

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**DETERMINANTS OF CAREER ASPIRATION OF SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE TEMA METROPOLIS**



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STUDENTS IN THE TEMA METROPOLIS**

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**A THESIS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES, FACULTY OF
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FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR AWARD OF MASTER OF
PHILOSOPHY (SOCIAL STUDIES) DEGREE.**

JULY, 2018

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Stella Turkson, declare that this thesis/dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE.....

DATE

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis/dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR. LUCY EFFEH ATTOM

SIGNATURE.....

DATE

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my children, Victricia Aku Turkson, Jason Yao Turkson and Nowell Kojo Turkson and to my husband, Mr. Innocent Kofi Turkson.

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GLOSSARY OF WORDS

CAS	Chinese Academy of Sciences
CRPSS	Chinese Continuous Ranked Probability Skill Score
FBOT	Family Background and Obligations Theory
GMAT	Goals, Motivation, and Achievement Theory
GPA	Grade Point Average
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LI	Legislative Instrument
MEDASS	Methodist Day Senior High
OLAMS	Our Lady of Mercy Senior High
SES	Socioeconomic Status
Tema PRESEC	Tema Presbyterian Senior High School
TEMASCO	Tema Senior High School

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine some of the determinants of career aspiration of Senior High school students in the Tema Metropolis. The study explored the career aspirations of participants, the relationship between career aspirations and academic performance, and the effect of socioeconomic status, and family up-bring on career aspirations of senior high school students. The study adopted the explanatory sequential mixed method design. Stratified random sampling was used to sample 300 participants for the quantitative phase whilst purposive sampling was used to sample 12 participants from the 300 for the qualitative phase of the data collection. Questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were used in data collection. Quantitative data was analysed using frequencies, percentages and correlation. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic approach. It emerged from the study that participants aspired for careers in accountancy, administration, artistic tasks, businessman, civil service, information communication technologist, economics, engineering, factory worker, farmer, historian, medicine and the like. The interview data confirmed these as the aspired careers of participants. Career aspirations of the participants were formed during childhood and crystallised into actual specific careers over time. There was an effect of socioeconomic status on participant's career aspiration. The data indicated that participants were from diverse economical background with at least five siblings. There were some effects of family up-bring on the career aspirations of the participants. Family up-bring elements like family traditions and cultural beliefs, rewarding individual achievements, religion, values, beliefs and norms affected the participants career aspiration. There was a significant negative correlation between career aspiration and academic achievement. The data also revealed that the academic performance of a student influenced the aspired career. The Tema Metropolitan Assembly, Tema Educational Directorate and the head teachers of the sampled schools should organize career guidance and outreach programmes for their students on the various career types, entry requirement/qualifications and available institutions.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

Education is universally recognized as the answer to socioeconomic problems of the world. Nations and individuals look up to education to provide a corrective measure for poverty, ignorance, drought, excessive rainfall, mental deficiency, joblessness, bad governance, poor communication system, hunger and inadequate shelter among other things (Suan, Mat & Lin Im, 2012). Every nation of the world aspires toward quality of life and social status. Career aspiration and selection is one of important choices students make in determining future plans. This decision may impact on them throughout their lives. The essence of who the student is will revolve around what the student wants to do with their life-long work (Suan, Mat & Lin Im, 2012). The choice of career has been a serious problem among Senior High School students in Ghana. No matter the age, the choice of career or occupation is an important issue of concern to people.

A lot of students in Senior High Secondary Schools believe that their future is a glorious adventure in which they are bound to succeed. Many of them have the idea that they would be able to work in the public or private establishments as soon as they complete senior high school education. Some aspire to become lawyers, engineers, medical doctors, accountants and so on. Students in senior high schools like many other young adults are always worried about what they will do with their lives, the kind of adult they will become (Pihie, 2009; Haase & Lautenschlager, 2011). They are concerned about early entry into the occupational world and finding productive and rewarding places in and out rapidly, fast changing societies where wages employment is unlikely to be available on a scale sufficient to absorb a small fraction of the young

people when they reach the working age. How the young people of today meet the problems of tomorrow will depend upon the amount of success they make in planning for that tomorrow. Planning for tomorrow itself is primarily the responsibilities of the parents, teachers and school counsellors. Students need general orientation into the world of work through the curriculum. The aspiration of career is a delicate issue that requires caution and serious considerations (Kyriacou & Coulthard, 2000).

Career aspiration is for young or older adults to either start a new career or enter a new vocation that they have never done. Career aspirations represent an individual's orientation towards a desired career goal under ideal conditions. More simply stated vocational aspirations "provide information about an individual's interests and hopes, unfitted by reality" (Hellenga, Aber & Rhodes, 2002; Joseph, 2009). Career aspiration is a person's desired career or career aim. In other words, vocational aspiration is defined as the desire to achieve a particular vocation.

Career development and aspiration process is perceived as life-long; tough choices made during High School are critical in laying the foundation of future vocation (Ngunjiri, 2013). Adolescence is a time of rapid physical emotional and mental development, which is occasionally complicated by high school setting, increased responsibilities and the desire to become an adult. Problems of emancipation, independence and freedom from the family occupy the early stage, while problems of social role and personal development task are to integrate earlier elements into a true sense of identity (Kelichi, Olalekan & Adigun, 2013). What we observe in the high school students career development is that many factors are evolved such as environment, personality, and opportunity that parents and students need to consider in their view of career aspiration.

Choosing a career is a landmark decision as it affects the rest of a person's life (Salami, 2008). It is not surprising therefore that the first institution to lay the foundation for career choice is the family where domestic chores are prescribed from a very tender age. Thus, career aspirations start early in life and is culturally embedded. Muthukrishna and Sokoya (2008) assert that from an early age, children are keen to identify themselves as either a boy or a girl. They further note that the gender role fantasies are influenced by parents, local communities, early years' professionals (teachers and caregivers) and media. The early manifestations of sex typing are evident in stereotypic play (Serbin, Kochung & Migunde, 2001). Girls prefer basic family roles of mother, child and domestic activities like food preparation while boys choose masculine roles during pretend play (Black, 1989). The girls play with feminine toys like dolls and kitchen utensils whereas boys prefer toys associated with maleness like toy gun, sword and car. Lerner (2013) reported that parents socialise their sons and daughters differently. This socialisation has a strong bearing on future aspired career goals and their motives. Apart from these home conditions, some other factors influence the career aspirations of the adolescent.

Intrinsic motives include personal interest and professional development (Griffiths & Kaldi 2007). Earlier researches of Chan (2004) and, Shadbolt and Bunker (2009) show that intrinsic motives were one of the major factors that influenced them to aspire about a career. Prestige, a construct of intrinsic motives, was also an important motivating factor in their career aspirations (Agarwala, 2008). According to Viet (1996), the intrinsic motivation of wanting to be useful, is still high as in previous investigations. Empirical research does not agree on gender differences in intrinsic motives for career choice. Studies by Halpern (1992), Heyman, Gomez-Mejia, Balkin and Cardy (2002) and Lai, Mitchell, Jones and Krumboltz (2009) show that males are

more intrinsically motivated than females. Males were more performance oriented and performed significantly higher than girls (Halpern, 1992; Lai et al., 2009). Males appeared to be more willing to confront a challenge, to seek to learn new things to satisfy curiosity and to solve problems independently as compared to females. Other studies (Agarwala, 2008; Chan et al., 2005) dispute the above as they suggest that females are more intrinsically motivated than males. Chan, Harrison and White (2005) attribute the gender discrepancy to the complex cultural and social context that have influence on achievement goal orientations. Similarly, Halpern (1992) suggests that the gender differences in intrinsic motivation are a result of gender stereotypes and socialization experiences

Empirical studies (Chan, 2004; Griffiths & Kaldi, 2007; Hallisey, 2002) show that many people make career choice decisions on the basis of expected incentives. Measures of extrinsic value like money, security and prestige revealed significant gender differences among students in several studies. For example, Holland (1986) suggests that boys are motivated more by utilitarian incentives (to become rich, acquire authority) since the principal role of a man in his family is that of “protector” and “provider”. Males, perceived to be stronger, fitter, more technical and practical, rated ‘earn a lot of money’, ‘work with technology’ and ‘good promotion prospects’ more highly than females in a study with Scottish pupils (Bond, Elliot, Strenta, Adair, Matier & Scott, 2009, p 48). Kordaki (2007) state that computer science boys were more concerned about financial gain and prestige of the profession. According to Duehr and Bono (2006), men who are more agentic, who believe that their appropriate role and value to their family is as breadwinner tend to place a higher value on financial gain. Girls were found to be far more interested than boys in gaining job security (Kordaki,

2007). However, Chuan and Atputhasamy (2001) note that gender difference on extrinsic motives are not significant.

Lifestyle values refer to the want for “good life” like status, power, independence, opportunity for professional development and remuneration associated with the occupation (Davey & Lalande, 2004). The lifestyle values include constructs such as hours of employment and opportunity to travel. According to Shadbolt and Bunker (2009), family factor is a powerful determinant of career choice that relates to the need to consider circumstances that surround it. Recent research evidence suggests that lifestyle factors are now equally important to both men and women (Shadbolt & Bunker, 2009; Thibodeau & Usoff, 2002). In contrast, a study by (Wendel et al., 2003) found that male more than female medical students who preferred a surgical career cited lifestyle as one of the major reasons for career choice.

Some studies suggest that individuals choose careers that give them the latitude to attend to family’s demands (Richardson & Watt, 2005) or career choices to meet the expectations of their family (Karibe et al., 2009). Women were found to have a stronger inclination to family motives (Albelushi, 2004; Sanfey, Juntunen, Barraclough & Broneck, 2006). The major influences on women’s career decisions appear to come from what is referred to as “care responsibilities”, such as childbirth and childcare, being a single mother, sharing roles and responsibilities with partner in a “dual earner” family or caring for aging parents (Bartosz, Becker & Park, 2006). By the same token, Cook (1993) states that despite strides in gender equity, it seems that young people are expected to follow the traditional interrupted employment pattern, which allows bearing and nurturing of children during their early ages.

In Europe, a study by Hallisey, Heppner and O’Brien (2002) with dental students shows that entrepreneurial motive was rated among the major reasons for

career choice. However, gender parity on participation in entrepreneurship has not been attained. For example, studies conducted by Small and McClean (2002) with Barbadian youth and Bardasi K, Barbaranelli C. et al., (2008) with Belgian and Philippine students show that more males than females are entrepreneurially motivated.

Studies by Matthews and Moser (1996) with US business graduates, Crant (1996) with US undergraduates and MBAs, Kourilsky and Walstad (1998) with US high school students, Rajjman (2001) with Mexican immigrants and Malaysian graduate students show that more males than females have a stronger inclination towards entrepreneurship. However, Kourilsky and Walstad (1998) report that both males and females exhibit a low level of entrepreneurship knowledge.

In Africa, more women were found to be major players than men in the private sector, particularly agriculture and informal businesses (Bardasi, Barbaranelli, Caprara & Pastorelli, 2008). A great deal of literature addresses reasons why students choose to study particular academic disciplines and aspire to enter into specific career types. Aspirations are desired goals that underlie an individual's behaviour (Feldman 1993). However, current literature on motives for career choice among students according to gender has no consensus. Researches indicate that intrinsic, extrinsic and altruistic motives (Brookhart & Freeman 1992) are the major reasons for career choice. In addition, social norms, lifestyle, values and attitudes (Brown, 2003) are factors whose trends are difficult to anticipate or even to recognise quickly, and yet they significantly affect career aspiration. This study therefore looked at some of the determinants of career aspiration of senior high students in some selected schools in the Tema Municipality in the Greater Accra region.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Preparations for and implementation of, career related choices is one of the critical challenges inherent in the normative shift from adolescence to early adulthood (Mish, 2004). High school is an opportunity for individuals to crystallize educational and career aspirations; thus, decisions made during this time have profound consequences for either limiting or optimizing future endeavours. Linderman (2010) conducted a study to examine the proposition that a direct relationship exists between the career aspirations of seventh grade students and their academic achievement. A career aspirations survey was completed by and collected from 39 students from a suburban middle school of a north-eastern United States city. Results indicated that most students, regardless of GPA, aspired to careers that required considerable to extensive preparation. The students holding the top five highest GPA's out of the sample aspired to careers in these two categories giving evidence to the validity of the proposition.

Bergen (2006) examined family influences on career development and aspirations of young adults. Results support the idea that different aspects of the family influence diverse factors of career development and future aspirations. The achievement orientation of the family was predictive of career salience and extrinsic aspirations. Conflict with mothers was predictive of career salience yet support and depth in the relationship with mothers and low amounts of conflict in the relationship with fathers were predictive of career maturity. High career salience was also predictive of career maturity. The hypothesis that factors play a mediating role between the family and career development variables was not supported.

Shumba and Naong (2012) conducted a study to determine factors influencing career choice and aspirations among South African students. A quantitative paradigm guided this study. A survey method in the form of a structured questionnaire was used in this study in order to identify the factors that influence career choice and aspirations among South African students. The study found that the family; the ability of the learner to identify his/her preferred career choice; and teachers were significant factors that influence the career choice and aspirations of students. These findings suggest future research should assess multiple aspects of the family and multiple facets regarding career development to more fully understand this process.

From the various studies reviewed, there appears to be very little work done in ascertaining multiple facets of career determinants and the effect of academic achievement on career aspiration of students in Ghana especially in the Tema Metropolis. To fill this knowledge gap, this current study is designed to investigate the academic achievement and career aspiration of Senior High School students in the Tema Metropolis.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to ascertain the determinants of career aspiration of Senior High school students in the Tema Metropolis.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Explore the career aspirations of students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis.
2. Explore the effects of socioeconomic status of parents on career aspirations of students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis.
3. Examine the effects of family up-bringing on career aspirations of students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis.
4. Examine the relationship between career aspirations and academic achievement of students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the career aspirations of Senior High School students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis?
2. What are the effects of socioeconomic status of parents on career aspirations of Senior High students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis?
3. What are the effects of family up-bringing on career aspirations of senior high school students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis?
4. How does academic achievement influence the career aspirations of students in Tema metropolis?

1.5 Hypothesis

The following hypothesis were formulated to guide the study

1. **H₀** There is no significant correlation between academic achievement and career aspirations of Senior High School students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis.

H₁ There is a statistically significant correlation between academic achievement and career aspirations of Senior High School students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study will contribute to existing literature on career aspiration and academic performance of students. It will benefit the Ghana Education Service, teachers, career counsellors, policy implementers and students in various levels of education. This study will promote the need for further studies into career aspiration, development and policy design in Ghana. It aimed to prepare the way for career policies and reviews opened to increase awareness among teenagers on diverse career options, the required plans and standards, actions and preparations/ trainings required to reach them. It may lead to the re-design of academic curricular that provides expert and practical instruction on skills applicable in specific career areas.

This written report may further assist in the preparation of new insurance guidelines that eliminate the relatively clear cut early academic specialization that tentatively begins from First Cycle Education in Ghana (students at this tier are required to select courses or elective areas before advancing to the Second Cycle). It can help push academic specialization to tertiary levels where students become relatively matured enough to form clearer career aspirations and decide which tertiary academic disciplines to pursue to fit those career ambitions.

In conclusion, this work may help provoke a rethink on the career development challenges in Ghana and help advance a new schedule of career development that deliberately and carefully target and sustain young people (possibly from childhood) with broadly wide and versatile potentials and talent.

1.7 Delimitations of the Study

Theoretically, the study was delimited to the career aspirations and academic achievement of senior high school students and how socioeconomic status, family beliefs and obligations affect their aspirations. Geographically, the study was delimited to selected senior high schools in the Tema Metropolis namely: Tema Senior High (TEMASCO), Chemu Senior High, Methodist Day Senior High (MEDASS), Presbyterian Senior High School (TEMA PRESEC), Our Lady of Mercy Senior High (OLAMS) and Manhean Senior High Schools.(MANSEC)

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

Academic Achievement: is the outcome of education, the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals. In this study academic achievement is taken from the final examination score in four core subjects, i.e. mathematics, English, integrated science and social studies subjects of secondary school students.

Career: a profession for which one trains and which is undertaken as a permanent calling (Mish, 2004).

Career Aspiration: aspiration is one's ideas and hopes of "possible selves", i.e., what a person would like to become or achieve (Markus & Nurius, 1986).

Career Development: refers to the shaping of factors that influence how an individual chooses careers over his or her life span (Herr, Cramer & Niles, 2004).

Career Choice: is the ideal job to which a person aspires, or the job a person actually plans to do after schooling (Crites, 1969).

Socioeconomic Status (SES): an individual's or group's position within a hierarchical social structure. Socioeconomic status depends on a combination of variables, including occupation, education, income, wealth and place of residence. (Hirsch, Kett & Trefil, 2002).

1.9 Organisation of the Study

The study was organized into five (5) chapters. The first chapter dealt with the introduction which gives an insight into the background of the study, the purpose of the study, objectives of the study and the research questions which serve as a guide to the study. It also dealt with the significance of the study and the delimitation. Chapter Three comprised of methodology. It highlighted the research design as well as the instruments and methods used for the study. It again described the population, sample and sampling techniques used in the study. Chapter four dealt with the findings and discussions of the study. It also contains the analysis of the questionnaires and interview responses in relation to the research questions. Chapter Five, dealt with the summary, conclusion, recommendations and suggestions made on the topic for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The theoretical review was underpinned by the theory of career vocational aspirations, Goals, Motivation, and Achievement Theory (GMAT) and Family Background and Obligations Theory (FBOT). This was followed by the conceptual review. The empirical review comprised studies on career aspirations of students, effects of socioeconomic status on career aspirations and the effects of the family upbringing on career aspirations. Literature on career aspiration and academic achievement abounds in developed countries however much had not been written on these in Africa and Ghana.

2.1 The Concept of Aspiration

Ngwoke (2004) cited in Joseph (2009) opined that level of aspiration is a longing for what is above one, with advancement as its goal. Thus, aspiration has to do with the desire to improve or rise above one's present status. Aspiration as goal striving behaviour is an essential feature of modern competitive world. As aspirations are ego involved, success leads to satisfaction, happiness and increased self-esteem while failure brings embarrassment, remorse and feeling of personal inadequacy and inferiority (Krishan, 2014). Aspiration may also be described as unrealistic especially when it is informed by limited knowledge and experience or inadequate assessment of opportunities available in the learning environment for its attainment. Some aspirations relate to what the learner wants to be or the ideal self-concept. While others relate to what the learner wants to accomplish or need achievement (Ngwoke, 2004). However, in the formation of one's aspiration what plays most important part is one's level of

aspiration (Krishan , 2014).

Katzel (1983) stated that a person's level of aspiration is found in dynamic social salutation. Usually, those who experience success will try to approximate or improve upon their past performance while those who experience failure will stop trying and lower their aspirations. "Level of Aspiration is the level of future performances in a familiar task which an individual, knowing his past performances in the task, explicitly undertakes to reach" (Krishan, 2014, p. 68). In the non-experimental context, level of aspiration usually means a level of performance, which at least before the event will be acceptable to the subject's image of himself, i.e. to his ego (Krishan, 2014). Hence, it can be concluded that level of aspiration is the standard up to which a person expects and hopes to reach in a given performance. In short, it is expected level of achievement of the individual.

2.2 Career Aspiration

Career vocational aspiration is for younger or older adults to either start a new career or enter a new vocation that they have never done. Career aspirations represent an individual's orientation towards a desired vocation goal under ideal conditions. More simply stated vocational aspirations provide information about an individual's interests and hopes, unfitted by reality (Hellenga, Aber & Rhodes, 2002; Joseph, 2009). Career aspiration is a person's desired career or career aim. In other words, vocational aspiration is defined as the desire to achieve a particular vocation. People's vocational aspiration can be categorized into limited number of types (Geek, 2009). The following are five examples of vocational aspirations:

Traditional career success aspiration describes people who are motivated and inspired to advance their professional skills for achieving a progress in the organization's hierarchy level. People seek positions that have the potential to establish

status responsibility, higher salary and authority.

People also seek solid jobs that represent stability and predictability. This aspiration describes people who prefer to work at workplaces that offer a long term secured position over advancement.

Expertise aspiration describes people who seek positions that offer technical career professional enhancement and technological interest. Such people would like to become experts in their professional area.

Freedom aspiration is exhibited by people who seek individualism. Such a person wants to get autonomy for his thoughts and activities. These are people who are motivated by values such as freedom and independence.

Balance aspiration also describes people who consider their career equal or lower as compared to other non-work values and interests such as family and religion but preferred jobs that respect their interests on their personal life. According to Gottfredson (1981) cited in Geek (2009), vocational aspiration is the single occupation named as one's best alternative at any given time. As perceptions of compatibility and accessibility change, so does a person's assessment of which alternative is the best, even though the social space may be stable. Vocational aspiration is commonly described as one's specific desired career choice.

2.3 Academic Achievement

Cary, Roseth, David and Roger (2008, p. 28) define academic achievement as: Performance on task with measures including comprehension, quality and accuracy of answers of tests, quality and accuracy of problem solving, frequency and quantity of desired outcome, time or rate to solution, time on task, level reasoning and critical thinking, creativity, recall and retention, and transfer of tasks.

Kobal and Musek (2001) stated that there are two broad groups of definitions of academic achievement. The first one could be considered more objective, because it refers to numerical scores of a pupil's knowledge, which measures the degree of a pupil's adaptation to school work and to the educational system. The second group is a more subjective one, as its determination of academic success is reliant upon the student's attitudes towards his academic achievement and himself, as well as by the attitudes of significant others towards his or her success in the career.

Academic achievement refers to a successful accomplishment or performance in a particular subject area and is indicated by grades, marks and scores of descriptive commentaries. Academic performance also refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers in a fixed time or academic year (Dimbisso, 2009).

Ferla, Martin and Yonghong (2009) use the notion of academic self-concept referring to individuals' knowledge and perceptions about themselves in academic achievements, and convictions that they can successfully perform a given academic tasks at designated levels. They further stated that academic self-concept represents a more past-oriented, aggregated and relatively stable judgment about one's self-perceived ability in a particular academic domain; while academic self-efficacy represents a context specific and relatively future oriented judgment about one's confidence for successfully performing an upcoming subject-specific academic task. Good (1973) as cited in Dimbisso (2009) stated that achievement encompasses actual accomplishment of the students of potential ability.

2.4 Theoretical Review

Three major theoretical approaches were adopted to conceptualise the formation and process of career aspiration, individual motivation and the significant role of the family background and values of the youth. These theories are theory of Career Aspirations, Goals, Motivation, and Achievement Theory (GMAT) and Family Background and Obligations Theory (FBOT).

2.4.1 Theory of Career Aspirations

Super (1957) proposed five phases through which a person develops a career. According to Super (1957), during the Growth Stage (birth to 14 or 15 years), concept of self, attitudes and interests develop whilst the Exploratory stage (15- 24 years) is marked by the development of skills and the making of tentative choices. The third phase is Establishment (25-44 years) during which skills are further developed and individuals begin to stabilize as work experience is gained. According to Super, Maintenance occurs from ages 45 to 64, a period characterized by adjustments to improve work positions. It is during the Decline phase (ages 65 and above) that individuals begin to prepare for retirement according to Super's theory. Super (1957) also proposed that an individual progresses through five vocational development stages: Crystallization (14-18 years), during which individuals develop and plan tentative vocational goals, Specification (18-21 years), during which individuals develop a firmer understanding of their vocational goals, Implementation (21-24 years), during which individuals are trained for and obtain employment, Stabilization (24-35 years), during which individuals continue to work and corroborate their career choice and Consolidation (35 years and above) during which individuals get ahead in their careers. Although Super (1957) initially proposed that these stages occur sequentially, he later revised his theory to reflect the belief that individuals cycle and recycle through these

stages in response to changes in self-concept and the work environment as they attempt to choose the job that allows them the most self-expression. During adolescence, interests, capacities and values develop which are all aspects of career maturity.

2.4.2 Goals, Motivation and Achievement Theory (GMAT)

This theory examines the relationship between goals, motivation, and school achievement. Discussing the relationship between educational goals (aspirations) and achievement, Covington (2000) advanced this theory by stressing that goals and achievements are separated by degree of motivation. According to this theory, aspirations are about achievements and achievements are about aspirations. Covington (2000) postulated that the quality of learning and the propensity to continue learning hinges on the interaction between the goals set by students and the motivating properties of such goals, such as expected reward structures or satisfaction. GPAs and scores in Mathematics, Integrated Science, Social Studies and English Language can influence aspirations (Taylor & Krahn, 2005), and variables like time spent on homework and students' aspirations enhances Mathematics scores (Dandy & Nettelbeck, 2002). A student with high educational aspirations tends to generate better achievement scores, and based on current achievement, a student evaluates the likelihood of achieving a certain level of education and will define the aspired level of education.

According to GMAT, differences in aspirations can arise from differences in expected rewards resulting from student-specific incentives and investments in education (Covington, 2000; Sherwood, 1989). In addition to students' abilities and talents, school and family resources, and for any given learning technology, setting educational and career goals by a student is synonymous with setting minimum parameters of motivation, effort, drive and achievement.

Differences and variations in aspiration levels among youth that are accounted for by differences in rewards of higher education can only be significant if there are large differences in reward structures, like wages and occupations, for the same levels of education across races, ethnicities, and youths in Ghana. However, such differences have been considered negligible. This leads to a discussion of the role of home in the formation of students' aspirations.

The implications of this theory reveal that the goals, motivation, and school achievement of a student in selected schools in Tema are related and depending on the level of the students' motivation and aspired goal. The aspired goal to achieve will determine the students level of performance and invariably the career aspired for the future. Students' academic achievement (Mathematics, English language, Integrated Science and Social studies) will influence the students career aspiration depending on the students' motivation.

2.4.3 Family Background and Obligations Theory (FBOT)

Given that there are many family variables, such as size and community, beliefs, expectations, obligations, values, religion, and language, that show some significance in enhancing aspirations and education, it is convincing to attribute to the family some theoretical role in understanding student aspirations (Fulgini, 1997). Moreover, variables such as household income and parents' education, expected to be instrumental in understanding aspirations levels and academic achievement of students, turn out to be weak predictors in explaining aspiration levels of students (Fulgini, 1997). This has necessitated the need for further analysis of aspirations beyond the effects of variables like socioeconomic status (SES), such as the role of the family and cultural capital in the formation and shaping of students' educational aspirations. Children in developing nations like Ghana and parents often face changes in socioeconomic status (SES), given

that parents' relative income and occupation often change due to economic variables (Fuligni, 1997).

The carryover effects of country of origin regarding the value of education and cultural beliefs of parents tend to persist for some duration considering the socioeconomic status of the parents. The education that parents and children obtain may also have some relevance to students' educational and career aspirations through the formation of expectations and beliefs in education (Fuligni, 1997).

FBOT postulates that family background factors, such as education, income, family structure, ethnicity, and culture, affect students' beliefs and behaviour. According to this theory, assimilation into the mainstream culture and the allocation of students' time are based on family beliefs and obligations to the extent that parents can influence their children (Fuligni, 1997). Fast assimilation into the mainstream culture has been emphasized by some scholars, but whether assimilation and acculturation affect aspirations of students and their socioeconomic development has been of much academic interest in recent years.

A study by Fuligni (1997) showed that some families stressed the importance of family obligations and cultural beliefs to their children, who then considered these as constraints in their decision making regarding use of time, for example, the choice of peers and time spent with peers. To maintain high educational outcomes, parents and children often negotiate some balance in the use of family resources and their time between family obligations and educational activities (Fuligni, 1997). They choose the path and speed of assimilation into the mainstream culture that leads to better educational outcomes.

FBOT is premised on the role of ethnicity and culture in adaptation and assimilation into the mainstream culture. It helps explain how a family mitigates social

barriers to education and educational risks associated with low Socioeconomic Status (SES), reflecting to some extent the aspirations of parents, family and teachers (Fuligni, 1997). Family intervention through control and motivation can compensate for the negative effects of factors like low SES and discrimination on aspirations and learning. From the studies examined, it appears that households discuss and enforce aspects of family obligations and cultural beliefs to ensure better schooling for their children. Fuligni, (1999) classified family obligations into three categories: current assistance, respect and future assistance. By comparing different levels of these three variables and educational aspirations, they found medium values of each of these three variables to be associated with higher student aspirations. Parents expect their children to be responsible for their daily schooling activities like homework and school plans, to take care of their younger siblings, and to help their parents with chores. This theory underpinning this study shows the role of family characteristics in the career aspiration of the student. In Ghana, family characteristics like socioeconomic status and family background has significant influence on the career aspiration of the participant.

2.5 Conceptual Review

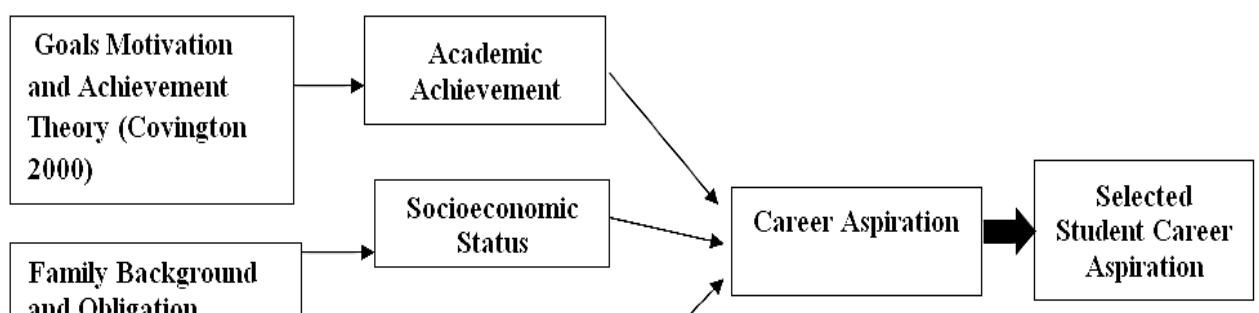


Figure 2.1: Determinants of Career Aspirations based on Covington (2000) and Fuligni (1997) theories.

It is often assumed that at some age, each student has aspirations, but broadly each student holds a specific aspiration level, when and how they arrive at that measure, and who and what influences their educational and career aspirations are questions important for understanding existing differences in educational aspirations across different youth populations documented by research. Research does not tell us how often students' aspirations change over time and whether such changes can be attributed to changes in their academic scores or trends in academic scores. Students can use their academic scores and other factors to revise their educational goals and aspirations, but the information students use to actually revise their aspirations and under what circumstances is also important in understanding the dynamics and differences in aspirations across student populations.

Children who are born in the Tema Metropolis or enter Tema Metropolis at some age (or grade) are endowed with certain attributes like language, respect for authority, discipline, family obligations, and even religion. Parents in the Municipality or immigrant parents also enter with certain socioeconomic backgrounds and have some motives for their children; they also have ambitions, expectations, and aspirations for their children. These ambitions and aspirations are crystallized into specific family goals, which include specific careers, income levels, and belonging to a social class,

and some measure of dignity, self-worth, and esteem for themselves and their children. At an early age, children are frequently asked the question, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” as an attempt to mould future career preferences of a child or find out if a child has embarked on particular aspirations. The answers given often cover a wide range of occupations, from being a teacher to being a doctor, often reflecting their admired role models, parents’ occupations, and what their parents and teachers communicate to them.

It can be assumed that all parents raise their children to be somebody, and there is frequent disagreement about who the father, the mother, and significant relatives want students to be when they grow up. The expectations and aspirations of others may not conform to students’ own aspirations or influence them, especially if they have developed aspirations on their own. The academic achievement and capabilities of a child can also influence the career aspiration of the child. If this assumption is relevant, then parents will nurture, care, invest in, and try to influence the beliefs and preferences of their children based on their socioeconomic background. The differences in levels of aspirations across students eventually depend on students’ academic abilities, their tolerance for low grades and sanctions from parents. The value they attach to different levels of education, the extent to which they feel obligated to current family needs and expected satisfaction from income, and support from their family are also important.

2.6 Empirical Review

2.6.1 Career Aspirations of Students

From the sociologist’s point of view, socialization processes are considered a dominant factor influencing the college student’s career aspirations (Weidman, 1998).

As places for socializing its members, colleges or universities provide experiences that in turn affect career aspirations. Parental socialization, collegiate experiences, normative pressure, and reference group are variables in Weidman's studies. For many high school graduates, the decision to continue on to university or college is very difficult because adolescence is a critical time for the formulation of educational and career aspirations. It is a time for students to develop and explore what they want to do to improve their status in society; it is a time to develop their aspirations.

Feliciano and Rumbaut (2005) examining educational aspirations of young adults in California, found the educational aspirations of males to be lower than that of females, who were more likely than males to aspire to and attain the highest status occupations even in areas that tended to be male dominated. Kao and Tienda (1998) showed that in 8th, 9th, 10th, and 12th grades, being a black female raised the probability of aspiring to obtain a college degree and that results were different for Asian and Hispanic females. Being a black male was important in forming college degree aspirations in 8th grade, but the effects of being a black male on college aspirations drastically changed in 10th and 12th grades.

Vernez and Abrahamse (1996) acknowledged that there are variations among different racial and ethnic groups just as there are variations among natives. Academic performance as an indicator of preparation for college showed that Asians generally performed best followed by Blacks, with Hispanics in the lower range.

Ragna (2001) in her study on education and training and choice of occupation and career in (Nyeri) Kenya, concluded that career aspirations were dictated by socioeconomic and cultural background of the students. Students from families where there was a tradition for further education, tended to choose the footsteps of their elder brothers and sisters. Tsuma (2006) on his study on girls career preferences in Kenya

found out that by the onset of adolescence, girls were already biased against technical and physical arts careers. Kibera (2003) in his study in Kiambu, Kajiado, and Machakos Districts on career aspirations and expectations of secondary school students pointed out that career aspirations and expectations are not merely outcomes of curriculum studied, rather they were a product of a variety of factors including school quality (quality of staff, equipment, workshops and school practices), gender composition of students in schools, age of the student, geographical/community environment.

McIlveen and Wendy (2006) in a career guidance seminar at Tereni Mixed Secondary School indicates that due to ignorance, students are likely to end up in a career not because that was what was ideal for them, but because they were not aware of any other options. To support the more relevant and exciting information available on a given career the more likely the students were to choose that career because they were impressed and even inspired by comfort and certainty of an informed decision.

Joseph (2009) conducted a study to investigate the vocational needs and aspirations of in-school and out-of-school secondary school females in Ankpa Education Zone of Kogi state, Nigeria. Findings of the study showed that in-school and out-of-school secondary school females in Ankpa Education Zone have relatively high vocational needs in areas like manipulation of tools, communication skills, artistic tasks, social work and mathematical tasks. The study found that in-school and out-of-school secondary school females aspires vocations such as law, administration, nursing, medicine and accountancy.

Previous research by Moody (1996) related to aspirations and expectations of university students in China. The main purpose of this study was to discover and to discern how far aspirations and expectations are affected by five predicted variables:

family background, geographic location, the level of the educational institution in which the student is enrolled, academic major and gender.

He chose the first and last year student population in nine cities from three provinces as a sample for the study. The total number of students who participated in this study was 1,216; and there was an overall rate of return of 91 percent. The findings revealed that higher educational opportunities are unlikely to be reached by the peasant farmer family, although their population is slightly more than 80% of the national population. There were only 27.8% of the students participating in this study who came from this kind of family, compared to 39.4% of the students who came from families where fathers were employed in high-ranking occupations. The population of these families is less than ten percent of the national population. Nonetheless, considering the difficulties in the countryside, it is truly a tremendous achievement that China has been able to raise the peasant career farmer class to the higher educational level of universities. In general, students tended to aspire to as much higher a career as possible as that of their parents. The only notable exceptions to this trend were those students from business career entrepreneur families, because they wanted to remain in the same occupation as their fathers. The paternal career categories in China are office worker, intellectual, leading cadre, skilled worker, factory worker, farmer, businessman and member of the military.

Jones (2011) argued that parents affected the level of education or training that their children achieved, the knowledge they had about work and different occupations, the beliefs and attitudes they had about work and the job skills they learned. Some of the ways they did this was by; the attitudes and behaviour they rewarded and punished approved or disapproved of various occupation. The expectations they had for their children's education and career were important to them and they were setting example

for their children. They exerted influence on who was around them the children and adults who were to become their children's significant others. They were concerned about the opportunities they offered their children to learn and develop and the kind of parent- child relationship they developed. In the researcher's opinion this was not bad but may go against the abilities and propensities of the student. Kilonzo (2010) in his study on student's career awareness found out that there was a significant relationship between father's education and educational aspirations for the children.

Raby and Walford (2011) in their study on career-related attitudes and their determinants in France revealed that home environment was the dominant source of career attitudes; parents' aspirations for their children were high. They also found out that students did not relate the world of school with future prospects. They saw the school as irrelevant to future jobs. Brembeck (2006) argued that student level of educational aspiration was positively related to peer-group membership. According to him peer group membership with a student with high career expectation influenced them to be inspired for certain careers. Jones (2012) supports the idea that peer group influence was an important factor in influencing students' career choice.

With primary focus on race and gender differences, some studies of career and educational aspirations were carried out (Arbona & Novy, 1991; Luzo, 1992). Using 500 black and white students, Howe (1977) did a study in the fall of 1975 cited in Jones (2012). A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to students in all freshman orientation sessions, Social Sciences and English classes at St. Phillip's College in San Antonio. Four dependent variables career aspirations, career expectations, educational aspirations, and educational expectations were graded into low, medium, and high using thirty-third and sixty-sixth percentiles on the frequency distribution. The data analyzed showed that there are no significant differences between the educational aspirations of the black and the white students, but the black students appear to have notably higher realistic expectations. However, significantly fewer black students than white have low educational expectations, and relatively more black students have medium and high educational expectations.

Concerning career aspirations, the findings showed that a significantly larger percentage of white students indicated low career aspirations, a significantly larger percentage of black students indicated medium career aspirations, and a significant difference was noticed between the career aspirations of the two races at the higher level. As Luzo stated, the result of his study showed that the issues related to career development that face college students are not consistent across cultural and ethnic groups (Luzo, 1992).

Studies to examine educational and career choice based on the college impact aspects were done by Routhen (2006). The studies used secondary data from both faculty and student research by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education in cooperation with the American Council on Education. Six majors were studied in the former research English, Engineering, Mathematics, Economics, History, and Politics

and four majors were studied in the latter research English, Mathematics, History and Politics. In the former study, five career values were studied, namely: helping others, administration, finance, career eminence and creativity. Three of the career values creativity, career eminence and helping others are more likely than the others to be affected by departmental influences. Sample findings concerning differences on the basis of sex indicate that females and males are differently influenced by kinds of interaction in the collegiate context.

Routhen's (2006) study set out to find out the factors influencing student's career choices at secondary school level in Manga Sub County, Nyamira County. The study revealed that students made ignorant career choices due to inadequate career guidance. Majority of the teachers were not trained to handle careers neither were there adequate career guidance sessions in schools. Parental, peer and sibling influence also affected students as they made their career choice. Possible measures suggested included; students should be guided through their subjected choices to be in line with their career expectations. Parents, siblings and other members of the community should be advised on how to talk to students about their subject interest and abilities.

A career aspirations study of Indonesian university students was done by Smith and Carpenter (1975) and Routhen (2006) by classifying twelve career professions perceived by students as having a high economic status. These are private industry, private trade, medicine, state enterprise, law, university teaching, the military, political party work, religious institutions, civil service, secondary school teaching, and acting as a government attorney. A total of 554 students were selected in roughly equal proportion from three universities (Diponegoro University = 195 students; Hasanuddin University = 181 students; and Andalas University = 178 students). The findings showed that 28.3% of participants indicated that they aspired to careers in the civil

service; 21.4% indicated that they aspired to careers in medicine; and 12.0% aspired to careers in private industries. The lowest career aspirations expressed by students were being lawyers (1.7%) and political party officers (2.4%). After colonization by the Dutch, more than three and half centuries, Indonesian culture takes into account that working with the government is a chance for lifting social status in the community. Although the monthly salary is not great compared to the private sector, government gives a better guarantee for the employees after their retirement.

Dahlan N, Karia N, et al.,(1997) in Indonesia proposed five types of students' aspirations to attain higher education, namely: vocational, academic, collegiate, nonconformist, and politics. This research was employed in six universities consisting of four public universities and two private universities in 1992, involving 561 students as a sample. The findings showed that there was a significant difference between student origin and three types of aspirations (vocational, academic, and collegiate). Students from the rural areas are likely to have both higher vocational ($F = 16.58$; $p = 0.001$) and higher collegiate ($F = 5.17$; $p = 0.06$) aspirations than those from urban areas. Meanwhile, students from urban areas are likely to have higher academic aspirations than those from rural areas ($F = 14.90$; $p = 0.001$). Also, parental educational background and grade point average show significant differences when combined with vocational, academic and collegiate aspirations. For example, the higher the father's educational background, the higher the vocational and collegiate aspirations of the student; and the lower the father's educational background the lower the academic aspirations of the student.

2.6.2 Effects of Socioeconomic Status on Career Aspirations

Socioeconomic status is an index often computed using different weight for parents' education, occupation, income, wealth, home investment, resources for

education, and the neighbourhood. Kao and Tienda (1998) found that social economic status was the single most important factor in students' establishing and maintaining high career aspirations throughout high school. Kao and Tienda, therefore, concluded that blacks and Hispanic students were less likely to maintain their aspirations throughout high school because they came from families with lower social economic status. Kao and Tienda (1998) stated that early aspirations of minorities were less concrete than those of White and Asian students. They further argued that Hispanic and black students were not as informed as White and Asian students about exploring options for college and therefore had less concrete career goals.

Alwin and Otto (1977) found that a school's socioeconomic context had positive effects whereas a school's ability context had negative effects on aspirations. The study revealed that students' ability in a high-ability school had a depressing effect on aspirations because of high competition; an individual's performance was depressed by other students' high academic performance, thus lowering their aspirations when compared to students in low ability school contexts. The school context variables were obtained from averages of SES, gender and ability variables. In the second stage, social influence variables such as parents' encouragement, teachers' encouragement, and peers' college plans were considered. These three variables in turn affected students' aspirations. But the authors also maintained that variables like school context, gender, SES, and academic ability had direct effects on aspirations. The difference between this approach and other approaches was the use of the school context variables and consideration of social influence and academic certification as intermediaries.

Kao and Tienda (1998) analysed how educational aspirations were formed and maintained from 8th through 12th grades. Two theories addressing why Hispanic and Black students had lower educational aspirations than White and Asian students were

used. The status attainment theory stated that if White students had a higher SES than minority students, they would have higher educational aspirations. The second theory, blocked-opportunities, postulated that minority students tended to form oppositional attitudes to the mainstream culture based on high educational aspirations and expectations. Students with such attitudes were more likely to have lower aspirations than those attempting to maintain high aspirations. Incomes and parents' knowledge can be used to create home learning resources. At school, the availability of classroom resources and an environment conducive to learning produces better educational outcomes, which ultimately push students ahead. High socioeconomic status (SES) is expected to lead to high educational outcomes and vice-versa, but blocked opportunities due to legal sanctions and education policies like tracking, discrimination, and stereotyping, tend to pull students backward academically, thus sustaining a low SES in following generations.

Davis-Kean (2005) established that a correlation exists between parents' financial status and the occupations of their children. In her pursuit for answers, Davis-Kean (2005) undertook research in America to support her beliefs with respect to parental influences. To test her theories, she used a selected group as a subset of a pre-existing longitudinal dataset. To ensure the outcomes were not biased, the researcher randomly selected only one child per family to a total of 868 participants. In analysing the questionnaire responses, approximately 80% of the target group of selected children and their parents confirmed the hypothesis that parent income influenced children's achievement as parents modify their behaviours in accordance with their economic status. Therefore, a correlation exists between parents' socioeconomic status, and their resultant occupations (Davis-Kean, 2005).

One school of thought has argued that resources and opportunities for education explain much of the differences in educational outcomes. According to this idea, parents who are educated and have high incomes can foster strong educational values and ethics and raise the academic expectations of their children. Does the ability to afford learning resources currently and in the future, raise the aspirations of the child, and if so, how? The presence of better learning opportunities at school and at home is expected to enhance educational aspirations of students through their academic achievement. The variable, home education resources, performs better than parents' income in explaining college aspirations among 8th-grade students (Kao & Tienda, 1998). Through investments in education, parents can signal to their children the value they place on the academic attainment of their youth, and with encouragement and family support, aspirations of the youth are formed and shaped. But parental encouragement and high educational aspirations are not rooted in family income and ability only.

The financial position of families influences career preparation in other ways. The financial demographics can influence where the family resides. The neighbourhood can pose further risks and limit the opportunities of female adolescents over the course of their lives. Gottfredson (1996) goes as far as to say the environment of an adolescent will affect the development of their career aspiration. For example, parents who feel their neighbourhood is safe and are comfortable with it will encourage and permit their child to engage openly and significantly in the activities offered within that environment. If the parents lack trust in their surrounding they will be more restrictive of their child's participation in the activities provided in that neighbourhood and, if financially able, will enrol them in activities external to their home environment. Some parents will go to the extent of restricting their involvement altogether, using this as a

management technique when they are unable to financially access activities outside their community (Eccles, 2005). This engagement in activities, or lack of, can impact on the child's formation of personal goals based on the experiences that are being provided.

Sewell and Shah (1968) cited Taylor and Krahn (2005) found that SES influenced students' aspirations indirectly and did not explain much of the variance in aspiration levels. They also found that students from a lower class with a lower SES aspired to achieve high educational goals despite their status. If SES played a role, then it must be the case that lower-class parents are disproportionately investing more of their limited resources in the education of their children to match the aspiration levels of students with a high SES background.

There are variables within the family, such as their values and expectations, and the activities parents and their children engage in, which create an environment of high hopes, aspirations, goals, support, and encouragement. Hanson (1994) examined the extent to which gender, race, and class explained losses in talents due to reduced aspirations, lowered expectations, and unrealized expectations, and found that White female and male's students were more likely to have losses in their talents than non-Whites. A high level of family and school resources are important only if good use is made of them. Hanson (1994) concluded that non-Whites were likely to convert their available resources into maintaining high expectations. However, race created some differences in aspirations when SES was taken into account. Having a lower SES twice increased the risk in loss of a talent perhaps due to the divergence between expectations and realized academic achievement. Race and gender showed positive signs regarding the possibility of loss in a talent in early periods of schooling but negative effects in later schooling years. Factors that led to variation in losses of talents among young

women and young men had unequal effects on aspirations and expectations of females and males. Factors such as locus of control, friends, educational values, and scores in standardized Mathematics tests were more important in females' aspirations than in males.' In addition to these variables, mother's and father's expectations and their age at birth of first child had some negative effects on aspirations (Green, 2008; Kao & Tienda, 1998).

The geographical location of both school and family is increasingly understood to be significant in the educational experience in the United States. As schools grow, they create zoning boundaries, limiting intake. Schools in affluent neighbourhoods, which often have higher student outcomes, are restrictive to student access, whereas schools in less affluent neighbourhoods have few or no restrictions on enrolment. However, schools in the less affluent neighbourhoods, are often schools to which students and their families are not particularly connected (Eccles, 2005). In the case of the Blacktown Learning Community (Somerville, 2013) a mother spoke of a vicious cycle whereby it was hard to encourage her children to connect with schools to achieve as high a level of education when the parent had not had a great deal of success themselves. School concerns are similar to those concerns of the community. Some parents might not encourage students to participate fully in the school environment for fear of a lack of future or for fear for their safety and/or ridicule of their children by others. Some will seek to enrol their children in other schools. However, this creates an added burden financially when parents are in stressful occupations, are under or unemployed or have little remuneration. Poor parents are not able to provide the experiences that align with valued cultural capital that will enhance their children's opportunities. Often parents are so overwhelmed that their capacity to provide

consistent messages and a supportive, nurturing environment at home is compromised (Eccles, 2005).

Lower socioeconomic groups and working-class parents emphasise more traditional roles for women and do not place importance on post-secondary education for women. Hannah and Kahn (1989) found that girls from higher socioeconomic groups are more likely to consider high-status, male dominated occupations, preferring these occupations to even highly prestigious, but traditional female occupations. Studies done in Singapore also show that adolescents of higher socioeconomic status know more high-status occupations and are aware of fewer low-status occupations than lower social class adolescents. Singaporean adolescents from higher social classes also feel that occupations within the upper professional and professional range are more suitable than occupations within the skilled to semi-skilled range (Poole & Cooney, 1985; Eccles, 2005).

Qian and Blair (1991) found that SES had a significant effect on academic attainment of White high school students but not on that of minorities. Parental status was also more important for White students' than for African-American students' academic attainment. The authors found academic performance to be a significant factor in the determination of the students' aspirations, but the effect was weaker when compared to other groups. However, in explaining aspirations, Qian and Blair (1999) found family income to be an important factor in increasing aspirations for Whites students only. The effect of parental education was mixed. If parents had high school or college degrees, aspiration levels of their children did not increase until or unless their parents had a Ph.D. or equivalent, but for the African-American students, the effect of parents' education was both weak and not statistically significant. The effects of parental involvement were about the same for Whites, African Americans, and

Hispanics, but were almost half as effective among Asian students. Family income was important only for Whites. From Qian and Blair's (1991, 1999) studies, it appears that students' educational aspirations are not well explained by their parents' income and education, but by their parents' actual (and perceived) aspiration levels and involvement. The effect of SES is weak and indirect; otherwise, poverty would be expected to lead to low educational aspirations. While controlling for variables like SES and family background, much of the variation in levels of aspirations, especially across different ethnic groups, remains to be explained.

In another aspect of career development, Hannah and Khan (1989) found gender and socioeconomic status to be relevant factors affecting one's self-efficacy expectations, that is one's belief about "their ability to perform various occupations" (Hackett & Betz, as cited in Hannah & Kahn, 1989). Hannah and Khan found that males and females have a higher self-efficacy for occupations dominated by their own gender rather than for occupations traditionally dominated by the other gender. They also found that students from lower socioeconomic groups had lower self-efficacy expectations and that they seemed less confident in performing various occupations as compared to students from higher socioeconomic groups.

Mortimer (1992) also found that poverty significantly affected high-school students' vocational development through the feelings of economic self-efficacy" (p. 47). Economic self-efficacy is defined as "the expectation that one has control over and will be able to realise one's basic material goals (i.e. a good job, good pay, ability to buy a home)" (p. 21). Adolescents who were living in poverty had decreased economic self-efficacy with regard to their future occupational goals. Furthermore, these decreased feelings of economic self-efficacy are negatively related to academic achievement and college preparation and positively related to premature school leaving.

2.6.3 Effects of Family upbringing on Career Aspirations of Students

Blustein, Cohen, Patterson, Kovarik and Chowning (1995) theorized that the quality of young adults' relationship with their parents is related to the ability to engage in career development activities. The attachment relationship formed with an individual's parents may provide a sense of security, allowing a young adult to begin the career exploration process (Germeijs & Verschueren, 2009). Moreover, Ketterson and Blustein (1997) found a positive correlation between secure attachment relationships and career exploration. Family relationships, specifically parental attachment, appear to influence the career exploration processes of young adults.

According to Isaac and Nyokamapelola (2014), parent's excessive involvement in the career decisions of their children is to make their children more satisfied in their careers than they are in their jobs. For the sake of pleasing their parents, children may start to seek and accept what their parent's advise. Moreover, children may accept and fail to challenge the ideas of their parents or assess their validity. Despite the presence of different parenting styles, parents always seek what is best for their children, and children mostly pay attention to the sayings of their parents. Therefore, children may be affected. Even across gender and racial lines, the significance of parental impact in determining their children's career choice is clearly visible. Even though friends and the student's community have a significant role in shaping the young adult's self-identity and career choice, what parents think and perceive as suitable career or educational field play an important role in guiding the children's career choice (Ferry, 2006)

Most studies come to the conclusion that explaining differences in aspirations among ethnic groups requires some knowledge about family aspirations and cultural beliefs in general. Many cultures from Asia, South and Central America, and Africa are

different from the dominant U.S. Western culture. Ideal Western culture tends to emphasize individual autonomy and freedom, independence, and individual rights, and tends to reward individual achievements rather than group success (Hui & Triandis, 1986; Spence, 1985). Africans, however, tend to hold a collectivist view, with an emphasis on group or family authority and interdependence among family members. The adaptation of these youth to the dominant African mainstream culture often conflicts with parents' beliefs and cultural values. But because parental aspirations and expectations are very high and strongly held, such cultural conflicts may not significantly have affected the educational aspirations of children. Asian American children buy into their parents' expectations and value good grades in order to satisfy their parents. They also want to express their commitment to assisting their families in the future by preparing for high-income careers (Fulgini, 1999; Hao & Bonstead-Bruns, 1998).

Most African, Asian and Latin America cultures emphasize collectivism in which the goals and interests of the family group are paramount; children are often asked not to disregard family needs at the expense of their own and to respect authority. As part of family obligations, students are expected to participate in chores like shopping for food; cooking meals; caring for other members of the family; and joining family members in daily meals, holidays, and special events like graduation, weddings, and anniversaries.

Although these activities are typical of other American households, African, Asian and Latin American families attach great value to them and expect their children and other family members to spend a considerable amount of time on these obligations. All members of the family are expected to support each other and engage in home maintenance, support living together or in close proximity, and care for their elderly.

The adolescent autonomy found in most other American households is not welcome. Fuligni et al. (1999) and Fuligni (1997) classified these family obligations into three categories of current assistance, respect and future assistance. These studies showed curvilinear relationships between different levels of the three variables and educational aspirations. Medium levels of each of these three variables were associated with higher aspirations.

Penick and Jepsen (1992) stated that the family background factors that are most likely to influence career development include parents' socioeconomic status and their educational level. It has also been found that girls from lower socioeconomic groups are very traditional in their occupational choices (Kenkel & Brucy as cited in Hannah & Kahn, 1989). Danziger as cited in Mortimer (1992) supported these findings with the observation that perhaps girls from lower socioeconomic groups are less likely to receive encouragement to further their education and that they are more likely to perceive barriers in achieving their goals. Danziger also suggested that families with limited financial resources give boys priority in achieving their educational and occupational goals. In poorer Asian families' boys are usually chosen over girls to pursue their education if there is a limited amount of money available. Boys are perceived as being able to repay the family back at a greater rate than girls as they would work throughout their lives and hence contribute to the economy; in comparison, women are expected to leave the labour force soon after starting a family (Salaff, 1990).

Togu (2011) conducted a study to investigate the formation of career aspirations during primary and secondary schooling. A particular emphasis was the relationship between social cognition and socioeconomic status (SES) associated with young people's thinking about careers-related identity questions. LCMM identified four discrete change trajectories in the prestige of career aspirations during nine years of

schooling. Students' identity styles were found to differ between SES backgrounds, with high SES students more information-oriented and less diffuse/avoidant when dealing with identity questions compared to low SES students. Identity styles also differed by SES background within the LCMM trajectories, with high aspiring low SES students more information-oriented and less diffuse/ avoidant than their low aspiring peers. The implications of these findings for theory, research and practice are discussed.

Taylor and Krahn (2005) found that parents' aspirations for their children had a strong positive effect on their college aspirations, producing a high probability of 69%. Household income, school engagement, and peers had moderate effects, while family structure, language first learned, and parental supervision had very little effect on the probability of aspiring to obtain a university degree (Lopez & Stanton- Salazar, 2001). A study by Davies and Kandel (1981) found that the encouragement of parents through their perceived aspirations had stronger effects than peer students' plans and influence. The hopes of youth tend to remain high in the first generation but decrease in subsequent generations (Fuligni, 1997; Fuligni et al., 1999). Statistical tests show that as the length of stay of an immigrant family in the United States increases, educational aspirations of parents and their children decrease (Fuligni, 1997; Hilaire, 2002; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2002). The U.S. Department of Education's report on bilingualism concluded that bilingual students had below-average scores in English skills and other academic subjects. Rumbaut and Portes (2001) survey of high school students in San Diego (California) and Dade County (Florida) showed that there was a negative correlation between length of stay and GPA and aspirations.

Families with valuable social and cultural capital appear to provide opportunities for female adolescents to view and question whom they should be. These discussions and negotiations, when fully informed can influence girls to make

adjustments of a positive nature. Research has compared families from varying financial backgrounds and the educational expectations that these families place on their female children (Li & Kerpelman, 2007; Garg, Melanson & Levin, 2006).

Family socio economic status is one of the most influential factors on educational outcomes and, consequently on, career selection for adolescents (Lien, Friedstad & Klepp, 2001). Research has shown a direct link between educational achievement and the cultural capital of parents (Gutman & Schoon, 2012). Further to this, the research shows that parents from middle class families are much more actively engaged in their child's education. Parents with this cultural capital background are more likely to question and challenge schools where they feel there is discrepancy (Fuller, 2009). An alignment between middle class parents and middle class educational institutions leads to a proactive educational experience for all parties. Parents are more actively engaged and schools are more liberated in their approach. In this environment, education valued by middle class families is seen as a collaborative process between the educational institution and family. In contrast, a working-class family sees the role of educating their child as falling predominantly on the educational institute and as such support with homework or after school meetings is often less forthcoming (Fuller, 2009).

Lopez (1996) found that the proportion of students who were monolingual increased with the number of generations, and some studies indicated that an increase in generations was associated with low aspirations and academic achievement. Fuligni (1997) found that first and second-generation students from East Asian, Latino, Filipino, and European backgrounds had higher Mathematics and English grades compared to natives with similar backgrounds. The argument of the positive effect of monolingualism on academic achievement does not hold when the length of stay of an

immigrant is considered. Many studies showed that bilingualism was associated with higher academic achievement (Bankston & Zhou, 1995). Zhou (1997) concluded that each language is deeply rooted in its culture and its use involves a host of other complex cultural undertakings.

Speaking a native language allows better communication between parents and children, and better utilization of cultural instruments like praise, persuasion and storytelling to augment positive emotions and family pride, which translate into self-esteem and identity. As students try to be proficient in their native language and in English, both their English Language and Mathematics scores improve, which in turn increases and reinforces their aspirations. Better English Language skills allow children to interact well at school and in their communities to obtain the best of both worlds.

Hakim (2008) conducted a study to examine parental influence on the choice of career among high school students in Lafito District, Addis Ababa. This study has found that both the student and their parents have an understanding about what career is; thus, committed to participate in career choice decision making. It is identified that parents have responsibility to guide their children on the right track towards making a better leaving emanating from decent job. On the other hand, it was also explored that there are a number of factors which influence the parents to take part on career choice decision making. These factors include good wish for own child to have bright future, to see the fruit of their long years' endeavour as a parent, to get social pride and gratify their social competence, parents sense of avenging what they could not fulfil in the past through the success of their child. These factors coupled with the ways of participation of the parents have either positive or negative consequences on the success of the children. The mode of paternal involvement in career decision making of their children determines child success in a positive way

Risk factors like community size, household income, and parents' education seem to explain very little of the variation in educational aspirations of youth. Taylor and Krahn (2005, p.67) concluded that "the educational values promoted within families appear to leave a mark on young people in these families and may assist them in dealing with some of the barriers they may face within the education system." The hopes of teenagers can be raised by their parents and their friends. Taylor and Krahn (2005) found strong correlations between aspirations and teenagers' own school involvement, friends' school involvement, and parents' own aspirations. Hanson (1994) also found that having friends who value education reduces the chances of losing talents better than variables like gender and SES.



2.6.4 Relationship between Career Aspirations and Academic Achievement

Studies attempting to explain the formation and maintenance of career aspirations among youth may infer that high educational aspirations are important or necessary for high academic achievement and career success (Covington, 2000; Kao & Tienda, 1998). Although studies have agreed with the proposition that educational aspirations and academic performance are highly positively correlated, the correlation does not explain how aspiration translates into education, and as such, the mechanisms of how aspirations influence educational performance remain debatable. This problem is compounded when the same variables are positively or negatively correlated with both the career aspirations and the academic achievement of students. Although most of the empirical studies have stressed the fact that career aspiration levels are strongly correlated with academic achievement of youth, only a few studies have shown that career aspirations have a positive influence on academic achievement among these youth (Fuligni, 1997; Fuligni, Tseng & Lam, 1999).

In contrast, some studies have shown that academic achievement influences education and outcomes influence career aspirations (Alwin & Otto, 1977; Kao & Tienda, 1998). Sewell, Haller and Straus (1957) reported that a child's intelligence had a strong effect on his or her aspirations and achievement, which was independent of the education of the child's father or mother. The education of both parents, however, boosted aspirations first by the parents' ensuring that the students were in good standing academically and second through encouragement and planning for college. Overall grade scores like GPA, Mathematics, or English language scores influenced aspirations (Taylor & Krahn, 2005). Kao and Tienda (1998) found that repeating a grade lowered expectations and aspirations for a college degree when students were in 8th and 10th grades. Fuligni (1997) and Fuligni et al. (1999) found that academic attitudes such as

the value of high grades, especially in Mathematics and English language, were correlated with high educational aspirations.

Suarez-Orozco (1989) and Valdez (1998) suggested that reward structures such as a high GPA or class rank are not confined to classrooms. Rewards for high academic goals and values can be realized by the student, the family, and the community, and are equally important in motivating students to set higher goals and to achieve them. Performance and learning goals, whether in competency, understanding, and performing academic tasks, can be driven by self-interest to outperform others even if it is at the expense of others. Although this theory is achievement driven, it helps explain the strong positive association between learning goals and school grades. To realize self-worth, status, and success in a society or in the eyes of parents, young students will consider the measures of education that reflect these rewards and will set their educational and career aspiration to match these expectations. As parents help define these rewards to their children, and with their support and motivation, students are likely to set high aspirations (Kao & Tienda, 1998).

In addition to a student's abilities and talents, school and family resources, and learning technology, setting educational and career goals by a student is almost equivalent to setting minimum parameters of motivation, effort and drive. Aspirations (or expectations) are a set of social and academic goals that students, parents, teachers, or education agencies establish to obtain student-specific desired educational and career achievements. Students, parents and teachers may collaborate to set or influence specific academic goals for a student, but sometimes students are driven mainly by their own desires in setting educational aspirations.

Aspirations have been found to play an important role in educational and career outcomes (Sewell & Shah, 1998), but other studies have also reported that academic

abilities and achievement influence aspirations in early school grade levels (Williams, 1998). Qian and Blair (1999) found that overall academic performance had some effect on educational aspirations of African Americans but a greater effect among White, Hispanic and Asian students. Some mixed results were obtained when different ethnic groups were considered. The level of past education decreased the educational aspirations of Mexicans but increased that of Cubans (Portes, MacLeod & Parker, 1978). The development of strong academic scores in Mathematics and English Language at an early age was important. It sent a signal regarding the amount of effort and resources the student and their parents needed to invest to set specific academic goals during the students' middle and high school years. Lopez and Stanton-Salazar's (2001) study of second-generation Mexican Americans in San Diego showed that students had high hopes of attending college, with 67% of the U.S.-born and 57% of foreign-born students aspiring to attend college. Their GPA scores positively and strongly correlated with amount of homework, parents' help with homework, teachers' help with homework, friends' help with homework, self-esteem, and family cohesion (Covington, 2000).

2.7 Summary of Literature Review

Career aspirations represent an individual's orientation towards a desired career goal under ideal conditions. More simply stated vocational aspirations "provide information about an individual's interests and hopes, unfitted by reality" (Hellenga, Aber, & Rhodes, 2002; Joseph, 2009). People's vocational aspiration can be categorized into limited number of types i.e. traditional career success, expertise, freedom and balance. Studies suggest that academic achievement influence career aspiration.

Three major theoretical approaches were adopted to conceptualise the formation and process of career aspiration, individual motivation and the significant role of the family background and values of the youth. These theories are Super's theory of Career Vocational Aspirations, Goals, Motivation, and Achievement Theory (GMAT) and Family Background and Obligations Theory (FBOT). Super (1957) proposed four phases through which a person develops a career. These four stages are compulsory for all individual to achieve a stabilization of their career maturity. The four stages consist of the; Growth Stage (birth to 14 or 15 years), Exploratory stage (15- 24 years) Establishment (25-44 years) and Maintenance occurs from ages (45 to 64). Goals, Motivation, and Achievement Theory (GMAT), this theory examines the relationship between goals, motivation, and school achievement. The theory discusses the relationship between educational goals (aspirations) and achievement. Family Background and Obligations Theory (FBOT), states that, given that there are many family variables, such as size and community, beliefs, expectations, obligations, values, religion, and language, that show some significance in enhancing aspirations and education, it is convincing to attribute to the family some theoretical role in understanding student aspirations.

Conceptually, it was assumed that all parents raise their children to be prominent in future, and there is frequent disagreement about who the father, the mother, and significant relatives want students to be when they grow up. The expectations and aspirations of others may not conform to students' own aspirations or influence them, especially if they have developed aspirations on their own. The academic achievement and capabilities of a child can also influence the career aspiration of the child. If this assumption is relevant, then parents will nurture, care, invest in, and try to influence the beliefs and preferences of their children based on their socioeconomic background, academic achievement and family background.

From the sociologist's point of view, socialization processes are considered a dominant factor influencing the student's career aspirations. Students career types according to the literature reviewed are related to accountancy, administration, artistic tasks, businessman, civil service, information communication technologist, economics, engineering, factory worker, farmer, historian and medicine. The review further suggested that socioeconomic status of students had considerable effects on the career aspirations. Effects of family background on career aspirations of students was also evident in the literature review. To conclude, available literature established a significant positive correlation between career aspirations and academic achievement of various sample groups involved in various students.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The discussion in the chapter is structured around the research design, study area, population of the study, sampling size and sampling strategy, instrumentation, validity of the quantitative instrument, validation of the qualitative instrument, reliability of the quantitative instrument, trustworthiness of the qualitative data, quantitative data collection procedure, qualitative data collection procedure, quantitative data analysis procedure, qualitative data analysis procedure and the ethical consideration

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted the Explanatory Mixed Method approach to facilitate the achievement of the stated objectives of the study. The term ‘mixed methods’ applies to research that combines alternative approaches within a single research project. It refers to a research strategy that crosses the boundaries of conventional paradigms of research by deliberately combining methods drawn from different traditions with different underlying assumptions. At its simplest, a mixed methods strategy is one that uses both qualitative and quantitative methods (Denscombe, 2007).

The explanatory mixed method is also known as the sequential explanatory (Creswell, 2012). It occurs in two distinct interactive phases. This research design starts with the collection and analysis of quantitative (numeric) data, which has the priority for addressing the study questions. This beginning stage is accompanied by the subsequent collection and analysis of qualitative (text) data. The second, qualitative phase of the study is designed so that it follows from the results of the first, quantitative

phase (Creswell, 2012). The researcher interprets how the qualitative results help to explain the initial quantitative results. Thus, the qualitative data are collected and analysed second in the sequence and help explain or elaborate on the quantitative results obtained in the first phase (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). The rationale for this approach is that the quantitative data and their subsequent analysis will provide a general understanding of the research problem (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007; Creswell, 2009). According to Denscombe (2007) researchers can improve their confidence in the accuracy of findings through the use of different methods to investigate the same subject. In line with the principles of triangulation, the Mixed Methods approach provides the researcher with the opportunity to check the findings from one method against the findings from a different method.

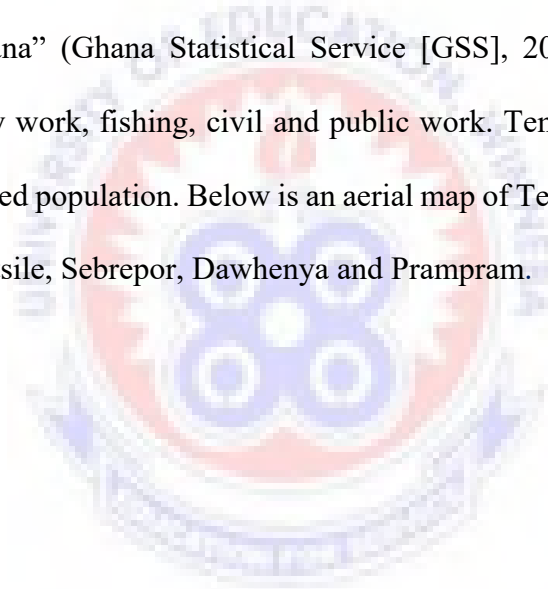
The use of more than one method can enhance the findings of research by providing a fuller and more complete picture of what is being studied. The benefit of the mixed methods approach in this instance is that the data produced by the different methods can be complementary (Denscombe, 2007).

3.2 Study Area

The Tema Metropolis was created from the erstwhile Tema Municipality in 2007 with the promulgation of Legislative Instrument (LI) 1929. In 2012, the Kpone-Katamanso Sub-Metropolitan Council was carved out of the Tema Metropolis to establish the Kpone-Katamanso District. The Tema Metropolis has three Sub-Metropolitan Councils namely; Tema West, Tema East and Tema Central (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2010).

Tema Metropolis is a coastal district situated about 30 kilometers East of Accra, the capital city of Ghana. It shares boundaries in the northeast with the Dangme West District, south-west by Ledzokuku Krowor Municipality, north-west by Adentan

Municipal and Ga East Municipal, north by the Akuapim South District and south by the Gulf of Guinea. The Ashaiman Municipal is an in-lock enclave within the Tema Metropolis. The Metropolis covers an area of about 87.8 km with Tema as its capital. The Metropolis lies in the coastal savannah zone (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2010). The Greenwich Meridian (i.e. Longitude 0°) passes through the Metropolis, which meets the equator or latitude 0° in the Ghanaian waters of the Gulf of Guinea. The Metropolis proximity to the sea with its low-lying terrain which projects into the sea makes it a natural endowment for a harbour. This evidently informed the decision of the construction of the Tema Harbour in 1957, making the Metropolis “the Eastern Gateway of Ghana” (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2010). They predominantly engage in factory work, fishing, civil and public work. Tema is an urban community made up of a mixed population. Below is an aerial map of Tema Metropolis surrounded by Afienya, Gbetsile, Sebrepor, Dawhenya and Prampram.



AERIAL MAP OF TEMA METROPOLIS



3.3 Population of the Study Area

The population of Tema Metropolis, according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, is 292,773 representing 7.3 percent of the Greater Accra region's total population. Males constitute 47.8 percent and females represent 52.2 percent. All the population live in urban localities (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2010). The Metropolis has a sex ratio of 91.6. The population of the Metropolis under 15 years is 34.5 percent depicting a broad base population pyramid which tapers off with a small number of elderly persons 60 years and above (6.0%). The total age dependency ratio for the Metropolis is 50.0, the dependency ratio of the males is higher (51.3) than that of the females (48.7) (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2010). Of the population 11 years and above, 91.1 percent are literate and 8.9 percent are non-literate. The proportion of literate males is higher (94.8 %) than that of females (87.8%). According

to the Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], (2010), about five out of ten people (48.8%) indicated they could speak and write both English and Ghanaian languages. Of the population aged three years and above (272,880) in the Metropolis, 8.5 percent has never attended school, 33.8 percent are currently attending and 57.7 percent have attended in the past (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2010).

The Target Population of the Study

The target population for the study involves first, second and third year students from six (6) Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The population is 6030 students. The schools are: Tema Senior High (TEMASCO), Chemu Senior High, Methodist Day Senior High (MEDASS), Presbyterian Senior High School (TEMA PRESEC), Our Lady of Mercy Senior High (OLAMS) and Manhean Senior High Schools (MANSEC).

3.4 Sample, Sampling Techniques and Sampling Procedures

The quality of a piece of research stands or falls not only by the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation but also by the suitability of the sampling strategy that has been adopted (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Stratified simple random sampling technique was used to sample 50, from the form two and three class from each of the Senior High Schools namely; Tema Senior High (TEMASCO), Chemu Senior High, Methodist Day Senior High (MEDASS), Presbyterian Senior High School (TEMA PRESEC), Our Lady of Mercy Senior High (OLAMS) and Manhean Senior High Schools (MANSEC). The various schools were stratified into two (2) strata from which simple random sampling was used to sample fifty (50) students totalling 300 students for the quantitative phase of the data collection. Stratified sampling is a

probability sampling technique in which each stratum is properly represented so that the sample drawn from it is proportionate to the stratum's share of the population.

Simple random sampling was achieved using the lottery method, pieces of paper which equal the total number of students in each class was designed by the researcher. In the first school, for instance, 50 pieces of paper with the inscription "Yes" whilst the other pieces of paper were captioned "No". The pieces of paper were folded and put in a box. The box was turned over and over again to ensure that the pieces of paper were well mixed to guarantee that each student had an equal opportunity of being selected. The students were required to pick the pieces of papers at random. Students, who selected the pieces of paper which have 'yes' responses were enrolled as study participants for this study. Fifty students were selected from each school. This process was repeated in the other schools. In all, 300 students were sampled, 50 from each of the six selected schools. The random selection ensures that each student of the sample schools have an equal chance of being selected, and this is required for generalisation of the results to the target population as noted by Creswell (2009). These sampling techniques ensured representativeness of the sample, and it also eliminated selection bias.

Purposive sampling was used to sample 12 participants who formed a part of the 300 participants sampled for the study to participate in the one on one interview. This comprised of six females and six males students from the six selected schools for the study. There, students were sampled because they formed a part of the initial participants for the quantitative study. Again, they were sampled to confirm the findings of the quantitative survey and to explain the data. With purposive sampling the sample is 'handpicked' for the research. The term is applied to those situations where the researcher already knows something about the specific people or events and

deliberately selects particular ones because they are seen as instances that are likely to produce the most valuable data (Denscombe, 2007).

3.5 Instrumentation

3.5.1 Structured Questionnaire

The questionnaire is widely used and useful instrument for collecting survey information, providing structured, often numerical data, being able to be administered without the presence of the researcher, and often being comparatively straightforward to analyse (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Structured questionnaire was adopted to aid in the quantitative data collection. The questionnaire consisted of four sections, the first section comprised of the demographic characteristics of the participants, the second section focused on the career aspirations of senior high school students, the third section dealt with the effects of socioeconomic status on career aspirations of senior high students, the fourth section also focused on the effects of family upbringing on career aspirations. This was a Likert scale questionnaire with options presented in four-point scale ranging from: Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and strongly Disagree (SA) respectively. Correspondingly, each of those options were rated the following: SA (4), A (3), D (2) and SA (1). The researcher chose questionnaire because all the participants were literate, and therefore could read and respond to the items.

Questionnaire are easier to arrange and supply standardized answers, to the extent that all participants are posed with exactly the same questions with no scope for variation to slip in via face-to-face contact with the researcher (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). The data collected, then, are very unlikely to be contaminated through variations in the wording of the questions or the manner in which the question is asked. There is little scope for the data to be affected by 'interpersonal factors' (Denscombe, 2007).

3.5.2 Semi-Structured Interview

The researcher also used semi-structured interview protocols for data collection. Interviews or question asking are considered the important data collection methods for this kind of research. Yin (1994) argued that it is very important to consistently ask why events appear to have happened or to be happening. The researcher conducted one-on-one interviews by letting the participants give answers without interrupting them. The semi structured interview was divided into five sections, the first section focused on the demographic characteristics of the participants, the second section dealt with items relating to career aspirations of high school students. The third section dealt with items relating to the effects of socioeconomic status on career aspirations. The fourth section focused on items relating to the relationship between career aspirations and academic achievement.

3.6 Validation of the Quantitative Research Instrument

3.6.1 Face Validity

Face Validity can be described considering that the interview guide and the questionnaire look like it measures what it was intended to measure. For example, were the questions phrased appropriately? (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). The face validity of the instruments for this study was established by giving the prepared instruments to the researcher's colleague students, friends and supervisor to scrutinise and make constructive criticisms. From which necessary adjustments were made to the instrument to achieve the face validity.

3.6.2 Content Validity

Content validity is the extent to which the questions on the instrument and the scores from these questions are representative of all the possible questions that could

be asked about the content or skills (Creswell, 2012). The content validity of the question was determined by experts in measurement and evaluation and the supervisor of the researcher in the Department of Social Studies in the University of Education, Winneba.

3.6.3 Construct Validity

Construct validity is a determination of the significance, meaning, purpose, and use of scores from an instrument (Creswell, 2012). Construct validity refers to the degree to which test or questionnaire scores based on specific characteristics correlate well with other measures of the same characteristics or tap the concept you try to measure (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 57). Evidence of construct validity of the questionnaire in this study was established by comparing the results obtained from the pilot study and the results that was obtained in the main study. This established that the items measure of the same characteristics or tap the concept under measure.

3.7 Validation of the Semi-Structured Instrument

The semi structure instrument was scrutinized by colleagues of the researcher before being given to the supervisor for consideration. The instrument was further pilot tested to identify potential deficiencies before using it for the actual study. Students in the Winneba Senior High School were involved as the population for the pilot test since they exhibit similar characteristics with the actual population of the study. Arthur and Nazroo (2003) affirm that, when assessing the scope of the guide, it is important to review whether it allows participants to give a full and coherent account of the central issues and incorporate issues they think are important.

3.8 Reliability of the Quantitative Instrument

Reliability means that individual scores from an instrument should be nearly the same or stable on repeated administrations of the instrument and that they should be free from sources of measurement error and consistent (Creswell, 2012). Reliability is concerned with consistency, dependability or stability of a test (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). To establish the reliability of the questionnaire, the Cronbach Alpha co-efficient was adopted for the study. The Cronbach Alpha was computed after the pilot testing; the Alpha level of the questionnaire was 0.87.

3.9 Trustworthiness of the Qualitative Data

Speziale and Carpenter (2011, p. 98) describe trustworthiness as “establishing the validity and reliability of qualitative research”. Qualitative research is trustworthy when it accurately represents the experiences of the study participants. Four criteria were used to measure the trustworthiness of data: credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability. Guba’s model for establishing trustworthiness of qualitative research was used because it is well developed conceptually and has been extensively used by qualitative researchers.

Credibility is demonstrated when participants recognise the reported research findings as their own experiences (Speziale & Carpenter, 2011). The following strategies were applied to ensure credibility: Prolonged engagement requires that the investigator be involved with a site long enough to detect and take into account distortions that might otherwise creep into the data (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Moderate time was spent with the participants to develop a trusting relationship with them during the interviews and member checks. The purpose of persistent observation is to identify those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the problem or issue being pursued and to focus on them in detail (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). The

researcher tentatively identified the participants' behaviour during class and break time period.

Peer debriefing exposes a researcher to the searching questions of others who are experienced in the methods of enquiry, the phenomenon or both (Lincoln & Guba 1985; Polit & Hungler, 2004). In this study, the researcher exposed the research work to colleagues for constructive criticism. Member check is whereby data, analytical categories, interpretations and conclusions are tested by members of those stakeholding groups from whom the data were originally collected (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Polit & Hungler, 2004). The researcher did member checks with the participants' feedback. The participants checked categories that emerged from the data, and after the themes were finalised, the researcher discussed the interpretation and conclusions with them. Guba and Lincoln (1985) suggest that by implementing an audit trail, an auditor or second party who becomes familiar with the qualitative study, its methodology, findings and conclusions can audit the research decisions and the methodological and analytical processes of the researcher on completion of the study, and thus confirm its findings. The researcher gave the dissertation to a colleague to familiarise herself with the work, its methodology, findings and conclusions to audit.

Transferability refers to the probability that the study findings have meaning to others in similar situations (Speziale & Carpenter, 2011). In this study, the researcher ensured the trustworthiness of the findings by exposing the study with colleagues for constructive criticism and by sharing the findings with other students who did not participate in the study.

Confirmability is a neutral criterion for measuring the trustworthiness of qualitative research. If a study demonstrates credibility and fittingness, the study is also said to possess confirmability (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Speziale & Carpenter, 2011).

The study established rigour with the decision trial and proved confirmability through credibility, transferability and dependability

3.10 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the Department of Social Studies Education, in the Faculty of Social Science in the University of Education, Winneba to facilitate the process of data collection. Permission was sought from the district educational officers and the school authorities to enable the researcher to conduct the study.

The consent of the participants was sort after which participants were given 40 minutes to answer the questionnaire to the best of their knowledge. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants; the various difficulties of the participants were rectified by the researcher. The researcher administered set of questionnaire to the sampled participants. In all, 300 sets of questionnaires were retrieved for analysis. The continuous assessment of students in Mathematics, English and Science were used as their academic achievement for the data analysis.

The researcher interviewed each of the participants for about forty-five (45) minutes. The researcher recorded the interview with the permission of the participants. The data was then played and transcribed for analysis.

3.11 Quantitative Data Analysis

The research questions one, two and three were analysed using frequencies and percentages whilst research question four was analysed using Pearson's moment correlation. The Statistical Package for Service Solution version 23 was used in the analysis.

3.12 Qualitative Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis is a mechanism for reducing and organizing data to produce findings that require interpretation by the researcher (Burns & Grove, 2003). The researcher used thematic analysis to establish meaning from the data collected. Morse and Field (1996) explain that, thematic analysis involves the search for and identification of common trends that extend throughout an entire interview or set of interviews. Themes are usually quite abstract and therefore difficult to identify. Often the theme does not immediately jump out of the interview but may be more apparent if the researcher steps back and considers.

The researcher transcribed the tape-recorded interviews, then read and re-read the interviews in their entirety, reflecting on the interviews as a whole. Then, the researcher summarized the interviews; keeping in mind that more than one theme might exist in a set of interviews. Once identified, the themes that appeared to be significant and concepts linking substantial portions of the interviews were written down and entered on computer (Morse & Field, 1996). Data analysis was done thematically with the aid of Atlas.ti 7.5.18 version, a qualitative research data analysis software.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

The researcher has a moral obligation to strictly consider the rights of the participants, who are expected to provide knowledge for this investigation (Streubert & Carpenter, 2011). The researcher requested for permission to conduct the study. A written permission was obtained from the Department of Social Studies Education, in the Faculty of Social Science in the University of Education, Winneba. Written permission (informed consent) sought from participants for the questionnaire administration and interviewing (Lo-Biondo Wood & Haber, 2002).

Polit and Hungler (2004) state that confidentiality means that no information that the participant divulges is made public or available to others. The anonymity of a person or an institution is protected by making it impossible to link aspects of data to a specific person or institution. Confidentiality and anonymity was guaranteed by ensuring that data obtained were used in such a way that no one other than the researcher knows the source (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtler, 2006). In this study no actual participant names were attached to the information obtained rather, serial numbers were used.

According to De Vos (2002) privacy refers to agreements between persons that limit the access of others to private information. In this study, the researcher ensured that when participants described their experiences, the information was not divulged. The participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time if they wished to (Hallow, 2005). This right was explained to them prior to engaging in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

The study also looked at the relationship between academic performance and career aspiration. This chapter presents quantitative data and qualitative data in an attempt to answer the stated research questions. This chapter is structured into three sections, the first section focused on the demographic characteristics of the participants, the second section deals with the presentation of quantitative and qualitative data in relation to the research questions. The third section deals with the discussion of the findings on the data analysis.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Participants

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the participants sampled from selected Senior High School Students in the Tema Metropolis. The demographic information of the participants was based on gender, age and form. For the purpose of the quantitative data analysis, the four-point Likert scale was reduced to a two-point Likert scale. Strongly agree and agree were merged to be agree whilst strongly disagree and disagree were also merged to be disagree.

Table 4.1: Gender Distribution of Participants

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Male	128	42.6
Female	172	57.4
Total	300	100.0

Source: Filed Data, 2017

Table 4.1 depicts the description of the gender distribution of participants. Table 4.1 suggests that the majority of the participants 172(57.3%) were females whilst a minority of the participants 128(42.6%) were males. The gender of the participants may influence their career aspiration and selection. While gender differences in the structure of interests have not been supported (Ryan, Solberg, Scott & Steven, 1996; Anderson, Tracey, & Rounds, 1997), gender differences have been found in the strength of interests (Lippa, 1998). More specifically, gender is strongly related to the Things/People dimension. Women tend to be more on the “People” side, while men tend to be more on the “Things” side of the dimension. Gender as measured by gender diagnosticity (GD) and bi-polar Masculinity-Femininity (M-F) was related to the Things/People dimension, but not to the Data/Ideas dimension (Lippa, 1998). Lippa suggests that Things/People might actually be viewed as an M-F or a sex-typing dimension within the sexes and a gendered dimension across the sexes.

Table 4.2 Age Distribution of Participants

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
13-14 years	9	3.0
15-16 years	200	66.7
17-18 years	91	30.3
Total	300	100.0

Source: Filed Data, 2017

Table 4.2 shows the description of the age distribution of participants. Table 4.2 reveals that, majority of the participants 200(66.7%) were between the ages of 15-16 years, whilst the minority of the participants 9(3.0%) were between the ages of 13-14 years. The age distribution of the participants suggests that, all participants are adolescent and in their career formation stages where they could be influenced by their

academic achievement, socioeconomic status and family background in selecting their careers.

Table 4.3 Class Distribution of Participants

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Form Two	150	50.0
Form Three	150	50.0
Total	300	100.0

Source: Filed Data, 2017

Table 4.3 shows the description of the class distribution of the participants. The table suggests that, half of the participants 150(50.0%) were in Form Two whilst the other half of the participants 150(50.0%) were also in Form Three. These group of participants were sampled for the study because of the availability of their academic records for first and second year respectfully. The class of the participants would influence their knowledge on career and their certainty on a chosen career.

4.2 Presentation of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

This section presents quantitative and qualitative data collected from the field in an attempt to achieve the stated research objectives. The quantitative data was presented using frequency and percentages whilst the qualitative data was presented using themes that are in line with research questions.

4.3 Research Questions One: What are the career aspirations of senior high school students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis?

Table 4.4: Career aspiration of participants

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Business		
Accountancy	13	4.3
Administration	12	4.0
Businessman/woman	11	3.7
Economics	11	3.7
Visual Arts/Home Economics		
Private Industry	19	6.3
Private Trade	12	4.0
Artistic Tasks	9	3.0
Factory Worker	2	0.7
Agriculture/General Sciences		
Engineering	16	5.3
Farmer	8	2.7
Information communication Technologist	20	6.6
Medicine	17	5.7
Nursing	19	6.3
General Arts		
Civil Service	14	4.7
Historian	9	3.0
Member of the Military/Security	13	4.3
Politics	4	1.3
Social Work	11	3.7
Basic/Secondary Teaching	27	9.0
Law/Legal Practitioner	19	6.3
Religious Institutions	14	4.7
University Teaching	20	6.7
Total	300	100.0

Source: Filed Data, 2017

Table 4.4 shows a description of the career aspiration of participants sampled from the selected schools in the Tema Metropolis. There was a fair distribution of the participants over the various career options available. With regards to career options in Business, eleven of the participants representing 3.7% also aspired to become businessmen. Table 4.4 reveals that, 13(4.3%) of the participants opted for accountancy, 12(4.0%) selected administrative work as the aspired career whilst 11(3.7%) opted to become economists in the near future.

With regard to careers in Visual Arts, in relation to artistic task, 9(3.0%) of the participants opted it as their aspired career. In relation to careers in private industry (i.e. working in a private industry), 19(6.3%) of the participants aspired to work in such environment whilst 12(4.0%) opted to work in private trade (i.e. self-employment) whilst 2(0.1%) of the participants selected factory work as their future aspired career.

Concerning careers in Agriculture Science, eight of the participants representing 2.7% opted to become farmers. Nineteen of the participants representing 6.3% selected nursing as their aspired career in the future. Seventeen participants representing 5.7% selected medicine or medical science as their aspired career in the future. Twenty representing 6.7% of the participants aspired to become information communication technologist. With regards to engineering, 6(5.3%) of the participants opted to pursue engineering in the future.

With careers in General Arts, fourteen participants representing 4.7% aspired to work for religious institutions. Nineteen of the participants representing 6.3% opted for careers in law/legal practice, 13(4.3%) chose to become members of the military/security in the near future whilst 20(6.7) opted for careers in university teaching. Twenty-seven representing (9.0%) of the participants aspired for careers in basic/secondary teaching. Eleven of the participants representing 3.7% aspired for

careers in social work whilst 4(1.3%) also selected politics as their aspired career. Nine (3.0%) also selected historian as their future aspired career whilst, 14(4.7%) of the participants aspired to become civil service workers.

Career aspirations with the highest frequencies were basic/secondary teaching, information communication technologist, university teaching, business, engineering, law/legal practitioner, medicine, nursing, private industry, civil service, religious institutions, accountancy, member of the military/security and private trade. Career aspirations with the lowest frequencies were administration, artistic tasks, businessman/woman, economics, factory worker, farmer, historian, politics and social work. Themes relating to the career aspiration of participants were related to; career aspirations, reasons of interest and motivation to pursue aspired career.

Career Aspirations

According to the interview data, the participants expressed their interest in diverse careers ranging from accountancy, administration, information communication technologist to engineering, farming and the like. The data revealed that many of the participants were following their childhood dreams. They were also willing to put in the necessary and required effort to make their career aspiration come to pass. They expressed their passion for their aspired career and were firm about their decision to eventually enter into their aspired career. They also appeared to have selected courses in the senior high school that reflect their career aspiration and were comfortable with the nature and demands of the course selected. Participants were also enthusiastic about the prospects of the aspired career and the conditions of service associated with their aspired career.

A participant commented:

I always wanted to be an accountant when I grow up, that is why am now pursuing business currently in Senior High School. I'm positive that I will make it during the WASSCE and make it to University of Ghana to pursue my dream. Most of my family members are into accounting and they all work in very nice environment and offices (Participant # 1, Form 2, female, Business, June 5, 2017).

Another participant also articulated that:

Personally, I have very great passion for electronic equipment, and I want to go for computer related course in the University. Any one of them will do, I just want to work in the computer industry. I feel competent working in such environment, well decorated and fully air conditioned. Even the prestige that comes with it makes me want to work there the more (Participants # 6, Form 2, male, Science, June 5, 2017).

Participant # 12, also shared her views and said that:

I want to be a politician, I love to lead and serve people, and I want to set an example of good leadership and selfless commitment to my nation Ghana. Though I will face some oppositions, I am very convinced and prepared to face all the obstacles squarely. If I'm able to achieve this dream, things will automatically fall into its place, I will be well connected (form 3, female, General Arts, June 5, 2017).

The interview data suggests that participant's aspired careers were related to accountancy, administration, politics, information communication technologist to engineering, farmer, and the like. Most of the participants' career aspiration was formed during their childhood ages and have developed and crystallised into actual specific they are pursuing careers over time. Participants were aware of the academic demands and institutional requirement associated with their aspired career. They were prepared to achieve these dreams through hard work and devotion. They were also interested in the environment of their aspired career.

Motivation to pursue Aspired Career

Data gathered from the interview further reveals that, participants were motivated by their personal desire and passion in their aspired career. The data further showed that, participants were also influenced by the demands of their parents and their up-bringing and home conditioning. The influence from the home seem to be prevailing in influencing the aspired career of the participants. Many of them appear to have a significant confidence in becoming like their parents or some relatives in relation to career. Participants were also motivated by their abilities and talents. They were conscious about these strengths and were willing to work hard to maximise them for their future prospects. They had a positive attitude towards their aspired career and were poised towards achieving their goal.

Participants stated:

My parents feel that becoming a medical doctor commands some respect and changes the social class of the family. My uncle is a surgeon and he always motivate me to do my best. Personally, I love the medical field so much, maybe because of the previous stories of my parents. currently I am pursuing Science and hopefully I will accomplish my desire. Working in a field you don't like would be very hurtful. I know for sure that with perseverance and dedication, I will definitely become a medical doctor one day. God be my helper (Participant # 11, Form 3, Science, female, June 5, 2017).

Participant #3 also stated that:

I want to become an artist because everyone says it is my talent. I can draw and paint. It's like I have been taught for a long time. Naturally, it something I enjoy doing and I wish I will do something relating to art in the university so as to get the chance to work as an artist in a good firm. Even when I don't receive salary for the works I do, I will be just okay because it gives me joy and fulfilment. My dad also supports me a lot (Form 2, male, Visual Arts, June 5, 2017).

Another participant noted:

For me, the idea that I can assist someone in need makes me want to become a nurse. I love to assist people especially the sick. My mother is a nurse and I believe I have been indoctrinated to also become same. My interest is towards assisting people who are suffering. Nursing is a good alternative to God's work. Because of this, I'm a Science student, though the course is difficult, I know I will go through and assist people (Participant # 10, Form 3, female, Science, June 5-9, 2017).

One participants also said:

I am from an average home and I would want to get into a career that pays well. My interest is in Mathematics and I hope to become a professor of Mathematics one day. My parents motivate me a lot. As at now, they call me professor and I'm glad they do. I love Mathematics and want to pursue it to the highest level. I also believe that there can be easier ways of learning Mathematics which I would love to share with the world. So personally, I am motivated (Participant # 5, form 2, Business, male, June 5-9, 2017).

From the interview data, it could be inferred that participants are self-motivated based on their interest, abilities, attitudes, parental demands and home conditioning. They had a positive conviction that they will achieve their goal. Parental influence and home conditioning appeared to have greater influence on the participants' career aspirations.

4.4 Research Question Two: What are the effects of socioeconomic status of parents on career aspirations of students from selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis?

Table 4.5: Effects of Socioeconomic Status on Career Aspirations

	Items	Agree F (%)	Disagree F (%)
1	My parents/guardian's education affects my career aspiration.	167(55.6)	133(44.3)
2	My parents/guardian's employment affects my career aspiration.	190(63.3)	110(36.7)
3	My parents'/guardians' income affects my career aspiration.	270(90.0)	30(10.0)
4	My family economic status affects my career aspiration.	261(87.0)	39(13.0)
5	My parents/guardians investing in the home affects my career aspiration.	245(81.7)	55(18.3)
6	My parents/guardian's investment in my education affects my career/occupational aspiration.	209(69.7)	91(30.3)
7	living in a poor neighbourhood affects my career aspiration.	102(34.0)	198(66.0)
8	I face discrimination from home which affects my career aspiration.	76(25.3)	224(74.7)
9	My parents/guardians provision of educational resources affects my career aspiration.	109(36.3)	191(63.7)
10	My parents'/guardian's expectation that I further my education affects my career aspiration.	271(90.3)	29(9.7)
11	My family size siblings which affects my career aspiration.	236(78.7)	64(21.3)
12	My parents/guardian's high status in society affects my career aspiration.	78(26.0)	222(74.0)
13	My parents/guardian's involvement in my education affects my career aspiration.	239(79.7)	61(20.3)

Source: Filed Data, 2017

N=300, %=100.

Table 4.5 shows the description of the responses on socioeconomic status of parents and their career aspiration. Table 4.5 suggests that, majority of the participants 167(55.6%) agreed that “My parent’s/guardians education affects my career aspiration” whilst a minority of the participants 133(44.3%) disagreed with this statement. Majority of the participants 190(63.3%) agreed that “the nature of my parents’ employment affects my career aspiration” whilst a minority of the participants 110(36.7%) disagreed to this assertion.

The majority of the participants 270(90.0%) agreed that “My parents’/guardians’ income affects my career aspiration” whilst a minority of the participants 30(10.0%) disagreed to this statement. A majority of the participants 261(87.0%) agreed that “My family economic status affects my career aspiration whilst a minority of the participants 39(13.0%) disagreed. Majority of the participants 245(81.7%) agreed that “My parents/guardians investment in the home affects my career aspiration whilst minority of the participants 55(18%) disagreed with this assertion.

Majority of the participants 198(66.0%) disagreed that “My parents/guardians investment in my education affects my career/occupational aspiration whilst a minority of the participants 102(34.0%) agreed to this assertion. Majority of the participants 224(74.7%) disagreed that “I face discrimination at home and this affects my career aspiration” whilst a minority of the participants 76(25.3%) agreed with this statement.

A majority of the participants 191(63.7%) disagreed that “My parents/guardians provision of educational resources affects my career aspiration”, 109(36.3%) disagreed with this assertion. A majority of the participants 271(90.3%) agreed that “My parents’/guardians expectation that I further my education affects my career aspiration whilst a minority of the participants 29(9.7%) disagreed with this assertion. A majority

of the participants 236(78.7%) agreed that “the nature of their family size affects my career aspiration”.

A majority of the participants 222(74.0%) agreed that “My parent’s/guardians high status in society affects my career aspiration” whilst a minority of the participants 78(26.0%) disagreed to this assertion. Also, a majority of the participants 239(79.7%) agreed that “My parent’s/guardians high involvement in my education affects my career aspiration”.

From the data, it could be deduced that the following were some of the effects of socioeconomic status on participant’s career aspiration; parents/ education, engaging in menial jobs (skilled work, especially domestic work) affected their career aspiration, parents’/guardians’ income affected their career aspiration. Families economic status affected their career aspiration. Parents/guardians investment in the home to improve on their living also affected their career aspiration. Parents/guardians provision of students needs affected their career aspiration. Parents’/guardians’ expects that participants further their education affected their career aspiration. The nature of the family size affected their career aspiration. Finally, parents/guardians being highly involved in participant’s education affected their career aspiration.

The following themes emerged from the qualitative data collected to further explain the quantitative data, the themes were related to family socioeconomic background, family income level and influence of socioeconomic background.

Family Socioeconomic Background

Referring to the interview data, many of the participants were from average and below average homes in terms of economic and social backgrounds. A minority of the participants were from affluent homes. The data further suggested that participants were mostly from larger families, most of them were from a family of five and more. Many of the participants seem to be coping with the economic demands of their education. This was as a result of the limited resources in the family and the strain caused by other sibling's career aspiration. Participants were cooperative with their parents and appreciative of their efforts though they wanted a better living condition. Some participants mentioned the delay of the payment of their school fees and the delay in the provision of other relevant educational demands. Some of the participants stated that their parents are not educated and as a result, they engage in menial jobs which are not so lucrative. These conditions they agreed, influence the economic status and social class.

One of the participants articulated:

I am from an average socioeconomic background and my parents are all teachers. We are five in number. I am the last born and three of my siblings are presently in the university, so it is not easy at all when it comes to finances. Although I get most of the things I need, sometimes you just have to cope with the system. My school fees sometimes delay and what can I do. Some people don't even have what I have. My parents are always consistent with our supplies though we don't live in luxury because of our many demands (Form 3, female, Home Economics, June 5, 2017).

Participant # 7, commented:

My dad is a medical doctor and my mother is a nurse. I have only one sibling. My parents are financially okay. My dad has some properties in Accra. So almost all I need is catered for by him. Even my kid brother is more pampered than I am. It a blessing though I hardly see my father in the house. He works all the time, but he provides all our needs (form 2, female, General Arts, June 5, 2017).

Another participant also noted that:

My uncle who takes care of me is a trader. Though he is trying his best to support me because my parents are dead, he is always struggle to maintain the home. His wife is also a trader and I always assist them in the trading after school. I believe they mean well for me but it is not easy at all. They have their own children who are also going to school, two of them are in the University and I am in the final year. Sometimes, my school fees delay. But my uncle has promised me that he will see me through to the university (Participant # 9, form 3, male, General Arts, June 5, 2017).

From the data, it was revealed that a minority of the participants were from affluent homes. Most of the participants were from average and below average homes. Most of the participants from average and below average homes had many siblings with the least being five. This affected their standard of living and quality of life. Participant were cooperative and appreciative of their families.

Family Income Level and Social Class

According to the interview data, it was revealed that many of the participants were from homes where parents' income levels were low. They were also from families with low social standing and status. The data suggests that because of their parents' low-income levels they are forced to cope with the situation of living below the average living standards. Some of the participants stated that their parents were on retirement and that influenced their income levels. They also complained about the largeness of their family and how it affected their share of the family income. They also believed that their situation was not peculiar but normal especially comparing with other friends. A few of the participants from affluent homes agreed that they had very little to worry about when it comes to income and spending in the house. They highlighted their gratitude about the efforts of their parents.

A participant commented:

We are not rich, though we are not so poor. My parents' income is not enough. They themselves complain about the insufficiency of their income. From my perspective, their income is quite small and we always have to manage in the house. I personally know that it is not easy at all as three of my siblings are in the house unemployed (Participant # 10, Form 3, male, Visual Arts, June 5, 2017).

One participant stated:

Hmmm, you cannot complain, I believe poverty is a general thing in Ghana. My mother is a teacher and my dad is on retirement. It is only my mother who brings home something substantial. We are six in number relying on this small salary. Sometimes, it is tough to even ask for what you need because of the demands of others. I just hope I finish school and look for a job (Participant # 9, form 2, male, Visual Arts, June 5, 2017).

Participant # 8 claimed:

I don't really know the income levels of my parents but I believe it is high. My father is an accountant and my mother is a supplier. She supplies goods to the Ghana ports authority and other government institutions. My parents also have stores all over Accra, so I believe they are rich though they will never admit they do have money (Form 2, male, General Arts, June 5, 2017).

Another participant also articulated:

I am a retirement baby, so it is my elderly siblings who take care of me. They are always late in paying my school fee and other relevant supplies and what can I do. I am not their child so I cannot demand for anything. For me, the only income I live on is the benevolence of my siblings and what can I do (Participant # 6, form 2, male, Business, June 5, 2017).

Participants # 2 also added that:

I am from a very affluent home, personally I don't know the specific income level of my parents but I have no problem with money. My parents provide everything I need and I don't lack anything, (Form 2, male, Home Economics, June 5-9, 2017).

The data suggests that most of the participants were from homes with very low-income levels but a minority of the participants were from affluent homes with high levels of income. Participants from low level income homes agreed that their situation was universal, especially in the Ghanaian context.

Effects of Socioeconomic Background of Parents on Participants Career

Aspiration

Data from the interview revealed that, there was a significant effect of socioeconomic background of participants on their aspired career. The participants claimed that, socioeconomic status of their families play a leading role in their next step of achieving their educational aspiration which is connected to their career aspiration. They highlighted that, in Ghana, there are no free universities and as such, the financial and social standing of the family play a significant role in achieving one's goals. Some emphasized that, they are currently considering working for some time before continuing their education because of the unavailability of sponsorship. Some of the participants also stated that, though they are brilliant students and would like to pursue their aspired career, they are forced to neglect their aspirations for now as a result of the expensive nature of their aspired careers. Participants mentioned that, careers like Law, Medicine, and other science related careers are expensive to pursue and as such, their socioeconomic background is dictating what they can do.

Participant # 3 narrated:

Personally, three of my siblings have finished university, so I know definitely I will also go through the system and finish successfully. I believe that socioeconomic status plays a huge role in pursuing academics because there is no university in Ghana which is free. Even with the newly instituted free Senior High School it is not absolutely free because parents will still need to support their children financially with food and other relevant stuff. So, coming from a poor home will definitely influence where you will go after Senior High School form 3, male, Business, June 5-9, 2017).

Another participant articulated:

Presently, my parents are struggling to cater for me though they are not complaining. I have made up my mind to work for some years before going to the university, at least, to assist my parents support my younger siblings. In my case, if the support and sponsorship was available, I would have gone straight to the university or any tertiary institution of my choice. Sometimes, where you are coming from can limit you though you may not attribute your limitation to that, because I believe my parents are also trying (Participant # 2, Form 2, female, Home Economics, June 5-9, 2017).

Participant # 7, stated that

I believe my socioeconomic background has some influence on the career aspiration because if you are brilliant and do not have the money to foot your education bills, you cannot achieve your purpose. I am from an average home. I am a Science student and I would like to pursue Medicine in the future. I am handicapped because the sponsorship is not available, my parents can only afford nursing training or teacher training and I have to select any of the two, if not, I can't go forward. Sometimes I wish I am from a wealthy family, but I am not (Form 2, male, Visual Arts, June 5-9, 2017).

The data shows that majority of the participants were of the view that there was a significant influence of socioeconomic background on the career aspiration. The data revealed that economic stability of the family was a necessity since tertiary education is expensive. Although intelligence was key aspect of attaining one's career aspiration, some programmes in the university were expensive for the average home to sponsor, example of these fields are Medicine, Law and other related courses in the sciences.

4.5 Research Question Three: What are the effects of family up-bringing on career aspirations of senior high school students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis?

Table 4.6: Effects of Family up-bringing on Career Aspirations

Item	Agree F (%)	Disagree F (%)
1. My family traditions and cultural beliefs affects my career aspiration.	300(100.0)	-
2. The nature of individual autonomy and freedom in my family affects my career aspiration.	87(29.0)	213(71.0)
3. My family reward individual achievements rather than group success and this affects my career aspiration.	209(69.7)	91(30.3)
4. My family practice interdependence among family members and this affects my career aspiration.	263(87.7)	37(12.3)
5. My family is committed to assisting other family members in the future and this affects my career aspiration.	300(100.0)	-
6. My family is geared towards achieving goals and interests of the family and this affects my career aspiration.	232(77.3)	68(22.7)
7. My family support living together and that affects my career aspiration.	261(87.0)	39(13.0)
8. My parents' career aspirations for me influence my career aspiration.	290(96.7)	10(4.3)
9. My family structure affects my career aspiration.	280(93.3)	20(7.7)
10. Language first learned affects my career aspiration.	89(29.7)	211(70.3)
11. My parents use storytelling and sentiments to motivate and encourage me and this affects my career aspiration.	201(67.0)	99(33.0)
12. My parent's utilization of praise affects my career aspiration.	261(87.0)	39(1.43)
13. Family pride, identity affects my career aspiration.	255(85.0)	45(15.0)

Source: Field Data, 2017

Table 4.6 shows the effects of family up-bringing on the career aspirations of participants in selected schools in the Tema Metropolis. Table 4.6 reveals that, all the participants 300(100%) agreed that their family traditions and cultural beliefs affects their career aspiration. With regard to the nature of individual autonomy and freedom in the family affecting the career aspiration of the participants, many of the participants 213(71.0%) agreed to this assertion whilst a minority of the participants 87(29.0%) disagreed to this assertion.

Most of the participants 263(87.7%) agreed that their family reward individual achievements rather than group success and this affects their career aspiration whilst a minority of the participants 37(12.3%) disagreed to this assertion. All the participants 300(100%) agreed that their family is committed to assisting other family members in the future and this affects their career aspiration.

With regard to family being geared towards achieving goals and interests of the family group, many of the participants 232(77.3%) agreed that this affects their career aspiration. Majority of the participants 261(87.0%) agreed that families support living together and this practice affects their career aspiration whilst a minority of the participants that is 39(13.0%) disagreed to this statement. Most of the participants 290(96.7%) agreed that their parents' career aspirations influenced their career aspiration whilst a minority of the participants 10(4.3%) disagreed to this assertion. With regard to family structure (i.e. social class, wealth, number of children, etc) affecting the career aspiration of the participants, most of them 280(93.3%) agreed to this assertion whilst a minority of the participants 20(7.7%) disagreed.

A majority of the participants 248(82.7%) agreed that parental supervision schooling activities affects their career aspiration whilst a minority of the participants 52(17.3%) disagreed to this assertion. With regard to "My parents utilization of praise,

and persuasion, majority of the participants 261(87.0%) agreed that this affects their career aspiration. With regard to family pride, which translates into self-esteem and identity, majority of the participants 255(85.0%) agreed that this affects their career aspiration.

Based on the data, it could be inferred that, family background effects career aspiration. The findings revealed that family traditions and cultural beliefs affects career aspiration, families that reward individual achievements rather than group success affects participants' career aspiration. Family practice like interdependence among family members affects career aspiration. Also, family commitment to assisting other family members and support living together.

Parents' career aspirations for participants influence career aspiration. Family structure, parental supervision of participants schooling, parents' utilization storytelling and sentiments affects participants career aspiration. Finally, the utilization of praise, and persuasion affects the career aspiration of participants.

From the interview data, the following themes emerged concerning family upbringing. These themes provided more explanation to the quantitative data.

Family Upbringing

According to the interview data, majority of the participants stated that they come from religious homes. They highlighted that there are values, norms and specific demands of good behaviour expected of them from their parents. The participants argue that, because they are younger, their parents always give them directions as to what they can do and what they cannot do. They mentioned that discipline was a virtue highly esteems in their respective families and nothing was more important than obeying the commands of their parents. Participants also claimed that their family upbringing has

influenced them to become sober and conformed to the expectations of their family. They had the belief that in accepting and conforming to these standards, they promote the name of the families and improve on the social respect and prestige of the family.

One of the participants articulated:

Hmmm, I am from a Muslim family and we are firm believers of discipline and respect. One of our family values is to obey before complain. In my house, children have no say on what they want to become, my father believes that I don't really know what I want. They always assume that I am incapable of catering for myself. So, coming from such a home will definitely mean that I have little exposure to the actual world though I live in it. It sometimes frustrating with all the restrictions and rules (Participant # 10, Form 3, male, Business, June 5, 2017).

Another participant confirmed this by sharing his experience thus:

I am from a royal family. My parents have others looking up to them for direction. Personally, I have to also make the conscious effort to walk in that line. My parents believe in orderliness and mutual respect and understanding. They also believe in prestige and name. They always want me to project the name of the family in a positive way. Sometimes I wonder what they derive from all these efforts. They are honest, sincere and willing to assist others, but sometimes they just won't listen to your side of the story (Participant # 5, form 2, male, Home Economics June 5, 2017).

Participant # 6 also said:

I am from a Christian home and it tough to misbehave. My parents have trained me in such a way that I hardly feel happy when I do the wrong thing. Sometimes I feel I'm really enlightening because it becomes difficult to mingle with my friends. Am always in my room, always reading or watching TV. My parents trained as to be at home always. They are firm believers in and they don't like trouble. They always tell us that, inversely, I am becoming like them (Form 3, male, Business, June 5, 2017).

The data presented suggests that participants are from religious homes. The data further revealed that majority of the participants are from strict homes with expectations and standards established for them to conform to. They maintained that discipline was a significant aspect of their family background. They claimed that following through

the values and norms of their respective families improves their social status and prestige. These variables play a significant role in influencing their career aspiration.

Effects of Family Upbringing on Participants Career Aspiration

According to the interview data, majority of the participants agreed that their family upbringing had some significant influence on their career aspiration. Participants emphasized that the nature of their family upbringing, their values, beliefs, norms, standards, and social class influence their aspired careers. They highlighted that their home conditioning and family upbringing has modelled them into thinking differently in terms of career aspiration. They also claimed that one's family up-bringing dictates the level of exposure the individual can experience and this could influence the career aspiration of the individual. Some of the participants claimed that they are restricted by their family values and beliefs in their career aspiration. They anticipate that, if they don't follow the advice of their parents, they may not support them in their quest to achieve their career aspiration dreams.

One of the participants articulated:

I believe family background does matter, I am from a very strict Christian home, but my parents are supportive when it comes to career choice. My parents believe that career choice is a personal decision to make and they respect that. The only problem is that, they believe some career are prone to corruption and mischief. But I believe it basically a matter of individual differences. I want to be a politician but I believe my family upbringing and prestige may not permit me. My father is a Pastor and I cannot do much about it (Participant # 1, Form 3, male, General Arts, June 5, 2017).

Another participant added:

Personally, I think that my upbringing has a lot to do with the career I would like to pursue in the future. Basically, the foundation on which I was trained makes me value some careers than others. My parents are all in the medical field and they regard other fields for the less intelligent. Sometimes, it so embarrassing when I don't make the best grades in school. My siblings tease me and they call me names and it not easy at all. I am brilliant, but you can't make all A's all the time. I can't opt for any other career than a career in the medical field because of the demands of my family and family friends. Obviously, they all hope I don't disappoint them (Participant # 4, Form 3, male, Business, June 9, 2017).

Participant # 2 also commented that:

Yes, family upbringing can really influence your career aspiration. I am from a village, if not for school, I would not have been in Tema. Though my parents are educated, they are teachers and I thought becoming a teacher was the way forward, but coming to school in a city, I have realised that there are a lot of other opportunities available for me to progress rather than become a teacher. My parents are liberal and willing to push me as far as I want to go, but without this eye-opening opportunity, I would have settled on becoming a teacher (Form 2, male, Science, June 5, 2017).

It could be inferred from these views expressed by the participants that majority are influenced by their family upbringing in their career aspirations. The data revealed that the values, beliefs and norms of the family have influence on their perceptions of career. The data further suggest that their family upbringing seem to restrict their career aspirations since it dictates their level of exposure and knowledge about career.

4.6 Testing of Hypothesis

1. **H₀** There is no significant correlation between academic achievement and career aspirations of senior high student in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis?

H₁ There is a statistically significant correlation between academic achievement and career aspirations of senior high student in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis?

Table 4.7: Pearson's product-moment correlation of academic achievement and career aspiration

	Career Aspiration	Academic Achievement
Pearson Correlation	1	-.298**
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
N	300	300

**** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

A product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to determine whether there will be no significant correlation between career aspirations and academic achievement of Senior High Students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis? Table 4.7 shows a Pearson moment correlation analysis between career aspiration and academic achievement. Table 4.7 depicts a negative correlation between career aspiration and academic achievement ($r = -.298^{**}$, $N = 300$, $\text{Sig} = .000$ $p < 0.01$). It can be inferred from the test that the more a student aspires for a career the lower his or her academic achievement. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant correlation between career aspirations and academic achievement of senior high student in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis was accepted.

4.7 Academic Achievement

The interview data gathered on the academic achievement suggests that the majority of the participants were above average and average students. A minority of the participants were in below average category. The participants claimed that learning is very difficult but they are poised to learn because of their ambition to achieve their hearts' desire. Some participants highlighted that their performance fluctuated depending on the subject. A minority of the participants also emphasized that they have some health issues that affected their learning and as such influenced their general performance.

A participant articulated:

I will grade myself as an above average student, I mostly make some good grades. Though learning is seeming to have it easier, French is difficult. Last term, I performed in all the courses except French, which I got C6. It is a difficult course and I'm trying my best to improve on it (Participant # 12, Form 3, female, Science, June 5-9, 2017).

Another participant commented:

Hmmm, for performance I can't complain. Sometimes I do well, other times I don't. It depends on the particular subject being taught. I have been trying my best to improve but I believe I am below average. I know a lot of influential people are below average so I'm not so bothered (Participant # 11, Form 2, male, Visual Arts, June 5, 2017).

Participant # 2, added:

Currently I am average, I use to perform excellently but after my eye operation, I cannot really learn the way I use to learn. When I learn for about one and a half hours, my eyes start to pain me. I wish I could improve on my performance, but the Doctor advised I don't strain myself (Form 2, female, Science, June 5-9, 2017).

It can be inferred from the participants that, majority of the participants are average and below average students. The data further revealed that, some of the participants had health related difficulties (Eye related challenges) that influenced their ability to learn effectively.

4.8 Academic Achievement and Career Aspiration

The interview data revealed that there was some significant influence of academic achievement on career aspiration of students. Participants argued that, there is always a standard required for the entry into any university in Ghana. The participants claimed that, without proper preparation and hard work, though an individual could desire and aspire to enter into a specific career, the entry requirement of the university will not permit the person unless he or she meets the requirement. Some of the participants also emphasized that, sometimes, people make the required grades, yet it becomes difficult for them to get admission in the public universities in Ghana. The participants also claimed that, there is the need for students to fully prepare their cognitive faculties to enable them to face squarely what is ahead of them.

Participant # 8 commented that:

There is a tremendous influence of academic performance on my aspired career, even the entry qualifications say it all. I want to become a surgeon and without excellent grades, I can't make it into the medical school. It quite obvious that academic performance dictates almost everything about the future. Even after university, your academic performance will enable you to continue. I have made a promise to my parents and myself to not settle for any other programme than becoming a surgeon and that means hard work and no enjoyment, after schooling, I will chill (Form 2, male, Home Economics, June 5-9, 2017).

Another participant stated:

In Ghana, academic performance influences what you can become. We are all aware that to enter into the university means you have to pass first. If you wish to become a lawyer, your wish cannot get you there. I want to go to the law school in University, but without the requisite grades, I have no chance. I have been learning earnestly, but sometimes, even when you made the grades, it takes the intervention of God for you to enter into such disciplines (Participant # 3, form 2, male, Science, June 5-9, 2017).

Another participant also added:

I believe academic performance is key in creativity and designing. Without intelligence, how do you become creative? But it is bold and clear that academic performance all over the world predicts what a person can become. In some isolated cases, things can change, but in most cases, it does influence the situation. I am presently maximising all my efforts to make a good grade, without which I know for sure that I will have to do remedial for the November December section of the West African Examinations. It's like a passport, without it, you can't make any significant progress (Participant # 11, form 3, male, Science, June 5-9, 2017).

From the interview data, it could be concluded that participants were of the view that there is a significant influence of academic performance and career aspirations. Participants suggested that, academic achievement is key in achieving one's career aspiration especially when it comes to tertiary education.

Discussion of Findings

4.9 Career Aspirations of Senior High School Students in Selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis

It emerged from the study that participants aspired to careers relating to basic/secondary teaching, information communication technologist, university teaching, business, engineering, law/legal practitioner, medicine, nursing, private industry, civil service, religious institutions, accountancy, member of the military/security and private trade.

These findings are consistent with literature. According to Super (1957), during the Growth Stage (birth to 14 or 15 years), concept of self, attitudes and interests develop whilst the Exploratory stage (15- 24 years) is marked by the development of skills and the making of tentative choices. The third phase is Establishment (25-44 years) during which skills are further developed and individuals begin to stabilize as work experience is gained. To Super, Maintenance occurs from ages 45 to 64, a period characterized by adjustments to improve work positions. It is during the Decline phase (ages 65 and above) that individuals begin to prepare for retirement according to Super's theory. Super (1957) also proposed that an individual progresses through five vocational development stages: Crystallization (14-18 years), during which individuals develop and plan tentative vocational goals, Specification (18-21 years), during which individuals develop a firmer understanding of their vocational goals, Implementation (21-24 years), during which individuals are trained for and obtain employment, Stabilization (24-35 years), during which individuals continue to work and corroborate their career choice and Consolidation (35 years and above) during which individuals get ahead in their careers.

Joseph (2009) conducted a study to investigate the vocational needs and aspirations of in-school and out-of-school secondary school females in Ankpa Education Zone of Kogi state, Nigeria. Findings of the study showed that in-school and out-of-school secondary school females in Ankpa Education Zone have relatively high vocational needs in areas like manipulation of tools, communication skills, artistic tasks, social work and mathematical tasks. The study found that in-school and out-of-school secondary school females aspires vocations such as law, administration, nursing, medicine and accountancy. Moody (1996) asserts that in his study, participants aspired to work as office worker, intellectual, leading cadre, skilled worker, factory worker, farmer, businessman and member of the military. Smith and Carpenter (1975) also conclude by stating that, their findings showed that 28.3% of participants indicated that they aspired to careers in the civil service; 21.4% indicated that they aspired to careers in medicine; and 12.0% aspired to careers in private industries. The lowest career aspirations expressed by students were being lawyers (1.7%) and political party officers (2.4%).

The interview data suggests that participant's aspired careers were related to accountancy, administration, information communication technologist to engineering, farmer, and the like. Participant's career aspiration was formed during their childhood ages and have developed and crystallised into actual specific careers they are pursuing over time. Participants were aware of the academic demands associated with their aspired career and the institutional requirement. They were prepared to achieve these dreams through hard work and devotion. They were moved by the working conditions of their aspired career. From the interview data, it could be inferred that, participants are motivated by their interest, abilities, attitudes, parental demands and home conditioning. They had a positive conviction that they will achieve their goal. Parental

influence and home conditioning appeared to have greater influence on the participants' career aspiration. These findings are consistent with literature, in general, students tended to aspire to as much higher a career as possible as that of their parents. Dahlan, (1997), confirms that, there was a significant difference between student origin and three types of aspirations (vocational, academic and collegiate). Students from the rural areas are likely to have both higher vocational ($F = 16.58$; $p 0.001$) and higher collegiate ($F = 5.17$; $p 0.06$) aspirations than those from urban areas. Meanwhile, students from urban areas are likely to have higher academic aspirations than those from rural areas ($F = 14.90$; $p 0.001$). Also, parental educational background and grade point average show significant differences when combined with vocational, academic and collegiate aspirations. For example, the higher the father's educational background, the higher the vocational and collegiate aspirations of the student; and the lower father's educational background the higher the academic aspirations of the student.

4.10 Effects of Socioeconomic Status of Parents on Career Aspirations of Senior High Students in Selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis

The study revealed that there were some effects of socioeconomic status of parents on participant's career aspiration. These were related to parents/guardian's educational level, job and income for the family up keep and their effect on career aspiration of participants. Families not wealthy affected their career aspiration. Parents/guardians provision of needs affected their career aspiration.

Parents/guardians investing in participants' education affected their career aspiration. Parents'/guardians' expectation that participants further their education affected their career aspiration. Participants number of siblings also affected their career aspiration. Finally, parents/guardians being highly involved in participant's education

affected their career aspiration. These findings are consistent with literature the Family Background and Obligations Theory (FBOT) which stipulates that socioeconomic or household income is expected to be instrumental in understanding aspirations levels and academic achievement of students and that these turn out to be weak predictors in explaining aspiration levels of students (Fuligni, 1997). This has necessitated the need for further analysis of aspirations beyond the effects of variables like socioeconomic status (SES), such as the role of the family and cultural capital in the formation and shaping of students' educational aspirations. Children in developing nations like Ghana and their parents often face changes in socioeconomic status (SES), given that parents' relative income and occupation often change due to economic variables (Fuligni, 1997).

Kao and Tienda (1998) found that social economic status was the single most important factor in students' establishing and maintaining high career aspirations throughout high school. Davis-Kean (2005) established that a correlation exists between parents' financial status and the occupations of their children. In her pursuit for answers, Davis-Kean (2005) undertook research in America to support her beliefs in respect to parental influences. She confirmed the hypothesis that parent income influenced children's achievement as parents modify their behaviours in accordance with their economic status. Therefore, a correlation exists between parents' socioeconomic status, and their resultant occupations (Davis-Kean, 2005).

It was evident from the interview data that minority of the participants were from affluent homes. A majority of the participants were from average and below average homes. Most of the participants from average and below average homes had many siblings with the least being five. This influenced their standard of living and quality of life. Participants were cooperative and appreciative of their families. The data suggests that, a majority of the participants were from homes with very low-income

levels but a minority of the participants were from affluent homes with high levels of income. Participants from low level income homes agreed that their situation was universal, especially in the Ghanaian context. These findings are consistent with the view of Eccles (2005) that some parents will go to the extent of restricting their involvement altogether, using this as a management technique when they are unable to financially access activities outside their community. Sewell and Shah (2008) found that SES influenced students' aspirations indirectly and did not explain much of the variance in aspiration levels. They also found that students from a lower class with a lower SES aspired to achieve high educational goals despite their status. If SES played a role, then it must be the case that lower-class parents are disproportionately investing more of their limited resources in the education of their children to match the aspiration levels of students with a high SES background.

The interview data further shows that there was a significant influence of socioeconomic background on the career aspiration of participants. The data revealed that economic stability of the family was a necessity since tertiary education were expensive. Although intelligence was key aspect of attaining one's career aspiration, some programmes in the university were expensive for the average home to sponsor, example of these fields are Medicine, Law and other related courses in the sciences. Blair (2006) found family income to be an important factor in increasing aspirations for Whites students only. The effect of parental education was mixed. If parents had high school or college degrees, aspiration levels of their children did not increase until or unless their parents had a Ph.D. or equivalent, but for the African-American students, the effect of parents' education was both weak and not statistically significant.

4.11 Effects of Family Upbringing on Career Aspirations of Senior High School Students in Selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis

It emerged from the study that family background affects career aspiration in the following way; family traditions and cultural beliefs affects career aspiration. Families that reward individual achievements affects participants' career aspirations. Family that practice interdependence among family members affects career aspirations. Family commitment to assisting other family members affects career aspirations. Family support such as living together affects career aspiration. Parents' career aspirations for participant's influence career aspiration. Family structure affects career aspiration. Parental supervision of participants' daily schooling activities affects career aspiration. Parents utilizing storytelling and sentiments to motivate participants affects their career aspiration. Finally, the utilization of praise and persuasion affect the career aspiration of participants. These findings are consistent with Family Background and Obligations Theory (FBOT) which postulates that family background factors, such as education, income, family structure, ethnicity, and culture, affect students' beliefs and behaviour. According to this theory, assimilation into the mainstream culture and the allocation of students' time are based on family beliefs and obligations to the extent that parents can influence their children (Fuligni, 1997). Fast assimilation into the mainstream culture has been emphasized by some scholars, but whether assimilation and acculturation affect aspirations of students and their socioeconomic development has been of much academic interest in recent years.

A study by Fuligni (1997) showed that some families stressed the importance of family obligations and cultural beliefs to their children, who then considered these as constraints in their decision making regarding use of time, for example, in the choice of peers and time spent with peers. To maintain high educational outcomes, parents and

children often negotiate some balance in the use of family resources and their time between family obligations and educational activities (Fuligni, 1997). They choose the path and speed of assimilation into the mainstream culture that leads to better educational outcomes.

Penick and Jepsen (1992) stated that it has also been found that girls from lower socioeconomic groups are very traditional in their occupational choices. Taylor and Krahn (2005) found that parents' aspirations for their children had a strong positive effect on their college aspirations, producing a high probability of 69%. School engagement, and peers had moderate effects, while family structure, language first learned, and parental supervision had very little effect on the probability of aspiring to obtain a university degree. This study has found that both the student and their parents have an understanding about what career is; thus, committed to participate in career choice decision making. It was identified that parents had responsibility to guide their children on the right track towards making a better living emanating from decent jobs.

The interview data revealed that participants are from religious homes. The data further revealed that majority of the participants are from strict homes with expectations and standards to meet. They maintained that discipline was a significant aspect of their family upbringing. They claimed that following through the values and norms of their respective families improves their social status and prestige. Majority of the participant emphasized that they are influenced by their family upbringing in their career aspirations. The data revealed that the values, beliefs and norms of the family have influenced their perceptions of career. The data further suggest that their family upbringing seem to restrict their career aspiration since the family upbringing may dictate their level of exposure and knowledge about career. These findings are also consistent with the views of Fuligni (1999), who asserts that most African, Asian and

Latin America cultures emphasize collectivism in which the goals and interests of the family group are paramount; children are often asked not to disregard family needs at the expense of their own and to respect authority. As part of family obligations, students are expected to participate in chores like shopping for food; cooking meals; caring for other members of the family; and joining family members in daily meals, holidays, and special events like graduation, weddings, and anniversaries and these activities influence their career aspiration. Green (2008) found that first and second-generation students from East Asian, Latino, Filipino, and European backgrounds had higher Mathematics and English grades compared to natives with similar backgrounds. The argument of the positive effect of monolingualism on academic achievement does not hold when the length of stay of an immigrant is considered. A study by Davies and Kandel (1981) found that the encouragement of parents through their perceived aspirations had stronger effects than peer students' plans and influence. The hopes of youth tend to remain high in the first generation but decrease in subsequent generations (Fuligni, 1997; Fuligni et al., 1999).

4.12 Career Aspirations and Academic Achievement of Senior High Student in Selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis.

It emerged from the study that there was a negative correlation between career aspiration and academic achievement. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant correlation between career aspirations and academic achievement of senior high student in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis was accepted. This finding is further discussed with the Goals, Motivation, and Achievement Theory (GMAT) that examines the relationship between goals, motivation, and school achievement. Discussing the relationship between educational goals (aspirations) and achievement, Covington (2000) advanced this theory by stressing that goals and achievements are separated by degree of motivation. According to this theory, aspirations are about achievements and achievements are about aspirations. Covington (2000) postulated that the quality of learning and the propensity to continue learning hinges on the interaction between the goals set by students and the motivating properties of such goals, such as expected reward structures or satisfaction. GPAs and scores in Mathematics, Integrated Science, Social Studies and English Language can influence aspirations (Taylor & Krahn, 2005), and variables like time spent on homework and students' aspirations enhances mathematics scores (Dandy & Nettelbeck, 2002). A student with high educational aspirations tends to generate better achievement scores, and based on current achievement, a student evaluates the likelihood of achieving a certain level of education and will define the aspired level of education.

According to GMAT, differences in aspirations can arise from differences in expected rewards resulting from student-specific incentives and investments in education (Covington, 2000; Sherwood, 1989). In addition to students' abilities and talents, school and family resources, and for any given learning technology, setting

educational and career goals by a student is synonymous with setting minimum parameters of motivation, effort, drive and achievement.

These findings are contradicted by Covington (2000) who stated that although studies have agreed with the proposition that educational aspirations and academic performance are highly positively correlated, the correlation does not explain how aspiration translates into education, and as such, the mechanisms of how aspirations influence educational performance remain debatable. Some studies have shown that academic achievement influences education and outcomes influence career aspirations (Alwin & Otto, 1977; Kao & Tienda, 1998). Sewell, Haller and Straus (1957) reported that a child's intelligence had a strong effect on his or her aspirations and achievement, which was independent of the education of the child's father or mother. The education of both parents, however, boosted aspirations first by the parents' ensuring that the students were in good standing academically and second through encouragement and planning for college. Overall grade scores like GPA, Mathematics, or English language scores influenced aspirations (Taylor & Krahn, 2005). Fuligni et al. (1999) found that academic attitudes such as the value of high grades, especially in Mathematics and English language, were correlated with high educational aspirations.

The interview data also suggested that majority of the participants are average and below average students. The data further revealed that, some of the participants had health related difficulties that influenced their ability to learn effectively. Participants suggest that there is a significant influence of academic performance on career aspirations. Participants suggested that, academic achievement is key in achieving one's career aspiration especially when it comes to tertiary education. Qian and Blair (1999) found that overall academic performance had some effect on educational aspirations of African Americans but a greater effect among White, Hispanic and Asian

students. Some mixed results were obtained when different ethnic groups were considered. The level of past education decreased the educational aspirations of Mexicans but increased that of Cubans (Portes, MacLeod & Parker, 1978). Salazar's (2001) study of second-generation Mexican Americans in San Diego showed that students had high hopes of attending college, with 67% of the U.S.-born and 57% of foreign-born students aspiring to attend college. Their GPA scores positively and strongly correlated with amount of homework, parents' help with homework, teachers' help with homework, friends' help with homework, self-esteem, and family cohesion (Covington, 2000).



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter also deals with the recommendations of the study and suggested areas for future research.

5.1 Summary

The purpose of the study was to ascertain the determinants of career aspiration of Senior High school students in the Tema Metropolis. To achieve this purpose, the following research objectives were formulated to guide the study.

1. Explore the career aspirations of senior high school students.
2. Explore the effects of socioeconomic status of parents on career aspirations of senior high students.
3. Examine the effects of family up-bringing on career aspirations of Senior High School students.
4. Examine the relationship between academic achievement and career aspirations of Senior High students.

To achieve these objectives, the sequential explanatory mixed method was employed using the following research questions and hypothesis:

1. What are the career aspirations of senior high school students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis?
2. What are the effects of socioeconomic status of parents on career aspirations of senior high students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis?
3. What are the effects of family upbringing on career aspirations of senior high school students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis?

1. **H₀** There is no significant correlation between academic achievement and career aspirations of senior high students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis.

H₁ There is a statistically significant correlation between academic achievement and career aspirations of senior high students in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis.

The Goal, Motivation, and achievement theory and the Family Background and Obligation theory underpinned the study. Essentially, the conceptual review discussed three main concepts; academic achievement, socioeconomic status and family upbringing and how they influence the career aspiration of the participants. This information acquired from the conceptual review directed and influenced the process of data collection and analysis, which also guided the development of themes of the findings. The conclusions answer the four key research questions stated above. The following key findings emerged from the study.

5.2 Key Findings

It emerged from the quantitative data that participants aspired to careers relating to basic/secondary teaching, information communication technologist, university teaching, business, engineering, law/legal practitioner, medicine, nursing, private industry, civil service, religious institutions, accountancy, member of the military/security and private trade. Career aspirations with the lowest frequencies were artistic tasks, factory worker, farmer, historian and politics. The qualitative data revealed that participant aspired careers were related to accountancy, administration, information communication technologist to engineering, farmer, and the like. Participant's career aspiration was formed during their childhood ages and have

developed and crystallised into actual specific careers they are pursuing over time. Participants were aware of the academic demands associated with their aspired career and the institutional requirement. They were prepared to achieve these dreams through hard work and devotion. They were moved by the working conditions of their aspired career. It was further revealed from the qualitative data that participants are motivated by their interest, abilities, attitudes, parental demands and home conditioning. They had a positive conviction that they will achieve their goal. Parental influence and home condition appeared to have greater influence on the participants' career aspirations.

The study revealed that there were some effects of socioeconomic status on participant's career aspiration. These were related to parents/guardians' educational level, jobs (skilled and unskilled work, especially domestic work), insufficient income levels for family upkeep. The number of siblings and parents/guardian's involvement in participant's education. Most of the participants from average and below average homes had many siblings with the least being five. This influenced their standard of living and quality of life. Participant engaged in the interview were cooperative and appreciative of their families. Participants accepted that there was a significant influence of their socioeconomic background on their career aspiration. They emphasized that the economic stability of the family was a necessity since tertiary education was expensive.

It emerged from the data that family upbringing affects career aspiration in the following ways; family traditions and cultural beliefs, rewarding individual achievements rather than group success. Family practice like interdependence among family members, commitment to assisting other family members. Family supporting living together affects career aspiration. Parents' career aspirations for participants, family structure, parental supervision of participants daily schooling activities and

parents' utilization of storytelling and sentiments to motivate participants daily and the use of praise and persuasion affects career aspirations of participants

The qualitative data suggests that participants are from religious homes. The data further revealed that most of the participants were from strict homes with expectations and standards to meet. They maintained that discipline was a significant aspect of their family upbringing. They claimed that following through the values and norms of their respective families improves their social status and prestige. Participants were influenced by their family background in their career aspirations. The data revealed that the values, beliefs and norms of the family have influence their perceptions of career. The data further suggest that their family background seem to restrict their career aspiration since the family upbringing dictates their level of exposure and knowledge about career.

It emerged from the testing of the hypothesis that the more a student aspires for a career the lower his or her academic achievement. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there will be no significant correlation between career aspirations and academic achievement of senior high student in selected Senior High Schools in the Tema Metropolis was accepted. The qualitative data revealed that most of the participants involved in the study were average and below average students in terms of academic performance. The data further revealed that, some of the participants had health related difficulties that influenced their ability to learn effectively. The participants suggest that there is a significant influence of Academic performance and career aspirations. Participants suggested that, academic achievement is key in achieving one's career aspiration especially when it comes to tertiary education.

5.3 Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn from the study:

1. Participants aspired for careers in various fields of their programmes, i.e. Science, Home Economics, General Arts, Visual Arts, and Business. Their career aspiration was formed during childhood and crystallised into actual specific careers over time. They were motivated by their interest, abilities, attitudes and parental demands. If career information was made available for students to consider their strength and weakness, participants would have a better appreciation of the field of career.
2. It could be concluded that there were some effects of socioeconomic status on participants' career aspirations. Participants were from diverse economic backgrounds and this affected their career aspiration. If these findings are implemented to inform parents about the need to plan financially to cater for their children's education, these would be abated.
3. There were some effects of family upbringing on the career aspiration of the participants. Family upbringing elements like family traditions and cultural beliefs, rewarding individual achievements and others affected participants career aspiration. If the effect of family background could be improved, participants would experience less impact on their career aspiration.
4. There was a negative correlation between career aspiration and academic achievement. There is some level of effect from the academic performance of a student on the aspired career. If students' academic achievement is improved, their career aspirations would also be influenced.

5.4 Recommendations of the Study

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that:

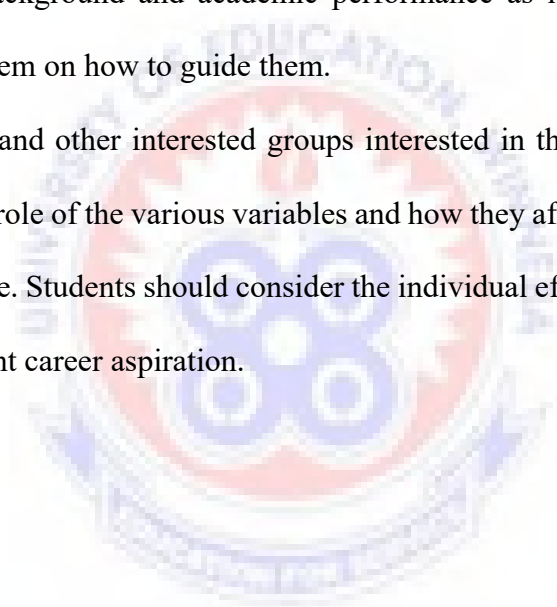
1. The Tema Metropolitan Assembly, Tema Educational Directorate and the Head teachers of the sampled schools should organize career guidance and outreach

programmes for their students on the various career types, entry requirement/qualifications and available institutions for training and sponsorship to fully educate the students on the various aspects of their aspired careers and the corresponding demands. The above-mentioned institutions should organize field trips to companies and institutions in the nation to expose students to the various working environment.

2. The Tema Metropolitan Assembly, Tema Educational Directorate and the Head teachers of the selected schools for the study should organize programmes geared towards educating parents and students on the effect of family socioeconomic status on the career aspirations of students. The Assembly should collaborate with the education service directorate to institute scholarship schemes for needy but brilliant students to facilitate their higher education. Parents should also be educated on comprehensive saving habits and planning for the education of their wards to facilitate students' achievement of their career aspirations.
3. The Tema Metropolitan Assembly, Tema Educational Directorate and the Head teachers of the selected schools for the study should organize programmes in collaboration with the educational counselling unit on the effect of family upbringing on the career aspiration of the students. Such programmes should comprise the stories of victims who were influenced by family upbringing in their career choice and have regretted. The Assembly should also educate parents through the Parent Teacher Association on the various effects of family values, belief, norms, home conditioning and parents expectations and demands on the career aspiration of their ward.
4. The Tema Metropolitan Assembly, Tema Educational Directorate and the Head

teachers of the sampled schools should make quality education a priority in the various schools to ensure students' academic improvement. The Assembly and the Educational Directorate in collaboration with the various Headteachers and teachers should educate parents on the role of academic performance in the career aspiration of their wards and the urgent need to motivate and encourage their wards to learn harder and diligently.

5. Non-governmental agencies, interested in students' career development and aspiration should consider the effect of student's socioeconomic backgrounds, family background and academic performance as identified in this study to inform them on how to guide them.
6. Students and other interested groups interested in this study should study the dynamic role of the various variables and how they affect their career aspiration as a whole. Students should consider the individual effects of these variables on the present career aspiration.



5.5 Limitations of the Study

The validity of the survey is only at face value as the researcher created the survey specifically for this study. Due to the sampling process chosen by the researcher, there are limited data calculations which can be performed. Data were collected from a limited number of students. Due to the scale of this study, findings cannot be generalized to all senior high school students. The nature of the study also inhibited the inclusion of diverse students from different levels in the senior high school. This could affect the result since all students were on the different levels and had similar perceptions and understanding of the determinants of their aspired careers.

In addition, the ambiguities, which are inherent in human language, may also influence the analysis and interpretation of the participant's experiences which can affect the findings of the study.

5.6 Suggestions for further Research

The study investigated into the student's career aspirations, effect of academic achievement, socioeconomic status and family upbringing on the career aspiration of students in the Tema Metropolis. It is therefore suggested that future studies should focus on increasing the sample of the study to include more participants for the study, this would make the findings more reliable. It is further suggested that future researchers should explore the career aspirations of students in the various public universities. Further study could also be done for workers to ascertain whether their career aspirations were met or they are content with their current careers. The study should be replicated in other districts.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CAREER ASPIRATION QUESTIONNAIRE

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES

I am an MPhil. Social Studies student from the University of Education, Winneba. I am conducting a research on the topic “Academic achievement and career aspiration of senior high school students in the Tema Metropolis” If the study is to be useful, it is important that you answer each question as thoughtfully and frankly as possible. Your answers to these questions will be kept completely confidential. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

SECTION A

Demographic Information

1. Gender

Male

Female

2. Age

13-14 years

15-16 years

17-18 years

19 years and above

3. Class

Form two

Form three

SECTION B**Career/Occupational Aspirations of Students**

By ticking where applicable, indicate which of the following career/occupational aspirations interest you

	Career/Occupational Aspiration	Tick
1	Accountancy.	
2	Administration.	
3	Artistic Tasks.	
4	Businessman.	
5	Civil Service	
6	Information communication Technologist.	
7	Economics.	
8	Engineering.	
9	Factory Worker.	
10	Farmer.	
11	Historian.	
12	Medicine.	
13	Member of the Military/Security.	
14	Nursing.	
15	Politics.	
16	Private Industry.	
17	Private Trade.	
18	Religious Institutions.	
19	Basic/Secondary Teaching.	
20	Social Work.	
21	University Teaching.	
22	Law/Legal Practitioner.	

Effects of Socioeconomic Status on Career/Occupational Aspirations

Please these items are related to the effects of socioeconomic status on students' career/occupational aspirations. By use of a tick, please indicate whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) or (SD)strongly disagree with the following statements.

No	Items	SD	D	SA	A
1	My parents/guardians are not highly educated (Below Senior High school) and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
2	My parents/guardians engage in menial jobs (unskilled work, especially domestic work) and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
3	My parents'/guardians' income is not sufficient for the family up keep and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
4	My family is not wealthy and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
5	My parents/guardians invest in the home to improve on our living and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
6	My parents/guardians invest in my education and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
7	I live in a poor neighbourhood and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
8	My parents/guardians are knowledgeable about education and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
9	Due to poverty, I face discrimination and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
10	My parents/guardians provide educational resources in the home and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
11	My parents'/guardians' expectations that I further my education and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				

12	I have too many siblings and this makes me feel education is a luxury and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
13	My parents/guardians have a high status in society and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
14	My parents/guardians are highly involved in my education and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				

Effects of Family upbringing on Career/Occupational Aspirations of Students

Please these items are related to the effects of Family Background on students' career/occupational aspirations. By use of a tick, please indicate whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) or (SD)strongly disagree with the following statements

No	Item	SD	D	SA	A
1	My family traditions and cultural beliefs affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
2	The nature of individual autonomy and freedom in my family affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
3	My family reward individual achievements rather than group success and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
4	My family practice interdependence among family members and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
5	My family is committed to assisting other family members in the future and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
6	My family is geared towards achieving goals and interests of the family group and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
7	My family support living together or in close proximity, and care for their elderly affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
8	My parents' career aspirations for me influence my career/occupational aspiration.				

9	My family structure affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
10	Language first learned affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
11	parental supervision responsible for my daily schooling activities such as homework and school plans affect my career/occupational aspiration.				
12	My parents talk to me about education using storytelling and sentiments to motivate and encourage me children to study hard and this affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
13	The utilization of cultural instruments like praise, persuasion, and storytelling to augment by my parents affects my career/occupational aspiration.				
14	Family pride, which translate into self-esteem and identity affects my career/occupational aspiration.				

Thank You...

APPENDIX B

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES

I am an MPhil. Social Studies student from the University of Education, Winneba. I am conducting a research into the topic: Academic achievement and career aspiration of senior high school students in the Tema Metropolis. If our study is to be useful, it is important that you answer each question as thoughtfully and frankly as possible. Your answers to these questions will be kept completely confidential. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

SECTION A

Demographic Information

1. Gender

Male []

Female []

2. Age

15-16 years []

17-18 years []

19 years and above []

3. Class

Form two []

Form three []

SECTION B

Career/occupational aspirations of senior high school students

1. What are your career/occupational aspirations for the future?
2. Why is/are this/these career/occupational of interest to you?
3. What motivated you to select this career?
4. Who motivated you to select this career ?

Relationship between career / occupational aspirations and academic achievement of senior high student.

1. What is the nature of your academic performance?
2. Are you influenced by your academic performance in making a career/occupational aspiration?

The effects of socioeconomic status on career/occupational aspirations of senior high students.

1. What's the income level of your parents
2. Thus, your parent's income level influences your career aspiration
3. What is the nature of your family socioeconomic background?
4. Does your socioeconomic background affect your career/occupational aspirations?

Effects of family upbringing on career/occupational aspirations of senior high school students.

1. What is the nature of your family background i.e. (values, beliefs, family influence)?
2. Does your parents' home conditioning affect your career aspirations?
3. Does your family background affect your career/occupational aspirations?