

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

CORRELATES OF DROPPING OUT OF BASIC SCHOOLS IN THE
VOLTA REGION: THE CASE OF AKATSI DISTRICT

BY

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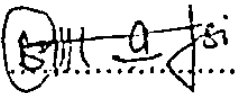
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I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

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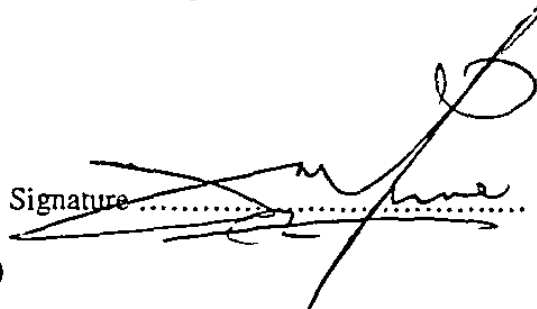
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SUPERVISORS' DECLARATION

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

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ABSTRACT

The incidence of school drop out in the basic schools in Ghana has been persistent. The objective of this study, therefore, was to find out the main factors responsible for dropping out of basic schools in the Volta Region of Ghana. The samples used for the study were dropouts and Junior Secondary School (J.S.S.) students still in school (non-dropouts) in the Akatsi district. A total sample size of 357 primary and J.S.S students comprising 214 dropouts and 143 non-dropouts were used. The snowball and purposive sampling techniques were used in selecting the dropouts while the random sampling technique was resorted to in selecting the 143 non-dropouts from 15 Junior Secondary Schools.

Two sets of structured interview schedule were used as instruments to collect data for the study. One set of the structured interview schedule was used for the dropouts and the other for non-dropouts. Frequencies, percentage distributions, crosstabulations and the chi-square test were used to analyse the data collected. The main finding of the study was that the incidence of household and community poverty is so high in the Akatsi district. The effects of this are that: (a) parents are unable to provide their children with their school needs, pay their children's school fees, and provide their children with pocket money; (b) manual labour was used excessively to support most of the schools; (c) teenage pregnancy was rampant.

The main recommendations, in effect, are that: (a) the central government should review the policy of communities providing classroom infrastructure and furniture for their schools; (b) a fund be instituted by the District Assembly to assist very needy

pupils/ students in the district; (c) income - generating jobs be developed in the area by the central government; (d) sex education be intensified in the basic schools in the district.

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I have drawn freely from the works of other writers. I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness for the references and the sources which are quoted in this study.

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The work, in principle, is the researcher's own product. I, therefore, accept wholly the responsibility of any inaccuracies, lapses and errors that may be found in it.

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JUNE 2001.

DEDICATION

To the Glory of God; To my dear Wife, Mrs Celestine A. Attatsi, the Children and my
Mother; To the eternal memories of my late Father, Hope and Kwasi.

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CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Numerous studies on school dropouts have been made cross-culturally to find out why such students leave school, among others. This chapter is devoted to the review of some of such related literature.

The review is classified under empirical studies and theoretical framework.

Empirical Studies

This covers the following sub-themes:

1. The Relationship Between Socio-Economic Status of Parents and School Dropout.
2. The Relationship Between Teacher Attitude to Work and School Dropout.
3. The Relationship Between Family Structure and School Dropout.
4. The Relationship Between Peer-Group Influence and School Dropout.
5. The Relationship Between Teenage Pregnancy/Early Marriage and School Dropout.

The Relationship Between Socio-Economic Status of Parents and School Dropout

Socio-economic status or social class is most commonly measured by father's education, occupational status and income. According to Keeves, cited in Dartey (1995), socio-economic status or social class takes cognisance of family structure variables including the number of children in the home, occupations of father and mother, the educational background of parents, family income, religion and language of the home.

ines occupational status. Education is also a
er the educational status, the higher the income.
al attainment because unless parents have higher
ation of their children.

: (1993) points out that lower-class families are
ed workers, people who are most affected by
1 experience being in debt or being laid off. He
n such families have to help the family rather than

ve view and adds that school dropout are associated
ents who are in extreme poverty and live in over-
nt. Such parents, he observes, cannot hire rooms
have access to educational facilities such as books,
hich aid learning. The children have their
ely satisfied. He adds that these children have

problems including exposure to drugs, crime, child abuse, bad housing, insufficient health-care and welfare and inferior education resulting in their dropping out of school. On the other hand, he contends, children from the middle or upper classes may have their own rooms and access to a lot of educational facilities which broaden their outlook and make them perform better in school.

Contributing to the issue of the effects of socio-economic status of parents on the educational attainment of their children, Anderson (1988) claims that in both the developed and developing countries, children who come from poor families do not enrol in school. Pupils of poor family background who attend school normally drop out as compared to children who come from better-off families. Her main reason is that poor families cannot afford the cost of their children's education both directly and indirectly. Direct outlays include school fees, activity fees, supplies, uniforms, transportation and lunches. The indirect or opportunity costs, she explains, include the household labour which is not done or the income that the children do not earn for being at school. She concludes that because poverty is often linked to limited educational attainment and low occupational status of the parents, poor families do not reinforce the value of education.

Rice (1981) observes that in the United States of America, many parents of low socio-economic status produce dropout children. If parents complete only fifth grade, they consider their children graduating from junior high school to be sufficient. Besides parents sometimes discourage their children from attending school. Older daughters are urged to stay at home to look after the younger siblings or to do household chores, while sons are expected to go out and look for jobs in order to earn income to help the family.

Dall (1989) also observes that the main reason why a lot of children do not go to school in Mali is economic. He points out that school is not free. Primary school pupils have to buy desks, chalk, chairs and make a monthly contribution. This cost is very high for the average family in Mali. Furthermore, most parents who have limited resources only want to invest in boys' education and not in girls'. In the towns, girls stay at home either to look after younger siblings or to sell goods from roadside stalls. He concludes that when working children do attend school, they have little time to study, which affects their academic performance. Poor children are also apt to be malnourished and this affects their achievement level adversely. When they are discouraged by their performance, they drop out. Ohlsen (1974) also shares a similar view by observing that tired undernourished and sickly children have difficulty using their mental powers efficiently. He also concluded that this normally leads to poor performance in school, resulting in their quitting school.

Ezewu (1986) adds that people of high socio-economic status usually earn a higher income and value school education more than those of low socio-economic status. Possessing the financial means, they are willing to provide their wards with books and the necessary school materials. In addition, high socio-economic status families tend to show more concern over their children's poor performance at school. Most of them either teach their children these subjects in which the children perform poorly, or they appoint part-time teachers for them.

On the other hand, children from economically disadvantaged homes do not enjoy the privilege of such support. Lacking such support such children tend to perform badly

in school. Their continual poor performance level at school frustrates them, compelling most of them to part with school.

Ezewu (1986) argues further that families with a high socio-economic status prepare their children for school more adequately than those with low socio-economic status. As a result, children from affluent homes are often more ready to learn and consequently stand a better chance of succeeding in their studies. These children are, therefore, kept longer in school than those from low socio-economic homes who have not had a comparable good headstart.

Bishop (1989) indicates that the most deep-rooted and widespread explanation for low attainment in education, especially in higher education in both developing and developed countries are those arising from socio-economic status.

Ryan & Cooper (1984) found out in their study that 20 percent failed and dropped out in the poor and minority group; but among the middle class, only 12.4 percent dropped out. They concluded that whatever the reasons, large numbers of poor and minority group students are leaving school without the verbal and computational skills necessary to function effectively.

Another study by Ambron, cited in Dartey (1995), reveals that low-income children show a disproportionately large number of reading difficulties. A large percentage of high school dropouts have had severe reading disabilities. He adds that difficulty in learning to read makes the child feel that he is born a loser. Such a negative self-concept is a source of problems throughout the child's education. He explains that early reading difficulties are themselves a source of later reading retardation because they

create frustration and a sense of inadequacy that hamper a child's further efforts to learn. He adds that where both parents have to work at tiring, mind-deadening jobs to support the family, they seldom have the energy to read stories to their children, talk with them or even supply children with story books to read. The outcome of this situation is the difficulty in reading and in related subjects leading to poor performance generally and a subsequent drop out from school. He explains that such children perform poorly because they have fewer resources from their poor communities and lack of pre-school experiences expected of children of their age. This makes the work of the school difficult as Levine and Havighurst (1989) rightly point out that schools are less effective in educating children from low socio-economic homes.

In another study, Mitchel, cited in Galloway (1985), found in a research on Central Scotland that poor school attendance mostly came from families where the father was unskilled or semi-skilled worker.

Pike (1970) reports that Canadian studies usually find that children from low-income families are more likely to leave school prematurely than children coming from families where income levels are comparatively high. He reports, for example, that in a survey of factors related to school drop-out amongst a sample of 200 Grade IX students attending Newfoundland Central Schools in Canada in 1961-62, 23 percent of the students dropping out reported a family income of less than \$1,000 per year (an extremely low level) compared with just 7 percent of those students who remained in school. Pike (1970) concludes that the direct effects of low family income on children's education is the tendency to drop out.

First of all, he explains that family income seems likely to have its most direct effect on the dropout rate during the course of elementary and secondary schooling since a youth from a low-income family may be under strong pressure from his parents to leave school and augment the family income by finding a full-time job.

Secondly, he explains that children from lower income families tend to enrol more often than others in high-school vocational programmes. This may sometimes occur because such programmes are relatively short-term and enable a student to enter the world of work without too much delay, or alternatively because they lead on to relatively low-cost post-secondary courses at community colleges or technical colleges.

Shavit & Pierce (1991), in a study on the relationship between sibsize and education in Israel, found out that the effect of father's and mother's education for Ashkenazi are positive and significant. This is because the educational level of the parents becomes a challenge to both parents and children. Children tend to strive harder to achieve what their parents had and even go higher than their parents. The parents, on the other hand, know the value of education and so devote their time, money and other resources to educating their children and seeing to their higher educational attainment.

Kuo & Hauser (1995) conducted a study on "Trends in Family Effects on the Education of Black and White Brothers" in the United States of America. After analysing data from the 1973 Occupational Changes in Generation (OCG) Document, a supplement to the March Current Population Survey (CPS) which covered a national sample of men aged twenty (20) and sixty-five (65) years (those born between 1907 and 1946), Kuo and Hauser found, among other things, that the schooling of American men and their brothers

is affected strongly by measured social background characteristics: paternal and maternal schooling, occupational status, amount of schooling, intact family, farm origin, and southern birth. Parents who have attained high school and college education pay more attention and invest more in their children's education.

Okey & Cusick (1995) examined in their study the school perspective of a set of families whose children dropped out of school. The study was conducted with families of twelve (12) adolescents who were all Caucasian, who had recently left school, and who had attended smaller school districts in the Midwest. They found out that dropout rates are higher for students from low socio-economic backgrounds, from single-parent families, and from families who had migrated to the United States.

✓ Estrom, et. al., (1986) confirmed the relationship between the family and the incidence of dropping out of school. They argue that dropouts come from families who had less education, valued education less, express less concern with school progress, and had lower educational expectations for themselves and their children.

✓ Furneaux (1969) has cited evidence in England of the strong correlation between father's occupational level and children's academic success. According to him, at primary school, the proportion of children from white-collar job families to those of unskilled fathers was 16:10. This proportion increased with each rise in educational level. He said that in supported grammar schools, the proportion is 63:10. In the sixth form of these schools, it became 390:10. It rose at University level to 620:10. Furneaux attributed these proportions to the superior performance of professional workers' children in academic tests and greater willingness of both parents and children in this group to

pursue educational goals. Commenting on her research findings Fraser, quoted in Furneaux (1969), found the highest correlation to be that between parental occupation and school performance. She commented that the most interesting figures are provided by the "high skilled" group. They show the greatest improvement in position on criterion test over position in Intelligence Quotient (I.Q.). As a group, they are less intelligent than children in the "clerical group" but yet more successful in school. Thus occupation of parents is noted to influence a child's performance. The more skilled the parent (especially father) is, the more likely it is for one to be successful in school and vice versa. This is because those who have attained a high level of efficiency and responsibility in a skilled occupation may also have attained a high educational standard.

In another study Douglas, quoted in Furneaux (1969), investigated the school performance of children at two different age groups. He found that at age eight, the children of parents in non-manual occupations performed better than children whose parents followed moment occupations. The two groups had 7.59 points difference between them at this age. In a follow-up on these two groups three years later by Douglas, he found that the initial difference of 7.59 points had risen to 9.44, a rise of 24 percent.

He concludes from the above account that there is a marked difference between the performance of non-manual workers' children and children of manual workers. The difference in school performance widens as the children grew up. This implies that whether or not a child will perform well in school depends on the sort of occupation the parents are following. Even if children of non-manual and manual working parents

perform comparably in the early stages at school, the effect that their parents' occupation is likely to have on the school performance begins to show as they progress in their grade levels. The effect of parents' occupation on school performance is, therefore, positive for non-manual workers and negative in the case of manual workers. It is not surprising therefore that in England, children of manual workers constitute a great majority of school dropouts, quite apart from their socio-economic status.

From the Ghanaian perspective, Agyeman (1986) supports the view that poverty affects the chances of success of a child in school. He contends that a child who is constantly hungry will have difficulties giving his full attention to the lessons in class. He claims that a child who observes that his parents and older siblings are either unemployed or in poorly paid job is likely to develop a negative attitude to schooling, begin to play truant and drop out of school. According to him, middle and upper socio-economic families provide a congenial learning atmosphere for their children at home by providing them with books, toys, writing materials and other educational facilities including even private teachers. This gives the children of such class an advantage over those of lower class families. He contends further that the attitude of the family to formal education serves as another variable which affects the formal education of the individual child. Thus he concludes that no matter how wealthy a family is, if the family is ill-disposed to education, it is likely such a family will be half-hearted about the schooling of their children.

A report on some studies undertaken by Addae-Mensah, Djangmah & Agbenyegah (1973) on family background and educational opportunities in Ghana

reveals that family background plays a significant role in one's educational opportunities. The results showed that students from a higher socio-economic background have more educational opportunities than their counterparts from the families with low socio-economic background. The implication is that the child with a higher socio-economic background has the opportunity to remain longer in school than his counterpart from low socio-economic background.

The findings of another survey conducted by Ekar (1975) on school dropouts in Kpando district in the Volta Region of Ghana revealed that 39 percent of the sample of 45 school dropouts were deemed to have dropped out of school because of financial handicap. He found that those pupils were wards of peasant farmers and petty traders.

In his study to find the disparities between urban and rural junior secondary schools, and the effects of these disparities on the students performance in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), Attasi (1994) found that parents' occupation has much influence on pupils' performance at school, and their capability to remain longer in school. According to the BECE results in 1991, 1992 and 1993 of the schools used in the Central Region for the study, 32.4 percent, 31.6 percent and 34.4 percent of the urban school students scored between aggregates 6 and 10 in 1991, 1992 and 1993 respectively. No rural student scored this aggregate. On the other hand, while 36.9 percent and 40.4 percent of rural school students scored between aggregates 37-54 in 1992 and 1993 respectively, only 9.4 percent and 3.2 percent of the urban school students scored such low grades in the same years – 1992 and 1993 respectively. It was found that most parents in the urban areas used in the study were in modern sector jobs such as civil

service, public service, nursing and teaching. On the other hand, parents in the rural areas were mostly farmers. A few were petty traders and artisans.

In another study at Asamankese in the Eastern Region of Ghana, Akuffo (1978) found that children from low socio-economic background with limited financial resources may have their efforts at school thwarted and hence be predisposed to stop school. In an explanation, he submits that there are school-related expenses apart from school fees. These are uniforms, stationery, furniture, school building fund, money for science and agricultural materials and tools. There is also examination fees to be paid. Daily pocket money for transportation and food at school are also paid.

In an article captioned "Children Need Protection", Effah (1995) stated among other things that the problem of child labour stems from the fact that some of these children cannot get people to help them pay their school fees or even provide homes for them. According to her, most parents abandon their children due to financial constraints. The order of the day now is that school children have to sell in order to get enough money to pay their school fees. She adds that there are some children in some parts of the country who have to walk several kilometres every morning to nearby towns to sell bundles of firewood before they attend classes. She explains that some children in rural communities work on farms after classes to raise money for some of their needs at school. This is unfortunate because it has a long-term effect on their academic progress and the standard of education in the country.

Damuah (1988) investigated the fundamental causes of school dropout from middle schools in Wassa-Damang-Huni-Valley area in Western Region of Ghana

between 1979/80 and 1985/86 academic years. He found that a significant majority (87%) of parents of the dropouts were farmers. Majority of the parents were also illiterates. He explained that because of the parents' low educational background, they did not appreciate the need for their children's education and so did not give them the desired support. He concluded that the parents' incomes were so low that they could not afford most of their children's needs. The children, therefore, dropped out to fend for themselves.

In another study, Tetteh (1988) investigated the causes of school dropout in first cycle schools in Ningo Traditional Area in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. He found economic problems as the key factor for children's drop out from school. His findings also revealed that parents could not afford the children's needs such as school fees, books, stationery, uniforms and pocket money. Out of a total enrolment of 1,226 pupils within the period studied, 549 had dropped out. This represented a dropout rate of 44.8 percent.

In her study to investigate the causes of adolescent dropouts in schools in Accra Metropolitan Assembly with particular reference to Ablekuma sub-district, Dartey (1995) found that inability of parents to pay their children's school fees was the major reason for school dropout in the area.

Brookman-Amissah (1992) also investigated the high incidence of dropouts in junior secondary schools in Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan area in the Western Region of Ghana. His findings revealed that a significant proportion of the students dropped out due to their parents' inability to pay their children's school fees and provide other needs. The findings showed that the parents were unable to pay their children's school fees and

provide other needs due to unemployment. Some parents were redeployees of various departments and organisations. Some who had retired from active service did not receive their end-of-service benefits. Large family sizes were also mentioned as a factor responsible for parents' inability to pay their children's school fees and provide other needs.

Downey (1995) of the Ohio State University explained the inverse relationship between the number of siblings and children's educational performance by the resource dilution model (RDM). This model posits that parental resources are finite and that additional children dilute the total quantity of resources any one child receives, which in turn decreases their educational output. Blake (1989), the leading proponent of the resource dilution model, has identified three types of finite parental resources. These are:

1. Types of homes, necessities of life, cultural objects like books, education toys, pictures, musical instruments, television sets, computers and so on;
2. Personal attention, intervention, teaching; and
3. Specific chances to engage the outside world or as kids say, 'to get to do things'.

Her conclusion was that the more the children, the more these resources are divided even taking account of economics of scale and hence, the lower the quality of the output (Blake, 1989).

A study by Ayim-Ampofo (1990) on the relationship between parent-type and the incidence of school dropout among junior secondary school pupils in Koforidua in the Eastern Region of Ghana revealed, among other things that, parents were unable to provide their children with their school needs. They were rather sent on errands or were

engaged with duties by their parents that often kept them out of school for a long time. He found that 160 students out of a total student population of 448 pupils between 1987/88 and 1989/90 dropped out. This represented a rate of about 36 percent.

Ghunney (1990) also investigated into the causes of truancy and school dropout among children of Apewosika and Kokwado in Cape Coast in the Central Region of Ghana. Her findings revealed that students dropped out of school because they were not fed well and their needs were also not met. Parents were unable to pay their children's textbook user-fees on time. As a result, they were sent home now and then. These resulted in the children dropping out of school and resorting to serving University of Cape Coast students as errand boys in the students' halls of residence. Large proportions of the parents were found to be unemployed.

Adjepong, et al., (1999) investigated the causes of school dropout among female students in junior secondary schools in the Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abrem (K.E.E.A.) district in the Central Region of Ghana. A very large proportion of the dropouts were found to have unemployed mothers and unskilled and semi-skilled fathers. Most of them were not gainfully employed. Financial difficulties were, therefore, found to have prevented the parents from meeting their children's school needs and paying their school fees. This accounted for the dropouts resorting to manual/child labour at the expense of attending school.

According to an observation at the World Summit for Children in 1991 held in Accra, Ghana, disadvantaged parents may not be able to afford the cost of their children's education even if the quality of education improves. The Summit contends that such

parents may want their children to work in order to supplement household income, by working on the farm or engaging in petty trading in urban areas. The Summit observes that children who must cope with the tremendous challenges just described are left unprepared for active participation in the cultural, social, economic and political life of their communities and country. This is illustrated, for example, by the literacy rate for those between 9-14 years of age: only approximately 110 out of every 1000 children in this age group are literate. Taken in conjunction with substantial non-attendance and dropout rates, this situation indicates that the future of Ghanaian children is at risk.

The Relationship between Teacher Attitude to Work and School Dropout

The teacher is the pivot in the educational process. Without him, no training for a meaningful development can take place. Qualities the teacher needs in order to perform his duties creditably include punctuality and regularity at school, hardwork, competence, diligence, initiative, enthusiasm, reliability and being responsible. The teacher's attitude to work is therefore crucial in sustaining students' interest at school or giving them cause to drop out of school.

Epstein (1989) observes that students drop out because they have teachers who care less about students, and give few homework. Again, the teachers fail to encourage students to perform better next time and make such remarks as, "you get a bad grade, I don't know what's wrong with you."

Ryan & Cooper (1984) pointed out that schools, and for that matter teachers, demand less and less hard work from students. Such negative attitude of teachers toward students can thwart students' interest which may lead to their dropping out of school. To

buttress this point, Lotz. et. al., cited in Dartey (1995), observed that lower-class youths tend to drop out of school early and in large numbers because of teachers' attitude. Sometimes, teachers single them out for special abuse such as being called "lazy" or "stupid" in front of the entire class. Other students also regard school rules as oppressive and intolerable and believe they are the making of teachers. Faced with such strict rules and degrading experiences in class, some students lash out at the cause of their embarrassment by attacking teachers, vandalising the school or dropping out of school.

Connell, Ashenden, Kessler & Dowsett (1982) note that in a variety of ways, the school operated as a mechanism of exclusion to some students. According to them, this can be seen in areas where teachers castigate and label students who, for one reason or other, cannot cope with the cognitive demand of schooling. For instance, a child may be branded or labelled "good for nothing", "pig headed" and so on to such an extent that he may lose confidence and self-esteem and may quit school.

Reynolds, cited in Hammersley & Woods (1976), observes that social relations in some schools between teachers and pupils are unhealthy. In other words, social relations are marked by hostility. In some schools, teachers have little time for showing patience and tolerance towards pupils' behaviour, in whatever form it is exhibited. This attitude of teachers is less conducive for pupils to show a sense of commitment to their teachers. Again, pupils show unwillingness to see the teachers as both ideal figures and significant others in their lives. In order to ensure their control, teachers need to apply increased

coercion. This method is not likely to achieve much since force applied to solve problems creates fresh ones. It is least expected that all pupils can cope with such a school climate. It follows that under such social context, some pupils find it more gratifying in playing truancy or staying away from school.

Buttressing the views of Connell, et. al., (1982) Hardman, et. al., cited in Nkansah (1989), contend that teachers who give negative labels to pupils tend to stifle their interest in school. According to them, labels may be descriptions which distinguish the "normal" from the "abnormal". In other words, the labels may indicate whether or not a person meets the values of the society. For example, a school may value creativity, innovation and imagination. A pupil/student who shows these traits will be valued and rewarded with positive labels or designations such as "bright", "intelligent", or "gifted". Anyone who deviates drastically from these may be branded with such negative labels as "radical", "extremist", or "rebel".

One can infer from the above discussion that labelling has negative impact on pupils. These inauspicious effects of negative labelling include the fact that it:

1. leads to "self-fulfilling prophesy". This means that if a child or a pupil is labelled, say, "learning disabled" or "emotionally disordered", he will grow up to become as described.
2. changes the pupil's self-concept or makes the pupil develop a low self-image.
3. makes pupils develop low level of aspiration for themselves.
4. can make pupils' behaviour worse rather than better.

These views indicate that negative labelling can reinforce pupils'/students' disinterest towards schooling and consequently dropping out of school.

Reid (1986) observes that there are certain factors in the school that cause pupils to skip school. Among the factors the author listed are: falling behind in class work (often following an illness), transfers, for any reason a dislike or fear of certain lessons (such as physical education), tests or examinations, boredom or inactivity at school; bullying, extortion, poor peer-group relationships in class or at school; teasing (due to personal characteristics - red hair, fatness, 'squeaky' voice or other reasons); the general lack of discipline and order in the school, form of the playground; noise levels; school rules and punishments; poor teacher-pupil relationships; organisational factors within schools (split-site, constantly changing classrooms after every lesson, assemblies), staff turnover (especially a change of form or subject teacher); staff attitudes; size of school; school ethos and atmosphere, lack of uniform, equipment or sports kit, and finally negative pastoral care system.

Curle (1969), in a study on educational problems of developing societies with case studies of Ghana and Pakistan, found that the greatest single cause of school dropout is the poor quality of education children receive mostly in third world or developing nations. His conception of quality education encompasses the physical surrounding of the school to the type of knowledge imparted to children as well as the method of approach. Citing India and Pakistan as examples, he describes the classrooms as often small, over-crowded and almost devoid of both furniture and other equipment. He observes that some villages do not have school buildings (classrooms) at all and resort to the shade of trees. Much more serious is the quality of teaching. For example, he

observes that in India and Pakistan, about thirty percent (30%) of the primary school teachers are untrained, and to compound matters, many of such teachers have had less than ten years of schooling themselves. Such teachers, he observes, turn to teaching without enthusiasm or interest. He points out that such bored and incompetent teachers who cannot arouse the interest of their students can only preserve discipline through weapons of fear, primarily physical fear and beatings. As a result, he contends, it is hardly surprising that for most primary age children, schooling is an experience at once tedious, frightening and pointless. As such, he unreservedly attributes the major cause of school dropout throughout primary education, and particularly during the first year, to the abysmally low standard of education, and the misery, which this involves for the student.

In an article on teacher-attitude and poor school environment as factors of school dropout, Henschel & Swingle (1999: 5) reported the experience of an 11-year old boy from India who dropped out of school and started working. The boy reports: "In school, teachers would not teach well. If we asked them to teach us alphabets, they would beat us. They would sleep in the class If we did not understand, they would not teach us." The article reports further that in developing countries, cuts in social spending have hit education particularly hard. For example, a UN survey carried out in 1994 in 14 of the world's least developed countries revealed some interesting facts. In half of these countries, classrooms for the first grade had seats for only 4 out of every 10 pupils. Half of the pupils had no textbooks, and half of the classrooms had no blackboards. Not surprisingly, stated the report, many children who attend such schools end up dropping out of school.

Galloway (1985) observes that one possible reason for poor school attendance is that teachers, as well as parents, may place a high priority on criteria such as public examination results, compared with their counterparts elsewhere. He observes that this could lead to the relative neglect of non-academic pupils resulting in persistent absence and exit from school. He adds that there may be a correlation between a high absence rates and certain subjects in the curriculum and/or the lessons of certain teachers.

Obeng-Mensah (1982) found in Bekwai district in the Ashanti Region of Ghana that 6 percent of the sample he studied dropped out because of their teachers' attitude. He indicated that pupils complained of harsh punishments meted out to them when they did not perform well in class exercises. He reported others who also complained of not being able to understand what their teachers taught and they were always punished; and they therefore had to withdraw from school.

The June 3, 2000 edition of the Daily Graphic reported the interdiction of the teachers of Besebuom L.A Primary School in the Fanteakwa district in the Eastern Region of Ghana for their alleged unprofessional behaviour which made the pupils abandon school. About 60 pupils of the Besebuom Primary School were reported to have refused to go to school because of the non-performance of teachers. According to the pupils, the teachers were not attending school regularly and on the few occasions that they did, they spent the time idling and gossiping instead of teaching. It was reported further that the number of pupils in the school during the early part of the 1998/99 academic year was sixty-eight (68). However, as at the end of the year, the number had

reduced to twenty-seven (27). The twenty-seven (27) pupils were also reported to have stopped going to the school. Instead, they registered at Ahumahumaso L.A. Primary School, which is about 3 kilometres from Bebebuom.

In his study, Tetteh (1988) found that teaching in the Ningo Traditional area was poor because as much as about 54 percent of the teachers were untrained. He concluded that these teachers lacked professional competence. The result was poor performance by the pupils who became discouraged and dropped out. Majority of the students (60%) claimed they dropped out because they were unhappy with their academic performance.

In his work cited earlier above, Ghunney (1990) also found that pupils dropped out of school at Apewosika and Kokwado in Cape Coast due to the unfriendly attitude of the teachers towards the students. The teachers were also found to be lazy and were using poor teaching techniques, which could not arouse the interest of the students.

Brookman-Amisshah (1992), in a study on the high incidence of dropouts in junior secondary schools in Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan area, found that hardworking, humorous and friendly teachers motivate pupils to remain in school and learn but teachers who cane too much and do not appear friendly to the pupils scare them away from school.

The Relationship Between Family Structure and School Dropout

Family structure (single-parentage) results from death of a spouse, separation, divorce or desertion. Single-parentage results mainly from the physical absence of the man leaving the woman to be faced with raising the children single-handedly. This is against the ideal of a two-parent (intact) family.

Kaplan (1996) shows in a research that children who are from divorced families or have never-married parents are less likely to complete high school and more likely to have earnings as adults than offspring of intact families. He observes also that children from one-parent families do not differ in academic ability or intelligence but are absent from school more often, have lower grades and are viewed by teachers as less motivated. Kaplan's findings revealed further that divorce brings many changes: the child's world is torn asunder and the child's entire lifestyle, including his education may be disrupted. He points out that financial problems may force the family to move to another neighbourhood altering the child's daily routine.

Collins & Coltrance (1992) observe that there is a post-marital economic strain. They point out that for all the emotional flare-ups and the social readjustments that must be made, the most important problem is economic. They contend that if a house-wife was not working before divorce, she has the problem of getting a job or securing some other source of income. They observe that alimony (where it exists) is rarely adequate to live on, and child support payments are often lower than actual child-related expenditure.

Singelmann & Wojtkiewicz (1993) also studied the effect of single-parenthood on the educational attainment and vocational training of children in West Germany. They sought to find out whether growing up with a single parent had a negative effect on the educational and vocational attainment of children in West Germany and whether divorce affects the late life course of German children as it does in American children.

They found that in the United States, children who grew up with single parents were more likely to drop out of school than those who grew up with two parents, and that children whose parents divorced had lower educational attainments than children whose parents did not divorce. This happened as a result of low parental support; control and supervision; low access to economic resources and stress that come with change from a two-parent family to a one-parent family. These led to low academic aspirations and achievement, which in turn led to low educational attainment.

In contrast, they argued that growing up in a single-parent household in Germany is more likely to affect a person's vocational training, the main reason being the different educational systems that exist in the two countries. Thus, while the effect of household structure is more likely to be on vocational training in Germany, in America it is on educational attainment.

Singelmann & Wojtkiewicz (1993) in the end show that, when the normal socio-economic factors are held constant, growing up in a single-parent household has little effect on the educational attainment of children in Germany but has a negative effect on vocational training than those who lived with two parents. On the other hand, growing up with a single-parent is more likely to affect the educational attainment of children in America.

Astone & McLanahan (1991) studied the relationship between family structure, whether both parents are present in the household and children's attainment in high school in the United States. Their study was based on data from High School and Beyond study (HSB). Respondents were randomly selected members of either the

sophomore or senior class at one of the nationally representative sample of over 1,000 US high schools in 1980. A sub-sample of respondents was surveyed again in 1982, 1984 and 1986. The respondents were either white (not Hispanic), black, Mexican, or Puerto Rican.

They found that parental involvement has positive effects on children's school achievement. Children from non-intact families report lower educational expectations on the part of their parents, less monitoring of schoolwork by mothers and fathers, and less overall supervision of social activities than children from intact families. An exception is that children in single-parent families spend significantly more time talking to their parents than children in two-parent families.

They also found that parents' educational aspiration are associated with the quality of parental involvement. High educational aspirations of parents are associated with high aspiration of children because parents transmit their aspirations to their children through helpful participation, supervision and closeness. Low educational aspirations are, therefore, one indicator of early disengagement from school since high aspirations are a critical factor predicting educational achievement which in turn lead to high educational attainment.

Their study also found that the differences in parenting practices between intact and non-intact families could account for the higher rate of school dropout among children from non-intact families. This has been attributed to the economic position of single-parent families. Mother-only-families are more likely than other families to be poor.

Their results compare with other studies. Such studies show that children who grow up in single-parent families are less likely to complete high school or to attend college than children who grow up with both parents (Amato, 1988; Coleman, 1988 & McLanahan, 1985).

Krein & Beller (1988) in a study conducted on Educational Attainment of Children from single-parent families also concluded that children in non-intact families have less money invested in their education because they have lower family incomes and live in poor communities. Perhaps, even more important, children in non-intact families receive less parental time and attention, they added. According to them, single mothers are likely to be working outside home and have less income to cater for the educational needs of their children.

Ollennu & Avokey (2000) wrote on "Effects on Later Life – Children from Low Socio-Economic Backgrounds" in their book, Coping With Single Parenting. They observed that many children have their academic work hampered because of lack of funds or lack of interest. That is, some lose interest in their school work altogether. They point out that drop out rate is quite high in single-parent cases with its ardent problems. Some fall into bad company – get into drugs, truancy, teenage pregnancy and less uncontrolled lives. They contend that single parents' children (especially the boys) may be part of the trouble causing gangs in schools, trouble makers in communities, and deviant revolutionaries in society. They conclude that some may steal because they lack funds and some may start working early and in hazardous and risky jobs, for example prostitution.

In his study, Ayim-Ampofo (1990) reported that about 77 percent of his dropout respondents indicated that they would not have stopped schooling if they were living with both parents. One main reason the respondents gave was lack of parental control due to financial constraints that characterised such homes. The study found that the income of the single parents could not adequately support the children's education. The parents, therefore, encouraged them to stop schooling and work to contribute towards the family income.

In a similar finding, Ghunney (1990) reported that 10 out of 13 dropouts from Apewosika and Kokwado were pressurised by their mothers, with whom they lived, to drop out of school and serve University of Cape Coast (U.C.C) students in their halls of residence to generate some income to supplement the family budget.

Brookman-Amissah (1992) also found that all his dropout - respondents lived in non-intact homes. (They did not live even with foster parents). Results of the study indicated further that all these dropouts could not get their school fees paid neither could their school needs be provided. This finding was supported by the findings of Adjepong, et. al., (1999) in another study.

The Relationship Between Peer -Group Influence and Dropping out of School

Although the family is the most important socialising agency during the early life of a child, the social demands made by his peer-group exert an increasing influence upon his behaviour. The influence may yield positive or negative results.

Slavin (1983), for example, has pointed out that the use of peers in a co-operative

learning setting where students share responsibility for solving academic tasks and preparing reports increases student achievement more than a teacher-directed setting. In addition, working together in co-operative learning setting improves student self-esteem, social relations, particularly in the area of ethnic relations and acceptance of disabled students who have been mainstreamed.

Berns (1993) also points out that children's attitudes towards learning are influenced by the peer-group to which they belong. The peer-group can thus help or hinder the school's role in socialisation.

Ohlsen (1974) observes that children can be influenced by the peer-group to drop out of school because children can fall prey to a delinquent gang leader who may control and use them. As the peer-group leader drops out of school, members in the peer-group also drop out of school in conformity to peer advice.

Furlong (1985) supports the above view in the light of his interpretation of 'deviant behaviour'. To him, the deviant is one who refuses to accept social behaviour which is appropriate. Furlong explains that inappropriate behaviour is not indicative of anything else except that children have learnt such deviant behaviour through 'imitation' or 'reinforcement'. Learning theorists argue that behaviour is learnt. It follows that children imitate the behaviour of those around them. They are particularly susceptible to learning when they are emotionally aroused.

The implication of this view is that in their formative years children are overtly impressionable. In view of this observation, it is not surprising that when children witness a truant or dropout behaviour and such behaviour accrues attractive 'pay-offs' they learn it because of the emotional arousal it creates in them.

Eldhersen (1978) observes that students who are dependent on their peers for approval are less likely to endorse school and family values of academic success. Thus, peer-group influences are often the cause of delinquent, aggressive and violent student behaviour resulting in stopping school especially among adolescents.

The findings of a study by Damuah (1988) reveals that the social demands made by the peer-group exert an increasing influence upon the behaviour of other peers in the group. This was testified by 34 percent of his sample who indicated that peer-group influence was responsible for their withdrawal from school.

Kono (1979) also found that about 40 percent of his student-sample exhibited the influence of a peer-group, which dropped out of school and indulged themselves in activities such as carrying loads at car parks. Later, these students also indulged in such activities during school hours. They played truant and dropped out eventually.

Koomson (1990) also found in his study on dropouts in junior secondary schools in Abura-Asebu-Kwamankese district that a significant percentage of his student-respondents had friends who were not in school. These friends were involved in commercial activities such as pushing trucks at lorry stations, carrying load at railway stations and shoe-shining. Parents of the students were also not happy with the type of friends their wards had because those friends were not interested in school and could influence their children to drop out of school too.

In his study, Brookman-Amissah (1992) found that some of his pupil-respondents had friends who had stopped schooling. They stopped schooling and went into apprenticeship, petty trading, truck-pushing and shoe-shining. Results indicated that some of the pupil-respondents expressed interest in learning trades and taking part in economic activities being undertaken by their dropped-out peers. The implication is that these pupils were being influenced by their peers who had dropped out of school.

The Relationship Between Teenage Pregnancy/Early Marriage and Dropping out of School

By increasing women's ability to earn an independent income, according to Global Child Health News and Review, edited by Wah, (1993), education raises women's status in the community thereby giving them greater input into family and community decision-making. Perhaps more important, education empowers girls with a basic knowledge of their rights as individuals and citizens of their nation and the world. According to the Review, girls' education contributes as well to progress in development. Education provides women with the knowledge and skills to contribute to and benefit from development efforts especially in areas of health, nutrition, water, sanitation and environment. Furthermore, because the attitudes of mothers towards education influences the importance they attach to their daughter's schooling, educating girls now will have a positive impact on girls' education for future generations.

Looking at the importance of girls' education to national development, Global Child Health News and Review projects that girls' education affects the economic well-being of a country, improving gross national product (GNP) per capita, and increasing female labour force participation, self-employment, and non-market and home production. It adds that girls' education and literacy also have a direct impact on infant and maternal mortality, immunisation and life expectancy. Further, educated women generally marry later, are more likely to practise family planning and have smaller families than uneducated women.

The curtailment of girls' education especially by pregnancy is considered by all economic systems as a great harm to society and the individual involved.

FAWE & AAS-FEMED (1995) found that teenage pregnancy and childbearing account for a large proportion of girls who drop out of upper primary and lower secondary school. They contend that the social and economic costs to the girl, her parents, and to the nation are enormous. These teenage girls are lured by others outside of their age group to emulate adult sexual behaviour without a full understanding of the consequences to their reproductive health, education and future careers.

On the basis of age alone, according to Nerquaye-Tetteh, (1996), teenage pregnancy is pregnancy of any girl aged 19 years or less. According to him, it is one of the numerous problems threatening the future of the girl-child in general. It frequently results in the curtailment of girls' social, intellectual and economic development. With little or no education, the adolescent females' chances of increasing their earning capacity and social status are thwarted.

Schaefer & Lamn (1995) reported that sexual harassment has been commonly reported not only in the workplace but also in colleges and universities. A variety of studies involving both undergraduate and graduate students show that 20 to 40 percent of students are the victims of sexual harassment by faculty members. According to a 1993 national survey in the United States - cited in Schaefer and Lamn - 65 percent of female students in grades 8 through 11 reported that they were touched, grabbed, or pinched in a sexual way. Because of these experiences and other forms of sexual harassment, 33 percent of those female students stated that they wanted to avoid going to school and were less inclined to speak in class.

Schaefer and Lamn (1995) indicated further that a study revealed the United States as the only developed country in which pregnancy among teenagers has been on the increase in recent years. Many adults with traditional attitudes have suspected the availability of birth control and sex education in the United States as the cause of increase in pregnancy among teenagers. However, the researchers point out that the lowest rates of pregnancy among teenagers are found in countries with liberal attitudes toward sex, easily accessible birth control services for young people, and comprehensive education programmes.

According to Nerquaye-Tetteh (1996), a UN report in 1988 showed that Ghana is among a group of countries with high pregnancy rates (above 10 percent in women aged 15-19) that have remained with little change (less than 20 percent since the 1970s). Other countries include Kenya, Malawi, Liberia, Senegal, Botswana and Madagascar. These countries also have high total fertility rates.

According to him, the 1993 Demographic and Health Survey in Ghana showed that over one-fifth (22 percent) of all teenage girls aged 15-19 years had started childbearing. He reports that recent evidence confirms that, on average, one out of every ten pregnant women (10 percent) is a teenager. He stated that in some areas of the country, the occurrence is as high as three out of ten (33 percent). He reports that in a 1993 study in Kumasi, it was observed that over 75 percent of these teenagers were unmarried and over 70 percent said they belonged to Christian churches. Moslems formed only 12 percent of the total and most of them were married.

According to the Volta Regional Director of Health Services, Dr. Frank Nyonator, the Region's teenage pregnancies constituted as much as 15 percent of all pregnancies recorded in 1998, while 18 percent of all pregnancies were recorded between January and June 1999. He pointed out that the lack of accurate information on adolescent reproductive health programme is responsible for early parenthood among the youth. He emphasised the provision of avenues for learning, information sharing and the development of oneself as crucial (Modey, 1999 cited in Alhassan, 2000a: 17).

Looking at why teenage pregnancy is a problem, Nerquaye-Tetteh (1996) pointed out that early childbearing means less education for many teenagers. He indicated that although there are opportunities for teenage mothers to go back to school, many do not. The Kumasi study indicated that about 37 percent of the pregnant teenagers had dropped out of primary school or had not gone to school at all, 21 percent had dropped out of junior secondary school (JSS) or senior secondary school (S.S.S) because of the pregnancy. Investigating why teenagers indulge in sexual activity, Nerquaye-Tetteh

indicated that according to a 1990 study, students gave reasons like curiosity, sexual desire, coercion by partners and peer pressure. In another study of pregnant teenagers, 55 percent gave the reason as financial gain.

According to a number of research findings (Ekar, 1975; Ahiaku, 1976; Avotri, 1994; Amponsah, 1994; Addai, 1994; Mensah, 1994 and Boakye, et. al., cited in Adjepong, et. al., 1999) teenage pregnancy is found to be associated with girls dropping out of school.

Theoretical Framework

Rational Choice Theory

Economists, political scientists and sociologists have all tried to build theories around the idea that all action is fundamentally rational in character and that people calculate the likely costs and benefits of any action before deciding what to do. Max Weber (1920), for example, built a typology of action on the basis of Rational Choice Theory. His ideas were taken up by Talcott Parsons (1937) and became a part of the sociological mainstream. All social action, it is argued, can be seen as rationally motivated, as instrumental action, however much it may appear to be irrational or non-rational (Scott, 1999).

Rational choice and rational decision-making take place both at the household level and at the corporate level. Consumer decision-making occurs in both the product market (households as demanders of goods and services) and in the productive resources market (households as suppliers of labour, raw materials, tools and managerial ability).

In both markets, rational consumer decision-making requires allocating time and money resources economically (Miller & Stafford, 1994).

When deciding to purchase a good or service, the consumer seeks information about the cost of that good and other equally necessary goods and services. The consumer compares the value he attaches to, and the value he believes he will receive from the good or service with that of other competing goods and services. It implies that the consumer weighs the costs and benefits associated with each alternative that he has identified. The cost considered are not only in terms of money but also in terms of the opportunity cost of other choices that he will have to give up.

If benefits minus costs are perceived to be greater than zero, then a net profit exists and the decision should be positive. Alternatively, if benefits minus costs are less than zero, then a net cost exists. In other words rational decision-making, whether it involves the use of time and money, is completed through a series of cost/benefit analysis in which choices are made that yield the highest net income. A net benefit is the value of all the benefits of a decision totalled together minus all of its costs totalled together.

The next step in rational decision-making is choosing an alternative and committing oneself to it. Finally, the consumer evaluates the results of his choice. An evaluation of the results of his choice provides the consumer with information that will help the consumer to make better choices in the future (Miller & Stafford, 1994).

Rational Choice and Demand For Education

Relating Rational Choice Theory to parents' demand for education for their children, it is obvious that a lot of cost is involved. These costs involve time, money and other things that are spent in the purchase of the educational services for the children.

When deciding to demand education for their children, parents compare the costs and benefits of other competing needs such as food, shelter, clothing, community responsibilities, medical bills, utility bills, and any other goods or services that address survival needs. So the opportunity cost of education for children is the other survival needs forgone.

When household incomes are low and the cost of educating children far outweigh the benefits, poor households tend to be reluctant to keep their children in school (Birdsall, Orivel, Ainsworth & Chuhan, 1987).

Still on the cost side, parents have to pay for textbooks and stationery, uniforms, pens and pencils and sometimes user-fees. They may also have to pay for transportation to school or to pay for the maintenance of their school-going children who stay with relatives outside the parents' home. In the face of mounting economic responsibilities especially when user-fees are high relative to household income, the demand for schooling becomes price-elastic (Birdsall, et al., 1987). In that event, parents become indifferent to their children's school attendance. Furthermore, in the face of widespread unemployment, even among high school and university graduates, poor parents will feel reluctant to keep their children in school and when such children drop out it becomes virtually a relief to parents.

Hypotheses

The hypothesis derived from the theory and empirical research is that:

Poverty in the family and in the community is associated with pupils' dropout from school.

This hypothesis is broken down into the following component hypotheses:

1. There is no statistically significant relationship between family poverty and school dropout.
2. There is no statistically significant relationship between community poverty and school dropout.

Regarding family poverty, it is hypothesised that:

- 1(a) Ho. There is no statistically significant relationship between parents' inability to provide school needs and children's tendency to drop out of school.
- Hi. There is a positive relationship between parents' inability to provide school needs and the tendency for such children to drop out of school.
- 1(b) Ho. There is no statistically significant relationship between parents' inability to pay school fees and children's tendency to drop out of school.
- Hi. Dropping out of school is positively related to parents' inability to pay school fees.
- 1(c) Ho. There is no statistically significant relationship between parents' inability to provide pocket money and the tendency of their children to drop out of school.

- Hi. The tendency to drop out of school is associated with parents' inability to provide pocket money.
- 1(d) Ho. There is no statistically significant relationship between parents' education and the tendency of their children to drop out of school.
- Hi. The tendency to drop out of school is associated with parents' education.

Regarding community poverty, it is hypothesised that:

2. Ho. There is no statistically significant relationship between perceived too much manual labour in the school and the tendency of children to drop out of school.
- Hi. The tendency of children to drop out of school is associated with their perception that there is too much manual labour in the school.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research procedures used in conducting the study. It describes the research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, the research instrument(s) used to collect data, pilot study and the data collection procedure. Finally, the chapter ends with the description of data analysis procedure and problems encountered in course of the study.

The Research Design

The descriptive survey design has been used for this study. The study aimed to find out the factors associated with dropping out of school in the Volta Region of Ghana, using Akatsi district as a case study. As observed by Osuala (1991), descriptive research is basic for all types of research in assessing the situation as a prerequisite for conclusions and generalisations. This design is highly regarded by policy makers in the social sciences where large populations are dealt with as in educational research.

The descriptive survey design was used because a large population and sample size was involved in this study. Because the descriptive design describes the status quo of educational variables and investigates the relationship between them, it is considered a suitable design for this study. In addition, descriptive methods of research are not

restricted to data gathering alone, but are also used in hypothesis testing (Ary, et. al., 1990). Since hypothesis testing forms an essential part of this study, this design was found to be most suitable.

Population

The target population for the study was all school dropouts at the basic education level in the Volta Region of Ghana. The accessible population was all school dropouts at the basic education level in the Akatsi district of the Volta Region between 1994/95 and 1998/99 academic years. The study was limited to only public schools.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

The Akatsi district is divided into nine (9) education circuits. Each circuit is designated by the name of its headquarters. The nine education circuits are:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| 1. Agbedrafo | 6. Avenorpedo |
| 2. Agormor | 7. Avenorpeme |
| 3. Akatsi | 8. Gefia |
| 4. Ave-Afiadenyigba | 9. Wute |
| 5. Ave-Dakpa | |

Each circuit has a number of basic schools, supervised by officers described as Circuit Supervisors. Below is the list of the circuits and the number of public basic schools under them.

**Table 1: Akatsi Education District: Number of Schools at the Basic Level
Circuit by Circuit**

CIRCUIT	NO. OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS	NO OF JUNIOR SEC. SCHOOLS
AGBEDRAFOR	11	3
AGORMOR	10	2
AKATSI	18	5
AVE-AFIADENYIGBA	12	4
AVE-DAKPA	8	4
AVENORPEDO	13	4
AVENORPEME	13	3
GEFLA	13	4
WUTE	14	5
TOTAL	112	34

SOURCE: Akatsi District Education Office (2000)

For the study, the researcher randomly chose most of the schools in the circuit headquarters for convenience. Apart from Akatsi township, each circuit headquarters has one primary and one junior secondary school (JSS). Below is the list of schools chosen in both primary and junior secondary schools, circuit by circuit.

Table 2: Primary Schools used for Dropouts Only

CIRCUIT	NAME OF SCHOOL
AKATSI	1. Akatsi Demonstration Primary School
	2. Torve R. C. Primary School
GEFIA	3. Gefia R. C. Primary School
	4. Lume-Avete L. A. Primary School
AGBEDRAFOR	5. Agbedrafor R. C. Primary School
	6. Witey R. C. Primary School
AVENORPEME	Xavi E. P. Primary School
AVENORPEDO	Avenorpedo E. P Primary School
AVE-DAKPA	Ave-Dakpa R. C. Primary School
AVE-AFIADENYIGBA	Ave-Havi L. A. Primary School
WUTE	Wute E. P. Primary School
AGORMOR	Agormor-Agado L. A. Primary School

Table 3: Junior Secondary Schools used for Dropouts and Students Still in School (Non-Dropouts)

CIRCUIT	NAME OF SCHOOL
AKATSI	1. Akatsi College Practice J.S.S.
	2. Akatsi No.2 J.S.S.
	3. Torve L. A. J.S.S
	4. Akatsi No.1 J.S.S.*
GEFIA	5. Gefia L. A. J.S.S
	6. Lume-United L. A. J.S.S
AGBEDRAFOR	7. Agbedrafor L. A. J.S.S.
	8. Wlitye L. A. J.S.S
AVENORPEME	9. Avenorpeme L. A. J.S.S
	10. Xavi L. A. J.S.S
AVENORPEDO	Avenorpedo L. A. J.S.S
AVE-DAKPA	Ave-Dakpa L. A. J.S.S
AVE-AFIADENYIGBA	Ave-Havi L. A. J.S.S
WUTE	Wute L. A. J.S.S
AGORMOR	Agormor-Agado L. A. J.S.S

*School used for only Non-Dropouts.

The random sampling technique was used in selecting the schools for the survey. The guiding principle was to cover the district by selecting at least, one primary and a J.S.S from each circuit. In selecting the sample of dropouts, however, the snowball and purposive sampling techniques were used. First, the researcher identified a small number of school dropouts. These people were then used as informants to identify other dropouts. These, in turn, identified yet others.

A sample size of 357 primary and junior secondary school pupils / students was used for the study. Two hundred and fourteen (214) of the sample were dropouts while 143 were JSS pupils still in school (non-dropouts).

Research Instrument(s)

The structured interview schedule was used to collect data for the study. By its nature, the structured interview schedule was appropriate because it gave the respondents the opportunity to state all the reasons for which they dropped out of school.

With the guidance and supervision of the Principal Supervisor, two (2) sets of structured interview schedule were developed for the study. One was for school dropouts from both the Primary and J.S.S (Dropouts). The other was for J.S.S. students still in school (Non-dropouts).

The common features with both the structured interview schedule were that both had the same content-related questions in items 1-30. The differences between the two were that the dropouts' structured interview schedule had 41 items, made of six (6) sections, A-F. It also had 32 close-ended and nine (9) open-ended questions. The

structured interview schedule for J.S.S. students in school (Non-dropouts) had 30 items made of five (5) sections, A-E. It had 24 close-ended and six (6) open-ended questions.

The close-ended questions were followed by sets of fixed responses from which the respondents were asked to choose the category which most nearly reflected their opinion or experience. The open-ended types allowed respondents to express their views in their own words.

Section 'A' in both structured interview schedules explored the personal/home background data of the respondents. It had ten (10) items. The questions sought to find out, among others, the respondents' gender, whom they stayed with, whether they felt happy at home and enquiries about their sibling sizes. For example, the variable on the respondents' gender was measured female (1) and male (2). At the same section, the question, "Whom do/did you stay with?", was measured on a 6-point Likert scale. The response categories and their corresponding values for the question were: Both parents (1) Mother only (2) Father only (3) Father with step-mother (4) Mother with step-father (5) Others (specify) (5). Section 'B' sought information about the socio-economic status of parents of the respondents. Father's and mother's highest levels of education and their occupation were explored. This section comprised four (4) questions which elited information on parents' level of education and occupation. For example, the phrase, "Highest level of education of father/male guardian", was measured on a 6-point Likert scale with the following response categories and their responding values: No schooling (1) Less than secondary education (2) Secondary education (3) Beyond secondary education but below Bachelor degree (4) Bachelor degree or equivalent (5)

Post-graduate or equivalent (6). "Highest level of education of mother/female guardian" was measured in the same way. Section 'C' probed parental commitment to pupils' needs. Among others, subjects were asked to give information on the ease or otherwise with which parents provided them with their needs to be able to attend school. For example, the question, "How difficult do/did your parents find it to provide your needs such as school uniform, sandals, etc.? Responses were measured on a 6-point Likert scale, using the following response categories: Very easy (1) Easy (2) Quite easy (3) Difficult (4) Very difficult (5) Extremely difficult (6). Section 'D' examined "in-school factors". It investigated, among others, teachers' regularity at school, whether teachers' teaching were interesting, frequency of caning and insults, and the extent of manual labour in the school. For example, the question, "How regularly do/did your teachers attend school?", was asked. The responses were also measured on a 6-point Likert scale, categorised as follows: Very regular (1) Regular (2) Quite regular (3) Irregular at times (4) Irregular most of the time (5) Always irregular (6). Section 'E' explored peer-group influence to find out whether the dropouts and students in school had peers who were not in school and whether these peers had influenced them to drop out of school. Section 'F' sought information on miscellaneous issues exclusively for only dropouts. It found out, among others, whether pregnancy was the cause of the respondents' dropping out of school. A question in this section based on pregnancy was, "Some pupils/students dropped out of school because they became pregnant or made others pregnant. To what extent is this true in your case?" This question was measured on a 6-point Likert scale, using the

following response categories: To no extent whatsoever (1) To no extent (2) To a little extent (3) To some extent (4) To a large extent (5) To a very large extent (6).

Validity and Reliability

To enhance the research instruments' internal consistency and validity, the structured interview schedule - for both dropouts and non-dropouts - were submitted to the two researcher's supervisors for their perusal and comments with the view of establishing face validity. This helped to identify ambiguities and other inadequacies in the research instruments. For example, the need to reorder the dropouts' structured interview schedule to fall in the same sequence with the non-dropouts' structured interview schedule was found to be necessary. Question 6 on the dropouts' structured interview schedule, therefore, became question 2; question 7 became question 3; question 8 became question 4, question 2 became 31; question 4 became 32 in addition to a few others. Some of the questions were also found to be irrelevant and were eliminated accordingly. The original 48 questions on the dropouts' structured interview schedule were, therefore, pruned down to 41. In this way, the face validity of the instrument was established.

In finding the reliability of the structured interview schedule, the structured interview schedule was pilot-tested on a sample of 50 dropout respondents and 50 non-dropout respondents in basic schools in Keta District in the Volta Region. The same structured interview schedule was again answered by the same respondents on a second occasion. A time lapse of seven days was given for the second exercise. The reliability

co-efficient was obtained by using the Pearsons product moment correlation, and this yielded a test-retest reliability coefficient of $r = .91$.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher visited the schools he selected, one after the other and introduced himself to the headteachers/headmasters with the help of introductory letters from the Head of Department, Department of Educational Foundations, University of Cape Coast and the Akatsi District Director of Education (Appendices C & D). He then collected the names of the school dropouts for each year from 1994/95 to 1998/99 academic years from the heads of the primary and junior secondary schools he selected (Appendices E & F). In coming by these lists of the dropouts, the school heads consulted class registers, admission registers, log books and in some cases, teachers and pupils. Earlier on, the Akatsi District Education Directorate provided the researcher with such records as the number of basic schools in the district circuit by circuit and the enrolment of all schools in the district from 1994/95 to 1998/99.

With the assistance of the school heads, the researcher appointed a total of 26 research assistants, one for each primary and J.S.S. used for the study. These people were teachers in the various schools selected based on their years of experience as teachers in their respective schools and also based on their demonstrated skills in eliciting information through interviewing. The researcher used the first few days travelling from school to school training the research assistants. Their orientation was to make them

know the nature of the study and the part they would play in it. Items in the structured interview schedule were well explained to them.

Each day, the researcher went out to the various communities according to an itinerary to look out for the dropouts who, when met, were interviewed on the spot. The research assistants also interviewed any of them they met even in my absence. We were assisted by colleague dropouts, pupils still in school, teachers and assemblymen to locate the dropouts. The questions were read out to them by the researcher/research assistants and the recording of the dropouts' responses done by them as well. The exercise was very hectic.

The instrument - structured interview schedule - for students still in school were administered by the researcher himself with the assistance of the respective class teachers. The data collection exercise took about three months to complete.

Data Analysis Procedure

Two methods of data analysis were adopted. First, descriptive statistics involving the use of frequencies, percentages and cross-tabulations were used to answer the six research questions. The frequency counts were converted to percentages to help establish the direction of the responses of the respondents. In other words, the use of the percentages helped in analysing the data collected and thereby making it possible for answers to each research question to be derived and significant conclusions reached.

Secondly, the analysis of data was done through the use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme. Specifically, inferential statistic namely the chi-

square test of independence was used to test the five hypotheses to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between variables. In other words, the chi-square tests of independence were carried out on the data to determine whether differences between variables were statistically significant.

Problems Encountered

In carrying out this study, a number of problems were encountered.

The data collection process started at a time when teachers and pupils were preparing for their end-of-year terminal examinations. The completion of various school records such as Pupils Continuous Assessment Records pre-occupied the school heads and class teachers. Preparation of the list of the dropouts was, therefore, very difficult and was delayed in many of the schools.

Poor record keeping by some of the school heads made acquisition of the list of dropouts difficult. Records on pupils' transfers were poorly kept in some of the schools such that whether a pupil/student was transferred or had dropped out of school could not be established. In some cases some of the class registers could not be traced. In one school in particular, the school head (she was new) complained that she did not inherit any school record – class registers, admission register, log book – from her predecessor because all the documents were reported to have been destroyed by termites.

The vacation of schools in early August 2000 also created some difficulty in the data collection process as the research assistants, teachers and pupils who were assisting in locating some of the dropouts had travelled out of their stations.

Accessibility to most of the communities was also difficult because some of the communities could be reached only on market days when vehicles plied the roads.

It was also difficult locating the dropouts. A good number of them had travelled out of their communities. It, therefore, took a lot of effort to come by 109 primary school dropouts and 105 J.S.S. dropouts.

The inflationary cost of writing materials and transport costs and the fact that one had to visit the communities several times made the data collection process very expensive.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the data analysed. The chapter has been divided into three sections. Section one deals with the demographic characteristics of the sample namely: the sample size, sex, age and the two groups of pupils involved in the study. The second section answers the research questions. The third section deals with testing the hypotheses.

Demographic Characteristics

The study involved a sample of 357 primary and junior secondary school (J.S.S.) pupils with an average age of 15.6 years. Two hundred and fourteen (214) of them were dropouts while one hundred and forty three (143) were still in school. The two groups of respondents were involved for the purpose of contrast. The dropouts were made up of one hundred and thirty two females (132) and eighty two (82) males. For those still in school, sample comprised sixty-eight (68) females and seventy-five (75) males. The overall total number of girls was two hundred (200) and that of the boys, one hundred and fifty seven (157).

Among the dropouts, 55 (about 26%) came from intact homes whereas 159 (about 74%) came from non-intact homes. Among those in school, 48 (about 34%) were in intact homes whereas 99 (about 66%) were in non-intact homes. In all, 103 (about 29%)

of all the respondents came from intact homes whereas 254 (71%) came from non-intact homes. The data indicated that about 49 percent of those from non-intact homes lived with single parents and that the situation was due to either divorce or separation. Indeed, as much as 42 percent of the non-intact status homes was due to death. From all indications, most of the dropouts came from single-parent homes and that, that condition was due primarily to marital disruption.

Socio-Economic Background

The socio-economic background of the pupils was also studied. In this connection, the education and occupation of mother and father was taken into consideration. The data indicated that among all the respondents, that is drop-outs and non-dropouts, about 43 percent of the fathers had no schooling. The same percentage had elementary education. In all, the findings revealed that 86 percent of the pupils have fathers with little or no formal education. The education of mothers was even much lower. Seventy-five percent (75%) of mothers had no schooling, whereas 20% had elementary education. In all, 95 percent of the pupils had mothers who have little or no education.

Regarding occupation, 7 percent of the pupils reported that their fathers were unemployed whereas 4 percent indicated that their mothers were unemployed. The responses indicated further that 68 percent of the pupils had fathers in unskilled

occupations whereas 91 percent of them had mothers also in unskilled or semi-skilled occupations.

Considering the low levels of education of parents coupled with their low occupational status, we conclude that majority of the pupils, both dropouts and non-dropouts came from very low socio-economic backgrounds.

The respondents were asked further to indicate if they had certain essential facilities for studies at home. The data indicated that 63 percent of all the respondents did not have furniture at home, 52 percent lacked lamps to study with, 54 percent did not have the necessary quiet to study at home while 41 percent lacked sufficient space at home for their studies.

It could be concluded that the low socio-economic status of all the respondents was largely responsible for the lack of the essential facilities such as furniture and lamp in the pupils' homes for studies. A number of studies have shown that the number of years of education is a strong determinant of occupational achievement (Collins, 1971). The unskilled and semi-skilled forms of occupation coupled with the low level of education of a large percentage of the respondents' parents suggest a low-level of income which could, in one way, account for the absence of such facilities in the pupils homes.

Other Descriptives

◆ Economic Factors

Respondents were asked to respond to a number of questions pertaining to economic factors affecting their education. First, they were asked if their parents were able to provide them with their school needs. To this question, 58 percent of the respondents indicated that their parents found it difficult to provide them with their school needs. They were also asked about the regularity at which their school fees were paid. Forty-eight percent (48%) indicated that payment of their school fees had been irregular. On further probing, 68 percent of the respondents, both dropouts and non-dropouts indicated that when fees were not paid on time, they were sent away from school.

An assumption underlying the study was that when pupils are engaged in income-generating activities before and after school, their attention tends to be diverted from school on to commercial activities. The respondents were, therefore, asked if they engaged in commercial activities before and after school. Fifty-two percent (52%) indicated that they engaged in such commercial activities as selling goods and pushing "trucks" in the market or farming. On market days especially, they usually did not go to school. The girls in particular engaged in hawking different commodities including ice water, fruits, cosmetics, textile while the boys sold assorted materials including men's and women's wear, belt and even ice water. A good number of them pushed "trucks" carrying load for traders to the market in the morning and from the market in the evening. The

pupils used the earnings they derived as their pocket money to school, for paying their school fees in some cases and to provide some of their school needs.

We conclude, therefore, that as the pupils engaged in these commercial activities and found them more financially rewarding than attending school, they dropped out of school

◆ School Factors

The respondents were also asked questions pertaining to school factors that could contribute to absenteeism and school dropout. First, both dropouts and non-dropouts were asked to evaluate their teachers' regularity in class. Almost all of them indicated that their teachers were regular in class. They were also asked if corporal punishment in the form of flogging was common in their school. Seventy-two percent (72%) responded "No" while 28 percent answered "Yes".

They were also asked to evaluate their teachers' teaching. Almost all of them found their teachers' teaching interesting. From all indications, conditions in the schools were appropriate for teaching and learning and for retention of pupils in school.

◆ Miscellaneous Factors

Other miscellaneous pieces of information were also sought.

The dropouts were asked to indicate whether or not they had friends who were also dropouts. Fifty-three percent (53%) of them answered "Yes" but when asked whether they dropped out due to peer influence, 90 percent indicated "No".

Asked about their parents' reaction to their dropping out of school, about 77 percent of the dropouts indicated that their parents were very much unhappy about it. When asked if they regretted dropping out of school, 90 percent of the dropouts themselves indicated that they were regretful. The modal reasons for the regret were that their dreams of climbing the academic ladder were shattered (25%); the future seemed gloomy because of their inability to secure modern sector jobs (38%). About 11 percent of the respondents sadly indicated that their regret stemmed from the fact that they had disappointed their parents by dropping out.

Finally, the dropouts were asked if their drop out was due to pregnancy. Only about 32 percent answered in the affirmative.

The Research Questions

Six (6) research questions were used to guide the study. This section describes steps that were taken to seek answers to the research questions.

Research Question 1:

Is there a relationship between parents' education and school dropout?

Parents' education was used to represent their socio-economic status. The 6-point Likert scale on which the variables, "Father's Education" and "Mother's Education" were measured were collapsed into three (3). Categories 1-2 were labelled "No Schooling", 3-4 labelled "Less than Secondary Education" and 5-6 labelled "Secondary Education and above". Cross-tabulations and percentage distributions were used to find the relationships. Table 4 presents the result of the data analysis.

Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Dropouts by Father's Education

PUPIL	NO SCHOOLING	< SECONDARY EDUCATION	> SECONDARY EDUCATION	TOTAL
Dropouts	49.5% (106)	44.4% (95)	6.1% (13)	100% (214)
Non-Dropouts	34.3% (49)	40.6% (58)	25.2% (36)	100% (143)

Note: Absolute Numbers are in Parenthesis

The result, as shown in Table 4 indicates that the higher the level of education of the father, the lower the tendency of the child to drop out of school. On the other hand, the lower the level of education of the father, the higher the tendency of the child to drop out of school. This shows that there is an inverse relationship between father's education and the tendency to drop out.

A similar relationship is found between mother's education and children dropping out of school. In this case too, percentage distributions and cross-tabulations were used.

Table 5 presents a summary of the results.

Table 5: Percentage Distribution of Dropouts by Mother's Education

PUPIL	NO SCHOOLING	< SECONDARY EDUCATION	> SECONDARY EDUCATION	TOTAL
Dropouts	84.6% (181)	13.1% (28)	2.3% (5)	100% (214)
Non-Dropouts	59.4% (85)	29.4% (42)	11.2% (16)	100% (143)

Note: Absolute Numbers are in Parenthesis

From table 5, we notice that mother's education is also inversely related to children dropping out of school. Thus we conclude that there is an inverse relationship between parents' education and children's tendency to drop out of school. This finding lends support to Anderson's (1988) claim that in both the developed and developing countries, children who come from poor families do not enrol in school. Those who attend school normally drop out as compared to children who come from better-off families. The finding also lends support to Wilson's (1987) view that school dropout results from low socio-economic status of parents because they are in extreme poverty and live in overcrowded and tension-filled environment.

Research Question 2:

Is there a relationship between pupils' perception that there is too much manual labour in the school and the tendency to drop out?

An assumption underlying the study is that children tend to lose interest in school and eventually drop out when there is too much manual labour in the school.

To answer this research question, the variable, "Too much manual labour" which was measured on a 6-point Likert scale was recorded into two (2) categories. Category 1 was labelled "Not Serious" while 2 was labelled "Serious".

The relationship between dropping out of school and manual labour was established using cross-tabulations and percentages. Table 6 presents the results of the data analysis.

Table 6: Percentage Distribution of Dropouts by Perception of Manual Labour

PUPIL	NOT SERIOUS	SERIOUS	TOTAL
Dropouts	1.9% (4)	98.1% (210)	100% (214)
Non-Dropouts	80.4% (115)	19.6% (28)	100% (143)

Note: Absolute Numbers are in parenthesis

The data as shown in Table 6 indicate that dropouts and non-dropouts perceive the state of manual labour in the school differently. Whereas almost all the dropouts perceive manual labour to be serious in the school, as much as 80 percent of those still in

school do not perceive manual labour to be serious. There is thus a strong positive relationship between the perception that there is too much manual labour in the school and the tendency to drop out of school. This suggests that those who find manual labour to be too much in the school tend to drop out.

Research Question 3:

Is there a relationship between pupils' perception of teacher attitude to work and their tendency to drop out of school?

An assumption underlying the study is that a positive teacher attitude to work sustains children's interest in attending school whereas a negative teacher attitude to work lowers children's interest in school causing them to play truant and eventually dropping out of school.

To test this assumption, the 6-point Likert scale on which the variable measuring teacher attitude – "Teacher regularity in class" – was recoded into two categories. Category 1 was labelled "Regular" while 2 was labelled "Irregular". Pupils' assessment of teacher regularity in class was cross-tabulated with type of pupil (dropouts and non-dropouts). Frequencies and percentages were also used. Table 7 presents a summary of the results.

Table 7: Percentage Distribution of Dropouts by Percentage of Teacher Regularity in Class

PUPIL	REGULAR	IRREGULAR	TOTAL
Dropouts	98.6% (211)	1.4% (3)	100% (214)
Non-Dropouts	94.4% (135)	5.6% (8)	100% (143)

Note: Absolute Numbers are in parenthesis

The data as shown in Table 7 indicate that almost all the respondents – dropouts and non-dropouts – have shown that their teachers are regular at school and that their teaching is interesting. Consequently, no significant relationship was found between perception of teacher attitude and pupils dropping out of school. The conclusion drawn, therefore, is that in this study, there is no relationship between pupils' perception of teacher attitude to work and the tendency of pupils to drop out of school.

Research Question 4:

Is there a relationship between family structure and school dropout?

An assumption underlying the study is that children from single-parent homes tend to drop out of school for lack of parental control and financial difficulties.

Inversely, children from intact homes keep longer in school due to a better financial support and an effective parental control and guidance.

To answer this research question, the variable, "Whom respondents stay with" which was measured on a 6-point Likert scale was recoded into two categories. Category 1 was labelled "intact" while 2 was labelled "Non-intact. Frequencies, percentages and Cross-tabulation were used to establish the relationship between family structure and school dropout. Table 8 presents the result of the data analysis.

Table 8: Percentage Distribution of Dropouts by Family Structure

PUPIL	INTACT	NON-INTACT	TOTAL
Dropouts	25.7% (55)	74.3% (159)	100% (214)
Non-Dropouts	33.6% (48)	66.4% (95)	100% (143)

Note: Absolute Numbers are in Parenthesis

The result as shown in Table 8 revealed that overwhelming proportions of both the dropouts and non-dropouts come from non-intact family settings – 74.3% and 66.4% respectively. Hence no relationship between household structure and school dropout was found.

Research Question 5:

Is dropping out of school related to peer influence?

An assumption underlying the study is that children can be influenced by their peer-group to drop out of school because the children can fall a natural prey to a

delinquent gang leader who may control and use them (Ohlsen, 1974). Reid (1985) exhorts that the influence of peers and friendship groups on behaviour in school and inside the classroom should not be underestimated, especially among pupils who are at a vulnerable age.

To test this assumption and answer the research question, frequencies, percentages and cross-tabulations were run. Table 9 presents a summary of the results.

Table 9: Percentage Distribution of Peer Influence-Related Dropout by Sex

SEX	RELATED	NOT-RELATED	TOTAL
Female	11.5% (23)	88.5% (177)	100% (214)
Male	8.9% (14)	91.1% (143)	100% (143)

Note: Absolute Numbers are in Parenthesis

The result was that about 90 percent of the respondents – both dropouts and non-dropouts – were not influenced by dropped-out peers to drop out of school. The answer to this research question, therefore, is that data from this study does not suggest any relationship between peer influence and dropping out of school.

Research Question 6:

Is there a relationship between having been pregnant or having made a girl pregnant on the one hand, and dropping out of school on the other?

To answer this research question, the variable, "Pregnancy", measured on a 6-point Likert scale was recoded into two categories. Category 1 was labelled "No" while 2 was labelled "Yes". Frequencies were run and percentage distributions used.

Pregnancy as a cause of dropping out of school was cross-tabulated with sex to establish the significance of the relationship.

Table 10 presents the result of the data analysis.

Table 10: Percentage Distribution of Pregnancy-Related Dropout by Sex

SEX	NON-DROPOUT	DROPOUT	TOTAL
Female	55.3% (73)	44.7% (59)	100% (132)
Male	89.0% (73)	11.0% (9)	100% (820)

Note: Absolute Numbers are in Parenthesis

The result, as shown in Table 10 indicates that more females than males dropped out of school due to pregnancy or having made a girl pregnant. It implies, therefore, that the higher the rate of pregnancy or having made a girl pregnant, the higher the rate of dropouts from school and vice versa.

Evidence adduced from the study therefore establishes a significant relationship between having been pregnant or having made a girl pregnant on the one hand and dropping out of school on the other.

Testing the Hypotheses

Introduction

Data gathered in the Akatsi district to achieve the purpose of the study suggest community and family poverty as a major factor responsible for school dropout in the district.

This section, therefore, tested the hypothesis that "Poverty in the family and in the community is the principal cause of pupils' dropout from school".

Two component hypotheses were drawn from the above hypothesis. These are:

- 1̄ There is no statistically significant relationship between family poverty and dropping out of school.
- 2̄ There is no statistically significant relationship between community poverty and dropping out of school.

Under family poverty, four null hypotheses were derived. Under community poverty, one null hypothesis was advanced for testing.

In testing these null hypotheses, the chi-square tests of independence were used.

These five hypotheses are reproduced and tested in the succeeding section.

Hypothesis 1(a)

- Ho. There is no statistically significant relationship between parents' inability to provide school needs and children's tendency to drop out of school.
- Hi. There is a strong positive relationship between parents' inability to provide school needs and the tendency for such children to drop out of school.

The chi-square test of independence was used to determine the direction and strength of the relationship. Table 11 presents a summary of the results of the chi-square test.

Table 11: Expected and Observed Frequencies of Parents' Ability to Provide School Needs by Category of Pupil

PUPIL	COUNT	Parents' Ability to Provide School Needs		TOTAL
		EASY	HARD	
Dropouts	Observed Frequency	74	140	214
	Expected Frequency	89.3	124.7	214.0
Non-Dropouts	Observed Frequency	75	68	143
	Expected Frequency	59.7	83.3	143.0
Total	Observed Frequency	149	208	357
	Expected Frequency	149.0	208.0	357.0

$$(X^2 (1, N = 357) = 11.25, P < .001)$$

The data as shown in table 11 indicate that a significant proportion of the dropouts found it difficult to get their school needs provided by their parents. This was not the case with those still in school. Regarding parents' ability to provide school needs, there is a statistically significant difference between dropouts and pupils still in school as the chi-square test has shown ($X^2(1, N = 357) = 11.25, P < .001$). This means that there is a positive relationship between parents' ability to provide school needs and children's tendency to remain in school. The easier it is to have one's school needs provided, the more convenient it is to stay in school.

The conclusion is that there is a strong positive relationship between parents' inability to provide school needs and the tendency for such children to drop out of school. So we reject the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1(b)

- Ho. There is no statistically significant relationship between parents' inability to pay school fees and children's tendency to drop out of school.
- Hi. Dropping out of school is positively related to parents' inability to pay school fees.

To test this hypothesis, the chi-square test of independence was used to establish the direction and strength of the relationship. Table 12 presents a summary of the results of the chi-square test.

Table 12: Expected and Observed Frequencies of Parents' Ability to Pay School Fees by Category of Pupil

PUPIL	COUNT	Regularity of Fee Payment		TOTAL
		EASY	HARD	
Dropouts	Observed Frequency	100	114	214
	Expected Frequency	111.5	102.5	214.0
Non-Dropouts	Observed Frequency	86	57	143
	Expected Frequency	74.5	68.5	143.0
Total	Observed Frequency	186	171	357
	Expected Frequency	186.0	171.0	357.0

$(X^2 (1, N = 357) = 6.18, P < .01)$

The data as shown in Table 12 reveal that a slight majority of the dropouts had difficulty in getting their school fees paid by their parents. This, however, is not the case with those still in school. The association between ability to pay school fees and the tendency to remain in or drop out of school is, however, weak as revealed by the chi-square value ($X^2 (1, N = 357) = 6.18, P < .01$). The relationship is weak but statistically significant. So we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that dropping out of school is related to parents' inability to pay school fees.

Hypothesis 1(c)

- Ho. There is no statistically significant relationship between parents' inability to provide pocket money and the tendency of their children to drop out of school.
- Hi. The tendency to drop out of school is associated with parents' inability to provide pocket money.

To test this assumption, the chi-square test of independence was used. Table 13 presents a summary of the results of the chi-square test.

Table 13: Expected and Observed Frequencies of Parents' Ability to Provide Pocket Money by Category of Pupil

PUPIL	COUNT	Parents' Ability to Provide		TOTAL
		Pocket Money		
		EASY	HARD	
Dropouts	Observed Frequency	84	130	214
	Expected Frequency	136.1	77.9	214.0
Non-Dropouts	Observed Frequency	143	0	143
	Expected Frequency	90.9	52.1	143.0
Total	Observed Frequency	227	130	357
	Expected Frequency	227.0	130.0	357.0

$$(X^2 (1, N = 357) = 136.62, P < .001)$$

The data as shown in Table 13 reveal that a large proportion of the dropouts found it extremely difficult to get pocket money from their parents whereas all those still in school found it relatively easy to get pocket money from their parents. A statistically significant difference between dropouts and pupils still in school regarding parents' ability to provide pocket money, has been established as revealed by the chi-square test ($X^2(1, N = 357) = 136.62, P < .001$). We thus conclude that there is a strong positive relationship between parents' inability to provide pocket money on the one hand, and children's tendency to drop out, on the another.

The null hypothesis is therefore rejected and the research hypothesis adopted: the tendency to drop out of school is associated with parents' inability to provide pocket money.

Hypothesis 1(d)

- Ho. There is no statistically significant relationship between parents' education and the tendency of their children to drop out of school.
- Hi. The tendency to drop out of school is negatively associated with parents' education.

The assumption here is that there is a positive correlation between education and income. It should, therefore, be expected that in the Akatsi district, educated parents, given their relatively high income, would be more capable of keeping their children in

school than would less educated parents. This is because poverty is often linked with limited educational attainment and low occupational status of parents.

To test this hypothesis the chi-square test of independence was used to measure the direction and strength of the relationship.

Tables 14 and 15 present summaries of the results of the chi-square tests of independence.

Table 14: Expected and Observed Frequencies of Father's Education by Category of Pupil

PUPIL	COUNT	Father's Education			TOTAL
		No Schooling	<Secondary Education	>Secondary Education	
Dropouts	Observed Frequency	106	95	13	214
	Expected Frequency	92.9	91.7	29.4	214.0
Non-Dropouts	Observed Frequency	49	58	36	143
	Expected Frequency	62.1	61.3	19.6	143.0
Total	Observed Frequency	155	153	49	357
	Expected Frequency	155.0	153.0	49.0	357.0

$$(X^2 (2, N = 357) = 27.68, P < .001)$$

Table 15: Expected and Observed Frequencies of Mother's Education by Category of Pupil

PUPIL	COUNT	Mother's Education			TOTAL
		No	<Secondary	>Secondary	
		Schooling	Education	Education	
Dropouts	Observed Frequency	181	28	5	214
	Expected Frequency	159.5	42.0	12.6	214.0
Non-Dropouts	Observed Frequency	85	42	16	143
	Expected Frequency	106.5	28.0	8.4	143.0
Total	Observed Frequency	266	70	21	357
	Expected Frequency	266.0	70.0	21.0	357.0

$$(X^2 (2, N = 357) = 30.29, P < .001)$$

The chi-square tests of independence for parents' education in relation to school dropout indicated positive relationships ($X^2 (2, N = 357) = 27.68, P < .001$) – for father's education – and ($X^2 (2, N = 357) = 30.29, P < .001$) – for mother's education. The null hypothesis is, therefore, rejected and the research hypothesis that the tendency to drop out of school is associated with parents' education is adopted. In other words, the lower the levels of parents education, the greater the tendency to drop out of school.

Hypothesis 2

- Ho. There is no statistically significant relationship between perceived too much manual labour in the school and the tendency of children to drop out of school.
- Hi. The tendency of children to drop out of school is associated with their perception that there is too much manual labour in the school.

Households constitute the community. Therefore, total household incomes constitute the aggregate income of the community. Therefore if the mass of households are poor, then the community is also poor. When households and the community are poor, the schools in the community cannot be supported. The schools must, therefore, be forced to be self-reliant. Accordingly, the schools have to take the children through income-generating activities to raise money to support the school. Some of such activities include manual labour. We assume that when manual labour is too rampant and too much for pupils, some of them may play truant and eventually drop out of school. From this assumption, we hypothesise that there is no statistically significant relationship between perceived too much manual labour in the school and the tendency of children to drop out of school.

To test this assumption, the chi-square test of independence was used. Table 16 gives a summary of the results of the chi-square test of independence.

Table 16: Expected and Observed Frequencies of Perceived too Much Manual Labour by Category of Pupil

PUPIL	COUNT	Too Much Manual Work		TOTAL
		SERIOUS	NOT SERIOUS	
Dropouts	Observed Frequency	210	4	214
	Expected Frequency	142.7	71.3	214.0
Non-Dropouts	Observed Frequency	28	115	143
	Expected Frequency	95.3	47.7	143.0
Total	Observed Frequency	238	119	357
	Expected Frequency	238.0	119.0	357.0

$(X^2(1, N = 357) = 238.01, P < .001)$

The chi-square test for perceived too much manual work in relation to school dropout, as shown in Table 16, indicated a strong positive relationship ($X^2(1, N = 357) = 238.01, P < .001$).

Because of the positive relationship, the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis that the tendency of children to drop out of school is associated with their perception that there is too much manual labour in the school is adopted.

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APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR DROPOUTS

This structured interview schedule is being used by a graduate student in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast. The purpose is to find out the causes of school dropout in basic schools in the Volta Region of Ghana, using Akatsi district as a case study.

You are one of the many respondents responding to this structured interview schedule for information to be used in the study. You are, therefore, entreated to answer the questions as objectively as you can. Be assured that all information given by you will be treated in strict confidence.

SECTION A: PERSONAL / HOME BACKGROUND DATA

1. Gender:
 1. Female []
 2. Male []

2. Whom did you stay with when you were in school?
 1. Both parents []
 2. Mother only []
 3. Father only []
 4. Father with step-mother []

5. Mother with step-father []

6. Others (specify)

.....

3. Did you feel happy at home when you were in school?

1. Yes []

2. No []

4. If No, explain why

.....

5. How many children depended on your parents/guardian for their upkeep / schooling when you were in school?

6. How many people did you share your room with at the time you were in school?

.....

7. Did you have sufficient tables and chairs for your studies at home?

1. Yes []

2. No []

8. Did you have a lamp for your studies at home?

1. Yes []

2. No []

9. Did you have enough space at home for your studies?

1. Yes []

2. No []

10. Did you have enough quiet at home for your studies?

- 1. Yes []
- 2. No []

SECTION B: PARENTS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

11. Highest level of education of father/male guardian.

- 1. No schooling []
- 2. Less than secondary education []
- 3. Secondary education []
- 4. Beyond secondary education but below Bachelor Degree. []
- 5. Bachelor degree or equivalent. []
- 6. Post-graduate or equivalent []

12. Highest level of education of mother/female guardian.

- 1. No schooling []
- 2. Less than secondary education []
- 3. Secondary education []
- 4. Beyond secondary education but below Bachelor Degree. []
- 5. Bachelor degree or equivalent. []
- 6. Post-graduate or equivalent []

13. What was the occupation of your father/male guardian at the time you were in school?

14. What was the occupation of your mother/female guardian at the time you were in school?

SECTION C: PARENTAL COMMITMENT TO PUPILS'/STUDENTS' NEEDS

15. How difficult did your parents/guardian find it to provide your needs such as school uniform, sandals, etc.

1. Very easy []
2. Easy []
3. Quite easy []
4. Difficult []
5. Very difficult []
6. Extremely difficult []

16. How difficult did your parents find it to get you pocket money to school?

1. Very easy []
2. Easy []
3. Quite easy []
4. Difficult []
5. Very difficult []
6. Extremely difficult []

17. Did your parents/guardian pay your fees regularly?

1. Very regularly []
2. Regularly []
3. Quite regularly []
4. Irregularly []
5. Very irregularly []
6. Not at all regularly []

18. What happened to you whenever you were unable to pay your school fees?
1. Teachers sent me away from school.
 2. I used to stop school temporarily and worked for the money myself.
 3. I used to seek assistance from other people
 4. Any other (state)
 -
19. When you were in school, how often did you sell or do some work for your parents before and after school?
1. Never []
 2. Occasionally []
 3. Quite often []
 4. Often []
 5. Very often []
 6. Always []
20. Did you have too many chores to complete in the house when you were in school?
1. Yes []
 2. No []
21. Were your parents/guardian annoyed anytime you did not go to school?
1. Yes []
 2. No []

SECTION D: IN-SCHOOL FACTORS

22. How regularly did your teachers attend school when you were in school?
1. Very regularly []
 2. Regularly []
 3. Quite regularly []
 4. Irregularly at times []
 5. Irregularly most of the time []
 6. Always irregularly []
23. Did the way your teacher teach contribute to your dropping out of school?
1. Yes []
 2. No []
24. In some schools, students are made to engage in too much manual labour. How serious was this in your school?
1. Not at all serious []
 2. Not serious []
 3. Quite serious []
 4. Serious []
 5. Very serious []
 6. Extremely serious []
25. How often were you caned for not doing well or for lateness to school?
1. Never []
 2. Occasionally []
 3. Quite often []

4. Often []
5. Very often []
6. Always []
26. How often were you insulted by your teachers for not doing well or for lateness to school?
1. Never []
2. Occasionally []
3. Quite often []
4. Often []
5. Very often []
6. Always []
27. How would you assess or consider your academic performance when you were in school?
1. Academically excellent []
2. Academically very good []
3. Academically good []
4. Quite weak academically []
5. Academically weak []
6. Very weak academically []

SECTION E: PEER-GROUP INFLUENCE

28. At the time you were in school, did you have friends who were not in school?

1. Yes []

2. No []

29. Did you drop out of school because of their influence?

1. Yes []

2. No []

30. If Yes, how did they influence you?

.....
.....

SECTION F: MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS FOR DROPOUTS ONLY

31. At what class did you drop out of school?

32. Were your parents staying together at the time you stopped schooling?

1. Yes []

2. No []

33. If No, indicate why

1. Separation []

2. Divorce []

3. Death []

4. Desertion []

5. Not Applicable []

34. Did you drop out of school because you found it difficult to get your school needs?
1. Yes []
 2. No []
35. Did you drop out of school because you were sent out of school?
1. Yes []
 2. No []
36. How did your parents/guardian feel when you dropped out of school?
1. They were happy – they encouraged it. []
 2. They were not happy about it []
 3. They were indifferent []
 4. Any other (state)
37. How interesting was your teacher's teaching?
1. Very interesting []
 2. Interesting []
 3. Quite interesting []
 4. Sometimes not interesting []
 5. Not interesting []
 6. Not at all interesting []
38. Have you regretted dropping out of school?
1. Yes []
 2. No []

39. If Yes, why?

.....

40. If No, why?

.....

41. Some pupils/students dropped out of school because they became pregnant or made others pregnant. To what extent is this true in your case?

- 1. To no extent whatsoever []
- 2. To no extent []
- 3. To a little extent []
- 4. To some extent []
- 5. To a large extent []
- 6. To a very large extent []

2. Whom do you stay with now?
- 1. Both parents []
 - 2. Mother only []
 - 3. Father only []
 - 4. Father with step-mother []
 - 5. Mother with step-father []
 - 6. Others (specify)
3. Do you feel happy at home?
- 1. Yes []
 - 2. No []
4. If No, explain why
-
5. How many children depend on your parents/guardian for their upkeep / schooling?
6. How many people do you share your room with?
-
7. Do you have sufficient tables and chairs for your studies at home?
- 1. Yes []
 - 2. No []
8. Do you have a lamp for your studies at home?
- 1. Yes []
 - 2. No []

9. Do you have enough space at home for your studies?

1. Yes []

2. No []

10. Do you have enough quiet at home for your studies?

1. Yes []

2. No []

SECTION B: PARENTS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

11. Highest level of education of father/male guardian.

1. No schooling []

2. Less than secondary education []

3. Secondary education []

4. Beyond secondary education but below Bachelor Degree. []

5. Bachelor degree or equivalent. []

6. Post-graduate or equivalent []

12. Highest level of education of mother/father guardian.

1. No schooling []

2. Less than secondary education []

3. Secondary education []

4. Beyond secondary education but below Bachelor Degree. []

5. Bachelor degree or equivalent. []

6. Post-graduate or equivalent []

13. What is the occupation of your father/male guardian?

.....
14. What is the occupation of your mother/female guardian?
.....

SECTION C: PARENTAL COMMITMENT TO PUPILS'/STUDENTS' NEEDS

15. How difficult do your parents/guardian find it to provide your needs such as school uniform, sandals, etc.

- 1. Very easy []
- 2. Easy []
- 3. Quite easy []
- 4. Difficult []
- 5. Very difficult []
- 6. Extremely difficult []

16. Is getting pocket money to school a problem?

- 1. Yes []
- 2. No []

17. Do your parents/guardian pay your fees regularly?

- 1. Very regularly []
- 2. Regularly []
- 3. Quite regularly []
- 4. Irregularly []
- 5. Very irregularly []
- 6. Not at all regularly []

18. What happens to you whenever you are unable to pay your school fees?
1. Teachers send me away from school.
 2. I stop school temporarily and work for the money myself.
 3. I seek assistance from other people
 4. Any other (state)
-
19. How often do you sell or do some work for your parents before and after school?
1. Never []
 2. Occasionally []
 3. Quite often []
 4. Often []
 5. Very often []
 6. Always []
20. Do you have too many chores to complete in the house before going to school?
1. Yes []
 2. No []
21. Do your parents/guardian get annoyed anytime you do not go to school?
1. Yes []
 2. No []

SECTION D: IN-SCHOOL FACTORS

22. How regularly do your teachers attend school?

1. Very regularly []
2. Regularly []
3. Quite regularly []
4. Irregularly at times []
5. Irregularly most of the time []
6. Always irregularly []

23. Does the way your teachers teach sometimes make you feel like not coming to school?

1. Yes []
2. No []

24. In some schools, students are made to engage in too much manual labour. How serious was this in your school?

1. Extremely serious []
2. Very serious []
3. Serious []
4. Quite serious []
5. Not serious []
6. Not at all serious []

25. How often are you caned by your teachers for not doing well or for lateness to school?

1. Never []
2. Occasionally []
3. Quite often []
4. Often []
5. Very often []
6. Always []

26. How often are you insulted by your teachers for not doing well or for lateness to school?

1. Never []
2. Occasionally []
3. Quite often []
4. Often []
5. Very often []
6. Always []

27. How would you assess or consider your present academic performance?

1. Academically excellent []
2. Academically very good []
3. Academically good []
4. Quite weak academically []
5. Academically weak []
6. Very weak academically []

SECTION E: PEER-GROUP INFLUENCE

28. Do you have friends who are not in school?

1. Yes []

2. No []

29. Does/Do he/she/they influence you to stop schooling too?

1. Yes []

2. No []

30. If Yes, how does/do he/she/they influence you?

.....

APPENDIX C

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

REF. NO. DE/98/VOL. 1

DATE: 27TH JUNE, 2000

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Mr. ATTATSI, BERNARD S. K., the bearer of this note, is an M.PHIL student of this University. As part of his degree requirements, he is expected to work on a project entitled: CAUSES OF BASIC SCHOOL DROPOUT IN THE VOLTA REGION OF GHANA: A CASE STUDY OF AKATSI DISTRICT.

He has opted to make a study of your institution/establishment for the project.

I should be most grateful if you could afford him an opportunity to make the study.

Any information provided will be treated as strictly confidential.

Thank you,

(DR. J. A. OPARE)

AG. HEAD

APPENDIX D

GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE

(AKATSI DISTRICT)

P. O. BOX 20

AKATSI – V/R

REF: NO. GES/VR/AKD/90/79

DATE: 30TH JUNE, 2000

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

(MR. B. S. K. ATTATSI)

Mr. B. S. K. Attatsi, the bearer of this note (until recently an officer at the Akatsi District Education Office), is pursuing a post-graduate programme at the University of Cape Coast.

He has chosen to undertake a study for his Thesis in all the Basic Schools in the Akatsi District.

I should be pleased if you could co-operate with him to carry out his research successfully.

Thank you for your attention and co-operation.

(F. A. AHIAFOR)

A. D. SUPERVISION

for: DIST. DIRECTOR

AKATSI

THE HEADTEACHER/HEADMASTER
ALL BASIC SCHOOLS
AKATSI DISTRICT

APPENDIX E

A RECORD OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS IN THE SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN AKATSI DISTRICT BETWEEN 1994/95 AND 1998/99

Circuit	Name of School	1994/ 95	1995/ 96	1996/ 97	1997/ 98	1998/ 99	Total
1. AKATSI	1. Akatsi Demonstration Prim	26	7	27	14	4	78
	2. Torve R. C. Primary	11	7	5	5	-	28
2. GEFIA	1. Gefia R. C. Primary	1	5	2	2	9	19
	2. Lume-Avete L. A. Primary	-	-	1	3	-	4
3. AVENORPEME	1. Xavi E. P. Primary	11	10	12	5	4	42
4. AGBEDRAFOR	1. Agbedrafor R. C. Primary	6	-	1	3	6	16
	2. Whitey R. C. Primary A&B	29	27	34	31	33	154
5. AVENORPEDO	1. Avenorpedo E. P Primary	25	41	33	19	-	118
6. AVE-DAKPA	1. Ave-Dakpa R. C. Primary	1	2	8	5	9	25
7. AVE- AFIADENYIGBA	1. Ave-Havi L. A. Primary	11	7	6	32	-	56
8. WUTE	1. Wute E. P. Primary	2	3	5	9	-	19
9. AGORMOR	1. Agormor-Agado L.A. Prim	5	3	3	-	2	13
TOTAL		128	112	137	128	67	572

Note: A dash (-) indicates unavailability of records.

APPENDIX F

A RECORD OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS IN THE SELECTED JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AKATSI DISTRICT BETWEEN 1994/95 AND 1998/99

Circuit	Name of School	1994/ 95	1995/ 96	1996/ 97	1997/ 98	1998/ 99	Total
1. AKATSI	1. Akatsi Coll. Practice Sch.	1	4	2	3	6	16
	2. Akatsi No. 1 J.S.S.	10	8	3	14	3	38
	3. Akatsi No. 2 J.S.S.	6	3	6	9	16	40
	4. Torve L. A J.S.S.	5	3	3	4	-	15
2. GEFIA	1. Gefia L. A. J.S.S.	9	9	6	3	5	32
	2. Lume-United L. A. J.S.S.	2	5	2	5	3	17
3. AVENORPEME	1. Avenorpeme L. A. J.S.S.	3	3	3	4	4	17
	2. Xavi L. A. J.S.S.	11	10	12	5	4	42
4. AGBEDRAFOR	1. Agbedrafor L. A. J.S.S.	15	11	-	5	8	39
	2. Wlitye L. A. J.S.S.	9	11	17	15	11	63
5. AVENORPEDO	1. Avenorpedo L. A. J.S.S.	13	5	6	7	18	49
6. AVE-DAKPA	1. Ave-Dakpa L. A. J.S.S.	6	4	8	4	6	28
7. AVE-	1. Ave-Havi L. A. J.S.S.	1	11	5	14	12	43
AFIADENYIGBA							
8. WUTE	1. Wute L. A. J.S.S.	-	2	12	8	6	28
9. AGORMOR	1. Agormor-Agado L.A. J.S.S	3	1	-	2	-	6
TOTAL		94	90	85	102	102	473

Note: A dash (-) indicates unavailability of records.