

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

THE PERCEPTION OF PARENTS, PUPILS AND TEACHERS ON THE
EFFECT OF HOME ENVIRONMENT ON THE ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MPORHOR
WASSA EAST DISTRICT

BY

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Dissertation submitted to the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration, Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of Master of Education Degree in Educational Administration

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

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

Candidate's Signature ----- Date -----

Name: Victoria Ametefe

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparations of this dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the university of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature ----- Date -----

Name: Mr. S. K. Atakpa

ABSTRACT

This study specifically attempted to find out whether academic performance among J.H.S 3 students, teachers and parents could be attributed to some home environmental factors such as parental encouragement, parental education, parental occupation, family size and learning facilities at home.

The researcher employed the use of questionnaire and focus group discussion to gather data for this work. Out of the four hundred (400) respondents that were sampled from the five strata, three hundred and fifty (350) sampled J. H. S. 3 students, teachers and parents in the Mpohor Wassa East District (MWED) answered the questionnaire and were also involved in the focus group discussion.

The results of the study showed that majority (70%) of the parents in MWED are peasant farmers who use their school going children as the source of labour. This has negatively affected the time pupils spent in school and with their books.. Although parents admitted that their involvements in their children's academic activities need to be improved, they equally advised teachers to spend time to research into the subject matter so as to improve the content of their lessons.

From the study, it was revealed that parents' positive involvement such as arranging for extra tuition, finding more about what their wards do at school, etc will go a long way to improve their academic performance. It would be appropriate for educationists and other stakeholders to adopt some of the measures suggested to improve the academic performance of J. H. S. 3 pupils in other areas of the country.

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DEDICATION

To my late father Alfred Kwaku Ametefe.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

It is widely recognised that if pupils are to maximise their potential from schooling they will need the full support of their parents. Attempts to enhance parental involvement in education occupy governments, administrators, educators and parents' organisations all over the world. It is anticipated that parents should play a role not only in the promotion of their own children's achievements but more broadly in school improvement and the democratisation of school governance (Deforges, 2003). The European Commission, for example, holds that the degree of parental participation is a significant indicator of the quality of schooling. The effect of the quality of education from the home is seen in the examination results that the child produces at the end of his graduation class.

Examinations in Ghana have been accepted as an important aspect of our educational system. This is obvious by the time and resources that teachers and parents spend in preparation of these children for examination. It is because over years examination results have been used as a criterion for selection for educational advancement and employment.

Three hundred and ninety five thousand five hundred and seven (395,507) pupils sat for Basic Education Certificate Examination (B.E.C.E) in the year 2009 according to the report from West African Examinations

Council (W.A.E.C). Slightly more than a third of those who sat for B.E.C.E in 2009 managed to secure places in good public senior high schools in the country. This is because among other reasons many of the pupils performed poorly despite the fact that they follow a common syllabus.

Though the performance in B.E.C.E has been a great concern in the whole country, the performance in Mpohor Wassa East District has been of greater concern to pupils, teachers, parents and the community as a whole. This is because almost 70% of the pupils who sat for B.E.C.E in 2009 failed to secure places in good public Senior High Schools in the country due to poor performance. This is despite introduction of free basic education (F.B.E); in service training for teachers through Ghana Education Service Inset Project (G.E.S.I.P) and free feeding program (F.F.P) by USAID Mpohor Wassa East District is in the Western Region of Ghana. Mpohor Wassa East is made up comprises of ten circuits. This include: Daboase, Manso, Sencheme, Ateiku, Subri, Mpohor, Atobiase ,S/ Krobo, Ekutuase, and Adum-Banso.

Table 1: B.E.C.E results of candidates from (2006-2009) in Mpohor Wassa East District

Year	Total candidates	Grade 6-15	Grade 16-25	Grade 26-30	Total Grade between 6-30	Total Grade above 30
2006	1372	78	156	296	544	784
2007	1476	185	273	182	640	836
2008	1450	143	292	153	588	862
2009	1412	129	237	296	662	750

Source: Mpohor Wassa East District Education office, April 2009

The performance of Junior High Schools in Mpohor Wassa East district in Basic Education Certificate Examination (B.E.C.E) has not been impressive. Poverty level in the location is one of the highest in the country and has raised concern to all stake-holders. Education would give residents opportunities to break the circle of poverty and tackle hunger and mobilize resources for the well being of the residence.

The process of education does not start when a child first attends school (Akhter, 2008). Education begins at home. One does not only acquire knowledge from a teacher, one can learn or receive knowledge from a parent, family members and home environment too. According to Akhter (2008) parents represent a considerable role in a child's education. There is stronger evidence that cultural characteristics and parental attitudes influence the educational attainment of children at school level. Akhter (2008) further says that if parents adopt good and effective attitude with children at home, children performance is much better in school.

Moreover, parental supportive styles and attitudes not only influence a child attainment level at school but also provide better environment for the student's learning process. Personalities, availability of social supports, family cohesion are often identified as factors that can impact a child positively or negatively. Personality can be defined as internal characteristics found in every child, including the child's intellectual ability and approach to learning, attitude and disposition, self-esteem and self control. Social support availability factors are such as advocate at home, school and elsewhere in the community.

Family cohesion includes structure and background characteristics such as the parent's occupation, family income, parent education, parental mental health and parental style. Some major factors identified as being responsible for poor performance are lack of facilities in the school, lack of teaching staff, poor discipline, unfavorable home environment and poor teaching methods. Other factors that have been identified by researchers (e.g. Fraiser, 1959; Maundu, 1980; Osire, 1983; Bali et al, 1984 etc) as cited in Muola (1990) as possible causes for variation in academic performance among pupils include the following:- teacher qualification, learning facilities, anxiety level of pupils, the intelligence of the pupils, nature of the test and academic achievement motivation etc. While these factors have been recognized as possible contributors to variation in academic performance, little research has been done to show the role played by any one of them in Mpohor Wassa East District.

One of the strategies that could be used to improve the performance of the pupils is to ensure that the home environment is made favorable to support learning. The home environment is an important variable in determining academic performance of the pupils. The experiences of the child at home are always carried along to school which will most likely influence his/her behaviour and responses at school.

Home influence can be identified as very important variable that have potential for promoting directly or indirectly student academic achievements (Fuhrman et al, 1987; Blooms, 1984) cited in Oluwatelure (2008). The term parental involvement has been given different meanings. It has been used to mean parental expectation of school performances (Hess et al, 1984; Seginer,

1983), deliberate by the home to reinforce improved academic performance (Fuhrman et al, 1987; Fontana, 1981; Karaka, 1972) cited in Oluwatelure (2008), general academic guidance and support (Blooms, 1984), students perceptions of the degree to which parents influence their plan for high schools and monitor their daily activities and school progress.

This study was carried out to determine the perception of pupils, teachers and their parents on parental, family and home environment in Mpohor Wassa East District that significantly affect performance of basic school pupils. This study specifically attempted to find out whether academic performance among pupils in Mpohor Wassa East District in view of parents, teachers and pupils could be attributed to some selected home environmental factors (i.e. parental encouragement, parent occupation, parent education, family size and learning facilities at home).

Statement of the Problem

The numbers of final year students (JHS 3 Pupils) that obtain aggregate 6-25 to qualify into the second cycle institutions are quiet alarming. It is estimated that out of 1412 pupils who sat for B.E.C.E (2009) in Mpohor Wassa East District, only 366 pupils who obtained grade (6-25) got places in good public senior high schools in the country. The situation has been like this for the past four years and this poor performance has been attributed to some home environmental factors.

The poor performance of pupils in Basic School Certificate Examination (B.E.C.E) has drawn the attention of the government, educationist, teachers, administrators, researchers, parents and even pupils. All these stake holders have been wondering how this growing concern of a social

canker can be resolved. Most of these pupils in MWED have been wondering why pupils in other nearby communities perform better in the BECE than them. Although the Mpohor Wassa East strategic plan document (2009) on education seeks to address the unique problems of high illiteracy levels especially for girls resulting in major disparities in education and improve the educational standards in all the ten circuits of the district, it has managed to improve education only to the basic level.

Parents or guardians in MWED on the other hand have been saddled with various socio-economic problems that have made it very difficult to get much involved in the academic performance of their pupils. It has been noted that parents do not have enough private teachers to assist their respective wards in home work and other academic activities. Besides, the family sizes in MWED are averagely large and these certainly had made the students among them to be deprived of conducive environment in their homes to have private studies. Most parents or guardians in MWED are predominantly subsistent farmers and lack the capital resources to employ labour so they use their children as labour for their respective farms.

At the same time, parents of various social backgrounds attach different values to education. This variation eventually affects the child's attitude to school and his motivation for success in academic (Muola, 1990). Despite the many government interventions on education in Mpohor Wassa East District, little improvement in B.E.C.E scores have been realized. It is therefore necessary to consider the family environmental factors which are most likely to encourage a favorable attitude to school and good academic performance in Mpohor Wassa East District context.

The performance of pupils in B.E.C.E determines their placement in senior high schools in the country. There are three categories of senior high schools in Ghana. These includes; high performing (Grade A), performing (Grade B) non-performing (Grade C). Those who score highly in B.E.C.E are admitted in Grade A schools and those who score highly but could not get places in grade A schools are admitted in grade B schools. District or Grade C senior high schools which are the majority admit most of the pupils who score slightly lower grades. District senior high schools take a small number of pupils to universities across the country. This means that the basic school children joining grade A or B senior high school is small. However, for the district to improve there is the need to link the school and the home in addressing issues of education. Therefore, this study determines the perception of pupils, teachers and parents on the effects of home environmental factors on academic performance of Junior high schools in Mpohor Wassa East District.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to ascertain the perception of pupils, teachers and parents on the effect of home environmental factors on the academic performance of JHS 3 pupils in Mpohor Wassa East District (MWED).

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are;

1. to ascertain pupil's (J.H.S 3) perceptions about the effect of home environment on their academic performance

2. to find out teacher's perception about the effects of home environment on academic performance of (J.H.S.3) pupils in Mpohor Wassa East District
3. to ascertain the perceptions of parents about the effect of home environment on academic performance of (J.H.S.3) pupils in Mpohor Wassa East District

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. What are (J.H.S 3) pupil's perceptions about the effect of home environment on their academic performance?
2. What are the perceptions of the teachers about the effects of home environment on academic performance of (J.H.S.3) pupils in Mpohor Wassa East District?
3. What are the perceptions of parents about the effect of home environment on academic performance of (J.H.S.3) pupils in Mpohor Wassa East District?

Significance of the Study

This research been carried out in a deprived district would provide insight into effect of home environment on academic performance. In order to fully develop the child's potential, it was necessary to be aware of the obstacles that may hinder his/her effort to do well in school. It was assumed that the study would reveal the kind of influence that the home environment has on the child's motivation to learn and his/her performance in school. The study would be beneficial to the following categories of people and institutions:

The study will help the pupils especially those from poor socio-economic background to understand their environment and the challenges they face in their home environment. The focus of educational policies and

curriculum development are general without much attention to the rural and deprived schools and the home environmental factors of the pupils. The study will assist policy makers to know and understand the problems besetting education in view of the effect of home environmental factors, which lead to poor performance in basic school certificate examinations.

Furthermore, teachers, as implementers of educational policies and programmes, will learn to understand situation of their pupils' home environment and learn to improve upon their teaching strategies and styles in impacting of knowledge to suit the different levels of pupils to ensure high academic success of students and pupils.

Again, District assemblies, which now play in the running of schools, will be guided by the findings of this work, in making effective contribution to schools within their catchment area, in terms of teaching and learning materials, text books and supplementary readers. There will also be the need for them to provide free school uniform, free lunch, school bags and also offer scholarship to poor but brilliant pupils in the schools within their catchment area. An awareness of some home environmental conditions or factors which are conducive to the educational development of the child will be of much help to educational planners in their effort in equalizing educational opportunities and attempts to minimize the poor performance among pupils.

It is hoped that parents will benefit from the findings and the recommendations of this study in selecting means and ways of improving the home environment in order to improve upon the performance of their children. The study was expected to contribute towards the understanding of academic

performance by showing how it is affected by the study variables. Any empirical evidence that is provided by this research will serve to enrich the understanding of educationist and psychologist on school performance. Additionally, information or factors that affect academic performance will be of benefit to educationist and psychologist since the study findings in this area are yet to be conclusive.

The findings of this study will inform the researcher on home environment factors and how they affect the academic performance of J.H.S 3 pupils in basic schools in Mpohor Wassa East district. With this knowledge, when published, the researcher will be in a position to advice the educationist, parents, teachers and pupils on the effects of home environmental factors on academic performance. Finally it is hoped that the findings of this study will stimulate interest for more research on the studied factors and others which may be thought to influence academic performance.

Delimitations of the Study

Social interaction in the family and at home play fundamental role in the development of cognition. Therefore, how the child interacts and the people he/she interact with at home can influence his/her learning process at school. This study aimed to assist in determining the perceptions of teachers, parents and students on the effects of home environmental factors on academic achievement of (J.H.S 3) pupils in basic school in Mpohor Wassa East district of Western Region. The following home environmental factors were selected for the purpose of the study because of their relevance to the pupils learning activities: Parental encouragement, Parental involvement, Parental aspirations,

Parental education, Parental occupation, Family background, Learning facilities at home, Gender issues, Cultural and traditional beliefs and practices.

The study was restricted to J.H.S 3 pupils in Mpohor Wassa East district because the performance at B.E.C.E for the past five (5) years has always been low and majority of the schools do score zero percent. The topic was also delimited to allow the researcher to do in-depth investigation about the subject.

Limitations of the Study

Some problems that were encountered during the study were lack of funding, time frame, accessibility to schools due to poor nature of roads in the district, students inability to read and understand the questions in the questionnaire, student inability to write exactly what is on their mind and the teachers commitment in given answers. Also return rate of teacher's questionnaire was not hundred percent (100%) since the questionnaire administered by the researcher was not collected by the researcher in person. One other weakness encountered was that the questionnaire lacked the ability of collecting data on non-verbal attitudes and responses of respondents since this could contribute a lot to enrich the findings of the work. The researcher did not rule out the fact that this can affect the reliability of the work.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter provides reviews of relevant literature on perception and home environment factors that influence academic performance of pupils in junior high schools. The chapter explored the following;

1. Concept of perception
2. Home environment
3. Gender Issues
4. Cultural, traditional beliefs and practices
5. Family model

Concept of Perception

According to Ogol (2000) perception is considered with describing the world as experienced by human being and relating this world to the physical environment, the structure and physiology of the organism and the impact of prior environment conditions on the currently perceived world. Mzure (1999) alluded that perception is the process by which an individual organize an interpret phenomenon and other sensory impressions in other to give meaning to their environment. Hirey (2004) categorized the factors influencing social perception as the characteristic of the perceiver, characteristic of situation and characteristic of personal receiving. Characteristic of the perceiver represent the most important attribute in influencing the focus of perception according to Organ and Bataman (1991) as cited in Hirey (2004). Luthen (1989) in Hirey

(2004) further emphasized that a person who has a relatively higher need for power, affiliation or achievement will be more attentive to the relevant situation variables in perception process. This represents the motivation state of the person. Other perceiver related characteristic include vast experience self concept, personality and values all of which greatly influence perception.

Characteristics of the situation include organizational culture or the shared belief among organizational members about how there is done and what is regarded important. In addition organizational structure, which is an important component influencing perception, shows how organization deals with forces within its environment. It determined how an organization plans to achieve its goals and objectives. It also affected the social perception in evaluating organizational activities (Mzure, 1999).

According to Hirey (2004), the characteristic of the perceived person include his/her appearance, communication and status. The appearance of others not only influences how we perceive their behaviour, influences how we respond to them. According to Mzure (1999), status is important in influencing social perception. For instance a high status person, a head teacher exert is stronger impact on perception that a low status person for example an office messenger.

Researchers Jones and Womble (1997) found out that perception seemed to be formed from experiences in school and at home. In their research, they look at the effect of perception of family background, carrier choice awareness, relationship of education to student, school to work relatedness, peer involvement, faculty and role model relation. The results indicated that all these experiences formed a bridge into the world of work to

the extent that exception and personal expectation shared future carrier choices for both males and female student. Obura (1991) pointed out that, it is not surprising to find that girls under achieved in science subject relative to boys and that their performance increasingly decline according to the perception of a subject as being relatively male oriented.

Home Environment

The home environment plays a vital role in the development of the child's personality. Before and after school, the child has constant interaction with the family and is invariably influence by the entire environment that surrounds him. Children need a congenial environment, an environment characterized by human care, particularly by the mother at the same time providing various experiences and stimulation (Sunitha, 2005).

Home itself is a complex unit. Due to the complexity in accessing a psycho-social environment, many scholars have described it but have not been able to come out with a unified and concise definition of the home. The term home environment designates all the objects, forces and conditions in the home which influence the child physically, intellectually emotionally and so forth. Home environment is a broad concept which encompasses very many factors in the home and therefore cannot be defined adequately (Muola, 1990). He continues to say that different home environment vary in very many aspects such as the parents level of education, economic status, occupational status, religious background, values interest, parents expectation for the child, family background etc. Children coming from different home environments are differentially affected by such variations.

Better home environment is that where parents provide more opportunity to understand things and situations and act according to their desires. Children receive maximum support and encouragement from parents; children rarely receive punishment and have less restriction. This kind of environment helps the pupils for better performance on various tasks. According to Sunitha (2005) rich environment and stimulation in the family are essential for each child for optimism, especially in the areas of social and cognitive development. Hess et al (1984) studied the academic achievement of the orphan boys of 6 to 12 years. Findings of study revealed that personal variables like study habits, academic motivation, affect the academic achievement but family variables like parents' education, occupation, socio-economic status; age does not affect the academic achievement. The environmental variables (both psychosocial and physical environment) as emotional and social support, infrastructural and functional facilities of the orphanage affect the academic achievement. Parents should provide necessary facility and educational environment which result in better performance, approve and appreciate activities related to education and other aspects. Hence, the above studies make it clear that home environment has an impact on the overall development of children.

The study of the home environment as a variable by itself is difficult and cannot be done in a single undertaking. Consequently, researchers who have tried to investigate the relationship between the home environment and academic performance have tended to select specific home factors depending on their interests (Osire, 1983) therefore the following home environmental factors were selected for the purpose of the study because of their relevance to

the pupils learning activity; Parental encouragement, Parental involvement and Parental aspiration. Other variables that would be considered due to the objective of the study include parental education, parents' occupation and family background. The categorization is just for convenience sake because all home environmental factors are overlapping in their effects on the child's academic performance. Each of the selected home environmental factors will be treated as an independent variable.

Parental Encouragement

The available literature consistently seems to underline the importance of parental encouragement on the child's academic performance. Children whose parents encourage them to do well in school, show interest in their schooling and are actively involved in their school work perform better in school. Children who are encouraged to excel in school tend to be academically motivated and are likely to work hard in order to please their parents. Parents who know the importance of education and have a positive attitude towards school will always press their children to complete their homework and assist them in doing it. Perhaps, it is this involvement and interest in the child's work rather than parents' demand for good performance which contribute substantially to the child's academic performance.

Another research finding showed that the academic performance of a child is to some extent influenced by parental encouragement. Cudjoe (2007) found parental encouragement to be significantly related to the child's school achievement. He saw parental encouragement to be of considerable importance in determining the educability of children. According to him,

children whose parents are most interested in their education and encourage them to do well, scored high average than children whose parents are most interested in their education and encourage them to do well, score high on average than children of parents who are least interested and encouraging. He further noted that children with interested parents pull ahead of the rest whatever their initial starting performance is. The parents interest implies that the level of support and encouragement which will help the child to take interest in study and use his/her capability as far as he/she can. Muola (2010) noted that importance of parental encouragement on academic performance cannot be underestimated because one part of the school learning is carried into the home-the evening homework. This is a time when parents who are interested can find out for themselves how the child is progressing with his lessons as well as the discipline which is often necessary to make him spend reasonable amount of time studying.

Parental Involvement

Parental Involvement has been conceptualized in many perspectives by many researchers. According to Desforges (2003), parental involvement is a catch-all term for many different activities in the home which includes good parenting, helping with the homework, talking to teachers, attending school functions through to taking part in school governance. It has been used to mean parental expectation of school performances (Hess et al., 1984; Seginer, 1983), deliberate effort by the home to reinforce improved academic performance (Oluwatelure, 2008), general academic guidance and support (Blooms, 1984) and pupils' perceptions of the degree to which parents

influence their plan for high school and monitor their daily activities and school progress.

Much contemporary research on parental involvement has been drawn to Epstein's (1995) topology of form of parental involvement. Epstein's framework was not based on empirical evidence of what parents actually do but rather, it is based on reflection about what parents could or might do.

Type of Involvement	Definition
Parenting	providing housing, health, nutrition, safety; parenting skills in Parent-child interactions; home conditions to support study; Information to help schools know the child
Communicating	school-home / home-school communication
Volunteering	in school to help classrooms events
Teaching at home choices or options	help with homework, help with educational
Decision making	membership of PTA or governors
Collaborating with the community	contributions to school

This framework assists educators in developing school, family and community partnership. Epstein's reason for developing this framework is to help all youngsters succeeds in school and in life as a whole.

This framework notwithstanding, Michigan Department of Education (2001) proposed three factors of parental involvement in children's education as parent's beliefs about what is important, necessary and permissible for them to do on behalf of their children; parents belief that they can have a positive

influence on their children's education and parent's perception that their children and school want them to get involve. Based on these factors, the study suggested that families whose children do well in school have parents who establish daily family routine such as providing time and quiet place to study, assigning responsibilities for household chores and being firm about bed time and having dinner together; parents who monitor out-of-school activities, model the value of learning, self-discipline and hard work, express high but realistic expectations for achievement, encourage children's development or progress in school and encourage reading, writing and discussions among family members.

Nyarko (2010) found that the positive association between mothers and fathers' home involvement in and academic performance of their children is a step in the right direction and suggests that if parents are challenged to be out and about in the education of their children at home, there would be progress in the academic performance of the children. He further suggests that educational authorities should provide parents with the necessary information required to support adolescent educational trajectories. When parents are provided with the information needed to promote their children's educational progress and learning opportunities at home, their children stand a greater chance of succeeding with their academics. Teachers on other hand should provide parents with information regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the students and measures to be taken to overcome the weaknesses and solidify the strengths.

Parental involvement in children's homework appears to influence students' outcomes because it offers modelling, reinforcement, and instruction

that supports the development of attitudes, knowledge and behaviours associated with successful school performance (Hess et al, 1984). According to Epstein (1995) parental involvement resulted in better relations between schools and families. Students saw their parents as effective role models who care about them. Parents' participation in the school may range from classroom visits to more active participation in tutoring, textbook evaluations (Irvlin, 1988). According to Massachusetts Advocacy Center (1988) cited in Magdol (1994), improved communication between the school and the family keep parents informed and provides information for them on how to help them succeed; resulting in improved family-schools, student achievement and attitude towards school.

Regarding the structure of the family, another literature suggested that children in both-parents present family contest (intact-families) do better on scholastic test than children in single family contest do (Okumber, 1998). The explanation offered was that children in non-intact families, especially mother-only often suffer educationally because they invariably lacked enough emotional and social contact with both parents. Single parents, especially single mothers may not be able to supervise and monitor their children schools work because they are invariably struggling to make ends meet. They again noted that the low scores made by children from non-intact homes were attributed to frequent absenteeism.

In this study parental involvement was represented by deliberate effort to improve academic performance through monitoring of school activities, checking children books and what happens in school through discussions with the child and teachers.

Parental Aspiration

If parents set high standards, children exert more effort and their school achievement is higher (Natriello & McDrill, 1986) as quoted by Magdol (1994). According to Davies & Kandel (1981) in Magdol (1994), higher aspiration may be especially important for adolescent from low socioeconomic backgrounds; parents who have high aspirations may provide a strong influence that enables them to supersede the disadvantages that they face.

By encouraging the pupil to pursue their education beyond secondary and university level demonstrates parent's aspiration for their children. Parental aspiration in this study was demonstrated by the desire of the parents for their children to make it to secondary school after J.H.S and later to the university and how they react when their children do not perform well in school.

Parental education

Children, whose parents had primary school education or less, are more than three times likely to have low test scores and grade repetition than children whose parents had secondary education (UNICEF, 2000). Seginer (1983) proposed that much more emphasis needs to be given to the role of parents, families and older siblings in helping young children to learn. He continued to say that parents do not have to be well educated to help and we know that involving parents in their children's formal education improves student achievement.

Muola (2010) found a correlation between parents' education and academic attainment of the pupils. He asserted that families or parents that

attach value to education would affect the attitudes of their children towards school and would assist them to attain a high level of education. The educated parents are likely to help the child with his schoolwork, encourage him/her to read and to do well in school. Okumber (1998) also found out that parents' job and parents' education seems to have different effects on the academic performance of the pupils. In detail explanation, they found that the mothers' education improved the academic performance of their children than that of their fathers. The result mirrored other studies showing those parents' social networks and mother's schooling affected students' academic performance more than did fathers' level of schooling (Steinberg, 1989).

Researchers have not only found that adolescents from lower income and less-educated families performed less well in school, but those from single-parent and large families fared less well in school than their counterparts from higher income, better-educated, two-parent and small families (Kanyongo et al, 2006). Steinberg (1989) found that the educational level of parents explained more of the variability in school achievement than did other family demographic characteristics. This might be explained by the theory that caregivers with more 'human capital' had greater education and skills, which they could draw upon to teach their children cognitive and social skills and social and cultural norms. Again, since mothers were the primary caregivers in many homes, their human capital generally affected their children's performances more than did the father (Okumber, 1998).

Parent's Occupation

There is considerably evidence to suggest that parent's occupational level is to the educational achievement of the child. Nyarko (2010) asserted

that income which is derived from a persons' occupation can affect academic achievement of the children in the family. Parents with better occupation would provide more academic opportunity to the children than parents with less opportunity. It may affect the child's education in so many areas that require the use of money – buying of books, paying for extra tuition and even paying for academic user fees and other charges.

Among the variables use to access the child's socio-economic status were the parent's occupational level, family background etc. according to Barry (2005), the parent's occupation indirectly reflects their intellectual ability which is inherited by the child. Nyarko (2010) reported significant positive correlation between the parent's occupational level and the child's intelligence academic performance. The literature suggests that elite parent set high academic standard for their children at an early age. They also take great pains to draw their children's attention to what socio-economic success is, and the means to that end. Such children naturally tend to take their home work serious and they invariably become high achievers (Okumber, 1998).

Researchers including Nyarko (2010) have emphasized the importance of occupational as an index for socio-economic status. They informed that parents' socio-economic status is based on parent's income, education and occupation. Thus families with high socio – economic status are often more successful in preparing its young children for school because they typically have access to a wide range of resources to promote and support their development. They are able to provide their children with high quality child care, quality child books and toys to encourage them in various learning

activities at home. The study considered the occupation of both the father and mother of the respondent to represent the parent's occupation.

Family Background

The family lays the psychosocial, moral and spiritual foundations in the overall development of the child (Uwaifo, 2008). While the mother's significant role in this cannot be over-emphasized. Studies on father-child relationship suggest that the presence of a father in the home influences significantly the development of a child (Agulanna, 1999). Thus, parenthood is a responsibility requiring the full cooperation of both parents who must ensure the total development of their offspring(s).

According to Muola, (2010) children of large families tend to have less contact with their parents. He says that as a result of this they do not receive the attention, encouragement, stimulation and support which are important in the development of intellectual skills. In most cases, standard of living deteriorate with the increase in the number of family members since limited resource have to be shared among the members. The child from a large family is not only denied the material support needed in his school work, but also his educational opportunities are limited. Giving these circumstances, a child from a large family is likely to perform at a lower level than a child from a small family.

Steinberg (1989) also postulate that increased number of children within a family lead to less favourable child outcome probably due to the competition for limited resources by the entire family. They assert that researchers have not only found that adolescents from lower income and less-

educated families performed less well in school, but those from single-parent and large families fared less well in school than their counterparts from higher income, better-educated, two-parent and small families. Besides, children with television (DSTV, Multi TV, etc) in their homes had higher grade point average than their counterparts without television in their homes, a phenomenon most likely to be associated with the socio-economic status of the family.

Uwaifo (2008) observed that children with five or more siblings are less success at school. He attributed the poor performance to the fact that children from large families get less encouragement from their parents than children from small families who are in closer contact with their parents. The study by (Eamon, 2005) showed that children from large families performed at lower level than those from small families. In the study it was noted that large families of seven and upwards were associated to a certain extent with poor education on the part of the mother.

Barry (2005) reported that previous research has shown that children from single- parent household do not perform as well in school as children from two-parent household (Majoribanks, 1996). There are several different explanations for this achievement gap. Single-parents household have less income and there is a lack of support for the single-parent which increases the stress and conflicts (Majoribanks, 1996). Single-parents often struggle with time management issues due to balancing many different areas of life on their own. Other research on single parents had shown that single-parents have less time for their children and therefore give less encouragement to them (Majoribanks, 1996).

Divorce has been found to have negative impact on academic performance. Jeynes (2002) found that children who have their parents' divorced were majority of the students who scored low marks in standardised test. Divorced parents neglect their core duties of given support, encouragement and positive parenting to their children due to psychological problems they are likely to encounter.

Learning Facilities at home

According to Muola (2010) a child from a home with adequate learning facilities is at an advantage as compared to a child from a home with inadequate facilities. A child from a home with material facilities which contributes with learning such as newspapers, radio, television, books and so on is likely to perform well in school. The lack of learning facilities in the child's home interferes with his learning and also hinders him from doing his homework. Consequently, the child's performance in school is affected.

Cudjoe (2007) realized the importance of learning facilities provided by the parents when he argued that the most obvious indication of parental encouragement of academic progress is seen when parents give high priority to the provision of good facilities for quiet study and homework. His study revealed that students narrative had confirm that access to educational resources is a critical factor in determining higher educational achievement and expectations. A family's educational resources, particularly those related to items like magazines, newspapers, and books are significant in student achievement.

Barry (2005) had assumed that in sufficient living space constitutes one of the socio-economic factors responsible for low achievement in

academic work. She contended that, over crowding affects the child by depriving him of the privacy and quiet environment which tend to depress his school performance by making it difficult for him to concentrate on his homework. According to her, an overcrowded home is one in which the child is likely to share a bedroom and probably his bed with more than one person, a situation which may interfere with sleep resulting in fatigue and inability to pay attention in school in the following day.

Gender Issues

In the Africa traditional sector, too much importance is attached to education of boys than that of girls; however in Ghana there has been serious effort, non-governmental organizations (N.G.Os) like world vision and other stakeholders to attain gender equity and equality in all aspect including education.

However the culture expectation for each sex is still different in most society in Ghana. Much emphasis is laid on the education of the boy because he is seen as the potential head of the family while the girl is prepared for a successful marriage. This emphasis which is yet to change completely affects the performance of girls in school. According to Muola (2010), normally girls will tend to have less time for study while they are at home. Usually after school, girls help her mother to fetch water, prepare supper and bath the younger children. The girl's participation in these domestic chores lives her with no or little time for her private study, let alone the school work. On the other hand the boys have little or no duties to attend to after returning from school and therefore turn to have plenty of time to study. The

interference with the pupil's study while at home is likely to cause some differences in their academic performance.

Cultural, traditional beliefs and practices

Wikipedia defines culture as the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generation through individual and struggling. It is the sum total of the learned behaviour of a group of people that are generally considered to be the tradition of that people and are transmitted from generation to generation. This definition will be adopted for this study.

A modern definition of culture is given by anthropologist Haviland (1990) in *Cultural Anthropology* as follows: "Culture is a set of rules or standards that, when acted upon by the members of a society produce behaviours that falls within a range of variance the members consider proper and acceptable." In other words, culture does not refer to the behaviour that is observed but to values and beliefs which generate behaviour.

The residents of Mpohor Wassa East District are subsistence farming people growing maize, cassava and plantain for their own consumption. They have largely maintained their traditional family-village farming. The Wassa are considered to be about 30% Christian. It is important to analyze the tradition and custom beliefs that affect many in the region. This study does not want to condemn the values, tradition, beliefs and custom of the resident but to carefully identify the ones that negatively impacted on the academic performance of the child in school.

Havilland (1990) stated that, the worth of a culture depends upon the eternity, universality and absolute truth of its foundational elements. On this basis, it can spread in all direction at all times. The enduring relevance of a culture also depends upon how progressive it is. Culture in its most natural form is like an ever flowing current of a river, that overcomes or embraces every obstacle and adjust its direction accordingly without stopping its flow. It should be noted that some ancient convictions, rigid principles, traditions or customs alone couldn't be regarded as culture. A culture, which is not opened and adoptive to the progressive trends as per the needs of the time, remains backwards and gets lost in the mist of time. Therefore, the Wassa culture should be open and adaptive to accommodate quality education as the future of the society. The common cultural practices that are very pertinent in Mpohor Wassa East district are early marriage, polygamy and gender roles.

The Family Model

Seginer (1983) proposed that family influences can be separated into components such as economic, human and social capital. Economic capital refers to the financial resources and assets available to families, whereas human capital provides parents with the knowledge resources necessary to create supportive learning environment for their children. In contrast family social capital is defined by the relationships that develop between family members. It is through these relationships that children gave access to the colony, human and cultural resources of their families. Similarly, Steinberg (1996) suggest that children in families from various social status and ethnic/racial groups have differing degrees of access to those forms of cultural capital that support academic success. Steinberg claims that within social

groups, parents provide experiences that result in children developing similar taste preference academic motivation, and inferences. Eventually these attributes are related to social status and ethnic/racial group differences in academic and occupational outcomes. A number of theories have been developed to examine those parent-child interactions that provide children with differential access to family resources.

Steinberg's Family Model

In a set of investigations, Steinberg (1996) proposed that to understand family influences, it is important to disentangle three different aspects of parenting. This includes: (1) parenting style, which provides the emotional context in which parent-child interaction occur (2) The goals that parents establish for their children and; (3) The practice adopted by parents to help children attain those goals. It has been shown, for example, that a parenting style defined as authoritative is related to positive academic motivation and successful academic achievement (Darling and Steinberg 1993). Such a style creates a context in which parents encourage their children's independent and individuality, provide opportunities for children to be involved in family discussion making, expect high standards for their children, and have warm relationships with their children.

Family Achievement Syndrome

In one of the most significant attempts to construct a frame work for the study of family influences, Rosen (1973) developed the concept of the family achievement syndrome. He proposed that achievement-oriented families can be characterized by variations in the interrelated components of: achievements training, independence training, achievement-value orientations,

and educational occupational aspiration. Whereas achievement training aims at getting children to do things well, independence training attempts to teach children to do things on their own. Rosen indicates that achievements and independence training acts together to generate achievement motivation which provides children with the impetus to excel in situation involving standards of excellence. In the achievement syndrome, it is proposed that achievement values help to shape children's behaviour so that achievement motivation can be translated into successful academic achievement. Rosen stated, however, that unless parent express high aspiration of their children; other family influences may not necessarily be associated with academic success. In analysis of social mobility it has been shown that, families from various social status and ethnic/ racial groups place different emphases on the dimension of the family achievement syndrome, and the variation in mobility are related to these group differences in family-achievement orientation.

Bloom's Sub Environmental Models

It was not until Benjamin S. Bloom (1964) and a number of his students examined the family correlates of children's affective and academic outcomes that a school of research emerged to investigate the relationships between family influences and academic outcomes. Bloom defined family environments as the condition, forces, and external stimuli that impinge on children. He proposed that the forces which may be physical or social as well as intellectual provided a network that surrounds, engulfs, and place of the child. The Bloom model suggested that the total family context surrounding a child may be considered as being composed of a number of sub environment. If the development of particular characteristics, such as academic motivation

and achievement, are to be understood, then it is necessary to identify those sub environments that are potentially related to the characteristics. The analyses guided by the sub environment model indicate that it is possible to measure family influences that, when combined have medium association with children's academic motivation and large association with their academic achievement.

Alterable Family Influences

In an extension of his family model Bloom (1980) proposed that the objective of family research should be to search for those variables that can be altered and therefore make a difference in children's learning. The findings from family learning environment research suggested that children's academic success is influenced by the interrelationships among high parental educational and occupational aspiration; a language environment that is characterized by strong reading habits and rich parent-child verbal interaction: academic involvement and support, where parents become actively involved in their children schooling; an intellectually stimulating home setting, in which parent provide opportunity for children to explore ideas and encourage their children to become involved in imagination provoking activities; and parents-child interaction that support the pursuit of excellence in academic and cultural experiences, and allow independence-oriented behaviour. It is important, there, that when attempt are made to help families develop more enrich learning environment, the strategies adopted acknowledge the significance of the inter-relationship among such influences.

The analysis of family and home environmental factors involved determining economic, human and social capital from homes that pupils in

Mpohor Wassa East District come from. It included an examination of parental involvement parent's encouragement, parent's education, parent's aspiration, parent's expectation, family background and learning facilities at home. The researcher then proposes a family model that in his opinion is most suitable for parents in Mpohor Wassa East District.

The main gaps from the literature review identified include the fact that no similar research has being done in the Mpohor Wassa East District; no research has being done that involve the perception of teachers and parents; changing parental style and attachment. The researcher attempted to fill these gaps by conducting the study in Mpohor Wassa East District through the use of questionnaire (which had both open and close ended questions to pupils and teachers and use of focus group discussion and document analysis guide.

Most of the researchers did their studies before their various interventions (e.g. free feeding program free basic education, INSET etc.) that sort to address the poor performance yet no researcher has conducted a similar study recently. Therefore the researcher wanted to determine if in this period (increased awareness information explosion) the home environment has changed in the perception of pupils, teachers and parents and it is influencing academic performance.

Most studies have not sort to determine the effect of the social interaction at home and their effects on academic performance therefore this will be the first such study that attempted to determine the effects of social interaction and how it affected the academic performance of J.H.S 3 pupils. However, many studies on relationship between home environment and academic performance have been done in many countries including Ghana.

Most of these have consistently supported the argument that home environmental factors such as the parents attitudes, support, encouragement, education level, occupation, socio-economic status, family background and so forth, influence academic performance (Barry, 2005; Cudjoe, 2007; Muola, 2010).

These findings imply that, a more favourable home environment motivates a child to excel in school. The high level of education which most often goes with high occupational status means that the parents will be able to provide the necessary learning facilities and to assist the child with school work. Parental involvement which could be lacking in parents whose education and occupation are low may have a motivating effect on the child. A parent with a small family will not only find it easy to provide for the physical needs of the child, but will also be in a position to give him attention, encouragement, stimulation and support with his schoolwork.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the structure and methodology that was used in conducting this study. Major components described are research design, target population, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments, data collection and lastly data analysis technique.

Research Design

Research design provides an overview of the blueprint or the outline that the researcher intends to build his/her research upon. “Research design provides the glue that holds the research project together. A design is used to structure the research, to show how all of the major parts of the research project -- the samples or groups, measures, treatments or programs, and methods of assignment -- work together to try to address the central research questions” (SRM, 2011).

According to Baume (2009), Research design is important for the following reasons; it serves as a guidepost for the researcher thereby making it easier to carry out the research; It helps in eliminating unnecessary materials since it avoids the collection of unnecessary data and maximizes the reliability of results by introducing greater efficiency in the research process. The study adopted descriptive survey design and naturalistic design. Survey design is appropriate because it is an attempt to collect data from a representative sample in order to determine the current status of that population with respect

to one or more variables, and then generalize the findings to the community. It was a descriptive research because it collected data in order to test hypotheses or answer questions concerning the current status, according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003). The data collected from the sample will form the basis for the generalization of the findings to the population. The survey method was used because it is cheaper and there is a rapid turn-around in data collection, the data obtained is highly specific and precise, it has the ability to identify attributes of a population from a small group of people and also provides reliability even though the validity could be low.

Considering the large number of basic school pupils in Mpohor Wassa East District (MWED), descriptive survey method is preferred (Saunders et al, 1997). The survey was cross sectional involving pupils (boys and girls), teachers and parent (male and female). Quantitative research and qualitative research approaches were employed in order to answer the research questions for the study.

Quantitative research focuses on the use of mathematical models, numerical measurements and statistical methods to make inferences and conclusions about a specific phenomenon. The objective is to quantify the data and to derive generalized results from the sample to the population of interest (Thomas, 2003). Qualitative research on the other hand is an inquiry into human behaviour and reasons that govern such behaviour (Kothari, 2008). Qualitative research is superior to other research methods such as the quantitative methods in gaining insight into people's attitudes, behaviour', value systems, concerns, motivations, aspirations, culture or lifestyles. It's

used to inform business decisions, policy formulation and communication. (Laurel 2003).

Qualitative research aids in the generation of new ideas and hypotheses, provides a deeper understanding of social phenomena and excels at generating detailed information about the phenomenon under study (SRM, 2011). The naturalistic design was used to solicit qualitative data from participants (Kothari, 2008). This was done through conducting in-depth focus group discussion and document analysis of staff minutes to determine the perceptions of parents and pupils about the issue under study. The data collected from J.H.S 3 pupils and their parents came from the ten selected junior high schools which were randomly selected from the five strata in Mpohor Wassa East District.

The population of this study includes all public junior high schools pupils, their subject teachers and their parents in Mpohor Wassa East District (MWED). The population of basic 9 pupils in the district is estimated to be 1412 and subject teachers of 311. For the sake of the research, the researcher surveyed pupils, parents and teachers from ten schools coming from the five strata, whose active population as at 2009/2010 academic year stood approximately at 314. As a result, this allowed for the generalization of the findings to basic schools in the district.

Population

There are 50 basic schools in Mpohor Wassa East district with 1412 basic 9 pupils (District Examination Officer, 2009). The participants were drawn from the ten randomly selected schools of the five strata of the district. The total number of pupils and teachers from the ten schools were 314 and

312 respectively. Out of these, 200 basic nine pupils and 100 teachers responded to the research instrument. According to Alreck and Settle (1985) as cited by Markwei (2001) postulated that 10% sample size of a population is enough to obtain adequate confidence.

The statistics of the population of 1412 basic 9 pupils was obtained from the district education office Planning & Statistics Department (PSD) of Mpohor Wassa east district. The respondents included 220 pupils (boys and girls), 120 teachers and 60 parents all drawn from the five strata of Mpohor Wassa East district. Out of the total number of 400, three hundred and fifty (350) responded to the various research instruments thus 200 pupils and 100 teachers responded to the questionnaire respectively while 50 parents were present at the focus group discussion which represents 87.5% of the sampled population.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

Sampling is the use of definite procedures in the selection of a part for the expressed purpose of obtaining from its descriptions or estimates certain proportions and characteristics of the whole (Kumepkor, 2002). Since the population of basic schools was too large for the researcher to survey, a small but carefully chosen sample was used to represent the population. This sample thus represented the characteristics of the population from which it was drawn. According to Saunders et al (1997), a good sample resembles its parent population; it is also large enough to allow generalizations, within measurable limits of accuracy, to the subject group from which it was selected. To them, the more homogenous the population is with regard to applicable variables, the smaller the sample size can be.

Considering the fact that in probability sampling, each member of the population has a known non-zero probability of being selected; the researcher used the stratified probability sampling method. According Saunders et al (1997), stratified random sampling involves dividing the population into 2 or more relevant and significant strata based on one or a number of attributes. A random sample (i.e. Simple or systematic) is then drawn from each of the strata. According to him, dividing the population into a series of relevant strata means that the sample is more likely to be representative, as you can ensure that each of the strata is represented proportionally within the sample.

Research Instrument

The object used in collecting data for a study is referred to as the research instrument or instrumentation. Fraenkel and Wallen (2000), however, described the whole process of collecting data as instrumentation. According to them, instrumentation does not only involve the selection of instruments but also the conditions under which the instruments are administered and includes who is to collect the data, when the data will be collected, where the data will be collected and how often are the data collected.

These factors affect the data obtained. In addition, Alreck and Settle (1985) stated that the fundamental differences among the data collection methods consist of the intensity of contact between the researcher and the respondents. According to Aina (2002) there are different instruments that one can adopt in research, namely questionnaire, interview, observation and documentary sources

The study used four sets of instruments to capture the requisite

information. These will include questionnaire for pupils and their teachers, focus group discussion guide for pupils and their parents and a document analysis guide. Questionnaire consisting of mainly structured or close-ended questions were used to collect the primary data for the study. Close-ended questions are known to provide control over the participant's range of responses by providing specific response alternative (Alreck and Settle, 1985). This will make it easier to summarize and analyze the responses.

To make up for the fact that the responses from close-ended questions are not rich, the researcher also included a few partially open-ended questions to allow respondents to either elaborate on their own responses or provide their responses to questions which do not provide answer options. This also gave room to the respondents to express their perception, attitudes, and suggestions on their attitude towards the subject under study. Questionnaire was used as an instrument of data collection because it facilitates the collection of a large amount of data, it provides a wider coverage of the sample than the interview method and it is economical in terms of effort since a single instrument (the questionnaire) will be duplicated and distributed to numerous respondents to produce a large amount of data for the study. It is relatively easy to collect quantitative data, enable respondents to provide honest and unambiguous answers and provides access to respondents that are more educated (Amekuede, 2002).

The questionnaire for pupils has three sessions A, B and C. The questionnaire is constructed to contain questions covering the following factors which were selected for the purpose of the study: Part A, contained biographical information of the participants with variable: Gender, age,

parent's background, education, occupation and family sizes. Part B, contains items seeking information on pupils home environment. Part C, contains items seeking to determine the type and frequency of the family support.

1. Teacher's questionnaire on the other hand has four sections A, B, C and D.
2. Section A Seeks to gather background information about the teacher such as gender, age, education, grade/position and teacher's experience;
3. Section B Seek information on teacher's perception on pupils' home environment;
4. Section C Inquire from teacher's of pupils parental support;
5. Section D had one item to allow the teacher's to give their perception about how best pupils' home environment can promote academic performance.

Focus group discussion guide collected qualitative data and has four items as follows: Question 1 determined the comment of J.H.S 3 pupils and parents about basic schools academic performance. The second question also determined from the J.H.S 3 pupils and parents the factors at home that affect their academic performance. Question 3 inquired information on factors at home that promotes academic performance. Finally, question 4 determined how the family/community was addressing the factors that affect academic performance negatively.

Data Collection Procedure

Having been granted permission by the Director of Education, head teachers of the selected schools were informed about the study and the proposed dates that the researcher will visit the schools. When the researcher arrived in the school he began with a courtesy call at the head teacher's office. Briefing on the purpose and method to be used for the study was done. The

necessary guidelines and explanations needed to complete the questionnaires were given to both J.H.S 3 pupils and their subject teachers.

In schools where the population was very high, twenty boys and twenty girls were sampled at random and were made to pick cards with 'A' and 'B' on them. Those who picked 'A' were sampled for the study. In all equal number of males and females were obtained at the end of balloting. In schools where the pupil's population was low, twenty pupils were selected at random and were made to answer questions for the study. In order to cater adequately for the limitations of the questionnaire method, the researcher, as much as possible, personally gave out the questionnaire to the respondents and went through each questionnaire after it had been filled out to ensure that the respondents answered all relevant questions. The researcher, however, respected the right of any respondent who was not willing to answer some of the questions or the questionnaire as a whole. The administering of questionnaire lasted for forty minutes to one hour and the focus group discussion took about an hour. The researcher analyzed the staff meeting minute's documents and this lasted for more than one hour. Clarification and further information were sought from the head teachers and teachers. It took 10 days to administer and retrieve the entire questionnaire.

Data Analysis

After collecting the data, all completed questionnaires, focus group discussion reports and document analysis reports from the field was studied for consistency by the researcher and organized for processing. Laurel (2003) asserts that data obtained from the field in raw form is difficult to interpret. Such data must be cleaned, coded, keypunched into a computer and analyzed.

It is from the results of such analysis that researchers are able to make sense of the data.

The study used both inferential and descriptive statistics to analyze the data. The researcher used descriptive statistical package to organize and code raw data from questions to give meaning to the responses. This was used to interpret the coded information into a more understandable data. Tables showing frequencies and percentages were used to present the data. Graphs and chart based on frequencies were also used in certain cases.

The idea of making a sample is to infer about the population so as to reach a conclusion about the population. Qualitative data was derived from open – ended items in the questionnaire, document analysis guide and focus group discussion guides. The responses were organized in relation to the themes of research and instrument. The focus group discussion reports and document analysis reports were organized in relation to the themes. From information obtained the researcher wrote a narrative and interpretive reports in order to explain the teachers, parents and pupils perceptions about the effect of home environment on academic performance of Junior Secondary School (J.H.S 3) students in Mpohor Wassa East District.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents and analyzes the findings under three main headings with respect to the objective of the study. It focused on pupil's perception of the effect of home environment on their academic performance, teacher's perception of the home environment on J.H.S 3 pupil's academic performance as well as what parents perceive of the effect of home environment on the academic performance of their J.H.S. 3 pupils. A focus group discussion was also conducted for parents, Teachers and pupils to ascertain these effects that the home environment exerts on the academic performance of these pupils. These were discussed in relation to the literature reviewed on the study.

This section focused on specific background information of pupils and teachers such as age, sex, teaching experience of teachers, education of parents or guardians, occupation of parents or guardians, who the pupils are staying with and the marital status of their parents or guardians. It also looked at the variables that were used as proxy to make a decision pupils and teachers perception of the effect of home environment on J.H.S.3 pupils' academic performance.

Background Information of Pupils

The pupils that responded to the research instrument were categorised according to gender (Sex) and the result were summarised in Figure 1.

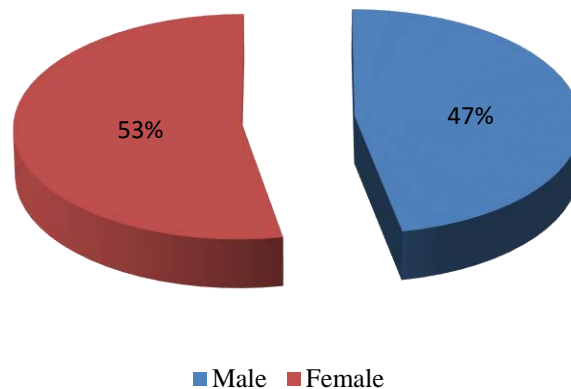


Figure 1: Sex distribution of Pupils

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

From the figure above, 106 (53.0%) of the pupils are females while 94 (47.0%) are males. This affirms the 2010 population census which indicated that there are more females than males in Ghana. It further indicates that gender equality in terms of education has been achieved in Mpohor Wassa East District.

The age of the pupils were also categorised and the results are shown the pictorial diagram (Figure 2) below.

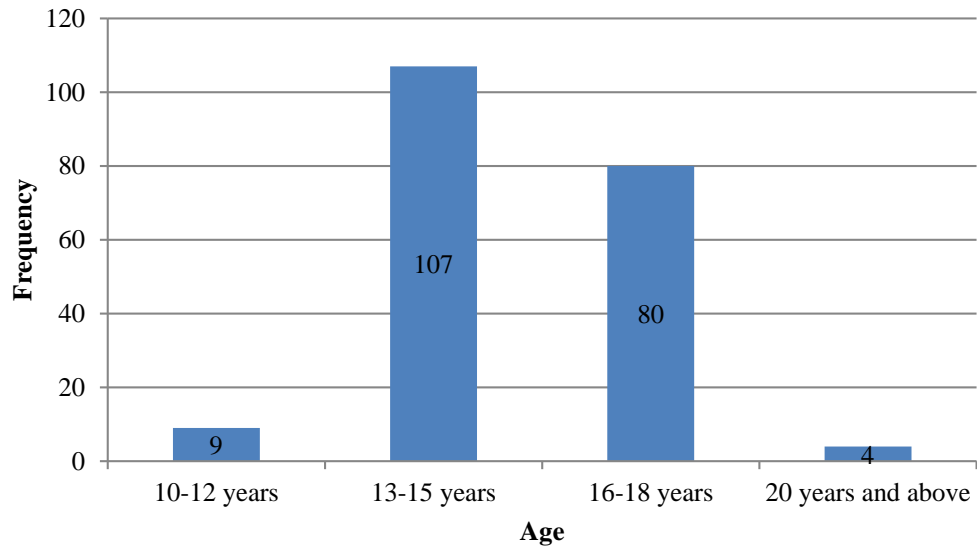


Figure 2: Age distribution of Pupils

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

The result in Age distribution shows that majority (107) of the J.H.S 3 pupils are within the appropriate school going age of 13-15 years with a few below and above the appropriate J.H.S age. This also affirms that the people of Mpohor Wassa East District are abreast with the time that their children must enrol in school.

Kanyongo et al (2006) proposed that parents needn't be well educated to help their children with their academic work. In view of this, the educations of parents were also accessed. This is illustrated in the table below.

Table 2: Education of Parents / Guardians

Level	Frequency	Percent
Basic	78	39.0
Secondary	58	29.0
Diploma	14	7.0
Degree	12	6.0
Non-formal Education	38	19.0
Total	200	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

The results in Table 2 showed that most (78) parents of the pupils had basic education, a fourth (58) of the parents had secondary education while 38 (19%) of the parents had non-formal education. According to UNICEF (2000), proposal that children whose parent had primary education are likely to have low test scores than their counterparts whose parents have secondary, it can be inferred that more than half (116) of the pupils of Mpohor Wassa East District would have low test scores and grade repetition. However, if Kanyongo et al (2006) opinion that much more emphasis should be given to the role of parents and guardians rather than their education is resorted to, then pupils whose parent get much involved in their wards education would have academic success than pupils whose parents are not much involve.

The occupations of parents can affect the child's academic performance Nyarko (2010). Based on this accession, the occupations of the parents of the pupils were also ascertained. The result is shown in Figure 3 below.

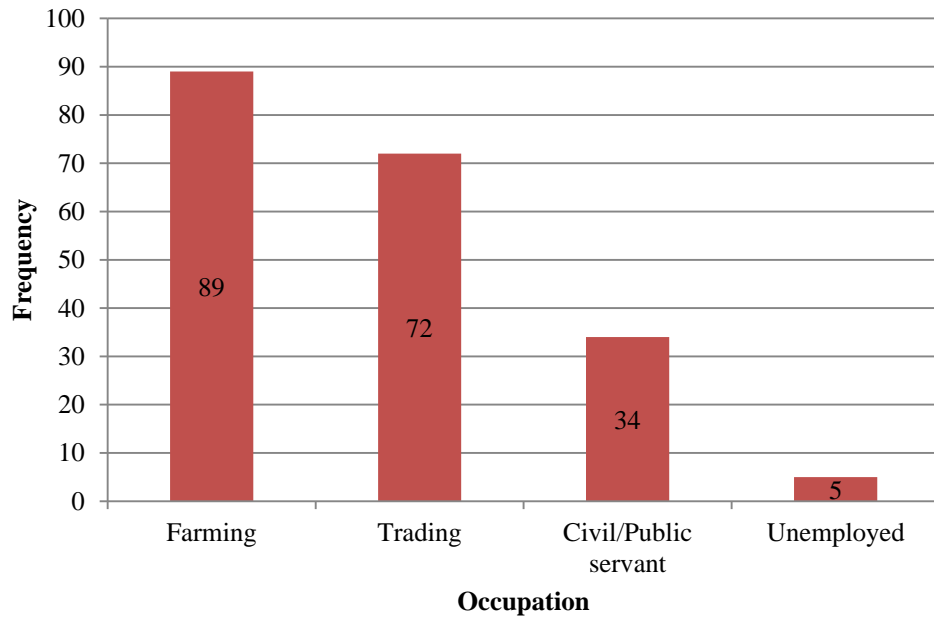


Figure 3: Occupation of Parents or Guardians of Pupils

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

With respect to the results in Figure 3 above, most (44.5%) of the pupils' parents are farmers with 72 (36%) of them being traders. This affirms that the residents of Mpohor Wassa East District are predominantly farmers. Although, occupation is an important index in parent's socio-economic status, it would be incomplete to conclude that it has significant impact on the academic performance of the child. This is in line with Muola (1990) findings that, among other things socio-economic (occupation) background seems to have no effect on the academic performance of school pupils. However, Barry (2005) says that parents' occupation indirectly reflects their intellectual ability which is inherited by the child. This implies that a child who inherits low academic intellect from the parent is likely to perform lower than his counterparts who would inherit high academic intellect from the parents as a result of parents' involvement in academic demanding occupation.

To probe further, the researcher found out who the pupils are staying with and in response, it was revealed that 81(40.5%) of the pupils were staying with a single parents, 37 (18.5%) are putting up with respective guardians while 82 (41.0%) were staying with both parents. Although, most of the pupils are staying both parents, quiet high numbers (40.5%) of them are with single parents. According to Majoribanks (1996) single-parents often struggle with time management issues due to balancing many different areas of life on their own and this makes single-parents to have less time for their children. The study further revealed that 110 (55.0%) of pupils parents are still married while 90 (45.0%) are with single parents either through death, separation or divorce. Such single parents (Divorced or deceased single parents) according to Fontana (1981) neglect their core duties of given support; encouragement and positive parenting due to the psychological problems they usually go through.

Background Information of Teachers

The teachers were also categorized into male and females and summarised in figure 4 below.

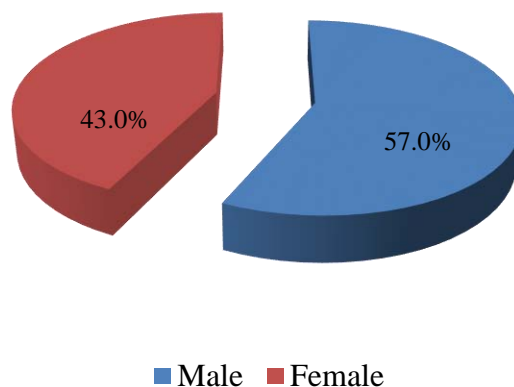


Figure 4: Sex distribution of Teachers

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

Out of the 100 teachers that were randomly selected, 57 of them were males while 43 were females. Unlike the pupils, the male teachers were more than the female teachers.

Considering the age distribution of the teachers, it was found out that most (48%) of (the teachers) them were within the age of 25 – 29 years while 33 (33%) of them were with 30-34 year group. The remaining few (12 and 7 teachers) were with 20 – 24 year and 40 and above year group respectively. Since majority (60%) of the teachers are in their twenties, the generation gap is quiet close and that would assist them to make informed decision on the pupils.

To further ascertain the teachers' background, their respective positions were also found out. The study revealed that most (64%) of the teachers were senior superintendents, 22% of them were superintendents and 12% of them were principal superintendents. Only 2% had attained the position of a director. This implies that almost all the teachers are in the classroom and have direct contact with the pupils and these means that they would have known the pupils enough to speak of their academic performance.

In other to ascertain the number of years these teachers have interacted with the pupils, their teaching experiences were also looked at and summarised in figure 5.

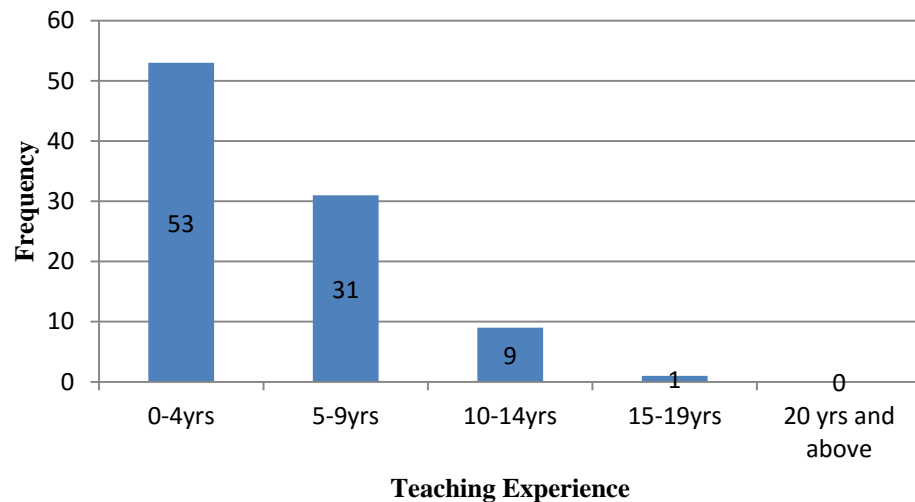


Figure 5: Teaching Experiences of Teachers

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

With regards to the teaching experiences shown in Figure 5, more than half (53%) of the teachers have less than 5 years teaching experience while a third (31) have taught for almost a decade.

Pupils' Perception on the effect of Home Environment on the Academic Performance

According to Muola (1990) children coming from different home environment are differently affected by such variations. In this vein, the home environment that has both positive and negative effect on the child's academic performance was accessed.

Rest forms integral part of persons output of work and so it is for the pupils.

To ascertain this fact, the sleeping times of the pupils were also looked at.

Table 3 Waking & Sleeping Times of Pupils

Time	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
4am & 12pm	6 (37.5%)	10 (62.5%)	16 (100.0%)
5am & 11pm	28 (90.3%)	3 (9.7%)	31 (100.0%)
6am & 10pm	33 (44.6%)	41 (55.4%)	74 (100.0%)
7am & 9pm	22 (31.4%)	48 (68.6%)	70 (100.0%)
Other	5 (55.6%)	4 (44.4%)	9 (100.0%)
Total	94 (47.0%)	106 (53.0%)	200 (100.0%)

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

With respect to the sleeping time of the students, the study showed that the female pupils have good rest than their male counterparts. It showed that 28 (90.3%) of the male pupils have 6 hour rest as against 3 (9.7%) their female counterparts while 33 (44.6%) of the male pupils enjoy 8 hour rest as against 41 (55.4%) of their female. It is therefore practicable to conclude that the male pupils in Mpohor Wassa East District work more outside school hours (perhaps in the farms) than the female pupils. This, perhaps, would be attributed to the fact that the district is predominantly a farming community.

To further access the situation, the sleeping times of pupils were analyzed with reference to the education of pupil's parents or guardians and results are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4 Waking & Sleeping Times of Pupils and Education of

Time	Education of parent/guardian					Total
	Basic	Secondary	Diploma	Degree	Non-formal Education	
	11		2	1	2	16
4am & 12pm	(68.8%)	-	(12.5%)	6.2%	12.5%	(100.0%)
	15	7	1		8	31
5am & 11pm	(48.4%)	(22.6%)	(3.2%)	-	(25.8%)	(100.0%)
	25	22	5	4	18	74
6am & 10pm	(33.8%)	(29.7%)	(6.8%)	(5.4%)	(24.3%)	(100.0%)
	27	22	5	6	10	70
7am & 9pm	(38.6%)	(31.4%)	(7.1%)	(8.6%)	(14.3%)	(100.0%)
		7	1	1		9
Other	-	(77.8%)	(11.1%)	(11.1%)	-	(100.0%)
	78	58	14	12	38	200
Total	(39.0%)	(29.0%)	(7.0%)	(6.0%)	(19.0%)	(100.0%)

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

Table 4 above reveals that 68.8% and 48.4% of the pupils who sleep for 4 and 6 hours have parents with basic education. It further showed that the higher one climbs on the educational ladder, the more resting times are given to their wards. In order to ascertain the detail condition in the home, the pupils were asked if they have a private teacher in the home and in response, 27 (13.5%) of them responded in the affirmative while 173 (86.5%) of the

pupils do not have private teachers in their home. This implies that 86.5% of the pupils in the district should interact with their family members to assist them in their academic work.

Pupils were further asked if they have quiet place to study and do their homework at home. Out of the 200 respondents, most (58%) of them said they do have a quiet place to study whilst 42% of them do not have a quiet place to study. This proportion shows that although most (58%) pupils in Mpohor Wassa East District may not have extra professional academic assistance in the home, they have conducive atmosphere to study.

The respondents were also asked to state some of the problems in the home that stand against the academic performance and the responses are illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5 Problems in the home that stand against Pupils' academic work

Attribute	Frequency	Percent
No place to learn	54	27.0
No light in the house	76	38.0
No role model to encourage me	38	19.0
There is too much noise in the house	52	26.0
I assist my parent in the market after school	49	24.5
Nobody to help with my school work	78	39.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

The result showed that the major problems faced by pupils were people in the home to assist them with their homework and lack of light in the homes to assist them to learn in the night. Other problems included no place to

learn, assisting parents or guardians in their workplace after school and too much noise in their homes. These are very realistic home environment problems that are faced by many students in general and are in line with Nyarko (2010) findings that environmental variables (both psychosocial and physical environment) such as emotional and social support, infrastructural and functional facilities affect academic achievement. Sunitha (2005) further affirms that rich environment and stimulation in the family are essential for each child development.

Table 6: Pupils’ expectation of parents/guardians to enhance pupils’ academic work

Attribute	Frequency	Percent
Get me a private teacher	138	69.0
Reduce my house work	21	10.5
Encourage me to learn hard	48	24.0
Buy me a supplementary books	35	17.5
Buy me good clothes	43	21.5
supervise my homework	25	12.5
Allow me to sleep on time	15	7.5
Other	8	4.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

In addition to seeking pupils perception about the effect of the home environment on their academic performance, pupils were asked to indicate what they want their parents to do to enhance their academic performance. The results in Table 5 revealed that majority (138) of the pupils want their respective parents or guardians to get them a private teacher in their homes.

Others believed that encouraging them to learn hard would improve their academic performance while others believe that getting new cloths (perhaps school uniforms) for them would improve their academic work. These expectations of pupils from parents of guardians are an indication that pupils want their parents/guardians to get involve and encourage them in their education. These are in support of Cudjoe (2007) argument that children whose parents are most interested in their education and encourage them to do well, scored high average than children whose parent are least interested.

Parental Support

Parental support is one of the integral factors among the home environment factors that can affect the child’s academic performance (Osire, 1983). In view of this, the pupils were asked to indicate their parents / guardians support for them and the responses are summarised in Table 6.

Table 7 Pupils’ Perception of parents/guardians support to enhance pupils’ academic work

Perceived Variables	Strongly		Disagree		Total
	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly	
You miss school because your parent or guardian wants them to assist in the house work	15 (7.5%)	45 (22.5%)	46 (23.0%)	94 (47.0%)	200 (100.0%)
Parents/Guardians buy you supplementary readers	64 (32.0%)	82 (41.0%)	24 (12.0%)	30 (30.0%)	200 (100.0%)

and other learning materials in addition to your school books. Parents/Guardians do not disturb you when you are doing your homework.	13 (13.0%)	32 (32.0%)	41 (41.0%)	14 (14.0%)	200 (100.0%)
Parents and other siblings assist and encourage you to learn and do your homework at home	55 (27.5%)	76 (38.0%)	40 (20.0%)	29 (14.5%)	200 (100.0%)
Your parents/guardians monitor your academic performance in school.	80 (40.0%)	53 (26.5%)	10 (5.0%)	57 (28.5%)	200 (100.0%)

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

The results in Table 7 showed that majority (70%) of the pupils stated that they don't miss school because their parents want them to assist in house work. This means that pupils are not made to stay in the house because of house work.

With respect to parents buying supplementary books for the pupils, majority (73%) of the pupils accepted that their parents/guardians buy them supplementary books in addition to their school books however, most (55%)

of the pupils stated that their parents/guardians disturb them when they are doing their homework. The pupils (65.5%) further stated that parents and siblings assist and encourage them to learn hard at home and also (66.5%) monitor their academic performance in school. This implies that most (66%) of the pupils perceived that their parents give them parental support in their academic work. This is a good indication according Muola (2010) that a child from a home with adequate learning facilities is at an advantage as compared to a child from a home with inadequate facilities.

Teachers' Perception on the effect of Home Environment on the Academic Performance

The researcher found out the teachers opinion on whether the home environment have influence on pupils' academic performance and in response, majority (88%) of the teachers agreed that the home environment has an influence on the academic performance of pupils. This affirms Sunitha (2005) accession that the child has constant interactions with the home and its environs and it invariable influence his personal development as a whole.

Table 8 Home Environment factors that can affect pupils' academic performance

Attribute	Frequency	Percent
Single parenting	63	63.0
Too much work in the home	71	71.0
Lateness to bed	49	49.0
Too much people in the home	20	20.0
Lack of parental supervision	93	93.0
Uneducated parent or guardian	65	65.0

Unemployment of parent or guardian	51	51.0
Low income of parent or guardian	40	40.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

To further ascertain their accession, the teachers were asked to state some of the possible home environment factors that can affect the pupils' academic performance. In response, almost all (93%) of the teachers shifted the blame of poor academic performance on lack of parental supervision. Seventy-one (71%) of them attributed the problem to too much work in the home while 65% of the teachers ascribed it to uneducated parent or guardian. Most (63%) of the teachers stated single parenting as a factor while more than half (51%) of them stated unemployment of parent or guardian. Other factors stated included lateness to bed (49%) and low income (40%) of parents or guardians. The teachers' perceptions of the influence of these factors on the pupils explain in practice, Muola (2010) argument that, different home environment vary in very many aspects such as the parents level of education, economic status, occupational status, parents expectation for the child and the family background. However, high response (93%) for lack of parental supervision depicts low level of parental involvement in the academic prowess of the pupil of Mpohor Wassa East District.

Table 9: Parents visiting time to monitor Pupils' academic performance

Attribute	Frequency	Percent
Very Often	3	3.0
Sometimes	74	74.0
Not at all	23	23.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

In respect of how often parents or guardians visit the school to monitor their wards academic performance, majority (74%) of the teachers stated that parents seldom visit the school to monitor their wards academic performance. Twenty-three (23%) of the teachers stated that parents don't visit the school at all to find out about their wards academic performance. This confirms the teachers' perception that poor academic performance is due to lack of parental supervision and involvement. This affirms Nyarko's (2010) argument that parental supervision and involvement would progress the academic performance of the pupils.

To probe the situation further, the researcher found out if the pupils complain of parents' attitude that affect their academic work and in response, 67% of the teachers affirmed that pupils complain of their parents' attitude towards their academic work which is in line with Oluwatele's (2008) argument that, if deliberate effort is not taken by the home to reinforce improved academic performance, general academic guidance and support, pupils would perceived the degree of parents or guardians influence and involvement in pupils daily activities and school progress.

Table 10 Teachers' expectation of Parents to improve Pupils' academic performance

Attribute	Frequency	Percent
Get pupils a private teacher	37	37.0
Reduce their house chores	61	61.0
Encourage pupil's to learn hard	80	80.0
Buy pupils' supplementary books	64	64.0

Buy pupils good clothes	16	16.0
Supervise pupils homework	74	74.0
Allow pupils to sleep on time	50	50.0
Other	4	4.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

The researcher then asked the teachers to suggest what parents or guardians can do to enhance their pupils' academic work and in response, 80% of the teachers stated that parents should encourage pupils to learn hard. Majority (74%) of teachers suggested that parents or guardians should supervise their homework. Most (64%) of the teachers also said parents or guardians should buy supplementary books and learning materials for their wards. Other teachers (61%) suggested that parents or guardians should reduce the house chores of pupils in the home while half (50%) suggested that parents should allow pupils to sleep on time. The majority (74%) of the teachers suggesting that parents or guardians should supervise pupils' homework and academic progress is a manifestation that parental support and involvement is a vital role in academic performance of the pupil. This implies that educational authorities should provide parents with the necessary information needed to promote their children's educational progress and learning opportunities at home (Nyarko, 2010).

Parental Support

Perception is the process by which an individual organize and interpret phenomenon and other sensory impressions to give meaning to happenings in the environment (Mzure, 1999). In this vein, the teachers were also asked to suggest their perceived parental support given to the pupils.

Table 11: Teachers' Perception of parents/guardians support to enhance pupils' academic

Perceived Usefulness Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Total
Pupils complete and submit homework regularly and on time	23 (23.0%)	61 (61.0%)	16 (16.0%)	-	100 (100.0%)
Your pupils miss school because their parent or guardian wants them to assist in the house work	22 (22.0%)	35 (35.0%)	33 (33.0%)	10 (10.0%)	100 (100.0%)
Parents/Guardians buy supplementary readers and other learning materials for their children to improve upon their academic performance.	20 (20.0%)	36 (36.0%)	35 (35.0%)	9 (9.0%)	100 (100.0%)
Parents/Guardians enquire about their wards academic performance and behaviour at school	13 (13.0%)	32 (32.0%)	41 (41.0%)	14 (14.0%)	100 (100.0%)
Pupils are sacked from school for school fees and other levies	4 (4.0%)	28 (28.0%)	23 (23.0%)	45 (45.0%)	100 (100.0%)
Pupils are sacked from school for improper dressing	12 (12.0%)	28 (28.0%)	25 (25.0%)	35 (35.0%)	100 (100.0%)

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

The results in Table 10 revealed that none of the teachers disagreed that pupils submit their homework regularly and on time. Most (61%) of the teachers agreed that pupils complete and submit their homework on time while 23% of them laid much emphasis on their agreement that pupils submit their homework regularly and on time. It can therefore be deduced that their parents give them the needed favourable conditions to do their homework. The case of pupils missing school because their parents or guardians have asked them to assist them in their house chores was responded with mixed feelings. Thirty-Five (35%) of the teachers agreed while a third (33%) disagreed with the statement that pupils miss school because parents insist they help with house chores.

In respect of parents or guardians supporting their pupils with supplementary books and teaching materials to enhance their academic work, the teachers were divergent in their opinions. Thirty – Six (36%) of them agreed that parents or guardians support pupils in that direction while 35 (35%) of them disagreed. However, 20 (20%) of the teachers emphasising on their agreement for the statements implies that parents or guardians do buy supplementary and or learning materials for their pupils to enhance their academic performance. In addition to parents or guardians support for pupils, 41% of the teachers stated parents or guardians do not enquire about their wards academic performance and behaviour. This implies that two-fifth of the parents or guardians' supports do not extend their support outside the home. Although, the researcher supports Sunitha (2005) idea that children should be giving congenial environment and motherly care at home, Nyarko (2010) suggestion that parents or guardians should involve in the academic progress

of the pupils to complement the motherly care and support in the home in order to develop the pupils holistically.

The parents or guardians were also asked to indicate their opinion on whether factors like improper dressing and sacking of pupils because of school fees can be attributed to parental control. In response, 45 (45%) of the teachers stated that pupils are not sacked from schools because of school fees and other levies. Although 28 (28%) of the teachers do agree that pupils are sacked because of school fees, the researchers agree with the majority (68%) that the number of pupils who are sacked for fees and other levies are realistic because, a fraction of the student on the continuum would be faced with such economic difficulty. In line with pupils being sacked for improper dressing, 60 (60%) of the teachers disagreed that pupils are sacked for improper dressing. This implies that parents or guardians make conscious effort to ensure that pupils dress well to school and other social gathering that involve the school. This supports Massachusetts Advocacy Center's (1988) proposal that parents who monitor out-of-school activities, model the value of learning, self-discipline and hard work bring up children who do well in school

Responses from Focus Group Discussion

A comprehensive account and discussion of findings within the key thematic areas of the study have been explored on the perceptions of pupils and teachers about the effect of home environment on academic performance in Mpohor Wassa East District (MWED). This was done through a focus group discussion with 50 pupils and 50 parents or guardians from 5 selected zonal schools to compliment the argument on teachers, pupils and their parents' or guardians' perception on the effect on home environment on

academic performance of basic school pupils in MWED. The questions discussed were parents' or guardians' comment on their children academic performance, factors at home that affect the pupils' academic performance and those that promote pupils' academic performance. How the respective families or communities are addressing these negative challenges in the society was also discussed.

Causes of Poor Academic Performance

The majority (70%) of the schools in Mpohor Wassa East District (MWED) have made conscious efforts to dig into the causes of poor academic performance in the district through various mediums such as discussion of the topic with parents in parent teacher association (PTA) meetings, counselling, et cetera. This affirms Osire (1983) thoughts that stakeholders of children development (Parents or Guardians, PTAs, Schools, Organizations, Governments) investigate the relationship between the home environment and academic performance depending on their interest.

Some of the problems identified in such meetings were lack of cooperation between parents and teachers, in some cases parents siding with their children in times of disciplinary cases; children indulging in inappropriate behaviour due to peer influence which had lead to unwanted pregnancies and dropping out of school and observance of rituals, cultural practice i.e. appeasing the dead which had lead to absenteeism and indiscipline amongst the basic school pupils. This affirms that parents should communicate their positive beliefs about what is important, necessary and permissible of adolescence to their wards in order to positively influence their

children's education and academic progress (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1988).

In course of the discussion, the teachers suggested that pupils must be given more schoolwork to do and help them in revision. They further proposed that parents of the Mpohor Wassa East District should be asked to visit the schools for briefings about the performance and other academic related issues. This reaffirms Nyarko (2010) suggestion that educational authorities should provide parents or guardians with the necessary information required to support adolescent educational trajectories so that parents can promote their children educational progress and learning opportunities at home.

Finding and Interpretation from Group Discussions

It was observed that most of the MWED pupils' and parents were not impressed by the academic performance of the respective schools in general. There are a few pupils who said that their performance was good but not so impressive. Based on the discussion by the pupils and parents the researcher concluded that the perception of the MWED pupils and parents on the academic performance of basic school pupils is fairly good.

With respects to the factors in the home that affect the academic performance of MWED pupils, most (60%) of the pupils reported that they don't have adequate time to do their home work and private studies because parents or guardians ask them to assist them in domestic jobs such as selling in shops, working in poultry farms, etc after school. Others (25%) said they usually don't understand the underling concepts when they study privately but there is no group studies where students from different schools can come

together to study or discuss challenges they encounter in their studies. The focus group discussion revealed that some of the students walk very long (2-5 miles) distances to and from their respective schools and by the time they settle down to study, they fall asleep because of fatigue.

Lack of paraffin for their lamps and electricity were also some of the problems in the home that pupils reported as hindrances to their academic performance. Other challenges in the home include lack of three square meals, disturbances from people and other entertaining source like televisions, radios and video games and inappropriate furniture for studies. This fore tells that most of the people in MWED lack most basic facilities in the home that promotes academic performance and it affirms Muola (2010) assertion that children from homes with adequate learning facilities are at advantage as compared from children with inadequate learning facilities. It can be inferred that pupils in MWED are less advantaged as compared to other advantaged communities.

In an attempt to remedy the situation in most communities in MWED some of the parents stated that they have bought textbooks for their children, employed private teachers and are according their pupils the needed congenial atmosphere to study. Government representatives in the communities are also making conscious efforts to connect their respective communities to the national electricity grid. The pupils present at the focus group discussion (FDG) then suggested that parents or guardians should reduce their house chores, provide extra lumps with paraffin and organize extra tuition for them. They also suggested that parents or guardians should be enlightened on the importance of parents or guardians involvement in the education of their

wards, monitor sleeping time of their pupils to ensure enough rest, pay school fees and other levies promptly and also visit their wards schools to monitor their behaviour and academic performance of their wards. These reaffirm the results from the questionnaire and make the study imperative.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter concludes the entire research. It summarised the major findings of the research, drew conclusion on the perception of pupils and teachers on the effect of home environment on the academic performance of the JHS 3 pupils in Mpohor Wassa East District (MWED). It also gave the perception of parents or guardians, their effort to promote the academic well being of their children and made recommendations on how these social challenges can be improved. Considering the findings of the research, future research areas were also suggested for future study.

Summary

The home environment is a psycho-social environment that plays a vital role in the overall development of the child. It serves as the first learning environment of any child before and after school. Children interact with the families and objects in the family to form concepts of their environment which has an influence either positively or negatively on the child. The study became imperative due to the constant decline in the BECE results and the number of students in MWED that gain admission to first and second class Senior High Schools in western region and the country as a whole. The study was conducted basically on JHS 3 pupils in Mpohor Wassa East District (MWED), predominantly a farming community that lack basic social amenities like

electricity to ascertain the impact of the home and community on the academic performance of the JHS pupils.

Related literatures were reviewed on the core variables in the home such as parents or guardians aspiration for the child's education, parental support, parental encouragement and supervision of the academic performance of the child. Other pertinent variables such as parental education, parental occupations, gender issues and the learning facilities in the home were also reviewed to ascertain the impact of home influence on the child. Most of the researchers found out the effects of these variables on the academic performance of the child and turns out that these factors can affect the child both positively and negatively depending on the level parental involvement, aspiration and support for the child. The findings of the study were not much different from the previous researchers except that the home environment has change (due to various interventions such as school feeding program, free basic education, INSET, and free uniforms for the deprived communities) the perception of pupils, teachers and parents and its effect on the academic performance of pupils.

The study adopted the survey method questionnaires and focus group discussions were used. The questionnaires were administered to the pupils and teachers in MWED while the focus group discussion was held with basically parents even though some pupils and teachers were randomly selected from their respective schools to take part. 350 questionnaires were administered and 300 of them were responded to representing a response rate of 85.7%. The questionnaires were 230 for the pupils and 120 for the teachers. They were grouped under three main headings (Background Information, Home

Environment variables and Parental support variables) in respect to the objectives of the study. The valid questionnaires were analysed in the previous chapter under the social background of the pupils and teachers, their perception of the effect of home environment on the academic performance of the JHS pupils and the parental support given and needed to promote academic excellence at home and school.

The focus group discussion were used to ascertain parents or guardians perception of the effect of home environment on the academic performance of pupils and the parental support given to the pupils at home that progress or retrogress the academic performance of the pupils. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in analysing the response from the pupils and teachers. The results were put into tables with a brief explanation to give a clear understanding of the findings. Frequencies, percentages and cross tabulation were used as statistical tool for interpreting the results.

The major findings of the study were;

- i. Although MWED is a farming community, approximately 45% (44.5%) of the parents or guardians are farmers.
- ii. Most (65%) of the pupils in MWED do not have conducive atmosphere (place to study, nobody to assist them in studies at home and inadequate lightening systems or study lumps) at home to learn.
- iii. The majority (69%) of the pupils want their parents to get involved in the education by getting them a private teacher, buying supplementary books for them and encouraging them to learn.
- iv. Most (66%) of the pupils perceived the parental support from parents or guardians are good but needs improvement.

- v. A very high percentage (88%) of the teachers in MWED agreed that the home environment have an influence on the academic performance on the child.
- vi. The home environmental factors that affect the pupils in MWED are lack of parental support (93%), too much work in the home (71%), uneducated parent or guardian (65%) and single parenting (63%).
- vii. The majority (74%) of the parent or guardian seldom visit their wards at school to check on their academic performance and behaviour.
- viii. Most (67%) of the pupils in MWED are aware that their parents or guardians attitude affect their academic performance.

Conclusions

The study was conducted to find out the perception of pupils, teachers and parents or guardians on the effect of home environment on the academic performance of JHS 3 pupils in Mpohor Wassa East District (MWED). The study looked specifically at the perception of pupils on the parents' involvement and its influence on the pupils' academic performance, teachers' perception of parental support needed of parents or guardians and the suggestions needed to improve it.

With respect to the social background of the pupils, it was discovered that most of the pupils in MWED were in the appropriate age as far as their classes was concern. This implies that the pupils in MWED started school at the right age of 4 to 6 years. The majority of the pupils' parents or guardians had basic education with a hand full having a university degree. Although Kathy (1995) proposed that parents do not needed a high level of education to be involved in the child or ward's education, it could be concluded that, the

perceived level of education acquired at this level (Basic) is insufficient to comprehend that kind of parental support and involvement.

The majority (79.5%) of the parents or guardians are substantive farmers and petty traders who lack the adequate financial resources to employ skilled labour for their respective farming or trading activities and so resort to their children as the labour for their respective jobs. This has increased the time children spend in the home and had subsequently decreased the time children spend in the school and with their books which had affected the academic performance of the pupils negatively. Single parenting had been one of the problems that tilted the effect of home negatively on the child's academic performance. Although the study found out that the majority of the pupils were staying with both parents, a similar majority were staying with single parents. The single parents were more concerned about managing the home than monitoring the academic performance of the ward which has caused ineffective supervision on the child's total development.

The pupils were aware that lack of basic infrastructure at home and the community and the level of parental support and involvement had affected their academic performance. This manifested in complains pupils made on their parents' attitude towards their education. Although, most parent buy supplementary books for their children, lack of family members to assist them in their studies, disturbances in the home and improper understanding of the concepts made it very difficult for pupils to improve their academic performance. In this wise the researcher concludes that majority of the pupils perceived their home environment to have a negative effect on their academic performance.

The teachers vehemently agreed that, the home environment have influence on the academic performance of the pupils. In this light the teachers suggested single parenting, too much work in the home, uneducated parents or guardians and lack of parental supervision as the major factors that had negatively affected the academic performance of the pupils. To further support their assertion, teachers explained parents seldom visit the school to enquire about their children's academic performance and also fail to find out what the children study at school and home. This affirmed their assertion of lack of parental supervision as the major factor that negatively affected the children's academic performance. In this vein the researcher concludes that the teachers perceive that the home environment in MWED negatively affect the pupils' academic performance than it does positively.

The parents on the hand perceived the performance of the schools to be below average. However they admitted the various challenges enumerated by the pupils to be vital factors that are serving as the hindrance to the academic progress of the pupils. Some of the parents realized their attitudes that retards the academic performance of the pupils and pledged their support for their wards. In the nut shell, the parents agreed that the home environment have an influence on the academic performance of the pupils.

Recommendations

The study focused on the pupils' perception of the effect of the home environment on the academic performance of JHS3 pupils, teachers' perception of the effect of parental support for the JHS3 pupils and parents' perception of the effect of home environment on the JHS3 pupils. The

researcher then makes the following recommendations from the findings of the study.

Based on the fact that pupils do not have a favourable atmosphere to study, the researcher recommends a common study room or library either in the community or in the nearest school for studies. The JHS3 pupils could put themselves in study groups and meet at the designated places for their study.

The teachers should introduce end of the week assignment for the JHS3 pupils which could be done in groups and presented in class by the student at a scheduled time. The members of the groups should be made to rotate in the presentation either on weekly basis or on subject bases.

Parents should also make conscious effort to interrogate their child on their academic work, how they are coping and what the children expect from them. They should also support them in the home by creating a quite atmosphere for them to study and encourage them to learn. They should also seek an external academic assistance for pupils who have problems with specific subjects.

The school authority should introduce 'meet the teacher' where dates would be scheduled by the school authorities for parents to meet the teachers of the respective wards and enquire about the academic and behavioural performance of their wards. Parents who fail to turn up should be made to pay a penalty.

The government representatives should as a matter of agency communicate the electricity problems to the government to assist the communities with generators if they cannot link them to the national grid. He should call for a school in almost every community.

Areas for Future Research

The perception of pupils and teachers about parental involvement and support in MWED is below average as far as the findings of the study are concern. Due to this, the researcher recommends the following areas to be considered for future research.

- i. A research should be conducted into the effect of parental attitude on academic performance of JHS pupils in MWED.
- ii. The effect of single parenting on the academic performance of the school going child in MWED.
- iii. The effect of parental occupation and education on the academic performance of basic school students in MWED.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire for Pupil

Dear Pupil,

This research questionnaire is designed to study “Perception of Teachers, Pupils and Parents’ about the effects of home Environment on academic performance of selected J.H.S in Mpohor Wassa East District”. This is in partial fulfillment of an award of Masters in Educational Administration at the University of Cape Coast. You have been randomly chosen to participate in the study. You are assured that any information you provide will be used purely for academic purposes and shall be treated as confidential.

Thank you

(Please tick [√] the appropriate response)

SECTION A: Background information

1. Age
a) 10 – 12 yrs [] b) 13 – 15 yrs [] c) 16 – 18 yrs [] d) 20 years and above []
2. Sex a) Female [] b) Male []
3. Who are you staying with?
a) Father [] b) Mother [] c) Guardian [] d) Both parent
4. Education of parents/guardian
a) Basic [] b) Secondary [] c) Diploma [] d) Degree [] e) Non-formal Education []
5. Occupation of parents/guardian
a) Farming [] b) Trading [] c) Civil/Public Servant [] d) Unemployed []

6. Which of these statements is/are TRUE of your family?

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| a) My father is dead
[] | d) My parents are separated
[] |
| b) My mother is dead
[] | e) My parents are divorced
[] |
| c) My parents are dead
[] | f) My parents are still married
[] |

SECTION B: Home Environment

7. When do you wake in the morning and when do you sleep in the evening?

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| a) 4am & 12pm [] | c) 6am & 10pm [] | e) Other |
| b) 5am & 11pm [] | d) 7am & 9pm [] | |

8. Do you have a quiet place to study and do your homework at home?

- a) Yes [] b) No []

9. Do the radio/TV/ News papers assist you in academic work at home?

- a) Yes [] b) No [] c) No I don't have any []

10. Do you have a private teacher at home?

- a) Yes [] b) No []

11. What is / are the problem(s) in the house that stand against your academic work?

- | | |
|---|--|
| a) No place to learn [] | c) No role model to encourage me [] |
| b) No light in the house [] | d) There is too much noise in the house [] |
| e) I assist my parents in the market after school [] | f) Nobody to help me with my school work [] |

12. What do you want your parent / guardian to do to enhance your academic work?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a) Get me a private teacher [] | c) Encourage me to learn hard [] |
| b) Reduce my house chores [] | d) Buy me supplementary books [] |

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire for Teachers

Dear Sir/Madam,

The research questionnaire is designed to study “Perception of Teachers, Pupils and Parents’ about the effects of home Environment on academic performance of selected J.H.S in Mporhor Wassa East District”. This is in partial fulfillment of an award of Masters in Educational Administration at the University of Cape Coast. You have been randomly chosen to participate in the study. You are assured that any information you provide will be used purely for academic purposes and shall be treated as confidential.

Thank you

SECTION A: Demographic Data

1. Sex

- a) Female [] b) Male []

2. Age

- a) 20 – 24 yrs [] b) 25 – 29 yrs [] c) 30 – 34 yrs [] d) 40 years and above []

3. Education

- a) Cert ‘A’ 4 yrs PM [] c) Diploma [] e) Masters []
b) Cert ‘A’ P/S [] d) Degree [] f) Doctorate []

4. Grade / Position

- a) Supt. [] b) Snr. Supt [] c) Prin. Supt. II [] d) Director []

5. Teaching experience

- a) 0 – 4yr [] b) 5 – 9 yrs [] c) 10 – 14 yrs [] d) 15 – 19 yrs [] e) 20 yrs and above []

SECTION B: Home Environment

6. Does the pupil’s home have influence on the pupil’s academic performance?

b) Yes [] b) No []

7. What are the factors in the home environment that can affect the pupil's academic performance?

- a) Single Parenting [] e) Lack of parental Supervisor []
- b) Too much work in the home [] f) Uneducated Parent or Guardian []
- c) Lateness to bed [] g) Unemployment of Parent []
- d) Too many people in the home [] h) Low income of Parent/Guardian []

8. How often do parents visit the school to monitor pupil's academic performance?

- a) Very often [] b) often [] c) Sometimes [] d) Not at all []

9. Do the pupils complain of parents' attitudes that affect their academic work?

a) Yes [] b) No []

10. What should parents / guardians do to enhance your pupils' academic work?

- a) Get pupils a private teacher [] e) Buy them good clothes []
- b) Reduce their house chores [] f) Supervise their homework []
- c) Encourage them to learn hard [] g) Allow them to sleep on time []
- d) Buy them supplementary books [] h) Other

SECTION C: Parental Support

Please tick (✓) against the word or sentence that is most applicable to you.

Key: 1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly Disagree

Attribute	1	2	3	4
Pupils complete and submit homework regularly and on time				
Your pupils miss school because their parent or guardian wants them to assist in the house work.				
Parents/guardians buy supplementary readers and other learning materials for their children to improve upon their academic performance.				

Parents / Guardians enquire about their wards academic performance and behavoiur at school.				
Pupils are sacked from school for school fees and other levies.				
Pupils are sacked from school for improper dressing.				

SECTION D:

17. In your opinion, how can the home environment impact positively on pupils' academic performance?

.....

.....

.....

APPENDIX C

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR PARENTS

The purpose of this focus group discussion is to gather information from J.H.S 3 pupils in Mpohor Wassa East District, which will help in determining their perception on the effect of home environmental factors that contribute to academic achievement. The information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

School: **Date:**

Number of Participant:

1. What is your comment on your schools academic performance?
2. Which factors or issues at home affect academic performance?
3. What are the factors that militate against the effect of home environment on the pupil's academic performance?
4. What are the factors that promote the effect of home environment on the pupil's academic performance?
5. How is your family/community addressing factors promote or and militate against the academic performance of the pupils?
6. Give your suggestions as to ways of addressing the effect of home environment on academic performance.

APPENDIX D

THE ZONAL MAP OF MPOHOR WASSA EAST DISTRICT

