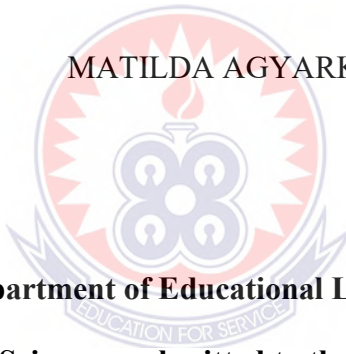UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE POOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC BASIC SCHOOLS IN THE KWADASO CIRCUIT OF KWADASO MUNICIPALITY

MATILDA AGYARKO

**A Dissertation in the Department of Educational Leadership, Faculty of Education and Communication Sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, University of Education, Winneba, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of the Master of Arts (Educational Leadership) degree**

DECEMBER, 2020

# DECLARATION

**STUDENT'S DECLARATION**

I, MATILDA AGYARKO, declare that this 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 guidelines for supervision of dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR:  DR. KOFI ASIAMAH YEBOAH

SIGNATURE:…………………………………………

DATE:…………………………………………

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**DEDICATION**

To my husband Mr. Bernard Osei Adinkrah, my children Frank Osei Adinkrah and

Emmanuel Osei Adinkrah and my sister Mrs. Veronica Asante-Ayeh.

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADP- Accelerated Development Plan

BECE-Basic Education Certificate Examinations

CV- Coefficient of Variation

FCUBE- Free Compulsory Basic Education

GES-Ghana Education Service

LESP-Lynch Enabling Survey for Parents

PTA- Parent Teacher Association

QUIPS- Quality Improvement in Primary Schools

SES- Socio-Economic Status

UNICEF- United Nation International Children's Emergency Fund

UTTDBE- Untrained Teachers Trainings Diploma in Basic Education
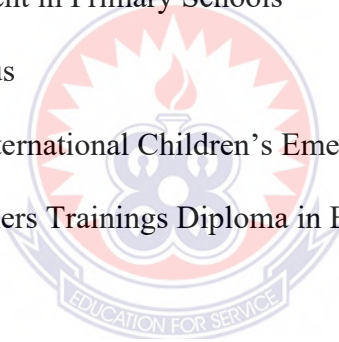
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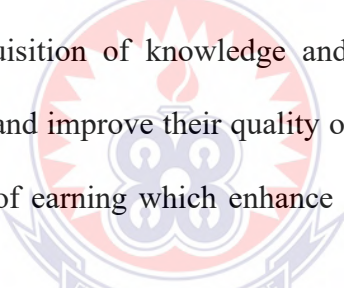
Poor student achievement or performance is a serious universal concern which has been eating into the fabric of educational development, yet very little effort has been taken in finding a panacea to it. The study was conducted in the Kwadaso circuit of the Kwadaso Municipality. The research design used for the study was a descriptive survey. 145 respondents from different schools in the Kwadaso circuit were selected for the study. A set of questionnaire consisting of closed questions were used to collect data from respondents consisting of 136 teachers, who were randomly selected and 9 headteachers, who were purposively selected. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel were used to analyze data obtained from field research.The findings indicated that teachers, students themselves, parents as well as management of schools in the district contribute to the poor academic performance of students. The researcher therefore concluded that both school related causes and outside school factors contribute to poor academic achievements of students in the Kwadaso circuit. The study therefore recommended, among others, that parents should be sensitized by the leaders of the church and the youth through the use of drama, symposia, and community education to understand and appreciate the importance of education and endeavor to provide their wards with basic educational needs to help improve upon their academic performance.

# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background to the Study

Access to education is one of the important basic human rights in all societies. In Ghana, the provision of education has been one of the most critical issues of the government's social policy especially after independence in 1957. In this era of globalization and technological revolution, education is considered as the first step for every human activity. It plays a vital role in the development of human capital and is linked with an individual's well-being and opportunities for better living (Battle & Lewis, 2002). It ensures the acquisition of knowledge and skills that enable individuals to increase their productivity and improve their quality of life. This increase in productivity also leads to new sources of earning which enhance the economic growth of a country (Saxton, 2000).

The quality of students' performance remains at top priority for educators. It is meant for making a difference locally, regionally, nationally and globally. Educators, trainers, and researchers have long been interested in exploring variables contributing effectively for quality of performance of learners. These variables are inside and outside the school and affect students' academic achievement. These factors may be termed as student factors, family factors, school factors and peer factors (Crosnoe, Johnson & Elder, 2004). The formal investigation about the role of these demographic factors dated to the 17th century (Mann, 1985). Generally, these factors include age, gender, geographical belongingness, ethnicity, marital status, socioeconomic status (SES), and

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parents' level of education, parental profession, language, income and religious affiliations. These are usually discussed under the umbrella of demography (Ballatine, 1993). In a broader context, demography is referred to as a way to explore the nature and effects of demographic variables in the biological and social context. Unfortunately, defining and measuring the quality of education is not a simple issue and the complexity of this process increases due to the changing values of quality attributes associated with the different stakeholders' viewpoint (Blevins, 2009; Parri, 2006).

In Ghana, the government spends 40% of its total budget on the provision of quality education for the citizens (Ghana Education Service [GES] 2015). This is perhaps the highest within the sub – Saharan region. The mission of successive governments, since colonial times, has been to pursue education to the highest level as a tool for development. Various educational reforms have been initiated to ensure regular school attendance in the country. However, parents and stakeholders continue to cry against absenteeism and the falling standards of education among students at the senior high school level. It was against this background that the Accelerated Development Plan for Education in Ghana was launched in 1951. The main objective of the plan, according to Graham (1975), was to develop a balanced system working towards universal primary education as rapidly as possible so that the pupils could graduate into high schools and finally replace the nation's ageing workforce.

The spirit of the Accelerated Development Plan (ADP) clearly portrayed the eagerness of the then government to accelerate the pace of manpower development in Ghana through the provision of education. Programmes put in place to achieve the objectives of the Accelerated Development Plan for Education included the offering of

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scholarships to citizens who have interest and aptitude to study and acquire skills in the field of medicine, law, engineering and teaching. In the northern part of the country, where school enrolment was low and economic conditions were believed to be poor, the government instituted the Northern Scholarship Scheme to promote mass participation in education to the people.

Ten years after the launch of ADP, the educational Act of 1961 was enacted. It became the first legal document of the post-independence government that set out broad outlines or principles for the education system in Ghana. It established the legal basis for compulsory education. Section 2 of the Act stated that "every child who has attained the school-going age as determined by the Minister shall attend a course of instruction in a school as laid down by educational authorities". It added that any parent who failed to comply would be fined (Mc William & Poh, 1975). The desire to train and educate the citizenry has not dwindled; successive governments of Ghana have continued to attach great importance to education. This is evidenced in the expansion of primary, junior and senior high schools. According to the National Democratic Congress Manifesto (1996), two hundred and sixty-nine (269) primary schools, three hundred and eighty-six (386) junior high schools and sixteen (16) new senior high schools were established between 1993 and 1996.

According to Bonney (2006), enrolment in basic and senior high schools increased by 16.67% in 2005 alone following the implementation of the Capitation Grant. For instance, in the 2004/2005 academic year, there were 3,698,448 school going children nationwide, and this has increased by 616,469 raising the figure to 4,314,917 in the 2005/2006 academic year. This figure was made up of 295,144 boys and 321,325

girls. The increase in pupils' enrolment in basic schools has a correspondent increase in senior high schools. The objective of the Capitation Grant was to make basic education free, compulsory and universal as enshrined in the Free Compulsory Basic Education (FCUBE) document. The government's desire to achieve free and quality education for all is in line with the Millennium Development Goal (2000 – 2015) of the United Nations which states that developing nations should achieve Universal Primary Education by 2015.

According to the Global Conference on Education (2004), held in South Africa, education should be the enabling right of all students. As a result, no school-going age child should be excluded from going to school owing to the parent's inability to pay fees. The Capitation Grant is seen as a major component of Ghana's FCUBE. The reason is; it has helped in the improvement of access, participation and retention of children in schools. The Ghana government introduced the Capitation Grant in 2005/2006 academic year to enrol all children of school-going age and retain them till the completion of junior high school, without the payment of any government-approved levies by the pupils. The aim of the Government was that poverty should not be a barrier to education for children of school-going age. This was to help increase access to quality basic education to reinforce the concept of education for all by the year 2015, irrespective of one's financial background, sex, race, religion, colour, culture among others. The goals of the government will come to nought if children are not regular in school.

The poor academic performance of pupils in the Kwadaso Municipality has been a concern for the metropolitan assembly over the past few years. The schools have shown poor performances in all public examinations and as one director puts it, 'their BECE

results have been appalling'. The schools in the municipality have been performing poorly in the national performance monitoring tests administered by the Ghana Education Service and they have also performed consistently poor in the Metro mock Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE).

Some schools in the Kwadaso Municipality have similar problems of poor performance of students in the BECE. From the analysis of the 2018 BECE results of nine public schools in the Kwadaso circuit schools had below 50% pass with one school scoring 41 per cent pass and that was Kwadaso M/A JHS.  In 2017, this Kwadaso M/A JHS scored 88.09% pass in the BECE. Then in 2019 performance fell by 20.09% with the school, scoring 68%.  Results from the previous years were also poor.

The Government of Ghana and other stakeholders in education have put in place a number of measures aimed at addressing this perceived poor performance of pupils at the basic level of education and improving the general quality of education in the country. For example, in 1996, the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (fCUBE) was introduced to ensure that children get access to basic quality education. Strategies like Quality Improvement In Primary Schools (QUIPS), Child School Community Progress in Education (Child Scope) sponsored by the United Nation International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) to improve children's reading, writing and numeracy skills were some of the measures towards quality education in Ghana (Akyeampong, 2004).

According to Mayer (2008), a teacher's influence can be unlimited and his/her ideas can affect thousands. He further states that one of the foremost problems of education deals with the recruitment and preparation of teachers. Recognizing this and the fact that pupils' performance at the basic level cannot be improved without a

conscious effort at upgrading the knowledge of teachers at this level of education, the Government of Ghana has initiated certain policies aimed at improving the quality of teachers at the basic level.

The Teacher Training Colleges have been upgraded into Diploma Awarding Institutions (Colleges of Education) and infrastructure upgraded to offer better facilities to teacher-trainees. The Universities have organized Distance Education Programmes to open their doors to as many teachers as are willing to upgrade themselves. The Teacher Education Division of the Ghana Education Service has also organized the Untrained Teachers Trainings Diploma in Basic Education (UTTDBE) programme to enrich the knowledge of pupil teachers and improve their competencies since most of them are handling pupils at basic schools. The various District/Municipal/Metropolitan Directorates of the Ghana Education Service have been organizing periodic workshops and in-service training programmes for Circuit Supervisors and other officers with the view of enhancing their capacity as officers who are directly in-charge of basic schools, to offer effective supervision in the schools to ensure the provision of quality education. There is, therefore, the need to conduct further research into the causes with the view of finding out other factors contributing to the poor performance of students in the schools and probably suggest ways of managing them.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Poor student achievement is a serious universal concern which has been eating into the fabric of educational development, yet very little effort has been taken in finding a panacea to it. Scanty data are available because not much research has been done into

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the problem. Government invests very substantially in education and has instituted the Free Compulsory and Universal Basic Education as enshrined in the FCUBE programme. This is to make education accessible to many children yet poor academic achievement of students seems to persist in some areas in Ghana. This research focuses on studies that address the relationship between at-risk students and academic achievement. The research addresses engagement in learning, resilience, teacher-student relationships, the parent or caregiver-student relationships, motivation, SES, and peer influence. Included are data on the attributes of resiliency in at-risk children.

Even though (Michael, 1998) have identified some internal and external school-related factors that have contributed to this state of affairs in certain parts of the country, the education directorate and parents in the Kwadaso municipality have expressed grave concern about the recurring failure of students in the Basic Education Certificate Examinations especially in the public schools. There is, therefore, the need to conduct an inquiry into what factors contribute to this state of affairs and to suggest ways of improving upon the situation, hence this research.

## 1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out what contributes to the poor academic performance of JHS students in public schools in the Kwadaso Municipality.

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**1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The study sought to:

1. Identify school-related causes that contribute to poor academic achievement of JHS students in schools in the Kwadaso Municipality

2. Identify outside-school causes that lead to poor academic achievement of JHS students in schools in the Kwadaso Municipality

3. ascertain mechanisms that exist in monitoring students' academic achievement in basic schools in the Kwadaso Municipality.

**1.5 Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. What school-related causes contribute to poor academic achievement of JHS students in schools in the Kwadaso Municipality?

2. What outside-school causes lead to poor academic achievement of JHS students in the Kwadaso Municipality?

3. What mechanisms exist in monitoring JHS students' academic achievement in schools in the Kwadaso Municipality?

**1.5 Significance of the Study**

The researcher believes that investigating the factors that cause poor academic achievement would be a good indicator for policymakers, stakeholders, parents, and teachers. This would help them appreciate the dangers that poor academic achievement

poses to educational institutions and students themselves and take measures to help address absenteeism in the schools.

Also, the study will suggest alternative solutions to the poor academic achievement of JHS students in schools. Finally, the research would complement the efforts of others in future research, by adding to the literature on causes of JHS students' poor academic achievement.

## 1.6 Delimitation of the Study

The study covered five Junior High Schools in the Kwadaso Municipality. Kwadaso Municipality has been divided into circuits. The study focused on schools in the Kwadaso circuit that continue to perform poorly in the Basic Education Certificate Examination.

## 1.8 Organization of the Study

This study will cover five chapters. Chapter one deals with the background to the study, the problem, research questions and purpose of the study. Also in this chapter are the significance of the study and limitation. Chapter two focuses on the review of related literature while the methodology of the study is in chapter three, which will describe the research design, the population, sampling procedures, and data-gathering instruments, pilot study, data collection procedures and methods of data analysis. Chapter four will be analysis and discussion of results. Chapter five will give the summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

# CHAPTER TWO

# REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

## 2.1    Introduction

This section looked at the related literature from books, internet, journals, articles and periodicals. It also highlighted theories that would help analyse issues that may come out of the study. This was done under the following strands:

- The concept of student academic achievement

- Student related causes of poor academic achievement

- Teacher related causes of  students' poor academic achievement

- Parents related causes of  students' poor academic achievement

- School management related causes of  students' poor academic achievement

## 2.2 The concept of student academic achievement

Educational services are often not tangible and are difficult to measure because they result in the form of transformation of knowledge, life skills and behaviour modifications of learners (Tsinidou, Gerogiannis, & Fitsilis, 2010). So there is no commonly agreed-upon definition of quality that is applied in the field of education. This confirms the assertion by Michael (1998) that the definition of quality of education varies from culture to culture. The environment and the personal characteristics of learners play an important role in their academic success. The school personnel, members of the families and communities provide help and support to students for the quality of their academic performance. This social assistance has a crucial role in the accomplishment of performance goals of students at school (Goddard, 2003). Besides the social structure,

parents' involvement in their children's education increases the rate of academic success of their children (Furstenberg & Hughes, 1995).

The relationship between gender and the academic achievement of students has been discussed for decades (Eitel, 2005). A gap between the achievement of boys and girls has been found, with girls showing better performance than boys in certain instances (Chambers & Schreiber, 2004). Gender, ethnicity, and father's occupation are significant contributors to student achievement (McCoy, 2005).

Above and beyond the other demographic factors, the effects of SES are still prevalent at the individual level (Capraro & Wiggins, 2000). The SES can be deliberated in a number of different ways; it is most often calculated by looking at parental education, occupation, income, and facilities used by individuals separately or collectively. Parental education and family SES level have positive correlations with the student's quality of achievement (Caldas & Bankston, 1997; Jeynes, 2002; Parelius & Parelius, 1987; Mitchell & Collom, 2001; Ma & Klinger, 2000). The students with a high level of SES perform better than the middle-class students and the middle-class students perform better than the students with a low level of SES (Garzon, 2006; Kahlenberg, 2006; Kirkup, 2008).

The achievement of students is negatively correlated with the low SES level of parents because it hinders the individual in gaining access to sources and resources of learning (Duke, 2000; Eamon, 2005; Lopez, 1995). Low SES level strongly affects the achievement of students, dragging them down to a lower level (Sander, 2001). This effect is most visible at the post-secondary level (Trusty, 2000). It is also observed that the economically disadvantaged parents are less able to afford the cost of education of their

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children at higher levels and consequently they do not work at their fullest potential (Rouse & Barrow, 2006). On this, Krashen (2005) concluded that students whose parents are educated score higher on standardized tests than those whose parents were not educated. Educated parents can better communicate with their children regarding the school work, activities and the information being taught at school. They can better assist their children in their work and participate at school (Fantuzzo & Tighe, 2000; Trusty, 1999).

Theory of Educational Productivity by Walberg (2000) determined three groups of nine factors based on affective, cognitive and behavioural skills for optimization of learning that affect the quality of academic performance: Aptitude (ability, development and motivation); instruction (amount and quality); environment (home, classroom, peers and television) (Roberts, 2007). The home environment also affects the academic performance of students. Educated parents can provide such an environment that suits best for the academic success of their children. The school authorities can provide guidance and counselling to parents for creating a positive home environment for improvement in students' quality of work (Roberts, 2007). The academic performance of students heavily depends on parental involvement in their academic activities to attain a higher level of quality in academic success (Barnard, 2004; Shumox & Lomax, 2001).

There is a range of factors that affect the quality of performance of students (Waters & Marzano, 2006). A series of variables are to be considered in identifying the affecting factors towards the quality of academic success. Identifying the most contributing variables in quality of academic performance is a very complex and

challenging job. The students in public schools belong to a variety of backgrounds depending upon their demography.

Another factor is motivation. A highly motivated person puts in the maximum effort in his or her job. Several factors produce motivation and job satisfaction. Young (1989) examined the job satisfaction of Californian public school teachers in the USA and found that one of the overall job predictors was the salary one earned from it. Studies by Lockheed et al. (1991) indicated that lack of motivation and professional commitment produce poor attendance and unprofessional attitudes towards students which in turn affect the performance of students academically.

The availability and use of teaching and learning materials affect the effectiveness of a teacher's lessons. According to Broom (1973), the creative use of a variety of media increases the probability that the student would learn more, retain better what they learn and improve their performance on the skills that they are expected to develop. Ausubel (1973) also stated that young children are capable of understanding abstract ideas if they are provided with sufficient materials and concrete experiences with the phenomenon that they are to understand.

Class sizes have also been identified as determinants of academic performance. Studies have indicated that schools with smaller class sizes perform better academically than schools with larger class sizes. Kraft (1994) in his study of the ideal class size and its effects on effective teaching and learning in Ghana concluded that class sizes above 40 have negative effects on students' achievement. Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) indicated that since children have differences in motivation, interests and abilities and that they also

differ in health, personal and social adjustment and creativity generally good teaching is best done in classes with smaller numbers that allow for individual attention.

Butler (1985) has also found homework to be a correlate of academic performance. He stated that homework bore a positive relationship with learning outcomes when it is relevant to learning objectives, assigned regularly in reasonable amounts, well explained, motivational and collected and reviewed during class time and used as an occasion for feedback to students. Butler (1985) found a positive relationship between the location of a school and the student and teacher performance. This phenomenon has crucial implications for my study, as student achievement is assessed, with a specific focus on determining factors that foster the development of success.

### 2.2.1 Theoretical Framework

Over the past four decades, researchers have identified a large number of variables that predict increases in student achievement (e. g., Carroll, 1963; Rosenshine & Stevens, 1986; Squires, Huitt, & Segars, 1982; Walberg, 2000). Unfortunately, despite this extensive knowledge base about what works, there is still a great debate about how to improve schooling (Carpenter, 2000). One reason is that educational leaders seem to resist utilizing this research (Carnine, 2000; Covaleskie, 1994), although pressure from parents, legislatures, and business have given educators an increased incentive for doing so (Hess & Petrilli, 2006).

A large number of variables related to school learning is an important issue that must be considered when attempting to utilize research for schooling reform. For

example, in a review of 800 meta-analyses, Hattie (2009) identified 138 variables significantly related to school achievement. This study followed earlier reviews of some 134 meta-analyses (Hattie, 1987; 1992) and summarized results from literally thousands of studies on many hundreds of variables.

A second important consideration is to understand classrooms, schools, families, and communities as systems (Green, 2000; Snyder, Acker-Hocevar, & Snyder, 2000). Attention must be paid to both developing well-functioning teams within schools (i. e., transformational leadership; Chin, 2007) while simultaneously addressing issues of improving the quality of teaching (i. e., instructional leadership; Teddlie & Springfield, 1993). Efforts at school reform that do not consider schools and classrooms as systems may find that the system merely adapts to the intrusion by outside forces in order to preserve the integrity of the teachers, classrooms, or schools that are the focus of change (Gustello & Liebovitch, 2009).
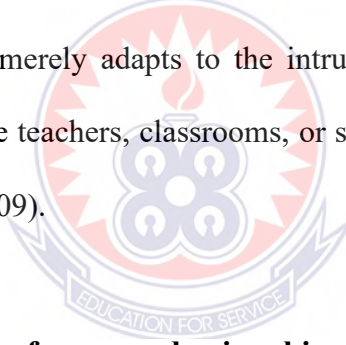
## 2.3 Student related causes of poor academic achievement

Some children develop the ability to survive despite many adverse situations in their lives. Many not only survive but also thrive academically and socially (Condly, 2006). Not only do children survive personal adversity, but they must also endure the challenges of an ever-changing and increasingly toxic society. Today's youth function in a world where children face increased poverty, exposure to and increased drug use, a demise in social behaviour for youths, lack of discipline among the youth, and increased violence and abuse. Nevertheless, many students manage to survive in adverse environments, and some actually excel (Condly). The ability to survive difficult

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situations defines the notion of resilience. The theory of resilience attempts to explain why some students academically achieve even though they encounter many negative environmental or psychological situations (Reis, Colbert, & Thomas, 2005). There seems to be no single definition for resilience; however, it is often described as the access to protective mechanisms that alter an individual's responses to situations that encompass risk (Reis et al., 2005). Rutter (1987) described resilience as the ability to adjust one's circumstances while facing negative life events and to exhibit a positive role in stress and adversity.

Much research in recent years has focused on identifying the key factors that promote academic success among learners. One of such factors is engagement and learning. Student engagement, according to Akey (2006), can be defined as the level of participation and intrinsic interest that a student shows in school. The author further posits that engagement in schoolwork involves both behaviours such as persistence, effort, attention and attitudes such as motivation, positive learning values, enthusiasm, interest, and pride in success. Thus, engaged students seek out activities, inside and outside the classroom, that lead to the success of learning. They also display curiosity, a desire to know more and positive emotional responses to learning.

According to the National Research Council (2000) as cited in Akey (2006), students' beliefs about their competence and their expectations for success in school have been directly linked to their levels of engagement, as well as to emotional states that promote or interfere with their ability to be academically successful. Akey (2006) is of the view that students who believe that they are academically incompetent tend to be more anxious in the classroom and more fearful of revealing their ignorance. They fear

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that educational interactions would result in embarrassment and humiliation, and this, in turn, inhibits them from behaving in ways that might help them, such as asking questions when they are confused or engaging in trial-and-error problem-solving. In addition, such students are more likely to avoid putting much effort into a task so that they can offer a plausible alternative to low ability or lack of knowledge as an explanation for the failure.

Further evidence from an exploratory analysis on School Context, Student Attitudes and Behaviour and Academic Achievement (Akey, 2006), also suggests that when classroom instruction draws on students' pre-existing knowledge, culture, and real-world experiences, it becomes more meaningful. Students enjoy learning more and learn better when what they are studying is of personal interest and relates to their lives. The earlier schools and teachers began to build students' confidence in their ability to do well, the better off students performed.  Students' perceptions of their capacity for success are key to their engagement in school and learning. Schools should be designed to enhance students' feelings of accomplishment (Akey, 2006).

Additionally, I analyzed factors that contribute to the academic demise of students in the division. The results rendered powerful data to assist educators with plans to intervene on behalf of the poor academic performance of students.

### 2.3.1 Motivation

Infants are born with the innate desire to explore and act on curiosity (Lumsden, 1994); babies and young children have the need to explore and understand their environment. Unfortunately, as children grow, they adapt to the influences and beliefs of their surrounding environments at home, school and in society. These environments

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shape students' beliefs about their ability to learn (Lumsden, 2005) and added that most often students lose their passion and drive for learning. The term, student motivation, refers to a desire to engage in the learning process. Students are motivated in two ways: extrinsically and intrinsically. Intrinsic motivation comes from the desire to learn within each individual. This motivation may be due to the pure enjoyment of the process or the desire for learning and a sense of accomplishment. External motivation comes from rewards or the desire to avoid a negative consequence (Lumsden, 1994).

Initial attitudes toward learning are instilled in children in their home environment. Parents who nurture their children's curiosity about the world, welcome the many questions, and encourage exploration to give their children the message that learning is a significant and important process: "When children are raised in a home that nurtures a sense of self-worth, competence, autonomy, and self-efficacy, they will be more apt to accept the risks inherent in learning" (Lumsden, 1994, p. 1). Children who do not view themselves as confident are less likely to feel free to take chances and engage in academic challenges for the fear of failure (Lumsden, 1994). As children start school they begin to develop their own belief systems about success and failure. Teachers also have a powerful influence on the success of students through the expectations they set for student success. Each student comes to the classroom with his or her own motivational histories; however, teachers have the ability to foster a warm classroom culture that encourages students to take risks in a safe and rewarding environment (Lumsden, 1994).

Struggling learners tend to become unmotivated in school. These students often resist academics because of a developed belief system that they do not have the ability to succeed even if they put forth much effort. These students have low feelings of self-

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efficacy or belief in self (Margolis & McCabe, 2004). Self-efficacy influences motivation. Enthusiastic teachers create classes that promote an emotionally safe and secure environment, which, in turn, promotes self-efficacy. This type of environment includes an emphasis on motivational principles that encourage learning and achievement (Margolis & McCabe, 2004).

### 2.3.2 Peer Influence

Making decisions is difficult for children and teenagers to accomplish alone. The task becomes more difficult when other people, specifically peers, try to get involved in other's choices Peer pressure is the one commonality all teens face, no matter how popular they are in school (Took, 2004). Peer pressure comes in many forms, including pressures to engage in sex or drugs, conform to a group or gang, dress a certain way, or alienate a certain individual in school. Certain personality traits place students at a higher risk for surrendering to peer pressure: low self-esteem, lack of confidence, a tendency toward eating disorders, feelings of isolation, depression, forging bonds with bullies, poor academic performance or ability, and lack of close friendships (Took, 2004).

Teens also feel pressure to perform well academically; this type of "elitist" peer pressure forms within groups of academically accelerated students. The students feel pressure from parents, teachers, and peers to always perform with academic excellence (Taylor, Pogrebin, & Dodge, 2002). Taylor, Pogrebin, and Dodge (2002) found in their study of advanced-placement students that the stress compelled them to engage in deceitful behaviours, such as cheating, to remain competitive in scholastic programs.

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The pressure to drop out of school is also prevalent among high school students. Success in school is ultimately the best option, as it provides for greater career choice and higher earning potential following high school (Ellenbogen & Chamberland, 1997). One study addressing peer relations among dropouts surveyed 191 at-risk and non-at-risk students from a middle-class area at the beginning and the end of the school year. Results indicated that at-risk students associate more often with dropout friends and friends that work full time. At-risk students also tended to have fewer school friends and fewer same-sex friendships (Ellenbogen & Chamberland, 1997). Students naturally want to be liked and to fit in with classmates. This desire represents a burden that often inhibits success in school. Pressure can come in positive as well as negative ways (Took, 2004). Students often admire friends who help them with academics or give good advice on the athletic field. This phenomenon has crucial implications for my study, as student poor academic achievement is assessed, with a specific focus on determining factors that foster the development of success.

### 2.3.3 Student-Teacher Relations

The relationship between student and teacher has a powerful influence on the academic outcomes of a student. Plato contended that educational quality is a predictor of future experiences for students (as cited in Parsley & Corcoran, 2003). The foundations for school failure or school success often stem from experiences at the beginning of elementary school (Parsley & Corcoran, 2003). Primary school teachers exert a tremendous influence on the academic achievement of their students throughout their

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experiences in kindergarten through the twelfth grade. Primary teachers significantly impact school adjustment (Parsley & Corcoran, 2003).

There is no single factor that dooms a child's educational experience, nor is there one solution for the problem of academic failure (Parsley & Corcoran, 2003).

Nevertheless, focus on the classroom teacher is one viable solution for promoting academic success with at-risk students. The development of a positive relationship that includes respect, courtesy, and shared responsibility is essential in convincing students that everyone is important in the classroom (Parsley & Corcoran, 2003).

Four actions contribute to a positive student-teacher relationship. First, trust must be established between the teacher and the student. Second, students must know that teachers care and are concerned about each student as an individual. Third, teachers must create a learning environment where students feel comfortable taking risks. Finally, teachers need to create a classroom environment that supports and enables each student to feel that he or she belongs in the classroom (Parsley & Corcoran, 2003). One effective way of creating a supportive environment is through the daily use of positive reinforcement. When positive relationships are developed and maintained in the classroom, at-risk students find the support they need to sustain and improve achievement (Parsley & Corcoran, 2003).

One study addressed the student-teacher relationship by assessing student perceptions of teacher effectiveness. From a pool of participants in an earlier study of early childhood education, 47 African American adults were invited to take part in this study. The participants ranged from high school dropouts to college graduates. Each participant provided his or her life story in a narrative form, with specific information

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regarding perceptions of teacher effectiveness; data, including interview responses, were analyzed as a part of this study (Peart & Campbell, 1999).

Results have indicated several common traits among teachers considered to be effective. With the establishment of a caring student-teacher relationship, teachers with good interpersonal skills affect the academic success of students. A positive relationship enhances the learning experience as well as the climate of the classroom. Good student-teacher relations have a positive and significant influence on achievement and classroom preparation (Peart & Campbell, 1999; Sanders & Jordan, 2000). Effective teachers must address students' feelings, values, and attitudes as well as their cognitive ability.

Students indicated that their perceptions of teachers typically were influenced by the teachers' ability to foster positive relationships with students, including concern for the academic and emotional well - being of each individual (Peart & Campbell). Peart and Campbell wrote, "Some students identified such a teacher as the most important person in their lives" (p. 274).

Additionally, a teacher's ability to motivate students proved to be effective in developing positive student perceptions. Students looked to teachers to set an example by demonstrating the characteristics of a motivational leader (Peart & Campbell, 1999).

Racial impartiality was another pertinent characteristic of teachers' playing a positive role in the life of at-risk students. Many participants in this study indicated that racism on the part of a teacher inhibits students from academic growth (Peart & Campbell, 1999).

Analysis of data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 also addressed student-teacher relations. This study disclosed a wealth of information with regard to school behaviours, attitudes, and achievement of students (Sanders & Jordan, 2000). Sanders and Jordan explored the extent to which student-teacher relations affected student behaviours, specifically focusing on the students' "educational investments and academic achievement" (p. 65). For the purpose of Sanders and Jordan's study, educational investments referred to the students' positive contributions to school conduct and classroom preparation. Educational investments also referred to the students' "avoidance of maladaptive behaviours" (p. 65). Regression analysis was used to assess the student-teacher relationship as a predictor of investment behaviours and to assess the impact of student investments and teacher relations on academic achievement.

The results revealed that the student-teacher relationship does have a significant positive influence on the student's ability to make wise educational investments. This ability directly impacts the academic success of students, including augmented performance on standardized tests (Sanders & Jordan, 2000).

Muller (2001) also examined data from the National Longitudinal Study of 1988, with specific attention to the function of caring for at-risk students in student-teacher relationship. Understanding the impact of the relationship between teacher and student is critical for the purposes of this study. It was assumed that the investigation of the factors facilitating success for at-risk students would likely expose the influential role of the teacher on student success. Teacher influence and power with regard to student achievement are critical to the success of at-risk students. As I conducted my study, data

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on student-teacher relations provided significant information with regard to factors that promote academic excellence in students.

## 2.4 Teacher related causes of students poor academic achievement

Academic performance of students at the basic level of education has been of great concern to most citizens in the country. Deposit that, performance at the basic level has not been encouraging. Several factors have generally been identified as causes of poor academic performance at the school level of education in Ghana. One cause that is relevant to consider is teacher attitude and behaviour towards teaching and learning in the school.

### 2.4.1 Teacher Commitment to Teaching and Work Habit

According to Etsey (2005), teachers should be made to realize that they are the bedrock of any educational system and should, therefore, show more responsibility and commitment to their work. Many teachers lack the commitment to their work. A good number of them are highly deficient in their subject areas and thus fail to teach what they are supposed to teach. The completion of the syllabuses for each subject in each class provides the foundation for the next class to be built upon. When the syllabus is not completed, content that should be taught in the next class which is based on the previous class could not be taught. According to Etsey (2005), as this continued, there would be a backlog of content not taught and this would affect the performance of the students. Since the subject matter syllabuses tend to be spiral, the non-completion of a syllabus tends to have a negative cumulative effect on the students such that as they move from grade to grade, they encounter materials they do not have the foundation to study. In the final analysis, this results in poor performance in the BECE results.

A teacher's influence can be unlimited and his/her ideas can affect thousands (Mayer, 2008). In view of this, a research conducted by Etsey (2005), on the causes of low academic performance of primary school pupils in the Shama- Ahanta East Metropolitan area in Ghana highlighted poor teacher habit and commitment as some of the main causes of poor academic performance of students. Teacher commitment and work habits were low. The teachers lacked enthusiasm and were unable to teach effectively. According to the researcher, this attitude made the pupils not to be able to learn well and acquire much classroom content and knowledge resulting in the poor performance in the BECE. This supports Etsey (2005)'s assertion that lack of motivation and professional commitment produce poor attendance and unprofessional attitudes towards students which in turn affect their performance academically.

A well-committed teacher may consider the assigning of homework to students to augment their efforts at completing the content for a particular year. Etsey (2005), citing Butler (1985), found homework to be a correlate of academic performance. He stated that homework bore a positive relationship with learning outcomes when it is relevant to learning objectives, assigned regularly in reasonable amounts, well explained, motivational and collected and reviewed during class time and used as an occasion for feedback to students.

The teacher who may be seen as the pivot of the transmission of knowledge can be effective if he/she learns and applies all of the teaching principles and methods that make a teacher as professional and competent enough to impart knowledge in any given field of discipline. Teachers who are seen by students as supportive and who set clear expectations about behaviour help create an atmosphere in which students feel in control

and confident about their ability to succeed in future educational endeavours (Akey, 2006). It is well for the professional teacher to remember this in relation to the use of teaching aids and methods (Farrant, 1968). Das (1985) agreed that there are several methods of teaching but a teacher's choice of a method depends on a variety of factors: the teacher's experiences, interests and availability of textbooks and extra- reading materials, class size, and students' learning preferences ( Etsey, 2005).

### 2.4.2    Teacher Qualification and Teaching Environment

Professional qualifications are important in education. The professional skill of the teacher 'establishes a productive classroom atmosphere from the start by means of good organization and carefully planned teaching structures' (Farrant, 1968). Professional competence, according to this author, often transforms into high quality of teaching with the expectation that this would influence the learning of students. Teacher professionalism should be exhibited in skills like giving prompt feedback, questioning, dealing with students' problems effectively and creating specific kinds of climate settings for different lessons, making sure that pupils understood and coped with the amount of knowledge given to them.

Agyemang (1993) reported that a teacher who does not have both academic and professional teaching qualification would undoubtedly have a negative influence on the teaching and learning of his/her subjects. He further stated that a teacher who is academically and professionally qualified but works under unfavourable working environment would be less dedicated to his work and thus be less productive than a teacher who is unqualified but works under favourable environment.

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### 2.4.3   Motivation and Job Satisfaction

Another factor is motivation. A highly motivated person puts in the maximum effort in his or her job. According to Farrant (1968), the relationship between teachers and pupils is often up-side-down; Pupils come because they must and teachers teach because they are paid to. Teachers mourn that their profession is not respected and complain that they are inadequately paid for the duties they are required to do. They look over their shoulders at other professions and conditions of service and sigh for a better life. (pg. 125)

This assertion by Farrant (1968) exhibited a lack of motivation both on the part of teachers and students and thus would have wished otherwise. More so, it may contribute to ineffectiveness and inefficiency in academic work and its effects – poor performance. Several other identified factors can be considered to produce motivation and job satisfaction for teachers to put up their best to improve academic performance in schools.

In the educational system, the academic performance of students may be dependent to a large extent on the quality of the teacher, his teaching methods, the facilities available and class size. These, in turn, depend on both the educational system and how the teacher is motivated by Kraft (1994). A teacher whose needs are not met may be psychologically unstable and consequently not productive (Asamoah, 2009). On the other hand, a satisfied teacher is stable and thus, efficient and effective.  In line with this, Cook (1980) observed that the key to improving performance is motivation and for this reason, employers need to understand what motivates their employees. Young (1989) examined the job satisfaction of Californian public school teachers in the USA and found that one of the overall job predictors was the salary one earned from it. Maslow (1968)

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observed that gratification of one's needs is essential for one's psychological health, which is related to one's performance on the job. When one's needs are gratified, psychological health is enhanced. During the colonial days, some Gold Coast teachers resigned in teaching to make cocoa farms because they were not satisfied with their salaries (Mac William & KwamenaPoh, 1975). Etsey (2005) revealed that lack of motivation and professional commitment produce poor attendance and unprofessional attitudes towards students which in turn affect the performance of students academically.

### 2.4.4 Class Sizes as a Motivating Factor and Determinant of Academic Performance

Class sizes have also been identified as another determinant and a motivating factor for better academic performance. A teacher, whether professional or not, who has to work with too large a class size would undoubtedly have his performance hindered and this will have a negative spillover effect on students. Too large class sizes might be one of the unfavourable conditions that might affect the performance of teachers in most Ghanaian schools. With the inception of the Ghana School Feeding Programme Kraft (1994), school enrolment has increased tremendously. In some cases, there are over 90 pupils per class handled by one teacher. This increase in class size brings in its trail problems of ineffective class management, poor supervision of assignment and ineffective teaching and personal pupil-teacher contacts.

Studies have indicated that schools with smaller class sizes perform better academically than schools with larger class sizes. Kraft (1994) in his study of the ideal class size and its effects on effective teaching and learning in Ghana concluded that class

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sizes above 40 have negative effects on students' achievement. Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) indicated that since children and teachers have differences in motivation, interests and abilities and also differ in health, personal and social adjustment and creativity, good teaching is generally best done in classes with smaller numbers that allow for individual attention.

### 2.4.5 Availability and Use of Teaching and Learning Materials

The availability and use of teaching and learning materials affect teachers' motivation and the effectiveness of their lessons as well (Etsey, 2005). Furthermore, the effectiveness of a teachers' lesson may be a determiner of improved academic performance. The use of appropriate teaching and learning materials in a teacher's lesson makes the lessons more practical and well connected to the students' environment. According to studies conducted by Etsey (2005) on causes of low academic performance of students in some schools in Ghana, one of the causes identified was the inadequacy of T/LMS in the schools. The author concluded that the situation made it difficult for the students to understand the lessons and this led to low performance.

Etsey (2005) further posits that T/LMs stimulate ideas, demand an active response from the learners and provide enjoyment of lessons. Again, Lessons become more alive and understanding and grasping of the major concepts become easier. Broom (1973) pointed out that, the creative use of a variety of media for learning increases the probability that students would learn more, retain better what they learn and improve their performance on the skills that they are expected to develop. Ausubel (1973) also stated that young children are capable of understanding abstract ideas better if they are

provided with sufficient materials and concrete experiences with the phenomenon that they are to understand

Etsey (2005), looking at employers in terms of the motivation of employees, was of the view that, when employers are unable to provide employees with all the requisite or very unreliable materials for the completion of a job, it may lead to frustration and the spillover effect may be inefficient and ineffective performance. This normally happens when especially the employer expects the employee to complete the job on schedule and with perfection, in spite of the unavailability of some materials. Therefore, the availability and use of teaching and learning materials motivate and affects the effectiveness of teacher's lessons as well as enhance the retentive memory of students hence improving academic performance.

### 2.4.6 Lateness and Absenteeism

Lateness and absenteeism reduce the amount of instructional time and these results in the syllabi not being completed (Etsey, 2005). According to this author, the completion of the syllabus for each subject in each class provides the foundation for the next class to be built upon. When the syllabus is not completed, content that should be taught in the next class which is based on the previous class could not be taught. As these continue, there would be a backlog of content not taught and this would affect the performance of the students. Moreover, since the subject matter syllabuses tend to be spiral, the non-completion of a syllabus tends to have a cumulative effect on the pupils such that as they move from grade to grade, they encounter materials they do not have the foundation to study. In the final analysis, poor performance is the result. The Middle

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School Programme (2004) of West Orange Public School, America cited in Paaku (2008) noted the importance of the presence of a student in class wrote that it is the student's responsibility to make up work missed as a result of being absent. It also added that the student must speak to each teacher upon return from an absence of any duration to arrange to make up work missed. According to Paaku (2008), the programme continued to state that if a student were absent for two days and beyond, double those days should be provided to make up work missed. This indicates the need and importance of students' regularity as a way of commitment to effective academic work before the student can succeed.

## 2.5 Parent related causes of students poor academic achievement

Parent involvement in education traditionally is manifested through attendance at Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, as well as participation in conferences with counsellors, administrators, and teachers. Recent federal initiatives, such as Goals 2000 and NCLB, call for more parental involvement in support of attempts to ensure success for all students during the implementation of accelerated academic standards (Skiba & Strassell, 1999.). Increased parent participation enriches the school experience while enabling students to meet academic standards. Parent involvement also fosters increased satisfaction on the part of the educator and the parent, while facilitating the development of a positive school climate (Skiba & Strassell, 1999 ).

Research has indicated that parental involvement supports growth in student achievement (LaBahn, 1995). Unfortunately, the level of parental involvement tends to decrease as students enter secondary school. Often times, this lessened involvement is

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due to an increase in non-traditional family situations, in which one parent is working to provide support for the children. In such instances, resources and time are limited; often there are financial restraints, as well (LaBahn, 1995). These factors contribute to the obstacles facing the academic achievement of students.

There are contradictions in the research regarding parental involvement. Some investigators have concluded there are some positive effects of parental involvement, whereas others have surmised a negative association or a neutral role (McNeal, 2001). McNeal took a theoretical approach to parental involvement, suggesting that the effects vary across cognitive and behavioural domains. This theory is based upon the concepts of social and cultural capital as defined by Coleman and Lareau (McNeal). Cultural capital with regard to the educational process refers to the ability of a parent to network, understand school terminology and jargon, and feel comfortable communicating with school employees (Lareau, 1989; McNeal, 2001). Lareau (1989) contended that cultural capital enhances school performance and is a predictor of student success.

On the other hand, social capital refers to the involvement of a parent in the school process, including parent-student discussions about school, involvement in school activities, and forming relationships with other parents (McNeal, 2001). This avenue of involvement provides opportunities for the parent to exert a direct influence on student behaviours, which in turn affect academic behaviours (McNeal). McNeal (2001) proposed that the controversy regarding parental involvement stems from one of the following: (a) the use of teacher perceptions versus actual factual reports from parents or students; (b) failure to examine the total makeup of parental involvement, including parent-child, parent-parent, and parent-school relations; (c) the lack of a full assessment

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of the varied effects of parent involvement on achievement by social class; and (d) parental involvement as an activity that affects only behavioural outcomes rather than the cognitive domain of achievement (McNeal). Several dimensions of parental involvement include parent-child discussion (cultural and social capital), parental involvement in school organizations such as the PTA (social capital), parental monitoring of student behaviour (social), and direct involvement in the educational process (cultural) (McNeal).

McNeal (2001) utilized data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 to examine parental involvement. Students included in that study were enrolled in public school and took achievement tests to provide baseline data. Parent data were also available. The researcher used two samples to address behavioural outcomes and the dropout rate. Results indicated that parent-student discussion does positively affect student achievement and reduce problem behaviour in students; however, for the most part, parent involvement provides the greatest influence on behaviour rather than cognitive outcomes. This finding provides support for the beliefs of social capital theorists, but not as much for the ideas of cultural capital theorists (McNeal).

Parent enabling is another factor influencing the progress of students in a school; however, enabling impedes the development of a sense of responsibility for one's own actions. Therefore, children do not learn to be accountable for their own behaviours (Lynch, Hurford, & Cole, 2002). Enablers tend to overprotect their children and shield them from difficult situations. They also tend to intervene before children have the opportunity to make mistakes and, thereby, learn from the experience. One critical concern for school students in this regard is that, most often, the child has not learned

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there are consequences for inappropriate actions. Additionally, students with enabling parents do not learn independence and self-control (Lynch et al.).

One study utilized surveys with two experiments to assess enabling behaviours in parents as well as the differences between 9th-grade, at-risk students and honours students and their parents. The Lynch Enabling Survey for Parents (LESP) is a 40-item questionnaire assessing the enabling behaviours of parents. In the first experiment, in which 416 parents completed the LESP, factor analysis was used to study the four factors in the behaviour of parents: direct enabling, indirect no enabling, direct no enabling, and indirect enabling (Lynch, Hurford, & Cole, 2002). The second experiment utilized the LESP and the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale. Also, according to Worley (2007), the role of parental involvement is another vital element affecting the development of success for students in at-risk situations. As I sought answers regarding the factors that influence the success of at-risk students, parental involvement was an essential ingredient in the evaluation process.

So far it has been established that the performance of students could be positively or negatively related to student's behaviour, teacher performance and available teaching materials, as well as how schools are managed. The success or failure of students could, therefore, be said to be dependent on these factors.

## CHAPTER THREE

## METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter dealt with the methods and techniques used in gathering data for the study. It discussed the research design, the population sample and sampling technique, instrumentation, data collection procedure, methods of data analysis and problems encountered during data collection.

### 3.2 Research Design

The study was a descriptive survey. A descriptive survey seeks to find answers to questions through assessing opinions or attitudes of individuals towards events or procedures (Cohen & Manon, 1995). The descriptive survey has been found appropriate to determine whether there is a relationship between students' poor academic achievement and such variables as students related causes, parents related causes, school related causes, teacher related causes and school management related causes.

The cross sectional survey method for the descriptive survey was chosen so that the samples would form a representation of absentees in the Kwadaso Circuit of educational directorate. The cross sectional survey enabled data on opinions and attitudes of samples to be representative of the target population (Cohen & Manon, 1995). In this method, the perception and opinion of the target population were summarized in frequencies and percentages towards reaching decision and recommendation.

### 3.3    Population

According to Kusi (2012), population is the large group to which the researcher wants to generalize the sample.  Gravetter and Forzano (2006) further explained population as the large group of interest to the researcher. Although the entire population usually does not participate in a research study, the results from the study are generalized to the entire population. The target population of the study consisted of all teachers and head teachers in the Kwadaso circuit, comprising of 9 head teachers and 136 teachers in the 9 public junior high schools in the Kwadaso circuit of the Kwadaso Municipal Education Directorte.

### 3.4    Sample and Sampling Procedure

Borg and Gall (2007) defined sampling as a technique used for selecting a given number of subjects from a target population as a representative of the population in research. In order to obtain an appropriate sample size for the study, an updated list of all the public Junior High Schools was obtained from the Kwadaso Municipal Directorate of Education.

Purposive sampling was therefore used to select all the 145 respondents, comprising 9 headteachers and 136 teachers in the 9 junior high schools of the Kwadaso Circuit. All the headteachers and teachers were selected due to the fact that they are more involved in the teaching and learning processes in the school. Amin (2005) posited that purposive sampling is appropriate in situations where respondents are targeted due to their position, expertise, situation, and so on.

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**Table 3.1 Sample of teachers and headteachers**

| Name of School | Teacher Population | Headteachers |
|---|---|---|
| Prempeh JHS 'A' | 17 | 1 |
| Prempeh JHS 'B' | 17 | 1 |
| Prempeh JHS 'C' | 14 | 1 |
| Forces Services JHS | 16 | 1 |
| 2 Brigade JHS | 16 | 1 |
| 4BN JHS | 14 | 1 |
| Kwadaso M/A JHS | 15 | 1 |
| Nyankyereniase Methodist JHS | 13 | 1 |
| Apatrapa R/C JHS | 14 | 1 |
| Total | 136 | 9 |

## 3.5    Instrumentation

The structured questionnaire was used for data collection. A set of questionnaires were designed for all the stakeholders who contribute to the poor academic performance of students. It was made up 33 items for 136 teachers and 9 heads.

Both questionnaires were divided into two parts. The first part was made up of demographic data about the respondents and the second on the general information about absenteeism such as peer groups, community and home factors which influenced students' poor academic performance. Items in the questionnaires' were framed in close ended fashion. It was a 5-point Likert scale (1= Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 =

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Uncertain, 4= Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree) in which higher score indicate more perceived positive responses.

## 3.6 Validity and reliability

The instrument was pilot-tested on ten teachers and four headteachers in the selected schools. This was to establish the reliability of the research instrument. Reliability is the ability of an instrument to consistently measure what it is supposed to measure (Alhassan, 2000). The result yielded a coefficient of 0.84. The result became feasible after the researcher had given the instrument to colleagues in the English and Social Studies departments of the University of Education, Winneba, to ascertain the face and content validities of the items.

Alhassan (2000) defines validity as the degree to which a test actually measures what it claims to measure. Face validity is the ability of each test items to establish a logical link with an objective (Kumar, 1999). Content validity is the extent to which statements or questions represent the issue they are supposed to measure (Kumar, 1999).

## 3.7    Data Collection Procedure

With a letter of introduction form the Head of Department of Educational Leadership, the researcher asked for permission and solicited the support and co-operation of the headmasters and teachers of the selected schools. The questionnaires were distributed to the teachers and identified absentees and they were briefed on what was expected of them in responding to the questions. The completed questionnaire was collected in the same day on each occasion.

## 3.8    Data Analysis Procedure

Responses obtained from the teachers were collected and collated. Frequency counts and percentages were used for analyzing the frequency data obtained on opinions expressed through responses to questionnaire by respondents. According to Pagano (1990), frequency counts and percentages are also employed by the researcher in analyzing frequency data. The Chi-square and regression were used in answering the research questions. The Chi-square is appropriate for analyzing frequency data involving two variables for relationship (Pagano, 1990).

# CHAPTER FOUR

# FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

## 4.1 Introduction

The chapter consisted of the findings and discussions of the data that were gathered through the administration of questionnaire, based on the research questions and 100% response rate.

## 4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study sought to distribute respondents by their demographic characteristics to determine the qualification of selected respondents to respond to the questionnaire and also to determine if demographics had any influence on the findings of the study.
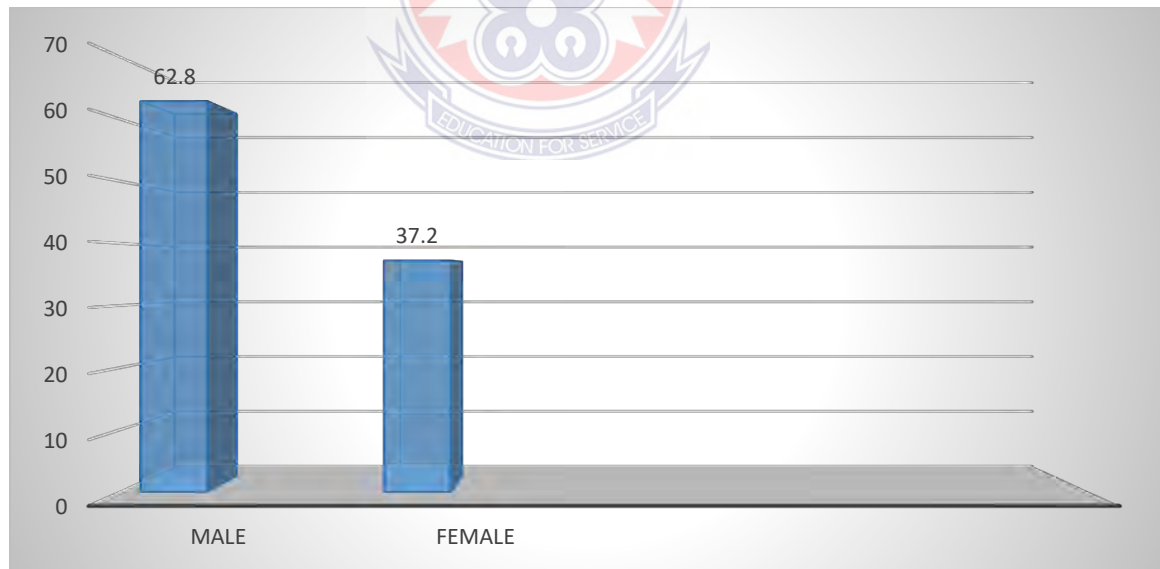


**Figure 4.1: Distributions of Respondents by gender**

Source: Field Survey, June, 2020

Figure 4.1 shows the gender distribution of respondents in this study. The data reveals that out of a sample size of hundred and forty-five (145) respondents, the study showed that males formed close to two thirds (62.8%) whilst females were a little over one third (37.2%) of the sample size. This instrument was necessary in finding out which gender was predominant among teachers and JHS students of Kwadaso Circuit. This finding is an indication of the masculinity of the caliber of work of the Kwadaso Circuit of Educational Directorate.
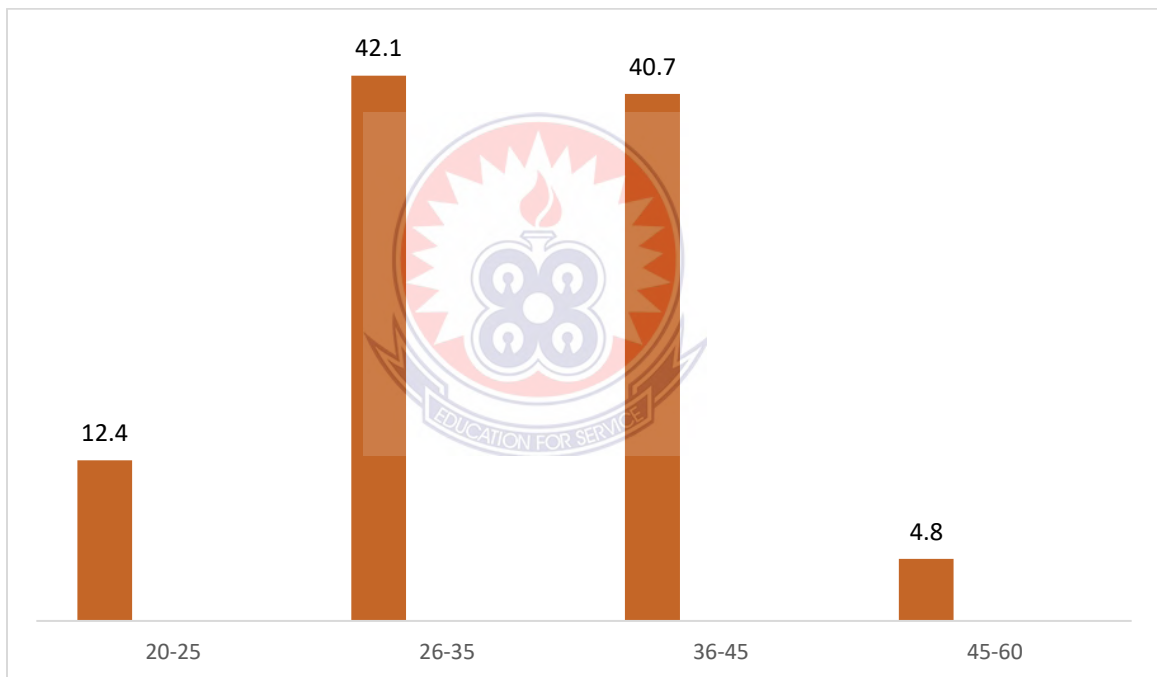


**Figure 4.2: Distributions of Respondents by age**

Source: Field Survey, June, 2020

Figure 4.2 indicates the age distribution of the study respondents. This study shows that majority, representing 42.1% of the sample were aged 26 to 35 years, 40.7% were between 36 to 45 years, 12.4% aged between 20 to 25 years, and the remaining 4.8

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% were 45 to 60 years. This analysis was necessary to determine the demographic characteristics of the study population.
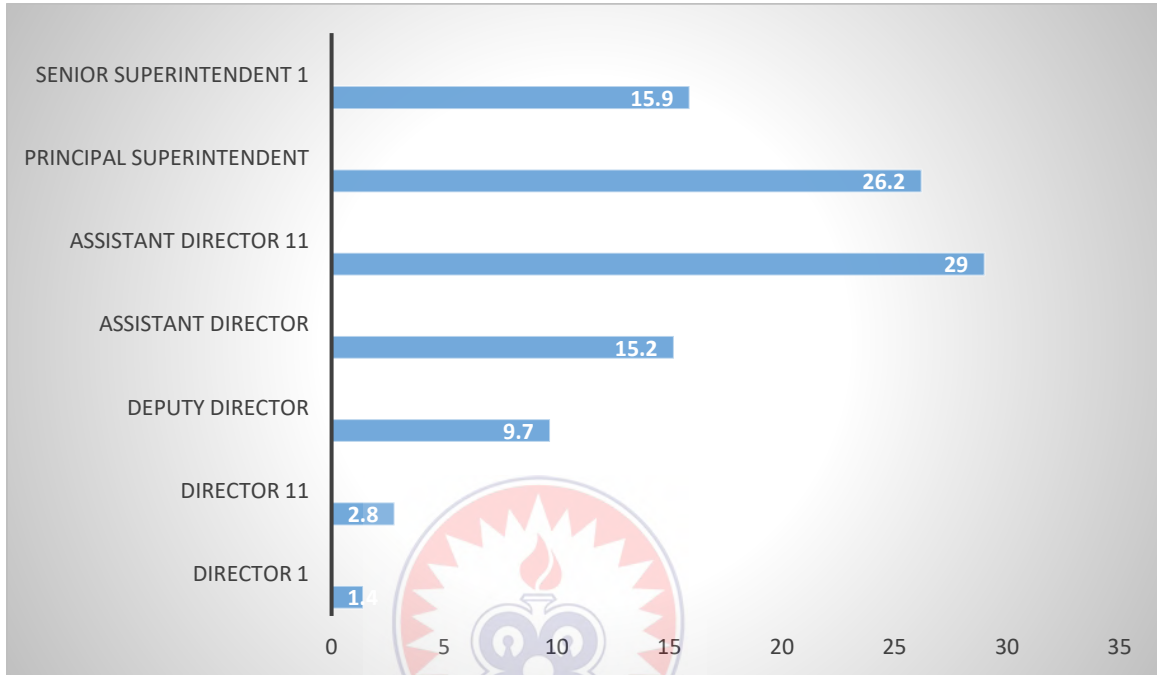


**Figure 4.3: Distributions of Respondents by rank**

Source: Field Survey, June, 2020

Figure 4.3 indicates the professional rank of respondents. The study shows that most employees (29%) were Assistant Director II, 26.2 % were principal superintendent, 15.9% were Senior superintendent I, 15.2 % were Assistant Director I, 9.7% Deputy Director II, 2.8% were Director II and the remaining 1.4% were Director I. The finding shows that, all the respondents have passed through the education ranks.

**Figure 4.4: Distributions of Respondents by your Professional status**

Source: Field Survey, June, 2020

Figure 4.4 indicates the distributions of Respondents by their Professional status. The study revealed that, the majority of the teachers at the Kwadaso Circuit, representing 70% were professionals and the remaining 30% were non-professional. The finding from the research can attest that majority of teachers in the municipal are professional.

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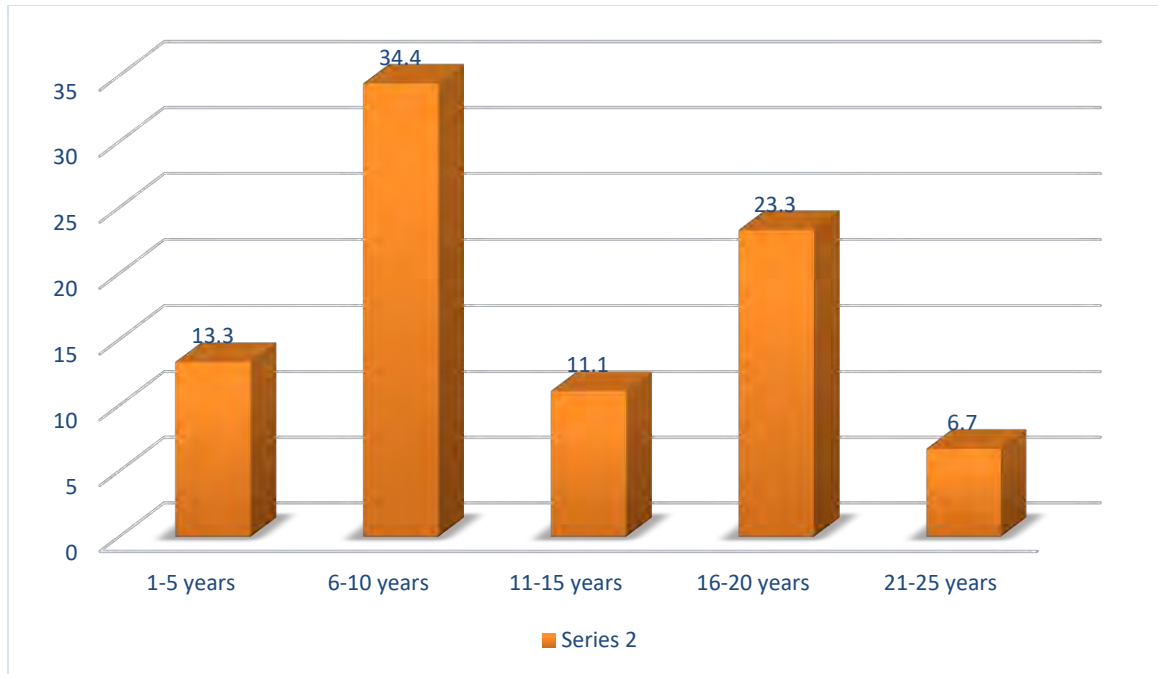
**Figure 4.5: Distributions of Respondents by teaching experience**

Source: Field Survey, June, 2020

To show the study credibility of respondents, especially education respondents needed to have a certain level of experience in the job to qualify to give authentic and reliable responses to the questionnaire instruments. Figure 4.5 shows respondents' years of experience. The study showed that 34.4% of teachers surveyed had been in the education service between 6-10 years, 23.3% between 16-20 years and 13.3% for periods between 1-5 years. However, 11.1% of respondents had been with education service for a period between 11 - 15 years. The remaining 6.7% had been with Education Service between 21-25 years. These respondents, nonetheless, showed great understanding of the research topic concerning what contributes to poor academic achievement of students.
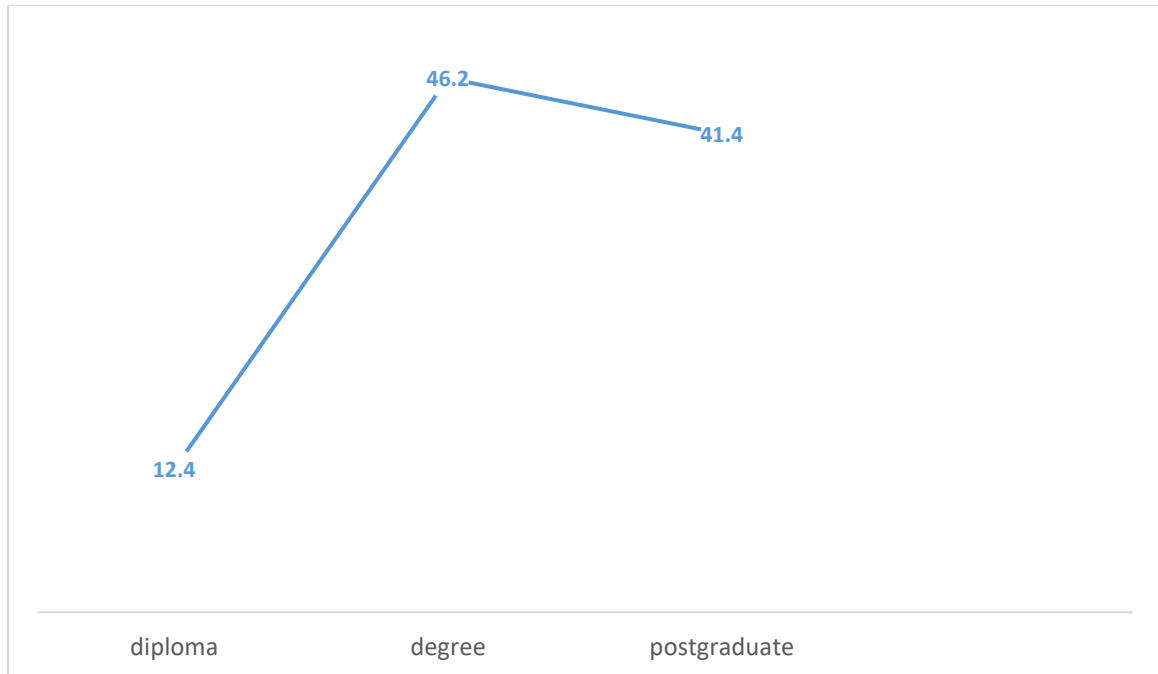
**Figure 4.6: Distributions of Respondents by educational background**

Source: Field Survey, June, 2020

Figure 4.6 above shows academic qualification of respondents used for study. The study shows that most individuals who responded to the questionnaire representing (46.2%) had some form of Bachelor's degree, 41.4% had postgraduate education, and the remaining 12.4% had Diploma education.

**Research Question One**

**4.3 What school related causes contribute to poor academic achievement of JHS students in schools in the Kwadaso Circuit?**

Research question one sought to identify the factors that contribute to poor academic achievement of JHS students in schools in the Kwadaso Circuit. In other words the study sought to identify key stakeholders who contribute to poor academic achievement of students in Kwadaso Circuit. The study identified stakeholders such as teachers, students and parents as the key stakeholders / variables that contribute to poor academic achievement of JHS students in schools in the Kwadaso Circuit. To effectively examine the central location, variability and effects of each stakeholder contribute to poor academic performance, statistical mean and standard deviation test was conducted.

**Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics of stakeholders**

|  | N | Mean | | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Statistic | Statistic | Std. Error | Statistic |
| 1. Teachers | 145 | 4.01 | .089 | 1.070 |
| 2. Students | 145 | 3.92 | .094 | 1.133 |
| 3. Parents or guardian | 145 | 3.85 | .095 | 1.145 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 145 | | | |

Source: Field Survey, June, 2020.

Table 4.1 shows that the means of the various variables under teachers are statistically and significantly different from one another, indicating that each variable contributes to poor academic performance of students in the circuit. The finding indicates that teachers mostly contribute to the students' poor academic performance.

Taylor, Pogrebin, and Dodge (2002) stated that, Teens also feel pressure to perform well academically; this type of "elitist" peer pressure forms within groups of academically accelerated students. The students feel pressure from parents, teachers, and peers to always perform well. Taylor, Pogrebin, and Dodge (2002) found in their study of advanced-placement students that the stress compelled them to engage in deceitful behaviours, such as cheating, to remain competitive in scholastic programs. Self-efficacy influences motivation. Enthusiastic teachers create classes that promote an emotionally safe and secure environment, which, in turn, promotes self-efficacy. This type of environment includes an emphasis on motivational principles that encourage learning and achievement stated by Margolis et al (2004).

In line with the findings, Condly (2006) stated that, not only do children survive personal adversity, but they must also endure the challenges of an ever-changing and increasingly toxic society. Today's youth function in a world where children face increased poverty, exposure to increased drug use, a demise in social behaviour for youths, lack of discipline among the youth, and increased violence and abuse. Nevertheless, many students manage to survive in adverse environments, and some actually excel (Condly, 2006). The ability to survive difficult situations defines the notion of resilience. The theory of resilience attempts to explain why some students academically achieve even though they encounter many negative environmental or psychological situations (Reis, Colbert, & Thomas, 2005). There seems to be no single definition for resilience; however, it is often described as the access to protective mechanisms that alter an individual's responses to situations that encompass risk (Reis et

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al., 2005). Rutter (1987) describes resilience as the ability to adjust one's circumstances while facing negative life events and to exhibit a positive role in stress and adversity.

Lateness and absenteeism reduce the amount of instructional time and these results in the syllabi not being completed (Etsey 2005). According to this author, the completion of the syllabus for each subject in each class provides the foundation for the next class to be built upon. America cited in Paaku (2008) noting the importance of the presence of a student in class, wrote that it is the student's responsibility to make up work missed as a result of being absent. It also added that the student must speak to each teacher upon return from an absence of any duration to arrange to make up work missed. According to Paaku (2008), the programme continued to state that if a student were absent for two days and beyond, double those days should be provided to make up work missed.

**Table 4.2: Causes of JHS students' poor academic performance**

| | N | Mean | | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Std. | |
| | Statistic | Statistic | Error | Statistic |
| 1. Inadequate teacher motivation | 145 | 4.03 | .093 | 1.121 |
| 2. Examination malpractices | 145 | 3.98 | .092 | 1.108 |
| 3. Inadequate teaching and learning materials | 145 | 3.94 | .094 | 1.138 |
| 4. Inadequate supervision | 145 | 3.91 | .093 | 1.118 |
| 5. Absenteeism among student and teachers | 145 | 3.91 | .094 | 1.136 |
| 6. Lack of confidence among students | 145 | 3.79 | .100 | 1.201 |
| 7. Inadequate learning facilities | 145 | 3.62 | .090 | 1.087 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 145 | | | |

Source: Field Survey, June, 2020

Table 4.2 presents causes of JHS students' poor academic performance at Kwadaso Circuit. The study conducted the mean analysis to identify the central location of the data (average). Standard deviation on the other hand was conducted to measure variability and the spread of the data set and the relationship of the mean to the rest of the data. The study calculated the relation of the standard deviation to the mean, otherwise known as the coefficient of variation (CV). The study showed that the coefficient of variation was rather small, indicating that the data has a greater deal of uniformity with respect to the mean and there is a general consensus among the sample respondents that, inadequate teacher motivation, examination malpractices, inadequate teaching and learning materials, inadequate supervision, absenteeism among students and teachers, lack of confidence among students and inadequate learning facilities was the most established causes of students' poor academic performance in Kwadaso Circuit. The findings give indications that inadequate teacher motivation was the major cause of students' poor academic performance. The study cannot determine whether these causes were established, based on empirical research findings or a credible survey.

**Research Question Two**

**4.4 What outside-school causes lead to poor academic achievement of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit?**

Research question two sought to identify the outside-school causes that lead to poor academic achievement of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit.

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**Table 4.3: Outside-school causes of JHS students' poor academic performance**

| No | Student related causes | SD% | D% | U% | A% | SA% |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Increase in poverty | 8(5.3) | 4(2.7) | 8(5.3) | 71(49.3) | 54(37.3) |
| 2 | Increase in drug use | 6(4) | 13(9.3) | 23(16.0) | 64(44.0) | 39(26.7) |
| 3 | Lack of discipline | 10(6.7) | 4(2.7) | 8(5.3) | 52(36.0) | 71(49.3) |
| 4 | Increase in violence and abuse | 16(10.7) | 5(4) | 10(6.7) | 56(38.7) | 58(40) |
| 5 | Lack of confidence | 8(5.3) | 4(2.7) | 8(5.3) | 71(49.3) | 54(37.3) |
| 6 | Peer pressure | 9(6) | 18(13.3) | 15(10) | 58(40) | 45(30.7) |
| 7 | Absenteeism among students | 10(6.7) | 4(2.7) | 8(5.3) | 52(36.0) | 71(49.3) |
| 8 | Lack of library in the school | 18(12.5) | 11(7.5) | 25(17.5) | 36(25.0) | 53(37.5) |
| 9 | Students waste time watching television | 15(10.0) | 7(5.0) | 7(5.0) | 51(35.0) | 65(45.0) |
| 10 | Teenage pregnancy | 4(2.5) | 4(2.5) | 22(15.0) | 47(32.5) | 68(47.5) |

Source: Field Survey, June, 2020

Table 4.3 presents responses to the questionnaire items on what outside the school causes lead to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. As indicated in item 1 of table 4.3, the respondents were asked whether increase in poverty was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of students in the Kwadaso Circuit. The study showed that 71(49.3%) of respondents agreed that Increase in poverty was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. There were 54(37.3%) respondents who strongly agreed and 8(5.3%) who were uncertain. However, a good number of 4(2.7%) disagreed whilst a further 8(5.3%) strongly disagreed.

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As indicated in item 2 of table 4.3, the respondents were asked whether the increase in drug use was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. The study showed that 64(44%) of respondents agreed that increase in poverty was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit, 39(26.7%) strongly agreed and a significantly 23(16%) were uncertain. However, 13(9.3%) disagreed and the remaining 6(4%) were strongly disagreeing.

As indicated in item 3 of table 4.3, the respondents were asked whether lack of discipline was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. The study showed that 71(49.3%) of respondents strongly agreed that lack of discipline was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of students in the Kwadaso Circuit. 52(36%) agreed and 8(5.3%) are uncertain. However, 4(2.7%) disagree whilst a further 10(6.7%) strongly disagreed.

As indicated in item 4 of table 4.3, the respondents asked whether increase in violence and abuse was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. The study showed that 58(40%) of respondents strongly agreed that increase in violence and abuse was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. 56(38.7%) agreed and 10(6.7%) are uncertain. However, 5(4%) disagreed whilst a further 16(10.7%) strongly disagreed.

As indicated in item 5 of table 4.3, the respondents were asked whether lack of confidence was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. The study shows that 71(49.3%) of respondents

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agreed that lack of confidence was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. 54(37.3%) strongly agreed and 8(5.3%) were uncertain. However, 4(2.7%) disagreed whilst a further 8(5.3%) strongly disagreed.

As indicated in item 6 of table 4.3, the respondents were asked whether peer pressure was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. The study showed that 58(40%) of respondents agreed that peer pressure was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit, 45(30.7%) strongly agreed and a significantly 15(10%) were uncertain. However, 18(13.3%) disagreed and the remaining 9(6%) were strongly in agreement.

As indicated in item 7 of table 4.3, the respondents were asked whether absenteeism among students was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. The study showed that 71(49.3%) of respondents agreed that absenteeism among students was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit, 52(36%) strongly agreed and a significantly 8(5.3%) were uncertain. However, a significant of 10(6.7%) strongly disagreed and 4(2.7%) disagreed.

As indicated in item 8 of table 4.3, the respondents were asked whether lack of library in the circuit was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. The study showed that 53(37.5%) of respondents strongly agreed that lack of library in the circuit was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of students in Kwadaso Circuit. 36(25%)

agreed and 25(17.5%) are uncertain. However, 11(7.5%) disagree whilst a further 18(12.5%) strongly disagreed.

As indicated in item 9 of table 4.3, the respondents were asked whether JHS students wasting time watching television was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of students in the Kwadaso Circuit. The study showed that 65(52.5%) of respondents agreed JHS students wasting time watching television outside the school was a cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. 51(45.0%) strongly agreed and 7(5%) are uncertain. However, 7(5%) disagreed whilst a further 15(10 %) strongly disagreed.

As indicated in item 10 of table 4.3, the respondents were asked whether teenage pregnancy was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. The study showed that 68(47.5%) of respondents strongly agreed that teenage pregnancy was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. Whereas 47(32.5%) agreed, 22(15%) were uncertain. However, 4(2.5%) disagreed whilst a further 4(2.5%) strongly disagreed.

In line with the findings, Condly (2006) stated that, not only do children survive personal adversity, but they must also endure the challenges of an ever-changing and increasingly toxic society. Today's youth function in a world where children face increased poverty, exposure to an increased drug use, a demise in social behaviour for youth, lack of discipline among the youth, and increased violence and abuse. Nevertheless, many students manage to survive in adverse environments, and some actually excel (Condly, 2006). The ability to survive difficult situations defines the notion

of resilience. The theory of resilience attempts to explain why some students academically achieve even though they encounter many negative environmental or psychological situations (Reis, Colbert, & Thomas, 2005). There seems to be no single definition for resilience; however, it is often described as the access to protective mechanisms that alter an individual's responses to situations that encompass risk (Reis et al., 2005). Rutter (1987) described resilience as the ability to adjust one's circumstances while facing negative life events and to exhibit a positive role in stress and adversity.

**Research Question Three**

**4.5 What mechanisms exist in monitoring JHS students' academic achievement in schools in the Kwadaso Circuit?**

Research question three sought to identify the existing mechanisms used in monitoring JHS students' academic performance in schools in the Kwadaso Circuit.

**Table 4.4: Mechanisms that exist in monitoring JHS students' academic performance in schools in the Kwadaso Circuit**

| No | | Mean | SD |
|----|----|----|----|
| 1. | Checking of absenteeism among students | 4.16 | .935 |
| 2. | Teacher classroom attendance | 4.12 | .992 |
| 3. | Classroom exercise and assignment | 4.09 | 1.379 |
| 4. | Regular monitoring and supervision | 4.04 | 1.564 |
| 5. | Provision of teaching and learning materials | 4.02 | 1.398 |
| 6. | Introduction of super mock examination at the circuit level | 4.00 | .972 |
| 7. | Provision of Library in the circuit | 3.89 | 1.213 |

Source: Field Survey, June, 2020

Table 4.4 presents the tools that exist in monitoring JHS students' academic performance in schools in the Kwadaso Circuit. The research sought to identify tools used in monitoring students' academic performance in schools in the Kwadaso Circuit, and what actually can be done in terms of improving the academic performance of students. Checking of absenteeism among students (M= 4.16; SD= 0.935) came out to be the most significant tool that exist in monitoring JHS students' academic performance in schools in the Kwadaso Circuit.

Teacher classroom attendance (M= 4.12; SD= 0.992), classroom exercise and assignment (M= 4.09; SD= 1.379) and regular monitoring and supervision (M= 4.04; SD= 1.564) are also effective tools that exist in monitoring JHS students' academic performance. However, monitoring tools such as provision of teaching and learning materials (M= 3.89; SD= 1.213), Introduction of super mock examination at the circuit level (M= 3.76; SD= 1.248), and provision of library in the circuit (M= 3.29; SD= 1.283) are not statistically significant tools that exist in monitoring JHS students' academic performance in schools in the Kwadaso Circuit.

Lateness and absenteeism reduce the amount of instructional time and these result in the syllabi not being completed (Etsey 2005). According to Etsey, the completion of the syllabus for each subject in each class provides the foundation for the next class to be built upon. America cited in Paaku (2008) noting the importance of the presence of a student in class, wrote that it is the student's responsibility to make up work missed as a result of being absent. Paaku also added that the student must speak to each teacher upon return from an absence of any duration to arrange to make up work missed. Paaku (2008)

continued to state that if a student were absent for two days and beyond, double those

days should be provided to make up work or lessons missed.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1    Introduction

The purpose of the study was to to find out what contributes to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit Educational Directorate. The final chapter summarized the findings and conclusion of the study, discussed the implications of the findings and suggested relevant recommendations.

### 5.2    Summary of the Findings

The study showed that the means of the various variables under teachers are statistically significant and different from one another which indicate that each variable contributes to poor academic performance of JHS students in the circuit. The finding indicates that teachers mostly contribute to the students' poor academic performance.The findings again gave an indication that inadequate teacher motivation was the major cause of students' poor academic performance. The study could not determine whether these causes were established, based on empirical research findings or a credible survey.

The study also showed that 49.3% of respondents agreed that increase in poverty as an outside the school cause, leads to poor academic performance of students in the Kwadaso Circuit. Out of the total number of respondents, 37.3% strongly agreed and 5.3% were uncertain. However, 2.7% disagreed whilst a further 5.3% strongly disagreed.

The study again showed that 44% of respondents agree that increase in poverty was outside the school cause and leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. Whereas 26.7% strongly agree, 16% were uncertain. However, a significant number of 9.3% disagreed and the remaining 4% strongly disagreed.

The study found that 49.3% of respondents strongly agreed that lack of discipline was outside the school cause of poor academic performance of students in the Kwadaso Circuit. Whereas 36% agreed, 5.3% are uncertain. However, 2.7% disagreed whilst a further 6.7% strongly disagreed.

The study showed that 40% of respondents strongly agreed that increase in violence and abuse were outside the school causes and they lead to poor academic performance of students in the Kwadaso Circuit. Whereas 38.7% agreed, 6.7% are uncertain. However, 4% disagreed whilst a further 10.7% strongly disagreed.

The study further showed that 49.3% of respondents agreed that lack of confidence was outside the school cause, which leads to poor academic performance of students in the Kwadaso Circuit. Whereas 37.3% strongly agreed, 5.3% are uncertain. However, 2.7% disagreed whilst a further 5.3% strongly disagreed.

In addition, the study found that 40% of respondents agreed that peer pressure was outside the school cause and contributes to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit. Whereas 30.7% respondents strongly agreed, a significantly 10% were uncertain. However, a significant number of 13.3% disagreed and the remaining 6% strongly disagreed.

The study also showed that 49.3% of respondents agree that absenteeism among students was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of students in the Kwadaso Circuit; 36% strongly agreed and a significantly 5.3% were uncertain. However, a significant number of 6.7% strongly disagreed and 2.7% disagreed.

The study further showed that 37.5% of respondents strongly agreed that lack of library in the circuit was a cause that leads to poor academic performance of students in the Kwadaso Circuit; 25% agreed and 17.5% are uncertain. However, 7.5% disagreed whilst a further 12.5% strongly disagreed.

The study showed that 52.5% of respondents agreed Students wasting time watching television outside the school was a cause that leads to poor academic performance of students in the Kwadaso Circuit; 27.5% strongly agreed and 5% are uncertain. However, 5% disagreed whilst a further 10% strongly disagreed.

The study showed that 47.5% of respondents strongly agreed Teenage pregnancy was an outside the school cause that leads to poor academic performance of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit; 32.5% agreed and 15% are uncertain. However, 2.5% disagreed whilst a further 2.5 % strongly disagreed. Finally, Checking of absenteeism among students (M= 4.16; SD= 0.935) came out to be the most significant tool that exists in monitoring JHS students' academic performance in schools in the Kwadaso Circuit.

### 5.3 Conclusions

The study sought to find out what contributes to poor academic achievement of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit Education Directorate. The purpose of the study was to to find out what contributes to poor academic performance of students. The study

tested for significant factors, to find out what school related causes, outside school causes that lead to poor academic achievement of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit, and what tools exist in monitoring students' academic performance in schools in the Kwadaso Circuit. Data were collected from one hundred and forty-five (145) respondents, using random sampling. Questionnaire was used as the main source of data collection and SPSS (18th edition) was used for the data analysis. Based on the outcome of the research, the researcher made the following conclusions.

Students related causes including lack of discipline, lack of confidence; peer pressure absenteeism, teenage pregnancy, and lack of discipline were found to be major factors that contribute to poor academic performance in the Kwadaso Circuit. Concerning teacher related causes, teachers' commitment to teaching and work habit, qualification, experience and teaching environment, inadequate teacher motivation and lack of job satisfaction, lack of teaching and learning materials, large class size as well as lateness and absenteeism contribute to poor academic performance of students.

The research also looked at school related causes and found out that lack of library, inadequate supervision, absenteeism among teachers and students, lack of confidence among students, and large class size lead to poor academic performance of students in the Kwadaso Circuit. In relation to parent-related causes, factors such as poverty and lack of parental care and parent enabling came out as the factors that contribute massively to poor academic performance of JHS students. The results showed that the wards of parents who are classified as poor tend to perform poorly academically because such parents are not able to provide the needed learning materials and environment for their children.

This means that teachers, students themselves, parents as well as management of schools in the circuit contribute to the poor academic performance of students, and that poor performance of students is not cause by a single unit or individual as far as education is concerned. The researcher therefore concluded that both school related causes and outside school factors contribute to poor academic achievements of JHS students in the Kwadaso Circuit.

## 5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was found that the factors including student related causes, teacher related causes, parents' related causes as well as school management related causes do exist in the selected school and they continue to affect students' performance negatively. The following recommendations were therefore given by the researcher to help improve upon the performance of students among Junior High Schools in the Kwadaso Circuit.

i. Students whose parents are poor in the circuit could be helped by instituting scholarship schemes for them. However, in considering scholarship packages for needy students, policy makers or the district assembly should consider parents with low socio-economic background with specific reference to family size and income.

ii. Parent Teachers Associations (PTAs) and education authorities in the municipality should investigate and agree on common mode of punishing students. This investigation and review exercise will bring to the fore better

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practices in punishing students thereby creating a conducive atmosphere for learning within the circuit.

iii. Peers have been found to contribute immensely on the behaviour of their colleagues. School authorities should set up counseling centres in the schools with staff whose main duty should be identifying negative behavioral practices among the students and put in place the requisite interventions to address them.

iv. School authorities in allocating boarding facilities to students should not only consider academic performance but also the distance of the geographical location of the students concerned so as to reduce the absenteeism emanating from long distance of travel by students in the circuit.

v. Parents should be sensitized by the leaders of the church and the youth through the use of drama, symposia, and community education to understand and appreciate the importance of education and endeavour to provide their wards with basic educational needs.

vi. Absenteeism does not require a single-dose treatment but a multiple one. In this regard, therefore, it requires the collective efforts of all stake holders in education to be involved. The Ministry of Education, the Ghana Education Service, Teachers, Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), the Board of Governance and the entire community should work together to address the problem of absenteeism in the area of study.

vii. Open Days and Speech and Prize - Giving Days should be organized annually or periodically to give parents more insight into the importance of education.

The school can also organize drama or concert to sensitize the community to foster good working relationship between the school and the community.

## 5.5 Suggestions and Areas for Further Research

The limitations of this study offer opportunities for future research. The ability to generalize the results of this study could be emphasized further by replicating the study, using a broader sample and employing other complex methodology that allays suspicion or fear. Focus group discussions and participant observation method could be employed in this regard. Other future researches can continue to explore further, the role of family and school factors in students' poor academic performance.

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**APPENDIX A**

**Appendix A: Questionnaire**

**DEPARTMENT OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES**

**MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATIONAL EDUCATION**

**COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION, KUMASI**

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

(KUMASI CAMPUS)

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INVESTIGATING INTO CAUSES OF POOR PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN THE BECE EXAMINATION. THE CASE STUDY OF KWADASO CIRCUIT**

This questionnaire is part of a study being conducted by a student of University of Education, Winneba, on investigating into causes of poor performance of students in the BECE examination, the case study of the Kwadaso Circuit. You are, therefore, respectfully required to read this instruction and co-operate by providing the answers. You are assured that your responses will be treated as strictly confidential as possible. Please, do not write your name. Tick (√) or fill in the appropriate spaces provided.

**SECTION A**

1. Your sex

   Male ( )          Female ( )

2. Age

   Below 25 [ ]  26-35 [ ]  36-45  [ ] 46-55 [ ] Above 55 [ ]

3. Your teaching experience:

1-5 years ( )    6-10years ( ) 11-15 years ( )    16-20 years ( ) 21-25 years ( )

26-30 years ( ) Above 30 years ( )

4. Your professional rank

Director 1 ( )   Director 11 ( )   Deputy Director ( )   Assistant Director 1 ( )

Assistant Director 11 ( )   Principal Superintendent ( )   Senior Superintendent 1 ( )

Senior Superintendent 11 ( )

5. Level of education

WACE/SSCE ( )      Diploma ( )   Degree  ( )      postgraduate  ( )

## SECTION B

Please, indicate the key stakeholders who contribute to poor academic achievement of JHS students in schools in Kwadaso Circuit?

**1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree, 3= uncertain; 4= agree; 5= strongly agree**

| No | Stakeholders | SD | D | UC | A | SA |
|----|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| 6. | Students | | | | | |
| 7. | Teachers | | | | | |
| 8 | Parents or guardian | | | | | |

**4. What school related causes contribute to poor academic achievement of JHS students in schools in Kwadaso Circuit?**

Please, indicate how the school related causes contribute to poor academic achievement of JHS students in schools in Kwadaso Circuit?

**1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree, 3= uncertain; 4= agree; 5= strongly agree**

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| No | School related causes | SD | D | UC | A | SA |
|----|-----------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| 9 | Examination malpractices | | | | | |
| 10 | Inadequate teaching and learning materials | | | | | |
| 11 | Absenteeism among student and teachers | | | | | |
| 12 | Inadequate of supervision | | | | | |
| 13 | Inadequate teacher motivation | | | | | |
| 14 | Lack of confidence among student | | | | | |
| 15 | Inadequate learning facilities | | | | | |
| 16 | Failure to write end of term examination | | | | | |

## SECTION C

**What outside-school causes lead to poor academic achievement of JHS students in schools in Kwadaso Circuit?**

Please, indicate how outside-school causes lead to poor academic achievement of JHS students in schools in Kwadaso Circuit.

**1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree, 3= uncertain; 4= agree; 5= strongly agree**

| No | Student related causes | SD | D | UC | A | SA |
|----|------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| 17 | Increase in poverty | | | | | |
| 18 | Increase in drug use | | | | | |
| 19 | Lack of discipline | | | | | |
| 20 | Increase in violence and abuse | | | | | |
| 21 | Lack of confidence | | | | | |

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| 22 | Peer pressure |
| 23 | Absenteeism among student |
| 24 | Lack of library in the |
| 25 | Students waste time watching television |
| 26 | Teenage pregnancy |

## SECTION D

**What mechanisms exist in monitoring JHS students' academic performance in schools in Kwadaso Circuit?**

Please, indicate what mechanisms exist in monitoring students' academic performance in schools in Kwadaso Circuit.

1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree, 3= uncertain; 4= agree; 5= strongly agree

| No | Student related causes | SD | D | UC | A | SA |
|----|------------------------|----|---|----|---|----|
| 27 | Checking of absenteeism among students | | | | | |
| 28 | Teacher classroom attendance | | | | | |
| 29 | Classroom exercise and assignment | | | | | |
| 30 | Regular monitoring and supervision | | | | | |
| 31 | Provision of teaching and learning materials | | | | | |
| 32 | Introduction of super mock examination at the circuit level | | | | | |
| 33 | Provision of Library in the circuit | | | | | |

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