

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

FACTORS AFFECTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF PUPILS IN
BASIC SCHOOLS IN ASAWASI SUB – METRO IN THE ASHANTI REGION
OF GHANA

GETRUDE OSAA MPIANI

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OF GHANA

BY

GETRUDE OSAA MPIANI

Dissertation submitted to the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration of the Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of Masters Degree in Educational Administration

SEPTEMBER 2012

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

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

Candidate's Signature Date.....

Candidate's Name: Getrude Osaa Mpiani

Supervisor's Declaration

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

Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Supervisor's Name: J. M. Dzinyela

ABSTRACT

The research sought to obtain evidence of the factors that were responsible for the academic performance of pupils in the Asawasi Sub – Metro such as family background, pupils’ characteristics, teachers’ influence and the school environmental factors. The research was conducted using observation, interviews and questionnaires. A sample size of 1640 respondents representing a heterogeneous target population was drawn from the Asawasi Sub-Metro.

The study revealed that persistent intrusion of the school premise by the public, ineffective use of teaching and learning materials (TLMs), and inadequate teaching and learning facilities disrupted teaching and learning and thus affected the academic performance of the pupils. It was concluded that the school environment, the community’s attitude towards education and the support given by the parents and other stakeholders affected the child’s academic development and performance.

It was recommended that school authorities should organize PTA and School Performance Appraisal Meetings to educate the community to understand that the child’s total development is a shared responsibility of all stakeholders.

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Finally my thanks go to Miss Yasmin whose contribution in typing has brought the dissertation to its printed stage. For any biases or short comings, the researcher is solely responsible.

DEDICATION

To my better half, Dr. S. Pyne.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Education is the single most important social institution that influences and is influenced by other social institutions. The crucial role played by education in developing human resources for both personal fulfilment and social advancement has been recognized in the world over. “It has been recognized that the social, economic, political and cultural development of nations depend largely on the quality and level of education of her citizens” (Rosovesky, 2000, p. 9). This is because of the strong fact that education is an engine of development of any country.

Conable, (1988), in an article on a World Bank study policy on education commented on the recognition of the key role education played in national development process for which support has continually been sought from the World Bank in Sub – Saharan African countries. Commenting on education and nations’ development, Conable stated that without education, development cannot occur. Conable went on to say that there exists considerable evidence that, improving the education status of a nation, the poor, women and indigenous people benefit from increased economic growth and reduction in poverty.

Realising the immense role of education in national development, both developed and developing nations have undertaken educational reforms in

order to make their educational systems functional and relevant to the socio – economic needs of their citizens. Ghana being one of the developing countries has carried out several educational reforms to change the structure and content of its educational system to make it suitable to meet the developmental needs of the people in the country. These reforms have also brought about huge investment in the development of infrastructure and establishment of new schools in order to make education accessible to all children of school going age.

Despite the perceived importance of education to the nation’s development and the government interventions to improve the quality of its education, the performance of pupils at the basic school level has been on the decline for some time now. The results of pupils’ performance have not been encouraging at all in some Junior High Schools in the Kumasi Metropolis especially in the Asawasi Sub–Metro. Careful analysis of the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) shows that of late only a small number of pupils are able to pass and continue to Senior High Schools. The recent BECE results of the public schools in the Asawasi Sub – Metro have been appalling. An observation of the situation of high rate of failure in the BECE indicated that the failure of the pupils could not be blamed solely on the performance of pupils.

According to Etsey (2005) and Sekyere (2009), several factors affecting academic performance have generally been identified. These factors include related family background, pupils’ characteristics, teachers’ influence and the school environmental factors. They also pointed out that family factors identified from related family backgrounds are relevant and come to play in

the cognitive, emotional and social development of the child. These family characteristics as observed by Etsey and Sekyere have direct relationship with academic performance of the child.

The academic performance of the child at school according to the findings of Etsey (2005) and Sekyere (2009) is highly influenced by the type of school environment the child is associated with. The contribution of teachers in the whole business of teaching and learning as well as the effort put into the learning process by the pupils; and the support given by the parents and other stakeholders of the community. All contribute in diverse ways in the child's academic development. This assertion therefore implies that for an institution to achieve the desired results in academic performance, all factors and stakeholders must be considered and brought together to play their respective roles.

Statement of the Problem

Statements made as well as concerns raised by some heads of basic schools, individuals, parents and government officials during occasions such as Open Days, Prize and Speech Days in the basic schools have in most case pointed to the fact that pupils' performance at the basic public schools was deteriorating very fast. This state of academic performance has been revealed by the results of the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). In the latter part of the 1990s and early part of 2000, most of the pupils in the public schools in the Asokore Mampong Circuit of the Asawasi Sub – Metro scored grade 6 in the BECE and gained admission to the best Senior High Schools in the country and Ashanti Region in particular. The recent results showed that the best total grades scored in most of the schools were in the range of 10 to

15. Majority of the pupils who completed their basic education could not pursue further education because of their BECE results. The situation was indeed pathetic. One was often tempted to attribute the academic performance of the pupils to inadequate resources in the schools.

However, the situation could be attributed to all stakeholders of education notably teachers, pupils, parents as well as the school factors. The academic performance of pupils in this regard could not only be attributed to inadequate resources in the schools. It is assumed that the factors identified above might have contributed in one way or another to the academic performance of pupils in public schools in the Asawasi Sub – Metro. However, evidence of the reliability of the assumption with regards to these factors as well as other factors need to be ascertained.

This research therefore was carried out to delve into the awful academic situation to ascertain the real factors affecting academic performance of pupils in the Asawasi Sub – Metro of Kumasi Metropolis.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to obtain evidence of the factors that were responsible for the academic performance of pupils in the Asawasi Sub – Metro. Specifically, the research was conducted to find evidence of:

- 1) School environment factors that affected academic performance of pupils in the Asawasi Sub – Metro Schools.
- 2) Teacher factors which affected academic performance of the pupils in the Circuit,
- 3) Pupil characteristics which contributed in diverse ways to academic performances in the Asawasi Sub – Metro.

- 4) Parental support variables which contributed to pupils' academic performance in the Asawasi Sub – Metro.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to guide and give direction to the research.

1. What school environment factors affect academic performance of pupils in the Asawasi Sub – Metro?
2. What teacher factors contribute to the academic performance of the pupils in the Asawasi Sub – Metro?
3. What pupil characteristics affect the academic performance of the pupils in the Asawasi Sub – Metro?
4. What parental support variables affect academic performance of their wards in Asawasi Sub – Metro?

Significance of the Study

The results of the research would be beneficial to parents, teachers, school administrators, government and other stakeholders of education in the study area because they all play a role in the total development of the pupil in school. It would therefore be in their interest to acknowledge from the results where they fall short of their responsibility; and take advantage of the recommendations to make the necessary corrections to improve upon the academic performance of the pupils. This would considerably raise the quality of education in the study area.

The recommendations from this research would be of great help to teachers and school authorities to check their activities and modify their methods and procedures of organizing events in the school to promote their

pupils' interests and attendance. Teachers may be encouraged to be assertive in their classrooms and other spheres of their life so as to have good academic impact on the results of their pupils. It is in the light of this that the goal of improving the academic performance of pupils to an appreciable level could be achieved.

Information from this research would sensitize parents to provide their wards with their basic school needs as well as assist them to do their home work and studies at home. This is because there is a correlation between home work and academic performance. Parents are to show interest in their children's school work. This study would create such awareness among the parents.

The findings of this research will help educational authorities to come out with practical policies that recommend suitable methods to be used in teaching which would encourage and arouse pupils' interest in academic achievement and school in general.

The results of this research would also encourage the government to adopt various methods of motivation which can be employed to encourage teachers to do their work effectively and efficiently.

This research would also serve as literature and reference material for other researchers who may wish to conduct similar studies elsewhere.

Delimitations of the Study

The research was conducted only within the Ashanti Region of Ghana. It was further delimited to the Asawasi Sub-Metro. The research covered only public junior high schools drawn from the three circuits that constituted the Asawasi Sub – Metro of Kumasi namely; Asokore–Mampong, Aboabo and

Asawasi Circuits. In other words the Asawasi Sub-Metro of Kumasi Metropolis was the geographical location for the research.

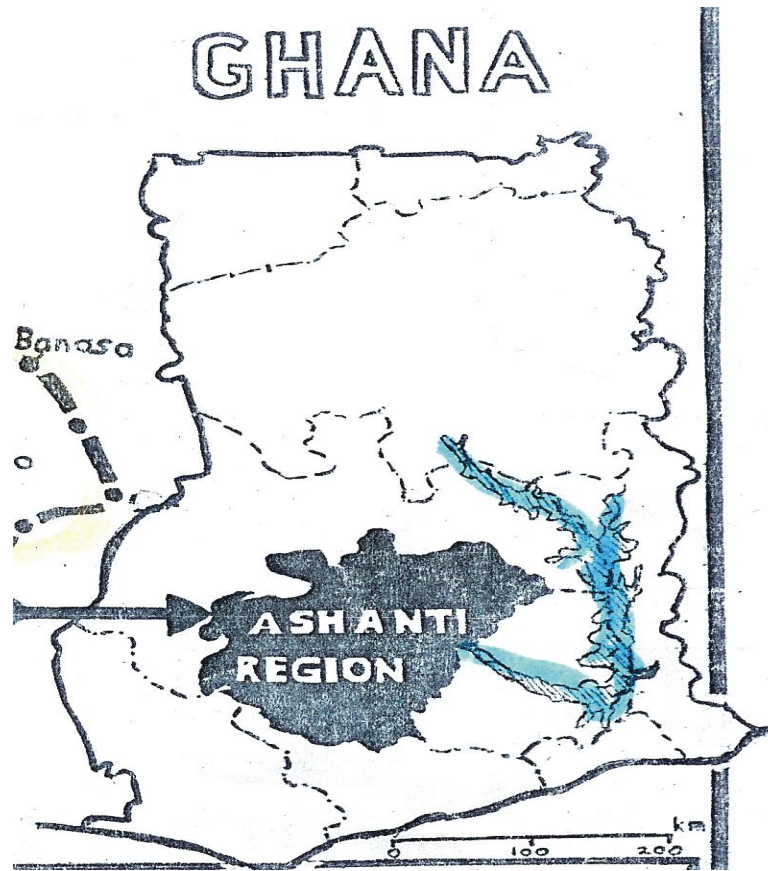


Figure 1: Map of Ghana showing Ashanti Region.

The choice of using the Asawasi Sub – Metro for the research was because the researcher happened to head of one of the public basic schools in the Sub – Metro and as such could have access to most of the resources required for the research.

The research concentrated on the twelve schools selected from the three circuits of the Asawasi Sub – Metro’s end of year performance in the BECE from 2005 to 2010 as reflected in the West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) results.

The practical skills acquired by the pupils and used for their vocational development as well as employable skills after completion of their basic education were left out of this research.

Limitation of the Study

The research sampled views of some of the pupils in each school and class. However, some pupils' inability to read the questionnaire and understand the items so as to provide the required responses made the collection of data more tiring and time consuming.

To come out with a good material on the activities of teachers based on practical evidence, it was so vital to have enough time with the teachers for the necessary interactions. It was observed that, acquiring first- hand information through personal interaction was very difficult because in many cases, the teachers were seen to be very busy. In such circumstance, the teachers became very apprehensive in responding positively to interactions with the researcher. The apprehension affected the consistency and logical sequence in releasing certain significant information.

Another form of limitation was identified as lack of co-operation on the part of the education officers. Since their work involved a lot of professionalism with regards to confidentiality, it became very difficult for them to give out certain vital information because they wanted only to respond within required professional standards. The lack of co-operation seriously affected the easy acquisition of relevant data to enrich the research.

Some heads were some-how reluctant to open their doors and permit the researcher to have access to the privacy of the school. The writer could not cope with some of the financial demands made by some of the respondents and

this therefore caused them to express blatantly their unwillingness to cooperate and assist the researcher to obtain the required material for the research.

Despite the challenges which confronted the research as well as personal biases and ‘blind spots’, which might have equally affected the work in one way or the other, efforts were made to put in place strategies to collect a valid and reliable data. This made it possible to come up with good and acceptable results for an objective conclusion and valid generalization of the findings.

Organization of the Study

This research was organized under five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction which gives a preamble to the study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Research Questions, Significance of the Study, Delimitations of the Study, Limitation of the Study and Organization of the Study.

Chapter two reviews related literature under relevant topics such as attitude and learning behaviour, definition of performance, conceptual framework on students’ academic performance and the school environment which constitute the basis for the research.

Chapter three explains the methodology used in the research and gives a brief description of the research design with particular reference to qualitative and quantitative design methods. There is also a description of the population of the research indicating the target population, accessible population, the sample as well as validation of instruments, pilot – testing of instrument, data collection instruments, and data collection procedures

Chapter Four gives a detailed account of the analysis and interpretation of the data collected. The chapter gives analysis and interpretation of data collated from the interviews, participant observations and general interactions with the research population within the sample area. Chapter Five provides the summary, conclusions and the recommendations offered by the researcher.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter is devoted to the review of related literature on factors that affect academic performance of pupils in basic school. The chapter discussed the need for child study, the place of children in education and understanding the child. It further discussed topics such as personality, character types, discipline, and the concept of adjustment.

Furthermore, the chapter reviewed relevant topics such as attitude and learning behaviour, definition of performance, conceptual framework on students' academic performance and the school environment. Other domains identified in the framework for this study consist of several dimensions that characterize the various institutional and administrative activities or characteristics of these domains. Some of these dimensions consist of a single activity or characteristic but most include several. These similar or closely related institutional activities or characteristics were believed to be variables that influence academic performance of pupils in one way or the other.

Need for Child Study

Before a gardener can help his plant to grow, he must study it. If it is a desert plant, he must give it sandy soil and plenty of sunshine; if it is a forest plant, he must give it shade. If it is a river plant, he must give it plenty of water and so on. Similarly, according to Beveridge (1967, p. 7) "the teacher must study what his plants, the pupils want for their growth, and as they are delicate,

sensitive and complex plants, he must study them very carefully to understand their nature”

The nature of the pupil in connection with this research shall be limited to his position in the teaching and learning environment. The pupil therefore becomes a vital figure in the teaching profession. Below are various views expressed by educationists about the pupil.

The Place of Children in Education

Isaacs asserted that:

The children themselves are the living aim and end of our teaching. It is their thought their knowledge, their character and development which make the purpose of our existence as schools and teachers. And it is the modes of their physical growth and social needs, which in the end determine the success, or failure of our teaching. (Isaacs, 1950, p.11)

In view of the above, the place of the basic school pupils with regards to their academic performance must be considered critically by teachers; because the success or failure of the teacher is determined by his ability or inability to mould the pupil to attain a desirable physical and social development and become useful to himself and society as a whole.

To evaluate all phases of their work, teachers need a good deal of information about the personal characteristics of their pupils. Gates & Jersild (1957, p. 25), commenting on the need for teachers to evaluate their work, asserted that “the school aims to help each pupil to develop his mental abilities, his ability to master various skills, his ability to get along with others

and to get along with himself” It is therefore necessary to study the characteristics of individual pupils in order to appraise the progress each one is making. Gates & Jersild made it clear that it is the teacher’s responsibility to study and seek relevant information about the personal characteristics of the pupils.

Education puts the pupil in the centre of the picture. The subject to be taught and methods to be used must be suited to his nature. To do this well, the pupils must be studied to understand the workings of their hearts and minds. Beveridge (1967, p. 7) wrote that “the teacher is not called upon to nourish the child’s body, but it is the teacher’s duty to nourish the child’s mind and character”. The teacher’s function according to Bowers (1967, p. 372) has been broadened to include the development of the pupils’ potentialities.

If the basic school pupil is put in the centre of ‘the picture’ as described above, then the teacher’s function of developing the child’s potentialities for a holistic personality as expressed by Bowers, cannot be overlooked.

From the foregone ideas expressed, one common factor that runs through is the fact that the teacher is not only expected to impart knowledge and skills to his pupils, but to aim at understanding their nature in order to help them to achieve quality academic performance.

Understanding the Child

Harold (1972) quoting Walter (1938) asserted that:

An individual’s course of development and behaviour
is influenced by what he has (his environment) what
he is (his inherited potential) and what he does (his

response to his environment and potentiality) this he described as the triangles of life. (Harold, 1972, p. 267)

According to Eddy & Lawes (1966, p. 16), “what makes pupils differ in physical size, in ability, in behaviour and so on, can be summarized by taking into account three sets of influences”. These are:

1. Innate influences: those which are present at birth
2. Past experiences: things, which have happened to the pupil during his upbringing, and have had a lasting effect upon him.
3. The present environment: the way in which he is now being influenced by the world around him and particularly by other people

It could be argued that one’s responses to his potentiality or environment whether positively or negatively become his experience within a given period of time. Expanding on the above influences, it is assumed that physical size; intelligence, temperament or disposition as well as certain emotional needs which seem very significant manifest their impact upon a pupil’s life. These may all have some direct influences on how such a pupil behaves. The child’s physical shape, size and strength will allow him/her to perform or prevent him/her from performing various actions. One’s basic disposition, active or passive, assertive or submissive may have a general influence on one’s actions and attitudes.

Personality

When a teacher first faces a new class of pupils whose ages are very much the same, they often seem to be alike. However, as the teacher gets to know them better, they begin to appear less alike and more as differing

individuals. Some distinguish themselves by their actions intended to attract the teacher's attention. Some may even stand out as individuals sooner than others. One pupil may appear to be the tallest in the class, and another the shortest. There could be one pupil who would always be the first with his hand up to answer any question. Another pupil may be identified as being the last to finish any piece of work. Additionally, each pupil will obviously be identified with certain height, a certain amount of intelligence, a customary level of behaviour, for example in punctuality, tidiness, helpfulness and many other characteristics. Interestingly, what differentiates each pupil from the rest and makes one a recognizable individual is one's personality.

Harold (1972, p. 258) noted that "personality embraces what one is, what one can be and what one hopes to be". Because it is impossible to deal with a man in totality, the word personality is restricted to those aspects which are functionary important, physique, feelings habits and knowledge.

Veronis, Charney, & Horton (1970 p.461) contended that "personality is the characteristics between patterns that a given individual displays in public". The term 'personality' according to the authors comes from the Latin expression *per sonare*, "to speak through" and refers to the masks that actors wore and "spoke through" on stage.

Wayne Weiten (1986, p.112) recorded personality as "a person's characteristic or consistent patterns of behaviour" Wade & Tavis (1987, p.389) also considered personality as "a distinctive and relatively stable pattern of behaviour, thoughts, motives and emotions that characterise an individual".

Theories of Personality

Theories of personality may be classified in a number of ways. Many of them have been developed within the therapeutic situation where the behaviour of the whole person is under observation. Others have been developed in the laboratory under controlled experimental conditions. For the purpose of this thesis, attention shall be directed to the theory of personality developed within the therapeutic situation as described by Sigmund Freud & Carl Jung.

Sigmund Freud

According to Wade & Tavris, Sigmund Freud propounded that personality consists of three parts, the id, the ego and the superego. Each has its own functions and elements. Human behaviour is nearly always a result of the interaction among them.

The id is the original system of personality; it is the material out of which the ego and superego become differentiated. It is the reservoir of psychic energy which, it obtains from the instincts. It is completely unconscious. One cannot know one's own id directly but only through its manifestations in one's behaviour. The id is said to obey the pleasure principles, and contains two basic competing groups of instincts: the life or sexual instinct (fuelled by psychic energy called the libido) and the death or aggressive instincts. As instinctive energy builds up in the id, the result is an uncomfortable state of tension. The id may discharge this tension in the form of reflex actions, displacement, physical symptoms or "wishful thinking" – uncensored mental images and unbidden thoughts. If these are not adequately handled and controlled skilfully by those responsible for the pupils' general

development, the results could easily affect pupils' academic performance negatively.

The ego is formed to handle transactions with the outside world. The ego operates according to the reality principle. The ego according to Freud represents "reason and good sense". It is said to be the executive of the personality because it controls the gateway to action, selects the features of the environment to which it will respond, and decides what needs will be satisfied in what manner. The description of the ego shows that pupils are supposed to be consciously trained to be able to identify and select appropriate and beneficial environments. It is by so doing that needs of the pupils could be satisfied in a desirable manner.

The superego represents the voice of morality, the rules of parents and society, the power of authority. It consist of what is termed as the ego ideal, those moral and social standards believed to be right, and the conscience, the inner voice that says something has been done wrong. The superego hands out good feelings such as pride and satisfaction when something is done well. It also hands out miserable feelings such as guilt and shame when rules are broken.

The id, ego and superego are in constant conflict. The id tells the pupil to go ahead and enjoy himself. Take the football to the field even though teacher has said not to; grab a computer game from another pupil because you want to play with it now. The superego says be good: don't get attracted to bad company; don't take the ball; never take someone else's belongings. The ego must mediate between the two so that the pupil is not dominated by one or the

other. Through the ego, the pupil develops a sense of self so that he can take initiative with confidence but not overstep society's boundaries.

The healthy personality must keep all three forces in balance. Someone who is too controlled by the id is governed by impulse and selfish desires. Someone who is too controlled by superego is rigid, moralistic, and authoritarian and cannot feel healthy emotions. Someone who has a weak ego is unable to balance personal needs and wishes with social duties and realistic limitations. The above structure of personality clearly indicates that any imbalance or dominance by one is bound to cause poor adjustment to the teaching and learning situation, hence affecting once academic performance. For example, when a child is too controlled by superego, he would become so fearful of getting an exercise wrong that he may eventually suffer from the morbid fear of failure or having failed. (Wade & Tavis, 1987, pp.391-396)

Character Types

According to Veronis, Charney, & Horton, Carl Jung developed a system of character types. The components of this system they claimed consist of two attitudes and four functions. The two attitudes are Introversion and Extroversion. The introverted attitude orients the person towards his inner subjective world; the extroverted attitude orients the person towards the external objective world.

The four functions are thinking, feeling, sensing and intuiting. The thinking function is concerned with ideas. By thinking, man tries to comprehend the nature of the world and of him. Feeling is the valuing function; it gives value to things with reference to the individual. It is responsible for man's experience of pleasure and pain, anger, fear, sorrow, joy

and love. Sensing is the perceptual or reality function. It yields concrete facts and information about the world. Intuiting refers to knowledge that is gained from unconscious sources. (Veronis, Charney, & Horton, 1970, p.470)

The researcher is of the view that the thinking, feeling, sensing and intuiting functions in a pupil's life play a major role in determining his fundamental attitude towards academic work. It is quite obvious to realize that if a pupil cannot think right, there is no way such a pupil can achieve any appreciable academic performance.

Stereotyped Sex Roles

One other area that shapes the life of a pupil as indicated by Eddy & Lawes (1966, p. 16) is seen in the different expectations the older generation have of the different sexes. "Through the way the pupil is brought up, through the teaching and guidance of parents and grandparents, the differences between boys and girls are widened" For instance, after the first few years of life, boys are expected to play with other boys, girls with other girls; some playthings, subjects, courses as well as some professions are regarded as suitable for males and others for females. Boys are encouraged to be energetic and courageous. Weeping for example is for girls and women; boys are told to act like men and not cry because it is unmanly. In these and many other ways pupils grow to fulfil stereotyped expectations. Such expectations are bound to influence the pupil's academic performance sometimes negatively. For example, boys are encouraged to study mathematics, engineering, and science. In an attempt to fulfil such stereotyped expectations some boys end up performing below average and find themselves trailing in class.

Needs and their Satisfaction

There are certain fundamental emotional needs of pupils, and the extent to which these are met has profound effect upon the individual. Satisfactory emotional development according to Hurlock (1985, p.411) depends upon the satisfaction of such needs as those for security and for adventure. For pupils, the need for security involves the security of feeling accepted not only by their parents and relatives, but also by other pupils, a feeling of belonging to the group and receiving affection, approval and admiration from the other members. Security requires the opportunity for giving affection as well as receiving it. Where the people surrounding a child fulfil the requirements of security by their words and deeds, the child's emotional growth is likely to be normal and enhanced. Anything otherwise is bound to create a negative impact on the child.

“Pupils seem to have a natural tendency for exploring, for being inquisitive, for wanting to know and for collecting objects” The need for adventure as observed by Acocella & Calhoun (1990, p. 41) included these, and the opportunities, for these activities are important to the process of growing up. Excessive restrictions by those around the pupil can have a lasting effect on him. He may become afraid to explore. In school when expected among his colleagues to find out for himself, or make an individual contribution, he may be too inhibited to do so.

The same might be said of mental exploration: if the asking of questions is discouraged by the relationship between pupil and adult, the pupil's natural inquisitiveness may be stifled, and a brake put on this aspect of mental growth which is required for high academic performance. The feeling

of security is necessary to provide the grounds for exploration. The exploration of the physical social and intellectual environments leads to better understanding and so enhances security which consequently may lead to satisfactory academic achievement. When the above information is critically analysed, it is realized that the two needs are linked.

Effects of Experience

The influence of one person on another, more often, has been an unconscious one. The older person is usually not aware of the effect that his actions have on the younger person. Yet there are also conscious efforts at influencing the young as described in the previous paragraphs, by passing on the traditions and attitudes of the social group and family. This can be through the medium of the spoken word or actions by adults and older pupils, which the pupil imitates. As the influence of the adult or older pupil is either consciously or unconsciously applied, so the acceptance of that influence by the pupil can also be conscious or unconscious.

A lot of behaviour patterns are learnt by watching how another person deals with a situation and then copying his action. Wright, & Taylor, (1970, p.423) asserted that “if an action is practiced a number of times in a type of situation; it becomes a habit – a more or less fixed pattern of behaviour”. Thereafter, that habit may be used unconsciously whenever an appropriate situation occurs.

Attitudes and habits have been described by Wright, & Taylor, (1970) as being consciously acquired even though they may be used without conscious thought. But it is equally possible that habits and attitudes may be

acquired in the first place without the person being consciously aware of it or the person making conscious effort to acquire it.

The Concept of Adjustment

Chauhan (1991, p.409) claimed that the term adjustment meant “reacting to the demands and pressures of social environment imposed upon the individual”. The demand may be external or internal, to which the individual has to react. The definition of adjustment is given by Lazarus (1989, p.86), as the “psychological process by which the individual manages or copes with various demands and pressures”. Expanding further, Lazarus claimed adjustment is often taken as a fitting in with society, not breaking its laws, not overstepping the bounds of customary behaviour nor setting up against the ideals of one’s group.

Veronis et al (1970, p.461) considered adjustment as “any behaviour that brings drive, need, motive or instigation to a halt” One can distinguish four phases of human adjustment. These are drive or instigation, seeking a solution, attaining a goal, and reducing tension. Adjustment in these terms is nothing more or less than action that relieves tension and restores a previous equilibrium and sense of well being. Veronis et al. further stated that adjustment is “man’s continuous interaction with himself, with other people and with his world.” (p. 484). These three factors are constantly acting on man and influencing him. And the relationship is reciprocal, for man is constantly acting on them as well.

In the school situation, a pupil who has learnt the whole range of behaviour suited to the school situations and consistently uses these actions would fit the definition of adjustment. His behaviour would be that expected

and accepted by the society. The pupil's behaviour in the school can be explained in one of two ways:

- (a) He is well behaved or adjusted because he has learnt the right habits for each possible situation, or (b) he is well behaved because he has developed concepts and principles of behaviour, and these enable him to decide upon the right course of action to take in a given situation. For example, a pupil who has learnt the right habits and has developed concepts and principles of good behaviour in his academic life will surely channel this life style to affect his academic performance positively.
- (b) Similarly, 'bad' behaviour can be explained in terms of (a) having learnt the wrong or inappropriate habits, or (b) of not having established guiding principles or concepts; and your guess of the effect of this on academic performance is as correct as mine.

Adjustment as a Process

This meaning of adjustment is seen as an on-going process by which a person varies his behaviour to produce a more harmonious relationship between himself and his environment. Adjustment as a process is of major importance for psychologist, teachers and parents. The nature of this process is decided by a number of factors, particularly, internal needs and external demands on the child. Those two types of demands sometimes come into conflict with each other and resultantly make adjustment a complicated process for the pupil. Conflicts among the various needs or demands of a pupil present special problems of adjustment. If one of the conflicting needs is gratified, the ungratified need may produce frustration and sometimes lead to abnormal behaviour.

To clarify the above, consider a schoolboy feeling sleepy while class is in progress. A conflict occurs between his internal need (urge to sleep) and external demand (requirement of attention) the pupil in such a condition may direct his efforts towards the inhibition of his urge to sleep. On the contrary, he may excuse himself and go out to sleep or make use of ‘malingering’ as an adjustment ‘mechanism to escape from the conflicting situation by gaining the teacher’s permission to sleep in class.

Chauhan (1991, p.411) in a further discussion on adjustment quoted Piaget (1952) who had studied the adjustment process and used the term ‘accommodation’ and ‘assimilation’ to represent the alternation of oneself or environment, as a means of adjustment. He asserted that “violent protest has become an outlet for some children when faced with social pressure” but most people adjust by accommodating pressure – that is, by subordinating one set of urges in order to gratify another – or by assimilating pressure – that is by mastering, eliminating his feelings and pattern of behaviour to fit the demands made on him, but (he does so) only if these demands do not dominate his personal life or dictate his every move. He remains his own person, resists group pressures that violate his beliefs, and tolerates disapproval of his way of life if he must. He believes that his view of life is accurate even if others disagree.

Adjustment as an Achievement

This point of view emphasizes the quality or efficiency of adjustment. This means how efficiently an individual can perform his duties in different circumstances. Education and other social activities need efficient well-adjusted individuals for the progress of society. In this sense, adjustment may

be seen as a state, thus the condition of harmony arrived at by a person whom we call 'well-adjusted'. Descriptively, this person is relatively efficient and happy in an environment, which is judged to be reasonably satisfactory.

However, if efficiency and happiness were the only criteria, then a class captain who bullies his peers for example might be considered well adjusted because he was happy and efficient. There is therefore the need to set criteria to judge the quality of adjustment that will add a proper degree of social feeling'. To this effect, Gates et al. (1957, p.71) argued that not only must a person be in an environment, which enables him to satisfy his basic needs properly, and be able to manage his life so that the satisfaction of need does not make the satisfaction of another impossible; but also, he must satisfy his needs in such a way to avoid interfering with the fulfilment of the legitimate needs of others.

A well-adjusted person according to Gates et al. (1957, p.73) is "one whose needs and satisfaction in life are integrated with a sense of social feeling and acceptance of social responsibility" In the context of this research, the well-adjusted person is one whose needs and satisfaction in life are integrated with a sense of intellectual responsibility and appreciable academic performance.

Discipline

Issues concerning discipline generate more interest and concern for school authorities and parents than any other matter. Crowther (1995, p.156) defined discipline as "training especially of the kind that produces self-control, orderliness and a capacity for cooperation"

According to Medinnus & Johnson (1976, p.203) in current thinking, discipline is often equated with guidance. However, discipline might be more appropriately described as the methods used by heads to ensure their pupils' compliance with that guidance. Okumbe (1998, p.119) also saw discipline as "the action taken by management to enforce organizational standards in any organization where the objectives are to be optimally patterned" Equally, in the school, there are standard rules and regulations which guide the conduct of the teachers, non-teaching staff and pupils. Most often, pupils who are the focus of this study, flout the behaviour patterns established by the authorities. Consequently disciplinary processes are used to obtain conformity to the institution's demands.

Clifford (1959, pp.45-82) conducted a research based on records of disciplinary techniques used by parents for pupils of different age groups. Clifford's study divided the training techniques into positive sanctions-praise and tangible rewards and negative sanctions physical punishment and deprivation of privileges. From the study Clifford identified eleven areas that require discipline. Some of these are pupils' relationship-quarrelling, aggression, refusal to eat, leaving the table during the meal, refusal to go to bed, noise in bed, refusal to dress properly, not attending classes and prep, inappropriate behaviour, destructiveness, forbidden behaviour, social inappropriate behaviour and insistence on own rights. Some of the findings of Clifford's (1959) study have been confirmed by Andrew (1994), and reflect various acts of indiscipline in J.H.S in Ghana today. Some of these acts are indecent dressing, aggressiveness and smoking; others are disrespect for school authority.

Aduonum (2003, p.1) observed that in the U.S A. “a large percentage of the teaching force retire voluntarily each year partly because of the unbearable challenging force of the pupils’ attitude and behaviour” The unacceptable behaviour of some J.H.S final year pupils who refused to attend class after registration resulted in a directive issued by the Director – General of the Ghana Education Service (GES. 2000) requiring the heads of schools to take appropriate sanctions against pupils who misbehave after their registration for the BECE. Again Daily Graphic (2001) reported that there is the need for parents to advise their wards appropriately on practices and behaviour bordering on alcoholism, occultism and truancy. It is a known fact that pupils from schools within the same neighbourhood sometimes engage themselves in brutal fights. Others also destroy their own school properties during demonstrations. All these activities do not help pupils to concentrate well on their academic work resulting in poor performance in their examination.

In response to acts of indiscipline, heads of schools are compelled to use appropriate disciplinary action to maintain the schools’ standards. Okumbe (1998) recommended two types of discipline to use in schools. These are preventive and corrective. Preventive discipline which is more recommended is the type that seeks to encourage self-discipline. It has the advantage of building morale and long range goals.

With regards to the corrective discipline, the administrative action may follow an infraction. Medinnus & Johnson (1976, p.64) claimed that “when discipline takes the form of punishment, it supplies only the cues to acceptable behaviour which is short-term measure” In the school, corporal punishment is least recommended. Where it is administered, it is usually the head or someone

delegated by the head to do it. Counselling in school which is usually aimed at reforming the offender to concentrate on his/her academic work may for example prescribe punishment as a reforming tool.

Davis & Newtron (1985, p.231) wrote that “corrective discipline is to reform the offender, to deter others from similar actions and to maintain consistent effective group standards” In a situation where corrective discipline had to be taken, Cascio (1992, p.131) suggested that “it has to proceed from formal warning to a written warning, to a suspension and finally to a dismissal” The GES rule prescribed for the administration of disciplinary measures in pre-tertiary institution follow the same procedure.

The importance of discipline to schools, and for that matter successful academic work cannot be underestimated. Medinnus & Johnson (1976, p.80) affirmed that “the most important single reason for discipline is the pupils’ non-compliance with institutional demands” Andrew (1994, p.53) observed that “discipline helps to train with institutional demands” Andrew (1994, p.53) earlier observed that “discipline helps to train pupils to be useful citizens of the society” Again, Andrew points out that a “college or school with well-ordered routines and a quiet atmosphere enables its products to apply the routines diligently to the work they are doing”. This observation could be true in the sense that instead of wasting their time on activities that counter academic work, pupils gain high concentration on their studies when they follow a set of instructions geared towards academic achievement.

Davis & Newstron (1985, p.125) claimed that “progressive discipline has the advantage of offering the teacher and pupil enough time for remedial actions” This in the long run may benefit pupils who settle down to do the

right things which could lead to higher concentration on their academic work. Davis & Newstron however, did not hesitate to add that, “although discipline may achieve a behavioural goal, its accomplishment may be nullified by the emotional and attitudinal side effects it produces in the pupil” Several researchers (Bandura & Walter, 1959; Hollenberg. & Sperry, 1951 & Sears, 1950) asserted that harsh, arbitrary and inconsistent discipline arouses resentment, hostility and anxiety in the pupil. This hostility may be directed towards others.

Attitude and Learning Behaviour

Many educators and researchers have upheld the assertion that attitudes affect behaviour in one way or the other. According to Gagne (1979, p.113) “an individual’s attitude is revealed through his actions” This may be understood in everyday life of the pupil in that in school, an individual is gradually conditioned by some forces in the environment to develop some definite attitudes towards certain subjects, persons or the class. However, this may or may not enhance learning depending on whether such attitudes are positive or negative to the subjects studied by them. In support of this, Neale, Bill & Tisner (1970, p.231) asserted that “pupils with favourable attitudes to subjects of study learn more about the subject than those whose attitudes are less favourable” In addition, they claimed that “pupils with favourable attitudes learned about a subject and also gained satisfaction from learning more about it”

Bieler, & Snowman, (1986, p. 98) for instance held the view that “though attitudes are elusive and very difficult to study scientifically, it is

apparent that they influence the acquisition and use of both cognitive and psychomotor abilities”

Relationship Between Attitude and Performance

Educationists and scholars such as (Neale 1969; & Anthonen, 1967) directed their efforts and attention towards finding the relationship between attitudes and performance. Attitude towards a subject is thought to affect performance in the subject in some ways. Neale (1969) commenting on the topic maintained that the relationship between attitude and performance was certainly the consequence of reciprocal influence. In this sense Neale asserts that attitude affects achievement, and achievement in turn affects attitude.

Majoribanks, (1974, p.97) commenting on the process of education claimed that “the nature of the skills or knowledge acquired and of their application depends on the person who acquired; and their application depends, on the attitudes held towards the specific situation in which the knowledge is acquired or applied” For this reason, it behoves on any educational institution to adopt practical ways towards the development and maintenance of wholesome attitude as an important educational endeavour.

Understanding Performance

Different scholars attempt to define performance from the perspective in which they view it. Hellriegel, Slocam & Woodman (1989, p.35) defined performance as “skills exhibited by a person towards his job” To Hellriegel et al, (1989) performance is concerned with the skills one demonstrates towards one’s work.

In a similar dimension Middlesmist & Hilt (1981, p.137) indicated that performance refers to “the skills, which an individual exercises in the

execution of his/her task and the skill may be better or poor” The central focus of the views cited had to do with skills one possesses to execute a task. Nroom was cited by Guyton, & Farokhi, (1987, p.49) to have defined performance as “the fulfilment of ones work to achieve specified results” In the context of this study, performance is seen with regards to pupils’ academic achievement in the Junior High School BECE results. One major use of these results is determining a pupil’s qualification for admission into Senior High School.

Resource Dilution Model on Academic Performance

The study utilized the “Resource Dilution” concept as exemplified by Downey (1995) as an explanation of level of academic performance. This concept focuses on the quality and quantity of human and material resources that are available in the schools and how these impact on pupils’ academic performance in Ghana.

Anastasi & Urbina (1987) writing on the relationship between pupils and the resources in the family claimed that, parental resources are finite, therefore, as the number of pupils in the family increased, the proportion of parental resources accrued by any individual pupil decreased. Three types of finite resources that can affect academic performance as claimed by Blake (1989, p.32) are outlined below as follows:

- i) “Types of homes, necessities of life, special objects like books, pictures, music and so on”.
- ii) “Personal attention”, intervention and teaching”
- iii) “Specific chances to engage the outside world” or a “to get to do things”

Socio-economic Status of Families

Ainley, Graetz, Long & Batten (1995) considered socio-economic status as a person's overall social position to which attainments in both the social and economic domain contribute. Additionally, Williams, Clancy, Batten & Girling-Butchner (1980) and Amato (1987) stated that economic status is determined by an individual's achievements in education; employment, occupational status, income and wealth.

Considering the determination of economic status as described above, a pupil is likely to possess the necessities of life, special objects like books, pictures, music and so on if the pupil comes from a family of higher level of education, and whose parents or guardians have good employment. Moreover, such a pupil is likely to be accorded personal attention, intervention and teaching in the house. Moreover, this pupil is bound to have specific chances to engage the outside world or to get to do things by means of personal computers and phones. In effect, all these are bound to affect the academic performance of the pupil.

Furthermore, Mukherjee (1995, p.45) emphasized that, several comprehensive reviews of the relationship between Socio-Economic Status (SES) and educational outcomes exist. He also made it clear that pupils from low socio-economic status families are more likely to exhibit the following patterns in terms of educational outcomes as compared to pupils from high socio-economic status families. According to Mukherjee, pupils from low socio-economic status families:

- i) Have lower levels of literacy, numeracy and comprehension

- ii) Have lower retention rates (pupils from low SES families are more likely to shorten their education early due to financial constraints)
- iii) Have lower education participation rates (pupils from low SES families are less likely to attend university)
- iv) Exhibit higher levels of problematic school behaviour (for instance truancy)
- v) Are less likely to study specialized Mathematics and Science subjects
- vi) Are more likely to have difficulty with their studies and display negative attitudes to school
- vii) Have less successful school-to-labour market transactions

According to Graetz (1995, p. 32), these results remain the same irrespective of how socio economic status is measured and whether the studies are based on individual or aggregate level data. Similarly, Graetz attested that studies of pupils' educational achievements over time have also demonstrated that "social background remains one of the major sources of educational inequality" Graetz further claimed that "educational success depends very strongly on the socio-economic status of one's parents"

Furthermore, William, Clancy, Batten & Carling-Butcher (1980, p.2) noted that "effect of parental socio-economic status on pupils' educational outcomes may be neutralized, strengthened or mediated by a range of other contextual, family and individual characteristics" Again, William et al. continued that a family where the parents' socio-economic status is high, they may also provide higher levels of psychological support for their children through environments that encourage the development of skills necessary for success at school.

Similarly, Berk (1997, p. 127) commenting on socio-economic status of families where the parents are advantaged socially, educationally and economically, stated that “what family members have (material resources), and what family members do, go a long way for example; to foster a higher level of achievement in their pupils”.

Family Structure

Rich (2000, p. 8) commenting on family structure described how family structure also plays a vital role in educational performance and how close it is to socio-economic status. Rich further asserted that “pupils from families with low socio-economic status are likely to have lower educational performance”

In a more succinct way, Buckingham (1999, p. 12) came up with other factors in single parent families that are likely to adversely affect educational outcomes compared to those from two parent families. The factors include:

- i) Reduced contact between the pupil and non-custodial parent
- ii) The non-custodial parent having less time to spend with pupils in terms of supervision of school work and maintain appropriate levels of discipline
- iii) The lack of an appropriate role model especially for males.

Rich (2000, p. 11) further wrote in support of Buckingham’s claim and asserted that “increased responsibilities on pupils such as childcare roles and domestic duties impede the time available for school work; and the nature of parent-child relationships in sole parent families may cause emotional and behavioural problems for the pupil”

In addition to the above expositions, Machin (1998, p.35) thought somewhat differently and stated that “the influence of family structure has

been found to be only weakly associated with educational attainments” Machin however did not hesitate to add that “once controlling variables for others become negatively affected, results are likely to deteriorate”

Sparkes (1999) was also of the opinion that when pupils in single-parent families experience a range of other risk factors such as low income, it is more detrimental to their academic performance.

Effects of Family Size on Academic Performance

Downey (1995, pp. 847- 894) reported that in Blake’s study on “Family size and Achievement”, it was found out that as “siblings size increases, performance in school declines” For further exposition, Downey came out with two theoretical explanations, namely: “No Effect” and the “Confluence Model”. First of all the “No Effect” explanation maintains that the inverse relationship between the number of siblings and educational performance is artificial and it is actually a function of socio-economic status.

The “Confluence Model” states that “A child’s intelligence is a function of the intellectual milieu in which he or she develops” Downey explained that the intellectual levels of all members of the child’s family with other children depress the family’s intellectual development. He further stated that children do not possess the same mental knowledge and skills as adult family members. Downey pointed out that “a most recent work has mounted convincing evidence challenging this model” Adding to this thought, Ernst, & Angst (1983, p. 15) explained that: “children from small families do well than their counterparts from large families because small families are disproportionately from lower socio-economic groups”

Retterford & Sewel (1999) however, disputed and indicated that using inappropriate methods to test the model is improper, and for that matter the merits of the “Confluence Model” therefore has to be clarified for better comprehension and acceptance.

Type of School

Touching on how a type of school affects pupils’ academic performance, Portes & MacLeod (1996, p. 255) indicated that “the type of school a pupil attends is very important since it has a great influence on his educational outcomes” They pointed out that “the meaning of socio-economic status variables continue to influence educational attainment even after controlling for different school type” The school context tends to affect the strength of the relationship between socio-economic status and educational outcomes. Sparkes (1999) equally contended that schools have an independent effect on pupils’ attainment. He pointed out further that the school effect is also likely to operate through variation in the quality and attitudes of teachers.

More so, Buckingham (2000) observed that pupils from independent private schools are more likely to achieve higher end of school scores. Again, he noted that private schools are more likely to have a greater number of pupils from high socio-economic status families, select pupils with stronger academic abilities and have greater financial resources. Ruge (1998, p. 6) pointed out that teachers who teach in disadvantaged schools, for instance, often hold low expectations of their pupils, which compound the low expectations pupils and their parents may also hold.

Absences

In considering pupils' academic performance, absence from school is considered a variable that impacts negatively or positively. Consequently, according to Sparkes (1999), in a case paper, poor academic performance may be attributed to the level of truancy or unexplained absence from school among pupils. He observed further that truancy can be meddled both as an educational outcome and as a casual factor in explaining academic performance. Again, Sparkes noted that truancy even though occasional, is associated with poorer academic performance at levels of unexplained absence at school.

Gender

On gender as a factor in the consideration of academic performance of pupils, Horne, (2000, p. 26) affirmed that it varies with an individual's sex. He revealed that there is evidence that suggests that "boys suffer an academic disadvantage relative to girls; especially in terms of performance in literacy"

In a similar dimension, Buckingham (1999) reviewing the puzzle of boys' educational decline claimed that girls out-perform boys within high or low socio-economic groups. Buckingham later observed that there are several explanations for this increasing gender gap which include: biological difference: gender biases (such as reading being seen as "not masculine"); teaching curricular and assessment for instance, less structured approaches to teaching grammar may have weakened boys' literacy performance. Others include socio-economic factors. In a related development, Teese, Davies, Charlton & Polesel (1995, p. 224) emphasized that the "performance of boys

deteriorates more rapidly than the performance of girls as they move down the socio-economic scale”.

Ethnicity

One other factor that has been considered by scholars in determining the academic performance of pupils is the ethnic backgrounds they came from. With this factor, Portes & MacLeod (1996, p.75) found out that the ethnic background or immigrant status is also an important mediating variable on pupils’ educational performance. They noted that studies conducted on the academic performance of second-generation school pupils in the United States have revealed that “factors that play a significant independent role in the academic performance of pupils among others include the socio-economic status of their parents, the type of school as well as their natural background” Portes & Macleod continued that first generation immigrant parents (e.g. Cuban, Vietnamese) through the process of migration and subsequent incorporation in the society, come to see education as a key means of upward mobility for their children, despite their own low levels of education and income.

Similarly, Martin, (1978) emphasized that pupils from immigrant communities do well despite their economic background. Birrell & Khoo (1995) noted that the second generation citizens in Australia, (especially those of European, Indian and Chinese origin) have achieved substantial education mobility in terms of staying on at schools, compared to those from British, German, Dutch and Australian origin. Dobson et al supported the perception that people from Vietnamese, Chinese, Eastern European and Korean

backgrounds are in high education than people from English speaking background.

Housing Type

According to Sparkes (1999), lower educational attainment has been found to be associated with pupils living in public housing compared to those in private housing. This may be due to the effects of over-crowding, poor access to resources and lack of social networks and in this sense, housing type may also be a measure of neighbourhood influence.

On their part, Jensen, & Seltzer, (2000, p.25) found that “neighbourhood effects were important influence on pupils’ educational plans” They noted further that some of the measures of the neighbourhood include the level of neighbourhood income, the unemployment rate, an index of educational attainment and the percentage employed in professional fields. In the researcher’s view, Jensen and Seltzer’s study did not precisely identify measures or the transmission mechanisms for such neighbourhood effects. For instance, whether they were due to spill over effects, such as poor group influence, the presence or lack of job networks and role model or whether the neighbourhood variable were acting as proxies for school quality or housing type.

Geographical Location

In contributing to the discourse on geographical location of pupils, Cheers (1990, p. 12) observed that pupils from non-metropolitan areas are more likely to have lower educational outcomes in terms of academic performance and retention rates than pupils from metropolitan areas. He stated further that “despite an adequate number of educational facilities in rural and

remote Australia, school pupils from these areas remain disadvantaged by other factors” Again, Cheers noted that issues affecting access to education in regional areas include “cost, the availability of transport and levels of family income support”. He added that “inequity exists with regard to the quality of the education that rural pupils receive, often as a result of restricted and limited subject choice” Furthermore, pupils may have limited recreational and educational facilities within their schools.

In addition to Cheers’ observations, Shiman (1970, p.49) asserted that “the boarding school environment probably lessens the influence of extra-school factors’ achievement” Shiman further emphasized that certain school factors might affect achievement and that all pupils never had equal opportunity to develop their full potentials. He accordingly came out with the following assertion that:

- i) Boarders performed better than day pupils on the basic level examinations.
- ii) Better schools not only have a higher quality of pupil intake but also, able to offer superior educational facilities and better qualified teachers.

The issues Shiman highlighted above may enhance quality and optimum pupils’ academic performance in the long run. However, the researcher is of the view that though Shiman’s assertion appeared to be convincing, it could be said that those points are not automatic variables in achieving academic excellence. Indeed other factors such as parental attitude to education, teachers’ dedication and commitment to their profession and most especially pupils’ academic interest and long term goals play equally significant role in the academic life of the pupil. In fact, these as well as all the

variables and ideas expressed in this chapter come to play in addressing the factors that affect academic performance.

Summary of Literature Review

In summary, the chapter has comprehensively reviewed a wide range of related literature gathered from four critical variables in connection with factors affecting the academic performance of pupils in basic schools in Asawasi Sub-Metro in Kumasi Metropolis. These are Pupil characteristics, Teacher factors, School environment, and Parental support.

Emerging issues addressed under the above variables include topics such as the need for teachers to understand the pupil as an individual with varying characteristics in his academic environment; assessing the pupils' attitude and learning behaviour in consonant with academic performance; family structure as well as socio-economic status of families and type of school and its geographical location. These were reviewed in the light of their effects on academic performance.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The chapter gives a brief description of qualitative and quantitative research designs. There is also a description of the population of the study indicating the target population, accessible population as well as the sample. The chapter further gives a brief discussion of the various sampling techniques used. Instruments for data collection and data collection procedures used are all addressed. There is also a description of the data analysis plan.

Research Design

The qualitative research design was considered more appropriate and was therefore adopted for the research. Research methods can be classified in various ways. However one of the most common distinctions is between qualitative and quantitative research methods. Quantitative research methods according to Straub, Gefen & Boudreau, (2004) were originally developed in the natural sciences to study natural phenomena. Examples of quantitative methods now well accepted in the social sciences include survey methods, laboratory experiments and numerical methods such as mathematical modelling.

Qualitative research methods were developed to enable researchers to study social and cultural phenomena. Examples of qualitative methods according to Myers, (2009) are descriptive research, analytical research, action research, case study research and ethnography. Qualitative data sources

include observation and participant observation, interviews and questionnaires, documents and texts, and the researcher's impressions and reactions

The motivation for doing qualitative research, as opposed to quantitative research, came from the observation that, if there was one thing which distinguished humans from the natural world, it was the ability to talk! Qualitative research methods therefore were designed to help researchers understand people and the social and cultural contexts within which they lived. Kaplan & Maxwell (1994) argued that the goal of understanding a phenomenon from the point of view of the participants and its particular social and institutional context was largely lost when textual data were quantified.

Qualitative research is often said to be naturalistic. That is, its goal is to understand behaviour in a natural setting. Two other goals attributed to qualitative research are understanding a phenomenon from the perspective of the research participant and understanding the meanings people give to their experience. It attempts to do this by using so-called naturalistic methods - interviewing, observation and participant observation. Each of these methods seeks to understand the perspective of the research participant within the context of their everyday life. (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia 2008)

It was on the basis of the above discussion that the researcher concerned herself with asking broad questions that allowed the respondents to answer in their own words. In addition, employing the observation method allowed the researcher to monitor the respondents within their natural settings - particularly those in public places. This resulted in the researcher's greater understanding of the people's behaviour.

The researcher made use of descriptive research method as qualitative research design, to compile this text. With her understanding of Descriptive research, which is sometimes referred to as non-experimental research, the researcher studied the relationships among non-manipulated variables. The researcher therefore selected the relevant variables from the events/conditions that prevailed among the teaching staff, students and parents in the Asawasi sub- Metro, Kumasi.

The researcher adopted the descriptive research method because the results of descriptive research provide a platform to make important decisions and also generate more research ideas to be tested by future researchers. Adopting the descriptive research design, the researcher was able to carry out a comprehensive study by touching on all the important aspects of the work. Also, the descriptive design helped the researcher to gather as much concrete facts as possible from respondents so as to describe the research in detail.

The usefulness of the descriptive research design is amplified by Gay (1987, p.104) who emphasized that “the design is an attempt to collect data from selected members of the population to determine the current status of that population with respect to one or more variables” In consonance with the variables Gay talked about, this study looks at methods of teaching and learning in the school, work load of teachers and pupils, pupils’ behaviour among others.

Population for the Study

The primary purpose of research is to discover principles that have universal application; but to study a whole population in order to arrive at generalizations would be impracticable if not impossible. A population

according to the definition of Best (1981, p.8) is “any group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher” Based on Best’s definition, the target population for this study was a heterogeneous one involving all the education officers, teaching staff, pupils as well as parents/guardians of pupils from the 29 Junior High Schools within the three Circuits that constitute the Asawasi Sub-Metro, Kumasi. These are Asokore Mampong Circuit, Aboabo Circuit and Asawasi Circuit. It was impracticable to attend to each of the respondents representing the target population within the time frame for the research, so the total of 29 JHSs within the Asawasi Sub-Metro was reduced to 12 JHSs by selecting 4 Junior High Schools from each of the three circuits of the Asawasi Sub-Metro. Kumasi. (See tables 1, 2 and 3 below)

Table 1: Breakdown of the Number of Teachers and Pupils in the Asokore Mampong Circuit.

Name of School	Number of Teachers	Number of Pupils	Total
Sakafia Islamic JHS	19	245	264
Adukrom MA JHS	16	206	222
Ansare Suna JHS	10	150	160
St Paul’s JHS	16	260	276
Grand Total	61	861	922

Source: *Compiled from the field.*

Table 2: Breakdown of the Number of Teachers and Pupils in the Aboabo Circuit

Name of School	Number of Teachers	Number of Pupils	Total
Aboabo MA JHS	7	120	127
Wataniya JHS	7	136	143
School of Islamic Studies	14	220	234
Nasurudeen JHS	16	315	331
Grand Total	44	791	835

Source: *Compiled from the field.*

Table 3: Breakdown of the Number of Teachers and Pupils in the Asawasi Circuit

Name of School	Number of Teachers	Number of Pupils	
Total			
St Theresa's JHS	20	413	433
Asawasi Ma JHS	16	318	334
Asawasi Methodist JHS	13	304	317
Central Mosque Islamic JHS	7	118	125
Grand Total	56	1153	1209

Source: *Compiled from the field.*

The 5466 people from 12 selected schools were made up of 161 teaching staff and 2805 pupils. Considering the number of pupils, the researcher was of the view that all things being equal if each pupil of the given number had a parent or guardian, the same number of 2805 will represent parents/guardians. However, considering the possibility of a parent or guardian having more than one ward in the school, an approximated average figure of 2500 was calculated to represent parents/guardians. These constitute the accessible population of the Asawasi Sub-Metro.

Table 4: Breakdown of Teachers, Pupils and Parents/Guardians Representing the Accessible Population of the Asawasi Sub-Metro

Category	Total Number	30 Percent (%)
Teachers	161	48
Pupils	2805	842
Parents/Guardians	2500	750
Grand Total	5466	1640

Source: *Compiled from the field.*

Out of the accessible population, the researcher calculated 30% of teachers' population, 30% of 161 = 48, 30% of pupils' population, 30% of 2805 = 842 and 30% of parents/guardians population 30% of 2500 = 750.

Finally, 30% of the total figure, 30% of 5466 = 1640 was calculated to represent the accessible population of the Asawasi Sub-Metro. This population shares same characteristics as the total population from which it was drawn for observation and analysis. By observing the characteristics of the selected population, the researcher could then make certain inferences for generalization.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

Considering the heterogeneous nature of the population, stratified sampling was an obvious technique to be employed in the research. This sampling technique was employed because the total number under investigation consisted of homogeneous sub-groups.

Sampling methods are classified as either probability or non-probability. In probability samples, each member of the population has a known non-zero probability of being selected. Probability methods include random sampling, systematic sampling, and stratified sampling. In non-probability sampling, members are selected from the population in some non-random manner. These include purposive sampling, judgment sampling and quota sampling.

The strata considered appropriate for this research were the teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians. The relevant strata and their actual representation in the population were identified. Random sampling, the purest form of probability sampling was then used to select a sufficient number of respondents from each stratum. "Sufficient" in this context refers to a sample size large enough for one to be reasonably confident that the stratum represents the population. Each member of the population had an equal chance

of being selected. However, it follows from this that random sampling does not ensure that the various types of persons in the population will be represented proportionately.

A sample size of 1640 respondents was used for the study. The 1640 was made up of 48 teaching staff, 842 pupils and 750 parents/guardians. Twelve Junior High Schools were used to represent the sub- metro. Four schools were selected from each of the three circuits, constituting the Asawasi sub- metro. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the school, head teachers and staff. These respondents representing 48 of the sample are the people entrusted with the responsibility of teaching and training pupils to go through academic pursuits successfully, so they could adjust to societal norms when they are out of school.

On the part of pupil and parent respondents, the simple random sampling technique was used to select the required number from each school and community. The assistance of class teachers was sought in the exercise to select the 842 pupils. This process was followed irrespective of gender of pupils. This gave each pupil equal chance of being part of the study. On the part of parent respondents, the assistance of pupils was sought in the exercise to select the parents.

Instruments

The main research instruments used by the researcher for the collection of data were the questionnaire, the interview and observation. To address the different but complementing issues raised in the study, the semi-structured questionnaire was used to gather data from pupils and parents/guardians respondents. Items were broadly selected to enable respondents to express

their views on a wide range of school factors that affect pupils' performance. Other items in the questionnaire had to do with ways of improving academic performance. Questions for pupils were in three sections

Section 'A' demanded information about their biographic data. It consisted of items in which a number of alternatives were offered for them to select the ones which were applicable to their situation. Section B. demanded information from their academic performance. They were to read and express their opinion by ticking the appropriate alternative. Section C. demanded the views of students with regards to BECE results.

Questions guiding the semi-structured interview for the head teachers as well as other teaching staff were concerned with the bio-data of interviewees as well as questions concerning academic performance of the pupils in the BECE. There were also questions about the attitude and interest of head teachers and parents that affect pupils' academic attainment. There were questions also about respondents' personal view on factors that affect academic performance of pupils.

Questionnaire for parents was in two sections. Section A was concerned with personal data; and Section B was concerned with parental support for their wards/children. (See Appendix A)

Pre – Testing of Instrument

First and foremost the questionnaire and outlines for interview were properly edited by the researcher. Afterwards it was given to a colleague to cross- check every item to ascertain its correctness and validity before finally submitting it to the supervisor for final assessment and approval as an error-free material that could be used. This was done to authenticate the outcome of

the research by avoiding erroneous results. This was done before the instruments were administered by the researcher.

The questionnaire and outlines for interview were pre-tested at St. Paul JHS after an introductory letter had been issued and delivered to the head teacher. A sample of 55 respondents was used for this process. The 55 respondents were made up of 40 pupils, 5 teachers and 10 parents.

Selection of the teachers as part of the sample for the pre-testing of instruments was done by means of random sampling. In the case of the pupils, from one to form three pupils were also selected randomly. The random selection of teachers to be interviewed was done with the help of the assistant head master who also mobilized the pupils for the exercise of responding to the questionnaire which lasted for a period of one hour. The pre-testing was done by giving each of the 40 pupils a copy of the questionnaire to respond to. The copies of the parents/guardians' questionnaire were also sent to them through their wards. The instruments were pre-tested to check for consistency and reliability of the responses given by respondents.

It is also recommended in any academic research as attested to by Tuckman (1992) that it is usually highly required of a researcher to run a pre-test on a questionnaire and to revise it based on the results of the test. Based on what Tuckman postulated, this pre- test was carried out to help readjust some of the items for easy answering. The feedback was used to make the necessary adjustments with regards to adding some important issues that were missing from the questionnaire and also removing items that were considered insignificant in order to arrive at a more reliable result.

Data Collection Procedure

Primary data is data observed or collected directly by a researcher from firsthand experience using methods such as interview and questionnaire. (Business Dictionary.com 2013)

Barker, (2012) contributing on primary data to eHow.com claimed that primary data is important for all areas of research because it is unvarnished information about the results of an experiment or observation; it is like eye witness testimony at a trial which is admissible as evidence. No one has tarnished it or spun it by adding their own opinion or bias, so it can form the basis of objective conclusions.

There are many methods of collecting primary data and the main methods used to collect the needed data for this research were naturalistic methods such as semi-structured interviewing, questionnaires and general observation. Below is a brief discussion of each procedure.

Interviews can be undertaken on a personal one-to-one basis or in a group. They can be conducted at work, at home, in the street or some other agreed location. In the case of this research the interview was conducted at the work place of interviewees.

The researcher considering interview as a useful method of collecting primary data from experts whose important opinions could provide some guidance and direction for the research, the District Education Office was used as a reliable point of reference where the researcher had the opportunity to interview some education officers. Interview with those experts provided the researcher with some additional information and opinions that would have been hard to find in books or other references.

Besides the District Education Office staff, the researcher also interviewed a considerable number of teachers. Their responses equally provided the researcher with information and opinions concerning factors affecting the academic performance of pupils in basic schools in Asawasi Sub-Metro of Kumasi Metropolis. The interviews followed a semi-structured format which focused on asking certain questions but with scope for the respondent to express himself/herself at length. The researcher then encouraged the respondent to talk freely.

Advantages of the personal interview experienced by the researcher included respondents' serious approach, resulting in accurate information. The researcher was also in control and could ask possible in-depth questions and gave help where there was a problem. The researcher in the course of the interview had the opportunity to assess characteristics of respondents by investigating their motives and feelings through individuals' tone of voice, facial expression, hesitation, etc. On the other hand however, some disadvantages encountered by the researcher included time consuming, respondent bias responses, tendency to please or impress, respondents creating false personal image.

Besides the use of interview, primary data was obtained from questionnaires prepared by the researcher for sampled pupils in selected basic schools in Asawasi Sub-Metro of Kumasi Metropolis. Using questionnaires enabled the researcher to organize the questions and receive replies without actually having to talk to every respondent. The target groups for the questionnaires were pupils as well as parents/guardians of pupils in the basic schools within the Asawasi Sub-Metro of Kumasi Metropolis. The

questionnaires for parents/guardians were distributed randomly through the pupils by sending the questionnaires to their parents/guardians at home. The questionnaire for parents/guardians was in two sections. Questions for section 'A' covered personal data and questions for section 'B' covered parental support for wards.

In addition to the interview and questionnaire procedures, observation as data collection procedure was used by the researcher. However, one challenge that the researcher dealt with was suppressing her own prejudices and a tendency to select what suits her to every situation. Using the observational situations approach, the researcher mixed with the respondents by going to the community and the selected institutions to observe the behaviour of the people at close hand over a fairly long period. The researcher asked the people questions but, wherever possible, she tried not to draw attention to herself so that her presence might not cause the respondents to behave in an untypical manner because human beings tend to behave untypically when they know they are being watched.

Secondary data for this research were obtained from data categorized into two main groups. These were paper-based sources and electronic sources. Paper-based sources were books, journals, research reports, and newspapers from libraries including University of Cape Coast libraries, libraries of University of Education Winneba, the Libraries of the College of Art and Social Sciences, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, St Louis College of Education, Kumasi, Wesley College of Education, Kumasi. The electronic sources were on-line databases, Internet, and broadcasts.

A clear benefit of using secondary data was that much of the background work needed had already been carried out. The data therefore had a pre-established degree of validity and reliability which need not be re-examined by the researcher when the data was being re-used. The research activity therefore began with review of the related secondary data.

Data Analysis

Another important part of the research paper was the analysis of the data collected. The entire data were systematically assembled, critically analysed, logically interpreted and acceptable conclusions drawn. Finally relevant recommendations were made using discourse analysis. Discourse analysis according to Bernd (1992, p.365) is neither a qualitative nor a quantitative research method, but a manner of questioning the basic assumptions of quantitative and qualitative research methods.

The data collected were critically processed by grouping them in relation to the research questions. The collated data were then edited for clarity especially in the case of the open ended items. The data were then closely examined by looking at each response in the light of the question being addressed. The analysed data were then presented in a descriptive manner. This was done to make the information easier to understand and interpret.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter gives detailed analysis and interpretation of data collated from the questionnaire, interviews, participant observations and general interactions with the research population within the sample area. The purpose of this study is to obtain evidence of the factors that are responsible for the academic performance of pupils in the Asawasi Sub – Metro. The chapter examines and discusses the research questions in line with the research objectives, which seek to obtain evidence of the effect of school environment factors, teacher factors, pupil characteristics and parental support variables on the academic performance of pupils in the Asawasi Sub – Metro.

Research Question One: What School Environment Factors Affect

Academic Performance of Pupils in the Asawasi Sub – Metro?

To address the question of school environment factors that affect academic performance of pupils in the Asawasi Sub – Metro, 48 teachers drawn from the 12 selected schools within the Sub – Metro and 5 officers from the District Education Office were interviewed. The 48 teachers 5 officers were unanimous in accepting the fact that there were indeed school environment factors that affect academic performance. The varied responses that the teachers and officers provided were put together and then summarised under two major school environment factors namely:

- i. Security in the schools

ii. Material resources

Below are the responses gathered from the various respondents based on the data collection procedures used on the points indicated above.

Security in the Schools

Table 5: Level of Security in the Schools within the Sub-Metro

Security in the schools	Level	Frequency	Percentage %
	High	21	4.4
	Medium	141	29.7
	Low	312	65.8
Total		474	100

Source: *Compiled from the field when a section of teachers and pupils in Senior High Schools of Asawase Sub-Metro responded to the question of security in the schools*

Expressing their views on the state of affairs with regards to security in the schools within the Asawasi Sub-Metro, table 5 clearly indicates that whilst three hundred and twelve (312) respondents representing 65.8% stated that level of security in the schools was low; one hundred and forty one (141) respondents representing 29.7% indicated that level of security in the schools was moderate. Twenty one (21) respondents representing 4.4% stated that level of security in the schools was high.

The picture painted in Table 5 clearly reveals that security of schools within the Asawasi Sub-Metro was very crucial and needed immediate redress. This bleak situation among other things poses a serious threat to any school that aims at climbing the academic hierarchy.

Below are some of the specific issues cited by some individuals to buttress their points as they commented on the level of security in response to the question of school environment factors. An assistant head teacher of Asawasi MA JHS who has worked in the Asawasi sub-metro for twenty one years gave a description of how his school situated close to the GES Asawasi Sub-Metro Office suffers from a high level of intrusion by the community.

According to the Assistant Head teacher, people who report to the Office in their cars drive through the school compound and disturb the teaching and learning process with noise from the cars coupled with dust emanating from the cars that move to and from the GES Asawasi Sub-Metro Office. Riding of motor bicycles on the school compound equally disturbs classes. Other respondents from Aboabo Circuit also described football fields belonging to schools which serve as the training grounds for some big clubs. According to the respondents, when these big clubs have their training in the morning they attract the attention of both teachers and the pupils. This consequently delays working in the morning and subsequently affects classes.

One female teacher of St Theresa's JHS emotionally commented on the school's closeness to the Asawasi Community Centre and the extent to which the programs that take place there disturb classes. Several other teachers equally mentioned the constant disturbances by motor riders who pass behind the school and make uncontrollable noise that disturb the process of teaching and learning. Moreover, it was disclosed that excessive noise from the community, cars, etc disturb classes to the extent that teachers are compelled to pause midway to allow vehicular or human disturbances to subside before teaching and learning could continue .

It was also recorded by some respondents from Adukrom JHS that Cargo trucks were usually parked on the school compound; and that there was so much noise pollution in the school by such big trucks. Cars and motor cycles that ply on the school compound also disturb classes. Furthermore, when people riding on horses, camels and donkeys use the school compound as their pathway, they draw the attention of the pupils and cause them to lose concentration.

Some respondents of Sakafia Islamic JHS expressed their view on how the Muslim community is allowed to use a mosque in the school to pray and the extent to which this at times disturbs the smooth running of academic activities of the school. The Muslim community, according to some of the respondents, sometimes appear too hostile to the schools upon the least misunderstanding and may even attack the school.

Besides the responses collated from the questionnaire and interviews, the researcher's personal observations and interactions with individuals in the schools and communities also confirmed the bleak state of security in the schools.

A closer analysis of all the responses from the twelve schools selected from the three circuits that make up the Asawasi sub-metro gave an austere representation in respect of security. It was disclosed that none of the four schools selected from the Aboabo circuit has been able to secure its premises and facilities with a fence wall. Two schools namely St Paul's JHS and Sakafia Islamic JHS of Asokore Mampong circuit and St Theresa's JHS of Asawasi circuit were the only schools that had built fence wall to secure the

schools' premise. Even though St Theresa's JHS was walled, the school's location put it at a disadvantageous position.

Teaching and Learning Materials (TLM)

Commenting on teaching and learning resources as school environment factor, majority of the respondents shared their views on the significance of teaching and learning materials in the academic development of the pupils.

A critical analysis of the responses revealed that most teachers do not use teaching and learning materials. According to the respondents who were teachers, the Education Office that has the sole responsibility to supply teaching and learning materials does not provide adequate teaching and learning materials.

In addition to the lack of materials as a result of insufficient supply by the office of Ghana Education Service, the analysis of the responses revealed that the teaching and learning materials play a very significant role in the teaching profession. It is therefore required of teachers to be creative by making good use of improvised teaching and learning materials to enhance their pupils understanding of what is taught. However, teachers' apathy in developing improvised teaching and learning materials have also been identified as a contributing factor in the poor academic performance of the pupils.

Inadequate Facilities

Besides the initial facilities such as the school buildings and classrooms, the researcher chose six basic facilities to serve as the criteria for assessing the number of facilities available to each school. Those six basic facilities were believed to be common and paramount to every school. These

are a library, a science laboratory, a staff common room, an ICT Centre, a canteen and a place of convenience. These six facilities were chosen for the purpose of this research.

Regarding availability of facilities in the schools within the Asawasi Sub-Metro, it was discovered among other things that a total of six (6) out of the twelve selected schools had a library facility each. The remaining six (6) schools did not have a library. It was further realised that all the twelve (12) schools had no science laboratory. Once again a total of six (6) out of the twelve selected schools had a staff common room facility each. The remaining six (6) schools did not have a staff common room. Four (4) out of the twelve schools had an ICT Centre. The remaining eight (8) schools did not have an ICT Centre. Moreover, three (3) out of the twelve schools had a canteen. Nine (9) out of the twelve (12) schools did not have a canteen. Finally it became evidenced that six (6) out of the twelve selected schools had a place of convenience each. The remaining six (6) schools did not have a place of convenience.

The situation described above with regards to facilities available to the selected schools was indeed a worrying situation that most of the people that the researcher interacted with shared their heartfelt concern.

The research clearly revealed that Asawasi Sub-Metro schools indeed lacked basic facilities that are crucial in attaining academic excellence. This bleak situation among other things posed a serious threat to the schools' academic pursuit as well as the pupils overall performance. There was no doubt that basic schools serving the Asawasi Sub-Metro of Kumasi Metropolis needed immediate attention.

Below is a tabular representation of how the six facilities reflected in the schools of the three circuits that make up the Asawasi Sub-Metro.

Table 6: Facilities Available to Schools Selected from Asokore Mampong Circuit.

Name of School	Number of Facilities Available
Sakafia Islamic JHS	0
Adukrom MA JHS	1
Ansare Suna JHS	0
St Paul's JHS	5

Source: Compiled from the field

Among the four schools that were selected to represent the Asokore Mampong circuit, St Paul JHS with the highest number of facilities had five out of the six facilities. These are a library, a staff common room, an ICT Centre, a canteen and a place of convenience. The only facility that the school lacked was a science laboratory. Besides St Paul JHS, only Adukrom MA JHS had a place of convenience being the only facility that was available to the school. The remaining two schools namely Sakafia Islamic JHS and Ansare Suna JHS had none of the six facilities. The situation truly affected pupils' academic performance.

Table 7: Facilities Available to the Schools Selected from Aboabo Circuit

Name of School	Number of Facilities Available
Aboabo MA JHS	1
Wataniya JHS	1
School of Islamic Studies	4
Nasurudeen JHS	1

Source: Compiled from the field

In the case of the four schools that were selected to represent the Aboabo circuit, School of Islamic Studies with the highest number of facilities

had four out of the six facilities. These are a library, a staff common room, an ICT Centre, and a place of convenience. The facilities that the school lacked were a science laboratory and a canteen. Apart from School of Islamic Studies having four of the facilities, the rest had a facility each. Aboabo MA JHS and Wataniya JHS had only a place of convenience. One could not find a science laboratory, a library, a staff common room, an ICT Centre, or a canteen. Nasurudeen JHS on the other hand had only a library. There was no science laboratory, staff common room, an ICT Centre, a canteen or place of convenience. It is obvious that pupils in schools will struggle with academic achievement. This consequently affected pupils' academic performance.

Table 8: Facilities Available to the Schools Selected from Asawasi Circuit

Name of School	Number of Facilities Available
St Theresa's JHS	4
Asawasi MA JHS	2
Asawasi Methodist JHS	3
Central Mosque Islamic JHS	3

Source: Compiled from the field

Unlike the first two circuits the four schools that were selected to represent the Asawasi circuit had an average possession of the six facilities. St Theresa's JHS with the highest number of facilities had four out of the six facilities. These are a library, a staff common room, an ICT Centre, and a canteen. The facilities that the school lacked were a science laboratory and a place of convenience. St Theresa's JHS was followed steadily by Asawasi Methodist JHS and Central Mosque Islamic JHS with three facilities each, Asawasi Methodist JHS had a library, a staff common room, and an ICT Centre. One could not find a science laboratory, a canteen or a place of convenience. Central Mosque Islamic JHS on the other hand had a library, a

staff common room, and a place of convenience. The facilities that the school did not have are science laboratory, ICT Centre, and a canteen. Asawasi MA JHS then follows with two of the facilities namely staff common room and a canteen. The school also did not have a library, science laboratory, ICT Centre, or place of convenience

Commenting on the six basic facilities that the researcher used as the criteria for assessing facilities available to the schools in the Sub-Metro, one female teacher of Sakafia JHS recounted the challenge posed by lack of canteen in her school. According to the teacher the school lacked an appropriate place where pupils could buy food to eat. The teacher further claimed that food sellers are not allowed to sell in the school because the school does not have enough space to keep them. However, pupils who have to buy some food during break time usually go outside the school compound to buy whatever they could find available. According to the teacher, it has become a daily routine for concerned teachers to run after such pupils to bring them back to the classroom. The situation as described by the teacher eats into the contact hours for effective teaching and learning. The pupils according to the respondent woefully suffer in the end since the situation seriously affects their overall performance.

Another challenge reported by other respondents had to do with lack of place of convenience in their schools. According to the respondents some pupils take advantage of the situation and play truancy in the school. Such pupils in the schools always went out to public places of convenience to ease themselves. Some of the pupils who go out of the school to attend nature's call tend to forgo classes and run away.

Furthermore, it was reported by both teachers and pupils of Sakafia JHS, Aboabo MA JHS and Ansare Suna JHS that inadequate supply of furniture for both teachers and pupils hindered the teaching and learning process in the schools. In support of this point the respondents cited the uncomfortable experience of pupils who struggle to share tables and chairs with colleagues whereas teaching was in progress. Classrooms that leaked badly when it rained were additional conditions that the respondents mentioned as affecting academic performance in the affected schools.

The conditions described here with regards to availability of facilities in the schools can rightly be sited in support of the assertion of Portes & MacLeod (1996) that the type of school a pupil attends is very important since it has a great influence on his educational outcomes. And there was no doubt that the responses of teachers confirmed Ruge (1998) statement that teachers who teach in disadvantaged schools, for instance, often hold low expectations of their pupils, which compound the low expectations pupils and their parents may also hold.

Research Question Two: How do Teachers Contribute to the Academic Performance of the Pupils in the Asawasi Sub – Metro?

Using the analogy of the gardener and his role in the growth of his plants, Beveridge (1967) similarly considers the position and responsibilities of the teacher in the training of the pupils in his care. The teacher therefore becomes a vital figure in determining the academic performance of his pupils. It was in the bid to determine the situation on the ground with respect to teachers' contribution that the second research question was posed.

The varied responses provided by the respondents who were mainly teachers and pupils selected from the twelve schools are discussed below. They did not mince words in accepting the fact that the teacher is a vital figure in determining the academic performance of pupils. The discussion generally focused on the effect of teachers' contribution on academic performance. The contribution in this context was viewed in the light of teachers' attitude to:

- i. Preparation and Teaching Method
- ii. Dedication and Commitment
- iii. Punctuality/Truancy

It was clear that how teachers regarded the three variables impacted positively or negatively on an input and its corresponding output as seen in relation to pupils' academic performance. In the light of the above notion, the discussion was divided into two parts:

The first part dealt with the responses provided by those respondents who felt that teachers' attitude to the given variables was appreciable and as such their contribution positively affected academic performance of pupils in Asawase Sub-Metro. The second part obviously dealt with responses provided by those respondents who appeared dissatisfied with teachers' contribution to academic performance of pupils in Asawase Sub-Metro.

According to the few respondents who were satisfied with how teachers contribute to affect academic performance of pupils in Asawase Sub-Metro, teachers do their best to teach well. Teachers also help pupils in their academic performance by giving the pupils class exercises to do in school. They moreover argued that so long as teachers go to class to teach, they satisfy the dedication and commitment variables.

The respondents further claimed that extra classes organised by teachers after school have a positive effect on the academic performance of pupils. The respondents claimed that teachers prepare and use good methods of teaching and that contribute to the academic performance of pupils. Other respondents additionally claimed that once there exist a cordial relationship between a Head teacher and subordinates, the Head teacher makes sure teachers go to class. The head also provides T.L.Ms for the teachers and supervise the effective use of the materials. This, the respondents claim go a long way to improve academic performance of pupils.

The majority of the respondents however began with the premise that teachers are role models to their pupils so if they (teachers) do not behave well it affects the pupils. Teachers may in effect disappoint their pupils if they do not put up good behaviour. When teachers constantly and habitually absent themselves from school, it affects the dignity of the profession as a noble one. Therefore it must be noted that attitude of teachers to teaching has huge influence on pupils' academic performance. It is on this premise that the second part of the discussion is done.

Preparation and Teaching Method

Majority of the respondents were of the view that when teachers are knowledgeable it helps improve the academic performance of their pupils. However, they contended that some of the teachers are not very good at the subject they teach; and if teachers are not well versed in the subject area their effort will obviously amount to poor teaching which will consequently affect academic performance negatively. Yet, the respondents claimed that these teachers do not research to enhance their stock of knowledge to help them to

teach effectively. Such unprofessional attitude negatively affects the academic performance of the pupils

The respondents were of the view that when teachers teach with professional methods, academic performance of the pupil is affected positively. The respondents however reported that the school administration fails to provide materials needed for teaching and learning. Some teachers therefore employ inappropriate methods of teaching pupils such as the use of abstract lecture approach in the teaching of pupils. Some teachers also use inappropriate teaching methods such as the use of canes in the process of teaching. Such method of teaching as reported by the respondents, inadvertently put undue fear in the pupils and may resultantly lead to poor concentration and participation. Obviously such situation may result in poor academic performance of pupils. Some teachers according to the respondents do not use lesson notes when teaching. Limited provision and irregular use of teaching and learning materials were additional concerns raised by the respondents with regards to teachers' preparation and methods of teaching. A teacher in an Islamic school claimed that it is against the teachings of the Islamic religion to paste pictures in the classroom for any reason. The use of such teaching and learning materials in Islamic schools is prohibited. Such a practice is bound to affect academic performance of pupils involved.

Dedication and Commitment

Commenting on the issue of teachers' dedication and commitment, majority of the respondents were of the view that teachers' dedication and commitment was questionable. Below are some of the points they raised to support their claim.

- i. Teachers spend time chatting when they are supposed to have lessons
- ii. Some female teachers overstay at the expense of the students when they go on maternity leave.
- iii. Some teachers are lazy and do not work hard to complete their syllabus.
- iv. Attendance of some undisciplined teachers to class is poor.

From the data described above, it is clear that such unwarranted attitude to work will surely yield to poor academic performance.

Lateness/Truancy

Below is a tabular representation of the status of lateness/truancy among teachers of Asawasi Sub-Metro as provided in response to interview questions posed to selected teachers and some pupils.

Table 9: Level of Lateness/Truancy at Asokore Mampong Circuit

Lateness/Truancy	Level	Frequency	Percentage %
	Low	10	6
	Moderate	53	32
	High	105	62
Total		168	100

Source: *Compiled from the field when a section of teachers and pupils in Asokore Mampong Circuit were interviewed*

Expressing their views on the state of affairs with regards to lateness/truancy among teachers in schools within the Asokore Mampong Circuit of Asawasi Sub-Metro, table 9 clearly indicates that whilst one hundred and five (105) respondents representing 62% stated that level of lateness/truancy among teachers in their school was high; fifty three (53) respondents representing 32% indicated that level of lateness/truancy in their

school was moderate. Ten (10) respondents representing 6% stated that level of lateness/truancy among teachers in their school was low.

Table 10: Level of Lateness/Truancy at Aboabo Circuit

Lateness/Truancy	Level	Frequency	Percentage %
	Low	25	14.3
	Moderate	62	35.6
	High	87	50.0
Total		174	100

Source: *Compiled from the field when a section of teachers and pupils in Aboabo Circuit were interviewed*

Expressing their views on the state of affairs with regards to lateness/truancy among teachers in schools within the Aboabo Circuit of Asawasi Sub-Metro, table 10 clearly indicates that whilst eighty seven (87) respondents representing 50.0% stated that level of lateness/truancy among teachers in their school was high; sixty two (62) respondents representing 35.6% indicated that level of lateness/truancy in their school was moderate. Twenty five (25) respondents representing 14.3% stated that level of lateness/truancy among teachers in their school was low.

Table 11: Level of lateness/truancy at Asawasi Circuit

Lateness/Truancy	Level	Frequency	Percentage %
	Low	29	13.3
	Moderate	90	41.4
	High	98	45.1
Total		217	100

Source: *Compiled from the field when a section of teachers and pupils in Asawasi Circuit were interviewed.*

Commenting on the issue of lateness/truancy among teachers in schools within the Asawasi Circuit of Asawasi Sub-Metro, table 11 clearly points out that whilst ninety eight (98) respondents representing 45.1% stated that level of lateness/truancy among teachers in their school was high; ninety (90) respondents representing 41.4% indicated that level of lateness/truancy in their school was moderate. Twenty nine (29) respondents representing 13.3% stated that level of lateness/truancy among teachers in their school was low.

The picture painted by Tables 9, 10, &11, clearly reveal that lateness/truancy among teachers of schools within the Asawasi Sub-Metro was very critical and needed serious intervention. This bleak situation, among other things, poses a serious threat to any school that aims at making academic impact.

The situation described above is indeed a worrying situation if the pupils whose academic performance is in review are under the care of these teachers at Asawasi Sub-Metro. It is quite obvious that pupils being taught with such high level of lateness/truancy on the part of teachers will be poor academically.

Research Question Three: What Pupil Characteristics Affect the Academic Performance of the Pupils in the Asawasi Sub – Metro?

The research unravelled pupils' characteristics which affected the academic performance of pupils in the Asawasi Sub – Metro. These characteristic centred broadly on persistent manifestation of maladjustment and indiscipline.

A well-adjusted person according to Gates et al. (1957) is one whose needs and satisfaction in life are integrated with a sense of social feeling and

acceptance of social responsibility. In the context of this research, the well-adjusted person is one whose needs and satisfaction in life are integrated with a sense of intellectual responsibility and appreciable academic performance. In other words the well-adjusted person in this context is one whose life reflects an integration of social and academic responsibility.

Crouthers (1995) defined discipline as “training” especially of the kind that produces self-control, orderliness and a capacity for cooperation. From Crouthers’ definition it could be inferred that if the said “training” fails to produce self-control, orderliness and a capacity for cooperation, such a situation could be termed indiscipline.

In the school, there are standard rules and regulations which guide the conduct of the teachers, non-teaching staff and especially pupils. It was established through the respondents that pupils who are the focus of this research, most often, flout the behaviour patterns established by the authorities. Self-control, orderliness and a capacity for cooperation are not common in the schools. This in effect amounts to indiscipline.

Commenting on the level of discipline among pupils, most of the respondents noted a downward trend as they expressed the view that disobeying school rules and regulations are common practices among some pupils of the sub-metro. According to most of the respondents, some of the pupils are disrespectful and take delight in engaging in acts of violence in the school. Such pupils, according to the teachers, may fight or engage in exchange of provocative words with fellow pupils or even with some teachers. Some respondents even shared their personal experiences of being attacked or confronted angrily by some pupils. A teacher recounted the incidence of a mob

attack organised by a pupil on the life of a colleague teacher who had seized an unacceptable cardigan that a pupil brought to school. This down trodden behaviour is certainly bound to affect the performance of the teacher. Such an unfortunate situation is likely to affect academic performance negatively. The data presented reveals that indiscipline among pupils in the Asawase Sub-Metro is a major concern that needed serious attention since it negatively affects the academic performance of pupils.

Addressing the question of pupils' attitude towards teaching and learning, a greater number of respondents claimed that, most of the pupils are not serious about their education. They supported their claim with the fact that the said pupils are playful, do not attend school regularly but engage in truancy. According to the respondents, even if such pupils choose to attend classes they are not punctual. It was reported that some of the pupils are learning a trade in addition to the formal education so they are usually challenged with divided attention in school. Such pupils, according to the respondents do not pay attention in class. Some according to the respondents are more interested in their business than schooling.

Some respondents were of the view that pupils who join bad companies consequently put up poor academic performance. In support of their claim the respondents cited the imitative behaviour of pupils. They explained that, pupils are known to learn from each other, so if they (pupils) happen to move with serious colleagues, they become serious and vice versa. Lack of positive competition among pupils was also identified by respondents. Others also mentioned the uncompromising and unwarranted attitude of some pupils in class during contact hours. It was reported that most pupils do not

write notes. Some choose to converse instead of writing notes given by the subject teachers. Some of the pupils, according to the respondents use one exercise book for two subjects. So when the book is collected by one subject teacher to mark an exercise, the other subject whose exercise must be done in that same book suffers. The respondents further went on to explain the difficulty in dealing with such pupils. The respondents established that lack of learning materials seriously disturb pupils' academic work.

The above discussion confirms what Majoribanks (1974) claimed, that in the education process, the nature of the skills or knowledge acquired and of their application depends, to a large extent, on the person who acquired; and their application depends, to a large extent, on the attitudes held by the individual towards the specific situation in which the knowledge is acquired or applied.

One could easily conclude that attitude held towards teaching and learning by the pupils in the Asawasi Sub-Metro is a huge challenge confronting the teachers of these schools. Moreover, the data succinctly reveal that attitude towards teaching and learning among pupils in the Asawasi Sub-Metro is a challenge confronting the parents/guardians, teachers and Ghana education service. Such a serious situation regarding pupils' attitude towards teaching and learning is indeed a known recipe for poor academic performance.

It is for this reason, that the researcher supports Majoribanks' caution to any educational institution to adopt practical ways towards the development and maintenance of wholesome attitude as an important educational endeavour.

Research Question Four: How do Parents Contribute to Academic Performance of their Wards in Asawasi Sub – Metro?

In assessing how parents contribute to academic performance of their wards in Asawasi Sub – Metro, the “Resource Dilution” concept epitomized by Downey (1995) as an explanation of level of academic performance was adapted. The concept focused on the quality and quantity of human and material resources that are available, and their relationship with pupils as well as the impact the resources have on academic performance. The question was therefore addressed under two main topics namely:

- a) Socio-economic status of families
- b) Effects of family size on academic performance

Socio-economic Status of Families

Table 12: Level of Socio-economic Status of Families

Socio-economic status	Level	Frequency	Percentage %
	High	68	9
	Medium	218	29
	Low	464	62
Total		750	100

Source: *Compiled from the field when a section of parent/guardians of pupils in Asawasi Sub-Metro were interviewed*

Using the above table as a point of reference, it is evident that 464 of the parents/guardians representing 62% of respondents whose wards are found in the selected schools within the Asawasi sub-Metro have low socio-economic status. Parents/guardians whose wards are found in the selected schools within the Asawasi sub-Metro totalling 218 respondents who represent 29% of the total number have medium socio-economic status. The remaining

9% of the respondents representing 68 parents/guardians whose wards are found in the selected schools within the Asawasi sub-Metro have high socio-economic status.

The research revealed that most parents do not support their pupils financially. They cannot afford to buy materials needed to promote their pupils' education. They do not provide them with pocket money. They do not see the importance of providing extra tuition for their pupils, if there is the need. It was further discovered that most of the parents are either illiterate or semi-literate so they are not much interested in the issues of education. As a result, some parents/guardians put their pupils in child labour at the expense of the pupils' education.

Though the effect of parental socio-economic status on pupils' educational outcomes may be neutralized, strengthened or mediated by a range of other contextual, family and individual characteristics as claimed by Williams et al. (1980), similarly, referring to the claim by Berk (1997), in families where the parents are advantaged socially, educationally and economically, a higher level of achievement is fostered in their children; and they may also provide higher levels of psychological support for their children through environments that encourage the development of skills necessary for success at school. From the table it was crystal clear that all things being equal only 68 parents out of the lot may be able to provide the environment and situation described above.

On the contrary however, the indicators revealed through the questionnaire suggest that majority of the pupils come from families where the parents are less advantaged socially, educationally and economically, and as

such cannot foster a higher level of achievement in their pupils. They are also not in the position to provide the necessary environments that encourage the development of skills necessary for success at school. Besides, the low levels of psychological support for the pupils resulting from a poor family background impacts negatively on their academic performance.

Effects of Family Size on Academic Performance

Family size also plays a vital role in academic performance and is closely linked to socio-economic status. Pupils from families with low socio-economic status are likely to have lower academic performance. Downey (1995, p.847) reported that in Blake's study on Family size and Achievement, it was found that "as siblings size increases, performance in school declines" Furthermore, parental resources, according to Anastasi & Urbina (1987), are finite, therefore, as the number of children in the family increased, the proportion of parental resources accrued by any individual child decreased.

The table below gives a succinct representation of the size of families that the researcher interacted with. Each of the 131 parents/guardians indicated that they take care of 2 children. Parent/guardians who responded to the questionnaire and indicated that they had just 1 child in their care totalled 59; whereas each of the 200 parents/guardian respondents said they take care of 6 children. The rest were 127 parents/guardian respondents who claimed to take care of 4 children each. Parents/guardian respondents who also indicated that they had 5 children in their care totalled 63 and 270 parents/guardian respondents had 3 children each in their care.

It was obvious from the previous discussion that since the socio-economic status of the greater number of families was low; it was bound to have a corresponding effect on their children with regards to family size.

Table 13: Number of wards in the care of Parents/Guardians

Number of Parents/guardians	Number of Ward(s) taken care of
131	2
59	1
200	6
127	4
63	5
270	3

Source: *Compiled from the field when a section of parent/guardians of pupils in Asawasi Sub-Metro were interviewed*

And as can be seen from the table, a greater number of parents/guardians have large family size so on the basis of that, the following results were discovered:

1. Parents did not provide their pupils with the basic needs like books, pocket money and uniforms to motivate the pupils to learn. All their efforts were rather directed towards how to make ends meet. The lack of extrinsic motivation had an undue negative effect on the academic performance of the pupils.
2. Parents overburden their pupils with work in the house whilst they (parents) concentrate on economic activities outside the home. The shedding of responsibilities of the parents on the pupils gave the pupils no meaningful time frame to study at home. This in one way or the other contributes to low academic performance.

3. Some parents do not either visit the school or attend P.T.A meetings to see how their pupils are doing. Such parents sometimes lose control of their pupils' academic development and subsequent impact on their total academic performance.
4. Some of the pupils do not live with their biological parents; and some of such parents instruct the pupils in their care to take care of their younger siblings at home and/ or engage the pupils in commercial activities while their counterparts were in school. The likelihood of such attitude of child labour to lead to poor academic performance is obviously very high.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONNS

Summary

Chapter five gives a summary of the study, findings and conclusions. Recommendations from the findings and those for further research are also included in this chapter. The worldwide view that a nation's social, economic, political and cultural development depends largely on the quality and level of education of her citizens gave a strong backing in conducting the study.

The study was further influenced by recognizing the crucial role played by education in developing human resources for both personal fulfilment and social advancement. Despite the perceived importance of education to the nation's development and the government interventions to improve the quality of its education, it was discovered that all was not rosy in some Junior High Schools in the Kumasi Metropolis, especially in the Asawasi Sub-Metro.

The study looked at factors affecting the academic performance of pupils in the Asawasi sub-metro. Specifically, investigation was done on the school environment factors, how teachers contribute to the academic performance of the pupils; pupils' characteristics that affect the academic performance; and how parents contribute to affect academic performance of their wards.

Key Findings

The following findings were arrived at after a critical analysis and interpretation of the collated data in consonance with the research questions:

1. Security of schools within the Asawasi Sub-Metro was very crucial and needed immediate redress. Most of the schools were not properly secured to control undue intrusion of the public. As a result of the intrusion of motor bicycles and cars on the schools' compound the teaching and learning process was unduly disturbed with noise coupled with dust emanating from the cars and motor bicycles that moved to and from the schools' premise. Obviously teaching and learning in such an environment was bound to result in low output in academic performance among pupils.
2. Insufficient supply of teaching and learning materials (TLMs). It was discovered that as supply of (TLMs) from the Education Office was not forthcoming, teachers were also apathetic in providing improvised TLMs in the teaching and learning process. This resultantly led to ineffective teaching and learning process which subsequently affected academic work and consequently affected pupils' output of academic performance.
3. Addressing the question of pupils' attitude towards teaching and learning, a greater number of respondents claimed that, most of the pupils were not serious about their education. In support of the claim, respondents reported that, indiscipline among pupils was high and disrespectful behaviour and engaging in acts of violence in the school was a common scene among pupils. Furthermore, it was reported that pupils who join bad companies consequently put up poor academic performance resulting from unwarranted group culture.

4. Asawasi Sub-Metro schools lacked basic facilities that are crucial in attaining academic excellence. These are a library, a science laboratory, a staff common room, an ICT Centre, a canteen and a place of convenience. It was discovered that out of the twelve schools selected from the three circuits that made up the Asawasi sub-metro, only St Paul's JHS had five of the facilities named above. Sakafia Islamic JHS and Ansare Suna JHS had none of the six facilities. This bleak situation among other things posed a serious threat to the schools' academic pursuit as well as the pupils overall performance. Insufficient supply of furniture for both teachers and pupils hindered the teaching and learning process in the schools. Some pupils were reported of taking advantage of the situation to involve themselves in malingering which no doubt is a known recipe for poor academic performance.
5. There was lack of professionalism among teachers. It was confirmed among other things that teachers spent time chatting when they were supposed to have lessons. Some teachers were reported of not using well prepared lesson notes when teaching. Such teachers just went to class to teach using old notes that might not be suitable for lessons. There is no way such unprofessional performance by teachers would yield any credible results. Pupils under such conditions are bound to perform poorly.
6. There was lack of dedication and commitment among teachers. It was confirmed among other things that some female teachers overstay at the expense of the pupils when they went on maternity leave. Moreover some teachers were said to be lazy and did not work hard to complete their syllabus. Teachers spent time on personal issues when they were supposed to have

lessons. Finally, some teachers were reported of not using the required length of time allotted for the lesson when teaching.

7. Poor family background impacted negatively on pupils' academic performance. The research revealed that majority of the pupils were from families where the parents were less advantaged socially, educationally and economically, and as such could not foster a higher level of achievement in their pupils. The parents/guardians were also not in the position to provide the necessary environments that encouraged the development of skills necessary for success at school.
8. Family size which is closely linked to socio-economic status also played a vital role in the pupils' academic performance. In their bid to contain the pressure of the family size, all parental efforts were rather directed towards how to make ends meet, instead of providing their pupils with the basic needs like books, pocket money and uniforms to motivate them to learn. The lack of extrinsic motivation had an undue negative effect on the academic performance of the pupils.

Conclusions

1. Security of schools within the Asawasi Sub-Metro was very crucial and needed immediate redress. Like other institutions, schools equally demand a peaceful and conducive environment for effective performance. Subsequently this would reflect in the overall development of the pupils in the care of the schools. So if no remedial action is taken, obviously, teaching and learning pertaining in the Asawasi Sub –Metro is bound to yield a poor academic performance among pupils.

2. If this unproductive development due to abysmal input concerning supply of teaching and learning materials (TLMs) from the Education Office is not brought to an end and teachers apathetic behaviour in providing improvised TLMs in the teaching and learning process fail to improve, then it would not be wrong for one to conclude that if those in the realm of affairs concerning the output of academic performance of the pupils are a party to the situation then their responsibility is questionable.
3. The unfortunate attitude towards teaching and learning among pupils in the Asawasi Sub-Metro schools is a huge challenge confronting the parents/guardians and teachers. So if systematic effort is not put in place to check the indiscipline, it will obviously have a rippling effect on the academic performance of the pupils, their future lives and the entire society as a whole.
4. Using a library, a science laboratory, a staff common room, an ICT Centre, a canteen and a place of convenience as the standard of assessment to determine the number of basic facilities owned by Asawasi Sub-Metro schools, it was discovered that there was no school that had all the six facilities. Only St Paul's JHS had five of the facilities named above. Sakafia Islamic JHS and Ansare Suna JHS had none of the six facilities. Moreover, the only facility available to Adukrom MA JHS, Wataniya JHS, and Aboabo MA JHS was just a place of convenience even though this facility has no direct academic impact. So with such a bleak situation in most of the schools in terms of facilities, it is obvious that no serious academic exercise could be done in such an environment because, to a large extent, a school's academic performance is influenced by the facilities available to the school.

5. Teachers' contribution in the total development of pupils cannot be over emphasised. In this sense the lack of dedication and commitment among teachers was a major setback in ensuring a high level of academic performance. So if pupils' performance were to be measured per the efforts demonstrated by teachers, then such lackadaisical attitude could not contribute to any satisfactory academic performance.
6. Poor family background impacted negatively on pupils' academic performance. A greater number of pupils in the Asawasi Sub –Metro belong to families with poor background. So if nothing is done to improve the socio-economic status of such families, then pupils may continue to attain poor academic performance. If such pupils do not receive the needed encouragement to develop skills necessary for success in life, then they may impact negatively on society.
7. The size of families played a vital role in the pupils' educational pursuit. When the basic needs like books, pocket money and uniforms needed for academic work are not forthcoming, as a result of increased number of school going children in a family, affected pupils suffer academically.

Recommendations

1. School Management Committee (S.M.C.) with other stakeholders should take advantage of appropriate forums such as PTA meetings, and SPAM to educate the community to cease using school compounds as thoroughfare as well as parking space for vehicles. The community must be made aware that movements and sound from such vehicles disturb the teaching and learning process. There should be a law passed that will prevent drivers from using school compounds as thoroughfare as well as parking space for vehicles.

When this is adhered to, schools without fence walls may enjoy some level of security.

2. The Ghana Education Service GES should see it as a responsibility to provide sufficient teaching and learning materials to schools. It is in doing so that they can have the moral right to deal with nonperforming teachers. It is also recommended that in-service training in the art of developing improvised TLMs should be organised by Head teachers for the teachers. If this is done, it will help alleviate the problem of TLM shortages in schools. Moreover, nonperforming teachers will have no excuse whatsoever.
3. Basic schools in Ghana do not have guidance and counselling coordinators who are attached to the schools to work alongside the teaching staff. It is therefore recommended that the guidance and counselling unit of the Ghana Education Service must be properly equipped by Government. It can then be enforced by GES to run guidance and counselling programs to contribute in the development of the pupils to check the uncontrollable trend of indiscipline and uncompromising attitude of pupils towards teaching and learning.
4. Besides the government's efforts to provide teaching and learning facilities, it is obvious that the support given by communities go a long way to reduce the huge educational burden on the government. Communities must therefore be encouraged to accept the challenge as a shared responsibility to avert the situation to help our young ones study in more conducive environments.
5. Though most teachers are professionally trained in the art and science of teaching, it behoves on the Head teachers to organise refresher courses for their teachers to update them on lesson planning, teaching methodology and classroom management to help improve their performance.

6. All stakeholders who have the welfare of the pupils at heart and desire their total development should in the same manner seek the professional satisfaction of the teachers into whose care the pupils are placed. It is hereby recommended that teachers must be adequately motivated extrinsically by government with appreciable salary and better conditions of service. In much the same way, if all stakeholders consider the plight of teachers as a concern and contribute to the welfare of teachers, they would have job satisfaction; they would further be intrinsically motivated to boost their dedication and commitment.
7. Because poor background/ family size is closely linked to socio-economic status It is highly recommended that such families that are less advantaged socially and economically must seek sponsorship for their brilliant but needy pupils from the Otumfuo's Education Fund, NGOs and Philanthropists. Such families must in future adopt family planning methods that would help them raise the number of children they would be able to cater for.

Suggestions for Further Research

It is recommended that the study should be replicated in the sub-metros in the Ashanti region. In addition, other factors like the teacher's philosophy and attitudes toward teaching should be considered in further studies.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

This questionnaire is being used for a study by a student in the Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast. It is meant for academic purpose, so you are assured that your responses will be treated confidentially.

You are kindly requested to answer all questions that follow as openly and honestly as possible to show your level of agreement on factors that affect academic attainment of your ward. Thank you very much.

SECTION A

Personal Data

Please tick [] whichever is applicable.

1. What is your highest level of education?
a. Middle school [] b. JHS []
c. Secondary [] d. Post Secondary []
e. Tertiary [] f. Other (please specify).....
2. What work do you do?
3. How many children do you take care of?

SECTION B

Parental Support for Wards

4. How often do you attend P.T.A. Meetings?
a. Regularly [] b. Sometimes [] c. Not at all []
5. Will you say your level of participation in P.T.A. meetings affects your wards' academic attainments? a. Yes [] b. No []
6. Briefly explain your choice of answer for question5.....
.....
.....
7. How do you receive/get information of your ward's performance / progress in school?
a. Visit to the school [] b. Report cards []
c. Others (please specify).....
8. Will you say it gives you a clear reflection of your wards performance /progress?
a. Yes [] b. No []
9. Do you keep records of your ward's performance in school?
a. Yes [] b. No []

10. Briefly explain your choice for question 9.....
.....
.....
11. Do you provide sufficient books and other study material for your wards' education?
a. Yes [] b. No []
12. Briefly explain your response for question 11.....
.....
.....
13. In what other way(s) do you help your children to study?
.....
14. How many hours on the average does your ward study on his/her own after school?
a. Below 2 hours [] b. Within 2-3 hrs [] c. Above 3 hours []
15. Briefly explain your choice of answer for question 14.....
.....
.....
16. What is the highest level of education your ward hopes to attain?
a. Only JHS [] b. Only Senior High School []
c. Tertiary [] d. Others (please specify).....
17. Briefly explain your choice of answer for question 16.
.....
.....
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APPENDIX B
GUIDE FOR PERSONAL INTERVIEW
Questions for Teaching Staff

Bio-Data

Name of School:

What position do you hold?

Are you a subject teacher or class teacher?

Which class(es) do you teach?

What subject(s) do you teach?

What extra-curricular activities are you in charge of?

How long have you been teaching in this school?

How long have you been teaching in this sub-metro?

Interview Questions

1. In your opinion what school environment factors will you consider to affect academic performance of pupils in the Asawasi sub-Metro?
2. Do you accept the notion that teachers contribute to affect academic performance of the pupils in the Asawasi sub-Metro? (Yes or No)
3. If 'yes' how do teachers contribute to affect academic performance of the pupils in the Asawasi sub-Metro?
4. What pupil characteristics in your opinion are capable of affecting academic performance in the Asawasi sub-Metro?
5. How do parents contribute to affect the academic performance of their wards in Asawasi sub-Metro?

APPENDIX C
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS
Please Tick Your Response

SECTION A

Bio –Data

1. Age: a. Below 15 years [] b. Above 14 years []
2. Form: a. One [] b. Two [] c. Three []
3. Nature of residence a. Rural [] b. Semi-Urban [] c. Urban []
4. Parents/Guardians' occupation
 Farming []
 Trading []
 Civil Service []
 House Wife []
 Others [], State.....
5. Parents/Guardians' educational background
 No schooling []
 Primary education []
 Secondary education []
 Post-Secondary education []
 Graduate education []
6. Number of siblings Boys [] Girls []
7. Who provides your educational needs?
 a. Mother [] b. Father [] c. Guardian []
 Others, please state.....
8. Do you have enough tables and chairs in the class? Yes [] No []

SECTION B

Carefully read the following statements and tick the alternative that best represent your option.

Statement	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. You understand your teachers during the teaching and learning process.				
2. Students are punctual to class				
3. Your teachers are punctual to class				
4. Students spend much of their time on academic exercises.				

<p>5. Students attend school regularly.</p> <p>6. Students participate fully in class.</p> <p>7. Parents' attitude towards education affects students' academic performance.</p> <p>8. Inadequate school facilities affect academic performance.</p> <p>9. Economic constraints affect academic performance.</p> <p>10. Entry grade affects academic performance.</p> <p>11. Relationship between teachers and students is good.</p> <p>12. Teachers are punctual and regular to school.</p> <p>13. Teachers are dedicated and committed to their work.</p> <p>14. Parents attitude towards teachers affect academic performance.</p> <p>15. Government policies affect academic work</p> <p>16. Security of the school is low</p> <p>17. Public intrusion of the school premise affects the teaching and learning process</p>				
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