

AKENTENG APPIAH-MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND  
ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT

CAUSES OF POOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN THE JUNIOR  
HIGH SCHOOLS IN GHANA: THE CASE OF BUILSA SOUTH DISTRICT



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**A Dissertation in the Department of Educational Leadership, Faculty of Education and Communication Sciences submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of the Master of Arts (Educational Leadership) degree**

NOVEMBER, 2022

## DECLARATION

### STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, AKAMBA BABA AKANZANG, 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 the guidelines for supervision of Dissertation as laid down by the Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: REV. FR. DR. FRANCIS K SAM.

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DATE: .....

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God for the giesat of life, to my lovely wife (Gifty Akanko), to my five beautiful daughters (Xavienna A. Akamba, Belinda A. Akamba, Victoria A. Akamba, Josephine A. Akamba and Pascalina A. Akamba), and also to my beloved father (Mr. Justice Joseph Bawuah Akamba) a retired supreme court judge).



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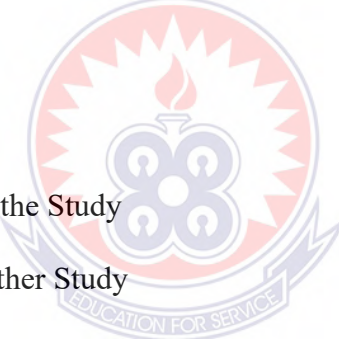
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
CBR	Crude Birth Rate
CHPS	Community Based Health Planning Services
GES	Ghana Education Service
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
MoE	Ministry of Education
SAEMA	Shama Ahanta East Metropolitan Assembly
TLMs	Teaching and Learning Materials
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
USA	United State of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WAEC	West African Examination Council

## ABSTRACT

The study investigated the causes of poor academic performance of students in the junior high schools in the Builsa South District. The specific objectives of the study were to find out the role school environmental factors play in students' poor academic performance, ascertain the home conditions responsible for the poor academic performance of students, identify teacher factors that contribute to the poor academic performance of students and to identify students characteristics responsible for the poor academic outcome of students in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District. Descriptive survey design was used for the study. Questionnaire was used for the study. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were employed for the study. The study revealed that the environmental factors contributing to students' poor academic performance are teachers' absence from classes, lack of proper supervision of students by school management, and inadequate material resources for teaching and learning. For the home, the factors are engaging students in economic activities (trading, farming etc.), poor economic background of students' parents, and single parenthood/divorced. The teacher related factors are poor/inappropriate teaching methodologies, teacher lateness to school on regular basis, and teacher inability to complete scheme of work (syllabus). Finally, the students' characteristics are poor revision management by students, truancy, and lack of self-motivation. It is recommended that regular sensitization meetings and community non-formal education classes should be organized within communities in the Builsa South to inform parents about the value of education to children, the community and the nation. This would be a way of encouraging them to be active in the Parent Associations as well as other activities in the schools.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

In Africa, issues in education such as of poor academic performance are a major concern where Ghana is not an exception. Due to this, governments across the globe including Ghana have put in numerous trials to arrest if not put to an end the problem of poor academic performance, especially, at the very beginning of the education ladder. Low academic achievement can be seen from different angles. Low or poor academic performance can be taking to mean a development where a learner and or learners fail(s) to attain a particular level of standard in an examination or other assessments. The repercussions of poor academic performance at the very beginning of the learner's academic carrier include graduates of low standards who may not be capable pursuing higher education, and also, producing graduates of bad standing where national development is impeded (Fehrler, Michaelowa & Wechtler, 2006).

In the field of education, learning is a major component in achieving academic excellence. To achieve this, there are some factors that always act in favour or against good learning outcomes. With Rothstein (2000), learning takes the same multifaceted approach including socio-economic and cultural forces which affect learning outcomes and subsequently, and school outcome. In the research on the determinants of school achievements, much has been centered on the relative effects of home-and school-related factors, with majority of the outcomes depicting that family background is an essential determinant of school outcomes, where the influence of school characteristic has negligible effects (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997). The opinion of Fehrler, Michaelowa

and Wechtler (2006) also posit that for learners to achieve great academic excellence, learners must adopt positive learning attributes such as believing in themselves to have a smooth sail in their academic journey; and also believing that what is learnt is needful, and important not only to them but the society as a whole. All in all, the learning environment needs to be enabling for students to attain this goal. Judging, the learning environment is two-way, home and school. The role of the home is for parents and or guardians of students to create a conducive home environment that will propel effective learning and the role of the school is to ensure that the school environment is conducive for students to learn well.

The issue of poor academic performance of students across the country has led to several researches to unearth the possible causes of this canker and among such causes is the learning environmental factors and the need to develop strategies to arrest the canker. A good number of these researches are dwelling on two main factors; home environmental factors on one hand and school environmental factors on the other. The variables in the home learning environmental factors that researchers always focused on among others are family structure, parental involvement, socioeconomic status of parents, and level of education of parents (Fehrler et al., 2006). For the school environmental factors, Fehrler et al. (2006) again focused on Studies on teacher qualification, teacher availability, class size, availability of teaching and learning materials, monitoring, contact hours, school ownership whether public or private, motivation of teachers, and teachers' absenteeism/commitment to duty independent of the home environmental factors. Therefore, Fehrler et al., saw these two distinct factors to be independent of each other. However, it must be stated without any reservation that, these variables are not

independent of each other as studies are made to belief. There is the need for these variables to complement one another to influence effective learning and to offset the phenomenon of poor academic performance. This creates a knowledge gap which this study seeks to fill.

Another driving force to this study was the fact where most of the studies on the learning environmental factors influencing academic success have focused on the universities and secondary schools neglecting the basic schools. This has been confirmed by Fehrler et al. (2006) where they concluded that limited researches have been conducted on basic schools' students' academic performance and these studies conducted are not comprehensive. The few studies carried out did not consider home environmental factors vis-à-vis the school environmental factors, but independently. Instances have been cited where a study looked at academic performance at the basic school and the focused was on only the home environmental factors. A study conducted on junior high school students' residential needs and their academic performance also focused basically on the home environmental factors affecting academic performance (Fehrler et al., 2006). This knowledge gap will be addressed in this study where I will examine students learning from the joint perspective of the home and school environment at the basic school level.

Focusing still on the poor academic performance, Anamuah-Mensah (2010) observed that the issue is attributable to the absence of proper supervision and monitoring at school, motivation of teachers and limited number of qualified teachers to fill empty classrooms. It is interesting noting that Anamuah-Mensah observation is centered on teacher related factor, a new addition to home and school environmental factors. The ideas of Diaz (2003) are found to be also limiting. His ideas; intellectual ability, poor



study habit, achievement motivation, lack of vocational goals, low self-concept, low socio-economic status of the family, poor family structure and anxiety can be streamlined into two main factors, student factors and family/home factors. Etsey (2005) also added to the study and observed that the cause of poor academic performance among most schools in Ghana is a combination of factors; factors relating to the school environment, teachers, students and parents. It is clear that Etsey's assertion is all encompassing.

The Builsa South District is one of the thirteen (13) districts in the Upper East Region of Ghana. Principal occupations are farming and trading. There are seventeen (17) Junior High Schools in the district (GSS, 2010). The poor academic performance of students in the Builsa South District has been a concern for the District Assembly and the education directorate over the past few years. The schools have shown poor performances in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (B.E.C.E) results (District Education Directorate, 2015-2020). For instance, in 2015, the B.E.C.E results released by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) showed that out of the 413 candidates who sat for the examination, only 115 candidates were able to obtain aggregate 6-30 (the required national pass aggregates), which represented 28 percent (District Education Directorate, 2015). Again, in 2016, the district presented 539 candidates for the BECE. Out of this number, only 188 candidates representing 34 percent obtained aggregate 6-30 (District Education Directorate, 2016). The poor performance for these years buttresses the point that there is poor academic performance among students in junior high schools in the district and the need to investigate. The worrying situation of the poor academic performance among most schools in the Ghanaian economy has necessitated a good number of studies to help reveal the factors responsible. On the background of the

undeniable fact about the multifaceted causes of poor academic performance of students of Junior High Schools, this work seeks to investigate these causes in the Builsa South District.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Several factors have, generally, been identified as causes of poor performance among students of Junior High Schools in Ghana. These factors have been empirically identified to be factors that affect academic performance of students in a number of educational institutions worldwide. Agyeman (1993) in advancing some reasons as to why students perform poorly in their examination put forward that academic and professional qualification of the teacher impact on students' performance and that the absence of teachers with the necessary academic and professional qualifications will definitely impede academic progress as such a teacher lacks the requisite skills to deliver in the classroom. However, a teacher may be academically and professionally qualified, but the conditions of service under which he/she works to a large extent influence academic performance; unfavourable working conditions of service limits commitment to work and thus impacting performance negatively whilst favourable working conditions of service greatly impact performance.

Etsey (2005) undertook a study in the Shama Sub-Metro of Shama Ahanta East Metropolitan Assembly (SAEMA) in Ghana on the causes of poor academic performance and found out that an interplay of factors in the area of school environment like inadequate teaching and learning materials (TLMs), limited textbooks and less

professionally trained teachers cause poor academic performance. The teacher factors outlined in the study included teachers not going to school early, the canker of absenteeism, employing the mother tongue as the medium of instruction, not able to complete the syllabi, not interested in students' comprehension level among others. On the part of the students' features, absenteeism and regularity in school, truancy, use of local language in the classroom, lack of interest and joy in the teacher's lessons and little help with studies at home were mentioned in study. In the same study by Etsey, parental factors were also mentioned to have caused poor academic performance among students. Among the issues raised included parents not able to meet the breakfast needs of their wards, parents not able to get their wards learning materials and other basic needs, parents showing limited interest in their wards academic work such as not finding out from teachers the academic progress of their wards and non-involvement in Parent Teacher Association's (PTA) activities (Etsey, 2005).

In another empirical report, Adane (2013) established in Kemp Methodist JHS in Aburi, in the Eastern region of Ghana that environmental factors in the area of few teachers with high academic qualification impact on academic performance negatively. Also, limited teaching and learning materials, improper misuse of instructional hours and teacher's level of education all affect academic performance negatively. For us to improve academic performance of students, she held the opinion that the teacher's mastery of his/her subject content plus the readily availability of the necessary teaching and learning materials improve teaching and learning among the students of Kemp Methodist Junior High School.

Over the past years, concerns have been raised about the poor academic performance of students in the Builsa South District by parents and other stakeholders. A study of the BECE results of the schools from 2015 to 2016 buttress this.

*Table 1.1: Basic Education Certificate Examination analysis from 2015-2016 of the Builsa South District*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total number of candidates</b>	<b>Aggregate (6 – 30%)</b>	<b>Aggregate (30 and above %)</b>
2015	413	115(28%)	298(72%)
2016	539	188 (34%)	355 (66%)

**Source: Builsa South Education Directorate (2015-2016)**

In 2015, the district presented 413 candidates for the B.E.C.E. Out of this number, 115 candidates representing 28% had aggregate 6-30 and 298 representing 72% had aggregate 31 and above. In 2016, the district presented 539 candidates for the B.E.C.E. Out of this number, 188 representing 34% had aggregate 6-30 and 355 representing 66% had aggregate 31 and above. It is evident from the above table that, the performance of the students is poor as majority are obtaining aggregates above 30, when aggregates 6-30 are the national passed aggregates.

This situation of poor performance in the B.E.C.E over the years raise questions regarding the factors affecting the poor performance of students in the district and there is therefore the need to investigate, and make appropriate recommendations.

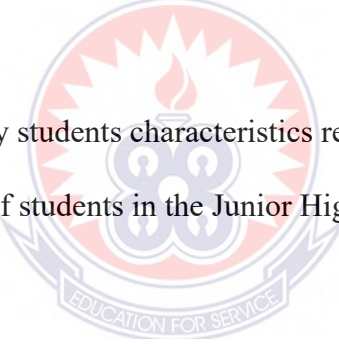
### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to investigate the causes of poor performance of students in the Junior High Schools in Ghana: The case of Builsa South District.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The study was guided by the following objectives.

1. To find out the role school environmental factors play in students' poor academic performance in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District.
2. To ascertain the home conditions responsible for the poor academic performance of students in Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District.
3. To identify teacher factors that contribute to the poor academic performance of students in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District.
4. To identify students characteristics responsible for the poor academic outcome of students in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District.



#### **1.5 Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. What school environmental factors are the causes of poor academic performance among students in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District?
2. What are the home conditions that cause poor academic performance among students in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District?

3. What are the teacher factors that contribute to poor academic performance among students in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District?
4. What student characteristics are responsible for the poor academic performance among students in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

Essentially, the role of any educational institution is to ensure that its aims and objectives are achieved eventually. One aim and or objective of an educational institution is to provide high quality education for the students. High quality basic education is of great concern to all the stakeholders in education: parents, teachers, students, school administrators, government, the Ghana Educational Service (G.E.S) and all policy makers. The researcher therefore sees this study to be of great concern to all these stakeholders mentioned.

The study will help parents to know the home conditions that affect their children's performance academically. Knowledge of this will cause them to desist from every activity that poses a threat to student's performance academically. The study will also keep teachers informed of the teacher related factors that cause students poor academic performance. This will help them to put emplace measures to improve their students' performance. For the students, it will help them come into terms with the kind of attitudes toward learning that when they put up can have negative effect on their

performance. Knowledge of this will therefore aid them to put up positive learning attitudes that will impact on their academics positively.

With the school administrators, the study will inform them of the school related factors that cause students poor performance. This will help them to take measures to make sure that these factors are taken care of thereby enhancing students' performance. For the Government and Ministry of Education (MOE) as policy makers, this study will provide them with the relevant information concerning factors responsible for students' poor academic performance so that appropriate educational policies can be formulated for implementation. Finally, the Ghana Education is the implementing body of educational policies from government. The study will be able to equip the G.E.S with the necessary information to enable advice government on policies that can help improve students' academic performances for implementation.

### **1.7 Delimitation of the Study**

Geographically, the study area covered Builsa South District in the Upper East Region of Ghana. Builsa South District was conveniently chosen because the researcher has lived in the district close to a decade now and fully aware of the situation among Junior High Schools in the district. The main focus of the study will be on investigating the causes of poor performance of students in Junior High Schools in the district. The Builsa South District comprises the following towns: Fumbisi, Kanjarga, Gbedema, Doninga, Bachonsa, Uwasi, Wiesi, Gbedembilisi, Kunkwak and Kadema South.

## **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

Limitations of the study refer to factors serving as challenges or constraints in coming out with appropriate data or information for the study. Respondents' apathy cannot be overlooked as it is one of the principal limitations to any study of this nature. The study used only questionnaire to collect data and this prevented the researcher from obtaining additional information to improve the findings. This was likely to affect the validity of the findings.

## **1.9 Organization of the Study**

This study is categorized into five main chapters. These include the following; Chapter one entails the general introduction covering background to the study, statement of the problem, research questions, objectives of the study, research scope, significance of the study, research limitations and organization of the study.

Chapter two of the study presents review of related literature pertaining to the subject matter of the study.

Chapter three of this study is the methodology aspect of the study. It presents detail on exactly how this study is carried out by demonstrating how samples is selected in the course of the study, how the data is collected and the instruments that is used to collect the data, how the data is presented and how the data is analyzed.

Chapter four of the study encompasses the results and discussions of the findings. This includes both quantitative data gathered through the administration of questionnaires. Chapter five covers the summary of major findings, conclusion, and recommendations.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter contained relevant literature which has been reviewed. The review included the nature of academic performance, the concept of teaching, the concept of learning, and factors influencing academic performance. The chapter concludes with the conceptual frameworks of the study.

#### **2.2 The nature of academic performance**

Regarding the concept of academic performance, the researcher first looked at the meaning and or the ingredients that should go with the word 'performance'. In the words of Mankoe (2002) performance is regarded as the act of working to meet set goals of an institution either by a worker of the institution or a student and most importantly, creating an enabling environment where less endowed person in terms of limited motivation is helped to achieve high. Performance is targeting at checking a particular act of the worker that can easily be monitored at a given time. From the opinions of Mankoe, performance in education should be able to measure the outcome of an input. Outcome here is taken to mean the performance from an evaluation exercise such as test, examination and or series of continuous assessments result of an academic process whereas the input is the teaching that goes on within that particular academic environment.

Academic performance from the Cambridge Dictionary of English (1995) is taking to mean how a learning institution such as a school, college, university on one hand and on the other, an individual or a group is capable of executing an assigned learning role, assignment or a person's outcome in standardized tests in an academic endeavour. Academic performance for Mankoe is how a learner is able to take up his/her learning task assigned by his/her teacher (Mankoe, 2002). According to Otoo (2007) academic performance is about what a learner will acquire when examined on what he/she has learnt. Otoo again mentioned that academic performance is cognitive.

Academic performance can be seen in terms of low and high. Low academic performance has many definitions. Diaz (2003) saw low academic performance as a situation where a learner after being examined based on his/her capabilities fails to meet the desired outcome, thus, changing the his/her whole functionality. Diaz (2003) also acknowledged that the norm is that a learner has failed having refused to attain a particular set mark seen as the desired mark. Bakare (1994) also opined poor academic performance as any achievement that is not up to the level set. Aremu (2000) understood poor academic performance to be an outcome that has been declared by the learner to have falling below a predetermined level.

From the literature above on poor academic performance, it is clear that poor academic performance certainly has to do with undesirable academic results as a result of multiple factors.

## 2.3 The Concept of Teaching

Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1986) defined teaching as the act of assisting someone to acquire very important elements in his/her life which are deemed to have the potential of shaping the affected person's behaviour in a positive direction. For Cohen teaching is the ability of aiding someone acquire specific skills which become routine similar to what others do frequently. This definition is somewhat general. In specific terms, Cohen defined professional classroom teaching as a task that is so dear and seen different from what is causal (Cohen, 1988).

Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta (2005) in their definition of teaching, said teaching is the act of taking learning to the learner. To Kochhar (2004) teaching is not an act that is automated, instead, complex and tasking. The act of teaching is less tangible but more lasting, that is, satisfaction of personal fulfilment. Farrant (1996) opined that teaching is an act that propels knowledge acquisition. Anyway, learning can take without teaching; such learning type is uncertain and may not yield any specific outcome. But the concept of teaching is an activity that is planned and directed towards achieving a particular objective (Lee, 2007). This explains why teaching and learning are intertwined; teaching does not happen without a learner (Amisshah, Sam-Tagoe, Amoah & Mereku, 2002).

The concept of teaching has the teacher as one of the key players. The role of the teacher here is to create an enabling environment where learners get the opportunity to acquire knowledge, comprehend, process and apply. Continuing in the review of teaching as a concept, Ball & Forzani, 2007; Cohen (2003), teaching entails developing strategies for learners to begin to appreciate what is to be learnt, plan the next steps in the learner's development, and to oversee and assess the learner's progress. In this regard, teaching

should be approached as a process that is very much systematic with a purposeful end. For Ball and Forzani (2007), the work of the teacher in school was acknowledged. For them, teaching in school is a complex task where the teacher takes care of a whole number of learners, assisting them to grow by grouping the numerous numbers into manageable sizes. This is what makes teaching complex; the special attention. The grouping is not just done anyhow but through a well-planned manner, taking into consideration intellectual ability, interest among.

It is a fact that human as we are, the level at which we build relationships with people do vary greatly. This is why Buchmann (1993) reasoned that relationships with people are personal where the reality lies within the person's choice. Traditionally, it is the fact to align more with one than the other. In teaching, professionalism is a trait that should shadow personal relation (Buchmann, 1993).

The concept of teaching from what has been gathered and relates to this research work, is the practice of the profession of a teacher. The profession is structured with short to long term goals to be achieved. Teachers are guided to operate within these goals to ensure that learners work toward the achievement of the goals set. The goals are found in a national curriculum to be religiously followed by both teachers and learners.

## **2.4 The Concept of Learning**

The task of the teacher as a key player in the teaching and learning process is to assist the learner acquire knowledge in a step-by-step manner and in a more productive way (Farrant, 1996). The term productivity in this context demands preparedness, encouragement and participation from the angle of the learner. Learning is any

modification in the doing of things due to two key things; experience, observation or activity (Dosoo, 2000). The outcome of the modification should not be a one-time thing but continuous over a given time frame. The modification should be maintained via constantly engaging in the same thing. Learning as a concept also entails receiving knowledge, ideas among others that are fresh (Dosoo, 2000). The moment our daily ways of doing things is modified in a positive manner, learning has occurred (Dosoo, 2000). However, any modification in way of life due to substance application for any purpose, learning should not be linked to that (Dosoo, 2000). In conclusion, the true form of learning is effective learning. Effective learning here is taken to mean that, the modification through knowledge acquisition should be forever (Dosoo, 2000).

Learning, according to Farrant (1996), is a development that enables one to receive and maintain attitudes, knowledge, understanding, skills and capabilities that are not due to inheritance neither are they as a result of physical growth. Farrant further explained that, the strength for learning is derived from within; inborn capabilities of the learner based on mind set elements while the frequency of learning is stemmed from two features; inheritance and environmental elements.

Gathering the various definitions, learning is one thing that is sophisticated, changing and very collaborative in knowledge acquisition.

## **2.5 Factors Influencing Poor Academic Performance**

### **2.5.1 The Home Conditions**

The factors influencing poor academic performance, the researcher began with the home condition factors. The researcher identified that a broken family is a home condition factor capable of causing poor academic performance amongst students. With empirical evidence, Dosoo (2000) in a study was able to establish that children who have traces of high incidence of divorce related cases in their lives achieve low academically relative to children from the opposite families (Dosoo, 2000). The tendency for a child from a divorce home not completing high school was very high as compared to their counterparts from the opposite homes. School as a well-designed structure is bedeviled with a good number of challenges from homes managing to recuperate from divorce. Comparing divorce and death which are all causes of low academic performance amongst students, studies conducted in Europe but somehow limited established that divorce had a much negative impact than death of a parent, most importantly that of a single-mother families. Children living with divorced single mothers performed poorly academically than children living with a single widowed mother. Adolescents from broken homes mostly exhibit ways of life which are negative, leading to poor academic performance. The reasons assigned to divorced children performing poorly academically among others are that; divorced children usually have the tendency to develop negative mind set and negative life problems (Dosoo, 2000). Divorced children are usually truants, spend much time on entertainments, have no time for homework and lastly, receive little check-ups from parents on their school activities.

Another home factor affecting students' poor academic performance is the factor of socio-economic position of the students' family. McMillan and Westor (2002) developed that socio-economic position of the family has three components; education, occupation and income all affecting the academic performance of students. However, these three components are distinct and should always be treated independently of one another as the interrelationship between them is moderate. Considine and Zappala (2002) also developed that socio-economic status of the family has two elements; social and economic. These two elements are very distinct and have a disjoint influence on educational outcomes. In the contribution of Majoribanks (1996), socio-economic status as a person was defined as the total social position to which achievements in both the social and economic domain contribute. Given an interpretation to Majoribanks' definition in the field of academic achievements, it means the socio-economic status of the home in terms of educational level, occupational level and income level. Social class is not alien but much present among human settlements either stone age or contemporary and that, socio-economic status of the home is judged based on materialistic possession, authority and respect. In a clearer picture, socio-economic status of a person deals with how much possession he/she has accumulated, the nature and how big or small the house is, location of house, number of automobiles, clothing among others (Majoribanks, 1996).

In a study conducted by Farooq, Chaudhry, Shafiq, Berhanu (2011) in the metropolitan city in Pakistan using 10th grade students (300 males & 300 females), established that different factors influence academic performance of secondary school students; higher level of socio-economic status of the family, peer factors and student factors. Their study also found out that parental education has positive effects on

students' academic performance. However, parental occupation has little effect on their child's performance in studies than their education. For King and Bellow (1989) educational levels of both parents had a positive and statistically significant effect on the educational attainment of Peruvian children. They further opined that the education a child's parents have is probably the most important factor in determining the child's educational opportunities. They observed that the higher the attainment for parents, the greater their aspirations for children. Krashen (2005) drew a conclusion that, students whose parents were educated scored higher on standardized tests than those whose parents were not educated. Educated parents could better communicate with their children regarding school work, activities and the information being taught at school. Fantuzzo and Tighe (2000) and Trusty (1999), all shared in that conclusion and said that children with educated parents could better assist their children in their work and assist them participate at school.

Further discussing the impact of socio-economic factors of parents on students' academic performance, some studies conducted revealed that the ability of parents to provide adequate breakfast for their wards could help improve their academic performance. In a study conducted by Kawafha (2013) found out that children who missed breakfast had negative effect on their academic performance. This study was carried out on primary school children in northern Jordan. The reasons assigned in the study as to how missing breakfast could impact negatively on students' academic performance were that, the inability of parents to provide breakfast could lead to malnutrition in children making them develop slow development in physical and mental terms, chances of children contracting infectious diseases are high. All these are catalysts



to promoting poor academic performance of students. Also, Amukowa and Karue (2013) were able to establish that low socio-economic level of parents' impact greatly on academic performance. This study was carried out among day secondary schools in Embu District of Eastern Province for Kenya's Certificate of Secondary Education. Their study unearthed that the poverty level of the people affected the performance of their children in the sense that parents could not afford reading materials for their children to have at home, homes were poorly lighted making children not to learn at night. Other findings from same study revealed that low socio-economic families' children kept bad peers at home, distance from home and school far and poor accommodation, all affecting studies.

Nyandwi (2014) on the same socio-economic factors undertook a study to know it will influence academic performance poorly using Sumbawanga District, Tanzania. The study confirmed that low socio-economic conditions of parents couple with that fact learners walk long distance to school impeded academic progress. Escarce (2003) also supported in a study that socio-economic conditions of families, especially income levels have great negative impact on the educational chances on learners especially adolescents and on their chances of educational success. Reasons advanced from the study were that low-income learners usually attend schools with lower funding levels, and have reduced achievement motivation. From a comparative study on the same poor academic performance, Escarce (2003) agreed with Combs (1985) and Sentamu (2003) that social class determines what school a child will attend and whether the child will pass the examination or not. The authors further found that unearthed that inadequate income among families with low socio-economic standing negatively affected making available

school books and other essential materials to propel academic work. Children of low socio-economic background is badly affected in the sense that such children are not able to pay school fees, buy school books and other logistics important to enhance better academic outcomes. According to Eshiwani (1993) improved socio-economic conditions of parents promotes learning on one hand and on the other, unimproved socio-economic conditions of parents impeded learning.

The link between socio-economic standing and academic achievements was conducted by Eamon (2005) among young adolescent at Latino in America. The findings of the study were that children from low socio-economic status families were more likely to exhibit low reading and writing skills, understanding and recall skills, low marks in test, not wanting to continue with school and other negative attributes capable of impeding academic progress. Graetz (1995) in the same line using Canberra in Austria proved that learners' educational achievements over a given period of time have something to do with the social background of parents where low social status of parents' accounts for educational inequality among children of such families. A very related study by Rouse & Barrow (2006) also identified that families who are challenged economically cannot foot the bills of their wards' education especially at higher learning levels. In the work of Barry (2005) families who have progressed socially, educationally and economically are able to promote their children's, thus, children doing well in their academics.

The last home condition factors this work has captured was the home environment factor. For this, Muola (1990) studied the link that existed between good academic performance academic and home environment. The study was conducted using standard

eight students in Harambee schools in Nyandarua District. The outcome came out clear that there is a positive link between the learner performance and home environment with a coefficient ( $r$ ) of 0.22. Environmental factors are impediments to learners achieving good educational outcomes. In assertion, Eshiwani (1993) opined that socio-cultural customs and beliefs have the tendency to motivate the withdrawal of learners from school; impacting negatively on their academic performance.

In conclusion, it is evident that home conditions such as divorce, socio-economic and home environmental factors to a large extent, influence the academic performance of students.

### **2.5.2 Teacher related factors**

The second factor the researcher reviewed literature on to having the tendency to cause poor academic performance among students was the teacher related factors. Musili (2015) in a study to find out how teacher-related factors have on learners' academic performance, conducted the study in Kenya public schools in Kibwezi Sub country and concentrated on the Certificate Secondary Education. The study was able to conclude that the professional qualification of teachers impacts on the achievements of the students. With this, professional is capable to contribute positively to the academic achievement of students than nonprofessional teachers. Adane (2013) also contributed to same subject using students from Kemp Methodist JHS in Aburi, eastern region of Ghana and concluded that teacher factor influences academic performance. Among the teacher factors advanced included teachers not going to school early and at worst absenting himself, not able to finish the syllabus for particular subject and not engaging students at home with take home assignments. In providing an explanation, Adane made it clear that

a teacher who is found of reporting to school late has a greater tendency of not completing his/her syllabus for particular subject and this can affect the students in their final examination. When a teacher also engages students at home with homework, they continue to learn and it is also an avenue to make the lazy ones learn at home. This promotes academic work of the students.

In other related studies, Fobih, Akyeampong and Koomson (1999) conducted unannounced visits in about 60 schools in the Central region of Ghana and found that about 85 per cent of teachers were late to school. The lateness ranged from five minutes up to one and a half hours. In their analysis, it meant that if it was persistent, teachers will be teaching less subjects per day, unable to complete syllabus among others. Etsey (2005) in a study at Shama metro revealed that lateness and absenteeism affected completion of syllabi. When the syllabus is not completed, students find it difficult to understand content that is to be taught in the next class which foundation in most cases is based on the previous class. Both absenteeism and lateness, Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) pointed out, are symptomatic of education systems that are unable to manage teachers effectively, have weak teacher management structures, and are unable to provide incentives to motivate teachers to improve their attitudes to work.

Another factor is teacher motivation. With teacher motivation, any teacher who has the necessary motivation is satisfied with the teaching work and puts up his/her best. Dwelling on the motivation factor, Ofoegbu (2004) in a study revealed that when the teacher is motivated, he/she is happy, loves one he/she is doing and thus, able to put up his/her best. However, a teacher who is demotivated show poor behaviour towards the teaching job, thus, poor academic performance of students. Supporting the assertion of

Ofoegbu, Lockheed and Verspoor (1991) confirmed in their study that absence of teacher motivation produces behaviours which are unprofessional such as teacher lateness and or absenteeism, and teacher not giving students the needed attention in school to help develop academically. All these turn to poorly affect the academic performance of students.

### **2.5.3 School related factors**

A third factor that has the potential to interfere in the academic performance of students is school-related factors. Positive school-related factors impact positively on students' academic performance whilst negative school-related factors impact negatively on students' academic performance. Several works have been done in relation to this. In this study, the findings of Ethington and Smart on school-related factors impacting academic performance of students are worth mentioning. Ethington and Smart (2001) acknowledged that there are numerous school environmental factors that could impact the academic performance of students and among factors outlined included availability of teaching and learning materials, where the school is sited, quality of the physical facilities, class size and student-teacher ratios, teacher qualification and experience, and supervision. For Holland (1997), the school environment is able to build the capabilities of the users of the school, encourage the users to undertake diverse endeavors, and as well reward the users for the show of values and attitudes.

In a related work conducted by Shamaki (2015) using selected secondary schools in Yobe State in Nigeria to establish the impact the school's learning environment has on students' academic performance unearth that classroom painting and lighting, seats and sitting arrangement, the classroom climate and air quality or ventilation all impact

academic work. Thus, when these factors outlined are positive, learners academic work improves and when these factors are negative, learners academic work are hampered. Therefore, schools' management should as a matter of fact ensure that classes are well lighted, good ventilation, and proper seats and sitting arrangement for improved academic performance. The findings of Nyandwi (2014) with some selected secondary schools in Sumbawanga District, Tanzania were similar to that of Shamaki. However, the study conducted by Nyandwi was on science subjects. The revelations of the study showed that factors such as inadequate teaching and learning facilities like text books and reference books, desks and chairs, inadequate hostels or dormitories, inadequate provision of meals to students, shortage of qualified teachers and shortage of well-equipped science laboratories impede academic work, thus, promoting poor academic performance of students in science subjects.

Isangedighi (1998) also observed that the relevance of school factors such as the site and physical buildings to good academic achievements should not be underestimated. The site of a school significantly contributes to the number of people who will want to attend such school. The reverse is that schools with bad physical structures may serve a disincentive for students to learn and this causes poor academic performance. The latter was what Isangedighi coined as 'learners environment mismatch'. Crosnoe and Eamon (2005) also observed that classes with few learners, availability of electronic learning resources such as computers have been proven to promote academic work. A good school facility supports educational enterprise. O'Sullivan (2006) in a study in Pennsylvania's high schools in USA to find out whether there exists any correlation between building conditions and student academic achievement did establish that there exists a correlation

between building condition and student academic achievement. Good building conditions have a positive correlation with academic achievement. Schneider (2002) was able to reveal in Washington D.C schools that school facilities affect academic outcomes; spatial configurations, noise, heat, cold, light, and air quality have a tone on students' and teachers' ability to perform.

At another level, Court and Ghai (1986) reiterate the success story of the presence of teaching and learning materials in the academic performance of achievement of learners. From their study on education, society and development in primary schools in Kenya, they unearthed that making readily available learning materials for instance books and equipment led to intellectual variations among schools. Eshiwani (1988) did mention that a lot of schools where learners are not able to perform well is as a result of little money spent in buying teaching materials and where enough money is spent in buying teaching materials such as the relevant text books, learners perform well as the teaching job is made easy. Etsey (2005) also indicated that teaching and learning materials are very crucial to the academic achievement of learners. This was found out in a study conducted in the Shama sub-metro schools where inadequate teaching and learning materials was a challenge for students to comprehend the lessons taught culminating into low academic performance.

In a World Bank Report (1987) on school and classroom impact on student learning in Thailand, the report was that students in bigger schools learnt more than students in smaller schools. However, students in schools where the student-teacher ratio is high, learners learn less than in schools where the student-teacher ratio is less. Heynemann and Lopxlely (1983) in their study in Brazil, China, Botswana and Uganda

were able to add the impact of school library as school factor to academic achievement. They were able to reveal that the availability of school library had a positive impact on academic.

In conclusion, among the school environmental related factors influencing academic performance of students are teaching and learning materials, school location, quality of school physical facilities (school structure, classroom paintings), class size, learner-teacher ratio, teacher qualification and experience, supervision, and classroom ventilation and lightening.

#### **2.5.4 Management and students' academic performance**

Management in any institution basically refers to those tasks with the responsibility of directing the affairs of the institution to achieve its goals. Management is therefore leadership and an integral part of the school system to ensuring that teaching and learning are carried out in a manner that will promote better academic results of learners. Based on the crucial role management in the school system, Gray (1990) pointed to the fact that the essential role of the head teacher's leadership is one of the obvious signals to an effective school system. Cole (2002) also held same opinion as Gray and mentioned that academic progress of students depends on the function the school leader has to perform, his/her leadership style, his/her leadership style in relation with his/her vision, the aspirations of the school and the general methodology to ensuring that students make progress in their academic carrier. In the words of Balunywa (2000) working towards academic excellence, leadership is not only about marshalling people to executing a particular job but also ensuring that those marshalled are well taking care off in terms of welfare matters, creating an environment that is capable of encouraging them



to work towards the goals of the institution. In other studies, too, it was found out that idle leadership style is highly instrumental in realizing academic success of students. A school may have all it takes in terms of the necessary school environmental related factors but without a good leader, all will be in vain (Maicibi, 2003).

Though leadership style is crucial in ensuring academic excellence, the fact must be stated that no one straight leadership style can work and leaders must try and blend the necessary leadership styles to achieve results. This assertion is traceable to Bossert, Dywer, Rowan and Lee, (1982) where they confirmed that no simple style of leadership is workable for all schools, thus, school leaders must study and employ leadership styles that best suit their schools. Therefore, principals must find the style and structures most suited to their own local situation. Gray (1990) again wrote that a successful leader must have a definite direction and to succeed as a leader, the leader must plan ahead.

Contributing to the management factor, Levine and Lezotle (1990) in their study added that for a leader to be successful, he/she must be ready to sanction any follower who tries to taut the groups agenda. It is therefore prudent for headteachers to do away with teachers who are working against achieving the interest of school. Rutter, Maughan, Mortimor and Ougtan (1978) also suggested other leadership features that leaders can adopt to be effective. They suggested through their study that an effective leader is one who shares the task of responsibility among subordinates. Heads should therefore adopt this strategy and share responsibility among teachers. Through this, teaching and learning will yield the right results. Assistance from the head is another feature that can be employed as a management skill to achieve results. Regarding the form (s) of assistance, Levine and Stark (1981) outlined that the real form of assistance heads can offer teachers

is through motivation and activity-based assistance. These will give the teacher mastery and confidence over content delivery. Sizemore, Brossad and Harrigan (1983) added another all-important feature through which management can rely on to improve students' academic performance. This feature is supervision. Their opinion was that when heads embark on supervision in the form of frequent visits to the classrooms and engaging in normal interactions with teachers, will surely help improve the teaching and learning process in schools.

Concluding, management could be successful by studying the learning environment and employing the necessary leadership style could contribute positively to students' academic work. Also, employing a mix leadership style, appropriate sanctions, sharing task, giving the necessary assistance and supervision are all positive leadership traits capable of improving the academic performance of students.

### **2.5.5 Student Characteristics**

Etsey (2005) stated that intelligence is an individual characteristic that has a great potential of helping achieve excellence. However, intelligence without devoting time to do assignments in school and at home may not help improve academic work. Butler (1987) found out that when a learner is dedicated to doing homework has a positive relationship with academic performance, given there is a bit of encouragement. Etsey (2005) pointed to the fact that homework has a positive relationship with academic performance. But this can only be achieved when the homework is relevant to the learner, given on constant space, understood, and worth doing on one hand and on the other, the learner getting report for his/her performance. Harbison and Hanushek (1992) in their

study were also able to confirmed that homework is that connecting element linking the school and the home and capable of assisting to determine academic performance.

A second student characteristic affecting academic performance reviewed in this study was truancy. Nyandwi (2014) in a study to find out the causes of poor academic performance among secondary schools' students in Sumbawanga District, Tanzania, revealed that two issues were responsible for students' poor academic performance; truancy and incompetence of English language. When students frequently absent them from school it makes it impossible to cover the syllabus. Also, the English language is the medium to understanding any subject taught, the student inability to understand the English language will mean understanding examination is challenged. Therefore, it is conclusive that, school attendance has a high correlation with individual academic achievement. Whenever the student attend school on irregular bases, or cutting classes and exhibiting fatigue in the academic work, yield poor academic results. The bearing student's attitudes had on academic performance (McLean, 1997). The result was that attitudes such as refusal to go to school on regular bases, dodging classes and not obeying school rules and regulations had a negative bearing on academic performance. Similar outcomes such as that of Hassan (2002) did not deviate from previous studies as the similarities were clear and indication that truancy had negative implications on academic performance.

A third characteristic of the student is the concept of self-identity. Knowing oneself assist to release one's own dreams. Diaz (2003) held on to the concept of self-identity and articulated that self-identity gives opportunity for the student to know his/her capabilities and appreciate what can be achieved and cannot be achieved. The link

between self-identity and academic achievement is that, a weak student will appreciate his/her weaknesses and devote more time to learning. Other researchers have also contributed to the concept of self-identity. Marsh (1990) in a study revealed that the present academic achievements of someone is as a result of previous self-identity. Marsh and Yeung (1997) in their study held a similar opinion to that of Diaz. Edwards (2002) outcome was not entirely different from previous authors. He admitted that self-identity has the tendency foretell the academic performance of an individual than variables such as age or gender. However, in the likes of researchers like Helmke and Van Aken (1995), they found out that achievements in one's early stages of education has no bearing on self-identity. But the conclusion can still be drawn that at whatever level of education, the concept of self-identity has a bearing on academic achievement as majority of studies are pointing to that fact.

Another character that has been highly studied to having an influence in the students' academic work is motivation. Motivation is a tool that makes the student to be involved in learning. A well-motivated learner has that strong desire to learn, and he/she just does that (Diaz, 2003). The angle at which this motivation will come from needs to be addressed. With this, parental motivation has been mentioned in some works. For instance, where a learner perceives that the parents support and involvement are massive in his/her academic carrier, academic achievement is great when the learner perceived that the parents show concern and involvement in his/her academic carrier, the relationship is positive with academic achievement. The learner tries to work hard not to disappoint the supporting parents. Learners who performed poorly in reading,

mathematics and science was as a result of poor motivation from parents (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Wang & Wildman, 1995).

The conclusion is drawn that homework, truancy, self-identity, and motivation are among the student characteristics contributing to academic performance.

## **2.6 Conceptual Framework**

The study intends to investigate the causes of poor performance of students in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District. The conceptual framework adopted for this study is called “The Mix Factor” conceptual framework to poor academic performance of students in the junior high schools in the Builsa South District. This approach is chosen considering the fact that, there is no one cause to the poor academic performance of junior high students in the Builsa South District.

Figure 1 shows the perceived factors affecting poor academic performance of students in the Builsa South District. Academic performance of students in junior high schools over a given period of time may be influenced by school environmental factors, home conditions factors, teacher factors and students’ characteristics factors. This conceptualization shows the complexity of factors affecting students’ academic performance at the junior high school level.

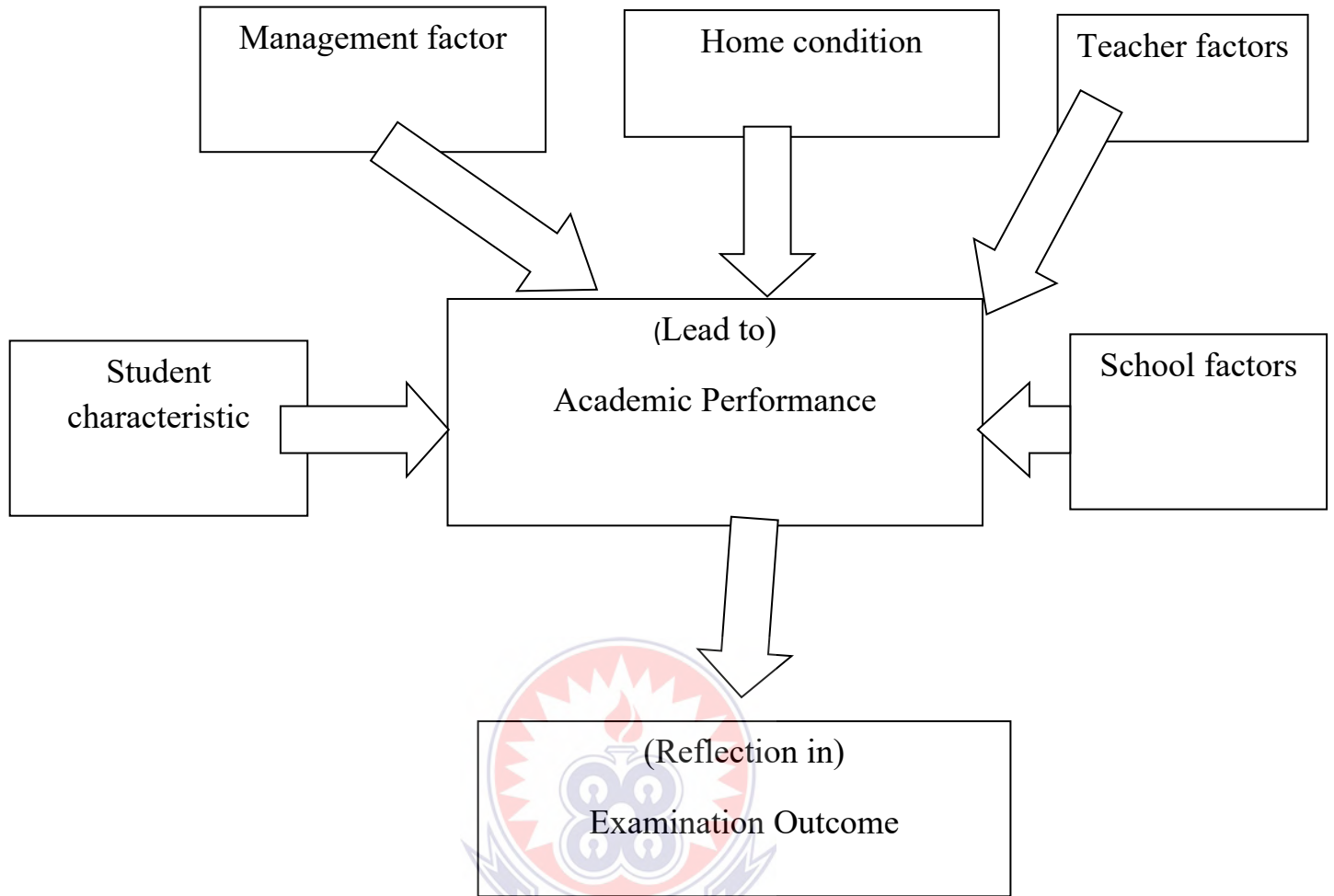


Figure 2.1: The mix factor conceptual framework

Source: Researcher's Own, 2022

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the procedures that the research took. It describes among other issues, the design, population, instruments and data collection and analysis procedures of the research.

#### **3.2 The Study Area**

The Builsa South District was given the status of a district on 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2012. It was created out of the then Builsa District. The district was among the four created in the region in 2012 and stood the overall number of districts in the region to thirteen. Fumbisi is the administrative capital. The Legislative Instrument that mandated its establishment is the Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462) of 2012 is (LI 2104). The population of Builsa South District, according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, is 36,514 representing 3.5 percent of the region's total population. Males constitute 49.6 percent and females represent 50.4 percent. The district has a sex ratio of 98.3. In terms of population structure, the district has youthful population (under 15 years) (40.7%) depicting a broad base population pyramid which tapers off with a small number of elderly persons 60 years and above (9.0%). The total age dependency ratio for the district is 88.6 (GSS, 2010). The youthful structure of the population gives the district the hope of future young leaders who will be able to marshal resources to development the district. Education is the key to prepare the youth to take up the challenge, therefore the need to have

good education. The essence of this research to come out with the causes and recommendations to sound education.

The Total Fertility Rate of the district stands 4.3. The General Fertility Rate is 119.8 births per 1000 women aged 15-49 years which is the sixth highest for the region. The Crude Birth Rate (CBR) is 27.7 per 1000 population. The crude death rate for the district is 9.2 per 1000. The death rate for males is highest for age 70 and above representing 60.7 deaths per 1000 population while for the females, the highest death rate of 27.7 deaths per 1000 population is also for age 70 and above. Accident/violence/homicide/suicide contributes for 4.2 percent of deaths, while 95.8 percent is by other causes (GSS, 2010). Studying the fertility of the district, one will observe that births in the district is high showing there are more births in the district. This calls for leaders of the district to put in place measures that will cater for the needs of these children for their proper growth and development.

Also from the Ghana Statistical Services, about 54 percent of the population aged 12 years and older are married and 34 percent have never married. By age 25-29 years, more than three quarters of females (78.9%) are married compared to 58.4 percent of males. At age 65 and above, widowed females account for as high as 59.3 percent while widowed males account for only 13.8 percent. Among the married, 81.1 percent have no education while about 31.8 percent of the never married have never been to school. About 80.1 percent of the married population is employed, 2.5 percent are unemployed and 17.3 percent are economically not active. About 5 out of 10 of those who have never married (52.4%) are economically not active with 2.4 percent unemployed (GSS, 2010). Of the overall employed population, about 81.0



percent are engaged as skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery, 7.0 percent in craft and related trade and 6.5 percent in service and sales. About 3.0 percent are engaged as managers, professionals, and technicians (GSS, 2010). The high percentage of the married being uneducated is an issue impacting negatively on children academic progress, therefore the need to investigate and provide measures.

Builsa South District lies between longitudes  $1^{\circ} 05'$  West and  $1^{\circ} 35'$  West and latitudes  $10^{\circ} 20'$  North and  $10^{\circ} 50'$  North of the equator. The district shares boundaries with the Builsa North district to the north, Mamprugu Moagduri District in the Northern Region to the South, West Mamprusi District to the west, and the Sisala East District in the Upper West Region to the east (GSS, 2010). The adjoining districts are quite distant in terms of proximity to the Builsa South District (GSS, 2010). In terms of the topography, the area is undulating and slopes ranging from 200 metres to 300 metres and are found in the western and northern part of the district particularly. In the valleys of Kulpawn, Besibeli, Asibelika and the Azimzim, the slopes are gentler and range from 150 metres to 200 metres. In general, the low-lying nature of the land makes greater part of it liable to flooding in years of copious rains (GSS, 2010). Therefore, in the event of flooding, inter-district travelling is impeded.

Like most parts of northern Ghana, a significant portion of the district falls within the Volta basin and is heavily dissected by a number of important tributaries of the White Volta such as the Kulpawn, Asebelika, and Belipieni, giving a very high drainage density. Most of these streams are however seasonal and dry up during the extended dry season with an adverse effect on the supply of water for both

agricultural and domestic use. The high drainage density coupled with the low-lying terrain, reduces easy accessibility in the district especially during the rainy season. Between July and September in particular, most rivers and streams overflow their banks, a number of roads, tracks and foot paths are flooded and settlements cut off from the center (GSS, 2010). The reason most students cut school during such periods. The cumulative effect is poor academic outcomes.

The vegetation of the district is characterized by savannah woodland and consists mostly of deciduous, widely spaced fire and drought resistant trees of varying sizes and density with dispersed perennial grasses and associated herbs. Through the activities of man, the woodland savannah has been reduced to open parkland where only trees of economic value like baobab, acacia, sheanut and the dawadawa have been retained with time. These trees satisfy domestic requirements for fuel wood and timber for local housing construction, cattle kraals, vegetable garden fences and materials for handicraft (GSS, 2010). Most students in the district during the dry season are engaged in fire wood fetching for domestic use. This act causes absenteeism among students.

There are a number of social infrastructural assets found in the district. Some of them are two Senior High School, seventeen (17) Junior High Schools, twenty-eight (28) Primary Schools and twenty-seven (27) kindergartens. The district can boast of a health center and twelve (12) Community Based Health Planning Services (CHPS) compounds, (GSS, 2010). Notwithstanding the existing social infrastructure, the growing population demands serious expansion in the district's social infrastructure for effective and efficient social service delivery. This explains why

there is overcrowding of students in the classrooms, making teaching and learning ineffective.

### **3.3 Research Design**

According to Creswell (2011), a research design is the advance planning of the methods to be adopted for collecting relevant data and the technique to be used in the analysis.

The researcher adopted the descriptive survey design using the quantitative approach for the study. Descriptive survey design is the procedure for describing, recording, analyzing and interpreting conditions (Caruth, 2013; Creswell, 2011; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Descriptive survey research design is administering a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviours or characteristics of the population (Creswell, 2011).

Descriptive design provides researchers with a lot of information from various respondents and also the data collected are easy to analyze (Creswell, 2011). However, how to retrieve all questionnaires that have been distributed to respondents is one of the weaknesses of descriptive survey design.

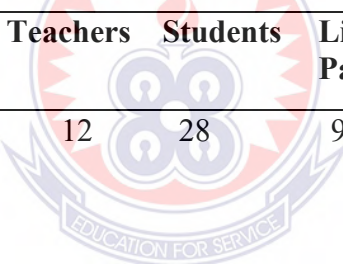
### **3.4 Target Population**

The targeted population included head teachers, teachers, students, literate parents of the 17 junior high schools in the district, and staff of the district education office.

The students have the requisite knowledge on objectives four (4), that is, students' characteristics responsible for their poor academic performance. They also

have knowledge on objective one (1), the role school environment plays in students' poor performance, objective two (2), to ascertain the home conditions responsible for the poor academic performance of students and objective three (3), to identify teacher factors that contribute to the poor performance of students. Students have contact with all these variables.

The accessible population was 258, comprising selected district education office staff; head teachers, teachers, JHS 3 students and literate parents of the five (5) selected junior high schools in the district, namely; Fumbisi Preparatory JHS, Zamsa JHS, Gbedema JHS, Kanjaga JHS, and Weisi JHS. The population of the study is presented in Table 3.1.



<b>Item</b>	<b>Head teachers</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Literate Parents</b>	<b>District office Staff</b>	<b>Total</b>
Fumbisi Preparatory JHS	1	12	28	9	-	50
Zamsa JHS	1	10	27	7	-	45
Gbedema JHS	1	11	28	8	-	48
Kanjaga JHS	1	12	26	6	-	45
Weisi JHS	1	10	29	9	-	49
District office Staff	-	-	-	-	21	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>258</b>

Source: Field Work, 2022

### 3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

According to Gall and Borg (2007), sampling is a technique used for selecting a given number of subjects from a target population as a representative of the population in research. Statistics from the Builsa South District directorate of Education indicated that the district has 17 Junior High Schools (GSS, 2010). The researcher used simple random sampling to select five (5) out of the 17 Junior High Schools for the study.

Using simple random sampling, the researcher chose an appropriate number of sampling units to fairly represent the 17 junior high schools in the district. In doing this, I considered 30% of the identified 17 schools. Lewins, Taylor and Gibbs (2005) indicates that, when determining sampling unit needed for a given level of accuracy, the researcher must use the conventional response rate of 20% which is considered as a good response rate, while a 30% response rate is considered to be really good. This is usually accepted in order to determine a general level of accuracy for a sample. Therefore, determining the sampling units for this particular study, the researcher considered 30% of the 17 junior high schools in the district; this yielded 5 schools as the sampling unit. At this stage, I numbered all the 17 Junior High Schools (JHS) in the district and with the simple random sampling, selected the 5 schools out of the 17 schools. The selection criteria were carried out by first assigning numerical codes to all the 17 schools in the district. After this, the numerical codes were put in a bowl, shuffled, and picked 5 times for the 5 schools. This gave the opportunity for equal chance of selection for the 17 schools. There was therefore the absence of manipulation and biases.

Purposive sampling was used to select all the five (5) head teachers. The lottery type of the simple random sampling was also used to select 129 respondents comprising

25 teachers (five from each school), 75 JHS 3 students (15 from each school), 20 literate parents of students (four from each school), and four (4) education office staffs, which was 50% of the population of 258 for the study. Flick (2015) suggests that, at least 10% of the population is a good representation where the population is a few thousands and 50% where the population is a few hundreds, therefore, 129 respondents which was 50% of the population of 258 was deemed appropriate and a good representation of the population for the study. Table 3.2 presents the breakdown of the sample of the study.

**Table 3.1: Breakdown of the Sample of the schools for the Study**

Category of Respondents	Total Number	Number Sampled
Head teachers	5	5
Teachers	55	25
Parents	39	20
Students	138	75
District office Staff	21	4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>129</b>

Source: Field work, 2022

### 3.6 Sources of Data

Sources of data of this research were both primary and secondary. Primary data were collected from respondents on the field. The questionnaire elicited for information on the role school environment factors play in students' poor academic performance in the junior high schools in then Builsa South District, the home conditions responsible for the poor academic performance of students in junior high schools in the Builsa South

District, the teacher factors that contribute to the poor academic performance of students in the junior high schools in the Builsa South District, and student characteristics responsible for poor academic performance of students in the junior high schools in the Builsa South District.

The secondary source of data for this research came from the review of literature on the causes of poor academic performance of students. This part of data confirmed the primary data from the respondents.

### **3.7 Data Collection Instrument**

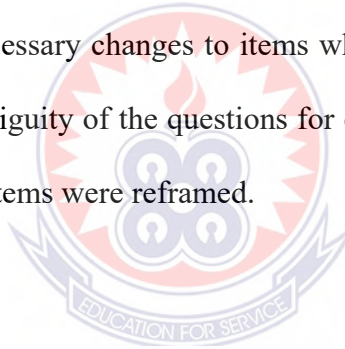
According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), a research instrument is a specific mechanism or strategy, the researcher uses to collect, manipulate, or interpret data. The researcher used closed ended questionnaire to collect data for the study. Questionnaire was used to for the study. The researcher used a set of self-develop questionnaire as means of gathering primary data for the study. The instrument was designed to obtain relevant information on the study. The questionnaire was mainly closed-ended items; questions that assisted the respondents in choosing from possible answers by agreeing to or disagreeing to the options given to investigate the causes of poor academic performance of students in the junior high schools in the district.

The close-ended questionnaire was meant to assist respondents to provide uniformity of response and to enable more information to be gathered. They also provide easier and accurate analysis of the data to obtain precise interpretation of the responses and a high degree of respondent's objectivity. A questionnaire is cost effective and less time consuming as compared to other instruments.

### **3.8 Piloting**

The purpose for piloting is to get the bugs out of the instrument so that the respondents in the study area will experience no difficulties in completing the questionnaire and also enable one to have preliminary analysis to see whether the wording and format of questions is appropriate (Bell, 2008).

The questionnaire was piloted to determine its validity and reliability. Thirty questionnaires were administered to 30 respondents, selected randomly from Junior High Schools in the Builsa North District which was not part of the study area but has similar characteristics as the main study. The purpose of the pilot-test was to enable the researcher to make the necessary changes to items which may be inappropriate and also determine the level of ambiguity of the questions for corrections. Ambiguous items were deleted and inappropriate items were reframed.



#### **Validity**

Validity is the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure. The researcher tested the face and content validity of the questionnaire. Face and content validity of the questionnaire were tested by the researcher. To achieve faced validity, the questionnaire was given to the supervisor to find out whether the items measure the intended purpose. The supervisor found out whether the items measure specific construct. The validity test enabled the researcher to change and delete items which were found to be unclear and ambiguous.



## **Reliability**

Reliability is the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results. Reliability is the extent to which the measuring instrument produces consistent scores when the same groups of individuals are repeatedly measured under the same condition (Bell, 2008). To determine the reliability, the questionnaire was administered to the same 30 respondents as stated earlier on, twice in the pilot study with a two week interval between the first and the second test and the coefficient of reliability from the two tests correlated. The reliability test yielded Cronbach alpha of 0.82.

### **3.9 Data Collection Procedure**

With an introductory letter from the district education office based on an introductory letter from the Head of Department of Educational Leadership of the university of Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development, the researcher was able to get the necessary support from the schools in the district. The introductory letter gave me the clearance to solicit for information from staff of the various schools, and staff of the district education office. An initial set of baseline data was collected from the head teachers, teachers, students, and staff of district education office. The baseline data developed a profile of how best to get the appropriate data to help answer the research objectives.

The researcher visited the education office and each of the schools selected prior to the study. This made it possible for dates and time of subsequent meetings to be scheduled. The questionnaire was personally administered to the respondents to ensure that the right information was obtained for the purpose of the study.

### **3.10 Data Analysis Plan**

The data collected were cleaned with the aim of identifying mistakes and errors which may have been made and blank spaces which have not been filled. A codebook for the questionnaire was prepared to record the response. The data was computed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software package. Frequencies and percentage were used to analyze and answer all the research questions.

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

Participants' rights and privacy were respected and protected. Again, the researcher was attentive to the cultural and social distinctions of the study respondents. All research findings were correctly presented with full disclosure of the research methodology and the research process's limits (Pandey & Pandey, 2021). The researcher's goal in this study is to add to the exploration of the perception of teachers relative to the educational leadership practices implemented by headmasters. This legitimizes the study; hence, treating respondents respectfully and getting informed permission is critical.

The participants will be informed that they are free to accept or decline the request to participate in the investigation. Participants were told of the study's aim, purpose, and participation in the survey, how the research results were distributed and utilized, what their rights as participants were, and where they may acquire more information on their research rights. As a result, the researcher gained informed permission from the individuals. Participation will be entirely optional.

It was also necessary to obtain the consent of the participants to use the information acquired from the questionnaire for academic purposes. However, they were made aware that confidentiality shall be maintained as much as possible since the names of respondents were not going to appear anywhere in the research.

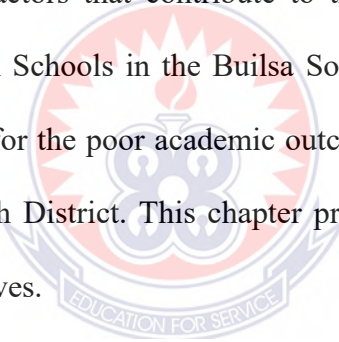


## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The main objective of the study was to investigate the causes of poor academic performance of students in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District. The study had four (4) specific objectives which included to: find out the role school environmental factors play in students' poor academic performance in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District; ascertain the home conditions responsible for the poor academic performance of students in Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District; identify teacher factors that contribute to the poor academic performance of students in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District; and identify students characteristics responsible for the poor academic outcome of students in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District. This chapter presents the findings of the study in relation to the study objectives.



#### **4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

The socio-demographic characteristics of the study participants are discussed in this section, which include the age distribution of respondents, their sex, their level of education, work experience, and their marital status. However, it must be made clear that the demographic characteristics in terms of the individual items are not the aggregates of the entire population under study for each item but aggregates of study population that matter for that particular item. Therefore, there are repetitions of same demographic characteristics items due to this. The first category focuses on the students. The researcher found out the respondents' ages to establish the age structure

of the students purposively sampled for the study. The total students sampled for the study was seventy-five (75). The data shows that majority of the respondents (67) representing 89% fell within 15-19 years while the minority of the respondents (8) representing 11% were between 10-14. The age distribution of the students is presented in Table 4.1. The sex of respondents (students) was next. The researcher collected data on sex of the students to understand the gender representation. Information gathered indicated that out of the 75 respondents, 17 respondents representing 23% were males while 58 respondents representing 77% were females. From the percentages, the females were the most participants. Table 4.1 presented the sex distribution of this. The last aspect for the students was their marital status. Out of the 75 students, 73 students representing 97% were single while 2 students representing 3% were married. This is represented in Table 4.1.

The second category was the other respondents (Headteachers, Teachers, Staff of district G.E.S and Parents). The total population for this category was 54 respondents. The first item for this category that the researcher looked at was the age distribution. The result indicated that 21 respondents representing 39% fell within 30-39 and this constituted the majority. The rest of the information is presented in table 4.1. The next item was the gender of the respondents. Males were 37 out of the total 54 respondents, representing 69% while the females were 17 representing 31%. Table 4.1 has represented this. The third demographic characteristic was the education of the respondents. The data gathered revealed that 31 of the respondents had a first degree and this represented 57%. Only 1 respondent representing 1% never had any sort of formal education at all. The high percentage of respondents having formal education demonstrated their high level of

understanding of the questions posed before them. The fourth demographic characteristic was the marital status of the respondents. The data collected reports that 40 out of the 54 respondents representing 74% were married and this represented the majority while divorce and widow both had a respondent representing 2% each. The rest of the information is represented in Table 4.1.

The fifth and very last category captured only the work experience. This particular category focused on the head teachers, teachers, parents and staff of the district G.E.S. The total population for this category was 54 respondents. Students were excluded because this particular demographic characteristic had nothing to do with them. The data gathered showed that 43 respondents representing 80% had work experience within the range of 0-9 years, 6 respondents representing 11% had work experience within the range of 10-19 years while 5 respondents representing 9% had work experience of 20 years and above. This information is also represented in table 4.1.

*Table 4.1: Demographic Information*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Age distribution of students	14-16	8	11
	17-19	67	89
	<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>
Sex of students	Male	17	23
	Female	58	77
	<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>
Marital status of students	Single	73	97
	Married	2	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>
Age distribution of other respondents (Headteachers, Teachers, Parents, and District G.E.S staff)	20-29	8	15
	30-39	21	39
	40-49	15	28
	50-59	9	17
	60 and above	1	1

	<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>
Gender of other respondents (Headteachers, Teachers, Parents, and District G.E.S staff)	Male	37	69
	Female	17	31
	<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>
Education of other respondents (Headteachers, Teachers, Parents, and District G.E.S staff)	Secondary	3	6
	Cert 'A' 3 Years	3	6
	Diploma	13	24
	First degree	31	57
	Master degree	3	6
	Non	1	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>
Marital status of other respondents (Headteachers, Teachers, Parents, and District G.E.S staff)	Married	40	74
	Single	10	18
	Separated	2	4
	Divorce	1	2
	Widow	1	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>
Work experience of headteachers, teachers, parents and district G.E.S staff	0-9	43	80
	10-19	6	11
	20 and above	5	9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

#### 4.3 Research Question 1: What School environmental factors contributing to students' poor academic performance

The first objective of the study sought to explore the school environmental factors contributing to the causes of poor performance of students in the junior high schools of the Builsa South District. To address this research objective, various questions were

asked for respondents to answer. This particular objective had a total of 129 respondents; 5 headteachers, 25 classroom teachers, 20 parents, 75 students and 4 staff of the district G.E.S.

#### **4.3.1 Teachers' absence from school**

Respondents' knowledge was sought on the issue of teachers' absence from school, whether it has any bearing on students performing poorly academically. The data revealed that 59 of the respondents representing 46% strongly agreed to teachers' absenteeism contributing negatively to students' poor academic performance, 29 respondents representing 22% agreed that teachers' absenteeism affects students' academic performance, 19 respondents representing 15% disagreed whilst, 22 of the respondents representing 17% strongly disagreed that teacher's absenteeism cannot cause poor academic performance of students.

#### **4.3.2 Students' abuse/humiliation**

The factor of student abuse/humiliation perceived to causing poor academic performance of students was sought from the respondents. The respondents were able to give their opinions on this. For the strongly agreed, 45 respondents representing 35% said student abuse/humiliation causes poor academic performance of students, 50 respondents representing 39% agreed that student abuse/humiliation causes poor academic performance of students, 23 representing 18% disagreed while 11 of the respondents representing 8% strongly disagreed that student abuse/humiliation causes poor academic performance of students.



#### **4.3.3 Lack of effective supervision**

On the knowledge of lack of effective supervision, the respondents gave their opinions. Of the 129 respondents, 62 of them (48%) strongly agreed that lack of effective supervision causes poor academic performance, 49 (38%) agreed that lack of proper supervision causes poor academic performance, 15 (12%) disagreed that lack of proper supervision causes poor academic performance while only 3 (2%) strongly disagreed that lack of proper supervision causes poor academic performance.

#### **4.3.4. Inadequate teaching and learning resources**

Of the 129 respondents, 72 (56%) strongly agreed that inadequate teaching and learning resources cause poor academic performance, 39 (30%) agreed that inadequate material resources cause poor academic performance. On the other hand, 15 respondents representing 12% disagreed that teaching and learning resources cause poor academic performance whilst only 3 respondents representing 2% strongly disagreed that teaching and learning resources cause poor academic performance.

#### **4.3.5 Insufficient professional teaching staff**

The responses of respondents on this particular factor showed that most of the respondents held the view that insufficient professional teaching staff impact negatively on the academic performance of students. The study revealed that 52 (40.3%) strongly agreed that insufficient teaching staff causes poor academic performance of students, 39 (30.2%) agreed that insufficient professional staff causes poor academic performance. On the other hand, 29 (22.5%) of the respondents disagreed that insufficient professional

teaching staff causes poor academic performance and 9 (7%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that insufficient professional teaching staff causes poor academic performance.

#### **4.3.6 Poor communication in school**

The study was able to reveal that poor communication in school is a major factor that negatively affects academic performance of students. Out of the 129 respondents, 50 respondents representing 39% strongly agreed that this factor causes poor academic performance of students. Also, 44 respondents representing 34% agreed that bad school tone causes poor academic performance. The reverse saw 30 (23%) disagreeing that poor communication in school causes poor academic performance and only 5 (4%) strongly disagreed that bad school tone causes poor academic performance.

#### **4.3.7 Failure to organize seminars, workshops, in-service training for teachers**

The study was able to that 48 respondents representing 37% strongly agreed that this is a factor that can cause poor academic performance of students, 45 respondents representing 35% agreeing that this factor can cause poor academic performance of students. On the other hand, both disagreed and strongly disagreed each had 18 respondents representing 14% each regarding failure to organize seminars, workshops, in-service training for teachers causing students' poor academic performance.

#### 4.4 Research Question 2: What Home conditions are responsible for students' poor academic performance

**Table 4.2: Home conditions responsible for students' poor academic performance in the Builsa South District**

**Table 4.2: Home conditions responsible for students' poor academic performance in the Builsa South District**

Item	SA	A	D	SD
1. Engagement of students in economic activities, eg. Trading	59(46%)	48(37%)	12(9%)	10(8%)
2. Poor socio-economic background of parents	37(29%)	62(48%)	24(19%)	6(4%)
3. Low academic background of parents	35(27%)	50(39%)	22(17%)	22(17%)
4. Single parenthood/divorced parents	61(47%)	41(32%)	23(18%)	4(3%)
5. Non provision of needed learning materials by parents	46(36%)	56(43%)	7(5%)	20(16%)

1: Respondents in general agreed that engaging students in economic activities could impact negatively on their academic performance. Out of the 129 respondents, a total of 107 respondents representing 83% supported this assertion whilst 22 respondents representing 17% generally refuted the assertion that engaging students in economic activities such as trading impede their academic performance.

2: Poor socio-economic background of parents. 37 (29%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the assertion that poor economic background of parents causes poor academic performance of students, 62 (48%) agreed that students whose parents are poor could perform poorly academically. On the other side, 24 (19%) disagreed that poor economic background of parents could not cause poor performance of students academically whilst 6 (4%) strongly disagreed with the assertion.

3: students whose parents have low academic achievement perform poorly academically. The largest proportion of respondents 85 (66%) of the total 129 respondents indicated that students whose parents had achieved low academically would perform poorly academically. Minority of the respondents 44 (34%) generally did not support the point that students whose parents have low academic achievements perform poorly academically.

4: 61 (47%) of the respondents strongly agreed that single parenthood/divorced parents wards perform poorly academically, 41 (32%) only agreed that singly parenthood/divorced couples children perform poorly academically. On the other side, 23 (18%) of the respondents disagreed that single parenthood/divorced parents children perform poorly academically whilst, 4 (3%) strongly disagreed that single parenthood/divorced couples children perform poorly academically.

5: 46 (36%) of the respondents strongly agreed to the point that non provision of needed learning materials by parents causes poor academic performance of students, 56 (43%) of the respondents agreed that the assertion was correct. However, 27(21%) generally disagreed to this view.

#### **4.5 Research Question 3: What Teacher factors contribute to students' poor academic performance**

The role of the teacher in the academic achievements of the student cannot be underestimated. The teacher factors looked at included poor/inappropriate teaching methodologies, poor interpersonal relationship with students, lack of interest in students school work, teacher's lateness to school, among others.

Regarding poor/inappropriate teaching methodologies as a factor that could cause poor academic performance of students, the data from the sampled respondents found that 114 out of the 129 respondents generally perceived this factor to truly cause poor academic performance among students while the rest of the 15 respondents generally disagreed with the assertion.

Second, 95 out of the 129 respondents linked poor interpersonal relationship of teachers with students to a factor that could cause poor academic performance among students. The rest of the 34 respondents thought otherwise.

Third, 110 out of the 129 sampled respondents shared a similar view. They opined that teachers lack of interest in students school work causes poor academic performance. On the other side, 19 of remaining respondents also shared a similar opinion. They saw teachers lack of interest in students school work not to have any negative impact in their academic performance.

Fourth, teachers' lateness to school factor. 108 respondents went with the opinion that lateness of teachers to school could cause poor academic performance of students. The remaining 21 sampled respondents went contrary to lateness of teachers capable of causing poor academic performance of students.

Fifth, teachers' absence from school on regular basis; On this factor, 95 of the sampled respondents generally supported the point that when teachers absent themselves regularly from school could cause poor academic performance of students. Conversely, the remaining 34 respondents on a general note refused the point teachers absence from school on regular basis could cause poor academic performance of students.

Six, teachers' inability to complete scheme of work (syllabus); Majority of the respondents sampled, 110 were of the view that the inability of the teacher to complete his/her syllabus could result to students performing poorly academically. On the other hand, the remaining 19 respondents generally refuted that the inability of the teacher to complete his/her scheme of work (syllabus) cannot cause students to perform poorly academically.

Lastly, teacher's inability to upgrade himself/herself; 80 of the sampled population responded generally affirmed that the inability of the teacher to upgrade himself/herself causes poor academic performance of students whilst the remaining 49 sampled generally disregarded this point as they felt that the inability of the teacher to upgrade himself/herself will not make students to perform poorly academically.

#### **4.6 Research Question 4: What Students characteristics contribute to students' poor academic performance**

One hundred and twenty-nine (129) respondents were used to ascertain the students' characteristics that contribute to students' poor academic performance in the Builsa South District. Respondents were presented with series of statements to indicate their level of agreement and or disagreement regarding the students' characteristics contributing to their poor academic performance.

##### **4.6.1 Poor revision management**

This section found out the contribution of poor revision management could have on students' academic performance. The data showed that out of the 129 respondents, 94 respondents on a general note supported the assertion that poor revision management causes poor academic performance. The remaining 35 respondents were of a contrary

opinion that poor revision management cannot cause poor academic performance among students.

#### **4.6.2 Too many extra-curricular activities**

On the side of the impact of the extra-curricular activities, 100 respondents making the majority on a general basis supported that too many extra-curricular activities can cause poor academic performance of students whilst the minority, 29 respondents generally did not support that too many extra-curricular activities cannot cause poor academic performance.

#### **4.6.3 High Truancy rate among students**

The data captured indicated that majority of the respondents (105) generally supported that high truancy rate among students causes poor academic performance. On the other hand, only 24 of the respondents representing the minority were of the view that, there is no way high truancy rate among students could cause poor academic performance among students.

#### **4.6.4 Lack of self -motivation**

The data gathered captured indicated that a greater proportion of the respondents, 117 respondents generally supported that lack of self-motivation among students causes poor academic performance. The other side of the data indicated that only 12 respondents did not support that lack of self-motivation could lead to poor academic performance among students.

#### **4.6.5 Frequent poor health status of students**

On the issue of frequent poor health of students, the data captured revealed that most of the respondents (117) generally supported the point that frequent poor health of students causes poor academic performance whilst 12 of the respondents indicated that frequent poor health status of respondents cannot cause poor academic performance of students.

#### **4.6.6 Students' intellectual ability**

On the issue of students' intellectual ability, the data gathered revealed that majority of the respondents (107) generally supported the point that students' intellectual ability causes poor academic performance whilst the minority, 22 of the respondents generally indicated that students' intellectual ability cannot cause poor academic performance.

#### **4.6.7 Students' readiness/maturation**

The data gathered indicated that majority of the respondents (87) generally supported that students' readiness/maturation causes poor academic performance. On the other hand, only 42 of the respondents representing the minority were of the view that, students' readiness/maturation cannot cause poor academic performance among students.

### **4.7 Discussion**

#### **4.7.1 School environmental factors contributing to students' poor academic performance**

This objective was designed to validate some statements that could cause students to perform poorly academically in the Builsa South District. The key finding emanating



from this objective suggests that teachers' absence from classes, students' abuse/humiliation, lack of proper supervision, inadequate material resources, insufficient professional teaching staff, bad school tone and failure to organize seminars, workshops, in-service training for teachers are all school environmental factors causing students' poor academic performance in the Builsa South District in this study. The results indicate that for each factor, majority of the respondents generally agreed with that factor to cause poor academic performance of students. This is in line with Ethington and Smart (2001) who noted that how available instructional materials are, where the school is sited, the quality of the physical facilities, level of teacher qualification and experience, and supervision are all factors influencing academic performance. Where instructional materials are readily available, the location of the school is good, good school physical facilities, highly qualified and experienced teachers improve students' academic performance whereas, absence of instructional materials, poor school location, poor school physical facilities and nonprofessional and inexperienced teachers impede academic performance. Also, in line with Nyandwi (2014), some school environmental factors that could cause poor academic performance of students in science related subjects include inadequate teaching and learning facilities like text books and reference books, desks and chairs, inadequate hostels or dormitories, inadequate provision of meals to students, shortage of qualified teachers and shortage of well-equipped science laboratories. All these factors outlined by Nyandwi are not just limited to science related subjects alone, but other subjects as well. In other works, Heynemann and Lopxlely (1983) identified that schools with well-equipped libraries stand a greater chance of seeing their students perform well academically. Etsey (2005) found the presence of

teaching and learning materials to have positive contribution to academic achievement. This suggests that school environment; teachers' absenteeism, students' abuse/humiliation, lack of proper supervision, inadequate material resources, insufficient professional teaching staff, bad school tone and absence of seminars, workshops, in-service training for teachers are potential factors to cause poor academic performance of students in the Builsa South District.

#### **4.7.2 Home conditions responsible for students' poor academic performance**

This section discusses the home conditions responsible for students' poor academic performance under consideration in this study. This section addressed research question two on the causes of poor academic performance of students in the junior high schools.

The study identified several factors that were confirmed by respondents as some home factors responsible for poor academic performance of students. The study results indicate that all the five factors identified as possible causes of poor academic performance were supported by the majority of the respondents. The findings show that home factors such as engaging students in economic activities (trading and farming), poor economic background of parents, low academic background of parents, single parenthood/divorced parents and non-provision of the needed learning materials by parents/guardian cause poor academic performance. This finding is in consonance with Dosoo (2000) who found out that school children who experienced divorce frequently record low academic achievement than children from non-divorced families. Further, in the study of Farooq et al., (2011) high level of socio-economic status of parents is the best indicator contributing towards the quality of learners' achievement; family

characteristics like socio economic status are significant predictors for learners' performance at school besides school factors, peer factors and student factors. In the same study, they also found out that parental education has positive effects on learners' academic performance. In other related studies, Krashen (2005) saw that learners whose parents were educated scored higher on standardized tests than those whose parents were not educated. The reason being that, educated parents could better communicate with their children regarding school work, activities and the information being taught at school. For a study conducted by Amukowa and Karue (2013) also touched on the home conditions of students in relation to their academic progress. For them, the home environments of the learners and their family backgrounds could impact negatively on their performance. They revealed that, learners who were not able to read effectively was as a result of parents' inability to provide them with the needed reading materials.

These findings and given that most of the respondents supported each of the home conditions, it implies that any of these points could cause poor academic performance of students in the Builsa South District.

#### **4.7.3 Teacher factors that contribute to students' poor academic performance**

This section of the study discusses the research question on the teacher factors that contribute to students' poor academic performance in the Builsa South District. The results are discussed based on the responses from the respondents sampled for this study.

The teacher factors looked at under this objective were poor/inappropriate teaching and learning methodologies, poor interpersonal relationship with students, lack of interest in students school work, teacher's lateness to school, teacher's absence from

school on regular basis, teacher's inability to complete scheme of work (syllabus) and finally, teacher's inability to upgrade himself/herself. The findings suggest that the respondents viewed all the factors under this particular objective to having the tendency of causing poor academic performance of students in the Builsa South District. As it is in line with Musili (2015) teacher's professional qualification affects learner achievement and concluded that professional experience of teachers has an influence on learner performance. Also, Adane (2013) found out that teacher factors such the attitude of lateness to school and absenteeism, inability to complete the syllabus and limited take home assignments to students contribute to low academic performance of students. Adane further explained that, teacher's lateness to school is an impediment to hindering him/her not to complete syllabus before final examination. Also, the inability of teachers to give take home assignments makes students roam about after school, especially the unserious ones but the art of giving them take home assignments, students are well engaged at home and this can improve their academic performance. However, in this study, limited take home assignments have not been captured as a factor capable of causing poor academic performance of students in the Builsa South District.

In other studies, Ofoegbu (2004) attributed poor academic performance of learners to poor teacher's performance in terms of meeting the teaching task, negative attitudes to work and poor teaching habits. These findings suggest that the outlined factors in this study are capable of bringing about poor academic performance of students in the study area as they have been empirically backed by related researches.

#### **4.7.4 Students characteristics that contribute to students' poor academic performance**

Section 4.7.4 discussed the students' characteristics that contribute to students' poor academic performance in the Builsa South District. This section addressed the research objective and question four of this study. The study points out several findings from the responses of the sampled respondents in the Builsa South District. The study findings revealed majority of the respondents confirming that poor revision management, too many extra-curricular activities, high truancy rate among students, lack of self-motivation, poor health status of students, students' intellectual ability and students' readiness/maturation are students' characteristics that could cause them to perform poorly academically.

Poor attendance caused by truancy or dodging school and cutting classes are seen as important in determining student's academic performance. McLean (1997) found that students' attitudes such as absenteeism, truancy and indiscipline had a negative effect on their performance. In the field of motivation, Diaz (2003) opined that when a student is strongly motivated, all his/her effort and attention are directed toward attaining a particular goal, thus bringing into play all his/her capabilities to realize this, arguing that positive motivation has a direct correlation with academic performance.

The overall results show that the all factors underlined in the study have a greater tendency to impede the academic performance of students in the Builsa South District. However, there are still factors unmentioned with also a higher tendency to cause poor academic performance of students.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the entire research. It is organized into three sections, where section 5.2 provides a summary of the research findings. Section 5.3 presents the research conclusion, and section 5.4 focuses on the recommendation of the study both for action and areas for further studies.

#### 5.2 Summary of Findings

The findings of this study were based on four (4) specific objectives, namely to: ( i) find out the role school environmental factors play in students' poor academic performance in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District, (ii) ascertain the home conditions responsible for the poor academic performance of students in Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District, (iii) identify teacher factors that contribute to the poor academic performance of students in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District, and (iv) identify students characteristics responsible for the poor academic outcome of students in the Junior High Schools in the Builsa South District.

##### 5.2.1 School environmental factors contributing to students' poor academic performance

The study revealed that the school environmental factors contributing to students' poor academic performance include: teachers' absence from classes, students' abuse/humiliation, lack of effective supervision of students by school management,

inadequate teaching and learning resources for teaching and learning, insufficient professional teaching staff, poor communication in the school, failure of school management to organize seminars, workshops, and in-service training for teachers.

### **5.2.2 Home conditions responsible for students' poor academic performance**

The study established that, engaging students in economic activities (trading, farming etc.), poor socio-economic background of students' parents, low academic background of students' parents, single parenthood/divorced parents and non-provision of needed learning materials by parents/guardians to students are home conditions responsible for students' poor academic performance.

### **5.2.3 Teacher factors that contribute to students' poor academic performance**

The study established that, poor/inappropriate teaching methodologies, poor interpersonal relationship between teachers and students, lack of interest in students work by teachers, teacher's lateness to school on regular basis, teacher's absenteeism, teacher's inability to complete scheme of work (syllabus) and teacher's inability to upgrade himself/herself are teacher factors capable of causing poor academic performance of students.

### **5.2.4 Students characteristics that contribute to students' poor academic performance**

The results show that poor revision management by students, too many extra-curricular activities engaged by students, high truancy rate amongst students, lack of self-motivation, frequent poor health status, students' intellectual ability and students'

readiness/maturation are student characteristics capable of causing poor academic performance.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

It is concluded that the major school environmental factors contributing to students' poor academic performance included teachers' absence from classes, students' abuse/humiliation, lack of effective supervision, inadequate teaching and learning resources, insufficient professional teaching staff, poor communication in school, failure of school management to organize seminars, workshops, and in-service training for teachers. These shortcomings in the school environment should be eliminated to promote students' academic performance.

It is also concluded that home factors that caused poor students performance included engaging students in economic activities (trading, farming etc.), poor socio-economic background of students' parents, low academic background of students' parents, single parenthood/divorced parents and non-provision of needed learning materials by parents/guardians to students. These negative factors should be remedied to improve students learning at home to improve performance.

It is concluded that teacher factors that contribute to students' poor academic performance in the Builsa South District included poor/inappropriate teaching methodologies, poor interpersonal relationship between teacher and students, lack of interest in students work by the teacher, teacher lateness to school on regular basis, teacher absenteeism, teacher inability to complete scheme of work (syllabus) and teacher inability to upgrade himself/herself. This should be addressed to improve students' academic performance.



Finally, the study concludes that students' characteristics that contribute to students' poor academic performance included poor revision management by students, too many extra-curricular activities engaged by students, high truancy rate amongst students, lack of self-motivation, frequent poor health status, students' weak intellectual ability and students' showing no readiness/maturation are capable of causing poor academic performance and therefore should be avoided.

#### **5.4 Recommendations of the Study**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The study found that the school environmental factors are very instrumental in the students' academic achievements. Therefore, it is recommended that supervision should be strengthened and circuit supervisors should be more regular in the schools. Regular visits to the schools would motivate the teachers to be more regular and early in school. When students realize that supervisors are regular in visiting the schools and teachers are also present always, they would be challenged to change their attitude towards school.
2. Also, guidance and counselling should be encouraged in the schools by management to meet students' needs. Students need someone to talk to since parents do not have time for their wards at home and teachers too do not show much interest in the students.
3. The study also found out that the home conditions are key to the achievement of students academically and recommended that, regular sensitization meetings and community non-formal education classes should be organized within communities in the Builsa South to inform parents about the value of education to children, the

community and the nation. This would be a way of encouraging them to be active in the Parent Associations as well as other activities in the schools. They would also see the need to provide the basic needs of their wards and provide help for them at home for their studies.

4. Also, the Builsa South Assembly has to access Common Fund from the Government for development. It is recommended that part of the Fund be invested in employment-generating activities for parents, especially those with poor economic standing. This would increase their income levels so that they can meet the basic needs of their children as well as provide the learning materials.
5. The teacher factors should not be over looked as they could cause serious academic problems for students. The researcher recommends that the district assembly should work out incentive packages to increase teachers' motivation to carry out their teaching profession diligently.
6. Teachers should be re-trained to use different teaching strategies and more practical-oriented approaches to teaching so that students will apply the lessons to everyday life. This will make them realize the importance of the lessons taught and not regard them as abstract. Interest will therefore be created in the children and their desire to be in school would be increased.
7. Students characteristics are also crucial to their academic performance. In this direction, the researcher recommends that the school authorities should investigate and give the necessary support to truant students to enable them change and take their academic work seriously.

#### **5.4.2 Suggestions for Further Study**

The study was carried out in the Builsa South District. Further research is recommended to investigate the same problem using other metropolitans, municipals and or districts to ascertain whether these findings would be the same or different.



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## **APPENDIX**

### **AKENTEN APPIAH MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT-KUMASI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

#### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS**

My name is Akamba Baba Akanzang, a student of Akenteng Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development (AAMUSTED) and pursuing, Master of Arts Degree in Educational Leadership. The title of my project work is, “CAUSES OF POOR PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN (GHANA): THE CASE OF BUILSA SOUTH DISTRICT”. You are invited to participate in this research study because your participation is very important to the success of the research. However, your participation in this research is completely voluntary. I am conducting a study to learn about the causes of poor performance of students in the junior high schools in (Ghana): the case of Builsa South District. Although this study may or may not benefit you personally, I hope that the results of this research will help bring to light the causes of poor performance of students in the junior high schools in the district.

If you agree to participate in this research study then please answer the questionnaires that follow. Your participation in this study will be confidential and your answers will not in any way be put in the public domain.

Thank you.

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

**SECTION A: Demographic characteristics of respondents**

1. Respondent's age

.....

2. Respondent's gender

1. Male

2. Female

3. Respondent's status

1. Headteacher

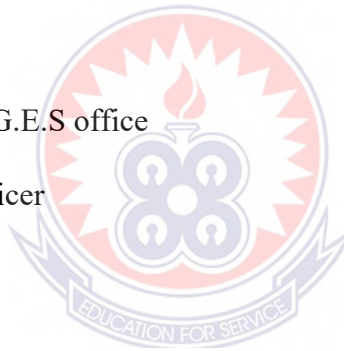
2. Teacher

3. Staff of district G.E.S office

4. Examination officer

5. Parent

6. Student



4. Academic qualification

1. Senior High School

2. Cert. A 3 Years

3. Diploma

3. First Degree

4. Master's Degree

5. Others (Specify).....



5. For how long have worked as an employee of G.E.S?

.....

6. What is your marital status?

1. Single

2. Married

3. Separated

4. Divorced

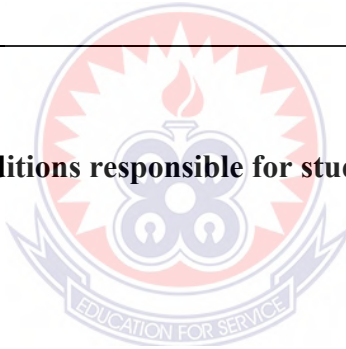
3. Others (Specify).....

Please indicate the extent to which the statement is SA- Strongly Agree, A- Agreed, D- Disagreed and SD- Strongly Disagreed with the research topic and where: **strongly agreed** means the statement is more than enough to cause poor performance, **agreed** means the statement is enough to cause poor performance, **disagreed** means the statement is not enough to cause poor performance and **strongly disagreed** means the statement is more not enough to cause poor performance among students at all.

**SECTION B: School environmental factors contributing to student's poor academic performance**

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
1.	Teachers' absence from classes				
2.	Students' abuse/humiliation				
3.	Lack of effective supervision				
4.	Inadequate teaching and learning resources				
5.	Insufficient professional teaching staff				
6.	Poor communication in the school				
7.	Failure to organize seminars, workshops, in-service training for teachers				

**SECTION C: Home conditions responsible for student's poor academic performance**



S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
8.	Engagement of students in economic activities (trading and farming)				
9.	Poor socio-economic background of parents				
10.	Low academic background (status) of parents				
11.	Single parenthood/divorced parents				
12.	Non provision of needed learning materials by parents/guardian				

**SECTION D: Teacher factors that contribute to student's poor academic performance**

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
13.	Poor/inappropriate teaching methodologies				
14.	Poor interpersonal relationship with students				
15.	Lack of interest in students school work				
16.	Teacher's lateness to school				
17.	Teacher's absence from school on regular basis				
18.	Teacher's inability to complete scheme of work (syllabus)				
19.	Teacher's inability to upgrade himself				

**SECTION E: Student's characteristics that contribute to students' poor academic performance**

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
20.	Poor revision management				
21.	Too many extra-curricular activities				
22.	High Truancy rate among students				
23.	Lack of self-motivation				
24.	Frequent poor health status of students				
25.	Students' intellectual ability				
26.	Students' readiness/maturation				

**End of Questionnaires, Thank you!**