-holding fathers were better prepared in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains ($p < 0.05$). As a result, it was found that students had very high levels of school readiness.

Pan, Trang, Love, and Templin (2019) also sought to investigate the level of school readiness among students. This study sought to ascertain whether distinct school preparation profiles exist and whether such profiles may be used to predict academic growth in different ways. A total of 14,954 first-time kindergarten students were included in the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study: 2010–11 (ECLS-K: 2011), a public data collection project. With a mean of 76.13 months, children started kindergarten at ages 44.81 to 87.98 months. The six dimensions of school preparation that were used in Study 1 were health, self-regulation, language development, social and emotional development, cognitive development, and learning styles. A total of 85% of the sample was represented by the top six school readiness profiles, which were positive development (28%), comprehensive at-risk (24%), personal and social strengths (20%), cognitive and language strengths (5%), health strength (5%), and cognitive, 85% of the sample were for social and personal strengths (3% each) were responsible. The results included a total of

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41 profiles. Study 2 looked at the possibility of using school preparation profiles to forecast children's progress in reading and math.

The primary conclusions demonstrated the high degree of school preparedness. Additional research revealed that members of distinct school readiness profiles exhibited distinct academic growth patterns and were able to predict academic growth independently of factors related to the child's and family's history. Over time, children who exhibited a positive development profile also demonstrated superior academic accomplishment. The kids with the highest growth rates were those that fit the Personal and Social Strengths profile. In conclusion, the results validated the importance of social and personal skills in the growth of reading and math ability, as well as the inclusion of self-regulation as an additional component of school readiness.

In a further study, Majzub and Rashid (2020) investigated the level of school readiness as well. This study looked at the preparedness of kids for school according to their backgrounds. A stratified random approach was employed to choose a sample of 377 preschool-age children from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, who attend government preschools, government agency preschools, and private preschools. Kindergarten instructors used a multidimensional evaluation called School Readiness (Year One) to report on children's readiness for school, while parents filled out papers providing demographic information about their background. Children scored lowest on socio emotional preparation and highest on moral preparedness, according to descriptive data. All things considered, the kids' preparedness for starting first grade was mediocre. The results of this study imply that parents may not have paid attention to their children's socio -emotional development. According to

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the study, low-income parents also require assistance in order to acquire the skills necessary to adopt more positive parenting techniques, engage in engaging activities with their kids, and have the resources necessary to improve the learning environment at home and promote their kids' growth.

Tourangeau, Nord, Le, Sorongon, Hagedorn, Daly and Najarian (2015) also studied school readiness. This study looked at the types of correlations that exist between kindergarten students' school preparedness and the enhancement of their engagement, academic, and social skills. Within the context of the Institute of Education Sciences-funded Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010–11 (ECLS–K), a nationally representative sample of students was chosen from 1,319 primary schools across the country (1,036 public schools and 283 private schools). They brought together 18,174 students from different schools, parents, and kindergarten teachers. All four of the relevant school preparation variables—teacher-rated social skills and engagement, autumn math and reading scores, and teacher-rated social skills—were represented in the final sample of children. The study looked at the different developmental trajectories of children's academic, social and engagement skills across these profiles to identify profiles of school preparedness present in entering kindergarteners using a person-centered analytical technique. Wiggler, On Par, Room to Grow, Super Regulator, Scholastic, and Room to grow are the first five different profiles of school readiness. A descriptive study revealed that the students' level of preparedness for school was generally very high. The researchers went on to suggest that training be provided in all areas of preparation.

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Lastly, Wolf and McCoy (2019) conducted an inquiry into the level of school readiness in Ghana. This study also looked at the paths of parental investment and how parent socio-economic status (SES) affected children's school readiness both directly and indirectly. During the 2015–2016 school year in Ghana, surveys were conducted with primary caregivers and direct evaluations of preschool-aged children (N = 2,137; M(age) = 5.2 years). 3,435 children in total were chosen for the child evaluations, with an average of 14.3 students per school (range = 4–15) throughout six districts in Ghana's Greater Accra Region. The study's primary conclusions showed that students' levels of school preparation ranged from low to moderate. Additional findings showed inequalities in child school readiness capabilities and parental investment characteristics related to SES.

Preschool involvement acted as the primary mediation mechanism in the relationship between SES and most school preparation skills, even though it did not predict executive function. On the one hand, at-home stimulation was found to be negatively correlated with motor, literacy, and numeracy skills, and the number of books in the home was found to be only slightly positively predictive of early literacy. It was concluded that there was a significant correlation between household wealth and schooling and that socio-economic status (SES) and the investments made by early parents in their children were clearly related. Therefore, a parent's primary concern should be making sure their child is ready for school.

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School Attendance among male and female students

Havik, Bru, and Ertesvg (2015) investigated the school attendance of male and female students in Norway. The study's objective was to evaluate the causes of truancy, school refusal, musculoskeletal symptoms, and subjective health problems, as well as their associations with gender, grade, and self-reported special educational requirements. Students selected from seven communities in Norway completed a self-reported questionnaire for the study. 5,465 sixth through tenth graders made up the entire sample.

The four recommended dimensions of reasons for school non-attendance were supported by the measuring model, which produced indices of good fit. More females than males were found to be truancy victims. Again, subjective health issues were cited as the main cause of absences from school, with truancy- or school refusal-related issues cited as the primary cause of absences by 6.2% of students. There was a propensity for females to report more school refusal reasons and for students who reported special educational needs to report more truancy reasons. Discussions about the study and its practical implications follow.

Hysing, Haugland, Stormark, Be, and Sivertsen (2015) also looked into school attendance in a different study. This study looked into the connection between teenage sleep patterns and absences from school. Based on a large population-based study from Norway, 8,347 teenagers (54 percent female) between the ages of 16 and 19 were surveyed in 2012. Data on pupils' attendance at schools was provided through national registers for administration. The majority of traits related to sleep were linked to a higher

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chance of missing school. Short sleep duration and sleep deficit had the highest odds of non-attendance (OR = 4.61, CI 95% 3.29–6.46) and (OR = 3.26, CI 95% 2.67–3.99), respectively, after controlling for gender and socioeconomic status. While girls missed significantly more school days than boys (4.5 days vs. 3.6 days, respectively, p 0.001), there were no gender differences in the number of hours missing from school (7.7 vs. 7.5, respectively) over the previous six months. Weekend versus weekday bedtime variations were also significantly associated with daytime drowsiness (OR = 2.09, CI 95% 1.70-2.57), insomnia (OR = 2.25, CI 1.89-2.67), and absenteeism (OR = 2.43, CI 1.93-2.02). There was a slight decline in the connections following more depression repair. The results led to the conclusion that, considering the known association between sleep problems and school absences, a thorough assessment of sleep is required when teenagers miss a lot of school. It is recommended to conduct more research to learn more about how sleep and school absence during adolescence may affect later employment affiliation in adulthood.

Students from twenty-five schools numbering 2,022 answered the questionnaires. In all 14.2% of males and 10.1% of females, PIU was detected. PIU prevalence was highest in girls aged 14 and boys aged 15, and it affected the students' capacity to go to school. Merely 13.5% of pupils stated that their parents kept an eye on their internet activities. Feelings of loneliness, frequency of use, duration of connections, and use of pornographic websites were all linked to increased risk of PIU in both genders. While information searches protected women, other factors associated with PIU included going to technical schools, downloading and sharing files, where men used the Internet,

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and being younger than women. PIU might become a public health concern in the years to come. Research should be done on the effects on both physical and mental health.

In Africa, Zinyemba et al (2021) investigated school attendance among male and female students in Zimbabwe. The researchers evaluated the impact of illness, in particular HIV, on school attendance in Zimbabwe using up-to-date, nationally representative data on 11,673 kids between the ages of 6 and 18. The researchers used a non-linear multivariate decomposition technique to look into the relationship between HIV and gender differences in school attendance. For this study, a nationally representative sample from the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) was used. The DHS Programme has been gathering information on the gender, age, and household demographics in more than 90 developing nations since 1984. The DHS began using a population-based approach to test men and women between the ages of 15 and 49 in 2001. However, the Zimbabwe DHS (ZDHS) 2015 wave is distinct since it includes HIV test results for males (15–54), women (15–49), adolescents (6–14), and young children (ages 0–5). The Zimbabwe National Statistical Agency (ZIMSTAT) carried out the research from July to December 2015 (ZDHS, 201); the findings showed that school attendance differed between females who tested negative for HIV and between boys and girls who tested positive. In both cohorts, variations in observable variables explained roughly 44% of the discrepancy in attendance. These variances accounted for about 56% of the variation in these factors' effects on different individuals. The findings indicate that illness, particularly HIV, causes girls to miss school at a higher rate than boys.

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Parental Care and School attendance

Accordingly, this work was to investigate gender disparities as well as the links between parental views and teenage perceptions of family functioning in their academic plans. Bonnaire and Phan (2017) investigated male and female students at a college in France regarding matters of parental care and school attendance. The researcher used 383 non-problematic gamers (NPG, 196 men and 187 women) and 37 problematic gamers from a sample of 434 school-aged youth (n = 434; age 13.2 years) (PG, 29 males; 8 females). Regulations, video game access, supervision, and video game bans were measured using the Family Relationship Index and a questionnaire gauging parental opinions. Compared to PG families, NPG families are more cohesive and have stronger relationships with one another. Males need to follow the law when it comes to gaming; however, for girls, banning is linked to IGD. Parental supervision, tensions, and family relationships are linked to IGD for both sexes. These results demonstrated the critical role played by parental attitudes and family dynamics in the development of IGD in adolescents and its gender-specific manifestations. It was therefore suggested that preventative initiatives should consider the significance of parents, parenting, and gender specificities.

Puccioni, Baker, and Froiland (2019), in a comparable reseach in the United States of America, discovered a link between parental care and students' attendance at school. Researchers examined relationships between parents' perceptions and the readiness of their wards. This study used data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010–

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2011 (N = 13,999), to examine children's school readiness, home-based involvement (parental care), and measures of that readiness (school attendance). An estimated structural equation model's findings indicated a positive correlation between parents' perceptions of their children's school readiness and their own involvement in their education, including high school attendance, good grades, and socio-emotional development.

Also, home-based involvement methods were favorably correlated with parents' perceptions of their children's preparation for school. To put it another way, children of parents who placed a higher value on school readiness exhibited higher levels of academic achievement and socio-emotional skills. Moreover, findings specified that academic achievement was more strongly correlated with parents' opinions about school preparedness than socio-emotional skills. The results showed that opinions about and involvement in education among parents varied according to race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic position. Overall, research results revealed and advised that initiatives to promote and support parental engagement should take into account parents' attitudes toward school preparedness and home-based involvement habits.

Hendron and Kearney (2016) also looked into parental involvement and students' attendance at school among male and female pupils in Nevada, a state in the United States. In their work, they investigated whether school variables, like parental care, were associated with severe absenteeism and significant indicators of psychopathology in teenagers who were specifically referred for low attendance (N = 388), both positively and negatively. The School Climate Survey Revised Edition, which assessed resource sharing,

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discipline, parental involvement, student-teacher relationships, and interpersonal interactions among students, was completed by adolescents in the sample. The revised Conners' Parent Rating Scale and the parents filled out the Child Anxiety and Depression Scale, which measures long-term anxiety, melancholy, and rebellious conduct in children, the measures were completed in a truancy diversion programme or at the family courts and services center. Structural equation modeling revealed a negative correlation between school atmosphere traits and absence severity, as well as anxiety, melancholy, and oppositional conduct. For older and more masculine youths in particular, role models were crucial. As predicted by the researchers, the goodness-of-fit criteria were not met by other models for inattention, perfectionism, separation anxiety, or cognitive issues. The results often supported earlier research with larger samples of middle and high school students. The researchers offered recommendations for preventative interventions for teenagers exhibiting problematic absenteeism.

Bruce, Patel, Peterson, and Chamberlain (2018) wanted to look into parental attitudes, practices, and impediments around students' readiness for school attendance at a county clinic that provides low-income Latino children with medical care. In order to measure school readiness (SR), or attendance at school, the researchers surveyed parents of children between the ages of three and six in four areas: attitudes and behaviors; obstacles; awareness; and use of local resources between December 2013 and September 2014. For example, the majority of parents (n = 210, response rate 95.6%) thought that their child should have certain skills before starting school. These skills included sharing

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and taking turns, counting with a pencil, knowing letters, colors, and shapes, and knowing 99.1%.

Another study that focused on parental participation and student attendance found that over 80% of parents placed a high priority on education and practiced positive SR behaviors included practicing letters, singing, or reading. Language barriers, limited access to literature at home, restrictions on reading aloud to the child before bed, trouble filling out school paperwork, and little free time with the child were major challenges for SR. Local services like preschool programmes were more well-known than they were truly used to be. Although these Hispanic, low-income parents valued SR, it was found that they did not have the knowledge necessary to fully prepare their kids for school and did not take advantage of available community resources, such as free preschool programmes.

Mahuro and Hungi (2016) looked into parental care and school attendance in Uganda, Africa. Many academic outcomes and children's attendance habits have been linked in educational research to parents' involvement in their children education. Parental care means devoting time and money to their kids' participation in school and academic success. Data from a cross-sectional survey of 2,669 sixth graders from public and private primary schools in the Iganga-Mayuge health and demographic monitoring system in rural Eastern Uganda were used in this study. Regression analysis was used to determine this while accounting for household, school, and individual covariates. In a similar vein to how parental participation in communication and parenting activities raises students' reading scores significantly, by 12 and 6 percentage points per unit increase, respectively.

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Two of the six categories of parental involvement listed in the Epstein framework for parental involvement were employed in this study.

In this study, children's academic achievement is said to be aided by parental support, which is crucial for encouraging pupils to improve their academic performance and attendance. The researchers proposed that active parental involvement and other education stakeholders should be incorporated into the learning process in order for them to benefit the most from an educational system. The findings demonstrated a significant improvement in students' numeracy scores of 6 and 15 percentage points, respectively, for every unit increase in parental involvement through parenting and communication types of involvement.

School Readiness and School Attendance

The preparation for school and attendance rates of American students was studied by Lee, Han, Waldfogel, and Brooks-Gunn (2018). Preschool-age children (Head Start, prekindergarten, or any other center-based preschool) consistently had better reading and math skills than children who were cared for only at home. The researchers used data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study—Birth Cohort, N = 1650—to examine the associations between preschool attendance and academic school readiness at kindergarten enrolment among 5-year-old US children of immigrant mothers. Ordinary least squares regressions with rich controls and propensity score weighting were used in the studies. On the other hand, studies looking at a particular kind of preschool showed that kids there were more proficient in math and reading than kids who were under parental supervision; these studies, however, excluded Head Start and other centre-based preschools.

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When comparing parental care to preschool attendance, the researchers typically discovered long-lasting positive correlations between reading and math proficiency for children of immigrant parents. The study's primary findings imply that preschool may, as proposed, help immigrant children become academically prepared for school. This is most likely due to the fact that it provides them with opportunities for high-quality learning and interactions (such as exposure to the English language and the American educational system, peer interaction opportunities, and structured educational activities) that help them acquire the academic skills decided upon. The researchers found that preschool attendance, particularly for full days, improves the school readiness of immigrant children.

In another report, Manfra (2019) conducted a systematic review of school readiness and school attendance. A thorough enquiry of the literature on the impact of homelessness on preschoolers' preparation for school and their academic achievement in the first years of primary school was presented. It was discovered that fourteen studies, spanning preschool through grade three, looked at this association. Studies reveal that children experiencing homelessness exhibit inferior academic performance and lack of preparedness for school compared to their non-homeless peers. However, it was unclear whether children who are homeless do worse than housed children with similar socio-demographics.

Most large-scale research involving more than four thousand children found that academic performance was higher for low-income housed children than for homeless children. However, it was only about 300 children, or less than half of the studies, found evidence for this connection. Among the

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numerous protective variables that have been suggested in the literature to mitigate the negative impacts of homelessness on academic achievement and school preparedness in the early elementary grades, the researcher suggested that a good school attendance high-quality parenting, self-regulation, and early education are included.

Additionally, an experimental study was conducted by Gennetian, Marti, Kennedy, Kim, and Duch(2019) to examine the connection between school attendance and preparedness for learning. Programmes for young children that try to lessen socioeconomic disparities must include parents. Drawing on the multidisciplinary field of behavioural economics, the researchers upgraded the Head Start preschool programme Getting Ready for School in order to increase parent involvement. The advancements in behavioural economics aimed to address psychological issues like attention deficit disorder, underestimation, and related parent biases regarding their children's behaviour and academic success in school, which could impair parents' ability to make informed decisions: The findings of a randomised control study conducted in four Head Start centres indicate that families who implemented behavioural economics-enhanced strategies saw an increase in student attendance and GRS activity follow-through, as well as more time spent on educational activities outside of the classroom compared to those who implemented the standard curriculum. Personalised invitations, text-message reminders, kid-friendly activity plans, and commitment reinforcement were some of these tactics. It was claimed that when parents support their children's school readiness, attendance at school does not become an issue.

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Byun, Irvin and Meece (2015) investigated school readiness and attendance patterns. This study used data from the 1988 National Education Longitudinal Study to investigate rural youth college attendance patterns. It looked at when to switch to a higher degree, how long enrolment lasted, and how selective the initial postsecondary school was. The study examined the trends in college attendance that differed between students from rural and non-rural areas, as well as the causes that led to these discrepancies. Only those with more than ten course credits and at least one postsecondary degree as of 2000 were included in the study's analysis. Due to the small sample numbers, American Indian and Alaska Native children were excluded.

The final analytic sample comprised about 8,200 students after records with missing location identifiers and postsecondary transcript information were removed. Youth from rural, suburban, and urban areas made up roughly 28%, 42%, and 30% of the sample, respectively. White student's were74% and 54% of them were female. The findings indicated that rural youth had a lower likelihood of enrolling in a selective institution than their non-rural counterparts. In addition, compared to their urban counterparts, rural children were more likely to put off starting their postsecondary education. The likelihood of rural students being consistently enrolled in college was lower than that of their urban counterparts. Rural and non-rural inequalities in socioeconomic position and high school readiness accounted for a large portion of these disparities in college attendance trends between rural and non-rural areas.

In Africa, McCoy, Zuilkowski, Yoshikawa and Fink (2017) also investigated school readiness and attendance in Zambia. They examined the

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relationships between early childhood care and education (ECCE) involvement and seven measures of children's school readiness in a national sample of 1,623 6-year-olds in Zambia using kernel exact matching. The children's receptive vocabulary, letter naming, reasoning, fine motor, executive function, and task performance skills were found to be significantly and favorably predicted by their involvement in ECCE (d = 0.20 0.65). The results showed that although ECCE was associated with improved outcomes in all programme types and dosage ranges, there was a stronger statistically significant, correlation between school readiness and ECCE participation for learners enrolled in non-profit programs as opposed to government or private sector programs, as well as for children attending three to five hours of ECCE per day as opposed to less than three hours.

Parental Care and School readiness on school attendance

Puccioni (2015) investigated parental care and school readiness among students. The conceptual model of academic socialisation was experimentally evaluated and argues that Parenting perception and child outcomes, such as preparedness for the move to school, are influenced by parents' beliefs and concern for their children' education (Taylor, Clayton & Rowley, 2004). Using data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Cohort (N = 12,622), the author specifically looked at relationships between parents' conceptions (care) of school readiness, transition practices (school readiness), and children's academic achievement in reading and mathematics from kindergarten through Grade 1. The estimation of a latent growth curve model revealed that parents' perceptions of their children's preparation for school were positively correlated with their initial

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growth and accomplishments. The achievement and kindergarten readiness of learners were likewise favorably correlated with parents' transition strategies. The use of transition strategies was also positively influenced by parents' beliefs. The study substantially supported the theoretical framework of academic socialisation. The results suggested or advised that early treatments aiming to alter parenting behaviours should take into account parents' expectations and views regarding their children's preparation for school.

Anderson (2015) also investigated parental care and school readiness among students. This study looked at correlations for economically poor Black families (N = 127) between stress, relationship quality (parental care), and young children's school preparation (i.e., academic, psychological, and socio-emotional traits). This action was taken in view of the empirical connections that have been shown between children's academic achievement and familial traits. In this study, 126 black families who were taking part in an after-school socio-emotional learning programme for young elementary school students underwent a randomised control experiment. The sample for the current investigation includes both treatment and control households.

In the sample, there were 127 school-aged children (M = 5.43, SD =.32, range = 4.5–6 years), 72 of whom were girls (57%), and 55 of whom were boys (43%), as well as 126 primary caregivers (one of whom had two children participating in the study). Parents' ages ranged from 21 to 76 (M = 32.56, SD = 9.23), with the majority of them being female (94%, n = 119). Seventy-two (57%) of the sample's caregivers—72—claimed to be the only ones in the household. Sixty-six percent (66%) of the parents had completed a similar programme or high school. One hundred and two individuals

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representing (80%) reported receiving additional public assistance based on their income, and 97% of the sample (n = 120) had children who received free or reduced lunches at school (e.g., temporary assistance for needy families; TANF).

Low levels of financial stress that had no bearing on how prepared their children were for school were reported by the parents. Both parent and teacher reports of children's psychosocial issues were strongly correlated with parents' overall levels of stress, but the direction of the relationship varied (e.g., positive versus negative, respectively). Children's psychosocial and socio-emotional preparedness was also significantly influenced by parents' reports of parent-child relationships. The results underlined the significance of parent-child connections in the behavioural functioning of underprivileged black children entry to school and pointed to solutions through school and household cooperation.

Puccioni (2018) also carried out research on school preparedness and parental care. The study design examined the relationships between parents' perceptions of their children's academic and behavioural readiness for school. Using data from the nationally representative Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Birth Cohort (ECLS-B), parents' involvement at home and at school, and the academic achievement of their children as they transitioned into kindergarten were examined. The study's findings showed that parents who value their kids' behaviour participated more in preschool activities and at-home parental care. This in turn had a positive correlation with preschoolers' achievement in reading and math as well as their attendance when they start kindergarten.

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The results also showed that, when controlling for socioeconomic position, parents of Black and Hispanic children gave behavioural traits a higher priority than those of White children. The researcher advised educators and policymakers who sought to improve home-schooling relationships and parent education programmes that attempted to optimise parental involvement during early infancy that these findings had practical consequences for them.

In Africa, parental care and school readiness was also studied by Wolf and McCoy (2019). This study examined how parental activities such as their care and their channels of parental investment, Children's readiness for school and attendance were both directly and indirectly impacted by their socioeconomic status (SES). At the beginning of the 2015–2016 academic year in Ghana, questionnaires filled out by primary caregivers and in-person assessments of preschool-aged children (N = 2,137; M(age) = 5.2 years) were used to collect data for this study. The findings showed that preschool activities and home-based parental participation—also referred to as parental care—are more common among parents who place a higher value on their kids' behavioral skills and traits. This in turn is positively correlated with preschoolers' success in math and reading as well as their kindergarten attendance.

The findings also demonstrated that parents of Black and Hispanic children prioritised behavioural traits more highly than parents of White children when adjusting for socioeconomic status. The researcher offered guidance to educators and policymakers aiming to enhance homeschooling relationships and parent education programmes that attempted to optimize

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parental involvement during early infancy that these findings had practical consequences for them.

In Africa, Wolf and McCoy (2019) studied parental care and school readiness. This study looked at the direct and indirect effects that parental behaviours, including caregiving, parental investment channels, and socioeconomic status (SES), had on kids' school readiness and attendance. Data for this study were gathered via questionnaires completed by main caregivers and direct evaluations of preschool-aged children (N = 2,137; M(age) = 5.2 years) at the beginning of the 2015–2016 academic year in Ghana. The findings showed deficiencies in children's school readiness and in every aspect of parental investment related to SES. Preschool involvement, such as attendance, served as the main mediator in the relationship between SES and most school-ready skills, even though it did not predict executive function. Although the number of books in the home was found to be a minor predictor of early literacy, at-home stimulation was negatively correlated with motor, reading, and numeracy skills. The researchers came to the conclusion that parental care and children's readiness for school were related, and they suggested increasing parental engagement in raising their charges.

Parental care among male and female students

Ing (2014) examined parental care in a study. This work compared differences in the relationship between a critical external factor (perceived early parental care), student mathematics and science achievement trajectories, and persistence in STEM careers by gender using latent growth curve analysis and nationally representative longitudinal survey data. Men's and women's STEM career perseverance was strongly associated with math and science

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career pathways. For males only, higher math achievement was correlated with perceived early parental care, not for females. There was no correlation discovered between higher science achievement in either gender and early perceived parental care. These results showed that there are differences in the association between career persistence, success, and parental care.

In another study, Strunin (2015) investigated parental care among students. For boys, but not for girls, higher math achievement was correlated with perceived early parental care. There was no correlation discovered between higher science achievement in either gender and early perceived parental care. These results showed that depending on the topic and gender, there are different relationships between parental care, achievement, and job persistence. Both lower-felt parental care and worse-perceived parental relationships were linked to greater drinking habits in both males and females; however, the link between the two was stronger in the former case than the latter. Lower parental care and weaker parental ties were also linked to being older, not living with parents, and having parents with less education.

Drinkers' profiles changed from non-consistent/infrequent/no consequences to excessive/many consequences, and there was a general downward trend in family dynamics and parental care. When it came to reported parental connections and perceptions of parental care, female drinking profiles were significantly correlated with poorer than male drinking patterns. Similar correlations between drinking practices and the parental care and relationship scores were also observed. The data suggests that drinking norms and values may have an impact on any protective effects of parental love and relationships on the drinking habits of Mexican students. It was

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recommended that research be done on changes in drinking norms, contextual factors, and student-parent trust in order to ascertain the efficacy of parental care or relationships as preventative measures against alcohol misuse among Mexican and Mexican American students as well as students from other backgrounds.

In another study, Hasan (2016) researched into parental care among students. The exponential rise in academic competition has highlighted the urgent need for parental care. Before parental care and assistance are included, school education is unable to fully visualise its goals. Parental care has thus come to represent the core of contemporary schooling. The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between and variations in the academic performance of male and female secondary school pupils from high and low parental care groups. The study's hypothesis stated that "there will be no relationship or difference between male and female secondary school students' academic achievements in high and low parental support groups."

After selecting 205 male and female secondary school students from four Aligarh Muslim University-affiliated secondary schools in Aligarh (U.P.) in India, the data was analysed using SD, t-test, and Pearson Correlation. The academic achievements of male and female secondary school students in the high parental care groups did not differ significantly from each other. Purposive sampling with non-probability was used to obtain the necessary sample kind. The academic performance of male and female secondary school students in the low parental care groups did not differ significantly.

Additionally, Stephens (2009) also looked at parental care among students. This study set out to find out whether parental care differed based on

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gender and, if so, to quantify the impact on the parent-student dynamic. A survey was given to the participants, inquiring about their basic demographics, the parent or parents they had lived with the most, and the gender roles played by each parent. The Parental Bonding Inventory, which gauges overprotectiveness and maternal and paternal care, was also administered to participants. The ways that parents interacted with their children varied significantly based on their gender. For instance, the majority of youth grown up with traditional parents and identify most with their mothers. Generally speaking, mothers were thought to be more caring and overprotective than fathers, and they also spent more time with their kids, were more likely to be part-time workers, spent the most quality time with their kids, and still talk to them more often than fathers. Another difference between fathers and mothers was that the former tended to be more overly protective of their daughters than the latter. The results supported conventional gender norms, which state that mothers should spend more time with their children and that as children get older, they should feel a stronger bond with their mothers.

Also, Curcio, Mak and George (2019) also investigated parental care among students. Psychological distress has been demonstrated to be predicted by low self-esteem; however, low self-esteem can also arise from inadequate parenting. The study investigated the associations between (a) psychological distress and (b) perceived maternal and paternal care factors. Additionally, the researchers investigated whether self-esteem mediated these associations in a non-clinical sample of 337 students in Canberra, Australia (age range: 13–17 years, mean = 14.17, 50.6% female). In comparison to men, they discovered that women reported lower levels of psychological distress. In females,

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psychological distress was predicted by low self-esteem and a sense of rejection from parents, while in males, psychological distress was predicted by low self-esteem.

Gilli (2016) also looked into parental care among students. Studies have consistently demonstrated that women are more empathetic than men in all domains of empathy, supporting the popular belief that women are naturally more empathic. According to this study, there may be a consistent gender gap because of gendered parenting practices. Research has shown that parenting styles have a bias towards women, favoring females and suggesting that girls receive more positive parenting. The purpose of this study was to confirm these results in a sample of 56 South African students, aged 9 to 13, from the Western Cape province (46 were coloured and 10 were black Africans).

The goal was to find out if females had more authoritative, positive parenting experiences. This study also sought to ascertain whether any biases against women in parenting practices were a factor in any perceived superiority of women in empathy. Only affective empathy showed a gender difference in favour of girls, whereas boys reported much more authoritative parenting than girls.

Subramani and Venkatachalam (2019) also researched parental care. Every student in school needs parental care in order to succeed academically. However, children's academic performance suffers when parents place more emphasis on expectations than on providing support. When they fall short of their parents' expectations, they struggle academically and experience stress. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the connection between

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students' academic stress and parental care. A sample of 179 high school students—92 males and 87 females—selected by simple random sampling (Sun et al., 2011) and High Parental Expectations for Academics (Fuligni, 1997) filled out self-report questionnaires for the Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents. The correlation analysis result showed that there was no meaningful connection between students' academic stress and parental care. The analysis's findings indicated that, in terms of parental care, there was no discernible gender difference among school children. The analysis the results demonstrated that there was no discernible gender difference in the parental care of school children. It was also mentioned that there was no statistically significant variation in the expectations of parents based on gender. Consequently, the findings also demonstrated that there was no discernible gender difference in the level of parental care between male and female students.

In Ghana, Darko and Gyasi (2019) also looked into parental care among students. This study sought to determine how parenting practices and gender affected senior high school students' academic achievement in the Ghanaian Central Region's Effutu Municipality. Students from two senior high schools participated in a cross-sectional survey created specifically for this objective. A multi-phase sampling method was used to choose 260 students from two Winneba senior high schools. The parenting style questionnaire created by Baumrind (1991) was used to find out what kind of parenting style students thought their parents did. It has a 0.79 reliability coefficient. The study's findings demonstrated that male pupils outperformed female students

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by a substantial margin. The study also showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the authoritarian behavior of males and females.

Lastly, Donkor, Ding, and Adu-Boateng (2019) examining the issues of parental care. Gender inequality persists at the top of the educational hierarchy in Ghana and the majority of other sub-Saharan African countries. This study sought to ascertain whether gender disparities in senior secondary schools in Ghana were influenced by parents' expectations for their kids' education. Propensity score matching is employed in the study's analysis, which makes use of data from the Ghana Living Standard Survey round six (GLSS 6). Using intra-household income inequality, parental expectations of the financial benefits of education were assessed. According to the findings, parents in Ghana often anticipated that their male offspring would benefit economically from education more than their female counterparts. As a result of this mindset, boys receive more funding for their education than girls do at senior secondary schools. Therefore, it was suggested that suitable regulations be put in place to guarantee that the obstacles preventing women from holding high-paying jobs in the workforce are removed. As a result, parents will provide their children's education similar funding regardless of gender, believing that girls can have the same economic potential as males.

School readiness among male and female students

Dangol and Shrestha (2021) investigated school readiness among students. One of the requirements thought to be necessary for a successful learning process in schools is readiness. Its absence may impede pupils' learning and the educational process overall. This study looked into the relationship between gender and learning readiness. In this study, data from

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400 students were gathered through a cross-sectional survey approach using purposive sampling. The collected data were evaluated using both descriptive and parametric statistical methods, most notably the independent sample t-test. The researcher discussed the findings while incorporating social capital theory.

The derived result showed that the high degree of learning preparedness among pupils was explained by all dimensions (student, school, and family). Similarly, because of differences in the influences associated to students' preexisting social capitals, gender significantly influenced learning readiness and its dimensions. The female students (Mean = 4.12, SD =.38) had a higher level of learning preparedness than the male students (Mean = 3.86, SD =.42). In terms of school preparation, female pupils performed better than male students (Mean = 3.85, SD =.44; Mean = 4.10, SD =.41). These results show that among school pupils, student preparedness and school readiness are significantly influenced by the gender of the students. Additionally, the degrees of preparation for school and students among

Also, Mutambik, Lee, and Almuqrin (2020) looked at school readiness. In order to close this gap, this work examined how culture and context affect high school students' preparedness for using e-learning in a special environment—a system of education where male and female students was taught separately. Due to the focus on the arbitrary nature of the ready concept, a mixed-methods study design was chosen. The results show that there were distinct gender disparities, but they also need to be taken with caution given the cultural context. About the gender differences, the study discovered statistically significant gender differences in the associations

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between the various external factors and the e-learning readiness traits. For example, the empirical findings showed that, although perceptions of social and in-school support as well as aspects of e-learning in general have a significant impact on students' preparation, male students perceived more support than female students.

Additionally, the researchers discovered that male students' views of e-learning features were more positively influenced by in-school support and social support than those of female students, which in turn affected the dimensions of e-learning preparedness.

Furthermore, Al-Hassan and Lansford (2009) examined pupils' preparation for school. The study examined demographic disparities in school readiness inside Jordan, an especially intriguing setting given the extensive national change that is now sweeping the country's educational system. Seven demographic characteristics were used to describe the degrees of school preparedness of children using teacher reports and researcher-directed assessments of the school readiness of a national sample of 4,681 first-grade Jordanian students. Male students were better prepared for school than female students.

Ganis Amurdawati, Pambudi, and Wantini (2020) investigated academic readiness. One of the metrics assisting students in meeting their learning objectives is learning readiness. More prepared students have a higher chance of achieving the learning objective. Evaluating the students' readiness for learning in several junior high schools in Pangkalpinang City, Bangka Belitung Island, Indonesia, was the aim of the study. One hundred and fifty J.H.S students from three different private and public schools took part in this

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cross-sectional survey study. Data were gathered via a survey, and SPSS was used for the analysis, which included an independent sample t-test and a one-way ANOVA.

The results showed that there was no difference in the students' preparedness between the two public junior high schools, SMP N 1 Pangkalpinang and SMP N 7 Pangkalpinang, with a sig value of 0.568 > 0.05. A significant difference in learning preparedness was found between private and public schools, specifically between SMP N 1 Pangkalpinang and SMP Muh Pangkalpinang, as well as between SMP N 7 Pangkalpinang and SMP Muh Pangkalpinang, as demonstrated by a sig value of 0.000 < 0.05. The gender comparison t-test showed no difference in learning readiness, with a sig value of 0.663 > 0.05. The investigation came to several conclusions. Those enrolled in public schools were better prepared for learning than those in private schools, according to the first finding on the readiness for learning gap.

Finally, Fowler, Joyner, and Slate (2011) also examined students' preparation for school. The study of gender differences on college placement examinations has produced a variety of findings and justifications for these discrepancies. In this study, the researchers looked at how much reading, math, and both subjects' achievement in college preparedness varied between Texas high school males and girls in the 2007–2008 and 2008–2009 academic years. For the 2007-2008 school years, scores from 918 Texas high schools were examined, and for the 2008-2009 school years, scores from 1,127 Texas high schools were examined. The college readiness scores of boys and girls in

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reading, math, and both subjects for both school years showed statistically significant disparities.

Overall, girls were more likely than boys to be college-ready in reading, but boys were more likely to be college-ready in math. In both courses, girls performed somewhat better than boys in terms of college readiness. The percentage of students who were prepared for college in math, reading, and both subjects increased significantly between 2008 and 2009, according to the results.

Conceptual Framework

How to effectively communicate one's ideas diagrammatically for easy reader comprehension is one of the key elements of research. According to Adom et al. (2016), the conceptual framework serves as the "blueprint" for every research project and clarifies and guides the concepts that are expressed in it. Robson (2011) further underlined the significance of the conceptual framework by claiming that it serves as the basis for all subsequent research. Figure I show the diagrammatic representation of this research work.

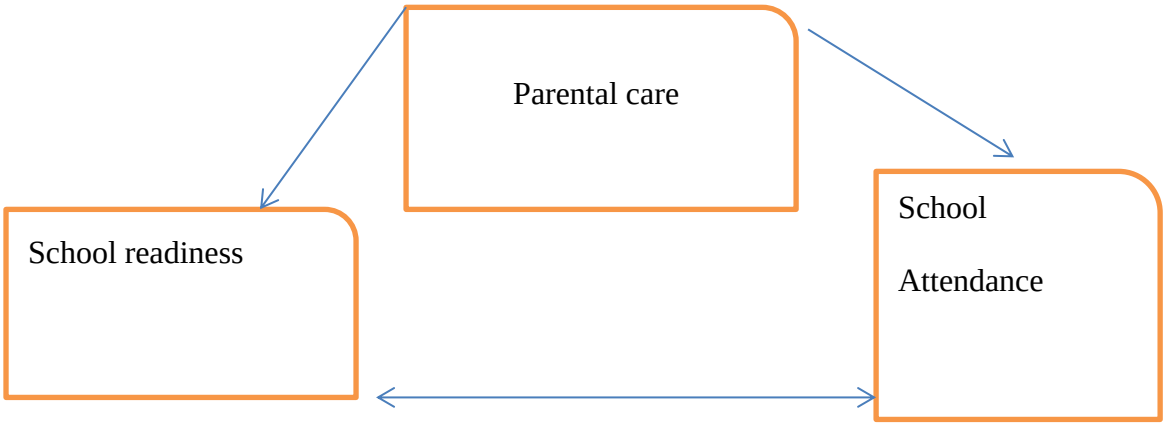

Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the influence of parental care and school readiness on school Attendance.

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Figure 1 shows a structural representation of parental care and school readiness and their influence on school attendance. Parental care and school readiness are the two independent variables, and school attendance is the dependent variable. Though other factors can affect or influence school attendance, they cannot outweigh these two variables. It is evident that parental care and school readiness are key elements for school attendance. The figure illustrates the paramount impact of parental care on both school readiness and school attendance and also the influence of school readiness on school attendance. When children are psychologically sound as a result of favourable environment at home—being provided with food, clothes, shelter, having good interaction with friends and loved ones, and also getting the needed support. This propels them to be sound-minded, active, and ready for schoolwork and activities. On the other hand, school readiness, as a result of constant cognitive stimulation and social interaction by parents and caregivers, puts learners in a state of readiness and makes them ready for school work and activities. From the diagram, it can be observed that these two variables lead to school attendance. This means that parental care and school readiness can affect school attendance either positively or negatively.

Chapter Summary

This chapter's main focus was the review of the literature for the study variables. Three theories were reviewed: Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, Bandura's social-cognitive theory, and Thorndike's instrumental theory. To provide context for this research, concepts related to school preparedness, parental care, and attendance were also examined, along with empirical investigations. The hypotheses using instruments Making connections between

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sensory experiences (perceptions of stimuli or events) and brain impulses (reactions) that materialise as behavioural manifestations is, in Thorndike's view, the most fundamental type of learning. As a result, learning occurs through the linking of stimuli and actions. Skinner's theory was also of the view that learning takes place by employing rewards and punishments for a behaviour. More so, the social cognitive theory of Bandura highlighted how people, their environment, and their behavior interact dynamically and reciprocally as they learn in social contexts.

Additionally, the importance of social interaction in an individual's psychological development is highlighted by Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory. It suggests that learning is fundamentally a social process in humans and that interaction with others who are more experienced lead to the development of cognitive abilities. In connection with this study, a review of empirical works was conducted. Various perspectives about the degree of parental care and school readiness were presented by a number of researches that were reviewed. To further understand the findings, reviews of parental care and school attendance, school readiness and school attendance, and parental care based on gender were conducted.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The study's goal was to find out how parental care and school readiness impacted basic school attendance in the K.E.E.A. Municipality. The research design, population, study area, sample and sampling procedures, data collection tool, data collection technique, data processing, and data analysis were studied.

Research design

The total strategy for acquiring information to answer the research questions is known as the research design. Additionally, it pertains to the specific data analysis methods or procedures that the researcher plans to employ (Amedahe & Asamoah-Gyimah, 2015). The work, therefore, adopted the descriptive survey design. Using this type of design, researchers are often interested in characterising the attitudes and behaviours of a large population about a particular issue or topic at a particular point in time (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012).

To investigate the relationship between the variables under consideration, a research design using the descriptive survey research method was employed. A descriptive research design, according to Bowling and Ebrahim (2005), is a method for acquiring data via in-person interviews or by giving out questionnaires to a sample of individuals who are representative of the target population. In order to test theories or address questions about the current state of the study's subject, descriptive research design comprises the

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systematic collection of data on individuals and groups (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorensen, 2006).

According to Ary et al. (2006), this kind of design is useful since it enables the researcher to gather data to evaluate present procedures in order to make improvements. They go on to say that the design aims to explain people's perceptions and behaviours on the basis of data gathered at any given time and that it provides a more accurate and meaningful depiction of events. Descriptive research design entails the methodical collection of data on people and groups in order to test theories or respond to inquiries regarding the state of the study's subject at the time it is being conducted (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorensen, 2006).

Ary et al. assert that this type of design is beneficial because it allows the researcher to collect information for assessing current practices and making necessary improvements. They continue by saying that the design offers a more accurate and meaningful portrayal of events and attempts to explain people's perceptions and behaviours based on data collected at any given time. A descriptive design was appropriate because the study's objective was to gather data from parents and students and report it honestly and unedited. Descriptive studies can be used as a springboard for additional research because they can be helpful in pointing out qualities that can be investigated. A descriptive study's conclusions could highlight particular factors that need more investigation. Even while descriptive design has many advantages; there are drawbacks that come with using it. Due to biases introduced by the measuring tools, they are prone to distortions (Amedahe & Asamoah-Gyimah, 2015). For instance, mistakes made when using

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questionnaires could skew the results of the study. After considering the advantages and disadvantages of using a descriptive survey design, I decided that the former was preferable to the latter and hence conducted the study using the descriptive survey methodology. Studies that are descriptive do not prove causation and effect. The data generated from the descriptive survey may not fully capture the breadth or depth of the problem being studied, even though it covers a large area. Moreover, the extent to which the researcher can verify the veracity and integrity of responses is restricted by the extensive coverage's prominence.

Study Area

The study was conducted at the Municipality of Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem (K.E.E.A.). The municipality's capital, Elmina, is located in Ghana's Central Region. The TwifoHemang-Lower Denkyira district, the Cape Coast Municipality, the Atlantic Ocean (Gulf of Guinea), and the Mpohor-Wassa East district in the Western Region are the municipality's northern, eastern, northern, and western borders. The municipality is located between latitudes 50 05' North and 150 North and longitudes 10 20' West and 10 40' West. With a population density of 319.8 people per square kilometer, this municipality spans 452.5 square kilometers.

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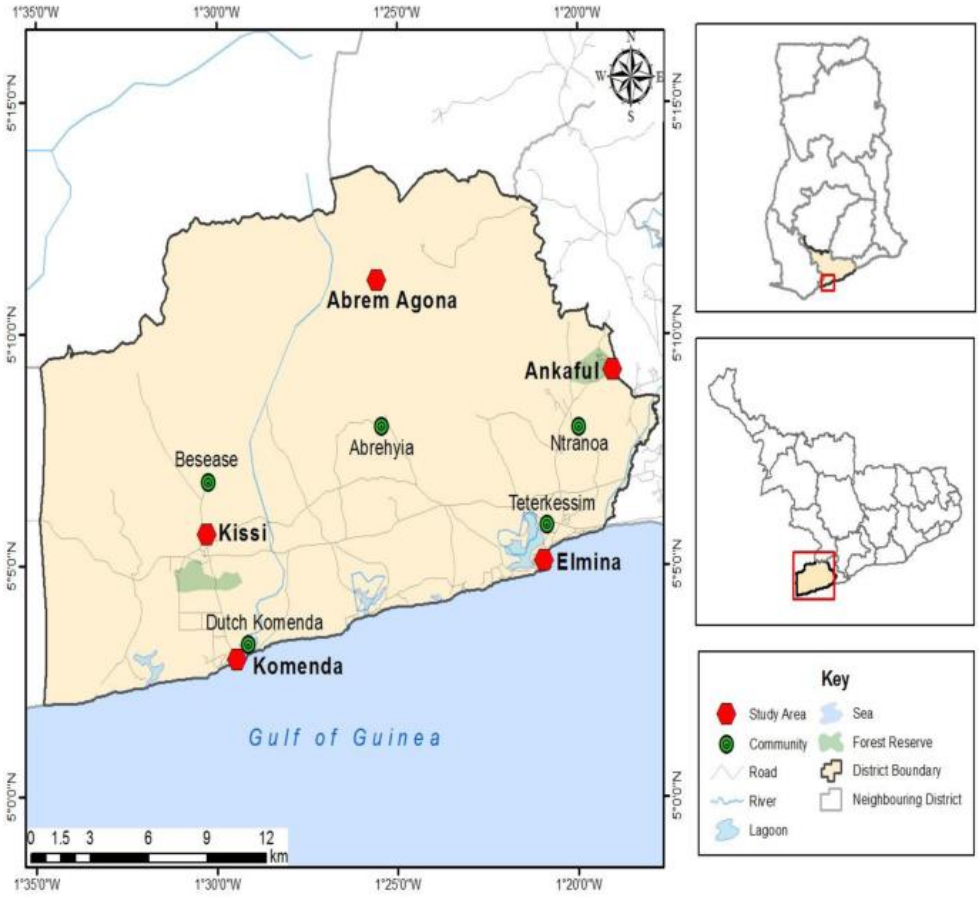

Figure 2: A geographical map of the Central Region showing the study area

According to the 2020 Population and Housing Census, the municipality has 166,017 residents, or 9.3 percent of the region's total population. Men comprise 80,570 of the population, whereas women make up 85,447. There are 414 schools in the municipality—221 public and 192 privates—as well as Komenda College of Education, which is the only educational institution in the community. The people of this municipality are mainly farmers and fishermen, with others involved in private and government work. The municipality has lots of tourist sites and places of attraction, such as Elmina Castle, Elmina Beach Resorts, Alberta's Palace, Komenda Cave, Nduom Stadium, and parks for recreation and fun. Edina Bronya and Bakatue

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are two distinctive cultural festivals held by the KEEA Municipality. Many people from across the globe, including those from Europe and America, participate in these festivals and tourist destinations.

Population

According to Ary et al. (2006), a population is the entire set of cases that meet a predetermined set of criteria. It should be emphasized that "population, regardless of the fundamental unit, always refers to the total collection of factors about which the researcher is interested in learning more and drawing conclusions." It is also known as the target group, about which the researcher hopes to learn more in order to collect information and draw conclusions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The target population was the 9,875 J.H.S. students enrolled in the public schools within the K.E.E.A. Municipality. 1,640 J.H.S. 2 students from K.E.E.A. Municipality public schools were the accessible population. All parents in the K.E.E.A Municipality were the target population for the parents' respondents. The accessible parents were anyone of the parents of the J.H.S 2 pupils.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

A sample is a part of the population that is similar to the larger group in a certain way (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2013). A population sample, according to Bambale (2014), consists mostly of the units selected for analysis. A sample is a carefully selected subset of the units in the population. Selecting volunteers who are typical of the population under study is the process of sampling (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun 2012). In sampling, the elements are the constituents of the population and the samples. Out of the 1,640 pupils who could be accessed, based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970),

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sample table of specification, a sample of 313 respondents were chosen as the study's sample size for both pupils and parents from five circuits. On the basis of 313 pupils selected, the researcher sought to use at least any one of the parents of the pupils to complete the questionnaire on behalf of their wards; 313 parents were selected. Since the schools in the municipality are already organised into circuits (strata), the lottery method was utilized to select respondents from five out of the eight circuits. Based on the population of JHS 2 students in each school in the five circuits, proportion was used to draw the sample from each school, since the population varied. The stratified sampling process was then employed to group the schools into strata for a proportional or fair representation of the population. Stratified random sampling, according to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), separates a population into groups. Random samples are drawn in proportion to the population from each group or stratum whose members share comparable traits and qualities to constitute the stratum (plural for stratum). To generate a proportionate sample, the population of each school was divided by the target population, multiplied by 100 to get the proportion, and then that proportion was taken out from the final sample size.

The equation is shown below as

s= n/N*100, where s is a single circuit or school sample.

n = the population of a specific circuit or school.

Total enrollment across all schools is N.

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Table 1- *Population, Sample population and Sample of boys and girls*

S/N	Circuits	Students Population	Sampled Population	Sample of Boys	Sample of Girls
1	A	520	99	51	48
2	B	222	42	20	22
3	C	390	75	35	40
4	D	283	54	27	27
5	E	225	43	23	20
	Total	1640	313	156	157

Source: EMIS Data from the KEEA District (2021/2022)

Table1 shows the population of the five selected circuits, with their respective samples. The accessible population selected for the study was 1,640. Using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample table of specification, a sample of 313 students' respondents were picked for the study. Using the stratified proportional sampling, 156 males and 157 females were selected. Table 2 show the sample of the selected schools in proportion.

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Data collection instruments

Adapted questionnaires were used for data collection. The questionnaires had parts answered by the parents and others for the students.

Perceived Parental Support Questionnaire (Thorlindsson et al. 1998)

The perceived parental support scale is a measure created by Thorlindsson et al. (1998). It was created with teenagers in mind. It a five-item scale measuring adolescents' perceptions of parents' overall support. The measure include: a) warmth and concern; b) personal matters talk; c) study advice; d) advice regarding other initiatives; and e) help with other things. The likert scale responses are: I = very difficult 2 = rather difficult 3 = rather easy and 4 = very easy. In the Icelandic context, the scale demonstrated strong internal consistency and test-retest reliability (Kristjansson, 2008; Thorlindsson et al., 1998). It had frequently been utilised in the yearly surveys of Icelandic youth (Sigfusdóttir et al., 2008, 2009). The questionnaire has a reliability of .79. The level of parental support total means score is estimated by summing the responses of total items and dividing it by the number of items.

Primary School Readiness Questionnaire (Canbulat & Kiriktas, 2016)

The Primary School Readiness Scale was developed in 2016 by Canbulat and Kiriktaş. The 33 items on the evaluation tool are divided into four sub-dimensions: cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and self-care. The scale's sub-dimensions' Cronbach's alpha coefficients were discovered to range from 0.954 to 0.987. As a result, it was decided that the measurement method employed in the study was quite trustworthy (Büyüköztürk, 2010). Cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and self-care skills are the sub-dimensions

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of the scale. There were 24 items for the sub-dimensions' cognitive skills, 14 for their affective skills, 18 for their psychomotor abilities, and 13 for their self-care skills. After confirmatory factor analysis, a total of 33 items were chosen and deemed fit. The scale was appropriate for the study because it asked all the questions about students' school readiness.

The parents questionnaires included the following topics: demographics, parental care for children, conversation about any other issue, guidance regarding children's studies, help with homework, supervision of homework, parents' visits to their children's schools, making sure their children attend school before they leave for work, whether parents involve their children in the work they do, and what their children do when they are not at school. This questionnaire after factor analysis, was deemed fit.

School attendance checklist (based on the Ghana Service School Register)

School Attendance Questionnaire was adapted from the Ghana Education Service register for schools. The questionnaires had questions on the following; 1) number of times present in a week 2) times absent without permission 3) times absent with parents' consent 4) times present with permission 5) number of times marked absent for being late. The responses ranged from numbers 0- 5 with the following indications 0 = never, 1 = once, 2 = twice, 3= three times 4= 4 times and 5= 5 times. The scale has a reliability coefficient of 0.89. The scale originally had five items but was modified to generate four more questions making it 9 questions in total. This helped to know the extent to which students attend school.

In structure, the students' questionnaire for the study had four sections labeled A-D. Section A, collected personal data of respondents, Section B

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collected data on parental care, Section C and Section D collected data on school readiness and school attendance respectively.

The parents' questionnaires had two sections labeled A-B. Section A collected data on personal characteristics and Section B gathered data on parents' care for their children.

Pilot Testing

Essaman United School, a public school in the Municipality that was not one of the study's chosen schools, was used for the pilot test. The school and the study's chosen sample both had traits that made this possible. The sample for the pilot test was 30 students and 30 parents (any one of the parents per a student). The sample size was appropriate as described by (Connelly, 2008). He clarified that 10% of the study's total sample should be the minimum sample size for a pre- testing. A total of 30 respondents were chosen for the pilot testing out of a sample size of 313. The test's results showed that the respondents could easily understand the questionnaire's instructions and the scale items.

The pilot test helped the researcher to reword some questions which the respondents could not answer appropriately and seemed unclear for them. For instance, "how do your parents care for you" was changed to "how do your parents cater for you".

Validity of the Instrument

A confirmatory factor analysis was performed using structural equation modeling. In particular, Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) was used. This was done in order to verify the specific items that were used to measure the different components in this study. Since there are typically far fewer

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factors in factor analysis than measures, each factor can be considered a condensed representation of a set of measures (Green & Salkind, 2014). The analysis's findings were used to determine which scales or items should be added to and removed from a measure of the various constructs, such as input factors and process factors. Based on the findings of the factor analysis, items with factor loadings of .512 and above were considered appropriate and were retained in the manner recommended by Mayers (2013). As a result, the items accounted for at least 26% of the factor's variance.

Convergent and discriminant validity estimates were used to determine the evidence for the concept validity. The average variance extracted (AVE) was computed together with the estimated variances of the items. To ascertain the convergent validity, the AVE was employed. The cut-off was an AVE coefficient of .50 or above. Convergent validity was proven because the dimensions of the different scales under consideration had AVEs larger than .50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). To determine discriminant validity, the square roots of the AVEs for each construct were computed, and the results were compared to the inter-construct correlations (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity was shown by the square roots of the AVEs being larger than the inter-construct correlations.

Reliability of the Instrument

To evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire items, the internal consistency of the instrument sub-sections was measured using Cronbach Alpha (α). Karagoz (2016) states that, an alpha value of .70 or higher was considered sufficient. Table 2 presents the final study's dependability along with the actual scale.

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Table 2- *Reliability Coefficients of scale and the final study*

Instrument	No of items	Actual Scale	Final Study
Perceived Parental Support scale	10	.79	.72
Primary School Readiness scale	22	0.954 - 0.987.	.78
School Attendance scale	9	.89	.73

Table 2 shows that, the reliability of perceived parental support scale was .79 for the actual scale and .72 in the final work. The primary school readiness scale had a reliability ranging from 0.954-0.98 and showed a reliability of .78 in the final work. The school attendance scale had a reliability of .89 and showed a reliability of .73 in the final study. Generally, the coefficients were good indicators of internal consistency, since they were not below .70 in the final study.

Data Collection Procedure

Before the data was collected, an introduction letter was received from the University of Cape Coast's Department of Education and Psychology. Necessary ethical clearance was sought for before data collection. To deliver the questionnaires to the respondents in the selected schools in the Municipality, a formal request for authorisation was made to the KEEA Education Directorate. Following approval, plans were made for the data collection with the heads of the various schools at the scheduled times and dates set aside for their Parents Teachers Association meetings[P.T.A]. Together with two other experienced research assistants, the researcher visited

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the several schools on the scheduled dates to gather data. The data was gathered over a course of four weeks, with the aid of these two research assistants, who were also masters' students. In order to facilitate understanding and assist respondents—particularly parents who could not read or write—the assistants read the questionnaires to them in their own local dialect as well as students who had difficulties reading. In order to ensure easy retrieval, the questionnaires were given to the respondents in person. Parents' who were not present at the organized P.T.A meetings held were traced to their homes with the help of their children. Students' respondents who were selected from the various sampled schools were picked using random sampling based on each schools sampled size. The return rate for students' questionnaires was 313 representing 100% and that of parents was 240 representing 77% respectively.

Ethical Consideration

The study was conducted in accordance with the guidelines and processes for conducting research set forth by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), University of Cape Coast. Before heading out into the field to gather data, ethical clearance was requested and granted. Confidentiality, anonymity and privacy were adhered to. The respondents were given a detailed explanation of the study's purpose before filling out a consent form and the questionnaires.

Parents gave their consent for their children to participate in the survey and respondents were informed that participation in the study was entirely voluntary rather than forced. The option to withdraw at any moment was provided to participants during the data collection period.

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The responders' identities and the names of their schools were kept a secret in order to guarantee anonymity and confidentiality.

Data Processing and Analysis

In line with quantitative research study, quantitative research tools were considered for the data analysis. All questionnaires were well scrutinized to check for correct coding. The demographics were analysed using frequency and percentages.

The data on research question 1 was analysed using descriptive statistical techniques specifically, means and standard deviation to ascertain the level of parental care among JHS students in the KEEA Municipality. Research Question 1 had nine questions and was scored on a 4-points Likert-type scale and was scored from 1- 4(1=strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= agree and 4= strongly agree) The means score of all items were summed and divided by the number of responses to get the mean of means. For high level of parental care, a mean score of 2.5([1+2+3+4]\ 4) and above should be ascertained. Any mean below the means of mean score indicates low level of parental care.

The level of school readiness among JHS students in the KEEA Municipality was assessed using Means and Standard Deviation data for research question 2. This scale had 22 items on a 5-points Likert- type scale. The items were described as 5= completely, 4= sufficiently, 3= moderately, 2= partially and 1= not sufficient. The means score of all items were summed and divided by the number of responses to get the mean of means, thus 3.0 ([1+2+3+4+5] \ 5). A mean above 3.0 was considered a high level of readiness whiles a means below was considered low level of readiness.

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The data for research question 3 was subjected to an independent sample t-test analysis to ascertain whether there were any differences in school attendance between male and female J.H.S students in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality.

Hypothesis 1 was tested using simple linear regression to find out whether there was an impact of parental care on school attendance.

Hypothesis 2 was subjected to simultaneous multiple regression analysis to determine whether there was an impact between the variables, school readiness and school attendance,

Hypothesis 3 was tested using Hierarchical Regression to find out whether there was an impact among the variables, parental care, school readiness and school attendance.

Hypothesis 4 was analysed using independent sample t-test to examine if gender affected any variations in the quality of parental care.

Hypothesis 5 was tested using a one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to look into whether there were any differences in the level of school readiness between male and female students.

Chapter Summary

The study's methodology was examined in this chapter. A descriptive survey design was used as the research methodology. The study's sample was chosen using a simple random and proportionate stratified sampling procedure. The methods for gathering data were structured questionnaires for both students and parents. This chapter covered the instruments used, the validity and reliability of the pilot test, the data collection procedure, ethical considerations, and the processing and analysis of the data.

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CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study's general goal was to investigate how parental care and school readiness impacted students' school attendance. The findings from the analysis that was done are presented in this chapter along with the discussion. The description of the sample's characteristics is highlighted in the results section before the analysis of the primary data that is related to the objectives.

Demographic Characteristics of Students

The study surveyed the demographic characteristics of the students, which include gender, age, who they live with, father's occupation, mother's occupation, and school location. Table 3 presents the analysis of the results on the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 3- *Demographic Information of Students*

Variable	Levels	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	156	49.8
	Female	157	50.2
Age	13 years	64	20.4
	14 years	91	29.1
	15 years	98	31.3
	16years and above	60	19.2
Whom are you living with	Both Parents	158	50.5
	Mother only	95	30.4
	Father only	10	3.2
	Grandparents	32	10.2
	Guardian	12	3.8
	Siblings	6	1.9

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Father's occupation	Farmer	91	29.1
	Fisherman	59	18.8
	Driver	20	6.4
	Teacher	9	2.9
	Building & Construction	42	13.4
	Creative Work	16	5.1
	Trader	52	16.6
	Not working	24	7.7
Mother's occupation	Farmer	68	21.7
	Fishmonger	40	12.8
	Trader	137	43.8
	Teacher	5	1.6
	Creative Work	33	10.5
	Not working	30	9.6
School location	Farming community	181	57.8
	Fishing community	132	42.2

Source: Field Survey (2022)

As presented in Table 3, there were more female 157 (50.2%) than males 156 (49.8%) who participated in this study. The majority of the students were between fifteen years 98(31.3%) and fourteen years 91(29.1%). With respect to whom the students live with, most of the students live with both parents 158(50.5%) those who were living with their mothers only were 95(30.4%) and their fathers only were 10(3.2%) whiles those living their siblings were 6(1.9%). Looking at their fathers' occupation, most of them were farmers 91 (29.1%) and fishermen 59(18.8%). On the other hand, those not working represented 24 (7.7%). Mothers' occupation showed that 137 (43.8%) are traders, 68(21.7%) of them were farmers whiles 5(1.6%) of them are teachers. The table further shows that 181(57.8%) of the schools used for the study are located in the farming communities.

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Demographic Characteristics of Parents

Parents' demographic data was also analyzed. The analysis of the results of the demographic details of the parents is shown in Table 4.

Table 4- *Demographic Information of Parents*

Variable	Levels	Frequency	Per cent
Gender	Male	85	35.4
	Female	155	64.6
Marital status	Single	24	10.0
	Married	159	66.3
	Divorced	43	17.9
	Widow	12	5.0
	Widower	2	.8
Occupation	Farmer	74	30.8
	Fisherman	29	12.1
	Fishmonger	31	12.9
	Teacher	13	5.4
	Driver	17	7.1
	Trader	45	18.8
	Creative Work	27	11.2
	Not working	4	1.7
Educational level	No formal Education	62	25.8
	Basic Education	136	56.7
	Secondary Education	36	15.0
	Tertiary Education	6	2.5

Source: Field Survey (2022)

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Table 4, shows the demographic characteristics of the parents surveyed. It included; gender, marital status, occupation and educational level. The numbers of male participants were 85 (35.5%) and female were 155 (64.6%). Majority of the participants were married 159 (66.3%), the single parents were 24 (10.0%) and divorced were 43 (17.9%). Looking at their occupation, the following were the indication.

Farmers were 74(30.8%), fishermen 29(12.1%), fishmongers 31 (12.9%), teachers 13 (5.4) and those not working were 4 (1.7%). With regards to their educational level, most respondents had no formal education representing 62 (25.8%), those with basic education were 136 (56.7). on the other hand, 6 (2.5%) had tertiary education.

Research Question One

What is the level of parental care among J.H.S. students in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality?

This research question sought to examine the level of parental care received among J.H.S students in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality. To ascertain answer to this question, means and standard deviation were used to analyse the data obtained from the students. The students rated the extent to which they received care using a scale of 1- 4. A criterion of 2.5([1+2+3+4] \4) was used for the results. An obtained mean above 2.5 signified that parental care is high among students whereas a mean less than 2.5, shows that parental care is low among students. Table 5 presents the details of the analysis of the results.

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Table 5- *Level of Parental Care among JHS Students at the KEEA*

Statement	Mean	SD
Your parents buy you materials for school (bag, books, shoes, uniform etc).	2.03	1.13
Your parents often engage you in discussing about any other matters.	2.01	.79
Your parents see to it that you go to school before they leave for work.	1.97	1.06
Your parents help you with your homework.	1.93	1.09
Your parents show you care and draw you closer to them.	1.86	.708
Your parents advice you on your studies.	1.78	.64
Your parents supervise your studies at home.	1.78	.74
Your parents give you money for school.	1.70	.59
You easily share your difficulties with your parents	1.65	.74
Mean of Means	1.94	.99

Municipality

Source: Field Survey (2022)

As shown in Table 5, the result revealed that the students received all the forms of care with varied degree levels. This is also reflected in the mean of means value of 2.06 with a standard deviation of .99, which is below the criterion mean of 2.5. This shows a low level of parental care received by the students. Notwithstanding, the students received some care in terms of parents buying them materials for school (books, bag, shoes, uniform).

Also, analysis was carried out to examine how parents' care for their children. This care is analyzed in term of financial support, materials for school, advice and parents' involvement in their children education. This is presented in Table 6.

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Table 6- *Parents Care for their Children in School*

Questions	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
How do you cater for your children at school;			
I buy them books	Yes	168	70.0
	No	72	30.0
I give them money			
	Yes	98	40.8
	No	142	59.2
I buy them uniform	Yes	54	22.5
	No	186	77.5
	Yes	112	46.7
I buy them school bag and materials for school	No	128	53.3
Do you engage your children in discussing about any other matters?	Yes	197	82.1
	No	43	17.9
How do you advice your children on their studies?	Often	163	67.9
	Very often	63	26.3
	Always	14	5.8
Do you help your children in doing their homework?	Yes	46	19.2
	No	94	80.8
How often do you visit your children at school?	Never	122	50.8
	Once Weekly	44	18.3
	Twice weekly	25	10.4
	Once termly	49	20.5
Do you supervise your children to do their assignment?	Yes	107	44.6
	No	133	55.4
Do your children leave for school before you leave for work?	Yes	185	77.1
	No	55	22.9

Source: Field Survey (2022)

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As shown in Table 6, the overall level of parental care was low. Parental care in terms of giving their wards for school and buying them uniforms, showed a significant low frequency of 98(40.8%) and 54(22.5%) respectively. Parents engagement in their children's education also showed a low level of involvement; with help in doing homework having a frequency of 46(19.2%), supervision of children assignment was 107(44.6%) and school visit with a frequency of 49(20.5%). Comparing the analysis of parents and students response, it was concluded that the level of parental care among students in the K.E.E.A Municipality was low.

Research Question Two

What is the level of school readiness among J.H.S. students in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality?

This research question aimed to find the level of school readiness among J.H.S students in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality. Four sub dimensions of school readiness were assessed, including; cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and self-care abilities. Students were to rate their level of school readiness by using a five-point Likert type scale. To interpret the results, the following ratings were used; 5=completely, 4=sufficiently, 3= moderately, 2= partially and 1= not sufficient. A criterion of 3.0 ([1+2+3+4+5] \5) was used for the results. An obtained mean above 3.0 signified higher level of school readiness among students whereas a mean less than 3.0 signified low level of school readiness. Table 7 presents the details of the results.

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Table 7- *School Readiness Levels*

Domains	Number of items	Mean	SD
Cognitive readiness	6	3.28	.40
Affective readiness	6	3.38	.32
Psychomotor readiness	5	3.52	.28
Self-care readiness	5	3.81	.33

Source; Field Survey (2022)

As presented in Table 7, the students reported a high school readiness level across all the domains of school readiness. Comparatively, self-care skills had the highest level of readiness (M=3.81, SD=.33), followed by psychomotor skills (M=3.52, SD=.28).

Research Question Three

What are the differences in school attendance among male and female J.H.S students in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality?

This research question was examined to find out whether there were differences in school attendance pertaining to gender (male and female). The statistical tool used to measure this was the independent sample t-test. Prior to the test, some assumptions were tested and they were not violated for example, normality. This normality was also confirmed from the Q-Q plot which showed that all the plotted points were closer to the regression line. The results from the Levene's test for equality of variance showed that equal variances were assumed, p=.426. Further, the skewness and kurtosis values of 1.594 and 3.132 respectively showed that the data did not violate the normality assumption. This normality was also confirmed from the Q-Q plot which

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showed that all the plotted points were closer to the regression line (see Figure 3).

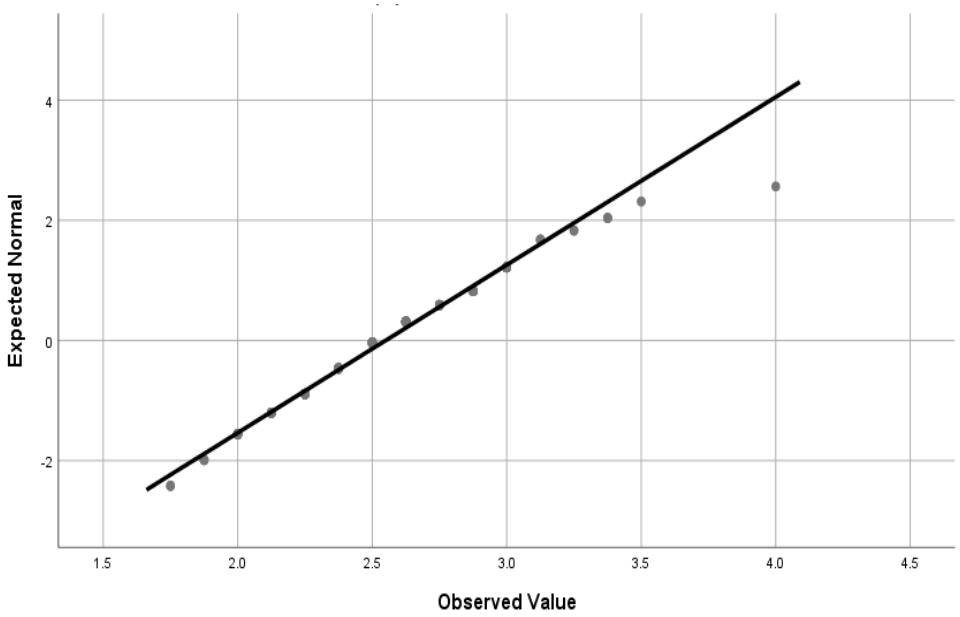

Figure 3: Q-Q Plot for school attendance

The details of the t-test analysis are shown in Table 8.

Table 8- *Gender Differences in School Attendance*

	Mean	SD	t	Df	Sig.	Mean Difference
Male	.92	.27				
Female	.95	.27	-.858	311	.391	-.02596

Levene's test: F=.635, p=.426
Source: Field Survey (2022)

At the 0.05 level of significance, the results showed that there were no difference in attendance between male and female students (M=.92, SD=.27). The t-test results showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the participant genders. Hence, t (311) = -.858, and p = -.391. This suggests that male and female students' attendance to school was the same and had no variances.

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Hypothesis One

Ho1: There is no statistically significant impact of parental care on school attendance among J.H.S. students of K.E.E.A Municipality

H1: There is statistically significant impact of parental care on school attendance among J.H.S. students of K.E.E.A Municipality.

This hypothesis tested the impact of parental care on school attendance among JHS students of K.E.E.A Municipality. A simple regression analysis was performed to test this hypothesis, with parental care being the predictor and school attendance being the criterion variable. Given that the normality assumption was satisfied (see Figure 3), the use of simple linear regression was warranted. Autocorrelation assumption was also satisfied as shown by the Durbin-Watson *D* test (*D*=1.746).

Table 9-*Model Summary for parental care and school attendance*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.370[a]	.137	.134	.24875	1.746

a. Predictors: (Constant), Parental Care
b. Dependent Variable: School Attendance

Table 10- *Model of fit indicator for Parental care and School Attendance*

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.061	1	3.061	49.471	.000[b]
	Residual	19.243	311	.062		
	Total	22.304	312			
a. Dependent Variable: School Attendance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Parental Care						

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As presented in Table 9 the model summary showed a correlation coefficient of .370 between parental care and school attendance. The results further revealed that about 13.7% of the variations in school attendance were explained by parental care.

A model fit indicator for parental care and school attendance showed a statistically significant model, F (1, 312) =49.471, p<.001, with parental care as predictor and school attendance as a criterion variable.

Table 11- *Regression Coefficient for parental care and school attendance*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.259	.098		2.657	.008
	Parental Care	.227	.032	.370	7.034	.000

a. Dependent Variable: School Attendance

As shown in Table 11, parental care was found to significantly and positively predict school attendance. Explicitly, a unit increase in parental care results in .227 increase in school attendance, B=.227, t=7.034, p<.001. In other words, pupils who received much care are more likely to attend school regularly.

Hypothesis Two

Ho2: There is no statistically significant impact of school readiness on school attendance among J.H.S. students of K.E.E.A Municipality.

H12: There is statistically significant impact of school readiness on school attendance among J.H.S. students of K.E.E.A Municipality.

The study also sought to assess the relationship between school readiness and school attendance. Thus, a hypothesis was tested to that effect.

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A simultaneous multiple regression analysis was conducted to test this proposed relationship, using the dimensions of school readiness as predictors and school attendance as criterion. The assumptions which were tested before the analysis include normality, multicollinearity and autocorrelation. The normality assumption has been already satisfied in hypothesis one. The values from the tolerance and variance inflation factor indicators showed that multicollinearity was absent and thus, the assumption has been satisfied. With Durbin Watson test result of 1.698, the autocorrelation assumption has been satisfied.

Table 12- *Model Summary for school readiness on school attendance*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.400[a]	.160	.149	.24663	1.698

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-care skills, Cognitive Readiness, psychomotor readiness, Affective Readiness

Table 13- *Model fit for school readiness and school attendance*

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	2.518	.215		11.718	.000		
Cognitive Readiness	-.091	.041	-.135	-2.227	.027	.741	1.349
Affective Readiness	-.004	.051	-.005	-.085	.933	.712	1.405
psychomotor Readiness	-.198	.060	-.204	-3.300	.001	.715	1.398
Self-care	-	.046	-.187	-	.00	.835	1.19

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Skills Readiness	.149			3.267	1		8

The results from the model summary showed a multiple correlation coefficient of .400 between the domains of school readiness and school attendance (see Table 12). The results further revealed in (Table 13) that about 16% of the variations in school attendance were explained by self-care readiness, cognitive readiness, psychomotor readiness, and affective readiness.

In a model fit for school readiness and school attendance, the results showed a statistically significant model, F (4, 308) =14.670, p<.001, with self-care readiness, cognitive readiness, psychomotor readiness, and affective readiness as predictors and school attendance as a criterion variable.

Table 14 provided more information with regards to the contribution of each of the predictor variables to the criterion variable.

Table 14-*Regression Coefficients school readiness and school attendance*

	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	P	VIF
(Constant)	2.518	.215		11.718	.000	
Cognitive Readiness	.091	.041	.135*	2.227	.027	1.349
Affective Readiness	-.004	.051	-.005	-.085	.933	1.405
psychomotor Readiness	.198	.060	.204*	3.300	.001	1.398
Self-care Readiness	.149	.046	.187*	3.267	.001	1.198

*Significant, p < .05 VIF- variance inflation factor

From Table 14, the result of the analysis showed that, school readiness had impact on school attendance. The table revealed that there was some

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level of significance in cognitive, psychomotor and self –care readiness respectively. Affective readiness on the other hand, did not significantly impact school attendance, with p value of .933.

Hypothesis Three

Ho3: There is no statistically significant impact of parental care and school readiness on school attendance J.H.S. among students of K.E.E.A Municipality.

H13: There is statistically significant impact of parental care and school readiness on school attendance among J.H.S. students of K.E.E.A Municipality.

This hypothesis tested the impact of parental care and school readiness on school attendance J.H.S. among students of K.E.E.A Municipality. First, a correlation matrix was presented to understand how these variables are associated. A hierarchical regression analysis was performed to test the unique contribution of parental care and school readiness to school attendance. The details of the correlation matrix are shown in Table 15.

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Table 15- *Correlation Matrix for parental care and school readiness on school attendance*

	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Parental Care	1					
2	Cognitive Readiness	.470	1				
3	Affective Readiness	.454	.449**	1			
4	psychomotor readiness	.504	.395**	.431**	1		
5	Self-care readiness	-.098	.269**	.291**	.368**	1	
6	School Attendance	.370**	.268**	.208**	.328**	.299**	1

**significant at $p<.001$

As revealed in Table 15, school attendance is positively associated with self-care readiness, cognitive readiness, psychomotor readiness, and affective readiness. Parental care was also found to be related to school attendance.

Table 16- *Model Summary for parental care and school readiness on school attendance*

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Change Statistics				
				R^2 Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig.
1	.400[a]	.160	.149	.160	14.670	4	308	.000
2	.543[b]	.295	.283	.135	58.536	1	307	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-care skills, Cognitive Readiness, psychomotor readiness, Affective Readiness
b. Predictors: (Constant), Self-care skills, Cognitive Readiness, psychomotor readiness, Affective Readiness, Parental Care
c. Dependent Variable: School Attendance

The results from the model summary in Table 16 showed that school readiness contribute about 16% of the variations in school attendance. With the introduction of parental care in the model, both readiness and parental care

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accounted for 29.5% of the variances in school attendance. This shows that parental care only contributed to 13.5% of the variances in school attendance. From the ANOVA Model 1 statistics, a statistically significant model was found, F (4, 308) = 14.670, p<.001, with school readiness as predictor and school attendance as a criterion variable. Similarly, the model (Model 2) containing school readiness and parental care as predictors and school attendance as criterion, was significant, F (5, 307) = 25.635, p<.001.

Table 17 shows more information with regards to the amount that each predictor variable contributed to the outcome variable.

Table 17- *Regression Coefficients for parental care and school readiness on school attendance*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.518	.215		11.718	.000
	Cognitive Readiness	.091	.041	.135	2.227	.027
	Affective Readiness	-.004	.051	-.005	-.085	.933
	psychomotor readiness	.198	.060	.204	3.300	.001
	Self-care skills	.149	.046	.187	3.267	.001
2	(Constant)	1.808	.218		8.293	.000
	Cognitive Readiness	.112	.038	-.165*	-2.964	.003
	Affective Readiness	-.022	.047	-.027	-.473	.637
	psychomotor readiness	.196	.055	.202*	3.567	.000
	Self-care skills	.109	.042	.137*	2.583	.010
	Parental Care	.227	.030	.371*	7.651	.000

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As presented in Table 17, it was evident that both parental care and school readiness predicted the variance in school attendance. Parental care predicted school attendance with a significance of .371, school readiness also predicted school attendance with three of its sub-dimensions. School readiness showed a significance of -.165 for cognitive readiness, .202 for psychomotor readiness, .137 for self- care readiness. Only affective readiness did not significantly predict school attendance. This results means, students lacked affective readiness and were more likely not to relate well and cooperate with other students in school.

Hypothesis Four

Ho 4: There is statistically no significant difference between parental care among male and female students of K.E.E.A Municipality.

H1 4: There is a statistically significant difference between parental care among male and female J.H.S. students of K.E.E.A Municipality.

This study also investigated the possibility of gender differences in parental caregiving. The independent sample t-test was the statistical method employed to assess this. A few presumptions were tested before the test and they passed. According to the Levene's test results, p=.380 meant that equal variances were assumed. Furthermore, it was evident from the data's skewness and kurtosis values of.189 and.462, respectively, that the assumption of normality was upheld. The Q-Q plot provided additional confirmation of this normalcy (see Figure 4).

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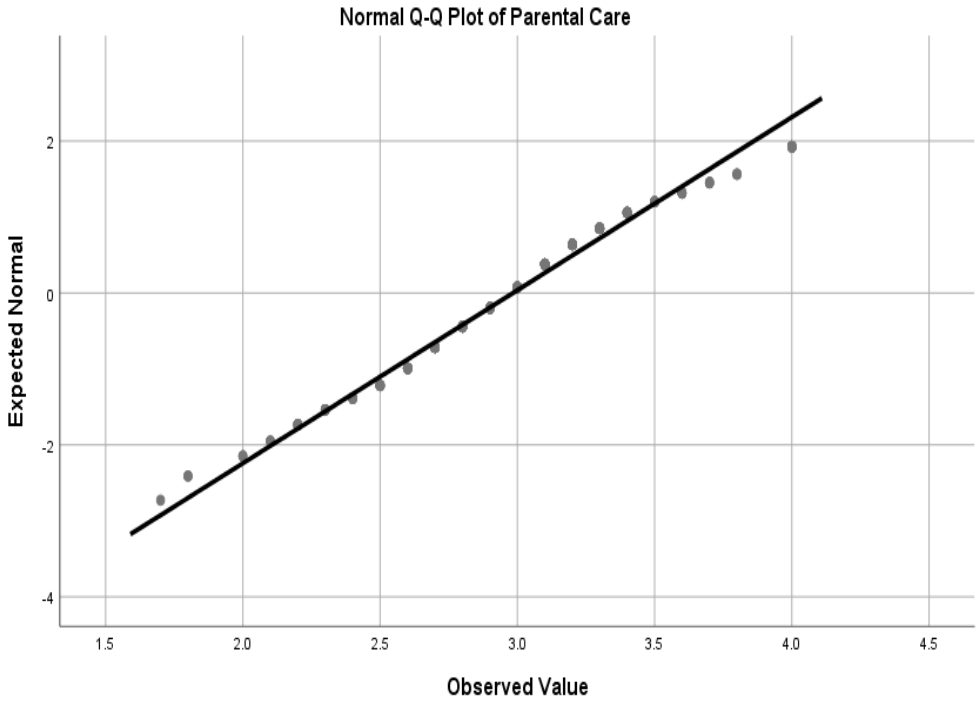

Figure 4: Q-Q Plot for Parental Care

The Q-Q plot showed in Figure 4 revealed the data points are closer to the regression line. This depicted that the residuals for the variable parental care are normally distribution and hence, the normality assumption was satisfied.

Table 18- *Gender Differences in Parental Care*

	Mean	SD	T	Df	Sig.	Mean Difference
Male	2.98	.45				
Female	2.99	.42	-.285	311	.776	-.014

The results in Table 18 showed that there is no significant difference in parental care levels of male (*M*= 2.98, *SD*= .45) and female (*M*= 2.99, *SD*= .42) pupils, *t*(311)= -.285, *p*=.776.

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Hypothesis five

Ho 5: There is statistically no significant difference in school readiness of J.H.S. students in K.E.E.A Municipality on the basis of gender.

H1 5: There is a statistically significant difference in school readiness of J.H.S students in K.E.E.A Municipality on the basis of gender.

This hypothesis investigated if school readiness varies between male and female students. To test this hypothesis, one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used. Gender was the categorical variable, and there were four levels of school readiness: cognitive, affective, self-care, and psychomotor. The box's test of equality of covariance matrices was run after the normality test.

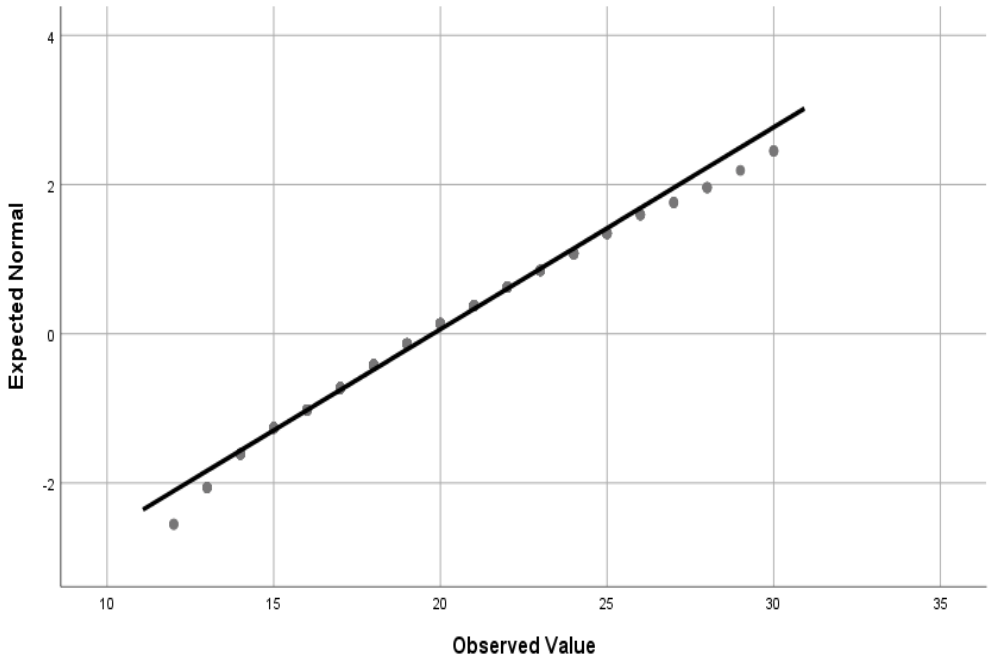

Figure 5: Q-Q Plots for Normality

The normality plot revealed that the normality assumption was satisfied (Figure 5). For all the dimensions of the criterion variable were closer to the regression line. Because the normality test has been satisfied the test

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was conducted. Table 19 presents the multivariate results and Table 18 highlights the univariate results.

Table 19- *Multivariate Test and Box Test Assumption for gender*

Effect	Value	F	df 1	df 2	Sig.
Intercept	.996	18228.55	4	308	.000
Gender	.001	.104	4	308	.981
Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices					
Box's M	22.576				
F	2.226				
df1	10				
df2	462367.934				
Sig.	.014				

Source: Field Survey (2022)

As presented in Table 19, the results show that the box test of equality of covariance matrices was violated, F (10, 462367) =.2.226, p=.014. As a result, the Pillar's trace estimates were presented. The multivariate results in Table 20 revealed a non-significant difference between male and female students with respect to their school readiness level, F (4, 308) =.104, p=.981.

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Table 19- *Tests of Between-Subjects Effects*

Source	Dependent Variable	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	Cognitive Readiness	1	3365.35	21472.643	.000
	Affective Readiness	1	3569.414	33860.927	.000
	psychomotor readiness	1	3886.929	51090.212	.000
	Self-care readiness	1	4547.114	40601.219	.000
Gender	Cognitive Readiness	1	.001	.008	.930
	Affective Readiness	1	.008	.080	.778
	psychomotor readiness	1	.009	.125	.724
	Self-care readiness	1	.008	.074	.786
Error	Cognitive Readiness	311	.157		
	Affective Readiness	311	.105		
	psychomotor readiness	311	.076		
	Self-care readiness	311	.112		
Total	Cognitive Readiness	313			
	Affective Readiness	313			
	psychomotor readiness	313			

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	Self-care readiness	313

Source: Field Survey (2022)

The results in Table 20 also revealed that male and female pupils did not differ on any of the dimensions of school readiness. That is, both male and female pupils had the same levels of cognitive readiness, psychomotor readiness, self-care readiness and affective readiness.

Discussion

The study was about examining the influence of parental care and school readiness on school attendance in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality.

RQ1: Level of parental care among J.H.S. students in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality

The study revealed a low level of parental care received by the students. The findings implies that students in K.E.E.A Municipality have low level of parental care and that their parents are not fully engaged in their care and schooling. Given this finding, there is no doubt that, students in the Municipality experiences lack of warmth, affection, money and even lag behind in their schooling. In typical fishing and farming communities which is characterized by poverty, children find it difficult accessing all the care that they need, making it difficult to access education. When students lack the needed support and care, the idea of education becomes the least of their worries. They engage in petty trading and menial work in order to survive on their own. This is evident in the rural areas especially in the farming and fishing communities. Being faced with lack of care, attention and educational

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involvement, children are left on their own to make the best decisions for themselves.

These students have to decide whether to go to school regardless of the low level of care and attention from parents or to engage in menial work by absenting from school sometimes in order to support their life.

The low level of care by parents has been attributed to factors such as parental educational level, socio-economic factors and parental knowledge. This is evident in the work of McCoy et al. (2016), who asserted that socio-economic status of parents affect their relation and care for their children. Parents with strong financial standing are able to care for their children and able to invest in them. Parents who have strong financial position are likely to provide three-square meals, clothing, appropriate shelter, materials and the needed books for their education and studies as compared with parents with weak or low financial standing (McGregor et al., 2007). Pryor and Ampah (2003a; 2003b), also suggested that the majority of parents had little interest in the education of their children due to their lack of interest in education, parents did not bother to participate in their children' academic pursuits. Though McCoy (2016) and Pryor and Ampah (2003a; 2003b) affirmed low level of parental care in their studies, Naite (2021) and Oyoru (2023) on the other hand, suggest a high levels of parental care in their studies. From these studies, I can be observed that with a greater level of education and financial stability among the parents, there is the likelihood of high level parental care and vice versa.

RQ2: Level of school readiness among J.H.S. students in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality

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The findings of this study showed that, there was high level of school readiness. The level of school readiness was significantly positive. This implies that, students in the K.E.E.A Municipality have the readiness needed for school and this is a reason for them to be in school. Looking at the four sub- dimensions, cognitive, affective, and psychomotor and self-care skills, it was evident that self- care skills readiness was the highest among the domains connoting students' personal care for themselves and efforts for school. When children can take care of themselves, they feel good being in school, since they will not be punished for not keeping themselves clean.

A psychomotor skill was the second highest form of student readiness abilities. This implies that, children had developed competencies such as writing, coordinated activities and engaging in co-curricular activities. They are able to mingle and engage in school work and activities. Affective skill and cognitive skills also followed respectively.

Though, the other domain predicted school readiness, it is obvious that students' ability to care for their selves and be independent of their parents help them to cope and be able to stay in school regardless of their cognitive abilities. According to Thorndike's law of exercise, as learners are constantly engaged in learning and activities its help improve their skills, they become more capable and willing to go to school. The high level of psychomotor skills implied that student had good handwriting, ability to coordinate the eye and hand effectively and also engage in any school activity. This ability makes it possible for learners to be ready for school since they can write and engage themselves in school work without any frustration and feel of misfit. Low level of cognitive skills can be attributed to lack of early cognitive stimulation

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and lower head start to education. According to Dercon and Krishnan (2009), children who are from a low resourced homes and experiences lack, have lower cognitive and social- emotional outcomes. This means that, proper parental care has a lasting effect on children cognition and places them in a good position in education.

RQ3: Gender difference in school attendance among J.H.S students in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality

The study revealed that there was no difference in school attendance among male and female students. This means the attendance among male and female students in the K.E.E.A. Municipality is the same. By implication, boys and girls attend school at the same rate. Being male or female does not suggest anything better in terms of attendance. Both genders influence each other, and their rates of attendance at school are the same. This is because the students are in the same communities and experience the same amount of care and conditions, thereby influencing their attendance. This explains why there is no difference in their attendance. The study contradicts the work of Wolf (2006), which stated that more boys are likely to be educated and attend school always. Additionally, a study conducted in 2015 by Hysing, Haugland, Stormark, Bøe, and Sivertsen found that there was a gender difference in school attendance, specifically indicating that males attended more than females. The study's findings demonstrated that, despite their surroundings, males and females in the municipality attend school at the same level.

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Hypothesis 1

Relationship between parental care and school attendance among J.H.S. students in the K.E.E.A Municipality

A simple regression was conducted to find whether there is a relationship between parental care and school attendance. The result showed a correlation coefficient of.370 between parental care and school attendance. The results further revealed that about 13.7% of the variations in school attendance were explained by parental care. This result implies that parental care predicts school attendance. Parental care is a viable factor for students school attendance, and without parental care, school attendance will be difficult to achieve. In an environment where children are to fend for themselves, school and education become less of their target, and they will be preoccupied with thoughts leading to getting money and food at the expense of school. Children may seek to engage in fishing activities or petty farming work to get money. The findings of this work agree with that of Mahuro and Hungi (2016), who asserted that lack of parental care is one of the major causes of students' constant absence from school.

Once more, the results are consistent with the research conducted by Puccioni, Baker, and Froiland (2019), discovered a link between parental care and attendance at school for both male and female students in the US. The findings demonstrated a positive correlation between children's academic achievement (high school attendance and good grades) and socio-emotional competencies and parents' beliefs about their readiness for school and their home-based involvement practices (parental care). Furthermore, there was a

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positive correlation found between parents' beliefs about school readiness and their involvement practices at home.

Hypothesis 2

The influence of school readiness on school attendance of J.H.S. students in the K.E.E.A Municipality

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to test whether there is an influence of school readiness on school attendance. The result from the model summary showed a multiple correlation coefficient of .400 between the domains of school readiness and school attendance. The results further revealed that about 16% of the variations in school attendance were explained by self-care readiness, cognitive readiness, psychomotor readiness, and affective readiness. This means that school readiness predicted school attendance. By implication, it means that for school attendance to be regular and on an increase, student need to develop school readiness. Learners should be cognitively ready, be able to care for themselves, be able to handle their emotions and how to relate to others and should able to show good penmanship and again be able to engage in extra- curricular activities. Students who develop high readiness for school are likely to be in school than learners who have low developed readiness for school. Looking at the other domains, it can be observed that three readiness skills (self –care, psychomotor skills and cognitive skills) influenced school attendance with self –care predicting more than the other domains. Though cognitive skills are needed for school attendance but without high self- care and psychomotor skills, students tend to lack the confidence and readiness for since they cannot write, keep themselves and be independent of their home environment, they

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end up being frustrated with the educational process and may fall out of school.

According to Gormley (2008), Karoly and Gonzalez (2011), Yoshikawa et al. (2013), and others, the capacity for basic numeracy and the construction of simple sentences are considered cognitive skills that indicate a person is ready and prepared for school. According to Dangol and Shrestha (2021), students' learning and education as a whole may be hampered by a lack of readiness, which is one of the requirements for an efficient learning process.

Hypothesis 3

The influence of parental care and school readiness on school attendance among J.H.S. students in the K.E.E.A Municipality

The results from the model summary showed that school readiness contributed about 16% of the variations in school attendance (see Table 16). With the introduction of parental care in the model, both readiness and parental care accounted for 29.5% of the variances in school attendance. This shows that parental care only contributed to 13.5% of the variance in school attendance. This means that both influence school attendance. Looking at the results shown by the analysis, it can be said that school readiness can predict attendance in the sense that students' development of skills like self-care and psychomotor readiness makes them prepared and ready for school. Not necessarily depending on their cognitive readiness and affective skills more, though necessary for school, but the fact that they can write, take care of themselves, and read simple sentences. Also, the result showed that parental care predicts school attendance. From the result, though school readiness predicted school attendance, it cannot solely ensure students continuous stay

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in school. This means that parental care is more paramount for student's attendance and the development of school readiness skills. Without the necessary provisions, such as food, money, and school materials, it will be difficult for children to attend and stay in school regularly since these necessities are lacking. This affirms the works of Desforges (2003) and Marchant et al. (2001) which acknowledges that parental care contributes to the children's school interest and academic performance. Parents, by their nature, provide family bounding, warmth, and a sense of belongingness, which promote children's cognitive abilities and state of well-being in school and life in general.

Hypothesis 4

Gender differences in parental care among J.H.S. students in K.E.E.A Municipality

The findings showed that there is no difference in the level of care received by male and female students. This implies that students (male and female), received equal attention, food, funds, and educational materials from their parents. Living in the same fishing and farming community, learners do experience the same attention, food, care and school involvement by parents and that explains the no difference in their care. Notwithstanding, some children might be getting enough care based on the economic stance of their parents but on an average, children experience the same level of parental care.

This implies that parental care does not significantly affect male and females in terms of school attendance or achievement. Conversely, the works of Sifuna et al., 2006; Stephens, 2009 and Gilli, 2016 state that there are differences in parental care among males and females. With the latter showing

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more care for females as compared to males. This then means in other settings, there might be difference in parental care among males and females based on certain indices and might include; being the first child or last child of the family, financial background of parents, family size and cultural beliefs and practice.

Hypothesis 5

Gender difference in school readiness among J.H.S. students in K.E.E.A Municipality

The results revealed no significant difference between male and female pupils with respect to their school readiness level. This means that male and female pupils did not differ on any of the dimensions of school readiness. That is, both male and female pupils had the same levels of cognitive readiness, psychomotor readiness, self-care readiness and affective readiness. What this implies is that, with the same level of care, students (male and female) develop the same level of readiness for school. This further suggests that with the same care, both male and female will perform equally in terms of cognitive, affective, psychomotor and self- care skills. Given that in an environment of constant care and attention, both male and female will show the same level of school readiness. The same level of school readiness might be as a result of growing up or living in the same communities. These learners influence each other and thus, might develop the same competencies and abilities with some little differences.

The result of this study aligns with the work of Ganis Amurdawati, Pambudi and Wantini (2020), who found no difference in school readiness among public school junior high school students. However, it showed

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variation with the findings of Al-Hassan and Lansford, 2009; Mutambik, Lee and Almuqrin, 2020 and Dangol and Shrestha, 2021 which all showed difference in school readiness among male and female students.

Chapter summary

The study produced some intriguing results about the influence of school readiness and parental care on school attendance. For example, it was found that low parental care had an influence on students' attendance at school. The study also showed that students had a high level of readiness for school. The study also showed that school attendance was predicted by both parental care and school readiness, with parental care being more important.

Once more, the study found no distinction in school attendance between males and females. Finally, the study showed that parental care did not differ between male and female students.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This section of the study presents a summary of the results, conclusions, suggestions, and paths for future research investigations.

Summary of the study

The influence of parental care and school readiness on school attendance in the Komenda- Edina- Eguafo- Abrem Municipality was examined in this study. The study employed a descriptive survey design in order to accomplish this. The primary tool used in the study's quantitative data collection method was the questionnaire. Pilot testing and confirmatory factor analysis were used, respectively, to validate the scales. The internal consistency of the completed questionnaire was 0.76. Both parents and students participated in the study. In all 313 students and 240 parents responded to questionnaires given out. The probability sampling technique was used as sample and sampling procedure with simple random and stratified proportionate sampling methods. Both descriptive (means and standard deviation) and inferential (independent sample t-test, linear and simultaneous multiple regression, and one-way multivariate analysis of variance [MANOVA]) statistics were used to test the quantitative data.

Key Findings

1. The study revealed that the level of parental care among J.H.S students in the K.E.E.A. Municipality is low.
2. The results showed that the level of school readiness among J.H.S students in the K.E.E.A. Municipality was high in all the sub-

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dimensions, self-care skills, psychomotor skills, affective skills and cognitive skills.

3. Males did not perform better than females in terms of school attendance and school readiness. The attendance rate and school readiness were the same among males and females.
4. Parental care did predict school attendance readiness. This means, parental care had influence on students' school attendance.
5. The study revealed that school readiness did predict school attendance. This means, students' school readiness influenced their school attendance.
6. Parental care and school readiness predicted school attendance with parental care being more paramount. Parental care and school readiness influenced school attendance, but parental care influenced more of students' school attendance.
7. Male and female students received the same parental care in the K.E.E.A Municipality.
8. School readiness was the same among male and female students in the K.E.E.A Municipality.

Conclusions

Based on the study's findings, it can be said that school attendance among J.H.S. students in the K.E.E.A. Municipality was influenced by parental care and school readiness. These results imply that school attendance is impossible to attain without parental supervision and students who are prepared for school. Even though studies have identified certain factors that may contribute to higher school attendance, learners' readiness to attend

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classes and participate in all associated activities is just as important as parental supervision.

It can also be concluded that parental care is paramount in effort to improve school attendance and it should not be overlooked. Though, learners might show all the readiness for school and be willing to go to school but, without the constant care (provision of food, money, attention and school materials) it would be difficult for learners to stay focused in school and to actively participate in school work and activities. In order for these learners to maintain regular attendance to school, parental care ought to be paramount and should not be lacking.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made;

1. The government as a major stakeholder in education should create avenue for educating and sensitizing parents on their all- important role in caring for their wards in achieving formal education. Policies on education should also factor the role of parents in educating their children.
2. Teachers should help learners to develop their competencies and abilities for them to harness their interest in school and to improve their attendance to school.
3. The study calls for empowerment programmes from the education directorate and education agencies to educate parents and offer opportunities to find alternative means of labour for their fishing and farming works and not to involve their children in their work. This will

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enhance more school attendance among students in the Municipality. This is to solve the menace of poor school attendance among students.

4. Students' particularly males need to be enlightened through school seminars and by education agencies on the need to be in school through special seminars and workshops for male students. This will enlighten them on the benefit of education and the need to be in school. These will create conscious efforts in the learners and cause them to be regular to school.

Suggestion for Further Research

1. It is recommended that this study be replicated in other municipalities in Ghana, since variations in parental care and student school readiness at the various districts and regions could bring about variations in results.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire for students

Dear Respondents,

Kindly help me to collect information for my research work on the topic "impact of parental care and school readiness on school attendance in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality". This study is purely for academic endeavour.

You can decide to participate willingly; therefore, you have the right to withdraw your participation at any time as you may wish. Please read the instructions under each of the sections very well to help you respond to the questions accurately. All information will be held confidential.

Participant Consent

I know that the person collecting the data is a student of University of Cape Coast and have explained to me the reasons for carrying out this study to me in detail. However, I can decide not to continue with the research at any time without giving any reason(s).

Respondent's signature … ……..

Date: ……..

General Instruction

Please tick '√' or mark '×' in the appropriate box provided at each question which most accurately reflects your view. Please answer the questions honestly and objectively as much as possible.

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SECTION A: PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. What is your gender?
   a) Male [ ]
   b) Female [ ]
2. What is your age?
   a. 13 [ ]
   b. 14 [ ]
   c. 15 [ ]
   d. 16 and above [ ]
3. What is your parents 'occupation?
   a. Farmer [ ]
   b. Fisherman [ ]
   c. Fishmonger [ ]
   d. teacher [ ]
   e. Any other ……
   f. What is the level of yours' education?
   a. No formal education [ ]
   b. Basic education [ ]
   c. Secondary education [ ]
   d. Tertiary education [ ]
4. Whom are you living with?
   a. Both parents [ ]
   b. Mother [ ]
   c. Father [ ]
   d. Grandparents [ ]
   e. Any other ……
5. Which community are you from?
   a. Farming [ ]
   b. Fishing [ ]

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SECTION B

Please choose from the following indicators the one which describe correctly your parents' care. Indicator 1= strongly disagree 2= disagree 3= strongly agree 4= agree

S/N	STATEMENT	1	2	3	4
1	My parents show me care and draw you closer to them.				
2	My parents often engage me in discussing about any other matters.				
3	My parents advise me on your studies.				
4	My parents help me with my homework.				
5	My parents supervisor my studies at home.				
6	My parents give me money for school.				
7	My parents buy me materials for school (bag, books, shoes, uniform etc).				
8	I easily share my difficulties with my parents				
9	My parents see to it that I go to school before they leave for work.				

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SECTION C

Please choose from the following indicators the one which describes your abilities. Indicators 5=completely, 4=sufficiently, 3= moderately, 2= partially and 1= not sufficient

STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5
Cognitive skills					
I can describe terms taught in a lesson.					
I can establish cause and effect relationships.					
I can add up numbers.					
I can tell the similarities and differences between events.					
I can reason towards the solution of the problem situation					
I can read object graphically.					
Affective skills					
I can easily tell how you feel about something.					
I behave in line with set goals.					
I have self confidence					
I fulfills given work and duty.					
I communicate easily with new individuals.					
I follow school rules and regulations.					
Psychomotor skills					
I demonstrate good handwriting.					
I can copy and complete patterns appropriately.					
I can easily engage in writing, lacing and reading activities.					
I stay focus during lessons.					
I engage in extracurricular activities.					
Self – care skills					
I wear the appropriate uniform for school.					
I wash and keep uniform neat for school.					
I keep your body clean always.					
I can protect myself from harm.					
I realise situations that may create danger.					

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SECTION D

Please choose from the following indicators the one which best explains your attendance to school weekly. 0 = never 1= once, 2= 2 times, 3= three times, 4= four times and 5= five times.

S/N	STATEMENT	0	1	2	3	4	5
1	How many times are you present to school in a week?						
2	How many times are you absent without permission in a week?						
3	How many times have you absent from school with your parents' consent in a week?						
4	How many times have you been absent without permission in a week?						
5	How many times do you get marked absent for being late for school in a week?						
6	How many times have you absented yourself from school without any reason?						
7	How many times have you been absent from school to engage in any economic activity(selling)						

8. What do you do if you absent from school?

……

9. Do your parents/ guardians engage you to work during school time?

a. Yes [ ]

b. No [ ]

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QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

Dear Respondents,

Kindly help me to collect information for my research work on the topic "impact of parental care and school readiness on school attendance in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality". This study is purely for academic endeavour.

You can decide to participate willingly; therefore, you have the right to withdraw your participation at any time as you may wish. Please read the instructions under each of the sections very well to help you respond to the questions accurately. All information will be held confidential.

Participant Consent

I know that the person collecting the data is a student of University of Cape Coast and have explained to me the reasons for carrying out this study to me in detail. However, I can decide not to continue with the research at any time without giving any reason(s).

Respondent's Signature: …….

Date: ……..

General Instruction

Please tick '√' or mark '×' in the appropriate box provided at each question which most accurately reflects your view. Please answer the questions honestly and objectively as much as possible.

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SECTION A: PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. What is your gender?
   a. Male [ ]
   b. female [ ]
2. What is your age? Please write
   ……
3. What is your marital status?
   a. Single [ ]
   b. Married [ ]
   c. Divorced [ ]
   d. Widow [ ]
   e. Widower [ ]

4. What is your educational level?

a. No formal education [ ]
b. basic education [ ]
c. secondary education [ ]
d. tertiary education [ ]

5. What is occupation?

a. Farmer [ ]
b. Fisherman [ ]
c. Fishmonger [ ]
d. Teacher [ ]
e. Any other …….

6. Which community are you from?

c. Farming [ ]
d. Fishing [ ]

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SECTION B

Please choose from the following indicators the one which describe correctly your parental care.

1. How do you cater for your children at school?
   a. I buy them books Yes [ ] No [ ]
   b. I give them money for school. Yes [ ] No [ ]
   c. I buy them uniform Yes [ ] No [ ]
   d. I buy them school bag and materials for school. Yes [ ] No [ ]

2. Do you engage your children in discussing about any other matters?
   a. Yes [ ] b. No [ ]

3. How do you advice your children on their studies?
   a. Often [ ]
   b. Very often [ ]
   c. Always [ ]

4. Do you help your children in doing their homework?
   a. Yes [ ]
   b. No [ ]

5. How often do you visit your children at school?
   a. Never [ ]
   b. Once a week [ ]
   c. Twice a week [ ]
   d. Once a term [ ]

6. Do you supervise your children to do their assignment?
   a. Yes [ ] b. No [ ]

7. Do your children leave for school before you leave for work?
   a. Yes [ ] b. No [ ]

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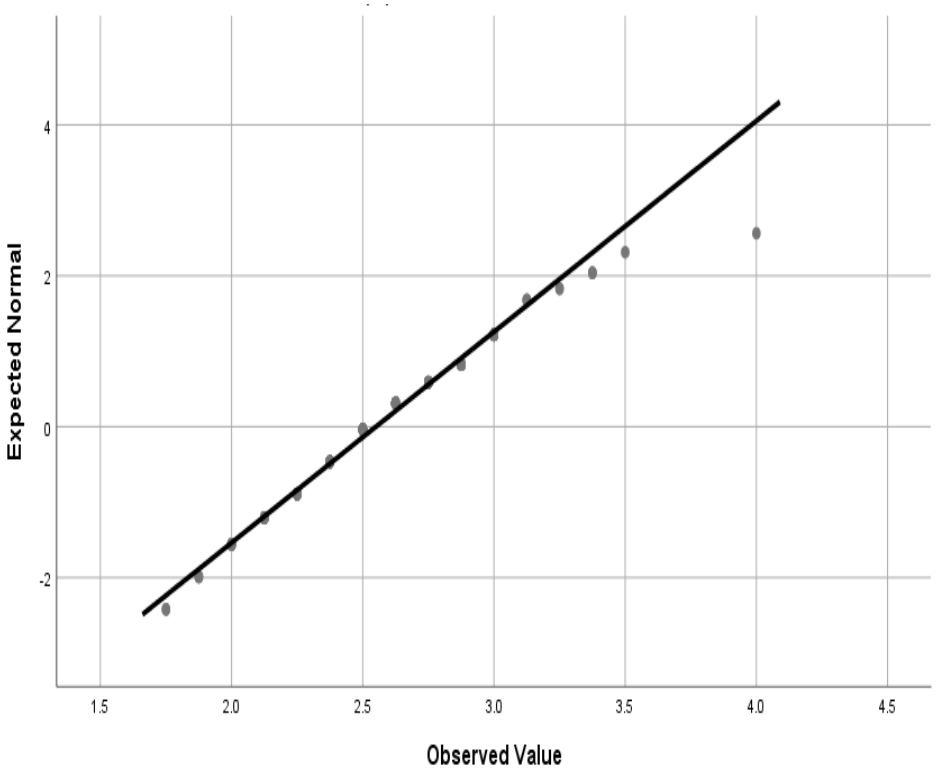
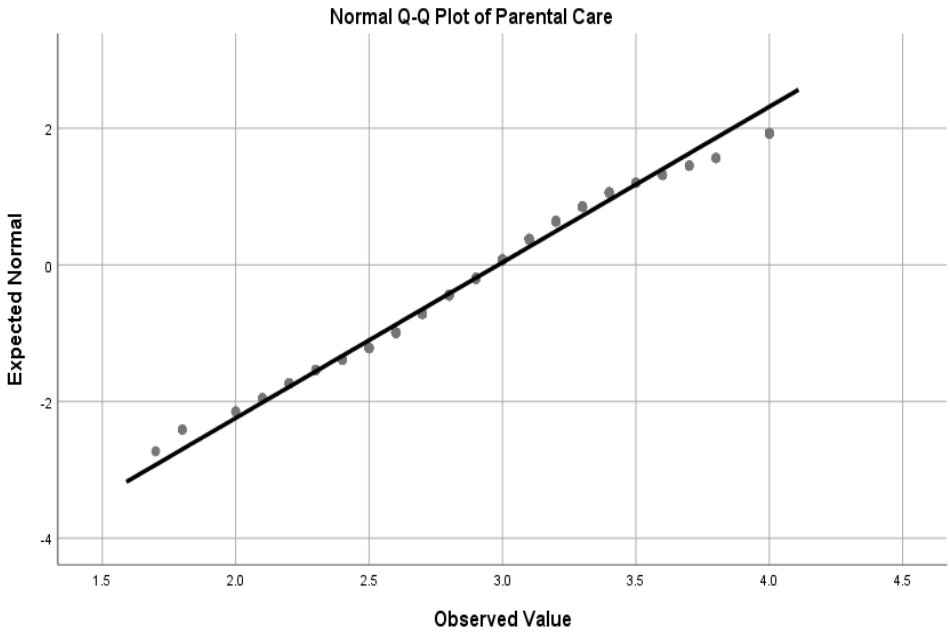
APPENDIX B

NORMALITY TEST

Q-Q Plot for school attendance





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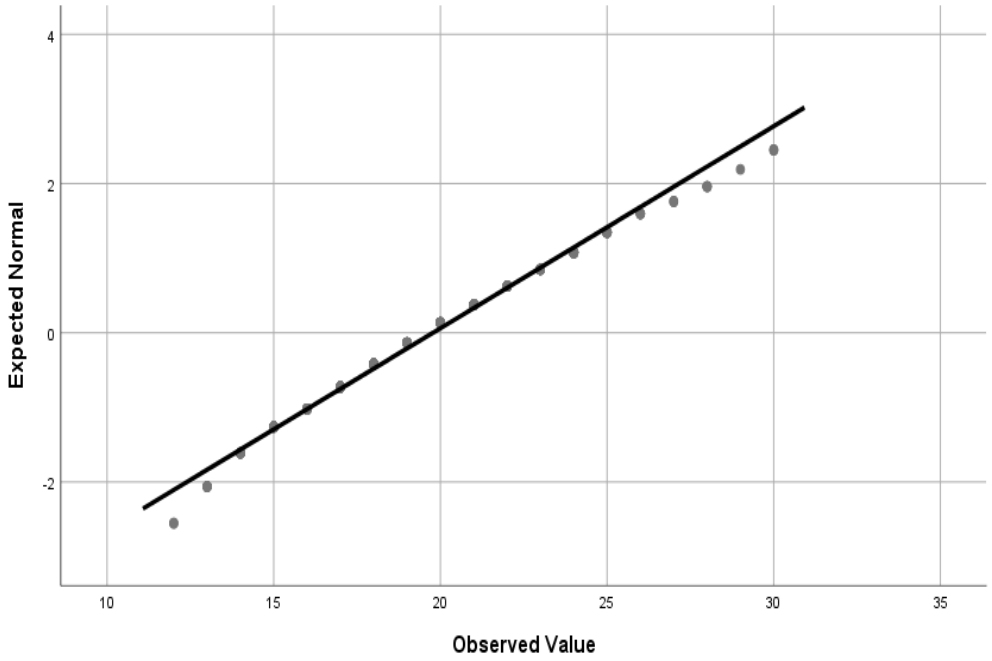
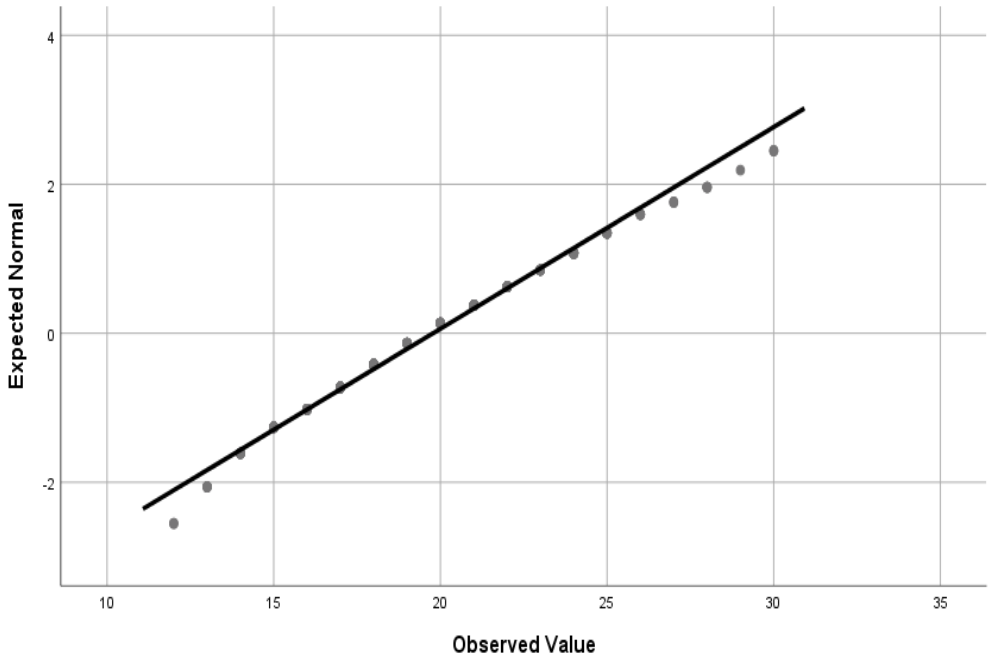
Normal Q-Q Plot For School Readiness



Normal Q-Q plot for School readiness



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APPENDIX C

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

Telephone: 0332091697
Email:dep@ucc.edu.gh

UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

1st August, 2022

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

THESIS WORK
LETTER OF INTRODUCTION
MS. MARY OFORI-KABLAH

We introduce to you Ms. Ofori-Kablah a student from the Department of Education and Psychology, University of Cape Coast. She is pursuing Master of Philosophy degree in Educational Psychology and she is currently at the thesis stage.

Ms. Ofori-Kablah is researching on the topic: "IMPACT OF PARENTAL CARE AND SCHOOL READINESS ON SCHOOL ATTENDANCE."

She has opted to gather data at your institution/establishment for her thesis work. We would be most grateful if you could provide her the opportunity and assistance for the study.

Any information provided would be treated strictly as confidential. We sincerely appreciate your co-operation and assistance in this direction.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Anna Ocran (Ms.)
Principal Administrative Assistant
For: HEAD

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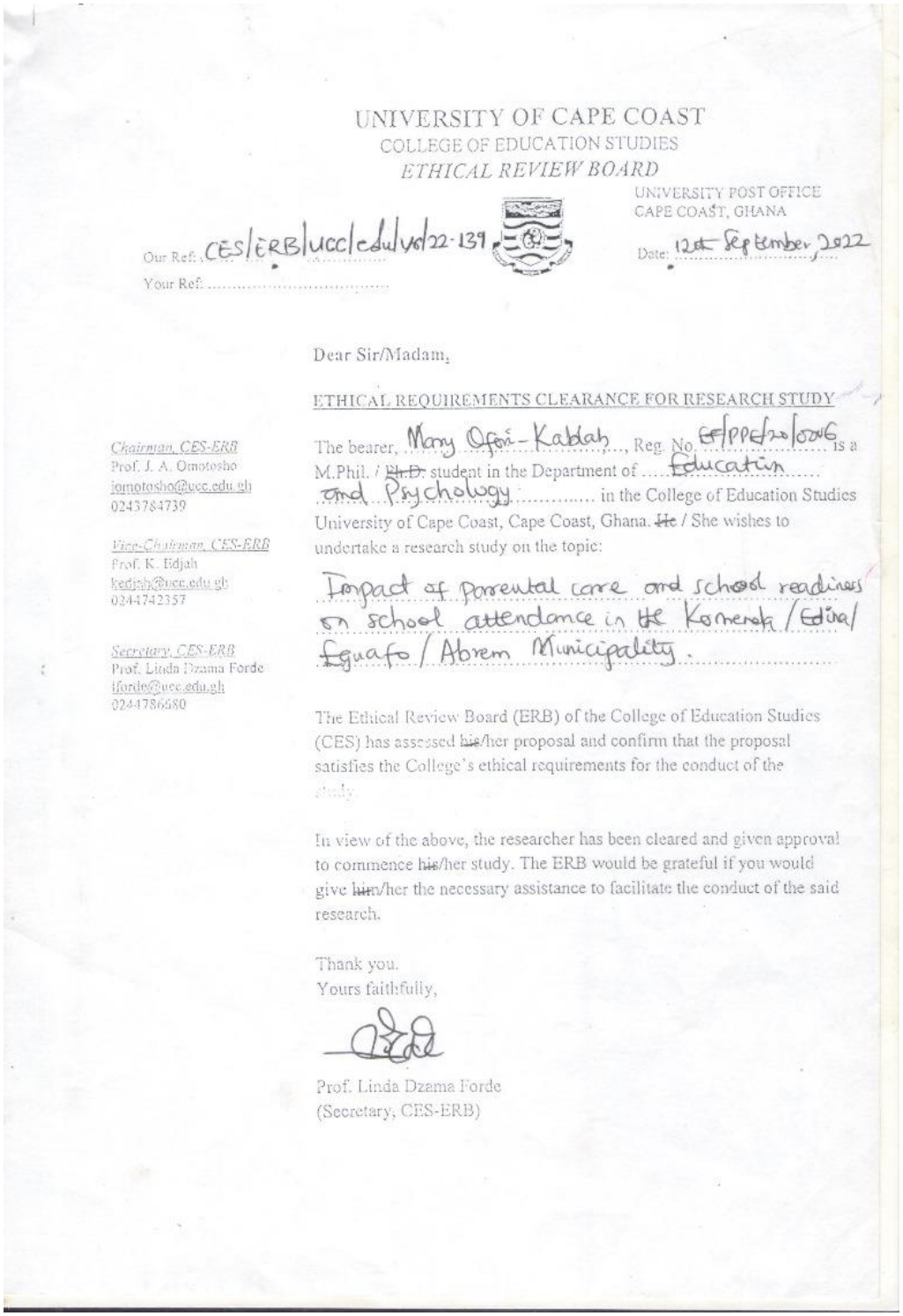
APPENDIX D

ETHICAL CLEARANCE



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
ETHICAL REVIEW BOARD

UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref: CES/ERB/ucc/edu/vol/22-139 Date: 12th September, 2022

Your Ref: .....

Dear Sir/Madam,

ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS CLEARANCE FOR RESEARCH STUDY

The bearer, Mary Ofori-Kabiah, Reg. No. ED/PPE/20/0006 is a M.Phil. / ~~Ph.D.~~ student in the Department of Education and Psychology in the College of Education Studies University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana. ~~He~~ / She wishes to undertake a research study on the topic:

Impact of parental care and school readiness on school attendance in the Komenda/Edina/Eguafo/Abrem Municipality.

The Ethical Review Board (ERB) of the College of Education Studies (CES) has assessed ~~his~~/her proposal and confirm that the proposal satisfies the College's ethical requirements for the conduct of the study.

In view of the above, the researcher has been cleared and given approval to commence ~~his~~/her study. The ERB would be grateful if you would give ~~him~~/her the necessary assistance to facilitate the conduct of the said research.

Thank you.
Yours faithfully,

Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
(Secretary, CES-ERB)

Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. J. A. Omotosho
jomotosho@ucc.edu.gh
0243784739

Vice-Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. K. Edjah
kedjah@ucc.edu.gh
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Secretary, CES-ERB
Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
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0244786580

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