UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

PERCEIVED FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR POOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS IN ASIKUMA CIRCUIT OF ASIKUMA-ODOBEN-BRAKWA DISTRICT

DAVID, BAIDOO-ANU

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BY

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

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

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

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

Name: ……..……

Supervisor's Declaration

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

Principal Supervisor's Signature: ..... Date.....

Name: …….

Co- supervisor's Signature:……..... Date…….

Name: ……..……

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify factors responsible for the poor academic performance of pupils in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa district. Descriptive design was used. The target population for this study consisted of school children and teachers. The study population was made up of pupils, and teachers of Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools. Simple random sampling was used to select four public Junior High Schools, namely Asikuma Presby JHS, Col Baidoo JHS, Asikuma Catholic Boys JHS and Asikuma Catholic Girls JHS. The researcher also used all the teachers in the selected Junior High Schools for the study. Questionnaire was deemed most appropriate for the study. The questionnaires were designed respectively for school teachers and pupils on factors which were perceived to be affecting academic performance in the school. Percentages and frequencies were used to analyze the background information of the participants and all the four research questions. The study found that school environmental factors such as inadequate teaching and learning materials, equipped classrooms for teaching and learning and non-availability of libraries in schools was a major cause of poor academic performance. Again, failure by parents in providing breakfast for their children before leaving to school and failure to provide subject textbook are the major home conditions responsible for the poor academic achievement of pupils. Teacher's regular absence from school and lateness to school has contributed immensely to the poor performance of the pupils in Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools. Pupil's absenteeism, peer group influence, lateness to school, not enjoying their teacher's lessons, contribute to pupil's poor academic achievement in Asikuma pupils in Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools.

KEY WORDS

Circuit

School environmental factors

Home conditions

Pupil's characteristics

Martin ford's motivational theory

Teacher-related factors

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DEDICATION

To my mother and brother, Ekua Ntiamoah and Alfred Anu Baidoo

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Over the past three years the performance of Asikuma circuit in the Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District in B.E.C.E has been very poor. Parents and other educational stakeholders have raised concern about the phenomenon, as to what actual factors are causing such poor performance. The study, therefore, seeks to identify the perceived factors responsible for the poor academic performance of pupils in Asikuma Circuit of Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa district. This study is very important because there have been a number of factors that researchers have identified as responsible for academic performance. However, to know the actual factors that are responsible for the poor performance in Asikuma circuit, there is the need to investigate into the problem to come out with the actual factors. This will help educational stakeholders in the district to know the factors that are responsible for the poor performance so that right measures will be taken to improve performance.

Background to the Study

Education is considered as the development of the endowed capacities in the individual, which will enable the one to control his/her environment and fulfil his/her possibilities to a large extent (Saxton, 2000). Indeed, in this era of globalization and technological revolution, education is considered as the first step for every human activity. It plays a vital role in the development of human capital and is linked with an individual's well-being and opportunities for better living (Battle & Lewis, 2002). According Kimani, Kara and Njagi

(2013) the purpose of education is to equip the citizenry with values, skills and knowledge to reshape their society and eliminate inequality. This is because education helps an individual develop his/her capabilities, attitudes and behaviour that is acceptable to the society. The benefits of having quality education is that it is able to adapt to the changing needs of the country as the world changes and spearhead the development of human resource and the country's economy. Hoyle (1986) argued that schools are established with the aim of imparting knowledge and skills to those who attend them. According to Ankomah, Koomson, Bonsu and Oduro (2005), high academic performance, as measured by the examination results, is one of the major goals of a school. Behind all this is the idea of enhancing good academic performance.

Education is an avenue for training and learning, especially in schools or colleges, to improve knowledge and develop skills. The ultimate purpose of education is to empower an individual to excel in a chosen field of endeavour or career, and to be able to positively impact his/her environment. Students are the most essential assets for any educational institution (Sentamu, 2003). This view, however, becomes valid only when students' academic performance is good enough. The social and economic development of the country is directly linked with student academic performance.

The students' performance (academic achievement) plays an important role in producing the best quality students who will become great leaders and manpower for the country. They are thus responsible for the country's economic and social development (Ali, Jusoff, Syukriah, Najah, & Syafena, 2009). Grades awarded to individuals at the end of an academic study are important indicators of ability and productivity when those individuals look

for their first jobs. In fact, a person's education is closely linked to his/her life chances, income and wellbeing (Battle & Lewis, 2002). Thus, students' success in any academic task has always been of special interest to educators, parents and society at large (Ajayi, 2006). The issue of factors affecting students' academic performance, therefore, remains a top priority to educators (Considine & Zappala, 2002).

A number of studies have been carried out to identify the factors that affect academic performance of students in a number of educational institutions worldwide. Most of these studies focus on three elements that intertwine, that is, parents (family causal factors), teachers (academic causal factors), and students (personal causal factors) (Crosnoe, & Elder, 2004). The combination of these factors influencing academic performance, however, varies from one academic environment to another, from one set of students to the next, and indeed from one cultural setting to another (Diaz, 2003).

The Government of Ghana has made every effort to improve the academic performance of students. One of the efforts is the introduction and implementation of Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE). This policy has been given a further boost with the introduction of a capitation grant and the attendant school feeding programme (SFP).

In spite of these developments, the education sector continues to face many challenges. According to ISSER (2008) the performance of many children in the school, is failing to meet the minimum learning requirements and to acquire basic skills and competencies. Pupil's performance is considered a vital indicator of good schooling, so the poor performance of pupils at the basic level of education has not only led to public outcry, but also

educationists have been increasingly occupied in their attempt to identify factors that influence pupil's performance especially in Basic Education Certificate Examination in Ghana (ISSER, 2008).

In fact, a number of factors have been identified as contributing to the poor performance of students' in Basic Education Certificate Examination in Ghana. This has become a recurrent phenomenon which has militated against the smooth transition from the basic level to the secondary (Adetunde & Asare, 2009). For example, Anamuah-Mensah (2010), attributed the phenomenon to lack of effective supervision and monitoring at school, lack of motivation for teachers and inadequate number of qualified teachers to fill empty classrooms. Diaz (2003) found factors such as intellectual ability, poor study habit, achievement motivation, lack of vocational goals, low self-concept, low socio-economic status of the family, poor family structure and anxiety as contributing to educational performance. Again, socio-economic background, and particularly parents' education has a positive influence on the academic performance of students (Jeynes, 2002; Nyarko, 2011). Also, Anderson, Benjamin and Fuss, (1994) found that individual characteristics such as previous school achievements, academic self-efficacy or study motivation are positively correlated with academic performance.

Furthermore, Adetunde and Asare, (2009) and Ajayi, (2006) in an assessment of student academic performance in Kasena-Nankana and Asuogyaman Districts of Ghana also found that the mass failure of students in both internal and external examinations can be attributed to a number of factors which include teacher factors (low qualification, lack of experience, poor salaries and allowances, poor supervision), organisational climate (open

and close), and student factors (poor ability of students, under age, unwillingness to learn, bad peer groups influence).

Gleaning from above, it is very conspicuous that poor academic performance is a phenomenon that needs to be given critical attention, not only looking at it from the generic perspective but looking in detail, the specific factors that are responsible for poor academic performance in each school, because the perceived causes of poor academic performance vary from school to school and environment to environment.

Statement of the Problem

Several factors have, generally, been identified as causes of poor academic performance. A number of studies have been carried out to identify the factors that affect academic performance of students in a number of educational institutions worldwide. Agyeman (1993) reported that a teacher who does not have both the academic and the professional teacher qualification would undoubtedly have a negative influence on the teaching and learning of his/her subject. However, he further stated that a teacher who is academically and professionally qualified, but works under unfavourable conditions of service would be less dedicated to his work and thus be less productive than a teacher who is unqualified but works under favourable conditions of service.

Etsey (2005) attributed the cause of poor academic performance in the Shama Sub-Metro of Shama Ahanta East Metropolitan Assembly (SAEMA) in Ghana to a combination of factors relating to the school environment such as limited teaching and learning materials (TLMs), inadequate textbooks and less professionally trained teachers. Other teacher factors include lateness to

school; incidence of absenteeism, use of the local language in teaching, inability to complete the syllabi, less interest in children's understanding of lesson and not being hardworking. He further found pupil characteristics such as absenteeism and regularity in school, truancy, use of local language in the classroom, lack of interest and joy in the teacher's lessons and little help with studies at home to also be the cause of poor academic performance in Shama Sub-Metro of Shama Ahanta East Metropolitan Assembly (SAEMA). Etsey (2005), again found that parental support variables causing pupils to perform poorly academically were their inability to provide breakfast, textbooks and basic school needs, less interaction with children's teachers and less involvement in the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

Also, Adane (2013) found environmental factors such as limited number of teachers with high academic qualification, inadequate teaching and learning materials, and misuse of contact hours to have accounted for the low academic performance in Kemp Methodist JHS in Aburi, in the Eastern region of Ghana. Teacher's level of education plays a very important role in their level of delivery in the classroom. She stated that a teacher's knowledge of the subject matter coupled with all the educational material have great influence on teaching and learning in Kemp Methodist Junior High School. She also found that inadequate teaching and learning materials also accounted for the low academic achievement of pupils of Kemp Methodist Junior High School. None of the teachers of the school indicated that the school had enough teaching and learning materials to support their work. She also further stated that pupils perform better when they have teaching materials like textbooks, maps, science equipment and pictures to aid them. Contact hours are meant for

academic work but pupils of Kemp Methodist Junior High School sometimes missed this, which also contributed to poor academic performance.

Over the past years, concerns have been raised about the poor academic performance of pupils in Asikuma District by parents and the community. A study of the BECE results of the schools from 2013 to 2015 buttress this.

Table1- *B.E.C.E Performance of Pupils from 2013-2015*

Year	Number of candidates	Aggregates 7-10 (%)	Aggregates 11-20 (%)	Aggregates 26-46 (%)
2013	2399	12 (0.5)	96 (4.0)	1452 (60.5)
2014	2321	10 (0.43)	27 (1.6)	1310 (56.44)
2015	2415	9 (0.37)	338 (14)	1118 (46.2)

Source: Field survey, Baidoo-Anu, (2016)

In 2013, the district presented 2399 candidates. Out of this number only 12 candidates had aggregates 7-10 representing 0.5% of the total candidates who wrote the exams. Also, 96 candidates obtained aggregates 11-20 representing 4% of the total candidates. Majority of the candidates 1452, representing 60.5% obtained aggregates 26-46. In 2014, the district presented 2321 candidates. Out of this number, only 10 students obtained aggregate 07-10 representing 0.43%, 27 candidates obtained aggregates 11-20 representing 1.6%. Majority of the candidates, 1310, obtained aggregates 26-46 representing 56.44%. Also, in 2015, the districts presented 2415 candidates. Out of this number, 12 candidates representing 0.5% obtained aggregates 6-10. Also, 338 representing 14% obtained aggregates 11-20. Majority of the candidates, 1118, representing 46.2% obtained aggregates 26-46.

This situation of poor performance in the BECE over the years raises questions about the depth of understanding of factors affecting the low performance of pupils of Asikuma districts JHS. The pertinent questions to address, therefore, are;

a) What are the perceived causes of this poor academic performance of students?
b) Are the perceived causes entirely that of teachers or pupils or both of them?
c) Or is the poor performance of students caused by parent's neglect or school environmental factors?

The present study, therefore, seeks to identify factors influencing the poor performance of the pupils of Asikuma circuit JHS.

Purpose of the Study

The objectives of this study are;

1. To find out the role school environmental factors (teaching and learning materials, classrooms for teaching and learning) played in pupil's poor academic performance in Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools.
2. To ascertain home condition (inability to provide breakfast, textbooks and basic school needs, less interaction with children's teachers and less involvement in the Parent Teacher Association PTA) responsible for the poor academic achievement of pupils in Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools.
3. To identify teacher factors (academic qualification, lateness to school, incidence of absenteeism, use of the local language in teaching,

completion of the syllabi) that contribute to the poor academic performance of the pupils in Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools

4. To identify pupils characteristics (absenteeism and regularity in school, lack of teacher motivation, lack of interest and joy in the teacher's lesson) responsible for their poor academic achievement in Asikuma pupils in Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools.

Research Questions

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What school environmental factors (teaching and learning materials, classrooms for teaching and learning) were the causes of poor academic performance in the Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools?
2. What were home conditions that (inability to provide breakfast, textbooks and basic school needs, less interaction with children's teachers and less involvement in the Parent Teacher Association PTA) caused pupils in the Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools.to perform poorly academically?
3. What teacher factors (academic qualification, lateness to school, incidence of absenteeism, use of the local language in teaching, completion of the syllabi) contributed to low academic achievement of the pupils in Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools?
4. What pupil characteristics (absenteeism and regularity in school, lack of teacher motivation, lack of interest and joy in the teacher's lesson) were responsible for their poor academic achievement in the Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools?

Significance of the Study

High quality basic education is of great concern to many Ghanaians these days; and. parents select schools for their children based on performance track records in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). All things being equal, each parent will strive for a school with a good academic standing. The researcher, therefore, sees this study to be very useful to parents, teachers, pupils, school administrators, Government, Ghana Education Service educators, policy makers and all stakeholders in the educational enterprise especially the Ghana Education Service (GES).

Parents

The study would help parents to know the home conditions that affect their children's performance academically. Knowledge of this will cause them to desist from every activity that poses a threat to pupil's performance academically.

Teachers

The study would also keep teachers with the teacher related factors that causes pupils poor academic performance. This will help them to make informed decisions as to what can be done to improve pupils' performance.

Pupils

Pupils would also know the kind of attitude towards learning that when they put up can have negative effect on their performance. Knowledge of this will aid them to also put up behavior that will impact on their academics positively.

School administrators

School administrators would also be acquainted with the school related factors that causes pupils poor performance. This will help them to take measures to make sure that those factors are eradicated thereby enhancing pupils performance.

Government

The results of this study would provide the selected JHS, the Government of Ghana, and other stakeholders with relevant information concerning factors responsible for pupils' poor performance this would help them to improve the performance of these schools.

Ghana Education Service

More broadly, the study would help the GES in seeking a solution to the low performance trend affecting other schools nationwide. The research would also extend knowledge on academic performance in this context.

Delimitation

Many Junior High schools in the Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District perform poorly academically. However, the study focused on Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools. A study of this nature could have been conducted in the whole circuit but I am interested in finding out the specific factors that were responsible for poor academic performance in Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools. This is because the factors responsible for poor academic performance vary from school to school.

A lot of factors have been identified to be responsible for poor academic performance. However, the study was delimited to school environmental factors such as school infrastructure and materials, home

conditions such as inability to provide breakfast, textbooks and basic school needs, less interaction with children's teachers and less involvement in the Parent Teacher Association PTA, teacher factors such as academic qualification, lateness to school, incidence of absenteeism, use of the local language in teaching, completion of the syllabi and not hardworking. Finally, pupil's characteristics such as absenteeism and regularity in school, lack of teacher motivation, lack of interest and joy in the teacher's lesson.

Limitations

The research design used is survey which has demand characteristics problem; respondents try to give responses in ways that reflect their idea of what responses the researcher wants from them. Thus, participants in the study acted in an unnatural fashion, which I perceived that it slightly influenced the data collected.

Definition of Terms

Academic achievement refers to a successful accomplishment or performance in a particular subject area. It is indicated by grades, marks and scores. It includes how pupils deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers in a fixed time or academic year (Hawis & Hawes, 1982 cited in Dimbisso, 2009). In order to avoid monotony, different terms such as academic performance, student performance and pupil performance are used in this study. All meant to refer to academic achievement

Home conditions refer to parental support variables causing pupils to perform poorly academically such as their inability to provide breakfast, textbooks and

basic school needs, less interaction with children's teachers and less involvement in the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

Poor/Low Performance refers to poor performance of pupils in BECE exams. That is pupils falling short of what is required to successfully continue to senior high schools, technical and other vocational institutions in the country.

Pupil's characteristics refer to pupil's characteristics causing them to perform poorly academically such as absenteeism and regularity in school, truancy, use of local language in the classroom, lack of interest and joy in the teacher's lessons and little help with studies at home.

School environmental factors refer to the factors relating to the school environment such as limited teaching and learning materials (TLMs), inadequate textbooks and less professionally trained teachers and quality of facilities.

Teacher factors refer to factors causing pupils to perform poorly academically such as lateness to school; academic qualification, incidence of absenteeism, use of the local language in teaching, inability to complete the syllabi, less interest in children's understanding of lesson and not hardworking.

Organisation the Study

The research is organised into five chapters, with each chapter dealing with an aspect of the study. The first chapter dealt with the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, delimitation, limitation and significant of the study. Related literature was reviewed in the second chapter while the third chapter was devoted to methods

of data collection, sample and sampling procedure and descriptions of research instrument used for data gathering and the method of data analysis. In the fourth chapter, there is a discussion of the results obtained. Chapter five was devoted to summary of the study, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study is about the perceived factors responsible for poor academic performance of pupils at Asikuma Circuit in the Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District. The first chapter dealt with the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study and the research questions. Also, it highlighted the significance of the study and the definitions of terms. This helped to put the study in perspective. This chapter reviews literature related to the topic. The objective is to explore what major authors and writers have written on the topic. The review was done under the following subheadings;

1. Theoretical Review
2. Conceptual Framework
3. Empirical Review

Theoretical Review

Martin Ford's motivational theory

The study first of all employed Martin Ford's motivational theory. A direct offspring or subset of Sigmund Freud's theory is Martin Ford's motivational systems theory (MST). This framework focuses on the individual as the unit of analysis, but embeds the individual in the biological, social, and environmental contexts that are crucial to development. MST attempts to describe the development of the whole person-in-context (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). Ford proposed a simple mathematical formula that attempts to

represent all the factors in one model. The formula for effective person-in-context functioning is:

Achievement = (Motivation x Skill) x Responsive Environment

The formula proposes that actual "achievement and competence are the results of a motivated, skilful and biologically capable person interacting with a responsive environment" (Ford, 1992, p. 70). The motivational systems theory does not attempt to replace or supersede any of the existing theories. Instead, it attempts to organize the various motivational constructs from different theories into one model. The main constructs are self-efficacy beliefs, the role of expectancy, and goal orientation. The formula suggests that in any behaviour episode, there are four major prerequisites for effective functioning:

1. The person must have the motivation needed to initiate and maintain the activity until the goal directing the episode is attained.
2. The person must have the skill necessary to construct and execute a pattern of activity that will produce the desired result.
3. The person's biological structure and functioning must be able to support the operation of the motivation and skill components.
4. The person must have the cooperation of a responsive environment that will facilitate progress towards the goal (Ford, 1992).

This model attempts to provide a comprehensive theory of motivation and proposes that actual achievement and competence are the results of a motivated, skilful, and biologically capable person interacting within a responsive environment.

In the motivational systems theory, motivation is defined as the organized patterning of three psychological functions that serve to direct,

energize, and regulate goal-directed activity: personal goals, emotional arousal processes, and personal agency beliefs" (Ford, 1992, p. 3). Symbolically, this definition of motivation can be represented as a formula of three interacting components:

Motivation = Goals x Emotions x Personal Agency Beliefs

Therefore, motivation is an interactive construct representing the direction a person is going, the emotional energy and affective experience supporting or inhibiting movement in that direction, and the expectancies that a person has about reaching their destination or achieving their goals. MST does not prefer or rank, any one of the three components but it views all three components as functioning in an interdependent triumvirate process. If any one of the components are absent in a particular episode, then the subject will not be motivated to initiate activity even though the other two components are firmly in place (Ford, 1992).

There has been a great deal of disagreement among researchers about the nature of motivation and the operation of motivational processes (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990). However, most professionals agree that the presence of motivation was inferred from the behavioural indicators, choice of tasks, effort, persistence, and achievement. Although the index choice of task may sound appealing, it is usually not a useful index in the academic setting as students typically have few choices in that environment. In the academic setting, students who are motivated to learn usually expend effort, the second index, to succeed. Students motivated to learn usually expend greater mental effort during instruction, organizing, and rehearsing information, monitoring level of understanding, and relating new material to prior knowledge (Pintrich

& De Groot, 1990). Researchers like Albert Bandura, Paul Pintrich, and Dale Schunk, have all assessed students' mental effort and found a relationship with self-efficacy. Self-efficacy, on the other hand, correlated positively with effort and achievement (Schunk, 1983).

In the academic environment, students who are motivated to learn should persist at tasks when they encounter obstacles. Persistence is important as learning does not always result in instant gratification. Persistence relates to the sustained component of motivation and the greater the persistence, the greater the accomplishments and rewards. Researchers frequently utilize persistence as a valid and measurable component of motivation. Brown and Inouye (1978) had college students solve anagrams and on completion they were informed that they had performed as well as the model. The students were then made to observe another model which failed, and were made to attempt the same anagrams as the failed model. The students outperformed that model, showing that the students were more competent than the model, which led to higher self-efficacy and persistence. Student achievement may be viewed as an indirect index or measure of motivation. Research has shown that students who chose to engage in a task, expended effort, and persisted, were more likely to achieve at a higher level than those who gave up (Pintrich & Schrauben, 1992; Schunk, 1991) and researchers have obtained positive relationships between achievement and motivational indices of choice of task, effort and persistence. In a simple but effective experiment, Schunk (1983) found that the more practice students obtained while in training (effort and persistence), the more successful they were in solving similar problems on an examination (measure of achievement).

This theory provides the understanding that pupil's performance or achievements are the result of a motivated and skilful student interacting with a responsive environment. Thus, if the school environment, home conditions, teacher factors and pupil's characteristics are favourable, pupils stand a better chance of performing well academically.

Conceptual Review

The nature of academic performance

According to Mankoe (2002), performance refers to the extent to which a worker or student contributes to achieving the goals of his or her institution and an individual with weak motivation might perform well owing to some chance factors that boost performance. This means that performance measures the aspect of behaviour that can be observed at a specific period.

The term poor academic performance has no one acceptable definition based on the broad nature of it. According to Okoye (1982) poor academic performance in individuals or candidates in a learning situation refers to one who fails to attain a set standard performance in a given evaluation exercise such as test, examination or series of continuous assessments. This means that the standard could be based on a number of stipulated subjects and other school activities. Academic performance according to the Cambridge Dictionary of English (1995) refers to how well a school, college, university, an individual or a group is able to perform when given a learning task, activity or one's achievement in standardized tests in academic pursuit. Academic performance refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teacher (Mankoe, 2002). Academic performance is related to content and intellect, meaning that

academic performance depends on the learner's competence. A candidate who scores less or below a given standard is regarded as performing poor academically (Okoye, 1982). Bakare (1994) described poor performance as any performance that falls below a desired standard. According to Otoo, (2007) academic performance constitutes what a student is capable of achieving when he or she is tested on what he or she has been taught. It is further stated that academic performance is related to intellectual capacity (Otoo, 2007).

To determine performance, a performance test is conducted. Singer (1981) defined performance test as the type of mental test in which the subject is asked to do something rather than to say something. Performance test is the type of test which throws light on the ability to deal with things rather than symbols (Drever, 1981).

Gleaning from above, academic performance can, therefore, be defined as consisting of students' scores obtained from teacher-made tests, first term examinations, mid-semester tests and so on.

Achievement is defined as measurable behaviour in a standardised series of tests (Simpson & Weiner, 1989). Achievement test is usually constructed and standardised to measure proficiency in school subjects. According to Bruce and Neville (1979) educational achievement can be measured by standardized achievement tests developed for school subjects. What this means is that academic achievement is measured in relation to what is attained at the end of a course, since it is the accomplishment of short, medium or long term objectives of education (Bruce & Neville, 1979). What is

important is that the test should be a standardised test to meet national norms. For a test to be standardised, it must be valid for over a period of time.

Achievement is regarded as an action of completing or attaining by exertion. It subsumes anything won by exertion, a feat, a distinguished and successful action (Bruce & Neville, 1979). Simpson and Weiner (1989) contended that achievement test tends to measure systematic education training and occupation towards a conventionally accepted pattern of skills or knowledge. Several subjects may be combined into an achievement battery for measuring general school proficiency either in point score or achievement age and perhaps achievement quotient.

The concept of teaching

Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1986) define teaching as the work of helping people learn "worthwhile things," which, as they pointed out, adds an explicitly moral dimension. Teaching, defined as helping others learn to do particular things, is an everyday activity in which many people engage regularly. Professional classroom teaching, on the other hand, is specialized work that is distinct from informal, commonplace showing, telling and helping (Cohen, 1988).

Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta (2005) have defined teaching as directing knowledge towards the learner. To Kochhar (2004), teaching is not a mechanical process but a rather intricate, exacting and challenging job. Though teaching is poorly paid, Kochhar explained that its riches are of a different order, less tangible but more lasting, that is satisfaction of personal fulfilment. Farrant (1996) explained teaching as a process that facilitates learning. Teaching and learning are, therefore, described as the two sides of a

coin because teaching does not happen without a learner (Amissah, Sam-Tagoe, Amoah & Mereku, 2002).

The problem of delineating the specialized, professional version of otherwise commonplace activities is not unique to teaching. According to Grossman (2009), learning how to build and maintain productive professional relationships with the people in one's care is no simple matter, yet many assume that this is a natural rather than learned capacity. Someone can be described as "good with people" or a "people person," but being "good with people" in purely social interactions is not the same as cultivating relationships in a professional role.

The professional work entailed by the practice of teaching is different from the everyday teaching of the sort described above (Cohen, 1997). Although learning can occur without teaching, such serendipitous learning is chancy. The practice of teaching comprises the intentionally designed activity of reducing that chanciness, that is, of increasing the probability that students will attain specific intended goals (Lampert, 2001; Lee, 2007).

Teachers must enable others to learn, understand, think, and do. Teaching involves identifying ways in which a learner is thinking about the topic or problem at hand, to structure the next steps in the learner's development, and to oversee and assess the learner's progress (Ball & Forzani, 2007; Cohen, 2003). In the case of teaching in school, the work of Ball and Forzani (2007) is further complicated by the reality that teachers are responsible for many individual learners' growth while working simultaneously with many learners, in batches. This work is not natural. To listen to and watch others as closely as is required to probe their ideas

carefully and to identify key understandings and misunderstandings, for example, requires closer attention to others than most individuals routinely accord to colleagues, friends, or even family members (Ball & Forzani, 2007). Few adults seek to learn about others' experiences and perspectives as systematically as teachers must (Ball & Forzani, 2007). More common ways of being in the world need not in fact and cannot rest so dependently on close attention to others' thinking. It is functional in the course of everyday interactions to be able to assume commonality with others' understanding of ideas and arguments and with others' experiences of events (Ball & Forzani, 2007). In non-teaching interactions, people ask one another questions to which they do not know the answers (Ball & Forzani, 2007; Cohen, 2003. It is normal to help others who request it, often doing the task or answering the question for them.

In everyday life, one's relations with others are personal and the imperatives rest with individual preferences (Buchmann, 1993). It is natural to like some people and dislike others and to act "as oneself," behaving in ways that feel comfortable and uniquely expressive of one's personality. To teach, on the other hand, is to shift the locus of one's role orientation from the personal to the professional (Buchmann, 1993). In sum, although teaching is a universal human activity as parents teach their children, being a teacher is to be a member of a practice community within which teaching does not mean the ordinary, common sense of teaching as showing or helping (Buchmann, 1993). The work of a teacher is instead specialized and professional in form and nature. Decisions about what to do are not appropriately rooted in personal preferences or experiences but are instead based on professionally

justified knowledge and on the moral imperatives of the role. Intuition and everyday experience are poor guides for the specialised work and judgment entailed by teaching (Buchmann, 1993).

Characteristics of good teaching

An effective and good teacher is one who knows the abilities of his learners and has understanding of what his or her students need to learn (Farrant, 1996). This implies that the skill of teaching lies in knowing who, what and how to teach and above all to be able to judge when (Farrant, 1996). Good teaching demands great skill irrespective of the level of teaching. It does not depend on the learner any more as (Farrant, 1996) indicated. Thus, teaching has become complicated due to the increasingly intricate phase of human personality and society. The idea is that a teacher must bear in mind certain principles of good teaching whiles dealing with the students.

According to Kochhar (2004) good teachers exhibit the following characteristics:

i. Recognize individual differences among people.
ii. Create the learning situation.
iii. Challenge the child to learn.
iv. Encourage general development.
v. Cause, facilitate and promote learning.

It is clear from the above discussion that efficient or good teachers must have a sound knowledge of what their people must know and have the ability to relate the content, method, sequence and pace of work to individual needs, to use the environment and appropriate media to support learning, use a range of teaching strategies skilfully and have enthusiasm for the subject

(Farrant, 1996). It is the teacher's duty and vital responsibility to motivate students in ascertaining their inner strengths and abilities and to discover what truly inspires them. The good teacher is, therefore, the one who has the willingness and passion to teach; respects and understands the individual learner, and creates learning situations that build up values in the individual learner for personal and societal satisfaction. It is vital, therefore, for the teachers to teach what they can teach better in order to facilitate effective learning for the students (Siaw, 2009).

The concept of learning

Several and sometimes varying definitions have been given by different psychologists on the meaning of learning. These definitions, however, seem to converge on certain trends which highlight the characteristics of learning. Myers, (1993) defined learning as a relatively permanent change in an organism's behaviour due to experience. Similarly, Mukherjee (2002) gave the meaning of learning as an inference from some performance of the organism resulting in an enduring change of behaviour. Hengenhann (1982) defined learning as a relatively permanent change in behavioural potentiality that occurs as a result of reinforced practice.

Bugelski (1956) defined learning as the process of the forming relatively permanent neural circuits through the simultaneous activity of the elements of the circuits-to-be; such activity is of the nature of change in cell structures through growth in such a manner as to facilitate the arousal of the entire circuit when a component element is aroused or activated. Learning refers to the change in a subject's behaviour to a given situation brought about by his repeated experiences in that situation, provided that the behaviour

change cannot be explained on the basis of native response tendencies, maturation or temporary states of the subject (e.g. fatigue, drugs, alcohol etc.) (Hilgard & Bower, 1975).

Types of learning

Learning types refer to the variations in the ability to accumulate as well as assimilate information. Basically, learning types is the method that best allows one to gather and use knowledge in a specific manner (Gagné, 1956).

Gagné (1956) proposed a system of classifying different types of learning in terms of the degree of complexity of the mental processes involved. He identified eight basic types, and arranged these in the hierarchy. According to Gagné, the higher orders of learning in this hierarchy build upon the lower levels, requiring progressively greater amounts of previous learning for their success. The lowest four orders tend to focus on the more behavioural aspects of learning, while the highest others focus on the more cognitive aspects increasing complexity. According to Gagne (1956), the types of learning are as follows

Signal Learning: This is the simplest form of learning, and consists essentially of the classical conditioning first described by the behavioural psychologist Pavlov. In this, the subject is 'conditioned' to emit a desired response as a result of a stimulus that would not normally produce that response. This is done by first exposing the subject to the chosen stimulus (known as the conditioned stimulus) along with another stimulus (known as the unconditioned stimulus) which produces the desired response naturally. After a certain number of repetitions of the double stimulus, it was found that

the subject emits the desired response when exposed to the conditioned stimulus on its own. The applications of classical conditioning in facilitating human learning are, however, very limited.

Stimulus-response learning: This somewhat more sophisticated form of learning, which is also known as operant conditioning, was originally developed by Skinner. It involves developing desired stimulus-response bonds in the subject through a carefully-planned reinforcement schedule based on the use of 'rewards' and 'punishments'. Operant conditioning differs from classical conditioning in that the reinforcing agent (the 'reward' or 'punishment') is presented after the response.

Chaining/ psychomotor connection learning: This is a more advanced form of learning in which the subject develops the ability to connect two or more previously-learned stimulus-response bonds into a linked sequence. It is the process whereby most complex psychomotor skills (e.g. riding a bicycle or playing the piano) are learned.

Verbal association learning: This is a form of chaining in which the links between the items being connected are verbal in nature. Verbal association is one of the key processes in the development of language skills. E.g.: Remembering poems, formulae or the alphabet in sequence.

Discrimination learning: This involves developing the ability to make appropriate (different) responses to a series of similar stimuli that differ in a systematic way. The process is made more complex (and hence more difficult) by the phenomenon of interference, whereby one piece of learning inhibits another. Interference is thought to be one of the main causes of forgetting. In discrimination learning the subject is reinforced to respond only to selected

sensory characteristics of stimuli. Discriminations that can be established in this way may be quite subtle. Pigeons, for example, can learn to discriminate differences in colours that are indistinguishable to human beings without the use of special devices. E.g.: Recognizing the names of the children in a class.

Concept learning: This involves developing the ability to make a consistent response to different stimuli that form a common class or category of some sort. It forms the basis of the ability to generalise, and classify. An organism is said to have learned a concept when it responds uniquely to all objects or events in a given logical class as distinct from other classes. E.g.: A child learns to call a 5 cm cube a 'block' and uses this name for other objects that are different in size and shape. Then he/she learns the concepts of cube and with this he/she can identify a class of objects that differ in characteristics such as material, colour, texture and size. Many concepts are learnt by children through trial and error without planning. The teacher's role is to design an effective learning sequence with the aim of learning a concept.

Rule or principle learning: This is a very-high-level cognitive process that involves being able to learn relationships between concepts and apply these relationships in different situations, including situations not previously encountered. It forms the basis of the learning of general rules, procedures, etc. E.g.: The relationship of the circumference of a circle with its diameter. Three concepts: the circumference, pi, and diameter are related.

Problem solving: This is the highest level of cognitive process according to Gagné. It involves developing the ability to invent a complex rule, algorithm or procedure for the purpose of solving one particular problem, and then using

the method to solve other problems of a similar nature. E.g.: Experimenting to test the effect of different types of fertilizer on plant growth.

Other types of learning

Vester (1998) differentiated between 4 types of learning. These are:

Learning type 1: Auditory learning ("by listening and speaking"). This is the type of learning through hearing and listening. These individuals discover information through listening and interpreting information by the means of pitch, emphasis and speed. These individuals gain knowledge from reading out loud in the classroom and may not have a full understanding of information that is written.

They learn best through verbal lectures, discussions, talking things through and listening to what others have to say. Auditory learners interpret the underlying meanings of speech through listening to tone of voice, pitch, speed, and other nuances. Written information may have little meaning until the learner hears it. These learners often benefit from reading text aloud and using a tape recorder. An auditory learner can benefit from, using word association to remember facts and information, making audiotapes of notes after writing them, recording lessons or lectures, matching instructional videos, repeating facts with his or her eyes closed, participating in group or class discussions and using audiotapes when practicing a foreign language or other material.

The best type of test for auditory learners is reading passages and writing answers about them, writing responses to lessons or lectures they have heard, or answering questions by oral examination even in a timed situation (Vester, 1998).

Learning type 2: visual learning ("through the eyes, by watching"). This is the type of learning through seeing and looking. Visual learners think in pictures and learn best in visual images. They depend on the instructor or facilitator's nonverbal cues such as body language to help with understanding. Sometimes, visual learners favour sitting in the front of the classroom. They also take descriptive notes over the material being presented. They need to see the teacher's body language and facial expression to fully understand the content of a lesson. They tend to prefer sitting at the front of the classroom to avoid visual obstructions (e.g., people's heads). They may think in pictures and learn best from visual displays including, diagrams, illustrated text books, overhead transparencies, videos, flipcharts, and hand-outs. During a lecture or classroom discussion, visual learners often prefer to take detailed notes to absorb the information. Visual learners can benefit from; drawing maps or flowcharts of events or scientific processes, making outlines of everything, copying what is on the board, diagramming sentences, taking notes, watching instructional videos, colour-coding, circling, underlining, or highlighting words and phrases, outlining reading assignments, using flash cards.

The best test types for visual learners include diagramming, reading maps, outlining to show a process, and writing an essay after studying an outline. The worst test type for visual learners is a listen and respond test (Vester, 1998).

Learning type 3: Tactile/ kinaesthetic learning ("by touching and feeling"). This is the type of learning through touching and doing. Individuals that are kinaesthetic learn best with and active "hands-on" approach. These learners favour interaction with the physical world. Most of the time kinaesthetic

learners have a difficult time staying on target and can become unfocused effortlessly. They learn best through a hands-on approach and actively exploring the physical world around them. They may find it hard to sit still for long periods and may become distracted by their need for activity and exploration. Kinaesthetic learners can benefit from studying in short blocks, taking lab classes, role playing, taking field trips, visiting museums, studying with others and using memory games and using flash cards to memorize and creating projects to explain lessons or events.

The worst test type for kinaesthetic learners is long essay questions. The best type of test for kinaesthetic learners would include short definition, fill-ins, and questions with multiple answer choices (Vester, 1998).

Learning type 4: Read/Write Learning. Individuals with this preference prefer output; i.e. reading and writing in all forms, internet, lists, dictionaries, thesauri and words. Learning strategies of this learning type are to rewrite notes, read/review notes every day, rewrite ideas and principles into words, organize diagrams/graphs into statements, turn reactions, actions, charts into words, write exam answers, practice with multiple choice questions, write paragraphs, beginnings and endings, write lists (a,b,c,1,2,3,4) and arrange words into hierarchies and points

Observational learning: modelling

Observational learning according to Bandura (1977) is one of the major ways we learn. Acquiring new skills by observing the behaviour of others is very common. It is part of everyday life. Observational learning depends on the existence of an appropriate model in one's environment. That is, the child picks up behaviour while the appropriate model is performing an

activity. For example, young people learn aggression through watching the actions of others (models). Television programmes and movies provide much of the learning to the young people. When children watch violence on television they tend to learn such behaviours. Individuals learn various social roles through observational learning. However, observational learning is a complex process, far more complex than mere imitation. Children acquire information and learn skills through observational learning but do not put it into immediate use. People, particularly youngsters, can often be influenced in positive ways when they have appropriate role models (Bandura, 1977).

Quality of teachers and student's academic performance

The quality of the learning environment at the school depends to a large extent on the quality of the human resources capacity available. Teachers are the most important human resource and remain the backbone of any educational system (UNESCO 2000). The quality of teachers in any educational system determines, to a great extent, the quality of the system itself (Okoye 2002). One key factor in determining examination results is the availability and quality of teachers. Trained teachers represent a significant social investment and their levels of motivation and career commitment is of concern to policy makers (UNESCO 2000). Adeyemo (2005) remarked that no profession in Nigeria has suffered reversal of fortune than teaching. This they submit has affected the commitment expected of teachers.

According to Abaji and Odipo (1997) teacher quality depends on their qualification, experience and level of discipline which in-turn determines the level of commitment. Kerlinger (1995) asserted that the quality of the teacher is very crucial to determining examination outcomes in a school. Kerlinger

argued that the school principal is the most important influential individual in a learning institution and his / her managerial skills set the benchmark, direction, tone, tempo and the school learning climate.

Creamer (1994) noted that the roles of a teacher includes; organizing the instructional environment, setting time framework and carrying out the instructional process. Lack of teachers results in some classes being left unattended and sometimes the teachers who are present take up extra loads to make up for absentee teachers. This leads to inconsistency and ineffective teaching and sometimes loss of valuable time. Thus, students may not adequately cover the syllabus to effectively prepare for national examinations. One of the leading problems in education in Africa as cited by UNESCO (1991) is the persistent shortage of both qualified and properly trained teachers. This has a negative impact on the academic achievement of students. Osman (1989) in his study on poor performance in Kenya Certificate Primary Education in North Eastern Province, Kenya noted that poor performance was mainly a result of unequal distribution of teachers. There was understaffing in most schools and teachers rarely attended in-service refresher courses.

Kathuri (as cited in Nyaga, 1997) concurred with Osman regarding the effect the teacher quality has on educational achievement of children. In a study on factors that influence performance in KCPE, Nyaga established that the quality of teachers contributed to the nurturing of pupils' performance. He also cited efficient use of teaching methods and good administrative set up as a reflection of teacher quality and as important factors in examination performance of pupils.

Simiyu (2002) established that teachers who were involved in marking Christian Religion Education at KCPE level produced better results in the subject than those who were not. Marking KCPE examinations is a form of training that helps teachers improve their understanding of the subject as well as learning to interpret examination questions. Such teachers are able to model their teaching along the examination lines and their students stand a better chance of performing well in the national examinations. On the quality of teachers, Eshiwani (1983) established that 40 percent of the teachers in primary schools in Western Province, Kenya were untrained and this had a negative effect on the performance in the final examination. Eshiwani further established that 60 percent of the teachers in the schools he visited were not serious with homework/assignments. Some students were not given homework/assignment and for those who were, there was no serious follow up. These schools had poor results in public / national examinations.

Pearson (1988) noted that in-service training is an important aspect of alleviating teachers' effectiveness. The courses should be geared towards the improvement of teaching skills and making teachers aware of changes in curriculum. Pearson further pointed out that in-service training also helped teachers to use the available teaching resources more effectively and efficiently. Ndiritu (1999) agreed with Pearson that it is important to train teachers whether through formal training or through in-service courses. Ndiritu's study in Nairobi established that teachers' attendance of in-service training and their desire to stay in the same work station influences performance in examinations.

Academic motivation

Academic motivation is crucial to a student's academic success at any age. Because students form self-concepts, values, and beliefs about their abilities at a young age, the development of early academic motivation has significant implications for later academic careers. A great deal of research has found that students high in academic motivation are more likely to have increased levels of academic achievement and have lower dropout rates (Blank, 1997).

However, different types of academic motivation have different implications for academic achievement (Slavin, 2006). If a student has high levels of academic motivation, knowing whether that student is extrinsically or intrinsically motivated may be important in making predictions about that student's academic performance (Slavin, 2006). Individuals who are intrinsically motivated to learn do so for the pleasure of learning, rather than for external reward (Slavin, 2006). In contrast, those who are extrinsically motivated to learn, are motivated to learn for external rewards that learning will bring (Slavin, 2006). According to Slavin (2006), there are many differences between extrinsically and intrinsically motivated students, and the following list describes some of the most important differences.

Intrinsically motivated students:

1. Earn higher grades and achievement test scores, on average than extrinsically motivated students.
2. Employ "strategies that demand more effort and that enable them to process information more deeply".

3. Are more likely to feel confident about their ability to learn new material.
4. Use "more logical information-gathering and decision-making strategies" than do extrinsically-motivated students.
5. Are more likely to engage in "tasks that are moderately challenging, whereas extrinsically oriented students gravitate toward tasks that are low in degree of difficulty".
6. Are more likely to persist with and complete assigned tasks.
7. Retain information and concepts longer, and are less likely to need remedial courses and review.
8. Are more likely to be lifelong learners, continuing to educate themselves outside the formal school setting long after external motivators such as grades and diplomas are removed.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the linkage between different factors and academic performance and factors affecting it. Academic performance of students in Junior High schools over a given period of time may be influenced by school environmental factors, home conditions factors, teacher factors and pupil's characteristics factors. This conceptualization shows the complexity of factors affecting students' academic performance in BECE.

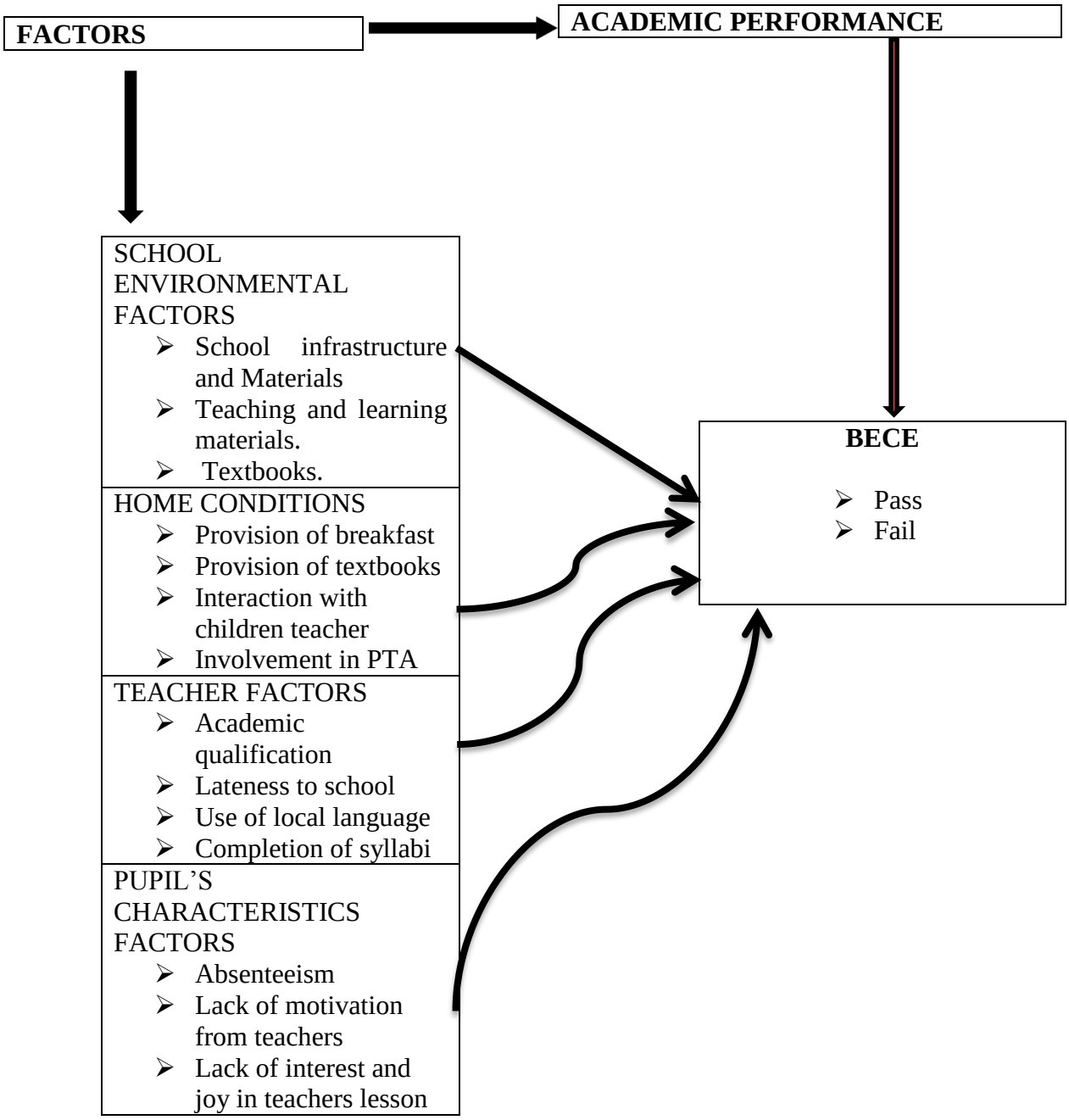


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the factors affecting academic performance.

From Fig 1 it is seen that school environment which include availability of instructional materials, school location and quality of the physical facilities, class size and pupil-teacher ratios, teacher qualification and experience, and supervision has connections with students' academic performance. Teacher factors, such as teacher's qualification, motivation level,

teacher's lateness and absenteeism also have influence on students' academic factors.

Moreover, home conditions such as provision of breakfast, provision of textbooks, interaction with children, teachers and Involvement in PTA have influence on pupils academic performance. Also, pupils characteristics such as, absenteeism, truancy, indiscipline, motivation level, self-concepts can affect their performance.

Empirical Review

Factors influencing academic performance

Home conditions

McMillan and Westor (2002) argued that social economic status is comprised of three major dimensions: education, occupation and income and therefore in developing indicators appropriate for high education context, researchers should study each dimension of social economic status separately. They add that education, occupation and income are moderately correlated, therefore, it is inappropriate to treat them interchangeably in the higher education context. Considine and Zappala (2002) argued that the social and the economic components of the socio-economic status have distinct and separate influences on educational outcomes. Majoribanks (1996) defined socio-economic status (SES) as a person's overall social position to which attainments in both the social and economic domain contribute. When used in studies of children's school achievement, it refers to the socio economic status of the parents or family educational level, occupational level and income level (Jeynes 2002). Social class is common to all societies, ancient or modern. Socio-economic status is usually determined by wealth, power and prestige.

Generally, when comparing and evaluating people, they usually consider peoples possession, type and size of house, area of residence and number of cars and quality of clothes (Jeynes 2002). Socio-economic status is most commonly determined by combining parents' educational level, occupational status and income level (McMillan & Western, 2000).

Farooq, Chaudhry, Shafiq, Berhanu (2011) examined different factors influencing the academic performance of secondary school students in a metropolitan city of Pakistan. The respondents for the study were 10th grade students (300 males & 300 females). The study concluded that the higher level of socio-economic status (SES) is the best indicator contributing towards the quality of students' achievement. Family characteristics like socio economic status (SES) are significant predictors for students' performance at school besides the other school factors, peer factors and student factors. The study also found out that parental education also has positive effects on students' academic performance. Parental occupation has little effect on their child's performance in studies than their education.

Kawafha (2013) in his study to find the impact of skipping breakfast on various educational and overall academic achievements of primary school children in northern Jordan found that skipping breakfast has an association with academic achievement. The result showed a significant and positive partial correlation between breakfast and academic achievement r (444) = .313, p< .001). The consequences of these problems Kawafha (2013) said include; malnutrition that leads to slow children's physical and mental development, increase susceptibility to infections and reduction in academic achievement. Therefore, skipping breakfast can be considered as a barrier to

optimal learning. Despite the fact that the sample was limited to northern Jordan, Kawafha (2013) indicated the findings of the study can be generalised to all children worldwide.

A study by Amukowa and Karue (2013) set to find out factors affecting performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in day secondary schools in Embu District of Eastern Province, Kenya. The study found out many factors which influenced the negative performance of day secondary school students in Embu District. Those factors which came out clearly were explained by the social and economic status of the general population of the Embu community which could best be described as poor. The poverty index, thus, plays a pivotal role in the poor performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Embu District. They further found that home environments of the students and their family backgrounds impacted negatively on their performance. In addition, students were not able to read effectively while at home because they lacked reading materials, they were interfered with friends, family members, poor lighting facilities and noise pollution from neighbours. All these factors were found to be major problems hindering day secondary school students from studying. Similarly, other problems were bad company at home, staying long distances from school and lack of proper accommodation.

Nyandwi (2014) in a study to assess factors influencing poor academic performance of students in Sumbawanga District, Tanzania found that the factors that hampered students 'academic performance included the home based factors such as low income of parents and long walking distance from home to school.

Family income, according to Escarce (2003) has a profound influence on the educational opportunities available to adolescents and on their chances of educational success. Escarce (2003) added that due to residential stratification and segregation, low-income students usually attended schools with lower funding levels, have reduced achievement motivation and much higher risk of educational failure. When compared with their more affluent counterparts, low-income adolescents receive lower grades, earn lower scores on standardized tests and are much more likely to drop out of school.

Kinyanjui, as cited in (Wamulla, 2013) in a study in Maasai of Tanzania saw that limited income among low class families was found to restrict provision for school books and other necessary materials necessary for attendance and good performance in school. Avalos (1986) in his study on teaching children of the poor explained that incomes among lower class families restricted provision of tuition fees, school books and other resources necessary to ensure good performance or continued education. Waweru (1982) also indicated that there are environmental factors that have been seen as handicaps to good school progress. Ndiritu (1999) in his study to find the factors that influence performance in selected public schools in Nairobi and Central provinces in Kenya found no correlation between socio-economic background and academic performance but found that poor children are regularly sent home from school because of inability to pay school levies. According to Eshiwani (1993) good socio economic conditions facilitates studies while poor ones hinder them. A big number of children fail because of poor financial state of the parents. The atmosphere at home negatively affects students in school. Socio cultural customs and beliefs influence decisions to

withdraw students from school; impacting negatively on their academic performance (Eshiwani, 1993). It is also observed that the economically disadvantaged parents are less able to afford the cost of education of their children at higher levels and consequently they do not work at their fullest potential (Rouse & Barrow, 2006).

Escarce (2003) is in agreement with Combs (1985) and Sentamu (2003) who argued that social class determines what school a child will attend and whether the child will pass the examinations. Eamon, (2005) in a study to find out the relationship between SES and educational outcomes of young adolescent at Latino in America found that those children from low SES families are more likely to exhibit the following patterns in terms of educational outcomes as compared to children from high SES families; have lower levels of literacy, numeracy, comprehension and lower retention rates, earn lower test scores and are likely to drop out of school, exhibit higher levels of problematic school behaviour, for instance; truancy and are more likely to have difficulties with their studies and display negative attitudes towards school. Similarly, Graetz (1995) in his studies of children's educational achievements over time at Canberra in Austria have also demonstrated that social background remains one of the major sources of educational inequality. In other words, educational success depends very strongly on the socio-economic status of one's parents (Graetz, 1995).

In contrast Barry (2005) conducted a study at Asian Catholic and Private schools using sample size of 796 to find the effect of parental SES on children's educational outcomes. Barry found out that parents may have a low income and a low-status occupation, but nevertheless transmit high

educational aspirations to their children. What family members have (material resources, for instance) can often be mediated by what family members do (for example parental support, family cohesion) (Barry, 2005). According to Barry (2005) the social and the economic components of socio-economic status, in other words, may have distinct and separate influences on educational outcomes. While both components are important, social factors (for instance, parent's educational attainments) have been found to be more significant than economic factors, such as a family's capacity to purchase goods and services, in explaining different educational outcomes. Barry again argued that families where the parents are advantaged socially, educationally and economically, foster a higher level of achievement in their children. They also may provide higher levels of psychological support for their children through environments that encourage the development of skills necessary for success at school (Barry, 2005).

Muola (1990) studying relationship between academic achievement motivation and home environment among standard eight pupils in Harambee schools in Nyandarua District also asserted that there is positive relationship between student performance and home environment with a coefficient (r) of 0.22. Kyoshaba (2005) investigated the factors affecting academic performance of undergraduate students of Uganda Christian University (UCU). Data collected from 340 respondents selected from all the six faculties of Uganda Christian University confirmed that there is a positive relationship between parents' social economic status and academic performance of undergraduate students with correlation coefficients of 0.8. Also, Ampofo and Osei-Owusu (2015) conducted study to establish the determinants of academic

performance among SHS Students in the Ashanti Mampong Municipality of Ghana. The study was to find out whether parental involvement, parents' academic ambition for their children, peer influence, the child's academic ambition and the child's effort has a relationship with the academic performance. The study found a positive relationship between parental involvements, parents' academic ambition for their children and academic performance with correlation coefficient (r) of 0.458.

King and Bellow (1989) found that the schooling levels of both parents had a positive and statistically significant effect on the educational attainment of Peruvian children. King and Bellow (1989) argued that how much education a child's parents have is probably the most important factor in determining the child's educational opportunities. They observed that the higher the attainment for parents, the greater their aspirations for children. Krashen (2005) concluded that students whose parents were educated scored higher on standardized tests than those whose parents were not educated. Educated parents could better communicate with their children regarding school work, activities and the information being taught at school. They could better assist their children in their work and participate at school (Fantuzzo & Tighe, 2000; Trusty, 1999). Parental education also has effects on students' academic performance. Parental occupation has little effect on their child's performance in studies than their education. (Ceballo, McLoyd & Toyokawa, 2004

Teacher related factors

A number of teacher-related factors have been identified as having significant influence on student academic performance. Musili (2015) in his

study to investigate the influence of teacher related factors on students' performance in Kenya Certificate Secondary Education in public schools in Kibwezi Sub country concluded that teacher's professional qualification affects student achievement and that teachers consider teaching as an opportunity of service for students and that they provided guidance in their free time to their students in their academic/non-academic areas. It was concluded that professional experience has an influence on student's performance. The study concluded that teacher's professional qualification affects student achievement and that teachers consider teaching as an opportunity of service for students and that they provided guidance in their free time to their students in their academic/non-academic areas. It was concluded that professional experience has an influence on students" performance in KCSE.

Adane (2013) found out that teacher factors such as incidence of lateness to school and absenteeism, inability to complete the syllabi and inadequate homework assigned to pupils contributed to the low academic performance of pupils from Kemp Methodist JHS in Aburi, eastern region of Ghana. The role of the teacher in achieving academic excellence is very important so lateness to school on the part of the teacher affect the pupils greatly. Teachers lateness to school affects their output of work and this can be seen in they not being able to complete their syllabi before pupils write their final examination. Giving homework to pupils is a way of ensuring that pupils continue to learn after school so if teachers do not give them regularly this does not encourage the lazy pupils to learn after school and this affects them academically.

In another study, Fobih, Akyeampong and Koomson (1999) arrived unannounced in 60 schools in the Central region of Ghana and found that about 85 per cent of teachers were late to school. Lateness ranged from five minutes up to one and a half hours. This meant teaching time was lost, teachers taught fewer school subjects (i.e. taught mainly English and Mathematics out of 10 subjects), and the school day for students was shortened. Etsey, (2005) in a study at Shama metro found out that lateness and absenteeism affected completion of syllabi. When the syllabus is not completed, pupils find it difficult to understand content that is to be taught in the next class which foundation in most cases is based on the previous class. This assertion supports Pryor and Ampiah (2003) who in a study to understanding education in an African Village and the impact of information and communication technologies in villages in Ghana, found out that most children do not follow school work because they do not possess the understanding from previous work that is prerequisite for the syllabus of the higher grades of primary school and junior secondary school. The study also found that most children are unable to follow the main 'text' of school lessons, which is constructed by the teacher assisted by one or two higher achieving pupils and by ritual responses from the rest of the class. The study again found that understanding of pupils is especially bad when English is used, as most children cannot speak more than a few basic phrases.

Both absenteeism and lateness, Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) pointed out, are symptomatic of education systems that are unable to manage teachers effectively, have weak teacher management structures, and are unable to provide incentives to motivate teachers to improve their attitudes to work.

Another factor is teacher motivation. A highly motivated person puts the maximum effort in his or her job. Ofoegbu (2004) linked poor academic performance of students to poor teacher's performance in terms of accomplishing the teaching task, negative attitudes to work and poor teaching habits which have been attributed to poor motivation. Corroborating this position, Lockheed and Verspoor (1991) asserted that lack of motivation and professional commitment on the part of teachers produced poor attendance and unprofessional attitudes towards pupils which in turn affect the performance of students academically.

School-related factors

Several school environmental factors have generally been identified as influencing academic performance (Ethington & Smart, 2001). These factors include availability of instructional materials, school location and quality of the physical facilities, class size and pupil-teacher ratios, teacher qualification and experience, and supervision (Ethington & Smart, 2001). Holland (1997) noted that environments foster the development of competencies, motivate people to engage in different activities, and reward people for their display of values and attitudes. Environment, therefore, influences personal and professional self-perceptions, competencies, attitudes, interests, and values. Holland (1997) further indicated that a college student's experiences include, but are not limited to:

1. a student's search for academic environments that match their patterns of abilities, interests, and personality profiles;
2. effects of academic environments on student's social behaviour in an effort to acquire the desired abilities, interests and values; and

3. a student achievement to include a function of personality type and the academic environment.

Research has shown that academic environments contribute to gains in student abilities, interests, and attitudes (Feldman, 1988; Feldman, Ethington, & Smart, 2001).

Shamaki (2015) also conducted a study in selected secondary schools in Yobe State in Nigeria to determine the influence of learning environment on students' academic performance. According to Shamaki (2015), learning environment factors among others included the classroom painting and lighting, seats and sitting arrangement, the classroom climate and air quality or ventilation. Thus, students' academic achievements are tied to these components of learning environment. This further implies that the quality of lighting and painting influence students' academic performance in mathematics. Shamaki (2015) also revealed that poor ventilation must be catered for and equally be discouraged so that the classroom temperature should be kept moderate in order not to hinder quality academic activities. Overcrowding does harm to learning mathematics (Shamaki, 2015).

Nyandwi (2014) undertook a study to assess factors that influence the academic performance of students of selected secondary schools in Sumbawanga District, Tanzania. The study identified some factors from the school environment such as inadequate teaching and learning facilities like text books and reference books, desks and chairs, inadequate hostels or dormitories, inadequate provision of meals to students, shortage of qualified teachers and shortage of well-equipped science laboratories. These caused

poor academic performance of students in science subjects in most secondary schools of Sumbawanga District.

According to Isangedighi (1998), the importance of school factors such as location and physical buildings to a successful academic achievement cannot be overemphasised. Where a school is located determines, to a very large extent the patronage such a school will enjoy. Conversely, the unattractive physical structures of the school could demotivate learners academically. This is what Isangedighi (1998) refers to as learner's environment mismatch. According to him, this promotes poor academic performance. Crosnoe and Eamon (2005) indicated that smaller class sizes lead to better academic performance and more access to resources such as computers which have been shown to enhance academic achievement. A good school facility supports educational enterprise. Research has shown that clean air, good light, small, quiet, comfortable and safe learning environment are important for academic achievement. O'Sullivan (2006) in his study to find out if a relationship exists between building conditions and student academic achievement in Pennsylvania's high schools in USA found that there is a relationship between building renovation/addition and student academic achievement. The variable, building renovation/addition was identified to have a significant relationship between structural building conditions and student academic achievement on the PSSA mathematics exam. When analysing the structural building conditions category O'Sullivan (2006) found that building renovation/addition accounted for 1.6 % of the variance on the PSSA mathematics test. An examination of the data indicated that a survey response which increases one level had student PSSA mathematics scores that were 4.8

points higher, on the scaled score. Schneider, (2002) in his study in Washington D.C schools to find out whether school facilities affect academic outcomes, found that school facilities affect learning. Spatial configurations, noise, heat, cold, light, and air quality bear on students' and teachers' ability to perform.

The availability of teaching and learning resources makes a difference in the achievement of students. Court and Ghai (1986) in their study on education, society and development in primary schools in Kenya found that the distribution of resources such as books and equipment accounted for scholastic differences among schools. Eshiwani (1988) indicated that most schools which perform poorly spend less money on the purchase of teaching resources and the availability of adequate relevant text books makes the teaching task easy. Physical facilities like classrooms laboratories and libraries contribute to performance. A World Bank Report (1987) on school and classroom effects on student learning in Thailand reported that students in larger schools learnt more than students in smaller schools. However, students in schools with higher student /teacher relationship learnt less than students in schools with lower student / teacher relationship.

Heynemann and Lopxlely (1983) in their study saw that the presence of school library related significantly to achievement in Brazil, China, Botswana and Uganda. This was consistent with Coleman’s study (as cited in Ndiritu, 1999) where findings were that the numbers of text books on loan from the library were significantly related to learning achievement in the USA. According to Southworth and Lefthouse (1990) sound physical environment

reflected in the schools amenities, decorative order and the immediate surrounding has a positive advantage to pupils' progress and achievement.

Etsey (2005) found teaching and learning materials to be less adequate in the Shama sub-metro schools. Since there were less TLMs in the Shama sub-metro schools, the situation made it difficult for the pupils to understand the lessons and this led to lower performance.

Management and students' academic performance

Gray (1990) has argued that the importance of the head teacher's leadership is one of the clearest of the messages from school effectiveness research. He draws attention to the fact that there is no evidence of effective schools with weak leadership that has emerged in review of effectiveness research. Leadership is not simply about the quality of individual leaders, although this is of course important. It is also about the role leaders' play, their style of management, their relationship to the vision, values and goals of the school and their approach to change (Cole, 2002). Leadership at work in educational institutions is, thus, a dynamic process where an individual is not only responsible for the groups' tasks, but also actively seeks the collaboration and commitment of all the group members in achieving group goals in a particular context (Cole, 2002). Leadership in this context pursues effective performance in schools because it does not only examine tasks to be accomplished and who executes them, but also seeks to include greater reinforcement characteristics like recognition, conditions of service and building of morale, coercion and remuneration (Balunywa, 2000).

Maicibi (2003) contends that, without a proper leadership style, effective performance cannot be realised in schools. Even if the school has all

the required instructional materials and financial resources, it will not be able to use them effectively if the students are not directed in their use of the materials or if the teachers who guide in the usage are not properly trained to implement them effectively.

As Bossert, Dywer, Rowan and Lee, (1982) concluded that no simple style of management seems appropriate for all schools, therefore principals must find the style and structures most suited to their own local situation. However, a study of the literature reveals that three characteristics have frequently been found to be associated with successful leadership; these are: strength of purpose; involving other staff in decision making and professional authority in the process of teaching and learning.

Effective leadership is usually firm and purposeful. Most case studies have shown the head teacher to be the key agent bringing about change in many of the factors affecting school effectiveness (Gray, 1990). The research literature shows that outstanding leaders tend to be proactive. For example, effectiveness is enhanced by vigorous selection and replacement of teachers (Levine & Lezotle, 1990). Another feature of effective head teachers is the sharing of leadership responsibilities with other members of Senior Management team and the involvement, more generally of teachers in decision making. Rutter, Maughan, Mortimor and Ougtan (1978), in their study of primary schools mentioned, in particular, the involvement of the deputy head in policy decisions and the involvement of teachers in management and curriculum planning and consulting teachers about spending and other policy decisions.

An effective head teacher is, in most cases, not simply the most senior administrator or manager, but is in some sense a leading professional. This implies involvement in and knowledge about what goes on in the classroom, including the curriculum, teaching strategies and monitoring of pupil progress (Rutter, Maughan, Mortimor & Ougtan, 1978). In practice, this requires the provision of a variety of forms of support to teachers, including encouragement and practical assistance (Levine & Stark, 1981). It also involves the head projecting a 'high' profile through actions such as frequent movement through the school, visits to the classroom and informal conversation with staff (Sizemore, Brossad, & Harrigan, 1983). It also requires assessing the ways teachers function, described by Scheerens (1992) as one of the pillars of educational leadership. The impact head teachers have on student achievement levels and progress is likely to operate indirectly rather than directly by changing school and staff culture, attitudes and behaviour which, in-turn affect classroom practices and the quality of teaching and learning.

Student Characteristics

Engin-Demir (2009) stated that regardless of intelligence, students who spend more time on assignments and homework are able to improve their grades. Butler (1987) found that the amount of time students invest in homework and other related activities have also been found to be strongly related to motivation. Etsey (2005) found homework to be a correlate of academic performance. He stated that "homework bore a positive relationship with learning outcomes when it is relevant to learning objectives, assigned regularly in reasonable amounts, well explained, motivational and collected and reviewed during class time and used as an occasion for feedback to

students" (p. 3). Homework is in reality an interaction between school and the home, and an essential ingredient of the educational process when measuring academic achievement (Harbison & Hanushek, 1992). Stricker and Rock (1995) conducted an analysis by assessing the impact of the pupil's initial characteristics (gender, ethnicity, parental education, geographic region and age) and the academic performance. They found that the students' initial characteristics have a modest impact on their academic performance and among them parental education was the most significant.

Nyandwi (2014) sought to investigate the factors influencing poor academic performance of secondary schools students in Sumbawanga District, Tanzania. The finding reveals that truancy and incompetence of English language of some students reduces the efficiency in their academic works.

In addition, school attendance has a high correlation with individual academic achievement. The success of a pupil in school is predicated by regular school attendance. According to Allen-Meares, Washington and Welsh (2000) poor attendance caused by truancy or unexcused absence from school, cutting classes, tardiness, and leaving school without permission are seen as important in determining pupil's academic. Adane (2005) argued that there is a negative relationship between student academic achievement and work during school hours. Akabayashi and Psacharopoulos (1999) in their study to examine determinants of work participation and school attendance for children aged 7-15 using survey data from rural Ethiopia found that additional working hours decrease a child's reading and computational ability, whereas with additional hours of school attendance and study the reading and computational ability increased. From their findings, Ray and Lancaster (2003) in their work

to find the relationship between work, school performance and school attendance of primary school children in Turkey concluded that time spent at work had negative impact on education variables with marginal impact weakening at higher levels of study hours. Unbalanced demand of work and education places a physical and mental strain on students and often leads to poor academic performance.

McLean (1997) in his study investigated the significant role of pupil attitudes toward learning with regard to the academic achievement of 69 high achieving and 55 low achieving schools in Northwestern Alberta. He found that pupils' attitudes such as absenteeism, truancy and indiscipline had a negative effect on their performance. For instance, McLean (1997) found, by distinguishing between the attitudes of high and low achievers, that five attitudinal factors (motivation for schooling, academic self-concept, referenced-based academic self-concept "perception of others", internal locus of control and instructional mastery) were significantly related to academic performance. Pupil's attitudes may not only directly affect academic achievement, but also may indirectly influence the effect of other factors as well. Hassan (2002) in his study to assess students attitudes towards school in Mulga, Turkey further complemented the results of earlier studies, with the former proving that the pupil's initial attitude towards school was significantly related to academic performance, while the latter found that attitudes predicted the pupil's basic approach to learning.

One of the personal variables most studied is self-concept, which concerns the group of thoughts and beliefs that a pupil has about his/her academic ability. Self-concept results from the pupil's internalisation of his

social image. It is developed from different interactions with the social environments and agents. Great importance is assigned by the pupil's self-image and the acceptance or rejection by others (Diaz, 2003). This factor has also been investigated by several authors. Marsh (1990) investigated the reciprocal relationship between self-concept and academic achievement using 363 students from 10 public high schools in Tehran found that an individual's present achievement is affected by prior academic self-concept, and that grades had no effect on subsequent academic self-concept. Similarly, Marsh and Yeung (1997) in their study in Tehran revealed that prior academic achievement did affect subsequent academic self-concept, and likewise, prior academic self-concept also affected subsequent achievement, with prior achievement being the control. Contrary to these results, Helmke and Van Aken (1995) found that elementary school achievement did not affect prior self-concept. Edwards (2002) found that self-concept better predict performance than variables such as age or student gender.

Another personal variable most studied is motivation. Motivation is considered to be the element that initiates the pupil's own involvement in learning. When a student is strongly motivated, all his/her effort and attention are directed toward the achievement of a specific goal, thus bringing to bear all his or her resources (Diaz, 2003). In addition, students' academic achievement motivation is influenced by the student's perception of parental support and involvement. If students' perception is positive on their parents' support and involvement, they achieve well (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Wang & Wildman, 1995). Gottfried (1994) revealed that parental motivational practices have significant direct effects on academic intrinsic motivation, and

indirect effects on subsequent motivation and achievement. According to Engin-Demir (2009) students' perceptions that their parents are involved and interested in their schooling and encourage them to do well are positively related to academic achievement. Through their involvement, parents convey the message that school is important and provide their children with positive emotional experiences in relation to school. Fuchs and Woessmann (2004) observed that students performed significantly worse in reading, maths and science in schools whose principals reported that learning was strongly hindered by the lack of parental support.

Chapter Summary

The chapter dealt with the review of literature related to factors affecting pupils' academic performance. The review was done under three themes, thus, theoretical, empirical and conceptual review.

The theoretical review was done on Martin Ford's motivational theory. The theory provides the understanding that pupil's performance or achievements are the result of a motivated and skilful student interacting with a responsive environment. Thus, if the school environment, home conditions, teacher factors and pupils characteristics are favourable, pupils stand a better chance of performing well academically.

Review was again done on the home conditions that affect pupils' academic performance. Parent's provision of breakfast, provision of text books, parents interaction with their children teacher concerning their academics and parents involvement in P.T.A have impact on pupils academic performance.

Furthermore, adequacy of school infrastructure and materials, teaching and learning materials and textbooks were found to have significant influence on pupils' performance. Again, academic qualification of teachers, lateness to school, use of local language and completion of syllabi have influence on academic performance of pupils. Notwithstanding, pupils absenteeism, lack of motivation from teachers and lack of interest and joy in teachers lesson have impact on the academic performance of pupils.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The study is about the perceived factors responsible for poor academic performance of pupils in Junior High Schools. This chapter describes the research methods used in the study including the research design, sampling techniques and procedures, population definition, instrumentation. It also describes the data sources including the methods of data collection, ethical concerns and data handling procedures.

Research Design

Research design describes the basic structure of a study, the nature of the hypothesis and the variables involved in the study (Gay, 1992). Mouton (2001) defined research design as a plan or blueprint of how one intends to conduct the research. It provides procedural outline for the conduct of any investigation. It, thus, reflects the plan that specifies how data relating to a given construct should be collected and analysed.

For the purpose of this study, the descriptive survey design was used. Descriptive design involves collecting data in order to test hypothesis or answer research questions concerning the current status of the subject of study (Gay, 1992). According to Kulbir (2009), descriptive design is a research design that seeks to find factors associated with certain occurrences, outcomes, condition or types of behaviours. Also, Osula (2001) noted that descriptive survey is versatile and practical, especially to the researcher in that they

identify present needs. He further notes that descriptive research is basic for all types of research in assessing the situation as a prerequisite for conclusion and generalisation. According to Best and Kahn (2007), the main feature of this type of design is that it describes the current state of a phenomenon, attitudes that are felt and trends that are ongoing. Descriptive survey involves the collection of data in order to test hypotheses or answer research concerning the current state of the subject under study. The main purpose of descriptive survey is to observe, describe and document aspects of a situation as it naturally occurs. This design makes use of various data collection techniques such as pre-testing, questionnaire, observation, interviews, or examination of documents (Amedahe & Asamoah-Gyimah, 2003). This type of research is important because it makes use of visual aids such as charts and graphs to assist the reader in understanding the data distribution (Jacobs, 2011).

On the contrary, if strict measures are not taken, data in descriptive survey research may be susceptible to distortion through the introduction of bias into the research design (Amedahe & Asamoah-Gyimah, 2003). Another disadvantage of descriptive survey is that though it relies on direct observation for the acquisition of data, the data have to be organized and presented systematically before accurate conclusions can be drawn. If care is not taken, the research might not draw accurate conclusions from the data gathered (Jacobs, 2011).

It is a scientific tool where relationship between variables are being determined and follow up questions can be asked and items that are not clear can be explained, and since the population was so large, it enables the researcher make generalizations based on the representative sample chosen.

Not only is descriptive survey objective, it also observes, describes and documents aspect of a situation as it occurs naturally. The descriptive design makes use of randomisation so that errors may be estimated when population characteristics are inferred from observation of samples (Wallen, 2000). The design is seen as appropriate for the study because:

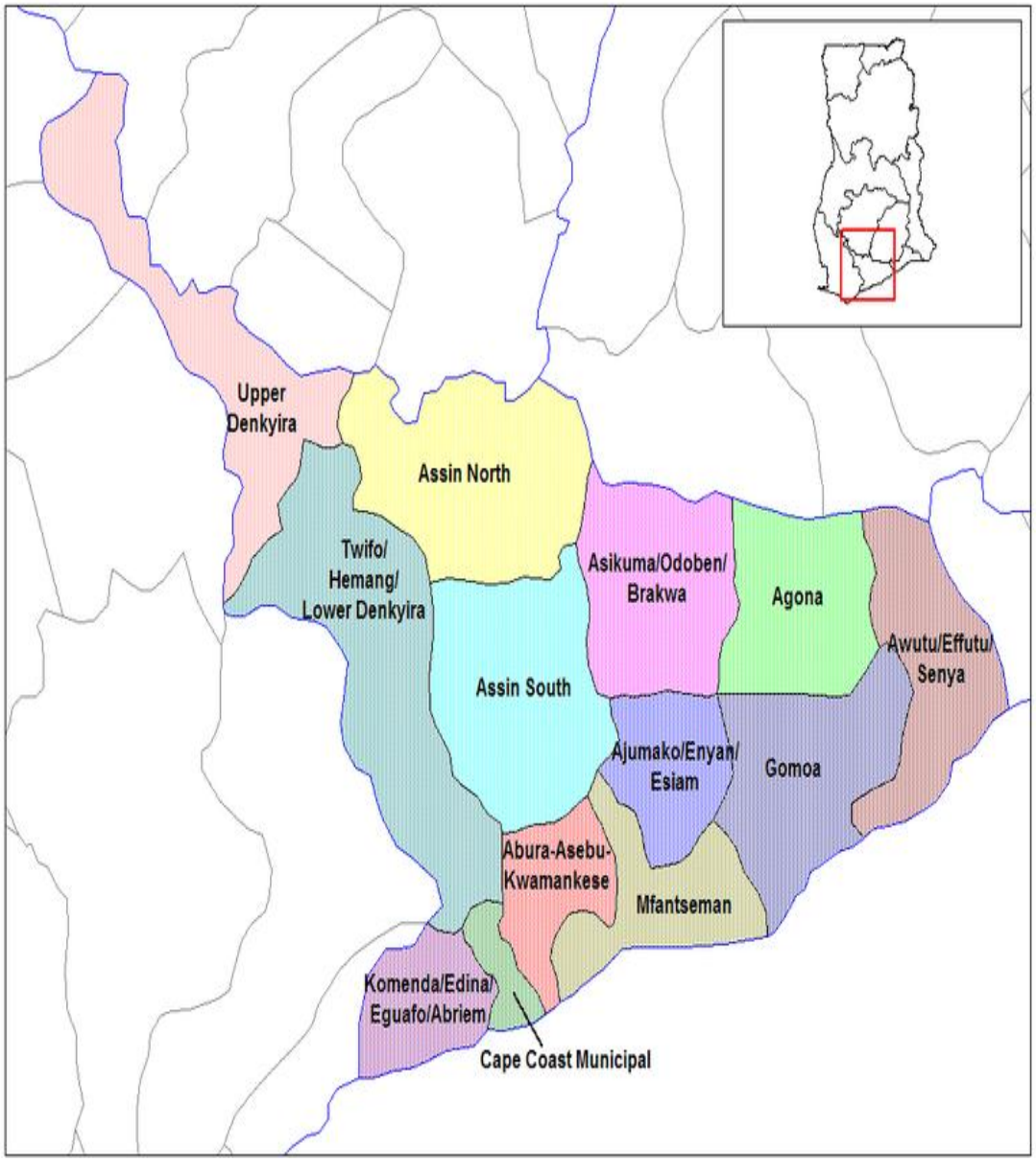
a) The nature of the topic requires that data is collected through self-report measures and
b) Large amounts of data can be collected within a short period of time.

This design helps to collect data by asking respondents questions about the construct under investigation. The main difficulty with the design, however, is demand characteristics, as respondents try to give responses in ways that reflect their idea of what responses the researcher wants from them. Despite the inherent disadvantage, it was deemed the most appropriate design for this study. This study is descriptive in nature because it was carried out to assess the factors responsible for the poor academic performance. It simply specified the nature of the given phenomena with a description of the situation using a specified population.

Study Area

The study was carried out in Asikuma circuit in the Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa Distict which is located in the north-central part of Central region of Ghana. It is bordered to the north by Birim South District of the Eastern Region, while Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam, Assin and Agona District share common boundaries with the district on the south, west and east respectively. Breman Asikuma is the capital town of the district. The population of the District according to the 2010 population and Housing Census was 112,706

representing 5.1 percentage of the region's total population. It covers an area of 884.84 square kilometres. It is located between latitude 5º 51 and 5º 52 North longitude 1º 50 and 1º 5 West. The District is generally low lying ranging between 15m-100m above sea level.



Source: Google map, 2017.

Figure 2**:** Graphical Map for Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa

Population

Gay (1992) defined population in research as the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which he/she would like the results of the study to be generalized. He further explained that the defined population has at least one characteristic that differentiates it from other groups. According to Polit and Hungler (1996), a study population reflects the entire aggregate of cases that meet designated set of criteria. It is the participants the researcher wishes to make generalisations of his findings on. Bryman (2001) defined population as any set of persons or subjects that possess at least one common characteristic. According to Johnson (1994) respondents in a population must possess the information required for the study.

Target population

Target population refers to the empirical units such as persons, objects or occurrences used for the study. The target population is the group of interest to the researcher (Kothari, 2004). The target population for a survey is the entire set of units for which the survey data are to be used to make inferences. Thus, the target population defines those units for which the findings of the survey are meant to generalize (Kothari, 2004).

Target populations must be specifically defined, as the definition determines whether sampled cases are eligible or ineligible for the survey. The geographic and temporal characteristics of the target population need to be delineated, as well as types of units being included (Kothari, 2004). It is the group to which the researcher would like to generalize the results of the study. The target population for this study consisted of school children and teachers in Asikuma District Junior High Schools, which is made up 8 circuits.

Accessible population

The accessible population is the population in research to which the researchers can apply their conclusions. This population is a subset of the target population and is also known as the study population. It is from the accessible population that researchers draw their samples (Kothari, 2004).The accessible population for the study was made up of pupils and teachers of Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools. The circuit has 30 (thirty) Junior High schools with students population of 2421 and 185 teachers.

Sampling Procedures

According to Sarantakos (1998), sample consists of carefully selected subjects of the units that comprise the entire population. Sarantakos (1998) sees sample as a subset of a population to which the researcher wants to generalize the results. Sampling techniques and procedures refer to the methods used to select sample from the target population. The process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population is known as sampling (Polit & Hungler, 1999).

Multi-stage random sampling technique was used to select the pupils for the study. Multistage sampling refers to sampling plans where the sampling is carried out in stages using smaller and smaller sampling units at each stage. In a two-stage sampling design, a sample of primary units is selected and then a sample of secondary units is selected within each primary unit (Burns & Grove 2001). Multi-stage sampling is a further development of the principle of cluster sampling (Kothari, 2004). There are three classes in a Junior High School namely, JHS one, JHS two and JHS three. All the three classes were considered for the study.

Stage 1

In the first stage, simple random sampling was used to select four public Junior High Schools, namely Asikuma Presby JHS, Col. Baidoo JHS, Asikuma Catholic Boys JHS and Asikuma Catholic Girls JHS. This type of sampling is also known as chance sampling or probability sampling where each and every item in the population has an equal chance of inclusion in the sample and each one of the possible samples, in case of finite universe, has the same probability of being selected (Kothari, 2004). The lottery method was used. All the names of Junior High Schools in the circuit were written on pieces of paper. The papers were put into a container and I shook the container rigorously and I selected four schools. This was done in order to give all the schools equal chance of being selected.

Stage 2

Proportionate random sampling was then used to select the number of pupils from the classes, thus JHS one 20%, JHS two 30% and JHS three 50%. This is because I believe that pupils in JHS three are very knowledgeable about the factors responsible for the poor academic performance than pupils in JHS two and JHS one respectively. Simple random sampling technique was used because I desire to give the subjects equal chance of being selected. I believe that pupils in these classes might have knowledge about BECE and are also familiar with school and home factors that influence their academic achievement. I also used all the teachers in the selected Junior High Schools for the study.

Table 2- *Distribution of Study Participants (Pupils)*

School	Class	Number of students	Sample size
Asikuma Presby	JHS 1	24	10
JHS	JHS 2	28	15
	JHS 3	29	25
Asikuma Col	JHS 1	22	10
Baidoo JHS	JHS 2	31	15
	JHS 3	34	26
Asikuma Catholic	JHS 1	39	10
Boys	JHS 2	33	15
	JHS 3	38	27
Asikuma Catholic	JHS 1	33	10
Girls	JHS 2	36	15
	JHS 3	39	27
Totals		386	205

Source: Field survey, Baidoo-Anu (2016)

According to Amedahe (2002), in most quantitative studies, a sample size of 5% to 20% of the population size is sufficient for generalization purposes, with respect to the population. Therefore a sample size of 205 for a population of 2421 was more than 5% of the total population and therefore was enough for generalisation. This can be seen in Table 2.

Data Collection Instruments

Instrumentation refers to the development of tools or instruments for gathering data from the field. Some of these include questionnaires, interview schedule, etc. Although a number of instruments for data collection could have been used, a questionnaire was deemed most appropriate for the study. Questionnaires are easy to administer, friendly to complete and fast to score and therefore take relatively less time from researchers and respondents (Knowles, 1980). Despite the numerous advantages of questionnaires dishonesty can be an issue. Thus respondents may not be 100 percent truthful with their answers. This can happen for variety of reasons, including social desirability bias and attempting to protect privacy. However, I stopped dishonesty in its track by assuring respondents that their privacy is valued and that the process prevents personal identification. It also has a weakness of respondents skipping questions which are complicated, and this can affect the result of the study; notwithstanding, I made my questions uncomplicated to avoid questions skipping so that I get better completion rates.

With the development of the questionnaire, I first of all did a thorough reading on the factors that affect pupil's academic performance and with the help of my supervisors, I based on the factors that affect pupil's academic performance to develop two questionnaires to be utilized in this study. The questionnaires were designed respectively for school teachers and pupils on factors which were perceived to be affecting academic performance in the school.

The questionnaire for teachers was made up of four sections, A, B, C, D. Section A sought to elicit demographic data of the teachers, section B

which was made up of 9 items sought to elicit information on the perceived teacher-related factors contributing to poor academic performance of pupils. Section C was made up of 5 items which sought information on perceived school-related factors contributing to pupils' poor academic performance. Finally, Section D was made up of 9 items which sought information on pupils' characteristics that affect their academic performance.

The pupils' questionnaire was made up of 3 sections, A, B, C. Section A sought to elicit demographic data of the pupils. Section B was made up of 10 items and it elicited information about the perceived pupils' characteristics contributing for their poor performance academically. Section C was made up of 8 items and it elicited information on the perceived home conditions contributing to poor academic performance of pupils.

I pre-tested the instruments that were used. Pre-testing in the view of Donald (1990) helps the researcher to decide whether the study is feasible and worthwhile to continue and also provides an opportunity to assess the appropriateness and practicality of the data collection instrument. The instrument was pre-tested in order to check understanding and ambiguity and correct any misunderstandings which would be due to the framing and construction of the items. The reliability statistic for the pupils' and teachers questionnaire had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.72 and 0.76 respectively.

The data was subjected to content validity as I selected a representative sample of indicators from the domain of indicators of the concepts. This is known as sampling validity. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) defined validity as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which are based on the research results.

Content- related evidence helps to determine if the content of the instrument contains an appropriate or adequate sample of the domain it is supposed to represent or reflect. Content- related evidence and face-validity were used to ensure validity of the instrument. This was done by giving the questionnaire to an expert who has knowledge in educational research. The validity and reliability of the instrument were established to make sure that it is internally consistent within itself.

Data Collection Procedure

Data was collected from selected teachers and students. I encouraged them to provide honest responses since the study was for academic purposes and will also be useful to the school and Children. To materialise this, I obtained a letter of introduction from the Head of Department of Education and Psychology in the University of Cape Coast, soliciting for the assistance of the Headmasters/Headmistresses of Junior High Schools for the effectiveness of the study. I visited the selected schools three weeks to the collection of the data to seek permission and then arranged for convenient days and time for the administration of the questionnaire. On March 8, 2017, around 9:00am I visited the first school, precisely Asikuma Presby Junior High School. The pupils were able to respond to the questionnaire on the same day of which I collected after they were done. The teachers asked me to go for the questionnaires the next day. On 9th March, 2017, around 8:30am I went to the school to take the teachers questionnaires. On 10th March around 11:00am I got to the second school, precisely Col. Baidoo Junior High School. At Col. Baidoo Junior High School, both the teachers and pupils responded to the questionnaire on the same day and I took them immediately after they were

done. On 12th March 2017, around 9:00am I went to Catholic Boys Junior High, it took me two days to collect the data from that school. I went to Catholic Girls Junior High School on the 15th of March 2017. I was able to retrieve all the questionnaires on the same say after both pupils and teachers have responded to the questionnaires. In all, I used one week for the data collection. During the administration, the pupils and teachers were briefed on the objectives of the study and the need to respond frankly to the items. The teachers and pupils questionnaires were distributed personally to the teachers and pupils and I took them immediately they were done. I had 100 percent return rate.

Data Processing and Analysis

Analysis of data provided facts and figures that enabled me to interpret results and make statements about the findings of the study. The data was collated, and edited in order to address questions that have been answered partially or not answered. For effective statistical presentation and analysis, the questionnaires were serially numbered to facilitate easy identification. It is necessary to observe this precaution to ensure quick detection of tiny errors when they occur in the tabulation of the data. Responses to the various items in the questionnaires were also added, tabulated and statistically analysed. All items of the questionnaires were coded. Items in the form of four point Likert scale were rated between 4-1, with 4 being the highest and 1 being the lowest.

Percentages and frequencies were used to analyze the background information of the participants. I used percentages and frequencies to answer research question one, research question two, research question three and

research question four. Percentages and frequencies were used to ensure clear understanding and interpretation of the data analysis.

Ethical Consideration

Research ethics refers to the correct rules of conduct necessary when carrying out research. It describes the need for participants to understand the aims, objectives and potential harm that such involvement may have on them (Seidman, 2006). It also spells out that they have the right to withdraw even after consent has been given. This is in line with Cohen et al (2000), and Mertens, (2010), who stated that informed consent arises from the participant's right to freedom. Researchers have moral responsibility to protect participants from harm. The primary responsibility for the conduct of ethical research lies with the researcher. Researchers have a responsibility to ensure as far as possible that the physical, social and psychological well-being of the research participant are not detrimentally affected by the research. Research relationships should be characterized, whenever possible, by mutual respect and trust. In this study, the purpose of the study was carefully reviewed with each participant before they will be involved in the research.

Punch (2008) was of the opinion that researchers should be mindful of ethical issues especially in social research because it is concerned with data about people. Consideration for moral issues and respect for participants is essential in social research. Hence, in this research several ethical issues were taken into consideration. The research addressed all ethical concerns which include informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality.

For parents and teachers, I obtained informed verbal consent from them before commencement. The participants were made aware that their

participation are voluntary, and that they are free to decline or accept or decline to engage in the research. Anonymity of study respondents were also highly taken into consideration in the present study. Oliver (2010) pointed out that anonymity is a vital issue in research ethics because it gives the participants the opportunity to have their identity concealed. In this research, fictitious names were used for identification purposes which could not be traced to the participants. Codes were also adopted where necessary to ensure anonymity of information. In order not to unnecessarily invade the privacy of participants, I made prior visits to schools before the data collection commenced to seek for their consent. Neither names nor any identifiable information from respondents were taken as a way of ensuring the ethical principle of anonymity. This is to prevent possible victimization of respondents where certain responses may be viewed as unpalatable to other stakeholders.

On the issue of confidentiality, efforts were made to maintain confidentiality of the responses of the participants. Participants were told that their responses would be kept confidential and that no one known to them would have access to the information provided and none of the respondents names were recorded in the study.

Most importantly on the ethical issues of the study, pieces of information that were cited from earlier studies on factors accounting for student's low academic performance to support the review of related literature were duly acknowledged through both citation and referencing in order to avoid academic dishonesty otherwise known as plagiarism.

Chapter Summary

This chapter highlighted the research design, population, sampling procedure, data collection instruments and procedures and data processing analysis. Descriptive research design was deemed appropriate for this study though it is susceptible to distortion through the introduction of bias into the research design and it relies on direct observation for the acquisition of data.

Public Junior High Schools in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District were the population for this study. The simple random sampling and multistage sampling techniques was used to sample participants for the study. Percentages and frequencies were used for the analysis of all the research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to investigate factors responsible for poor academic performance in the Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools. This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of the data that I collected from the participants from the schools that participated in the study. The data were analyzed and discussed according to the research questions. The respondents of the study were pupils, parents and teachers.

Data were analysed using frequency distributions, percentages, standard deviations and means. The first part of this chapter describes the demographic characteristics of respondents. In the second part, the research findings are presented in four sections according to the research questions posed on school factors, parental/home support variables, teacher factors, and pupil's characteristics issues. The analysis was done based on the following research questions.

Research Questions

1) What school environmental factors (teaching and learning materials, classrooms for teaching and learning) are the causes of poor academic performance in the Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools?
2) What are home condition that (inability to provide breakfast, textbooks and basic school needs, less interaction with children's teachers and less involvement in the Parent Teacher Association PTA) caused

pupils in the Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools to perform poorly academically?

3) What teacher factors (academic qualification, lateness to school, incidence of absenteeism, use of the local language in teaching, completion of the syllabi) contribute to low academic achievement of the pupils in Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools?
4) What pupil characteristics (absenteeism and regularity in school, lack of teacher motivation, lack of interest and joy in the teacher's lesson) were responsible for their poor academic achievement in the Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools?

Analysis of Background Data

This section of the chapter presents the analysis of the background data of the respondents.

Table 3- *Gender Distribution of Teachers*

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	15	60.0
Female	10	40.0
Total	25	100

Source: Field survey, Baidoo-Anu (2017)

From Table 3, it can be observed that, out of the 25 teachers used for the study, 15 (60.0%) were males while 10 (40.0%) were females. This means that the males exceeded the female.

Table 4 presents the gender distribution of pupils used for the study

Table 4- *Gender Distribution of the Pupils*

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	103	50.2
Female	102	49.8
Total	205	100.0

Source: Field survey, Baidoo-Anu (2017)

Table 4 above shows that, out of the 205 respondents, 103 representing 50.2% were males and 102 respondents representing 49.8% are females. This shows gender balance among respondents.

Table 5- *Age Range Distribution of Pupils*

Age (in years)	Frequency	Percentage
12 years and below	17	8.3
13-15	100	48.8
16 years and above	88	42.9
Total	205	100.0

Source: Field survey, Baidoo-Anu (2017)

The age distribution of the pupils as presented in Table 5 indicates that 100 (48.8%) were between the ages of 13 to 15 years. This was the age group with the highest respondents. It is followed by 16 years and above had 88 (42.9%) out of the 205 pupils used for the study. Age ranges 12 years and below registered 17 (8.3%). This is an indication that most of the pupils who participated in the study were 13 years and above.

Table 6 presents the analysis of the age range of teachers. The result is presented in table 6.

Table 6 – *Age Range of Distribution Teachers*

Age (in years)	Frequency	Percentage
Below 22	1	4.0
22-40	18	72.0
Above 40	6	24.0
Total	25	100.0

Source: Field survey, Baidoo-Anu (2017)

The age distribution of the teachers as presented in Table 5 indicates that 18 (72.0%) were between the ages of 22 to 40 years. This was the age group with the highest respondents. It is followed by 40 years and above had 6 (24.0%) out of the 25 teachers used for the study. Age ranges below 22 years registered 1 (4.0%). This is an indication that most of the teachers who participated in the study were between the ages of 22 years and 40 years. This means there are more young teachers in the circuit.

I solicited for teacher's academic qualification. The analysis of the result is presented in Table 7.

Table 7- *Academic Qualification of Teachers*

Educational status	Frequency	Percent
First Degree	13	52
Diploma	9	36
Cert A	3	12
Total	25	100

Source: Field survey, Baidoo-Anu (2017)

Out of the 25 teachers who participated in the study, 13 representing 52% have first degree, 9 teachers representing 36% have diploma and 3

teachers representing 12%. The result indicates that majority of the teachers who participated in the study had first degree.

Table 8- *Distribution of Teacher's Number of Years Taught*

Years	Frequency	Percent
Less than 5 years	1	4.0
5-10 years	13	52.0
11 years and above	11	44.0
Totals	25	100

Source: Field survey, Baidoo-Anu (2017)

Table 8 shows that majority 13 (52%) of the teachers who responded to the questionnaires indicated that they have taught for 5-10 years. Out of the 25 respondents, 11 (44%) indicated they have taught for 11 years and above. This shows that the teachers who responded are very experienced in teaching, because they taught for some number of years, and therefore have are in the best position to give credible information with regards to factors affecting pupils academic performance.

Analysis and Discussions of Research Questions

Research Question One: What school environmental factors (teaching and learning materials, classrooms for teaching and learning) were the causes of poor academic performance in the Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools?

For clear understanding, frequency and percentage was also used to analyse research question one. The analyses was done using four point likert scale thus very adequate, adequate, not adequate and not available. Where **Very Adequate** means the resource in question is more than enough to aid teaching and learning, **Adequate** means the resource in question is enough to

aid teaching and learning, **Not Adequate** means the resource in question is not enough to aid teaching and learning and **Not Available** means the resource in question is not found in the school at all. For easy interpretation very adequate and adequate were put together as adequate. The questionnaire on the school environmental factors were made up of 6 (six) items.

Respondent's responses concerning school related factors responsible for poor academic performance of the pupils in Asikuma circuit are presented in Table 9 below.

Table 9- *Descriptive Analysis of School Related Factors Causing Poor Academic Performance of Pupils*

Sn	statements	N	Adequate Freq	Adequate %	Not adequate Freq	Not adequate %	Not Available Freq	Not Available %
1.	How adequate are the teaching and learning materials (TLMs) in your school to help in the teaching and learning?	25	8	32	11	44	6	24
2.	How adequate does the school library aid teaching and learning?	25	4	16	10	40	11	44
3.	How adequate is the organisation of in-service-training, workshops and seminars for teachers in the school?	25	6	36	14	56	2	8
4.	How adequate is the organisation of PTA meetings in the school?	25	20	80	5	20	0	0
5.	How adequate are the classrooms equipped for teaching and learning in the school?	25	9	36	15	60	1	4
6.	How adequate are the pieces of furniture in the classroom for teaching and learning in the school?	25	9	36	16	64	0	0

Source: Field survey, Baidoo-Anu (2017)

Table 9 sought to find out school related factors causing low academic performance among schools in the Asikuma Circuit. The findings from the study shows that school related factors play a major role in student's poor academic performance. Concerning the first item, thus "How adequately are the teaching and learning materials (TLMs) in school to help in the teaching and learning" majority of the respondents, 11(44%) are of the view that teaching and learning materials are not adequate in the school. Six respondents representing 24% said the TLM's are not available at all, 8(32%) indicated that the TLM's are adequate. The result shows that majority of the respondents confirmed that there is not enough teaching and learning materials (TLMs) in school to help in the teaching and learning.

This support the work of Nyandwi (2014) who undertook a study to assess factors that influenced the academic performance of students of selected secondary schools in Sumbawanga District, Tanzania. The study identified some factors rooted from the school environment such as inadequate teaching and learning facilities. Again, Etsey (2005) also found teaching and learning materials to be less adequate in the Shama sub-metro schools. Since there were less TLMs in the Shama sub-metro schools, the situation made it difficult for the pupils to understand the lessons and this led to lower performance because lack of suitable teaching materials and accommodation tends to reduce the effectiveness of teaching.

Table 9 further sought to elicit information whether school library is adequate to aid teaching and learning. The table shows that majority 11(44%) of the respondents indicated that library is not available in the school, 10 (40%) of the respondents indicated that though they have library, it is not

adequate enough to aid teaching and learning. This gives evidence that unavailability of school library in the schools contributed to poor academic performance in the Asikuma Circuit. This confirms the work of Heynemann and Lopxlely (1983) who found out that presence of school library related significantly to achievement.

On the issue of how adequate classrooms are equipped for teaching and learning. The study revealed that student's poor academic performance could be attributed to inadequacy of classrooms among the schools in the Asikuma Circuit. From the Table 9, majority 15(60%) of the respondents indicated that the classrooms are not adequately equipped to aid teaching and learning.

Table 9 further sought to elicit information as to whether pieces of furniture in the classroom are adequate for teaching and learning in the school. The majority 16 (64%) of the respondents indicated that the pieces of furniture in the classrooms were not adequate to aid teaching and learning. This supports Nyandwi (2014) study, who found that inadequate teaching and learning facilities such as desks and chairs in the classrooms affects teaching and learning negatively.

Research Question Two: What are the home conditions that (inability to provide breakfast, textbooks and basic school needs, less interaction with children's teachers and less involvement in the Parent Teacher Association PTA) caused pupils in the Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools to perform poorly academically?

This section sought to find answers to research question two. In finding out from pupils the home related factors that cause poor academic performance in pupils in Asikuma circuit, responses were put on four point likert scale. Thus, SA means Strongly Agree, A means Agree, D is Disagree, SD means Strongly Disagree. The questionnaire on the home conditions that affect pupils performance was made up 8 (eight) items. For clearer interpretations, strongly agree and agree were combined as **agree** while strongly disagree and disagree were put together as **disagree.**

Pupils' responses on the perceived home factors that contributed to pupils' poor academic performance are presented in Table 10.

Table10- *Home Related Factors Contributing to Pupils Poor Academic performance*

SN	Statement	N	Agree	Disagree
		205	F (%)	F (%)
1	My parents do not encourage me to learn	205	50(24)	155(76)
2	My parents do not supervise my homework	205	78(38.2)	126(61.8)
3	My parents' do not attend P.T.A meetings	205	146(71.2)	59(28.8)
4	My Parents do not provide my basic needs for me	204	54(26.5)	150(73.5)
5	My parents do not provide subject textbooks for me	205	139(68)	66(32)
6	My parents provide breakfast for me before I leave for school	205	83(40.5)	122(59.5)
7	My parents make me sell after school hours	204	69(33.8)	135(66.2)
8	My parents make me go to farm after school hours	205	37(18)	168(81.9)

Source: Field survey, Baidoo-Anu (2017)

Table 10 clearly shows that, majority 155(76%) of the pupils indicated that their parents encourage them to learn. It can be concluded from the above findings that parents encourage their ward concerning their education.

Furthermore, concerning whether their parents attend P.T.A meetings, majority 146(71.2%) indicated that their parents did not attend P.T.A meetings. The findings further support the work of Adane (2013) who found that there is a statistically significant relationship between attendance at PTA meetings and school performance ($\chi 2 = 11.378$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.05$). The results showed that parents of the pupils in high achieving school were more involved in attending PTA meetings than parents of the pupils in the low achieving school.

Again, on the issue of whether parents provided their wards with subjects text books, majority 139(68%) of the respondent indicated that, their parent do not provide them with subjects text books.

The pupils were also asked whether their parents provide breakfast for them before they leave for school. Majority 122(59.5%) indicated that their parent do not provide breakfast for them before leaving to school.

This findings support the work of Kawafha (2013). In his study to find the impact of skipping breakfast on various educational and overall academic achievements of primary school children in northern of Jordan found that skipping breakfast has an association with academic achievement. The consequences of these problems Kawafha (2013) said include malnutrition that leads to slow children physical and mental development, increase susceptibility to infections and reduces academic achievement. Skipping breakfast can be considered as a barrier to optimal learning.

Etsey (2005) also found that parental support variables causing pupils to perform poorly academically were their inability to provide breakfast, textbooks and less involvement in the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

Research Question Three: What's teacher factors (academic qualification, lateness to school, incidence of absenteeism, use of the local language in teaching, completion of the syllabi) contribute to low academic achievement of the pupils in Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools?

I sought knowledge from the teachers on the teacher related factors that cause poor academic performance of pupils in Asikuma circuit. Responses were put on four likert point scale. Thus, SA means Strongly Agree, A means Agree, D is Disagree, SD means Strongly Disagree. For clearer interpretations, strongly agree and agree were combined as agree while strongly disagree and disagree were put together as disagree. The questionnaire on the teacher factors were made up of 9 (nine) items.

Table 11 presents a summary of teachers responses to the factors perceived to be teacher-related causes of poor academic performance.

Table 11- *Descriptive Analysis of Teachers Factors Causing Poor Academic Performance of Pupils*

SN	Statement	N	Agree	Disagree
			F (%)	F (%)
1	When I use poor methods of teaching, it affects my students' academic performance negatively	25	21(84)	4(16)
2	My good interpersonal relationship with students tends to affects their performance positively	25	19(76)	6(24)
3	My interest in pupils school work affects their performance positively	25	19(76)	6(24)
4	My lateness to school tends to affect pupils learning Negatively	25	19(76)	6(24)
5	My absence from school on regular basis affects pupils performance negatively	25	22(88)	3(12)
6	Students performance is affected negatively if am unable to complete their scheme of work (syllabus)	25	16(64)	9(36)
7	My poor attitude towards tends to affect pupils performance negatively	25	21(84)	4(16)
8	Failure to organize seminars, workshops, in-service training for us teachers in the affects pupils performance negatively	25	17(68)	8(22)
9	My failure to use English language in teaching it affects pupil's ability to express themselves	25	17(68)	8(22)

Source: Field data, Baidoo-Anu (2017)

I further went on to find out the teachers factors causing poor academic performance of pupils in Asikuma Circuit. Table 11 presents the findings from the study. The results show that majority 21(84%) indicated that use of poor methods by teachers affects pupil's academic performance negatively.

To elicit from the teachers whether teachers good interpersonal relationship with students tends to affect their performance positively, majority 19(76%) indicating that pupils academic performance largely depends on the teachers good interpersonal relationship with their students. With respect to absenteeism of teachers, majority 22(88%) of the teachers indicated their regular absence from school has resulted in their pupils poor performance.

Concerning teachers lateness to school, majority 19(76%) of the respondents indicated that their lateness to school has had adverse effect on pupils performance.

This findings confirm the study of Etsey (2005) who attributed the cause of poor academic performance in the Shama Sub-Metro of Shama Ahanta East Metropolitan Assembly (SAEMA) in Ghana to a combination of factors relating to teacher factors such as lateness to school, incidence of absenteeism, use of the local language in teaching, inability to complete the syllabi, less interest in children's understanding of lesson and not hardworking.

The findings also support the work of Adane (2005) who found out that teacher factors such as incidence of lateness to school and absenteeism, inability to complete the syllabi and inadequate homework assigned to pupils contributed to the low academic performance of pupils from Kemp Methodist JHS. The role of the teacher in achieving academic excellence is very important so these factors on the part of the teacher affect the pupils greatly.

In another study, Fobih, Akyeampong and Koomson (1999) arrived unannounced in some 60 schools and found that about 85 per cent of teachers went to school late. Lateness ranged from five minutes up to one and a half hours. This meant teaching time was lost, teachers taught fewer school subjects (i.e. taught mainly English and Mathematics out of 10 subjects), and the shortening of the school day for students.

Research Questions Four: What pupil characteristics (absenteeism and regularity in school, lack of teacher motivation, lack of interest and joy in the teacher's lesson) are responsible for the poor academic achievement in the Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools?

I sought knowledge from the teachers about the pupil characteristics that contributed to cause poor academic performance of pupils in Asikuma circuit. Responses were put on a four point likert scale, VO- Very Often, O- Often, S- Sometimes, and R- Rarely. Very Often means it happens all the time, Often means it happens most of the times, Sometimes means it happens occasionally and Rarely means it mostly does not happen. For better and clearer understanding, very often and often were put together as **often.** Whiles

Sometimes and Rarely were maintained. The questionnaire on the pupil characteristics that affect pupils performance was made up 9 of (nine) items.

Table 12 presents a summary of pupils responses to the factors perceived to be pupils characteristics causing poor academic performance.

Table 12- *Descriptive Analysis of Pupils Factors Causing Poor Academic Performance of Pupils*

Sn	N	Often		Sometimes		Rarely	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1. How often do your pupils come to school before morning assembles?	25	19	76	1	4	5	20
2. How often do your pupils absent themselves from school?	25	13	52	10	40	2	8
3. How often do your pupils do their class exercises?	25	24	96	1	4	0	0
4. How often do your pupils do assignments?	25	23	92	2	8	0	0
5. How often do your pupils participate in class lessons?	25	25	100	0	0	0	0
6. How often do your pupils participate in extra classes in the school?	25	17	68	7	28	1	4
7. How often do your pupils use Local language to communicate among themselves during class lessons?	25	17	68	5	20	3	12
8. How often do your pupils use English language to communicate among themselves during lessons?	25	15	60	10	40	0	0
9. How often do your pupils get motivated in studying?	25	12	48	13	52	0	0

Source: Field survey, Baidoo-Anu (2017)

From Table 12, concerning pupils absenting themselves, majority 13(52%) of the teachers indicated that their pupils often absent themselves from school. Twelve (48%) of the respondent indicated that their pupils often get motivated in studying, 13(52%) indicated that their pupils sometimes get motivated in studying.

This findings support the work of Allen-Meares, Washington and Welsh (2000) who found that poor attendance caused by truancy or unexcused absence from school, cutting classes, tardiness, and leaving school without permission is seen as important in determining pupil's academic performance.

Also, McLean (1997) investigated the significant role of pupil attitudes toward learning with regard to their academic achievement. Pupils' attitudes such as absenteeism, truancy, indiscipline, had negative effect on their performance.

Diaz (2003) found that when a student is strongly motivated, all his effort and attention are directed toward the achievement of a specific goal, thus bringing to bear all his or her resources

I also sought from the pupils themselves the factors relating to them that causes their poor performance. The analyses of their responses are presented in Table 13. The questionnaire on the pupil characteristics that affect pupils performance was made up of 10 (ten) items.

Table13-*Pupil's Characteristics that Contribute to the Poor Academic Performance*

SN	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
		F (%)	**F (%)**	**F (%)**	**F (%)**	**F (%)**
1	When I develop bad behaviour towards my studies it affects my academics negatively.	152(74.1)	32(15.6)	6(2.9)	15(7.3)	205(100)
2	Peer group influence affects my learning negatively.	121(59.6)	45(22.2)	19(9.4)	18(8.9)	203(100)
3	Truancy affects my learning negatively.	114(56.4)	45(22.3)	16(7.9)	27(13.4)	202(100)
4	My lateness to school affects my learning in a negative way.	116(56.9)	52(25.4)	19(9.3)	17(8.3)	204(100)
5	Absenting myself from school on a regular basis affect my learning negatively.	132(65.0)	40(19.7)	12(5.9)	19(9.3)	203(100)
6	My failure in doing my homework affects my learning negatively.	122(59.5)	46(22.4)	18(8.8)	19(9.3)	205(100)
7	My use of local language more than the official language (English) affects my learning positively.	56(27.3)	50(24.4)	58(28.3)	41(20.0)	205(100)
8	I am not happy in school and this affects my learning negatively.	60(29.3)	53(25.9)	35(17.1)	57(27.8)	205(100)
9	When I go to school regularly it affects my learning positively.	103(50.3)	27(13.2)	22(10.7)	53(25.9)	205(100)
10	I mostly do not enjoy my teacher's lessons and it tends to affect my learning negatively.	66(32.4)	65(31.9)	31(15.2)	42(20.6)	204(100)

Source: Field data, Baidoo-Anu (2017)

From Table 13, majority 152(74.1%) of the pupils indicated that when they develop bad behaviour towards their studies it affects their academics negatively. Concerning peer group influence, the majority 121(59.6%) of the pupils stated that peer group influence affects their learning negatively. Again, on issues relating to pupils lateness to school, majority 116(56.9%) of the pupils indicated that their lateness to school affects their learning in a negative way. Furthermore, concerning pupils absenting themselves, out of the 205 pupils who were involved in the study, majority 192(65.0%) indicated they strongly agree that absenting themselves from school on a regular basis affect their learning negatively, 113(55.2%) of the pupils agreed that they are not happy in school and this affects their learning negatively. Moreover, the pupils were asked if they enjoy their teacher's lesson and out of the total 204 respondents, 131(64.3%) agreed that they mostly do not enjoy their teacher's lessons and it tends to affect their learning negatively.

These findings confirm the work of Allen-Meares, Washington and Welsh (2000) who found out that poor attendance caused by truancy or unexcused absence from school, cutting classes, tardiness, and leaving school without permission is seen as important in determining pupil's academic performance. The finding further confirms the work of McLean (1997) who investigated the significant role of pupil attitudes toward learning with regard to their academic achievement. McLean found out that pupils' attitudes such as absenteeism, truancy and indiscipline, had negative effect on their performance.

Chapter Summary

The chapter discussed the findings of the study. Four researched questions were analysed and discussed. From research question one, the study found that Asikuma circuit Junior High Schools do not have enough teaching and learning materials to aid teaching and learning. Libraries too are not available in most of the schools which also impede some teaching and learning. Also the study revealed that organisation of in-service-training, workshops and seminars for teachers are not adequate.

From research question two, the study found that parents do not provide breakfast for their children before leaving to school and also parents do not provide subject text book for their children. It further revealed that parents do not attend PTA meetings regularly. Also, from research question three, the study found that teachers lateness absenteeism, poor interpersonal relationships affect pupils performance.

Finally, from research question four, the study found that pupils' absenteeism, peer group influence, less interest in teachers' lesson contributes to pupils poor performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

The purpose of this study was to identify factors responsible for the poor academic performance of pupils in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa district. Specifically, the study aimed at finding out the role school environmental factors (teaching and learning materials, classrooms for teaching and learning) play in pupil's poor academic performance in Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools, ascertaining home condition (inability to provide breakfast, textbooks and basic school needs, less interaction with children's teachers and less involvement in the Parent Teacher Association PTA) responsible for the poor academic achievement of pupils in Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools, identifying teacher factors (academic qualification, lateness to school, incidence of absenteeism, use of the local language in teaching, completion of the syllabi) that contribute to the poor academic performance of the pupils in Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools and pupils characteristics (absenteeism and regularity in school, lack of teacher motivation, lack of interest and joy in the teacher's lesson) play in the poor academic achievement in Asikuma pupils in Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools.

Four public Junior High Schools, namely Asikuma Presby JHS, Col Baidoo JHS, Asikuma Catholic Boys JHS and Asikuma Catholic Girls JHS were used for the study. Multi-stage random sampling technique was used to

select the pupil for the study. The researcher also used all the teachers in the selected Junior High Schools for the study. A total of 230 respondents were used for the study. This comprised 25 teachers and 205 pupils. Questionnaire was the main instrument used for data collection and analysis was done using the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) to generate figures, frequencies, percentages and tables.

Summary

The following key findings were made:

1. School environmental factors that causes poor academic performance in the Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools.
    a) Inadequate learning materials
    b) Inadequate classrooms for teaching and learning.
    c) Lack of library to aid teaching and learning.
    d) Classrooms are not adequately equipped to aid teaching and learning
2. Home condition that causes pupils in the Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools to perform poorly academically are:
    a) Parents do not provide breakfast for their children and it affect their performance negatively
    b) Parents do not provide subject textbooks for their children.
    c) Parents do not attend Parent Teachers Association meetings.
3. Teacher factors that contributed to low academic achievement of the pupils in Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools include:

a) Teacher's regular absence from school has resulted in their pupil's poor performance.

b) Teacher's lateness to school had adverse effect on pupil's performance.

4. Pupils' characteristics that are responsible for their poor academic achievement in the Asikuma Circuit Junior High Schools are:

   a) Pupils often absent themselves from school.

   b) Peer group influence affects pupils learning negatively.

   c) Pupil's lateness to school affects their learning in a negative way.

   d) Pupils mostly do not enjoy their teacher's lessons and it tends to affect their learning negatively

Conclusions

The study examined the perceived factors that were responsible for the low academic achievement of pupils in Asikuma circuit of Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District. Factors related to school environment, teachers, home conditions and pupils characteristics were found to be contributing to poor academic performance of the pupils in Asikuma circuit. These factors include pupils and teacher absenteeism, pupils and teachers lateness to school, inadequate teaching and learning materials, poor parental involvement in PTA meetings, parents not providing pupils with subject text book and breakfast. These factors attributed to teachers, pupils, parents and the school environments were primarily responsible for the low academic performance of pupils in Asikuma circuit in of Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District.

It must be emphasised that these factors generally do not operate in isolation. Teacher absenteeism and lateness, for example, would result in incompletion of the syllabus and would also affect pupil's motivation, enthusiasm, zeal and commitment to learn. Improving the academic performance of the pupils in the Asikuma circuit of Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District schools should not involve paying attention to individual issues discussed. It should involve a total package.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the research for policy and practice.

1) Ghana Education Service in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District should provide the Asikuma Circuit schools with the adequate teaching and learning materials, adequate classrooms for teaching and learning. This will help them read more thereby promoting good performance.
2) Parents in Asikuma Circuit should be encouraged to try their possible best to provide breakfast for their children every morning before leaving to school, as this will help student concentrate during instructional sessions.
3) Parents should provide subject text books for their children as this will help improve their academic performance.
4) It is recommended that the Ghana Education Service in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District should educate pupils on the adverse effects of absenteeism, truancy and peer group influence on academic performance. The schools should adopt strategy to reward students

who come to school on regular basis and those who come to school early. This reinforcement strategy will motivate students who do not like going to school or who do not go to school early to also learn to be going to school on regular basis and also be punctual.

5) Asikuma Circuit teachers should also motivate their pupils and make the classroom environment lively. Ghana Education Service should organize workshops for Asikuma Circuit teachers to educate them on how to make their class interesting so that their pupils will enjoy their lesson.
6) Asikuma Circuit teachers should be encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards their pupils so that the pupils can readily approach and relate with them. This will help the pupils to easily communicate to them whatever issues bothering them.

Suggestions for Further Research

Further studies can be done on the perceived administrative and community factors responsible for poor academic performance. This will provide knowledge on the administrative and the community factors that cause pupils poor academic performance.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR JHS TEACHERS

Dear Respondent,

I am a student of the University of Cape Coast conducting a research. The goal of this study is to obtain evidence of the perceived factors that are responsible for the poor academic performance of pupils in schools. I, therefore, solicit your cooperation and consent to participate in this study. The confidentiality of your responses is guaranteed. There is no right or wrong responses, so please feel free to tick (where appropriate) the responses that express your views.

Please indicate your choice by ticking (√) or writing your response where necessary.

SECTION A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Gender : Male [ ] Female[ ]
2. Age: Below 22 years [ ] Between 22 and 40 years[ ] Above 40 years[ ]
3. Academic Qualification Cert. A 3 years [ ] Diploma [ ] First Degree [ ] Masters [ ] Any other……..
4. How many years have you taught as a teacher?

   Less than five years [ ] Between 5-10 years [ ] More than 11 years[ ]

SECTION B

Teacher factors contributing to pupils' poor academic performance

Please, the purpose of this is to find out the teacher related factors that contribute to pupils poor academic performance. There is no right or wrong response, so please feel free to tick (where appropriate) the responses that express your views. You are to select the response that you consider most applicable. The SA means Strongly Agree, A means Agree, D is Disagree, SD means Strongly Disagree.

STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD
1. When I use poor methods of teaching, it affects my students' academic performance negatively.				
2. My good interpersonal relationship with students tends to affects their performance positively.				
3. My interest in pupils school work affects their performance positively.				
4. My lateness to school tends to affect pupils learning negatively.				
5. My absence from school on regular basis affects pupils performance negatively				
6. Students performance is affected negatively if am unable to complete their scheme of work (syllabus)				
7. My poor attitude towards pupils tends to affect pupils performance negatively.				
8. Failure to organize seminars, workshops, in-service				

training for us teachers affects pupils performance negatively				
9. My failure to use English language in teaching it affects pupil's ability to express themselves.				
10. Failure of parents in providing basic needs for their children tends to affect their performance negatively.				
11. Level of parents educational attainments affect wards performance academically positively.				

SECTION C

School related factors contributing to pupil's poor academic performance

Please respond to the following statements on school environmental factors contributing to low academic performance. Indicate the extent to which the statement is VA- Very Adequate, A- Adequate, NA- Not Adequate, and NA- Not Available.

Where **Very Adequate** means the resource in question is more than enough to aid teaching and learning, **Adequate** means the resource in question is enough to aid teaching and learning, **Not Adequate** means the resource in question is not enough to aid teaching and learning and **Not Available** means the resource in question is not found in the school at all.

S/N	**Statements**	VA	A	NA	NA
14	How adequately are the teaching and learning materials (TLMs) in your school to help in the teaching and learning?				
15	How adequately does the school library aid teaching and learning?				
16	How adequately is the organisation of in-service-training, workshops and seminars for teachers in the school?				
17	How adequately is the organisation of PTA meetings in the school?				
18	How adequately are the classrooms equipped for teaching and learning in the school?				
19	How adequately are the pieces of furniture in the classroom for teaching and learning in the school?				

SECTION D

Pupils' characteristics that contribute to pupil's poor academic performance

Please respond to the following statements on school environmental factors contributing to low academic performance. Indicate the extent to which the statement is VO- Very Often, O- Often, S- Sometimes, and R- Rarely.

Where **Very Often** means it happens all the time. **Often** means it happens most of the times. **Sometimes** means it happens occasionally and **Rarely** means it mostly does not happen.

S/N	**Statements**	VO	O	S	R
20.	How often do your pupils come to school before the morning assembly?				
21.	How often do your pupils absent themselves from school?				
22.	How often do your pupils do their class exercises?				
23.	How often do your pupils do assignments?				
24.	How often do your pupils participate in class lessons?				
25.	How often do your pupils participate in extra classes in the school?				
26.	How often do your pupils use Local language to communicate among themselves during class lessons?				
27.	How often do your pupils use English language to communicate among themselves during lessons?				
28.	How often do your pupils get motivated in studying?				

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PUPIL'S

Dear Respondent,

I am a student of the University of Cape Coast conducting a research. The goal of this study is to obtain evidence of the factors that are responsible for the poor academic performance of pupils in schools. I, therefore, ask you to help me with the study and be part of it. I will make sure that what you write will be kept secretly. There is no right or wrong responses; so please feel free to tick (where appropriate) the responses that express your views.

Please indicate your choice by ticking (√) or writing your response where necessary.

SECTION A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Gender : Male [ ] Female [ ]
2. Class: J.H.S 1 [ ] J.H.S. 2 [ ] J.H.S. 3 [ ]
3. Age : 12 years and below[ ] 13-15 years[ ] 16 years and above [ ]

SECTION B

Pupil's characteristics that contribute to the poor academic performance

Please tick (√) the appropriate column to indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD
1. When I develop bad behaviour towards my studies it affects my academics negatively.				
2. Peer group influence affects my learning negatively.				
3. Truancy affects my learning negatively.				
4. My lateness to school affects my learning in a negative way.				
5. Absenting myself from school on a regular basis affect my learning negatively.				
6. My failure in doing my homework affects my learning negatively.				
7. My use of local language more than the official language (English) affects my learning positively.				
8. I am not happy in school and this affects my learning negatively.				
9. When I go to school regularly it affects my learning positively.				
10. I mostly do not enjoy my teacher's lessons and it tends to affect my learning negatively.				

SECTION C

Home related factors contributing to pupils poor academic performance

Please tick (√) the appropriate column to indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD
11. My parents do not encourage me to learn				
12. My parents do not supervise my home work				
13. My parents' do not attend P.T.A meetings				
14. My Parents do not provide my basic needs for me				
15. My parents do not provide subject textbooks for me				
16. My parents provide breakfast for me before I leave for school				
17. My parents make me sell after school hours				
18. My parents make me go to farm after school hours				

19. State your parent's highest attainment level in education……

APPENDIX B

Reliability Coefficients for Pupils Questionnaire

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.720	22

Reliability Coefficients for Teachers Questionnaire

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.769	33

APPENDIX C

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

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

Telephone: 233-3321-32440/4 & 32480/3
Direct: 033 20 91697
Fax: 03321-30184
Telex: 2552, UCC, GH.
Telegram & Cables: University, Cape Coast
Email: edufound@ucc.edu.gh

UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

26th September, 2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION
BAIDOO-ANU DAVID

We confirm that the above-mentioned name is an M.Phil Measurement and Evaluation Student at the Department of Education and Psychology, UCC.

Currently, he is at the theses writing stage writing on the topic: "assessment of factors influencing poor academic performance of JHS pupils in Asikuma District." and would like to collect data for his work.

We would be very grateful if you could assist him with any information he may need for his research.

All information retrieved would be treated confidentially.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

(Georgina Nyantakyiwaa Thompson)
Principal Administrative Assistant
For: Head

APPENDIX D

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
ETHICAL REVIEW BOARD

UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref: CES-ERB/ucc.edu/17/19

Your Ref: .....

Date: 16.03.2017

.....

.....

.....

Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. J. A. Omotosho
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0243784739

Vice-Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. K. Edjah
kedjah@ucc.edu.gh
0244742357

Secretary, CES-ERB
Dr. (Mrs.) L. D. Forde
lforde@ucc.edu.gh
0244786680

Dear Sir/Madam,

ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS CLEARANCE FOR RESEARCH STUDY

The bearer, Mr. David Baidoo-Any ..... Reg. No. ED/MEP/15/0010 ... is an M.Phil /Ph.D student in the Department of Education and Psychology ....., College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana. He/She wishes to undertake a research study on the topic Perceived factors responsible for the poor academic performance of pupils of the Asikuma Circuit in the Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District

The Ethical Review Board (ERB) of the College of Education Studies (CES) has assessed the proposal submitted by the bearer. The said proposal satisfies the College's ethical requirements for the conduct of the study.

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

Thank you.
Yours sincerely.

Dr. (Mrs.) Linda Dzama Forde
(Secretary, CES-ERB)