UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INFLUENCE OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF CLASSROOM SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN BEREKUM MUNICIPALITY

ANNA SAKYIWAA

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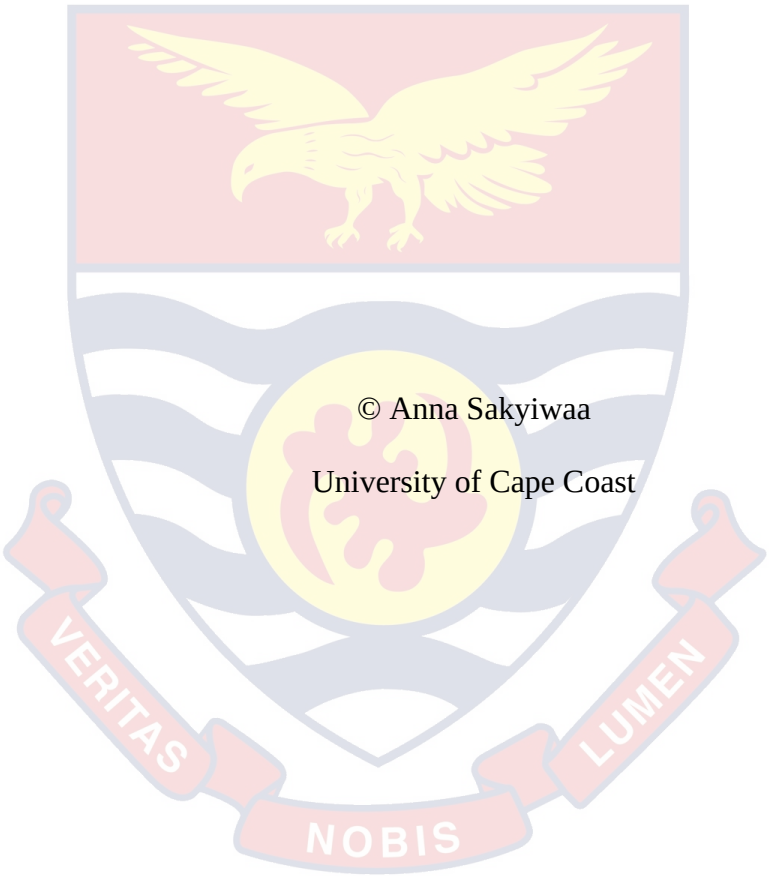

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BY

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

OCTOBER 2020

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:……...

Supervisors' 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 study investigated students' perception of the influence of classroom social environment on academic performance. The descriptive survey design was the used research design for the study. A sample of 341 respondents, consisting 162 males and 179 females was selected using a multistage sampling procedure. An adopted classroom social environment scale with a reliability coefficient of .81 was used for the data collection. The data was analysed using descriptive (means and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (independent samples t-test and regression). The study revealed that students held positive perceptions about their classroom social environment (M=2.93>2.50) as it influenced their academic performance. Again, the study revealed that statistically significant differences existed in the performance of students based on gender and school type but no statistically significant difference was identified in perceptions about classroom social environment. It was recommended that public school head teachers should frequently visit classrooms to assess participation and involvement between teachers and students so that those low public-school students could be identified and helped. Again, concerned public school teachers should give special attention to their students in order to bring them closer to their counterparts in the private schools.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My gratitude goes to my supervisors Prof. Paul Dela Ahiatroga and Dr. Mark Amponsah for providing their invaluable guidance, comments and suggestions throughout the course of the project. I am really thankful to them.

Also, I would like to thank my best friend Mavis Ansu Amponsah for her encouragement and support.

Last but not least, I would also like to thank my children, my mother and my sisters for their prayers.

DEDICATION

To my children

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Education is accepted to be one of the most important assets of every nation as it stands the opportunity to bring out 'game changers' and 'drivers' of progress. According to Tharanie and Geetha (2017), education has become highly competitive and commercial in many countries. It is on the basis of high academic performance of the Basic School level that students get selected to good secondary schools, better courses of study, and eventually better jobs. Academic achievement has become a yardstick of self-worth and success. The outcome of education determines the quality of life, progress and status of people living anywhere in the world (Devi & Mayuri, 2003).

However, such a feat cannot be achieved if the educational process becomes chaotic due to classroom social environmental conditions. Classroom social environment has a toll on whether students would learn or not, whether teachers would be effective or not and as well whether school performance would improve or not (Devi & Mayuri, 2003). Academic performance is a complex behaviour. Research has consistently shown that academic achievement is not an outcome of any single factor; rather it is the result of the interplay of a large number of factors (Gupta, Mumick, & Subrahmanian, 1993). Many reasons have been advanced as the cause of high rates of failure, including bad study habits, low IQ, faulty teaching methods, erroneous examination systems, social and economic disparities at the expense of classroom social environment (Tharanie & Geetha, 2017). Classroom social environment plays

an important and a vital role in students' performance and behaviour modification. Classrooms environment are the catalysts of change; they are the torchbearers always lighting the path towards progress of the world in all its facets.

Background to the Study

Classroom environment encompasses a broad range of educational concept, including the physical setting, the social setting, the psychological environment created through social contexts, and numerous instructional components related to teacher characteristics and behaviours (Miller & Cunningham, n.d.). The study of classroom environment has been widespread across nearly all sub-specializations of educational psychology. Researchers are interested in relationships between environment constructs and multiple outcomes, including learning, engagement, motivation, social relationships, and group dynamics. Early researchers recognized that behaviour is a function of people's personal characteristics and their environment.

Class composition studies such as Patrick, Ryan, and Kaplan (2007) and Fraser (2002) examined classroom grouping methods, including ability grouping of students, single-sex classrooms and cooperative learning groups. These studies found that classrooms with highly cooperative groups appear to have students with more positive perceptions of fairness in grading, stronger class cohesion, and higher degree of social support, as well as higher achievement scores. Research works on classroom environment have been on teacher behaviours, specifically teacher development and school culture and how these components affect classroom environment.

Research such as Miller and Cunningham (n.d.) suggests that due to the complexity of cultivating an effective classroom environment, it may be beyond the developmental scope of the newly graduated teacher. Some researchers such as Memon, Bughio, and Pandhiani (2016) recommended that professional development for new teachers should include intense mentoring and teaching partnerships that reduce isolation and form productive and meaningful relationships with other adults in the school community.

According to Miller and Cunningham (n.d.), classroom rules and procedures should be introduced early in the school year and consequences should be enforced consistently across students and throughout the school year. Research has shown that routine and fairness have a positive impact on behaviour as well as academic quality. It has been found that teachers who run respectful classrooms are in turn more respected by their students, and students believe that these teachers also hold higher learning expectations (Memon, Bughio, & Pandhiani, 2016). Teachers are encouraged to focus more on the learning task than on the outcome or grade assigned at the end of the task, although this becomes much more difficult if the emphasis in education is placed on accountability and high-stakes testing

Learning and its success among students is possible when school social environment is conducive. Helpful educational surroundings are essential to help incrementally harmonize student outcomes, including learning, motivation, school adjustment, and achievement (Eccles, Wigfield & Schiefele, 1998). Researchers such as Goodenow (1992), Juvonen and Weiner (1993) have been remarking for some time that school accomplishment does not only involve academics, rather, schools and classrooms are integrally social places, and

students go about their work in the presence of many peers. To understand students' achievement in school, therefore, there is the need for attention concerning the relationships with others at school and ways that the environment promotes different types of social interactions and relationships (Patrick & Ryan, 2003).

Students, regardless of cultural beliefs and customs, enjoy learning in an environment that gives them many opportunities to play, feel happy, and secure. A noticeable ambience of an environment is giving students space for easy and safe movement (Obaki, 2017). Motion permits students to move freely in the allocated spaces, create their own boundaries, and explore their abilities by handling different objects. Teachers should create social environments that match the age and level of the students they teach. The social environment that is created to match students' development provides care and gives an opportunity for students to play and interact with materials.

According to Cürebal (2004), classroom social environment is about freedom from abuse and violence, climate for trust, respect, social support and mental health promotion; opportunities for physical education and recreation and opportunities for mentoring and role models. It is believed that peer settings and classroom environment play critical roles in children's behaviour development. Classroom social environment covers a range of learning aspects that include the relationship that exists between learners themselves and their teacher. The classroom social environment attempts to spell out the teacher's expectations on the children's motivation for effective learning, the strategies that should be employed for effective teaching, the kind of materials that would motivate children to have greater interest in learning, and the social behaviour

that should be exhibited in a classroom. Classroom social environment comprises several aspects that may at times be observable (Cürebal, 2004).

Classroom social environment is defined as the type of environment that is created for students by the school, teachers, and peers. Teachers are continually looking to create a "positive" classroom social environment in which student learning is maximized (Bilbo et al. as cited in Tharanie & Geetha, 2017). Positive classroom environment is an environment where students feel safe, nurtured, and intellectually stimulated. This type of positive classroom social environment allows students to meet their basic needs of physical and mental health. While there is no specific definition of what creates a negative classroom social environment, it is considered to be one in which students feel uncomfortable, whether physically, emotionally, or academically, for any reason. There are two aspects of classroom social environment: the physical and social environment. Physical environment refers to the arrangement of chairs, tables, fixtures and pieces of furniture, the painting, lighting and ventilation while the social environment refers to the leadership exhibited by the teacher like democratic, authoritarian and laissez-faire and the mode of students' participation such as collaborative, individualistic or competitive (Kumpulainen, & Wray, 2002).

According to Tharanie and Geetha (2017), the classroom social environment influences students' achievement, their self-esteem and participation in the lesson. The most important aspect of classroom social environment is the relationship between teacher and students. There must be elements of caring, trust and respect in the interpersonal relationships between teachers and students. An effective classroom social environment is one in

which the teachers' authority to organize and manage learning activities is accepted by the students. There is mutual respect and good rapport, and the atmosphere is one of purposefulness and confidence in learning. A key consideration is the extent to which the teacher is able to foster favorable perceptions towards learning among students, by establishing in students' self-respect and self-esteem regarding themselves as learners.

The classroom social environment refers to the general flow of behaviour and feeling with in a group. Classroom social environment is the type of environment that is created for students by the school, teachers and peers. Teachers are continually looking to create a positive classroom social environment in which student learning is maximized. Classroom social environment encompasses all the socio-psychological dimensions of classroom life. This included common interest and the pursuit of common goal achieved through focused, organized and well-planned lessons (Tharanie & Geetha, 2017).

Classroom social environment is conceived to compose a range of educational concepts that include physical setting, the psychological environment that is created through social interactions, and several instructional procedures that are related to teacher characteristics and behaviour (Miller & Cunningham, 2003). It directly influences learning engagement, motivation, and social interaction among school members. Classroom social environment may be considered to be associated with good planning, effective teaching, teacher's concern for the children's welfare, and the beauty that is reflected in the classroom (Barth et al as cited in Obaki, 2017). The classroom social environment, according to Patrick and Ryan (2003), is comprised of students'

perceptions about how they are encouraged to interact with and relate to others (classmates, the teacher), and encompasses dimensions of teacher support, promoting mutual respect, promoting student task-related interaction, and promoting performance goals. To Ryan and Patrick (2001), current studies have indicated that these various dimensions of the classroom social environment are separate, can be measured quickly and reliably, and relate significantly to students' motivation, self-regulated learning, classroom behaviour (both positive and negative), social relationships, and achievement.

The term classroom social environment is elaborated by several educationists such as Fraser (as cited in Malik & Rizvi, 2018), who considered its shared perception of the students and sometimes of the teachers in that environment. Walberg (as cited in Malik & Rizvi, 2018) opined that the classroom social environment refers to the climate or atmosphere of a class as a social group that potentially influences what students learn. Moss and Trickit (as cited in Malik & Rizvi, 2018) said that the classroom social environment is a dynamical social system which includes not only teachers' behaviour and teacher-student interaction but student - student as well. Fraser (as cited in Malik & Rizvi, 2018) explained the concept of classroom social environment as an environment that carries a variety of meanings; it generally refers to the total climate, structures, processes, ethos within classrooms, which integral elements affecting students' are learning.

Adediwura and Tayo (2007) considered perception as mental and biological perspective and expounded their effect on learning. Perception is described as the way people judge or evaluate others with whom they are familiar in everyday life. It is important that background knowledge of students

in the form of schemas affect their perception and subsequent learning (Malik & Rizvi, 2018).

Tsavga (2011) maintained that the learning environment plays a vital role in determining how students perform or respond to circumstances and situations around them. This implies that no society is void of environmental influences. The learning environment determines to a large extent how a student behaves and interacts, that is to say that the environment in which we find ourselves tend to mould our behaviour so as to meet the demands of life whether negatively or positively.

Freiberg, Driscoll and Knights (1999) observed that some of the notable factors that may influence students' academic achievement in secondary schools are: school climate, instructional materials, discipline, physical facilities, teacher quality, type of location of school and class size. This is because schools with a good and conducive environment that has the best type of teachers, instructional materials and physical facilities will produce better school leavers with high achievement.

Most at times parents of students are not satisfied with the facilities provided in their school. In addition, the extent to which some teachers exhibit high level of indiscipline does not seem to portray them as role models. They rather encourage indiscipline among students by their attitudes. This may have negative influence on students' academic achievement. Adzemba (2006) defined learning as a relatively permanent change in behaviour due to practice and experience.

This definition is a confirmation of Akoja (2006), who viewed learning as a relatively permanent change in behaviour because of insight, practice,

experience or stimuli in the environment. To buttress further, Akoja (2006) viewed school environment as the immediate surroundings of the school which also include classrooms dining halls, examination halls, football fields among others. For learning to be meaningful and effective, learning environment according to Zaria in Aliade (2008) is a place where teachers impact knowledge of the various subjects to students thereby bringing them up morally and guiding them as regards to career choice. Aliade (2008) stated that learning environment should have good infrastructural development, adequately trained teachers, good leadership and adequate instructional materials among others. All these characteristics according to the author have positive impact on academic achievement of students in primary schools (Odeh, Oguche, & Iyagher, 2015). With this, it is necessary to design classrooms in such a way that would make them effective. Classroom atmosphere should be favourable and conducive for teaching learning process.

Statement of the Problem

The influence of school environment on academic performance of students has been an issue of concern to all stakeholders in education. Classroom social environment is part of the learning environment in that the school cannot do without. This is because it deals with the interaction between students and teachers, interaction among students and interaction of individuals and class facilities in the classroom environment, which cannot be neglected in any school. As such, the need to achieve high academic performance is a worldwide concern. Despite the importance of classroom social environment, teachers and students seem not to have developed positive attitude and interest towards their classroom social environment (Darmar, 2006). This according to

some researchers could be due to the nature of their classroom social environment, which arises because of some classroom environmental factors like the physical environment, teachers' behaviour, teaching method and interaction in the classroom (Iloba, 2009).

Though much effort has been made by the Ghana Education Service and Ministry of Education to improve education in Ghana, students' academic performance at the basic level is still low in the Berekum Municipality (District League Table, 2016). Again, in the 2015 Basic Education Certificate Examination results ranking, the Berekum Municipality was ranked 39th (National B.E.C.E. Ranking, 2015) and this was low comparably to sister municipalities. Achievement of the educational objectives in Ghana, especially the Berekum Municipality, may partly depend on the environment in which learning takes place. Classroom social environment is one of the conditions in the school, which affects teachers and students. Could it be that much attention has not been paid to the classroom social characteristics of teachers and students in school or due to the way teachers and students perceive their classroom social environment or due to the location of their schools? Students' academic performance in school may not be improved unless there is provision for ideal classroom social environment in which best learning will take place in schools (Iloba, 2009). It is also not certain whether students in Berekum Municipality perceive their classroom social environment in a poor manner, and if the differences in their perception related to their performance. Hence, the study is about Junior High School students' perception of their classroom social environments' influence on academic performance in the Berekum Municipality.

Purpose of the Study

The study sought to explore perceptions held by students concerning their classroom social environment and its influence on academic performance. Specifically, the study sought to examine:

1. Students' perception of classroom social environment.
2. Influence of students' perception of classroom social environment on their academic performance.
3. Gender difference in terms of students' perception of classroom social environment.
4. Gender difference in terms of students' academic performance.
5. School difference in terms of students' perception of classroom social environment.
6. Differences in students' academic performance based on school type.

Research Question

1. What perception do students' hold about their classroom social environment?
2. What is the influence of classroom social environment on students' academic performance?

Research Hypotheses

1. **H1:** There will be a significant difference between male and female students in terms of their perception of classroom social environment.
2. **H2:** There will be a significant difference between male and female in terms of academic performance.
3. **H3:** There will be a significant difference between public and private school students in terms of their academic performance.

4. **H4:** There will be a significant difference between public and private schools in terms of their perception of classroom social environment.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will help curriculum planners and developers on the information regarding the quality of classroom social environment in which lessons will be best taught in schools. Furthermore, it will help in a view to guiding them in recommending the ideal classroom social environment for various subjects, thereby incorporating it in the curriculum to enhance students' academic performance. Again, the findings of this study will provide information to teachers and educators on students' perception of classroom social environment and their academic performance in school.

The study results may open up a research field for educators and researchers. Thus, similar studies may be carried out in other school learning environments. The school head teachers will not be left out, as this study will help them in the sense that they will be able to guide their teachers in creating a better classroom social environment. The Ghana Education Service, if aware of classroom social environment, can make rules for examining bodies to monitor classroom social environment.

Delimitations

The study was delimited to students in the Berekum Municipality and not any other Municipality. The study was equally delimited to the research questionnaire that was adapted and developed for the study and not any other data collection instruments. It was also delimited to students in public basic schools and private basic schools (Juinior High School) and not senior high

schools. The study was delimited to only academic performance in English Language and not any other school subject.

Limitations

This study was subject to methodological setbacks in as much as the use of questionnaire as a data collection tool is concerned. Respondents might not be truthful as the case may be for reasons best known to them. In that sense, it might in one way or the other influence the study's findings due to the subjectivity on the part of the respondents.

Definition of Terms

Classroom: It is a room in which teaching and learning activities take place. The classroom provides a safe space where learning takes place uninterrupted by other distractions.

Social Environment: It is the environmental conditions in the classroom that influences the growth and development of students as they learn.

Performance: It is a result obtained by administering a written test after learning activities.

Organization of the Study

This study was organized into five chapters. Chapter one provides the framework for the rest of the study. It dealt with the introduction which covers the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions that guided the study, significance of the study, delimitations of the study, definitions of terms and organization of the rest of the study. The second chapter reviewed literature that is relevant to the issue under investigation. It provided the conceptual, theoretical and empirical reviews for the study. The procedures and techniques employed to carry out the study were

described in chapter three. It described the research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, instrument, validity and reliability of the instrument, data collection procedure and data analysis. Chapter Four was devoted to results and discussions. Chapter five contains the summary, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This aspect of the study has three (3) thematic areas. These are (1) theoretical review (2), conceptual review and (3) empirical review.

Theoretical Review

Bandura's Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy beliefs, according to Bandura (as cited in Tollefson, 2000), are important determinants of whether individuals will expend effort on a task and persist in the face of difficulty. Persons with high self-efficacy attempt tasks and persist even if tasks are difficult. Persons with low self-efficacy expend minimum effort and, in many cases, give up easily. Bandura distinguishes between outcome expectations and efficacy expectations. Outcome expectations are beliefs that particular courses of action lead to particular outcomes; efficacy expectations are beliefs that the person is capable of successfully completing the course of action that will lead to success. Students may believe that particular courses of action will lead to success in school, but not believe that they are capable of successfully completing the actions required for success. Thus, for any task, a person will have a high or low outcome expectation and a high or low efficacy expectation. Students who have high outcome expectations and high efficacy expectations approach academic tasks with confidence and persist even when the tasks are difficult because they believe that success is possible and that they personally have the abilities and

skills needed to be successful (Tollefson, 2000). Bandura (1993) argued that stronger self-efficacy beliefs are related to higher goals and stronger commitment to attaining the goal. Students with low self-efficacy (self-perceptions of low ability) are discouraged by failure and they decrease effort expenditures when confronted by difficult tasks in classroom interaction.

According to Tollefson (2000), students develop outcome and efficacy beliefs associated with success in school. For example, students may accept a teacher's statement on the first day of class that everyone who works hard can be successful in academics and have initial high outcome and efficacy expectancies for the class. Some students may begin to change their self-efficacy expectancies to believe that, while it is possible for students to be successful in class, they personally do not have the skills, abilities, and/or work ethic needed to be successful (Tollefson, 2000). Students who have high outcome expectancies and low self-efficacy expectancies may begin to decrease their effort expenditures over the course of the school year.

According to Bandura, people develop their personal sense of efficacy from four sources: (a) performance accomplishment, (b) observation of the performance of others, (c) verbal persuasion and related types of social influence, and (d) states of physiological arousal from which they judge personal capabilities and vulnerability (Bandura, 1993). Students' efficacy expectations are strongly influenced by the mastery of experiences (Bandura, 1977). When students master a task, their expectation that they will master similar tasks in the future increases. However, while success generally contributes to enhanced efficacy expectations, attributions of success to ease of the task or help from others may not lead to increased efficacy expectations. For

efficacy expectations to be enhanced by mastery or success on a task, success on the task needs to be attributed to ability or effort. Therefore, teachers assigning students easy tasks or assisting them to complete tasks that they could not complete independently will not necessarily enhance students' self-efficacy expectations (Tollefson, 2000).

Research with middle school students suggests that the relationship between efficacy and student achievement occurs through the relationship between efficacy and level of students' cognitive engagement. In a regression analysis of seventh-grade students' responses to the Motivated Strategies Learning Questionnaire, Pintrich and DeGroot (1990) found significant correlations between higher self-efficacy scores and higher performance on exams between higher self-efficacy scores and increased use of cognitive strategies. However, when cognitive strategies were included in the multiple regression analysis, self-efficacy scores did not explain a significant proportion of the variance in achievement scores. The authors concluded, ''Students who believed they were capable were more likely to report use of cognitive strategies, to be more self-regulating in terms of reporting more use of metacognitive strategies, and to persist more often at difficult or uninteresting academic tasks.

Tollefson (2000) suggests that students who hold the outcome expectancy effective study behaviours are related to higher achievement and who believe that they can personally implement these effective study behaviours are more likely to use cognitive strategies that in turn lead to higher achievement outcomes. For the classroom teacher, the initial task is to establish the means-end belief (Skinner, 1996) that effective study behaviours lead to

high achievement. Once the outcome expectancy has been established, the task becomes one of teaching students that they can implement the desired study behaviours and that doing so will increase their achievement. Control of the difficulty of the task and the amount of effort needed for a successful achievement outcome is critical to developing outcome and efficacy beliefs that promote achievement (Tollefson, 2000).

Application of Self-Efficacy in Social Learning Environment

Student perceptions of the learning environment influence learning behaviours and outcomes that, in turn, become part of the experienced learning environment of self and others. It is believed that self-efficacy influences students' perceptions of the learning environment. It is admitted that the student's perceptions of the learning environment change moment by moment and is specific to the teaching/learning dynamic operating at the time (Lorsbach & Jinks, 1999).

Social learning theorists define perceived self-efficacy as a sense of confidence regarding the performance of specific tasks. For example, Bandura (1986), defines the construct as "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances. It is concerned not with the skills one has but with the judgments of what one can do with whatever skills one possesses.

Self-efficacy influences several aspects of behavior that are important to learning. Among these are the choice of activities that a student makes, the effort put forth and persistence in accomplishing a task (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1989). The concept of self-efficacy is an important component of all three dimensions for classifying human environments. From the perspective of

relationship dimensions, self-efficacy is dependent on the nature of personal relationships. Self-efficacy is perceived in large part by comparisons to one social group (social-comparative appraisals). That is, students' self-efficacy is perceived by comparing personal knowledge and skills to other students. The teacher's use of social-comparative appraisals with students also affects students' self-efficacy (Rosenholtz & Rosenholtz, 1981).

Although self-efficacy is rooted in the social system in which one acts, it is essentially about one's personal appraisal of ability and growth. Self-efficacy is dependent upon components of the classroom environment that are determined by how such things as goals, incentives, and expectations are created and maintained. Such concepts are identified with system maintenance and system change dimensions because order and clarity of purpose within a learning environment allow for more accurate appraisals of ability. In short, the concept of academic self-efficacy is strongly linked to perceptions of the learning environment (Lorsbach & Jinks, 1999).

Bandura (1986), in his social cognitive theory, argues that self-referent thought mediates knowledge and action and is consistent with others who argue that an individual's beliefs are a filter through which new phenomena are interpreted and subsequent behaviour mediated (Pajares, 1996). Thus, self-efficacy beliefs can determine if learning environments are perceived positively or negatively. Consideration of self-efficacy might have led to questions about individuals that might be less confident regarding the use of technology and the reflective nature of the program. Research has shown that individuals possessing low self-efficacy tend to give up easily when faced with frustration. But self-efficacy and persistence increase with incremental successes.

Critical Evaluation of Self-Efficacy Theory

The theory clearly states that individuals have unique roles in producing behavioural change and has concluded that self-efficacy plays a central role, both directly and via its influences on the other determinants, in predicting change in behaviour. It is believed that education and age may influence self-efficacy. It has been stated earlier that the underlying assumption of self-efficacy theory is that perceived personal efficacy influences the initiation, persistence as well as the effort to apply to produce behaviour. Therefore, in the face of difficulties, individuals who doubt their capabilities (low self-efficacy) tend to give up on their attempts while those with a strong sense of self-efficacy would put in more effort until they are able to overcome those challenges and achieve their target. These observations are true and may explain why a lot of successful people tell stories of difficult moments they might have overcome to attain their status.

Vygotsky's Socio-cultural Theory

The most known representative of the social-cognitive constructivist theory is Vygotsky's Sociocultural theory. The focus of his work is the individual's interaction with society, the impact of social interaction, language and learning culture. Vygotsky aimed to explain the role of dialogue in structuring recognition and viewed the origin of cognitive functions as a product of social interaction (Topqiu & Myftiu, 2015). To Vygotsky, human learning means a precise societal environment and a practice through which children enter progressively in the intellectual life of people close to them (Vygotsky, 1934).

Lantolf (2000) confirmed, based on the main concepts of the sociocultural theory, that the human mind is intermediated. According to Vygotsky (as cited in Lantolf, 2000), the sociocultural environment challenges youngsters with various set of demands and responsibilities. In early stages, the child is completely dependent on other people, especially on parents, who initiate his/her decisions while instructing him/her on what to do, how to do it and what not to do. Initially, these are realized through language, which plays an important role in the way the child adapts to the social inheritance (Topqiu & Myftiu, 2015). Vygotsky (as cited in Wertsch, 1985) declared that the child obtains the information initially through the interactions with people, and then assimilates this information by adding the personal values in it. This route from the social to the personal qualities is not a simple imitation but a transfer of what has been learnt from the interaction with the personal values (Topqiu & Myftiu, 2015).

Vygotksy (as cited in Topqiu & Myftiu, 2015) admitted that interaction is what happens in schools. Students do not only imitate what the teachers have offered but also transform them during the learning process. According to this theory, the interaction between teachers and students has a dynamic nature and learning occurs because of this interaction. Griffiths et al. (2000) believed that the sociocultural theory of learning starts not through interaction but during interaction. At first, students finish a task with the help of another person, learn it and then are able to do the same task alone. In this way, the social interaction is a support to intermediate learning. According to Griffiths et al., the sociocultural theory supports the idea that successful interactions are those during which students are helped to finish new tasks in the classroom.

One of the most important contributions of Vygotsky's constructivist theory is the difference it makes to the current level and the potential development called "Zone of Proximal Development" (ZPD). Lantolf (2002), Wertch (1985) and Shayer and Adey (2002) admitted that Vygotsky introduced the ZPD concept because he did not approve the way the students' intellectual abilities were being evaluated. According to Vygotsky (as cited in Topqiu & Myftiu, 2015), the techniques developed for testing the children define only the current level of development, but do not measure their potential capabilities. He introduced the concept of ZPD, which he defined as the distance between a child's actual developmental level as determined by independent problem-solving, and the higher level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in cooperation with more capable peers (Werstch, 1985).

In other words, this means introducing two different presentations of a child: without or with the help of a partner (Carugati & Selleri, 2001). The transition from a spontaneous concept to a scientific one, which affects the intellectual development of a child, is neither automatic nor spontaneous. This development is attained through the adults' interference and exactly in this moment appears what Vygotsky calls the learning process. ZPD helps determine the mental functions of the child which have not yet matured, but are on the process of maturing; functions which are in the embryonic phase but will mature tomorrow. The teacher should not be limited to what the child can do today but to what he would be able to do, if help was offered (Aprile, 2010). Through the help of an adult or the more capable peers, in the ZPD appear a

series of inner development processes, which later become part of the independent achievement (Topqiu & Myftiu, 2015).

According to Shayer and Adey (2002), Vygotsky supports the idea that a good instruction should proceed ahead of development and should awaken and push for the invigoration of a set of functions that are in the maturity phase and lie in ZPD. This way the instruction can play an important role in development. Shayer and Adey (2002) went on suggesting that teachers are responsible for offering the learning context in which the instruction moves ahead of development and leads it. Shayer and Adey (2002), claimed that ZPD application in school practice is not easy. A problem observed in school contexts is linked to what help the students' progress from a level to another as the teacher serves as a facilitator. Teachers and educators should enter where and when needed in ZPD (Topqiu & Myftiu, 2015).

Several important means have been discussed, like intermediation, which is central to the sociocultural theory and the scaffolding, which is mentioned by the cognitive psychologists. The term "scaffolding" has been introduced by Wood et.al. (as cited in Topqiu & Myftiu, 2015) as 'to create a scaffold' or to provide an external support through something that helps construct a building. However, this is a representation that helps understand the used modalities by adults to organize their activities with children (Carugati & Selleri, 2001). Scaffolding describes the process of transition from teacher assistance to independence. It answers the frequently asked question about the ZPD; if a child can function at a high level only with assistance, how can this child eventually be able to function at the same level independently? (Bodrova & Leong, 2001). Donato (1994) confirmed that during social interaction, a more

capable participant, using language and other supportive conditions, may help the child move forward to a higher lever with the knowledge and skills owned (Turuk, 2008). In the classroom situation, scaffolding is an instructional structure through which the teacher models the strategy or task of learning and then moves this responsibility to the students. According to Tharp and Gallimore (as cited in Pollard &Tann, 1993), learning, especially in classrooms can be seen as achievement with the help of someone. The use of the supportive scaffold facilitates and accelerates the students' task of learning. When the teacher and peers use scaffolding in cooperative learning, the learning improves (Krajcik & Blumenfeld, 2006; Peery, Truner & Meyer, 2006). However, this raises the question of how capable is the teacher to choose the right type and quantity of help, in order for the students to finalize the task in an independent way, and be as successful as when the task was done with help. Studies point out that if an answer is not provided for this question, scaffolding will remain a metaphor and not an instructional strategy to be used (Topqiu & Myftiu, 2015).

Vygotsky's followers presented a set of means through which teachers can introduce the usage of the inner language by students. Especially, children in preschool and elementary school can benefit a lot from it. According to Lurias (1979), the inner language has another important function as it helps children fix their outside and mental behaviour (Berk & Winsler, 1995). On the other hand, the symbolic or dramatic game, which is present during the preschool age, plays a special role in the Vygotsky theory of learning and development.

Donovan and Smolkin (2002), who analyse this concept in children's writing, have presented a more specific study on the supportive scaffold. They have researched the role of different levels of the supportive scaffold in

children's understanding and in showing their knowledge. Tasks are ranked from those who need a minimal support to those who need intermediary and high level of support. According to Rogoff (as cited in Donato, 1994), during the application of scaffolding, the teachers should be active and attentive. They need to continuously review their help and decide when they need to modify and move it.

Application of Vygotsky theory in Social Learning Environment

In Vygotsky's view, interactions with the social environment, including peer interaction and/or scaffolding, are important ways to facilitate individual cognitive growth and knowledge acquisition. Therefore, learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them. Vygotsky said that learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in the environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalized, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky also emphasized the importance of the social nature of imagination play for development. He saw the imaginary situations created in play as zones of proximal development that operate as mental support system (Fleer, 2008). Vykotsky called teachers or peers who supported learning in the ZDP as the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO). The MKO is anyone who has a better understanding or a higher ability level than the leaner particularly in regards to a specific task, concept or process. Traditionally the MKO is thought of as a teacher, an older adult or a peer (Dahms et al., 2007). But the MKO can also be viewed as a learning object or social software which embodies and

mediates learning at higher levels of knowledge about the topic being learned than the learner presently possesses.

The role of a social learning environment may be not only that of a tool to provide access to 'More Knowledgeable Others' but as part of a system to allow learners to link learning to performance in practice, though work processes. And taking a wider view of artefacts as including information or knowledge accessed through a social learning environment, reflection on action or performance may in turn generate new artefacts for others to use within a ZPD.

Dahms et al. (2007) say that Vygotsky's findings suggest methodological procedures for the classroom. In Vygotskian perspective, the ideal role of the teacher is that of providing scaffolding (collaborative dialogue) to assist students on tasks within their zones of proximal development (Hamilton & Ghatala, 1994). During scaffolding the first step is to build interest and engage the learner. Once the learner is actively participating, the given task should be simplified by breaking it into smaller sub-tasks. During this task, the teacher needs to keep the learner focused, while concentrating on the most important ideas of the assignment. One of the most integral steps in scaffolding consists of keeping the learner from becoming frustrated. The final task associated with scaffolding involves the teacher modelling possible ways of completing tasks, which the learner can then imitate and eventually internalise (Dahms et al., 2007).

Within this perspective a social learning environment could be seen as allowing the representation of knowledge, skills and prior learning and a set of tools for interaction with peers to accomplish further tasks. The social learning

environment would be dynamic in that it would allow reflection on those tasks and further assist in the representation of prior knowledge, skills and experiences. In this context experiences are seen as representing performance or practice. Through access to external symbol systems (Clark, 1997) such as metadata, ontologies and taxonomies the internal learning can be transformed into externalised knowledge and become part of the scaffolding for others as a representation of an MKO within a Zone of Proximal Development. Such an approach to the design of a social learning environment can bring together the everyday evolving uses of social networks and social media with pedagogic theories to learning.

Critical Evaluation of Sociocultural Theory

Vygotsky's work has not received the same level of intense scrutiny that Piaget's has, partly due to the time-consuming process of translating Vygotsky's work from Russian. Also, Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective does not provide as many specific hypotheses to test as did Piaget's theory, making refutation difficult, if not impossible. Perhaps the main criticism of Vygotsky's work concerns the assumption that it is relevant to all cultures. It is dismissed that Vygotsky's ideas are culturally universal and instead states the concept of scaffolding, which is heavily dependent on verbal instruction - may not be equally useful in all cultures for all types of learning. Indeed, in some instances, observation and practice may be more effective ways of learning certain skills.

Conceptual Framework

The framework is about the interaction of key variables in the study. It is shown that CSE whether positive can predict students' academic performance. A positive CSE must reflect positively in students' involvement,

support, affiliation, task orientation, order and organisation and clarity of instruction provided by teachers in the teaching and learning interaction.

Conceptual Review

Learning Environment

Learning environment refers to the diverse physical locations, contexts, and cultures in which students learn. Since students may learn in a wide variety of settings, such as outside-of-school locations and outdoor environments, the term is often used as a more accurate or preferred alternative to classroom, which has more limited and traditional connotations as a room with rows of desks and a chalkboard, for example (The Glossary of Educational Reform, 2014). Wagner and Dobbin (2009) indicated that a learning environment consists of a wide set of features that affect learning. The idea of a learning environment implies a setting where intentions and design cannot account for everything that happens; some elements escape control or are at least unintended. Environment, then, is a mix of the deliberate and the accidental, the conjunction of planned and unanticipated events.

The term encompasses the culture of a school or class with its presiding ethos and characteristics, including how individuals interact with and treat one another as well as the ways in which teachers may organize an educational setting to facilitate learning (conducting classes in relevant natural ecosystems, grouping desks in specific ways, decorating the walls with learning materials, or utilizing audio, visual, and digital technologies). And because the qualities and characteristics of a learning environment are determined by a wide variety of factors, school policies, governance structures, and other features may be considered elements of a “learning environment.” Educators may also argue that

learning environments have both a direct and indirect influence on student learning, including their engagement in what is being taught, their motivation to learn, and their sense of well-being, belonging, and personal safety. For example, learning environments filled with sunlight and stimulating educational materials would likely be considered more conducive to learning than drab in spaces without windows or decoration, as would schools with fewer incidences of misbehaviour, disorder, bullying, and illegal activity. How adults interact with students and how students interact with one another may also be considered aspects of a learning environment, and phrases such as "positive learning environment" or "negative learning environment" are commonly used in reference to the social and emotional dimensions of a school or class (The Glossary of Educational Reform, 2014).

In a learning environment, there are many stimuli created by the teacher and a student collects the information that he/she chooses from among these stimuli. Additionally, every student might have different senses he/she prefers to use. Whereas one student tries to learn by listening to the teacher, another might be interested in the behaviours of the teacher or the script and pictures of the book opened in front of him/her (Ozerem, & Akkoyunlu, 2015). Every student has a different strategy of coding information to their long-term memory. Some try to learn by giving meaning to them at once, whereas some try to learn by repeatition. Some students can remember what they learned easily and quickly. Conversely, some have difficulty remembering and organizing what they know. Some students like learning in groups, and some might find it disturbing (Erden & Altun, 2006).

Researches on educational sciences, according to Ozerem and Akkoyunlu (2015), have shown that there are learning differences among students and the only way for learning to take place in the proper sense is to find an individual's learning style and arrange the learning environment accordingly. Students have their own methods of obtaining information and processing it. While some focus on data and operations for others are better at theories and mathematical models. For some, written and verbal explanations are more effective; for others, it can be visual elements like drawings, shapes, and graphics. Some learners prefer interactive environments, while others might prefer working individually. All of these differences in learning preferences are signs of their different learning styles (Felder as cited in Ozerem & Akkoyunlu, 2015).

The learning style of an individual not only shows how he/she learns but also gives information about how to design a learning environment. Although all the students in a class are of the same age, at the same developmental phase, and offered mutual chances by the teacher, different behaviours, learning styles, and achievements in a class can be observed. Dwyer (1996) emphasized that no matter the learning environment, students' learning styles should be taken into consideration while designing the learning process. Many of the researches underlined the importance of identifying students' learning styles and how helpful this can be in preparing the learning/teaching environment (Boydak, 2001). In school learning, if the learning environment is designed according to student learning styles, their academic achievements increase (Erden & Altun, 2006).

A learning environment has many meanings according to the way it is used. Besides its definition as an indicator of learning task (Tynjala, 1999), psychosocial environments in class (Henderson, Fisher & Fraser, 2000), and virtual environments created with computer and internet technologies (Fulkerth, 2002). It is also used in a very wide range of ways. Studies on learning environments focus on behaviour management, classroom rules and discipline, motivation of students, teaching methods, the set-up of classroom tools (tables, desks, etc.), and even the colour of the classroom (Chesebro & McCroskey, 2002; Snowman & Biehler, 2003). To make lifelong learning possible, the experiences in the learning environment are crucial. These experiences are formed based on the interaction between the learner and the learning environment. The role of the interaction with sensory stimulants (tools and materials) is very important in a learning environment designed for learners (Ozerem & Akkoyunlu, 2015).

In today's educational concept, the insight of learner-cantered education not only enables materials to be designed according to students' different learning characteristics, but also enhances the efficient learning environments with the help of the developed technology. Learning environments designed according to students' needs improve student motivation and success by using a variety of materials. In this context, when instructional technologies are analysed, they can be classified as visual environments, auditory environments, or both. As Vinales (2015) mentioned in her study, learning environment is a key factor for student learning. It provides a crucial exposure for the students and helps students develop their repertoire of skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours in order to meet 21st century competencies.

Designing the learning environment is a complicated process including many different variables. In order to avoid chaos in the learning environment, either the teachers or the instructional designers should prepare and check it in advance (Wilson as cited in Ozerem & Akkoyunlu, 2015). Instructional designers cannot design a learning environment that can be applied to every kind of learning. This is not possible even though the characteristics of learning and the learner are taken into consideration. During the learning process, learners use more than one sense: they use visual and auditory information, perceive data from the outside, choose the meaningful data, and combine new data with existing information (Ozerem & Akkoyunlu, 2015). Besides, learners with different learning styles activate the aforementioned mind processes. These experiences can be acquired by interacting with the learning environment (Bolliger, 2004). Studies have shown that learning environments that consider learner characteristics affect academic success in a positive way (Chen & Duh, 2008; Dascalu, Bodea, Moldoveanu, Mohora, Lytras & De Pablos, 2015; Powell, Millwood, & Tindal, 2008).

While designing the learning environment, it is vital to think about learner characteristics (learning styles, approaches, motivation, interests, etc.) in order to promote permanent and effective learning. Multimedia environments address more than one sense and teach by giving importance to individual differences, which increase success and make permanent learning possible. Dwyer (1996) mentioned that learning environment and learning process should be designed not to enable students to learn in the same manner and at the same level, but rather should be designed by giving thought to students' existing learning styles (Ozerem & Akkoyunlu, 2015).

Classroom Environment

Every classroom plays host to different personality types of learners who come into the classroom differently prepared with a uniquely set characteristics that determine their levels of aspirations within the same classroom environment (Ezike, 2018). The classroom environment is therefore a common playground hosting all these personalities at the same time. The problem of organizing these into a reasonable, identifiable and useful whole falls on the teacher who is the second living component in the classroom environment and a chief facilitator of learning. Classroom environment encompasses a broad range of educational concepts including the physical setting, the psychological environment created through social contexts and numerous instructional components related to the characteristics and behaviours (Miller & Cunningham as cited in Ezike, 2018).

Falsario, Muyong and Neuvaespana (2014) identified two aspects of classroom; namely; physical and social environment. According to them, physical classroom environment refers to the arrangement of chairs, tables, fixtures and pieces of furniture, painting, lighting and ventilation while the social environment refers to the leadership exhibited by the teacher and the mode of students' participation and interaction (Falsario, Muyong & Neuvaespana, 2014). Suleman et al (as cited in Ezike, 2018) refer to physical environment as the physical room in which the teacher and the learners are the main elements including its spatial elements like the floor, windows, walls as well as other classroom equipment.

According to Falsario, Muyong and Neuvaespana (2014), physical environment can affect students' comfort and also their ability to learn. Students

who are comfortable are likely to get much information compared to those who are uncomfortable. Unfavourable classroom can discourage the learners as they become less willing to learn which invariably affect their interest in the whole academic process and space (Ezike, 2018).

Classroom environment provides students with effective instruction, promotes smooth teaching-learning process and affects academic achievement positively. The power of the classroom environment is expressed in the formulation of situational interest as the key factor in the enhancement of student engagement. According to Kpolovie, Joe and Okoto (2014), situational interest is the affective reaction triggered by specific or appealing stimuli in the environment. It can be enhanced through the manipulation or modification of certain aspects of the learning environment and contextual factors such as teaching strategies, task presentation and structuring of learning experiences.

Mushtaq and Khan (2012) identified internal and external classroom factors as strongly affecting students' academic performance. The internal factors among others include class schedules, class size, textbooks, test results, learning facilities, teacher's role, environment of the class etc. Taylor and Vlastos (as cited in Ezike, 2018) indicated in a study that classroom environmental design can facilitate and improve the learning process like the overt curriculum. The classrooms are overcrowded, inadequate facilities, lack of qualified teachers, lack of chairs and benches and in some schools, students sit on windows while the teacher barely has enough space to move about. In some schools, rainstorms have blown off rooftops and the government practically feel unconcerned. In this type of scenario, there is nothing attractive

to lure the students to the school and they prefer to play away their time rather than coming into dilapidating classrooms (Ezike, 2018).

Classrooms have collapsed killing learners in the process in some schools. Some empirical studies such as Ekpo, Akpan, Essien and Imo-obot (2009) found that classroom favourable environment has a significant positive effect on the academic achievement scores of Secondary School students. Sang (2013), working with pre-school children in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya, found that preschool children with favourable classroom environment had better performance in Mathematics when compared to preschools with unfavourable classroom. However, the findings of Arul-Lawrence and Vimala (2012) showed that there was no significant relationship between school environment, which includes the classroom, and academic achievement. Falsario et al (as cited in Ezike, 2018), in their study using two groups of students (Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) and Bachelor of Secondary Education, BSED), found that classroom climate could not influence academic performance of BEED students but for the BSED students there was a moderately low positive correlation between their academic achievement and classroom climate.

As noted earlier, unfavourable classroom environment can discourage learners as they become less willing to learn which invariably affect their interest in classroom activities. Interest as a psychological construct plays a major role in various life activities including academic. The decision to engage or not to engage in an activity, desire to persist or even to re-engage after disengagement and the degree of effort and time put into an activity are mainly dictated by the level of interest in the individual (Ezike, 2018). This is congruent

with Frick's (as cited in Ezike, 2018) argument that interest influences what people attend to, think about, discuss and learn more about.

Dimensions of the Classroom Social Environment

Teacher support

Teacher support refers to students' beliefs that their teachers care about them, value and establish personal relationships with them (Fraser & Fisher, 1982; Goodenow, 1993; Trickett & Moos, 1973). Researchers have found positive associations between perceptions of teacher support and students' adaptive motivational beliefs and engagement behaviours. For example, when students view their teacher as supportive, they report higher levels of interest, valuing, effort, and enjoyment in their schoolwork (Fraser & Fisher, 1982; Trickett & Moos, 1973), a more positive academic self-concept (Felner, Aber, Primavera, & Cauce, 1985), and greater expectancies for success (Goodenow, 1993). Perceiving the teacher as supportive is also related positively to asking for help with schoolwork when needed (Newman & Schwager, 1993), use of self-regulated learning strategies (Ryan & Patrick, 2001), and a desire to comply with classroom rules (Wentzel, 1994). Perceived teacher support is related negatively to absenteeism (Moos & Moos, 1978) and disruptiveness in the classroom (Ryan & Patrick, 2001).

Promoting mutual respect

A focus on mutual respect in the classroom involves a perception that the teacher expects all students to value one another and the contributions they make to classroom life, and will not allow students to make fun of others. Environments that are perceived as respectful are likely to be ones in which students can focus on understanding tasks, without having their attention

diverted by concern about what others might think or say if they are incorrect or experience difficulty. Respectful environments are also most conducive to student problem-solving, cognitive risk-taking, and conceptual understanding (De Lisi & Golbeck, 1999). Perception that the teacher promotes mutual respect in the classroom arguably contributes to students' feelings of psychological safety and comfort, including low anxiety and low threat regarding making mistakes. When students are anxious or worried about making mistakes, they are less likely to engage in their academic work in an effortful and strategic manner (Turner, Thorpe, & Meyer, 1998). Thus, a perception that the teacher promotes respect in the classroom is related positively to increased academic efficacy and more self-regulated learning relative to the previous year (Ryan & Patrick, 2001).

Promoting task-related interaction

Teachers vary in the extent to which they allow, or even encourage, students to interact with one-another during academic activities. This interaction may encompass students sharing ideas and approaches during whole-class lessons, working together in small-group activities, or informal help-seeking and help-giving during individual seatwork. Whatever the form, however, interaction among students is a critical component of student-centred instructional approaches. When students are encouraged to interact and exchange ideas with each other during academic tasks, they have opportunities to ask or answer questions, make suggestions, give explanations, justify their reasoning, and participate in discussions. These interactions are related to student learning and achievement (Webb & Palincsar, 1996), consistent with expectations from both Piagetian and Vygotskian theories of learning and

development (De Lisi & Golbeck, 1999; O'Donnell & O'Kelly, 1994). Students' perceptions that they are given opportunities to participate actively during lessons and are encouraged to interact with classmates in the pursuit of understanding are likely to be associated also with their motivation. For example, interaction opportunities may foster students' feelings of confidence or efficacy, sustain interest, and support a willingness to persevere with the task when experiencing difficulty or frustration. Students made these kinds of comments during interviews, when they were asked about working with peers during project-based science activities (Patrick & Middleton, 2002). Students should also feel efficacious about their ability to learn and complete activities successfully when interaction among students is promoted, because they have a greater array of resources on which to draw than if they were working individually. Relatedly, students' perception that the teacher encourages them to be actively involved in lessons and participate in discussions is related to their liking and interest of school and specific subject areas (Fraser & Fisher, 1982; Trickett & Moos, 1974).

Promoting performance goals

The promotion of performance goals concerns an emphasis on competition and relative ability comparisons between students in the classroom. Research from a goal theory framework has examined this dimension of the classroom and found that when students perceive an emphasis on performance goals, they are more likely to exhibit beliefs and behaviours that are less conducive to, and often detrimental to learning and achievement (Patrick & Ryan, 2003). The perception that the teacher promotes performance goals may be particularly harmful to adolescents' motivation, because of adolescents'

heightened self-consciousness and sensitivity (Harter, Waters, & Whitesell, 1997). Support for this comes from studies that examined emphasis on classroom performance goals and student motivation. Researchers such as Ames and Archer (1988); Urdan, Midgley, and Anderman (1998) found that a classroom that focus on performance goals was correlated negatively with students perceived academic competence.

When classrooms are perceived as highly competitive, emphasizing a hierarchy of ability and students' relative position within that hierarchy, students are likely to report engaging in behaviours that are detrimental to learning (Urdan, Ryan, Anderman, & Gheen, 2002). For example, classrooms that are perceived as being performance-focused are likely to have the highest rates of students' avoiding tasks, including not seeking help when it is needed (Ryan, Gheen, & Midgley, 1998) and academic self-handicapping (Urdan et al. as cited in Patrick & Ryan, 2003). Cheating is more prevalent in environments that are seen as emphasizing performance goals (Anderman, Griesinger, & Westerfield, 1998), than students' disruptive behaviour (Kaplan, Gheen, & Midgley, 2002, Ryan & Patrick, 2001). Previous research has examined the relation between performance goals and students' self-regulated learning. Some work has found that when students focus on performance goals, they are less likely to self-regulate their learning, indicating that a focus on task performance relative to others, rather than on the task itself, decreases the use of deep cognitive processing strategies that lead to better understanding (Graham & Golan, 1991).

Empirical Review

Perception of CSE Influence on Academic Performance

A large amount of a student's time is spent sitting in a school classroom. This place is where they learn the various skills deemed necessary and proper for them to achieve success in the global society. The classroom is where they gain an understanding of their place in the world and the opportunities that they have to offer it. It is where the students develop what they want their future to look like, as well as knowledge and skills needed to reach that goal. With the classroom being such an important place in the growth of a student, it is important to understand the ways in which it affects this environment in order to receive maximum effectiveness in instruction. If schools really do play a large role in teaching the next generation how to be successful members of society, then every precaution should be taken to make sure that the learning environment is one that helps students thrive (Ryan, 2013).

According to Ryan (2013), if not approached correctly, a classroom can be set up in a way that stifles creativity or does not promote a positive learning environment. The way in which teachers organise their class, or how they control it, will yield positive or negative consequences for their students. If a teacher is not motivated, there will be a direct impact on the students within the classroom. Similarly, if a teacher is motivated, he/she will likely have a beneficial impact on his/her students as well. It is important for teachers to understand this cause and effect in order to understand how to organize his/her classroom to create a better learning environment (Ryan, 2013).

Over the past several decades, research has firmly established classroom learning environment as a thriving field of study (Fraser; 1982; Waxman, 1991).

According to Freiberg (1998), classroom social environment could positively influence the health of the learning environment, or it could significantly impede learning. Thus, feedback about social environment could play an important role in reform. The benefits derived from information regarding social environment and academic achievement could lead to identification of strategies that schools could take in designing effective interventions to produce improved academic performance in students (Waxman, 1991).

It has been noted that students learn better when they perceive their classroom environment more positively, hence the study of classroom environment has become a concern to educators, researchers, school administrators and parents. Numerous researches such as Anderson and Waxman (1991) and Goh and Fraser, (1998) have provided important information for educators and researchers on student's perception of classroom environment. Fraser and Fisher (1982) studied relationship between students affective and cognitive outcomes and their perceptions of classroom psychological environment as measured by the individualised classroom environment questionnaire (ICEQ) and the classroom environment scale (CES) were investigated for a sample of 1,083 junior high school students in 116 classrooms. Result showed that the ICEQ and CES gave appreciable unique contribution to explaining outcomes variance.

Fraser (1984) studied the effects of classroom social environment on student outcomes: A replication in two developing countries had found significant relationship between student outcomes and classroom social environment among students in both Indonesia and Thailand. Fraser (1999) studied differences between students and instructors' perceptions of actual and

preferred classroom environment and found that both students and instructors preferred a more favourable classroom environment than the one actually present and also instructors perceived the environment of their classes more positively than did their students in the same classrooms. Schibeci and Fraser, (1987) studied effect of classroom environment on science attitudes. The study focused on a total of 1125 secondary school students and found a statistically significant association between environment and attitudes.

Wong and Fraser (1996) studied college faculty perception of classroom environment and found that perceptions of classroom environment were linked to self-perceptions. Dorman, Fraser and Mcrobbie (1997) studied the relationships between school and classroom environment. The study involved a sample of 2,211 students and found a weak relationship between school and classroom environment. McRobbie, Roth and Lucus (1997) examined the multiple learning environment in a physics classroom and found that the nature of the classroom learning environment and psychosocial interaction could make a difference in how the students learn and achieve their goals.

Backer (1999) studied the effects of teacher-student interaction and relationship quality on student school/satisfaction in poor urban, African American Classrooms. He found that students who were dissatisfied with their classroom environment received less negative feedback when seeking assistance from their teacher and when teacher-initiated contact regarding academic work but more negative feedback about their behaviour when compared to students who were satisfied at school. Kim (2000) studied classroom environment and teacher interpersonal behaviour in Korea. Questionnaires were administered to 543 students in 12 different Korean

schools and found positive relationships of classroom environment and interpersonal teacher behaviour with students' attitudinal outcome, Relative to girls, boys perceived their learning environments and their teachers' interpersonal behaviour more favourably and reported more favourable attitudes toward their science class.

Ryan (2001) studied perception of the social environment of eighth grade classroom related to change in motivation and engagement when they moved from seventh to eighth grade. In general, the study revealed that prior motivation and engagement where gender, race and prior achievement were not related to change in motivation or engagement. Dorman, Fisher and Waldrip (2002) studied student's perception of learning environments and assessment with academic efficacy and attitude to science in Australian secondary schools. Result showed that classroom environment and student perceptions of assessment were significant positive predictors of academic efficacy and attitude to science. Burnett (2002) studied the relationships between teacher praise and feedback, and students' perceptions of the classroom environment. He found that negative teacher feedback and effort feedback were both related to students' relationships with their teachers, while ability feedback was associated with perceptions of the classroom environment. Praise was not related to classroom environment or teacher-student relationships.

Dorman, Adams and Ferguson (2003) studied association between classroom psychological environment in mathematics classroom and academic efficacy. A sample of 3,602 mathematics students from Australian, British and Canadian secondary schools responded to an instrument that assessed 10 dimensions of mathematics classroom environment (Vis. student cohesiveness,

teacher support, investigation, task orientation, cooperation, equity, involvement, personal relevance, shared control, student negotiation) and found that classroom environment related positively with academic efficacy. A commonality analysis showed that the 3-constructivist learning environment survey scales did not contribute greatly to explaining variance in academic efficacy.

Choi, Jung, Lee and Beak (2006) studied relationship between students' perceptions of classroom environment and their academic achievement in Korea and found that involvement, affiliation, competition, task-orientation order and organization rule clarity and teacher control, had a significant correlation with students' academic achievement. Juster and Leichter-Saxby (2014) studied classroom environment and academic performance at Kolei Yayasan Pelajaran Mara Kualalumpur and found that students with good academic performance participated more actively in class compared to students with average and poor academic performance. Students who performed poorly in academics perceived the prevalence of teacher-student interaction in classroom but they were less confident to establish good rapport with their lteachers. Good performing students regarded teachers' teaching efficiency highly, followed by the average and poor performing students respectively.

Chrisenduth (2006) studied influence of classroom social environment on academic achievement of learners in secondary schools, and found that a significant positive correlation existed between classroom social environment and academic achievement of learners in secondary schools. The research further confirmed that the lack of organization of learning space, lack of learner involvement in lessons and lack of classroom discipline contributes to poor

academic achievement in secondary schools. Galton (2006) and Simpson Mercer, and Majors (2010) studied the relationship between classroom environment and attitudes towards science and achievement in science among tenth grade biology students. The result of the study indicated that student attitudes towards the classroom environment predicted between 56 to 61% of the variance in attitudes towards science, student attitudes towards the classroom environment predicted between 5 to 14% of the variance in achievement in science. Again, student attitudes towards science and attitudes toward the classroom environment predicted between 8 to 18% of the variance in achievement in science.

Allen and Fraser (2007) studied classroom, home and peer environment influence on student outcomes in science and mathematics. The finding confirmed the importance of extending research on classroom learning environment to include the learning environment of the home and the peer group. Only the classroom environment accounted for statistically significant amounts of unique variance in student achievement scores. Arisoy (2007) studied 874 grade students' perception of learning environment of science classrooms in relation to motivational beliefs and attitudes and found that gender had a significant effect on students' constructivist learning environment, their adaptive motivational beliefs, and their attitude towards science. He also found that all constructivist learning environment variables and all the motivational beliefs variables were positively related with each other.

Positive classroom social environment characterised by positive and supportive teacher-child relationships and interactions have been shown to influence students' psychosocial adjustment in preschool and later grades

(Anderson, Hamilton, & Hattie, 2004), and to improve student's social competencies with peers (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988). This is especially important as students' abilities to relate well to peers are especially important for adaptive school functioning and adjustment, as it has been shown to be an especially important area of social growth (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988). Conducting a study on students in India, Tharanie and Geetha (2017) revealed that there was a positive relationship between classroom social environment and academic achievement of students at higher secondary level**.** Also 43.66% of students belonged to moderate level of classroom social environment and 45.66% of students belonged to moderate level of academic achievement.

Students who are connected to classroom (i.e., felt safe, perceived themselves to be treated fairly by adults, were happy to be in classroom, felt they were part of the classroom community, and felt close to people at classroom) experienced less distress and engaged in fewer risk-taking behaviours (Blum, 2002, 2005). Classroom climate research suggests that positive interpersonal relationships and optimal learning opportunities could increase achievement levels and reduced high-risk behaviour for students in all demographic environments. According to Megan (2002), research on classroom climate in high-risk urban environments indicated that a positive, supportive, and culturally conscious classroom climate could significantly shape the degree of academic success experienced by urban students. Furthermore, researchers have found that positive classroom climate perceptions were protective factors for boys and may supply high-risk students with a supportive learning environment yielding healthy development, as well as preventing antisocial behaviour.

Safe and collaborative learning communities where students feel safe and supported report increased teacher morale, job satisfaction, and retention. The interaction of various characteristics of classroom and classroom climate can create a fabric of support that enables all members of the classroom community not only to learn but also to teach at optimum levels (Freiberg, 1998). Conversely, a negative classroom climate interferes with learning and development. Organizational climate is assumed to have some effects on the success of a classroom in accomplishing its objectives (Singh, 2006). Various studies documented that students in classrooms with a better classroom climate have higher achievement and better socio emotional health. The classroom climate-student achievement connection has been well established in the literature (Freiberg, Driscoll, & Knights, 1999).

Commenting on why high academic attainment is not in vogue in Nigeria basic classrooms, Adesina (1991) identified poor and inadequate classroom social facilities, obsolete teaching techniques, overcrowded classrooms among others, as factors. Throwing more light on classroom facilities and moral guiding provision, Fabunmi (1997) asserted that classroom facilities when provided aided teaching-learning programme and consequently improved academic achievement of students while the models guiding their provision to classrooms could take any form as rational bureaucratic and/or political model. According to Hallak (1990), facilities formed one of the potent factors that contributed to academic achievement of students in the classroom system. They include the classroom buildings, classroom, accommodation, libraries, laboratories, furniture, recreational equipment, apparatus and other instructional materials. He went further to stated that their availability,

relevance and adequacy contributed to academic achievement of students. He however, quickly added that unattractive classroom buildings and overcrowded classrooms, among others, contribute to poor academic achievement of the students in primary and other levels of education (Hallak, 1990).

Proper arrangement of classroom environment plays a remarkable role in making instructional process more effective and establishes an atmosphere favourable and encouraging to learning (Suleman & Hussain, 2014). According to Suleman and Hussain (2014), the quality of the classroom social setting significantly affects academic achievement of the students. Classroom social facilities in classrooms ensure effective and successful teaching learning process (Fabunmi, 1997). Without these facilities, effective and fruitful teaching and learning process is not possible. Students get more information from their teachers in well-facilitated classrooms and consequently show good performance. On the other hand, if students feel uncomfortable in a classroom then they will fail to get more information from their teachers (Lyons, 2001). Lyons (2001) stated that poor school facilities adversely influenced teachers' effectiveness and their performance. Consequently, it negatively affects student achievement. MacAulay (1990) in a study found that a well-structured classroom social environment could enhance students' academic and behavioural outcomes. Suleman and Hussain (2014) in a study among secondary school students in Parkistan revealed a significant effect of classroom social environment on the academic achievement scores of secondary school students. A well-equipped classroom has a significant positive effect on the academic achievement scores of secondary school students.

Suleman and Hussain (2014) reported that studies on the classroom environment revealed that physical environment plays a vital role in the teaching-learning process. It can affect the performance of both teachers and students. The classroom environment includes many different facets. The environment can include the placement of tables and chairs, lighting and temperature, classroom management, discipline techniques, and engaging lesson plans. Stewart's (2014) research on classroom socio-emotional context indicated that when students believed that their teachers created a sense of community, responded to students' needs, and fostered meaningful relationships in the classroom, positive student academic and behavioural adjustment ensued.

Baafi (2020) in a report on School Physical Environment and Student Academic Success. The model summary was 89.1 percent, using regression analysis, indicating that the regression model can be used to assess the physical environment and student success in the classroom. The degree of association between the dependent and the independent variable was demonstrated in R square. The results showed that the model of regression substantially well forecasts the dependent variable. The sig value of.000 is based on which the statistical significance above sig value < 0.002, less than 0.05, of the regression model is seen. Therefore, the overall regression model has been concluded that statistically, the variable result is statistically predicted which means it is fit for the data. The results from the regression analysis showed that the physical and social atmosphere of the classroom has positive ties with the success of the students.

Perceptual difference between male and female students concerning CSE

According to Beer and Darkenwald (1989), there is strong support for the hypothesis that female and male students will exhibit divergent perceptions of relationship dimensions of the classroom social environment. Dissimilar socialization experiences generally result in differences between the sexes in interests, motives, beliefs, and behaviours, which in turn strongly influence social cognitions. In their study, Beer and Darkenwald (1989) provided empirical evidence that gender differences existed in the perceptions of adult students of college classroom social environments. Although statistically significant, these differences were not large, perhaps because of the modest reliabilities of the dependent variable subscales. The most noteworthy conclusion indicated by the findings was that women perceived more affiliation and a greater degree of involvement in the classroom than men do.

A study conducted among students by Bakhshialiabad, Bakhshi, and Hassanshahi (2015) revealed that students generally hold positive perceptions towards their course environment. The findings that females held superior perceptions than males, and the variations between year levels were consistent with results from another research. In the context of boys and girls differences in perception of classroom social environment, results indicated that girls got higher scores than boys in subscales of perception of classroom structure (Rostami, Hejazi, & Lavasani, 2011).

According to Lawrenz (1987), it is possible that as girls mature, they perceive their classes differently than boys and that these differences may affect their future participation in all subject areas. In his study, Lawrenz showed that there were gender related differences in student perception of the classroom

psychosocial environment. In other words, the fourth-grade boys and girls perceived no differences in classes taught by males and females. There were no differences within the seventh-grade classes either. The boys and girls had similar impressions of the classes. There were, however, differences between classes for the seventh graders. Both the boys and girls perceived classes taught by females as having more friction than classes taught by males. For the high school students there were differences the classes. Classes taught by females were perceived as more difficult and within the classes, girls with male teachers viewed their classes as more cohesive. Further, from the interaction results, it appeared that classes were perceived more favourably when the two opposite genders were combined in the study. Girls with male teachers and boys with female teachers viewed their classes as less competitive, as more satisfying, and as having less friction (Lawrenz, 1987).

Gender Difference in Academic Performance in English Language

Various research studies around the world have suggested that academic performance between males and females at age 15 was tilted towards girls in reading. In mathematics, boys outperformed girls in some countries and economies even though differences were generally smaller, in science, gender differences were small and there is no consistent pattern across countries (Graetz, 1995; Considine & Zappala, 2002). Students' attitudes also seemed to play an important role in shaping gender differences in academic performance as observed in mathematics and reading and gender stereotypical attitudes towards these subjects arose early on (Graetz, 1995).

Gender gaps are seen to be much more prominent among low and high achieving students. In reading, there are many more boys lacking basic skills

than girls, while in mathematics, boys are more likely than girls to be among the best performing students (Graetz, 1995). Concern about gender differences in education throughout much of the twentieth century has tended to focus on the disadvantages and underachievement of girls. More recently, however, the underachievement of boys in reading and the underachievement of girls in natural sciences have become the focus of public policy attention (Graetz, 1995).

Research carried out at The Middle East Technical University (METU), which is a large public university in Turkey, has revealed reasons for gender disparities in academic performance. It suggested that a host of factors including individual and household characteristics such as student ability, motivation, affected academic performance and the quality of secondary education (Feingold, 1988). Furthermore, the gender of the student may also be a factor in determining student performance. Childhood training and experience, gender differences in attitudes, parental and teacher expectations and behaviours, differential course taking and biological differences between the sexes may all be instrumental in giving rise to gender differences in achievement (Feingold, 1988).

In a meta-analysis of results of Zambian University Psychology students, in spite of female pupils generally having lower entry result requirements, available data has revealed that in terms of actual academic performance there was actually very little disparity between the performances of the sexes. For example, departmental records of the performance of Psychology students at the University of Zambia over the period 2009- 2010 in the course entitled 'Cognitive Development and Culture', which is offered at

third year revealed no significant differences between male and female students. Instead there appeared to be a larger gender bias of each sex to select certain courses of study, with female and male students showing a preference for what they or their society or even their culture considered gender-stereotypical courses (Sidney, Kusanthan, & Menon, 2015).

Studies done by Spinath et al. (as cited in Rostami, Hejazi, & Lavasani, 2011) and Freuden-Thaler (as cited in Rostami, Hejazi, & Lavasani, 2011) showed that girls had higher scores in academic performance goals. In addition, Pekrun, Elliot and Maier (as cited in Rostami, Hejazi, & Lavasani, 2011) reported that girls chose learning goals more. Freuden-Thaler, Spinath and Neubauer (as cited in Rostami, Hejazi, & Lavasani, 2011) have shown that boys got higher scores than girls in academic performance. In addition, in goal orientations, results shown that girls and boys had no significant differences in components of proficiency goals and academic performance goals; however, girls had higher mean score than boys' in academic performance goals. According to this study, it seems that academic achievement in English was not a dependent variable on gender, since both sexes put equal importance on achievement in English, and that English was not a subject restricted to female or male zone (Rostami, Hejazi, & Lavasani, 2011).

In most countries in the Western world, girls' academic performance is superior to that of boys (Arnesen, Lahelma & Ohrn, 2008). These differences in merits have been almost constant over the last 10 years, with a slight increase in favour of the girls (Blanchenay, Burns & Koster, 2014; Lofstrom, 2012). Boys' lower grades give them a lesser chance of being accepted in higher education, and in the end, this may affect the boys' opportunities to achieve

success in the labour market (Lofstrom, 2012). However, boys' performance slightly improved on the subsequent test (Gurria, 2016). Several research studies from different disciplines highlight boys' low performances in school (Bjornsson, 2005; Ingvar, 2010; Wernersson, 2010).

Concerning teachers perceptions of male and female students in terms of academic performance, most teachers try to be fair and strive to provide equitable learning opportunities for all students, but studies have pointed out that teachers generally have lower expectations of boys' academic performance and behaviour in school (Frosh, Phoenix & Pattman, 2002; Jackson, 2006). Boys are considered underachieving and troublesome, and girls are considered independent, motivated, and high achieving (Jackson, 2006).

Kilosmeive and Wilesman (as cited in Okonkwo, 2015) reported significant high performance of girls in divergent thinking while boys were found to be higher in convergent thinking. This means that boys were likely to make mistakes in their writing, which required divergent thinking than their female counterparts. Odo (2013) argued that it may be an over statement to assert that there was a significant disparity in the performance of male and female students in essay writing in English language. He revealed that many institutions of learning enroled more boys than girls. He explained that this might be traced to the fact that more male students went to the science -based disciplines while the female students placed more interest in arts of which English language is one.

Hutt (as cited in Okonkwo, 2015) stated that girls used longer sentences and were better in writing essays and in language than boys but as they grew into adults, the reverse becames the case as boys, probably due to the kind of

activities they engaged, in the process of socialization and growing up , developed their verbal skills. Okonkwo (2008) was of the view that little boys and most adult men were less verbal than little girls' and women because of the differences in their brain and this may likely affect their essay writing. Odo (2004) observed that men were physically strong, less resilient, had greater spatial, numerical and mechanical abilities than women and viewed the world in terms of objects, ideas and theories while women matured physically and psychologically at an earlier age, had higher precocious verbal skills and saw the world in personal, aesthetic and moral terms. He pointed to the fact that females may as well perform better in writing than boys.

Research shows females get better course grades than males even in traditionally male content areas, such as physics and maths, but males scored higher on ability tests in these subjects (Kimball 1989; Wentzel 1988). The 1996 McGraw report was based on a study of high school students when they were leaving school in Sydney, Australia. This study showed that in 1991, males were over-represented at the high and low spectrums of the Tertiary Entrance Ranks, while females mostly comprised the middle ranges (Sparks-Wallace, 2007).

Goh et al. (2013) examined the gender differences among students on their academic performance and revealed that individuals background characteristic affected their cognitive and non-cognitive one of the most significant and influential characteristics in academic performance. Muffato, Toffalini., Meneghetti, Carbone, and De Beni (2017) studied the sex differences and the relationship between creativity and self-concept on academic performance among high school students. The objective was to measure the rate of creativity questionnaire and cumulative grade point among 306 high school

students (150 boys and 156 girls). The study revealed that there was no significant relationship between creativity and self-concept on academic performance. In their study, the students were randomly selected from 68 schools (2,264 students, 38% where boys and 62% were girls). The academic performance of students was assessed using a self-reported achievement in some subject area such as English, Natural science, Mathematics, and Social science (Muffato, Toffalini., Meneghetti, Carbone, & De Beni, 2017).

Gender as a predictor of mathematics achievement, Bahurudin and Luster (as cited in Yagana-Wali, Ali, & Bularafa, 2015) found that the gap between the average scale scores of males and females was quite small at all three grades and has fluctuated only slightly over the past 10 years. There was no significant difference by gender at the fourth-grade level. In Louisiana, neither the scale scores nor the percentage of students scoring at or above the proficient level was significant for gender at fourth grade. At eighth grade, the difference in scale scores was not significant, but the difference in percentages scoring above the proficient level was positively significant for male.

Aremu (1999) reported that boys were better than girls in Mathematics and other science subjects while Casey and Evans (2011) found that girls out performed boys in some other school subjects. Gottlieb and Ernst-Slavit (2014) examined the influence of gender on achievement and found that male and female students tended to performed differently in various subject areas of education. Mathematics, science and reading are traditional subjects that are prone to obvious achievement gender gaps. Male students tend to be more motivated to achieve better in Mathematics and science subjects while female students perform better in readings. Abioye (2010), in a study, reported that sex

is a factor in school Mathematics achievement. On the general trend, in Nigeria, Abioye asserts that male learners tended to achieve higher in Mathematics than their female counterparts.

Hanna and Kuendiger (1999) reported a pattern of achievement results in Mathematics which indicated that girls were more successful than boys in Belgium, Thailand, Finland, Hungary; but least in France, Nigeria, Israel and the Netherlands. Inomiesa (1994) showed no gender differences in academic achievement in school subjects.

Research on gender differences in goal orientations does not provide clear results. Some studies revealed that there was a significant relationship between gender and the type of achievement goal orientations students held in different academic settings as well as under various conditions. For example, research by Blackwell, Trzesniewski, and Dweck (2007) showed gender differences with females being more extrinsic or performance oriented. Kenny-Benson, Pomerantz, Ryan, and Patrick (2006) reported from their study that boys and girls differed in their approaches towards their academic tasks, which may be related to the type of goal orientations that they adopted. Girls were more oriented towards adopting learning goals than boys; whereas, boys were more oriented towards adopting performance -approach goals and to be viewed as smart to others. Report of other studies indicated that females were more interested in adopting mastery goals than males (Brdar, Rijavec, & Loncaric, 2006; Meece, Glienke, & Burg, 2006) while males were oriented towards performance goals (Patrick, Ryan, & Pintrich, 1999).

In contrast, the results of some studies showed that females were more performance goal oriented than males (Kwok-wai, Po-yin, Man-tak, & Phillip,

2002), males were more inclined to adopting performance-avoidance goals than females (Brdar et al., 2006; Meece et al., 2006).

Rashid and Javanmardi (2012) investigated the relationship between Iranian EFL Students' achievement goal orientations and their gender with a sample of 182 B.A. students, both males and females, majoring in English Literature at Shiraz University. They reported that mastery goal was the dominant goal held by students followed by performance approach, work avoidant, and performance avoidant goal orientations. The results also revealed no significant effect of gender on students' goal orientations in English Language.

Okoro (2008) thus observed that males and females show great differences in their interest and career choice. These differences may be attributed to the psychological differences and cultural influences. Females' enrollment in vocations was quite different from those of males. Even parents generally encouraged their daughters to opt for professions not masculine in nature. UNESCO (2000) has it that, local customs and values have been developing in girls, and they were so deeply ingrained that some of them found it difficult to cope in areas that were believed to be male dominated professions. Lie and Syoberg (2004) observed that invisible rules within the society have provided what is feminine and what is masculine. This could also be found in Social Studies classroom interaction as male students dominate the female folk in all sorts of curricula activities.

Achievement test results conducted by Onekutu (2002) has shown that boys and girls in the early ages performed equally in all subjects including English language, and as they grow to higher classes, the girls begin to get more

interested in language Arts, while the boys take more to sciences and Social Sciences. This has resulted to a situation where there are more boys than girls offering social sciences. However, the issue of gender and students' academic achievement has remained a controversial one. While some propose that, males perform better than females in academics, others argue that, the reverse is the case.

Vernon (2002) reported that many comparisons show average scores of boys and girls to be the same on general intelligence test. He stated that girls do a little better on most verbal tests and on tests involving rote memory than boys. On tests of inductive reasoning and arithmetical ability, though with a great deal of overlapping, the average differences, he stated, seldom exceeded about four points of intelligence quotient. He added that the most marked difference occurs on spatial and mechanical tests, and wonders if such ability might be attributed to the cultural influences on our civilization, which encourages boys to develop physical, constructional and mechanical interests. He concluded that many surveys demonstrate that the range or spread of ability is slightly more restricted in girls.

Gessell (2004) asserted that girls under the age of fourteen years usually performed better in English language than boys of the same age. In addition, after that age, the boys usually overtake the girls. The initial higher achievement of girls, according to Okoye (2009) was as a result of girls over attachment to their mothers in household chores involving social interaction with their mothers and measuring out of food items, quantities of water and other liquids, timing the period for which a particular food needs to boil on fire. In addition, cooking involved estimation of how much each person in the family needs and

making allowance for necessary wastages. All these are practical interactions of English language which girls are exposed to as they under-study their mothers, hence, their initial higher achievements as asserted by Gersell (2004).

Denga (as cited in Nnamani & Oyibe, 2016) posited that no evidence was clear as to whether differences existed between males and females in academic achievement. He however stated that girls tended to do better than boys in language, arts like English language and Music while the boys tended to outperform the girls in mathematics and sciences. In the same vein, Miller, Kelly, and Zhou, (2005) pointed out that attempting to relate specific intellectual abilities to achievement in specific subject areas is prone to considerable problems. Gender differences in intellectual abilities can be as a result of gender role stereotyping. Gender differences in academic performance cannot, therefore, be assumed to be due to inherent biological differences between the genders even if they existed. The theory of innate gender differences in ability that might be used to account for gender differences in academic performance has weak evidence. According to Kelly, in many psychological areas, it is a virtual impossibility to separate completely the innate from the acquired.

Gender is a strong predictor of human conduct and many differences have been documented on attitude and behaviour that affect academic performance in between males and females, (Block, 2006). Academic performance differs between boys and girls in basic subjects like social studies both in primary and secondary levels. Calsmith (2007) explained that, the influence of gender and differences in academic performance is a complex task, thus many studies appear to be contradictory. A tremendous amount of work has been done in an attempt to find out potential causes of differences between

girls' and boys' academic performances in social sciences and this has clearly demonstrated that male students were superior to their female counterparts in qualitative courses.

Maccoby (2003) for example, pointed out that girls were more conforming, suggestible and dependent on the opinions of others. The traits in turn have been related to dependency and inability to break a set of tasks. Maccoby then suggested that, these same traits in females might also account for their superior performance on tests involving analytic thinking, and spatial abilities. In western societies, females possess higher ability in verbal test English language than males. Sweeney, (2003) noted that female students were lower in mathematics and spatial ability, as males were superior to females on problem solving tasks and on specific abilities related to problem solving

Messies (as cited in Nnamani & Oyibe, 2016) contended that there were gender differences in intellectual functioning that attempted to account for differences in means and correlation patterns between the genders. He concluded that in the period of secondary school and beyond, the intellectual domain revealed few consistent differences between the genders. Husen and Ayayo (as cited in Nnamani & Oyibe, 2016) indicated in an investigation spanning twelve industrialized countries the ability of both male and female students in their general academic performance. The result revealed that males were superior to females. This superiority did not confine to the United States of America. The findings also confirmed that even with the level of instruction held constant, males achieved higher levels than females.

Ayayo (2007) attributed the differences in performance between boys and girls to the school environment and programmes. She opined that prior to

attending school, general intelligence of girls was higher than that of boys but the position gradually reversed. Supporting this position, Powell (2004) held the opinion that girls do better at all levels than boys in achievement even in areas such as language and arithmetic where boys seemed to excel, girls seemed to have better grades. It is obvious from the related literature reviewed that the role of gender in the academic performance of students is a controversial issue. This is because while some research findings revealed that gender plays active role in students' academic performance, others revealed otherwise.

Difference in Academic Performance between Public and Private School Students

In many different parts of the world, students from public and private schools typically attain different levels of achievement, with students in private schools outperforming their public school counterparts in different measures of achievement (Carbonaro & Covay, 2010; Coulson, 2009). This gap between public and private schools has also been observed in the Philippine educational system (Chua, 2008; Yamauchi 2005). Data on the national achievement tests administered by the National Educational Testing and Research Center (NETRC) of the Department of Education showed that the graduating secondary students from private school outperformed their counterparts in the public schools in the 2007-2008 academic year (mean percentage scores were 51.8 vs. 46.0, respectively), also in the 2008-2009 (50.9 vs. 43.9) academic year (Virola, 2009). A recent study results indicated the same trend, and that the advantage of the private schools students was observed in all domains of the achievement test (Benito, 2013).

Public schools operate differently from private schools in terms of funding, infrastructure, class sizes, among others; as such, the achievement gap is typically attributed to these operational differences. One factor that has been identified in the research literature is the degree of local autonomy or control over the management of teaching and learning activities in the school, which tends to be much lower in local community public schools in the Philippines (Lockheed & Zhao, 1993). Research in various countries suggests that less external state-control is related to higher student achievement (Coulson, 2009), but Philippine research is equivocal on the issue. Some researches (Lockheed & Zhao, 1993) indicate that local control is not systematically associated with the achievement gaps, but other studies show that increasing the autonomy of public school heads to manage their schools leads to higher achievement outcomes in public schools (Khattri, Ling, & Jha, 2010;).

A study conducted concerning achievement gap between public and private school students in the Philippines revealed that public school students had more positive affect about schooling; they were less likely to express the valuing of schooling and their intention to pursue further schooling beyond high school. The results indicated that public school students had less adaptive motivational profiles compared to private school students in terms of the three facets of meaning in personal investment theory. More specifically, with regard to facilitating conditions, public school students reported lower scores on parent support, teacher support, peer support, and positive peer influence, but higher negative peer and parental influence, and influences to leave school (Bernardo, Ganotice, & King, 2014).

Evidence from surveys in a number of developing countries including India, showed that learning outcomes in private schools, as measured by test scores, were on average better than government schools. In most studies, the private school advantage remained even after controlling for a large set of observable student family, school and teacher characteristics (Goyal, 2006a, Goyal, 2006b; Muralidharan & Kremer, 2006; Tooley & Dixon, 2006).

A comparative quality of public and private schools has led to a strong policy debate on the conditions of provision of education by the government. It is argued that the government school system is expensive and wasteful and fails in imparting even minimum skills to students; private schools not only did better but also provided learning at a much lower unit cost (Tooley & Dixon, 2006). Researchers have also looked at the relative learning achievements across government and private schools. On raw scores alone, in most studies, private schools had a distinct advantage over government schools. Based on a survey in urban and semi-urban areas of Hyderabad in south India, Tooley and Dixon (2006) found that private school children, including those in unrecognized schools, outperformed government school children. The size of the difference fell substantially when background variables were controlled but the difference continued to be significant. A study of rural primary schools in Punjab province of Pakistan found that, after adjusting for school and student characteristics, significant differences remained in test scores between government and private schools (Tooley & Dixon, 2006).

According to Ashley et al. (2014), there is strong evidence that teaching is better in private schools than in state schools, in terms of higher levels of teacher presence and teaching activity as well as teaching approaches that are

more likely to lead to improved learning outcomes. Again, there is moderate evidence that private school pupils achieve better learning outcomes when compared with state schools. However, there is ambiguity about the size of the true private school effect. In addition, many children may not be achieving basic competencies even in private schools. Again, there is a moderate evidence supporting that perceived better quality of private schools (in terms of teaching, teacher attendance, school performance, small class size, discipline) compared with state schools is a key factor in parents' choice of private schools. Other important factors cited include English-language instruction, future occupation possibilities and promotion rates to secondary school. The perception of 'private schools as better quality' is informed informally, often through parents' informal social networks; such sources play a significant but often under-recognised role in informing users in their choice of school (Ashley, Engel, Batley, & Nicolai, 2014).

Contrary to previous studies conducted on the efficacy of private and public schools in Tanzania, Gerard and Tan (as cited in Kivenule, 2015) revealed that private schools were less efficient as reported elsewhere from Tanzania. A study conducted by Sumra and Katabaro (as cited in Kivenule, 2015) on the declining quality of Education in Tanzania revealed that one of the factors that explain such steep rise in failure rate is the increased establishment of community schools. When looking at the performance of pupils by ownership of schools, the study found that best performing schools were seminaries that are private, followed by government schools, non-government and community schools that were public (Kivenule, 2015).

Similarly, a study result indicated that students in Nigeria Private Secondary Schools in Ondo State performed better in Basic Science than their counterparts in public schools. Students in private and public schools respectively obtained a total credit pass of 60.0 and 40.0 percent. The overall result indicated that private schools in Ondo state did better than public schools in terms of their student' academic performance (Owaduge, 2015).

In a study in Pakistan, it was revealed that private school students got better academic grades due to their regular attendance, maintenance of discipline, punctuality and better school environment. The responses of the respondents and statistical analysis clearly showed that the students' Private Schools showed better academic performance as compared to students' in Public Schools' students; and also that students in Private Schools' regularly attend their schools; they properly followed and maintained discipline in their schools; they were mostly punctual and they fully availed better school environment while the students in Public Schools showed no regularity; they did not follow discipline in their schools; they were not punctual and their school' environment was also not satisfactory due to which they showed poor academic grades as compared to Private Schools' students in District Lakki Marwat, Khber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan (Khan, Rehman, & Marwat, 2017).

Comparing students' performance between private and public higher secondary school conducted by Ahmed and Ahmed (2017) revealed that private higher secondary schools 78 representing 70.1% of the respondents in the private higher secondary schools scored above average, while 15.3% and 7.2% of the subjects scored averagely and below the average marks respectively. Moreover, 25.2% of the subject scored above of average mark. The performance

of 10 (9.7%) of them were adjudged to be average, while 60 of them representing 50.5% scored below the average mark. It was concluded that the students in the private higher secondary schools performed better than their counterparts in the public higher secondary schools perform and therefore, called for improvement in the public schools to enhance the learning opportunity of the vast majority of pupils attending the public schools.

In a study carried out in the U.S. by Lubienski and Lubienski (2006), they compared academic achievement among charter, private and public schools. One of the major findings from this study showed that private schools scored higher than charter and public schools. In a related study carried out also in the U.S. by Braun, Jenkins and Grigg (2006), that compared the performance of pupils in private and public schools in both reading and mathematics involving grades 4 and 8. The results showed that the private schools performed better than the public schools not only in reading and mathematics, but also in the two grades (4th & 8th) involved in the study. Overall, findings indicated that the average private school mean score was higher than the average public-school mean score, and that the difference was statistically significant.

However, in a study which compared students' academic performance in business studies in public and private Junior Secondary School Certificate Examinations (JSSCE) in Ovia South West Local Government Council Area of Edo State, Nigeria. Igbinedion and Epumepu (2011) revealed that there was significant difference in the academic performance in business studies between the public and private schools from 2008 to 2011. Results showed that the percentage performance trend of public schools were higher than those of the private schools for both male and female students.

In a related study conducted by Adeyemi (2014), 73.3% of the pupils from the private school scored above average, as against 30.8% in the public school in same category. In the average category, it was 17.5% and 11.7% of the pupils from private and public schools respectively. While it was only 9.2% of the pupils from private schools that scored below average, it was as much as 57.5% of the pupils from public schools. However, the private schools may be said to have excelled in such areas as: efficient instructional encounter in the classroom as a result of frequent and thorough supervision, dynamic school administration, frequent class assignments, prompt payment of teachers' salaries and allowances, mutual parent-school relationship, positive pupil-teacher interactions, absence of teachers industrial actions, provision of adequate furniture and the maintenance of the standard teacher-pupil ratio among others, all of which stimulate effective learning in the children (Adeyemi, 2014).

According to Adeyemi (2014), the situation in the public schools on the other hand had deteriorated to the extent that pupils carry their chairs and desks to school on daily basis. Some even sit on the floor in many classrooms. Most schools were under-staffed and until recently, teachers were owed salary arrears. All these were capable of wielding negative influence on pupils' learning.

Chapter Summary

The chaptered reviewed literature related to this study by touching on social-related theories: social learning theory and socio-cultural theory. Social learning theory has it that, an individual's capabilities of learning depends on interactional process between a learner and a model where the learner observes

and imitates an interested learning trait. Socio-cultural theory stipulates that an individual learns by tapping on an advanced learner's zone of proximal development or being guided by someone ahead of him or her in the learning process. Again, the study reviewed empirical studies where it was evident that the classroom social environment indeed has a value in the progress of learning. The more interaction become positively mediated between teachers and learners, the more successful they become in their academic activities.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Overview

The chapter details procedures followed to make the investigation possible. The chapter includes the design, population, sampling procedures, data collection instruments, data collection procedures, ethical procedures and as well data processing and analysis.

Research Design

Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The design is deemed appropriate since the study seeks to find out perceptions. According to Polit (2017), descriptive research design involves measurement, classification, analysis, comparison and interpretation. It collects three types of information which include what is in existence, comparing what exist with the norm or desirable, and how to achieve goals. Even though descriptive research design is considered primitive, it is able to provide information to solve problems and at times provide data to form the basis of another research. The use of descriptive research design actually involves concentrating on events that have happened and are related to the current happenings. It gives a picture of a situation as it occurs in its natural setting without any manipulation (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2007).

The use of descriptive research design varies greatly in complexity. At one instance, it constitutes frequency count of events to study local problems without any significant research hypothesis. At another instance, it attempts to

ascertain significant interrelationships among phenomena (Polit, 2017). Some short comings of a descriptive research design are that, results obtained from the analysis do not allow for strong findings to be made concerning a cause and effect relationship between variables and also does not reflect in-depth description of the phenomenon (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2007).

The study was quantitative in nature because questionnaires were the main data collection instruments. According to Kessler and Wang (2008), quantitative research most often uses deductive logic, in which researchers start with research questions or hypotheses and then collect data which can be used to determine whether empirical evidence to support that hypothesis exists. As such, data collected and reported by quantitative approach is numerical in nature. To Crandell, Voils, and Sandelowski (2011) quantitative analysis requires numeric information in the form of variables. The results of quantitative analysis are most commonly reported in the form of statistical tables or graphs. The presentation of results usually begins with descriptive statistics describing who is in the sample. This can take the form of univariate statistics (such as frequency distributions, means, standard' deviations) or simple graphs (such as pie charts, bar graphs, or histograms). According to Hunter and Leahey (2008), quantitative approach is especially useful for addressing specific questions about relatively well-defined phenomena. Quantitative analysis requires high-quality data in which variables are measured well (meaning the values of the variables must accurately represent differences in the characteristics of interest). This can be challenging when conducting research on complicated or understudied areas that do not lend themselves well to being measured with specific variables. Because it uses

deductive logic and is, therefore, more easily viewed as "real science," the quantitative approach is often perceived as providing stronger empirical evidence than other research approaches.

Study Area

Berekum Municipality lies between latitude 7'15°South and 8'00°North and longitude 2'2$^{5°}$East and 2'50°West. Berekum Municipality lies in the North-western corner of the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. The Municipality covers total land area of about 863.3q.km. It is bordered to the North-east and North-west by Tain District and Jaman South Districts respectively, South-west by Dormaa East District and to the South-east is Sunyani West District (BMA report, 2013). Berekum traditional area is made up of one paramountcy namely Asokore-Berekum with sub-chiefs such as the Kyidom, Akyempem, Apadwa and Adonten. The major ethnic group is the Akan with Mole-Dagbani, Guan and other ethnic groups coexisting peacefully.

According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, 129 628 of the population of the city of Berekum accounts for 5.6% of the total population of the area. The males make up 46.2% and the females 53.8%. In the urban areas over half (65.5%) of the municipality's population lives, and the sex ratio is between 85 men and 100 women. Approximately two fifths (41.6 percent) of the municipality 's population is young, with a large base population pyramid depicting a few elderly people (3.7 percent).

In the municipality, the overall age dependence ratio is 74.8, with men being more dependent than women with a 68.4 dependency ratio. Of the population 11 years and above, 83.5 percent are literate and 16.5 percent are non-literate. The proportion of literate females (52.2%) is slightly higher than

that of males (47.8%). Seven out of ten people (77.3%) indicated they could read and write both English and Ghanaian language. Of the population aged 3 years and above in the municipality, 14.1 percent has never attended school, 45.0 percent are currently attending and 40.9 percent have attended in the past.

Of the employed population, 43.4 percent are engaged as skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers, 22.4 percent as service and sales workers, 12.8 percent in craft and related trade, and 10.0 percent are engaged as managers, professionals, and technicians. More than half (57.0%) percent of households in the municipality are engage in agriculture. In the rural localities, seven out of ten households (73.0%) are agricultural households while in the urban localities, 49.9 percent of households are into agriculture.

Most households in the municipality (97.6%) are involved in crop farming. Poultry (chicken) is the dominant animal reared in the district. In terms of education, the municipality has the following facilities: kindergarten (96), primary (93), JHS (74), SHS (8), a Teacher Training College, and a Nursing Training College (BMA, 2013). The municipality has the following; two hospitals, health centre, seven rural clinics, seven maternity homes, seven private clinics and three Community Health Planning Services (CHPS). Currently, a large number of the population in the municipality has access to MTN, Airtel, Vodafone, GLO and Tigo networks (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012).

Population

Population represents the entire people that are to be considered for the study. The target population comprised all junior high school students in the Berekum Municipality. Out of a total of 6,747 junior high school students in the

Municipality, 2,089 form two students were accessible for the study. Junior High Schools were used because they are perceived to possess problems related to classroom social environment. Specifically, form two students were used because they had experience of the classroom environment at the junior high school level. However, form one and form three students were not used because the form one students had just entered form one while the form three students were preparing for their final examination. Taking excerpts from Hanitzsch, Van Dalen, and Steindl (2018), population is the entire people that research results is intended to be generalised on by a researcher. Burns and Grove (2010) defined population as the entire set of individuals that meet the sampling criteria for a study.

Sampling Procedures

The sample estimated for the study was 341 (14 percent of accessible population=2,089) respondents sampled based on Nwana (1992) sampling determination proportion. According to Sozu, Sugimoto, Hamasaki, and Evans (2015), the sample size determines the amount of sampling error inherent in a test result. Other things being equal, effects are harder to detect in smaller samples. Increasing sample size is often the easiest way to boost the statistical power of a test. Polit (2017) asserted that, sampling is the process of selecting participants who are representatives of the population being studied. In other words, sampling can be defined as the process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population. According to Lance and Hattori (2016), sampling is concerned with the selection of a subset of individuals from within a statistical population to estimate characteristics of the whole

population. The sample was arrived at through multistage sampling procedure. In doing so, the following sampling techniques would be employed:

Simple random sampling using the lottery method was used in selecting four (4) educational circuits out of eight (8) educational circuits in the Berekum Municipality for the study. Again, simple random sampling procedure was used to select four Public J.H.S. schools and one Private J.H.S (limited number of private schools). each from the sampled circuits to make twenty (20) schools for the study. According to Starnes, Yates, and Moore (2009), a simple random sample is a subset of individuals (a sample) chosen from a larger set (a population). Each individual is chosen randomly and entirely by chance, such that each individual has the same probability of being chosen at any stage during the sampling process, and each subset of ***k*** individuals has the same probability of being chosen for the sample as any other subset of ***k*** individuals. A simple random sample is an unbiased surveying technique and serves as the basic type of sampling, since it can be a component of other more complex sampling methods. The principle of simple random sampling is that every object has the same probability of being chosen (Starnes, Yates, & Moore, 2009). Table 1 and 2 present information about sampled schools:

Table 1-*Random Sample of Circuits*

Circuits	No. of Schools	JHS Population	JHS 2 Population	Boys Population	Girls Population
Kato*	11	1,609	539	266	273
Kutre*	8	893	307	153	154
Jinijini N*	10	749	253	140	113
Senase*	7	794	251	122	129
Biadan	7	648	226	118	108
Jinijini S.	8	634	214	106	108
Mpatasie	9	752	250	124	126
Nsapor	7	668	242	135	107
Total	67	6,747	2,282	1,164	1,118

Source: Berekum Municipal Education Service Data (2018/2019) *sampled circuits

Table 2-*Random Sample of Junior High Schools from the Circuits*

Schools	Population	Boys	Girls
Berekum St Monica A	116	48	68
Berekum Y.B. Demo B	225	115	110
Kato R/C Basic	114	49	65
Kato Presby A Basic	111	47	64
Berekum M/A Basic	235	107	128
Berekum Usumaniya	54	22	32
Kutre No. 1 Presby	85	45	40
Kutre No. 2 R/C Basic	175	90	85
Namasua R/C Basic	64	41	23
Nkyenkyeman M/A JHS	78	45	33
Fetentaa M/A JHS	65	24	41
Fetentaa R/C Basic	110	59	51
Jinijini R/C JHS	60	27	33
Ayimom R/C Basic	71	45	26
Berekum SDA Basic	89	43	46
Bess M/A Basic	188	93	95
Ebenezer Preparatory	51	20	31
T-Kwart Preparatory	68	38	30
All for Christ Preparatory	60	28	32
Assemblies of God	70	31	39
Total	2,089	1,017	1,072

Source: Berekum Municipal Education Service Data (2018/2019)

Stratified Sampling Procedure was used to place sampled schools and their J.H.S 2 students in each circuit in strata for fair representation of the sample. This technique was used to put the various sub-sections into proportions due to population difference among the schools. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) defined stratified sampling as the process of dividing members of the population into homogeneous subgroups before sampling. The strata should be mutually exclusive where every element in the population must be assigned to only one stratum.

In doing this, the total population of each school was divided by the target population and multiplied by 100 to get the proportion and therefore extract that proportion from the total sample size. The formula and the table with proportions are shown in Table 3:

s = $\frac{n}{N}$ x 100, where

s= individual circuit or school sample

n= individual circuit or school population

N= total population of all schools

Table 3 presents the proportions and samples of the selected schools:

Table 3-*Proportions and Samples of the Selected Junior High Schools*

(n=341)

Schools	**JHS 2**	**%**	**S**	**2 Boys**	**2 Girls**
Berekum St Monica A	36	5	17	8	9
Berekum Y.B. Demo B	75	11	38	18	20
Kato R/C Basic	35	5	17	8	9
Kato Presby A Basic	33	5	17	8	9
Berekum M/A Basic	83	12	39	18	21

Table 3: Continued

Berekum Usumaniya	18	3	10	5	5
Kutre No. 1 Presby	27	4	14	7	7
Kutre No. 2 R/C Basic	56	8	28	13	15
Namasua R/C Basic	27	4	14	7	7
Nkyenkyeman M/A JHS	45	7	25	11	14
Fetentaa M/A JHS	27	4	14	7	7
Fetentaa R/C Basic	35	5	17	8	9
Jinijini R/C JHS	20	3	10	5	5
Ayimom R/C Basic	25	4	14	7	7
Berekum SDA Basic	18	3	10	5	5
Bess M/A Basic	38	6	20	10	10
Ebenezer Preparatory	18	3	10	5	5
T-Kwart Preparatory	21	3	10	5	5
All for Christ Prep.	19	3	10	5	5
Assemblies of God	22	3	10	5	5
Total	678	100	341	162	179

Source: Berekum Municipal Education Service Data (2018/2019) *sampled

Finally, simple random sampling procedure with replacement was used.

Data Collection Instrument

The study adopted Moos and Trickett (1974) Classroom Social Environment Influence on Students Performance. Questionnaire as the main instrument for the data collection. The choice of questionnaire is that after examining the research questions and the nature at which the researcher wants to make in-depth analysis to the case, called for Likert scale type questionnaire for the quantitative method. A questionnaire is a device which consists of a

series of questions dealing with psychological, social, and educational topics given to an individual or a group of individuals with the objective of obtaining data with regard to some problems under investigation. But for the purpose of this study, a four-point Likert scale was used to ascertain the measure the variables among students.

With a four (4) point Likert Scale arranged according to agreement level (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree). The scale had 24-items that are shared among six dimensions such as involvement (4-items; reliability coefficient is .87), affiliation (4-items; reliability coefficient is .72), support (4-items; reliability coefficient is .77), task orientation (4-items; reliability coefficient is .72), Order and Organisation **(**4-items; reliability coefficient is .91) and Clarity of Instruction **(**4-items; reliability coefficient is .84). The overall Cronbach alpha was .81.

The test for performance was English Language. The test was developed by English teachers of the University of Cape Coast Basic School. The test items were 30 in number and were considered standardized, as the test was developed, reviewed and validated by a team of experts in the subject area and the activity time for the test was 30 minutes. The English language test was used because it is the medium of instruction from Primary four to the University in Ghana. Again, it is one of the main subject areas used to determine academic performance of students nationwide. It is assumed that when students understand the English language it can improve understanding of other related academic subjects. Usually, expressing oneself in English Language is used as basis to determine whether one is good academically or not.

Data Collection Procedure

Before administering the instruments, letter of introduction was taken from the Department of Education and Psychology, U.C.C. to seek formal permission from the head teachers of the schools. Permission from the schools was sought through the Berekum Municipal Education Office. After permission was granted, the researcher went ahead to select the participants for the study**.** The data was collected in a span of three (3) weeks with the help of three (3) trained assistants, who were academic friends. The choice of the academic friends as assistants was informed by the fact that they possessed knowledge in research and their engagement was in the right direction. The participants were informed about the nature of the instrument and how it should be filled. The test questions were kept secret to avoid leakages and were only brought out on the day of the test. The social environment questionnaire was filled, collected before the respondents were give the the English Language test.

Ethical Consideration

The protocols in research such as informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity of respondents and their information provided were considered. Apart from these protocols, I took an introduction letter from the Department of Education and Psychology in University of Cape Coast and presented it to the various schools' authorities to show as permission document. In addition, ethical clearance form was taken from the College of Education Review Board in University of Cape Coast for the purpose of general indication of genuine research that was executed.

Data Processing and Analysis

As a quantitative study, the use of quantitative statistical tools was considered. Data in respect of question one was analysed quantitatively using means and standard deviations because the objective was to find out the kind of classroom social environment available in the schools. Research question two data was analysed using simple linear regression because the objective was to test effects of classroom social environment on performance. Research hypothesis one was tested using independent samples t-test. Research hypotheses two was tested using independent samples t-test while. Research hypothesis three was tested using independent samples t-test because the objective was to test differences between male and female students and school types. Research hypothesis four was tested using independent samples t-test because the objective was to test differences between male and female students and school types.

Chapter Summary

The chapter was about the methods employed for the study and espoused the various steps indicted at the overview section. In the process of the study, some limitations such as methodological setbacks in as much as the use of questionnaire, respondents might not be truthful as it supposed were realized.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter covers the analysis, presentation and interpretation of the findings resulting from this study. The purpose of the study was to investigate students' perception of classroom social environment influence on academic performance of students in the Berekum Municipality in the Bono Region of Ghana. The analysis and interpretation of data were carried out based on the results of the research questions set for the study. The analysis was based on the 100% return data obtained from 341 participants sampled for the study. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages, means and standard deviations) inferential statistics (Linear Regression and Independent Samples t-test). The first part of this chapter describes the demographic characteristics of the participants. In the second part, the results are presented based on the research questions and hypotheses formulated for the study.

Presentation of Demographic Results

This aspect of the questionnaire was designed to elicit the personal information of the participants. These demographic data included the participants' gender, age and circuit. Table 4 presents the information on the demographic information:

Table 4-*Demographic Distribution of the Participants*

Variable	**Response Measure**	
Age	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
12.00	14	4.1
13.00	42	12.3
14.00	171	50.1
15.00	71	20.8
16.00	38	11.1
17.00	4	1.2
19.00	1	.3
Total	341	100.0
Gender	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Male	162	47.5
Female	179	52.5
Total	341	100.0
Circuit	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Kato	94	27.6
Kutre	81	23.8
Jinini North	66	19.4
Senase	100	29.3
Total	341	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Table 4 presents result on the demographic characteristics of the participants. Table 4 had three (3) demographic characteristics, thus age, gender and circuit. On the issue of age, the dominant age was 14 with a frequency of

171 (50.1%) and as well the mean age for the participants was 14.3, median and mode age was 14. It was revealed therefore, that participants aged around 14 dominated the sample. On the gender dimension, female participants dominated the sample with 52.5% (179) while male participants had 47.5% (162). In terms of circuit, they were four of them in which Senase circuit dominated the sample with a frequency of 100 (29.3%), followed by Kato with a frequency of 94 (27.6%). Next was Kutre which had a frequency of 81 (23.8%) while Jinijini North had a frequency of 66 (19.4%). It can therefore be said that Senase Circuit had majority participants in the study.

Research Question One: What perception does students' hold about their classroom social environment?

The focus of the question was to find out perceptions of Junior School Student about their classroom social environment. The classroom social environment was in six (6) subsections with equal items. In analysing the data, it was based on the subsections. The items were 24 in number and were scored based of four-point Likert-type scales. Descriptively, the scale was with four codes with their respective values. On the scale, code 1 represented Strongly Disagree (SD), code 2 represented Disagree (D), code 3 represented Agree (3) and code 4 represented Strongly Agree (SA). The analysis was done based means and standard deviations with a criterion mean of 2.50 (1+2+3+4=10/4). Participants with mean values from the criterion above were perceived to agree with the statements while respondents with mean values from criterion below were perceived to disagree with the statements. Table 5 presents information on the academic guidance and counselling needs of the respondents:

Table 5-*Distribution of Responses on Perception of Classroom Social Environment*

Variable	**Response Measure**		
Students Involvement Statements	N	Mean	SD
I put a lot of energy into what they do here.	341	3.49	.66
I have been thinking of pleasant things a lot in class.	341	2.76	.97
I often become inattentive in class (R).	341	2.05	1.20
I really pay attention to what the teacher is saying.	341	3.27	.87
Students Affiliation Statements	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**
I get to know my colleagues in this class really well.	341	2.48	1.09
I am not very interested in getting to know other students (R).	341	2.80	1.25
I have made lot of friends in this class.	341	2.23	1.15
It is easy for me to get a group together for a project.	341	2.51	1.14
Students Support Statements	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**
My teacher spends very little time just talking with students (R).	341	2.87	1.12
My teachers take a personal interest in students.	341	2.23	1.08
My teachers are more like friends than an authority.	341	3.18	.98
My teachers go out of their way to help students.	341	3.20	.86
Students Task Orientation Statements	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**
I often spend more time discussing outside student activities than class related material (R).	341	3.04	1.11
Getting a certain amount of classwork done is very important in my class.	341	3.03	.97

Table 5: Continued

I do not do much work in class (R).	341	3.45	5.27
My class is more like a social than a place to learn something (R).	341	2.90	1.07
Students Order and Organisation Statements	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**
My class is a well-organized class.	341	3.32	.89
I am usually quiet in this class.	341	3.29	.86
I play around a lot in this class (R).	341	2.93	1.11
My class is often very noisy (R).	341	2.78	1.17
Clarity of Instruction Statements	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**
There are clear set of rules for students to follow in my class.	341	3.04	.94
Rules in my class are not stable (R).	341	3.06	.93
My teachers explain what will happen if a student breaks a rule.	341	3.28	.92
My teachers explain what the rules are.	341	3.09	.97
Mean of Means	**341**	**2.93**	**1.29**

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Table 5 showed results on perception of students about classroom social environment on academic performance. The analysis was based on a criterion mean of 2.50 where mean values higher than criterion mean indicate agreement while mean values below 2.50 indicate disagreement.

Surprisingly, most responses had mean values greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. For instance, under students' involvement, respondents agreed that they put a lot of energy into what they did in class (M=3.49, SD=.66) while participants agreed that they had been thinking of pleasant things a lot in class

(M=2.76, SD=.97). The study revealed that participants disagreed they often became inattentive in class (M=2.05, SD=1.20) while participants also agreed that they paid attention to what teachers say in class (M=3.27, SD=.87).

In terms of affiliation in the classroom, participants disagreed that they got to know colleagues in this class really well (M=2.48, SD=1.09) while participants equally agreed that they are not interested in getting to know other students (M=2.80, SD=1.25). Again, participants disagreed that they had made lot of friends in class (M=2.23, SD=1.15) while participants agreed that it was easy for them to get a group together for a project (M=2.51, SD=1.14).

With respect to support in classroom, participants agreed their teachers spent very little time just talking with students (2.87, SD=1.12) while participants disagreed that their teachers took a personal interest in students (M=2.24, SD=1.08). Again, participants agreed that teachers were more like friends than an authority (M=3.18, SD=.98) while participants agreed that teachers went out of their way to help students (M=3.21, SD=.86).

In terms of task orientation, participants agreed that they often spent more time discussing outside student activities than class related material (M=3.04, SD=1.11) while agreeing getting a certain amount of classwork done in class was very important (M=3.03, SD=.97). Again, participants agreed that they did not do much work in class (M=3.45, SD=5.27) while participants agreed that their class was more like a social than a place to learn something (M=2.90, SD=1.07).

With regards to order and organisation, participants agreed that lessons were usually well organised and interesting by teachers (M=3.32, SD=.89) while at the same time agreed that they were usually quiet in class (M=3.29,

SD=.86). Again, participants agreed that they played around a lot in class (M=2.93, SD=1.11) while participants agreed that normal classroom was very noisy (M=2.78, SD=1.17).

In terms of clarity of instruction, participants agreed that they had clear set of rules for students to follow in class (M=3.04, SD=.94) while participants also agreed that rules in their class was not stable (M=3.06, SD=.93). Again, participants agreed that teachers explained what could happen if students break a rule (M=3.28, SD=.92) while participants agreed that teachers explained what the rules were to them in class (M=3.09, SD=.97).

In sum, participants agreed that classroom social environment influence on academic performance was possible with grand average mean of 2.93 above criterion mean of 2.50. It is therefore concluded that students in the Berekum Municipality had positive perception about their classroom social environment.

Research Question Two: What is the influence of classroom social environment on students' academic performance in English Language?

To achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher sought to find out how classroom social environment influenced academic performance. To make this possible, linear regression was deemed appropriate for the analysis. Proceeding to performing linear regression, certain assumptions were to be met. This include normality test. The researcher checked for the assumption before conducting the main regression test. Figure 2 showed the normality test for the variables:

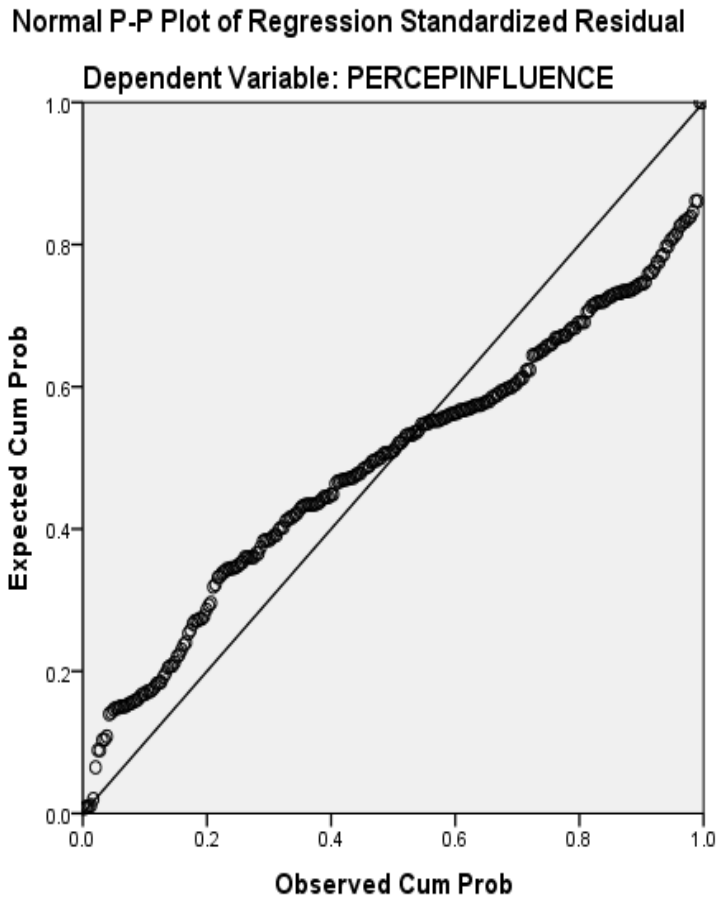

Figure 1: Normality Plot (P-P)

Table 6-*Results of Descriptive Statistics*

Test Variable	**Mean**	**SD**	**N**
Classroom Social Environment	110.90	16.79	341
Academic Performance in English Language	13.72	4.99	341

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Table 6 demonstrates the descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) of the test variables (classroom social environment and academic performance). The results from Table 6 showed that classroom social environment produced the highest mean and standard deviation (M=110.90, SD= 16.79) while academic performance recorded mean and standard deviation of (M=13.72, SD=4.99). Table 7 presents linear regression results:

Table 7-*Results of Linear Regression Analysis of the Classroom Social Environment and Academic (n=341)*

Variables	**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t-value**	**p-value**
	B	**SD Error**	**(β)**		
(Constant)	113.03	2.977		37.97	.000
Academic Performance	-.155	.204	-.046	-.762	.447
Multiple R value	.046a		F value	.581	
R Square value	.002		P value	.447	
Adjusted R Square	-.002				

Source: Field Survey (2019) *Significant @ 0.05 level

a. Predictors: (Constant), (Academic Performance)

b. Dependent Variable: Classroom Social Environment

Table 7 indicates the result of the linear regression analysis between academic performance and classroom social environment. The result of the unstandardized coefficient of the linear regression analysis shows that the linear correlation coefficient is .046. This measures the degree of relationship between the independent and dependent variables. This indicates that there was a weak but positive relationship between the classroom social environment and academic performance of students.

From Table 7, the R^2 (R-square) of .002 measures the goodness-of-fit of the estimated regression model in terms of the proportion of the variation in the performance of students in English Language as explained by the fitted sample regression equation. Thus, the predictor (classroom social environment) explains about .2% of the variation in academic performance of students and R^2 value is significant at 5 percent confidence level. In sum, the simple linear regression results indicated that the model explained 0.2% of the variance and that the model was significant, F (1,340) =.581, p=.000. It was found that classroom social environment significantly predicted academic performance of students (β1 = -.16, p=.000).

Testing of Hypothesis

Research Hypothesis One

One of the objectives of the study was to determine the differences in gender (male and female) with respect to performance of students in the English Language Test. Exploring alternative statistical tools, the independent samples t-test was deemed appropriate for the hypothesis testing. Table 8 presents the results:

Table 8-*Results of Independent Sample t-test Comparing Performance in English Language between Male and Female Participants*

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Performance	Male	162	13.60	4.91	-.383	339	.702
	Female	179	13.83	5.07			

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Table 8 indicates the results of the test of difference using the independent samples t-test. Results from the independent samples t-test showed

that there was no statistically significant difference between male and female participants, thus, *t* (339) = -.383, p=.702 (2-tailed). The result suggests that male participants performance in English Language (M= 13.60, SD = 4.91) was not different from female participants (M=13.83, SD= 5.07) at .05 level of significance. It implies that male participants did not perform better than female participants as the results depicts. Therefore, the null hypothesis was maintained.

Research Hypothesis Two

Another objective of the study was to determine the differences in gender (male and female) with respect to perception of students about classroom social environment. Exploring alternative statistical tools, the independent samples t-test was deemed appropriate for the hypothesis testing. Table 9 presents the results:

Table 9-*Results of Independent Sample t-test Comparing Perception of Classroom Social Environment between Male and Female Participants*

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
CSE	Male	162	109.55	9.53	-.993	339	.322
	Female	179	111.24	19.69			

Source: Field Survey (2019) Significant @ 0.05 level

Table 9 indicates the results of the test of difference using the independent samples t-test. Results from the independent samples t-test showed that there was no statistically significant difference between male and female participants, thus, *t* (339) = -.993, p=.322 (2-tailed). The result suggests that male participants' perception about classroom social environment (M= 109.55,

SD = 9.53) was not different from female participants (M=111.24, SD= 19.69) at .05 level of significance. It implies that male participants did not hold a different perception about their classroom social environment from female participants. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Research Hypothesis Three

The study investigated differences between private schools and public schools in terms of academic performance in English Language. Based on the nature of the variables, differences could only be conducted using independent samples t-test after assumptions were satisfied. Table 10 presents the results:

Table 10-*Results of Independent Sample t-test Comparing Private and Public-School Participants on Academic Performance*

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Performance	Public	293	5.50	4.01			.000
	Private	48	8.40	4.85	5.28	160.30	

Source: Field Survey (2019) Significant @ 0.05 level

Table 10 indicates the results of the test of difference using the independent samples t-test. Results from the independent samples t-test showed that there was a statistically significant difference between students in public and students in private schools, thus, *t* (160.30) = 5.28, p=.000 (2-tailed). The result suggests that, private school participants performed better (M= 8.40, SD = 4.85) than public school participants (M=5.50, SD= 4.01) at .05 level of significance. The Cohen *d* for the findings is .08, which signifies a strong effect in terms of difference in performance between public and private school students (Cohen, 1988). It implies that participants in private J.H.S. performed

better in English Language test than participants in public J.H.S. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Research Hypothesis Four

The study investigated differences between private schools and public schools in terms of perception of classroom social environment influence. Based on the nature of the variables, differences could only be conducted using independent samples t-test after assumptions were satisfied. Table 11 presents the results:

Table 11-*Results of Independent Sample t-test Comparing Private and Public-School Participants on Classroom Social Environment Influence*

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
CSE	Public	293	24.56	3.88	-1.55	339	.122
	Private	48	25.25	4.30			

Source: Field Survey (2019) Significant @ 0.05 level

Table 11 indicates the results of the test of difference using the independent samples t-test. Results from the independent samples t-test showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the perception of students in public and students in private schools about their classroom social environment, thus, *t* (339) = -1.55, p=.122 (2-tailed). The result suggests that, private school participants (M= 24.56, SD = 3.88) and public-school participants (M=25.25, SD= 4.30) had similar perception about their classroom social environment at .05 level of significance. It implies that participants in private and participants in public J.H.S had similar positive perception about

their classroom social environment. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Discussion

The study was about students' perception of influence of classroom social environment on academic performance among Junior High School students in the Berekum Municipality.

RQ 1: Perception of CSE Influence on Academic Performance

The study revealed that students conceived positive perceptions about their classroom social environment with composite mean value of 2.93 greater than criterion mean value of 2.50. The revelation implies that students had no negative perception about their colleagues and teachers in the various schools and classrooms. Based on the findings, there is no doubt that students in their schools were involved in their classrooms, they felt being affiliated to others, they received support services from teachers and colleagues, task given to them were progress-oriented, presentation and discussions were orderly and as well rules and regulation governing the operations were made clear to them. Corroboratively, the findings agreed with the assertion made by Ryan and Patrick (2001) that students' perception about the environments as positive promotes respect between teachers and students in the classroom and this relate positively to increased academic efficacy and more self-regulated learning among students.

Again, the findings of Patrick and Middleton (2002) is consistent with the finding study that with positive perceptions and given opportunities to participate and as well encouraged to interact with classmates academically, they become motivated towards the learning situations. It is believed that such

interactional opportunities may foster students' feelings of confidence or efficacy, sustained interest, and support a willingness to persevere with the task when experiencing difficulty or frustration (Patrick & Middleton, 2002).

RQ 2: Influence of CSE on Academic Performance

The study revealed that classroom social environment influenced performance but not much as the regression results indicated that the model explained 0.2% of the variance and that the model was significant, [F (1, 340) =.581, p=.000; (β1 = -.16, p=.000)]. The finding implies that when classroom social environment is good and appreciated by students, the likelihood of improvement in academic performance is inevitable. Such classroom social environments may provide opportunities for students to seek clarifications and support services when there is a need. The revelation corroborates with the finding of Dorman, Fisher and Waldrip (2002) that classroom social environment predicted positively the academic performance and efficacy of students in Australian schools. The finding of the study also corroborates the finding of Suzanna (2003) in Kolei Yayasan Pelajaran Mara Kualalumpur, that students with good academic performance participated more actively in class compared to students with average and poor academic performance. The Suzanna (2003) explained that students who performed poorly in academic perceived the prevalence of teacher-student interaction in classroom but they were less confident to establish good rapport with their teachers.

H1: Gender Difference in Academic Performance

The researcher tested the hypothesis to find whether differences existed between male and female students in terms of academic performance in English Language test. The study revealed that no differences existed between male and

female students on the test. This finding means that male participants did not perform better than female participants in the English Language test irrespective of the category of school in terms of public or private. The finding is consistent with the finding of Freuden-Thaler, Spinath and Neubauer (as cited in Rostami, Hejazi, & Lavasani, 2011), that revealed boys performing better than girls in academic performance. Conversely, the finding negates those of Blanchenay, Burns and Koster (2014); Lofstrom (2012) where academic performance was in favour of the girls against boys.

H2: Gender Difference in Perception of CSE

The researcher tested the hypothesis to find whether differences existed between male and female students' in terms of perception of classroom social environment. The study revealed that no differences existed between male and female students on their perceptions. The revelation suggests that male participants did not hold a different perception about their classroom social environment with female participants irrespective of category of school in terms of public or private. The study finding debunked those of Bakhshialiabad, Bakhshi, and Hassanshahi (2015) and Rostami, Hejazi, and Lavasani (2011) that female students generally hold positive perceptions toward their social learning environment than female students.

H3: Difference in Academic Performance between Public and Private School Students

The researcher tested the hypothesis to find whether differences existed between public and private school students in terms of academic performance in English Language test. The study revealed that differences existed between public and private school students on performance. The finding showed that

students in private schools performed better in English Language test than their counterparts in public schools with a mean difference magnitude of .08. The finding seems not to be surprising as it tended to confirm the general impression held by many in the Ghanaian educational terrain that private schools at the basic level perform better than their counterparts in state assisted schools. The finding supports the findings of Goyal (2006a, Goyal, 2006b); Kremer and Muralidharan (2006); Tooley and Dixon (2006). These researchers reported that performance outcomes in private schools were on average better than government schools and in most cases. Their findings showed that private schools the advantage remained even after controlling for a large set of observable student family, school and teacher characteristics.

H4: Difference in Perception of CSE between Public and Private School Students

The researcher tested the hypothesis to find whether differences existed between public and private school students in terms of perception of classroom social environment. The study revealed that no differences existed between male and female students on their perceptions. The finding of the was that no differences existed between public and private school students on their perceptions of the classroom social environment. The finding suggests that students in public schools did not hold a different perception about their classroom social environment from students in private schools.

Chapter Summary

The study came out with overwhelming findings in term of classroom social environment influence on academic performance of students. For instance, students held positive perceptions about their classroom social

environment, which positively influenced their performance in English Language test. The study further revealed that performance differed in terms school type but perceptions held never differed in terms of gender and school type.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

This aspect of the study is about summary of the findings, conclusions drawn from the study, recommendations offered and directions for further research.

Summary of the Study

The study investigated perceptions of students about the influence of classroom social environment on academic performance in English Language test in the Berekum Municipality. To achieve the purpose, descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The study employed quantitative approach because questionnaire was the main data collection instrument. The students participated in the study via responding to the adopted questionnaire. In all, 341 students in Junior High Schools in the Berekum Municipality were selected for the study using probability sampling techniques. The quantitative data was analysed using both descriptive (Means and Standard Deviation) and inferential statistics (Independent Samples t-test).

Key Findings

1. The study revealed that students had positive perceptions about their classroom social environment with composite mean value of 2.93 greater than criterion mean value of 2.50.
2. The study revealed that the regression model explained 0.2% of the variance and that the model was significant, where classroom social

environment significantly predicted academic performance of students in English Language test.

3. The study revealed that male participants did not perform better than female participants in the English Language test.
4. The study revealed that male participants did not hold a different perception about their classroom social environment from the female participants.
5. The study revealed that students in private schools performed better in English Language test than students in public school schools.
6. The study revealed that students in private schools had no different perception about their classroom social environment from students in public schools.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that junior high school students in the Berekum Municipality hold a positive perception about their classroom social environment no matter how they are. Having such a perception is very important as it could go a long way to help students grasp opportunities presented in their interactions with colleagues and teachers in the classroom. Again, classroom social environment has a relationship with performance of students academically. Therefore, the more students have positive perception about their classroom social environment the likelihood their performance will improve because least impediments would be entertained.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion drawn from the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Stakeholders in education should continue doing what they do keep such classroom social environment positive for students. Based on this, stakeholders such as curriculum development, assessment system and teacher training in the education system should take practical and meaningful steps to inculcate/promote the habits of self-learning, reflection, understanding, inquiry and investigation among students as their classroom social environment was viewed to be positive for academic work. Such positive social environment has the impetus to propel and inspire students towards meaningful academic work.
2. It is also recommended that the classroom social environment should still be catered for by Ghana Education Service despite it been positive for students' learning. This will help increase impact on students' academic performance than what was revealed in the study. Such can be done by frequently visit classrooms in order to assess participation, involvement, and understanding of the students and offer support to those teachers who lack competencies required to improve the learning situation and environment in classrooms as sanctioned by school heads. Low achievers in the subject are needed to be involved more through increased interaction with teachers in the form of makeup classes, tutorial classes or special coaching.
3. Personal participation of public-school students should be enhanced through better inter-personal relationship and teachers' special attention

so that their students' academic performances can be improved. For this to occur, it is important to sanction public school teachers to make sure students perform appreciable like their private counterparts because these teachers possess the necessary training and skills than their private counterparts.

Suggestions for Future Research

Many issues remain unknown and invite further research. For instance, teachers' perceptions about classroom social environment influence on academic performance of students should be explored. This will help bring a comprehensive understanding of the situation in the Berekum Municipality.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES

FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,

I am embarking on study that seeks to find out "***Students' Perception of Classroom Social Environment Influence on Performance".*** I would be grateful if you could answer the questions below. There is no right or wrong answer. I am interested in your personal experience and opinion. The confidentiality of your information is guaranteed.

Instruction: For each item, please choose the answer which best describes your experiences by ticking [√]

SECTION A

Demographic Data

1. **Gender/Sex:** Male **[ ]** Female **[ ]**

2. **Age Range:**

3. **Circuit:** Kato [ ] Kutre [ ], Jinini North [ ], Senase [ ]

Instruction: In the tables below, for each statement mark how much you agree with a tick **[√]** in the box to the right of each statement. The responses are on the scale **1-4**, where **1** = Strongly Disagree **[SD], 2** = Disagree **[D], 3** = Agree **[A]** and **4** = Strongly Agree **[SA].**

SECTION B

Moos and Trickett (1974) Classroom Social Environment Influence on Students Performance

SN	**Involvement Statements (.87)**	SD	D	A	SA
1	I put a lot of energy into what I do here.				
2	I have been thinking of pleasant things a lot in class.				
3	I often become inattentive in class (R).				
4	I really pay attention to what the teacher is saying.				
	Affiliation Statements (.72)				
5	I get to know my colleagues in this class really well.				
6	I am not very interested in getting to know other students (R).				
7	I have made lot of friends in this class.				
8	It is easy for me to get a group together for a project.				
	Support Statements (.77)				
9	My teacher spends very little time just talking with students (R).				
10	My teachers take a personal interest in students.				
11	My teachers are more like friends than an authority.				
12	My teachers go out of their way to help students.				

	Task Orientation Statements (.72)				
13	I often spend more time discussing outside student activities than class related material (R).				
14	Getting a certain amount of classwork done is very important in my class.				
15	I do not do much work in class (R).				
16	My class is more like a social than a place to learn something (R).				
	Order and Organisation Statements (.91)				
17	My class is a well-organized class.				
18	I am usually quiet in this class.				
19	I play around a lot in this class (R).				
20	My class is often very noisy (R).				
	Clarity of Instruction (.84)				
21	There are clear set of rules for students to follow in my class.				
22	Rules in my class is not stable (R).				
23	My teachers explain what will happen if a student breaks a rule.				
24	My teachers explain what the rules are.				
	Composite Cronbach Alpha = .81				

Note: R for Negative Statements that are reversely scored

APPENDIX B

ENGLISH LANG. TRIAL TEST FOR BASIC SEVEN (7): LEXIS AND STRUCTURE

SECTION A

From the alternatives lettered A to D, choose the one which most suitably completes each sentence.

Time Allowed: 1 Hour

1. This is the lady's torch. It is.....
   A. Hers
   B. Her's
   C. His
   D. Its

2. A fish's fins..... it to swim in water.
   A. helps
   B. helping
   C. help
   D. helped

3. If this project fails it will affect not only our department, ……the whole organization.
   A. and
   B. but
   C. but also
   D. than

4. She agreed …….me in everything.

   A. for

   B. on

   C. to

   D. with

5. Could you ..... me your pen for a few minutes, please?

   A. lend

   B. borrow

   C. donate

   D. steal

6. Take..... flower pots from here to the garden.

   A. this

   B. those

   C. these

   D. that

7. The pupils are preparing ..... the end of term examination.

   A. for

   B. with

   C. of

   D. on

8. Our..... are at risk.

A. leaves

B. lifes

C. leaf

D. lives

9. Bulky goods are transported.....sea

A. by

B. on

C. to

D. through

10. He came here with the man in green suit, ……?

A. does he

B. doesn't

C. did he

D. didn't he

11. "Will you mind if I borrowed your book?"

A. Yes I do

B. "Yes, I mind"

C. "No, I don't"

D. "No, I won't"

12. My nephew spent so much money---------clothing every month.

A. in

B. for

C. from

D. on

13. He leaned-------the wall and read the newspapers.

A. against

B. in

C. around

D. over

14. He said that he didn't want …….in return.

A. anything

B. nothing

C. somethings

D. all thing

15. Not only was she pretty……. intelligent

A. and also

B. but also

C. nor

D. for

SECTION B

Choose from the alternatives lettered A to D the one which is *nearest in meaning* to the underlined word in each sentence.

16. Baba Seidu was **exhausted** after he climbed the steep hill.

    A. Angry

    B. Hunger

    C. Tired

    D. Confused

17. That innocent looking boy is a **hypocrite.**

    A. critic

    B. deceiver

    C. fighter

    D. pretender

18. He could hardly contain his **fury**.

    A. anger

    B. bluff

    C. pride

    D. strength

19. We will **commence** building work in August next year.

    A. begin

    B. complete

    C. continue

    D. stop

20. She's got such a **cheeky** grin.

A. beautiful

B. innocent

C. insolent

D. peculiar

SECTION C

In each of the following sentences a group of words has been underlined. Choose from the alternatives lettered A to D, the one that *best explains* the underlined group of words.

21. The thief ***took to his heels*** when he heard the watchman shout. This means that, the thief

A. carried his heels

B. run away

C. run on his heels

D. stood straight.

22. In spite of his boasting, Robert's proved to be a **chicken-hearted fellow**. This means that Robert was

A. coward

B. mean

C. stupid

D. weak

23. The sick old woman **passed out** last night. This means that she has

A. gone out

B. died

C. travelled

D. fainted

24. After several attempts, Ama **threw in the sponge**. This means that Ama……..

A. admitted defeat

B. prove that she was strong

C. threw her sponge away

D. succeeded after several attempt

25. Smoking is ***frowned upon*** in many restaurants. This means that many restaurants

A. Praise smokers

B. Disallow smoking

C. Disapprove smoking

D. Hate smoking

SECTION D

In each of the following sentences, a group of words has been underlined. Choose from the alternatives lettered A to D the one that is most nearly opposite in meaning the underlined group of words.

26. The boy spoke **rudely** to the mate

A. politely

B. confidently

C. gently

D. loudly

27. The money he sent to the bank is **fake**

A. good

B. brand new

C. genuine

D. little

28. The five men were declared **innocent** by the trial judge

A. guilty

B. harmless

C. truthful

D. honest

29. Boatema sells very **expensive** fabrics.

A. beautiful

B. cheap

C. better

D. fine

30. We should not **blend** clay with cow dang.

A. grind

B. separate

C. mine

D. join

APPENDIX C

MARKING SCHEME

1. A
2. A
3. B
4. D
5. A
6. C
7. A
8. D
9. A
10. D
11. D
12. D
13. A
14. A
15. B
16. C
17. D
18. A
19. A
20. C
21. B
22. A

23. D

24. A

25. C

26. A

27. C

28. A

29. B

30. B.

APPENDIX D

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.805	24