UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

PARENTAL MOTIVATION AND THE ENROLMENT OF THEIR

CHILDREN INTO KINDERGARTEN

MADEEZ ADAMU-ISSAH

MARCH

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University of Cape Coast

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CHILDREN INTO KINDERGARTEN

BY

MADEEZ ADAMU-ISSAH

Thesis submitted to the Department of Integrated Development Studies, of the School for Development Studies, College of Humanities and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Development Studies

MARCH 2020

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

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

Candidate's Signature: …………………………..   Date: ……………………

Name: ……………………………………………....

Supervisors' Declaration

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

Principal Supervisor's Signature: …………………….   Date: …………..

Name: ………………………………………….............

Co-Supervisor's Signature: ……………………………   Date: …………..

Name: ………………………………………….............

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ABSTRACT

The study, which was conducted in the Kwahu Afram Plains North District, investigated factors that motivate parents to enrol their children in Kindergarten. The motivation of the study was to identify why parents voluntarily enrolled children in Kindergarten even when the State was unable to enforce compulsory universal enrolment or address Early Childhood Education sectoral challenges. The study employed a mixed-method approach and used question guides to collect information from 653 parents in the interviews. Focus group discussions provided additional information to validate the findings. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analysed while descriptive statistics such as percentages, pie charts, bar graphs and chi-square estimations were used to present or support the findings. Major findings of the study were that parents were motivated to enrol children in KG by factors like their notion of responsibility for their children's development, their aspirations for their children, their awareness of ECE policies and initiatives, and their perception of the importance of KG. Other motivators included preparing children for school, need for places to keep children during working hours, government's pro-poor policies, and availability of KG. Factors like parents' place of residence, educational background, sex and age, also influenced. The study concluded that parental motivation is key in school enrolment decisions. The study recommended that the State adopt measures that will improve communication with parents, strengthen collaboration between school authorities and parents, involve parents in decision making in schools, and strengthen school-community relationship in order to improve parental motivation and involvement in children's education.

KEY WORDS

Aspiration

Development

Kindergarten

Motivation

Parental Aspiration

Parental Expectation

Perception

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DEDICATION

To my parents; Mallam Issah and Hawah Issah, my siblings, my wife

(Margie), and my children (Rauf, Jamal and Nadia).

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APDO	Afram Plains Development Organisation
CCT	Conditional Cash Transfer
CHILDSCOPE	Child-School -Community Process in Education
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DCD	Department of Community Development
DEOC	District Education Oversight Committees
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FCUBE	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
HD	Human Development
JHS	Junior High School
JSS	Junior Secondary School
KAPN	Kwahu Afram Plains North
KG	Kindergarten
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NGO	Non-Government Organisation

OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PTA	Parent-Teacher Associations
SHS	Senior High School
SMC	School Management Committees
SSS	Senior Secondary School
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Education plays a significant role in the creation and improvement of human capital, hence, its relevance and importance to economic growth and development are very well recognised in development planning. Education is one of the fundamental factors of development. Through education, therefore, human skill or productivity becomes as important as capital, natural resources and entrepreneurship in the development process (Abubakar, 2014; Abiogu, 2014; Sreenivasulu, 2013; Umudjere, Okogu & Osah, 2016; World Bank, 2007). Mwamwenda (2014) also argued that education is not only critical, but also a solid foundation for the reconstruction and development of Africa. He further pointed out that providing education for Africa's people is investing in economic development, given that sustainable development calls for adequate and ever-increasing skills and knowledge bases, which are inherently a product of education. Moreover, education does not only contribute to economic development, but also contributes to a sustainable democratic society, as its graduates positively contribute in the governance of their society.

No country can achieve sustainable economic development without substantial investment in human capital. Education enriches people's understanding of themselves and the world. It improves the quality of their lives and leads to broad social benefits to individuals and society. Education raises people's productivity and creativity and promotes entrepreneurship and technological advances. In addition, it plays a very crucial role in securing economic and social progress and improving income distribution. Also,

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education and skills are essential for realizing individual potential, enhancing national economic growth and social development, and fostering global citizenship (Hanushek & Ludger, 2015; UNESDOC, 2013).

The United Nations (2012) further asserts that education is the basic building block of every society and that it is a fundamental human right, not a privilege of the few. Consequently, globally, interventions and initiatives, all aimed at improving education, and hence, human capital development, have been introduced at various periods. These interventions and initiatives include the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) of 1989 (Article 28), Education for All (EFA) of 1990 and the follow-up Dakar Framework of Action of 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000 (Goal 2), the EFA Fast Track Initiative (Global Partnership for Education) of 2000, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2015 (Goals 4 and 5).

The realisation by nations across the world that education represents the hopes, dreams and aspirations of children, families, communities and nations as the most reliable route out of poverty and a critical pathway towards healthier, more productive citizens and stronger societies has led to phenomenal progress in education for young children (UNICEF & UNESCO, 2015). According to these United Nations Agencies, when people are asked to list their priorities, education tops in survey after survey and poll after poll. They note that there is consensus at virtually every level, from the poorest family in the most remote village to the global policy leaders who are shaping the world's future development goals, that education matters. This consensus has been translated

into concrete action; propelling millions of children once denied an education into the classroom (UNICEF & UNESCO, 2015).

As a corollary of the global initiatives and interventions in education, Early Childhood Education (ECE), especially Kindergarten (KG), has also received great attention with the realisation that it is only when focus is placed on the early years of children's lives that education goals and, consequently, human development efforts expressed in the global education goals would be achieved. These developments are, partly, in response to the declarations made at the September 1990 World Summit for Children at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. This summit focused attention, at both global and governmental levels, on the urgent needs of children all over the world, particularly those in developing countries, who suffer gross unacceptable deprivations and hardships.

The EFA global framework states that pre-school education is a basic right of all children in the relevant age group and should be incorporated into all governmental programming, particularly in regions where there is a high incidence of poverty. The EFA framework for sub-Saharan Africa states, therefore, proposed that Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes should be expanded two-fold by the year 2006 and should offer safe, secure and stimulating environments. It called on countries to work towards providing access to Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) programmes for all children by the year 2015 (UNESDOC, 2000).

The interest in ECE was also inspired by scientific research in different disciplines such as education, neuroscience and sociology that points to economic, social, educational and developmental benefits of participating in

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high-quality early childhood education and care and further, demonstrate conclusively the critical impact of early experiences (Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford & Taggart, 2010; Vandenbroecka, Lenaertsb & Beblavy, 2018). There is also, overwhelming evidence from both randomised controlled trials, quasi-experimental and longitudinal studies, conducted across many European countries, that ECE improves educational outcomes (OECD, 2011). The European Commission (2011) also maintains that ECE has the potential to give all children a good start in the world of tomorrow and to break the cycle which transmits disadvantage from one generation to another. Britto, Engle, and Super (2013) have also stressed that early learning begets later learning and early success breeds later success, just as early failure breeds later failure. Britto et al, therefore, maintain that early intervention, as a strategy to prevent future problems, has almost become conventional wisdom and that there is a positive effect on children's development during kindergarten, their readiness for primary, and their social and academic progress through primary school. Evidence from OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA, 2013), also reveal that in 2012, the difference in PISA mathematics scores between students who had attended pre-primary education and those who had not was 51 points, the equivalent of more than a year of formal schooling.

Available empirical evidence shows that the benefits that accrue from children's participation in ECE are not limited to only the children involved, but extend to society at large (Shonkoff, Boyce, & McEwen, 2009; Vandenbroecka, et al; 2018;). For instance, research findings show that the benefits for children who participate in high-quality ECE include reduced special participation in

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future remedial education, higher future earnings, greater educational attainment, improved social integration and better health. At the family level, ECE participation by children enables labour market participation, especially of mothers and single parents. It also allows siblings, especially girls, to attend school. Research findings also suggest further that ECE also benefit families who, due to migration and urbanisation and a rise in the phenomenon of nuclear families, have lost the support for childcare from informal forms of childcare and relatives, especially grandmothers (Vandenbroecka, et al; 2018). For the society, potential benefits from ECE include reduced spending on welfare, reduced remedial education programmes for children, lower crime rates and improved social cohesion.

Engle, Fernald, Alderman, Behrman, O'Gara, Yousafzai, de Mello, Hidrobo, Ulkuer, Ertem, and Iltus, (2011), on their part, point out that investment in young children is cheaper in terms of survival and development of human potential, at both individual and social levels and have multiplier effects on various aspects of national growth and development. Engle et al, therefore, emphasised the importance of the early years on both an individual's life and, eventually, the social and economic development and human capital formation of a nation.

The analysis above show that the impact of the first years of life on children's physical, emotional, cognitive and social development, the role of quality of care provided by the parents, and early childhood care and education have been proven in the last decades. However, according to Herczog (2012), this argument is not always influential, as the investment must be made now, while the return can be seen 15–20 years later and the outcomes do not

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necessarily enrich those who invested. Hence, a rights-based approach which consists in a set of values and standards that apply to all children and their best interest, and the development of their capacities is arguably the strongest justification for ECE (Asimaki, Koustourakis, Lagiou, & Tampourlou, 2016; Herczog, 2012; UNICEF, 2009). A rights-based approach emphasises "well-being" and not only "well-becoming". It is essential to ensure that 'no child is left behind', 'every child matters', and that the principles of the CRC are taken into consideration by ensuring the best interest, non-discrimination, protection from all forms of violence, and participation (Herczog, 2012).

With this understanding, governments, development partners and other stakeholders have been motivated to adopt strategies and interventions that ensure a good start in life for all children, resulting in an unprecedented progress in the proportion of children having access to ECE services worldwide. UNESCO and UNICEF (2012) report that Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER) in pre-primary education rose from 34 per cent in 2000 to 39 per cent in 2005 and further to 46 per cent in 2009. The Africa-America Institute (2015), also reports that 184 million children were enrolled in pre-primary education worldwide and that even Africa (especially Sub-Saharan Africa), the region with the lowest pre-primary enrolment (only 20%) in the world in 2012, had expanded ECE enrolment by almost two and half times between 1999 and 2012.

In Ghana, the State has made tremendous effort to provide needed services to her young children. Ghana's Shared Growth and Development Agenda Two for the 2014 – 2017 and its predecessor development strategies, namely, the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS I) for 2002 - 2005, the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II) for 2006 - 2009 and Growth

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and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS III) for the period 2010 - 2013, all state that ECCD services will be provided to all children in Ghana and act as a key strategy for poverty reduction, particularly in relation to disadvantaged groups (Republic of Ghana, 2015). For the country, therefore, early childhood care and education is more than a preparatory stage assisting the child's transition to formal schooling. Early childhood has been placed within a broader context of social development, gender equity and poverty reduction. The Ghana's Shared Growth and Development Agenda Two for the 2014 – 2017, in particular, is premised on the belief that, by providing a "fair start" to all children, it is possible to modify distressing socio-economic and gender-related inequities. The principle underlying this belief is that the unhealthy conditions and stress associated with poverty are accompanied by inequalities in early development and learning. These inequalities help to maintain or magnify existing economic and social inequalities. In a vicious cycle, children from families with few resources often fall quickly and progressively behind their more advantaged peers in their mental development and their readiness for school and life. That gap is then increasingly difficult to close.

In Ghana, the State's formal effort to promote ECE is traceable back to the 19th century when the Basel Mission established and attached KG classes to some of their primary schools (Abdulai, 2014; Adamu-Issah, Elden, Forson, & Schrofer, 2007; Boakye, Etse, Adamu-Issah, Moti-Medha, Matjila, and Shikwambi, 2008). Such a model was followed by other missions engaged in the establishment of ECE Centres (Ministry of Education, Ghana, 2010). Then in 1961, the government took a decisive step towards ECE through the Education Act of 1961, which made provision for early childhood education and

development and placed pre-school education under the Ministry of Education (MOE).

Ghana's comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) policy which was developed in August 2004 to provide a framework for government and other stakeholders to promote survival, development, and protection for children from birth to age eight. It was expected that the implementation of the ECCD policy would ensure the survival, growth, and development of all children in Ghana (Boakye, et al, 2008; Republic of Ghana, 2004). In the area of education, it was envisaged that the implementation of the ECCD policy would, among others, contribute to the expansion of primary school enrolment to 95 per cent by 2015, provision of 60 per cent of public primary schools with two KG classrooms by 2015 as well as an increase in GER at preschool level to 75 per cent by 2015.

Finally, since 2003, MOE has developed Education Strategic Plans such as the Education Strategic Plan 2003 to 2015, Education Strategic Plan 2010 to 2020 and Education Strategic Plan 2018 -30 which all have policy goals which aim at providing all children in Ghana access to Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) which includes two years of kindergarten education (Ministry of Education, Ghana, 2010). Also, MOE introduced major interventions with immense potential implications for ECD-age children in general and, especially, those in the kindergarten age-group (4 and 5 years). For instance, from the beginning of the 2005/2006 academic year, the Government of Ghana introduced the "Capitation Grant" in all public basic schools (KG, Primary and Junior High School) in the country. With the introduction of this grant, the payment of levies and all types of fees were officially banned in all

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basic schools. Secondly, a two-year kindergarten education programme became part of the FCUBE structure with effect from September 2007. Thirdly, from 2007 five of the 38 Colleges of Education were mandated to add specialist KG teacher training to their regular courses. Because of the efforts of the State and major stakeholders, the Ministry of Education's Education Management Information System (EMIS) data for 2015 showed that for the 2014/15 academic year, Gross Enrolment Rate at the KG level stood at 128.8 per cent (Girls – 131.1%, Boys – 126.6%) while Net Enrolment Rate (NER) was 82.7% (Girls – 84.3%, Boys – 81.2%).

To achieve these high enrolment rates, stakeholders identified and paid critical attention to demand and supply side determinants that influenced the participation of young children in formal education. The supply factors included school characteristics, availability of educational facilities (both quantity and quality), location of schools, policy on education (e.g; whether compulsory or free or fee paying), percentage of female teachers, availability of credit markets, better road and communication infrastructure, impact of globalization, and the state's influence and ability to put pressure on parents to send their children to school (Amuchie, Asotibe, Audu, 2015; Bolaji, Gray & Campbell-Evans, 2015; Nudzor, 2015).

On the demand side, factors that have influenced school enrolment included household resource constraints, socioeconomic status of the family (including family wealth, educational background especially that of mothers, occupation, family structure and size, etc.), and cost of education (both direct and indirect costs). Other demand factors included perception of labour market prospects for people with formal education, parental perception of the future

rewards of education that accrue to their children as well as the expected rewards for the parents themselves and parental aspirations for their children. Cultural traditions, power relations within the family (especially the position of women within the household), distance to school, and place of residence of parents are also major demand factors (Kipng'etich, Boit & Bomett, 2013).

Multilevel analyses show that both demand and supply side characteristics are important in their unique ways and affect education participation of children differently. They also vary among contexts, allowing for the development of tailor-made policy interventions which aim at improving educational participation in specific problem situations. In many instances, however, both sets of factors are interdependent on each other. For instance, many effects of household-level factors depend on the context in which the household is living, over which the parents have no control while in some situations, the individual choices parents make about ECE have important ramifications not only for their children and their families, but also for the entire ECE system.

Of the supply and demand factors, the role of parents has been identified as a very critical factor in children's participation in school (Avvisati, Besbas & Guyon, 2010; Friedman, 2011; Zoppi, 2016). Parental participation in schooling has always been apparent in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly with the intention of improving equitable access, retention, quality and performance of schooling but it is only in recent years that it has become more formalised in policy with new forms of parental participation emerging (Hedges, Mulder, James, & Lawson, 2016; Mekonnen, W. G., 2017). Afridi, Anderson, and Mundy (2014) also maintain that parents are key stakeholders in

programmes and decentralisation measures in education and that there is evidence that the involvement of parents in education help in the promotion of access for children, school governance and management, teaching and learning, and accountability at all levels.

Evidence from different countries indicate that parental motivation and aspiration play a crucial role in their children's education, especially in the children's schooling and attainment (Jung & Zhang, 2016; Lian 2016; Grolnick, 2014). Chiapa, Garrido, and Prina (2012), after an investigation of the effect on parental aspirations of exposure to professionals via the Mexican anti-poverty programme PROGRESA, found a positive correlation between parental aspirations and children's educational participation and attainment. Samal (2012) notes that parents' attitudes towards their children's education is important in determining school attendance and academic achievement of their children. Samal opined further that parents' favourable attitude towards schooling and education enhances their involvement in their children's present and future studies. Parents are also aware of the importance of providing learning support and educational input at home. Parents support for children's learning at home include encouraging children to do their homework and school projects, providing learning resources and encouraging children to use them, encouraging children to learn, communicating with children and discussing problems and employing tutors. The evidence, thus, shows that parental motivation is crucial in determining the kind of education their children receive.

The crucial question that has often been asked is "what motivates parents to participate in their children's education"? According to Halle, Blasberg, Chrisler, Shana, Susman-Stillman, Cox, and Cleveland, (2011), among the

many considerations that parents weigh when choosing an early care and education setting for their children include convenience **factors (e.g.** cost, location, hours of care, health and safety as well as their perception about the programme and the potential benefits that could be derived from it. They add further, that parents' positive attitude towards their children's education is important in determining school attendance and academic achievement of the children. Regarding children with disability, parent educational involvement has been demonstrated to be a predictor of in-school and post-school success for all students, including students with disabilities (Hirano & Dawn, 2015; Rodriguez, Blatz, & Elbaum, 2014).

Generally, the decisions parents make about their young children centre on the acknowledgement that they are responsible for the children's nurture and care e.g. feeding, clothing accommodation and socialization. The consensus is that motivation to send a child to school is related to what parents see as the purpose and benefits of education. This thinking validates the Needs-based theorists like Maslow (1943), Alderfer (1969) and McClelland (1965), who postulate that the primary motivating stimulus for individuals is the desire to fulfil a felt-need. The fulfilment of the felt-need moves the individual from one state to another whose outcome appears more desirable or attractive.

Usually, sending a child to school entails parents making a conscious decision that is related to certain expectations of what education can provide. Parents sometimes even become "deviants" by having to defy convention and tradition to enrol their children in school. Parental motivation, is, consequently, a strong predictor of parental involvement and investment in the child's education. Parents' motivation to educate their children may also be influenced

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by the Human capital theory (Becker, 1962, 1964; Heckman & Stefano, 2014) which postulates that investments in people (e.g., education, training, health) ultimately, increases an individual's productivity.

Whilst acknowledging that parental motivation and aspirations play a significant role in determining human capital investment, particularly in resource-constrained environments, Ray (2006), asserts that, in general, there has been limited evidence relating parental motivation, preferences and aspirations to educational outcomes and school choice. Analysis of some of the purportedly important determinants of parental school choice for their children often point to supply factors such as school characteristics, availability and location (Chakrabarti & Roy 2010). Other analysts also point to demand factors such as household resource constraints (Kipng'etich, Boit & Bomett, 2013). These analyses often neglect the role of parental motivation and aspirations for their children's future as a potential driver of school choice.

Mncube (2010) notes that even though parental involvement in the provision of education services has been found to be beneficial, beyond an evaluation of compliance and understanding of already instituted standards for parental involvement, little information exists yet on why parents decide to become involved or not in their children's education. This situation, as explained by Bray, Gooskens, Kahn, Moses, and Seekings (2010, p. 209), is unfortunate because "the home is not only an economic base and nexus of interpersonal relationships, it is also an arena in which culturally informed and historically influenced attitudes to schooling are played out". Consequently, the push for universal enrolment for all children to benefit from ECE makes it

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imperative for a country like Ghana, with inadequate resources and where the ECE sector faces many challenges to develop partnerships with parents.

A situation analysis of the ECE sector, as contained in the Government of Ghana - UNICEF Country Programme Action Plan for 2006-2010 shows that the State's inability to implement the FCUBE programme comprehensively and to ensure universal enrolment of all children qualified to be in KG is compounded by several challenges. Among the many challenges identified was the questionable quality of service provided by pre-school centres, including the widespread use of poorly trained or untrained caregivers, and an early emphasis on rigid, formal learning, in violation of child-development principles. The situation analysis also show that gross disparities exist in access to ECE services in Ghana. Firstly, there is geographical disparity, with the urban centres, and especially rich neighbourhoods, being better served than rural and deprived areas. Secondly, there exist some disparities due to socio-economic background of children, with children from affluent homes having better access than those from poor homes. Many poor families are unable to afford the cost of private KG education or levies imposed in public schools which are sometimes imposed by school heads, despite the introduction of the Capitation grant. Thirdly, many private schools were better resourced than public schools. The State was also unable to implement comprehensive and compulsory universal enrolment policies and this places parents in a strong position where they are often the ones who decide to either enrol their children in school or not.

Another major challenge that was identified is that there is inadequate funding for pre-school activities. Most often, budgetary support for pre-school activities has been woefully inadequate with funds allocated just enough to pay

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salaries of staff. Often, there is a shortage of school facilities, inadequate classrooms and teaching and learning materials. When classrooms are available, they are sometimes of poor quality and may be poorly lit and ventilated. Also, in many schools, blackboards and furniture for both children and teachers are inadequate. Most schools do not have water or sanitary facilities, nor do they provide adequate access for children with disabilities. All these factors negatively influence both access and quality, with parents often being made to pay for services.

Finally, the situation analysis of the ECE sector in the Government of Ghana - UNICEF Country Programme Action Plan noted that in many rural areas and parts of the three northern regions, long distances and natural impediments like large streams on the way to school hinder children's access to KG. Sometimes, there is also the unintended exclusion of orphans and vulnerable children, such as children with disabilities, from the formal education system. Finally, most of the conventional pre-schools are public, and appendages to local primary schools and, in many rural areas, some children are prematurely forced to start formal schooling instead of ECE.

Addressing challenges like those above call for strong partnerships with parents. It is only when this is done that parents will be empowered and encouraged enough to become key partners in ECE, especially in the enrolment of their children.

Statement of the Problem

Ghana introduced a free and compulsory universal basic education programme in 1995 and promised universal education by 2005. However, the FCUBE did not go far enough to offset the opportunity costs of schooling for

the poorest households by abolishing all forms of fees and reducing significantly the indirect costs associated with attending school (Akyeampong, 2009). Consequently, even though FCUBE led to a surge in enrolments, getting children from disadvantaged or marginalised communities to enrol and complete basic education remained a challenge (Akyeampong, 2009). For instance, despite the considerable progress made in kindergarten enrolment in the country, evidence from Ghana's Ministry of Education data indicates that the nation has never been able to enrol all the eligible four and five-year old children who were supposed to be in kindergarten. For example, even though Net Enrolment Rates improved tremendously from 38.5 per cent (38.5% for girls and 38.4% for boys) in 2004/2005 to 82.7 per cent (84.3% for girls and 81.2% for boys) in 2014/2015, this clearly shows that about 17.3 per cent of children in the KG age group, four- and five-year-olds, were still out of KG nationwide (Ministry of Education, 2017).

One of the strategies adopted by the State to address the challenges of the ECE sector and, consequently, to promote KG, is the acknowledgement, recognition and apportioning of roles to parents in education delivery. For instance, the Ghana Education Service Act of 1995 (Act 506) and that of 2008 (Act 778) allow for the active participation of parents in education delivery in the country, especially at the pre-tertiary level. Consequently, across the entire structure of the educational system, parents participate in education delivery through statutory structures like the District Education Oversight Committees (DEOC), Boards of Governors of second cycle schools, School Management Committees (SMC), and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA). Parents again participate in education delivery through District Assemblies, District

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Education Planning Teams, Old Pupils' Associations, Unit Committees and Voluntary Associations. Some of these bodies are statutory and have legal backing while others have only administrative and community support to perform roles necessary to achieve quality education.

In Ghana, even though statutes in the country allow for parental participation in education delivery, the involvement of parents is voluntary and motivated by factors which appeal to them. The voluntary aspect of parental involvement is more evident in enrolment of children in school because of the State's inability to enforce the compulsory enrolment of children in school as well as provide free, universal education to all children. Consequently, many parents make a conscious effort to enrol their children in school voluntarily. Given the State's inability to implement a comprehensive FCUBE programme and to ensure universal enrolment coupled with the challenges in the ECE sector, there must be compelling reasons which motivate parents to enrol their children in KG, especially when they are not compelled by the State to do so. This situation agrees with Pomazal (2002), who maintains that one can make the highly plausible assumption that enrolment is an intentional, goal-oriented behaviour. According to him, to know what motivates parents to enrol their children in school, there is a need to adopt a logical approach to explore systematically the specific determinants of attitudes and subsequent intentions to enrol. Pomazal (2002) adds that although enrolment decisions may be influenced by external factors (e.g., social pressure, transportation problems, distance to school, etc.), ultimately the decision to enrol children in school is an individual one, often decided by parents. The major question that arises then is, therefore, "what motivates parents to enrol their children in school, especially,

KG when there is no compulsion to do so, especially when their colleagues are not also enrolling their children?"

Analysis of available literature of the ECE sector reveals that most of the data on parental motivation on ECE focus on the effect of ECE on parents participation in the labour force, children's achievement, children's in-school behaviour and children's life after school, etc. and not on motivation for enrolment (Anders, Grosse, Rossbach, Ebert & Weinert, 2013; Graves, Scott & Wright, 2011; Maloney, Ramirez, Gunderson, Levine & Beilock, 2015). Also, as noted by Grolnick (2015), parent motivations for involvement in schools are complex. Thus, research on parental motivations is critical to promoting involvement of parents in educational contexts (Grolnick, 2015).

In Ghana, the analysis of literature shows that there is also an absence of data on the factors that motivate parents to enrol their children in KG. Hence, information on what motivate parents to enrol their children in KG remain anecdotal and, often, undocumented. This, therefore, necessitated the need for this study on parental motivation to enrol their children in KG. Also, investigated were the influences of the many forces that affect behaviours, including social and physical environments. These forces were investigated based on the explanation offered by theories like the Needs theories of motivation, the Positive deviance theory and the Human Capital to explain the "whys" of behaviour.

The study was carried out in Kwahu Afram Plains North (KAPN) District, a typical deprived and hard-to-reach district in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The classification of the district was based on Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), 2010 Population and Housing Census classification of rural and urban

locality to classify individuals as living in either rural or urban locality (GSS, 2012). Even though the district suffers greatly from the challenges that afflict the ECE sub-sector, many parents voluntarily enrol their children in KG. The district, with its relatively higher KG enrolment rates is, therefore, an outlier among similar districts, who under similar conditions, experience much lower KG enrolments. There was, therefore, the need to investigate the factors that motivate the parents to demand KG education for their children as well as the deterring factors that influence other parents to keep their children out of kindergarten.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the factors that motivate parents to enrol their children in Kindergarten in the Kwahu Afram Plains North District.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Review the effect of parental perception of their responsibility for their children's development on their motivation to enrol children in KG.

2. Examine the effect of parents' aspirations for their children on their motivation to enrol children in KG.

3. Explore the influence of Government's Early Childhood Education policies on parents' motivation to enrol their children in KG.

4. Review the influence of parents' perception of the importance of KG education on their decision to enrol their children in KG.

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5. Analyse the influence of children's characteristics on parents' motivation to enrol children in KG in KAPN.

6. Explore the factors parents consider when enrolling their children in KG and/or retaining them in KG in KAPN.

7. Identify the main factors which influence parents to recommend KG education to other parents

Research Questions

1. What is the effect of parental perception of their responsibility for their children's development on their motivation to enrol their children in KG?

2. How do parents' aspirations for their children affect their motivation to enrol their children in Kindergarten?

3. How do Government policies of Early Childhood Education influence parents' motivation to enrol their children in Kindergarten?

4. How do parents' perception of the importance of Kindergarten education motivate influence their decision to enrol their children in KG?

5. How do children's characteristics influence parents' motivation to enrol children in KG in KAPN?

6. What general factors do parents consider in enrolling their children in Kindergarten or retaining them in KG in Kwahu Afram Plains North?

7. What factors will parents consider important to make them recommend KG to other parents?

8. How do demographic characteristics of parents affect their motivation to enrol children in Kindergarten?

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Research Hypotheses:

Ho: Parents' motivation to enrol their children in KG is not significantly related to their demographic characteristics.

Ha: Parents motivation to enrol their children in KG is significantly related to their demographic characteristics.

Scope of the Study

The study investigated the factors which motivate parents to enrol their children in KG in Ghana. More especially, the study focused attention on what parents considered as motivating factors to get them to participate more meaningfully in the ECE system.

Significance of the Study

The study results give an insight into what motivates parents to enrol their children in KG. On the reverse side, it provides reasons as to why some parents refuse to enrol their children in KG. The results of the study, therefore, provide useful information for policy and decision makers as to the necessary measures to take that would encourage parents to patronise ECE services.

The findings from this study has benefit for policy makers by alerting them to the thinking of parents about what is crucial to them about ECE. The policy makers will, therefore, be able to use the findings of the study as a guide to formulate appropriate interventions as well as design parent education programmes that will appeal to parents to invest in ECE. The findings are, again, expected to help the policy makers to come up with policy framework that spells out clearly the role of the parents, vis-à-vis, other stakeholders in the provision of ECE services. Thus, it will, hopefully, enable education planners to design

appropriate strategies and programmes that will improve motivation levels of parents to play a more active role in their children's education.

Finally, the findings add to the existing knowledge on factors militating against full and comprehensive enrolment of all children within the early childhood education age bracket in Ghana as well as support the need for further research that will provide data to further improve programming for early childhood education and development.

Definition of Terms

Aspiration: The word "aspiration" means "a desire or ambition to achieve something" (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989). The word signifies some goal or target and a desire to attain it, but also suggests the intention to exert effort towards realising the goal.

Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD): This term is often used inter-changeably with ECD. In the 1980s, the term "care" was added to the phrase early childhood development, in recognition of the fact that young children need care and nurturing. They need attention to their health and nutrition, their evolving emotional and social abilities, as well as their minds. The term care was chosen, rather than education, to move policy makers and program providers away from thinking exclusively in terms of pre-schooling.

Early Childhood Development (ECD): A comprehensive approach to policies and programmes for children from birth to eight years of age, their parents and caregivers, aimed at protecting the child's rights to develop his or her full cognitive, emotional, social and physical potential (UNICEF, 2009).

Early Childhood Education (ECE): see preschool education below.

Basic Schools: In Ghana, this currently refers to eleven years of kindergarten, primary and Junior High schooling.

Development: Development is defined as the process of change in which the child comes to master more and more complex levels of moving, thinking, feeling and interacting with people and objects in the environment. Development involves both a gradual unfolding of biologically determined characteristics and the learning process. Learning is the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, habits and values through experience and experimentation, observation, reflection, and/or study and instruction. Both the child's physical growth (the child's health and nutrition history and current health and nutritional status) and the child's intellectual, emotional and social growth are crucial in the child's overall development. The child's current developmental status either facilitates or inhibits future learning. Thus, learning is part of the development process.

Gross Enrolment Rate (GER): This refers to the number of pupils/students enrolled (irrespective of their ages) divided by population officially supposed to be at that level (e.g. 6-11-year olds at Primary and four and five-year olds at kindergarten level in Ghana).

Kindergarten: (German, literally means "children's garden") is a class or small school for young children, usually between the ages of four and six to prepare them for primary education. It serves as a transition from home to the commencement of more formal schooling.

Motivation: refers to reasons that underlie behaviour that is characterized by willingness and volition. Intrinsic motivation is animated by personal enjoyment, interest, or pleasure, whereas extrinsic motivation is governed by

reinforcement contingencies. Motivation involves a constellation of closely related beliefs, perceptions, values, interests, and action. In sum, motivation may be regarded as something, which prompts, compels and energizes an individual to act or behave in a particular manner at a particular time for attaining some specific goal or purpose.

Net Enrolment Rate (NER): This refers to the number of pupils/students enrolled in a school within the appropriate official age range (e.g. enrolment 6-11-year olds in primary schools in Ghana) divided by population of all children in the country, who are aged 6-11 years.

Parental Aspiration: The levels of education or occupational status that a parent desires for his/her children. Aspirations may be based on norms, values, hopes and dreams. Aspirations may be taken as indicators of the ideal situation.

Parental Expectation: The levels of education or occupational status that a parent perceives as likely for his/her children. Expectations are based, at least, in part on a realistic assessment of such factors as the child's ability, motivation, opportunities, and the family's financial situation. Expectations reflect reality.

Perception: the beliefs parents hold regarding pre-school education, including attitudes, opinions, and values. For this research, the term perception will be used to refer to parents' expression of their awareness or understanding of the nature or purpose of preschool education.

Pre-school Education: - much of the literature varies in the terminology used to describe the level of education about which the parents' perceptions are sought. Terms include preschool education, kindergarten education, and pre-primary education. The term pre-school education, pre-primary, Early Childhood Education and Kindergarten will be used interchangeably throughout this thesis

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and will encompass the two years of education immediately before a child enters primary school. In Ghana, the official corresponding age related to this period is four and five years.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter reviews the theoretical, conceptual and empirical literature relevant to the study. The main theories that were reviewed in this study to explain the factors that motivate parents to enrol their children in Kindergarten in the Kwahu Afram Plains North District were the Needs theories of motivation, the Positive deviance theory and the Human Capital theory. Also reviewed in this chapter was empirical literature relevant to the theme of the study, especially studies that focus on the factors which influence parents' decision to enrol their children and which identify gaps that the study attempts to bridge. Even though the review took a global perspective, the focus of the review was their relevance to the motivation of parents towards enrolling their children in KG in Ghana. Finally, the chapter also presents the conceptual framework which was developed out of the theories and which guided the study.

Theoretical Underpinnings of the Study

Theories have been used as the foundation for programme planning and development because this practice is consistent with the current emphasis on using evidence-based interventions in development and other behavioural change programmes. Theory provides a road map for studying problems, developing appropriate interventions, and evaluating their successes or otherwise. The theories reviewed in this section attempt to explain the dynamics of behaviours, including processes for changing them, and the influences of the many forces that affect behaviours, including social and physical environments. Theory can also help planners identify the most suitable target audiences,

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methods for fostering change, and outcomes for evaluation. Researchers and practitioners, therefore, use theory to investigate answers to the questions of "why," "what," and "how" problems should be addressed and, by seeking answers to these questions, are able to propose solutions to identified social challenges. Thus, the theories reviewed guide the search for reasons why people do or do not engage in certain behaviours and helps to direct possible actions that could be undertaken.

Need Theories of Motivation

Most contemporary theories of motivation assume that people initiate and persist at behaviours to the extent that they believe the behaviours will lead to desired outcomes or goals (Abdulrahman & Hui, 2018; Acevedo, 2018). Abdulrahman et al and Acevedo add that this assumption is premised on the belief that human beings have needs and goals and are motivated to act in ways that lead to the satisfaction of the needs. This belief gave birth to the need theories which have been the focus of much of the research on motivation because they have been among 'the most enduring ways to understand motivation' (Abdulrahman & Hui, 2018; Acevedo, 2018). Needs-based motivation theories, therefore, stem from the understanding that all motivation comes from an individual's desire to fulfil or achieve a need.

The Need theories are the foundations of motivation theories and revolve around the desire of an individual to fulfil a felt-need, moving the individual from one state to another whose outcome appears more desirable or attractive. This theory postulates that human beings are motivated by unsatisfied needs, and typically, certain lower needs must be satisfied before higher needs can be satisfied (Aruma & Hanachor, 2017). A need in this context is an internal

state that makes certain outcomes appear attractive. An unsatisfied need creates tension that stimulates drives within the individual that then generate a search behaviour to find goals that, if attained, will satisfy the need and lead to the reduction of the tension. Needs are physiological or psychological deficiencies that arouse behaviour. These vary over time and place, can be strong or weak, and are also influenced by environmental factors (Aruma & Hanachor, 2017).

One of the most widely used of the need theories, is Maslow's (1943) needs hierarchy. According to Maslow, people have a pyramid hierarchy of needs that they will satisfy from bottom to top. He categorised individual needs into two, namely, "Deficiency needs" (physiological and safety) and "growth needs" which include belonging, self-esteem and self-actualisation (Figure 1).
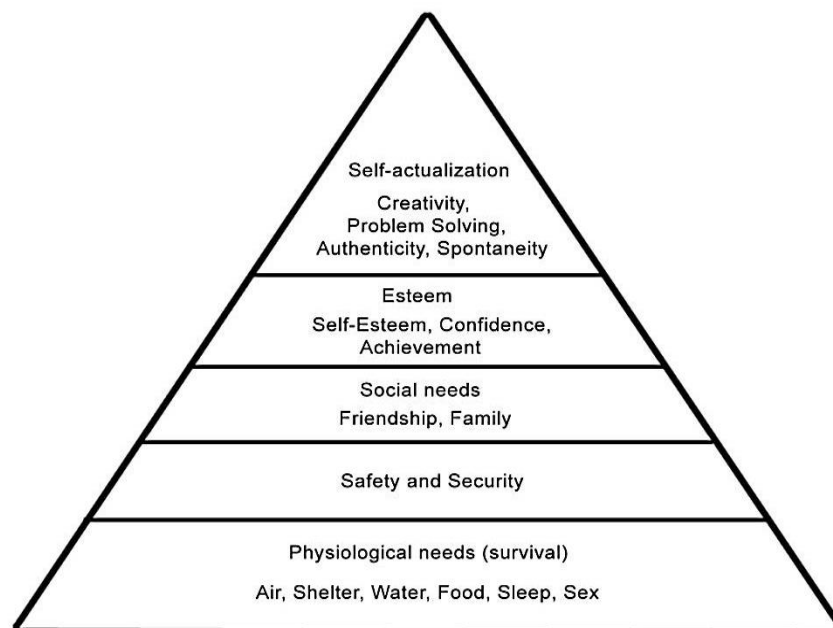
Figure 1: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Source: Maslow, (1943).

General ly, these are needs for the individual which he will progressively try to satisfy, starting from basic (physiological and safety needs, through

psychological (esteem, status, recognition, belongingness, love) needs to self-fulfilment (self-actualization and self-development) needs (Abdulrahman & Hui, 2018; Acevedo, 2018; Aruma & Hanachor, 2017; Maslow, 1943). Maslow believes that unfulfilled needs lower on the ladder would inhibit the person from climbing to the next step. If the deficiency needs are not satisfied, the person will feel the deficit, and this will stifle his or her development. Maslow's theory implies that based on one's needs, an individual sets his own personal goals, which are hierarchically arranged. Individuals then attempt to satisfy these needs, systematically, from the corresponding hierarchical level and will only move to the next level after a need is satisfied. Otherwise, this person remains fixed on low needs in his personal development too.

Other Needs theorists, especially McClelland (1965) and Alderfer (1969), built on Maslow's theory and used it to imply a deficiency fulfilling reason for a person's actions. Various researchers (e.g. Cooper, 2013; Unal & Turgut, 2017), maintain Alderfer's Existential Relatedness and Growth (ERG) Model condenses Maslow's five human needs into three categories, namely, Existence (material and physiological), Relatedness (social and external esteem) and Growth (internal esteem and self-actualisation). On the other hand, McClelland's Achievement Motivation Theory (Acquired Needs theory) states that an individual's specific needs are acquired over time according to one's life experiences (Acquah, 2017; Badubi, 2017).

Although Maslow's theory is intuitively appealing, various criticisms have been levelled at it (Steers & Porter, 1991). While Maslow's theory provides a simple and logical explanation to what influences individuals to set certain goals and strive to achieve them, it ignores the fact that needs are seldom

arranged so hierarchically and systematically in life. Neither do people fulfil needs in the same fashion. Finally, the theory ignores the influence of external forces and environmental factors such as state power and the influence of various groups like NGOs, media, moral influence of friends and family and religious bodies. In the context of this research, the needs theories can be used to explain why an individual would want to enrol his child in KG, for instance. An individual, depending on his felt need, may decide that enrolling his or her child in KG may fulfil this need. The theory can, therefore, explain the motivation behind the action. However, this theory implies a deficiency fulfilling assumption and reduces all decision making to fulfilling the needs of the individual; hence, it does not explain the influence or pressure from other actors such as the state, relatives, neighbours and other change agents. Also, it cannot explain why a poor individual, for instance, would prioritise enrolling his or her child in KG over other needs which might even be hierarchically lower in the model than KG education of children.

Finally, the theory implies that goal-setting and decision-making of the individual, e.g; with regard to the enrolment decision making of his child's education, to the calculated analysis of the benefit that the individual will derive from his/her action. However, in a decision like school enrolment, it is not always possible for the individual to do this cost-benefit analysis. Consequently, it cannot be used to explain an instance when an entire community decides to ensure that all the children in the community enrol in KG. An individual may be compelled to go along with the decision of others or even take a particular decision when he/she was not sure of the long-term outcome. In conclusion, even though the theory offers some insight into why a parent may decide to

enrol his/her child in KG, it does not completely explain all the elements in the decision-making process.

Positive Deviance Theory

Positive Deviance (PD) is a behavioural and social change approach that seeks to explain how people deviate from norms to create extraordinary change (Herington & van de Fliert, 2018; Shoenberger, Heckert & Heckert, 2015). It is premised on the observation that in any context, certain individuals confronting similar challenges, constraints, and resource deprivations as their peers, will nonetheless employ uncommon but successful behaviours or strategies which enable them to find better solutions (Shoenberger, Heckert & Heckert, 2015; Herington & van de Fliert, 2018; Singhal & Dura, 2010). Through the study of these individuals, referred to as "positive deviants", the PD approach suggests that innovative solutions to such challenges may be identified and refined from their outlying behaviour.

The term "Positive Deviance" has become increasingly popular in recent years, resulting in the co-existence of multiple definitions and applications scattered among diverse sources of academic literature (Herington & van de Fliert, 2018). PD initially gained recognition from the work of Tufts University nutrition professor Marian Zeitlen in the 1980s when she focused on why despite the poverty in a community, some children were better nourished than others and used the information gathered from these outliers to plan a nutrition programme for communities (Zeitlin, Ghassemi, & Mansour, 1990). The term was thus used to refer to the phenomenon of a handful of women who managed to maintain good nutrition for their children with the same access to resources in the same context and community where malnutrition was the norm. The

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approach has since been applied widely within health sectors, education, and to the private business sector (Pascale, Sternin and Sternin, 2010). PD is, thus, an assets and strength-based approach which identifies what works right in a community and replicates it, as opposed to focusing on what is going wrong in a community and fixing it (Herington & van de Fliert, 2018; Shoenberger, Heckert & Heckert, 2015).

Though PD has been used as a transformational approach for communities, it is premised on the intentional behaviour of individuals that departs radically from the norms of the individual's referent groups, overcoming personal or environmental constraints to create extraordinary change (Thiel, 2015). The theory is, consequently, based around five core principles: first, that communities possess the solutions and expertise to best address their own problems; second, that these communities are self-organising entities with sufficient human resources and assets to derive solutions to communal problems; third, that communities possess a 'collective intelligence', equally distributed through the community, which the PD approach seeks to foster and draw out; fourth, that the foundation of any PD approach rests on sustainability and the act of enabling a community to discover solutions to their own problems through the study of local "positive deviants"; and fifth, that behaviour change is best achieved through practice and the act of "doing" (Pascale, Sternin, & Sternin, 2010; Singhal & Dura, 2010).

This approach to bring about community change through the "deviant" behaviours of individuals is different in important ways (Singhal & Dura, 2010; Singhal, 2013). Based on a community's own assets, the positive deviance approach operates within the specific cultural context of a given community

(village, business, school, ministry, department, hospital) and provides to community members the "social proof" that an uncommon behaviour can be adopted by all because it is already practiced by a few within the community (Herington & van de Fliert, 2018; Pascale, Sternin, & Sternin, 2010; Thiel, 2015; Shoenberger, Heckert, & Heckert, 2015; Zeitlin, Ghassemi, & Mansour, 1990). The community, having identified positive deviants, sets out to find the behaviours, attitudes, or beliefs that allow the PD to be successful. The focus is on the successful strategies of the PD, not on making a hero of the person using the strategy. This self-discovery of people just like them who have found successful solutions provide "social proof" that this problem can be overcome now, without outside resources. The scaling up of innovation may happen through the "ripple effect" of other people observing the success and replicating it (Thiel, 2015).

Since its inception in nutrition research in the 1970s, the PD approach has been used extensively by researchers and evaluators in development. Over the past two decades, the PD approach has been employed in several countries to successfully address a wide variety of intractable and complex social problems, including solving endemic malnutrition in Vietnam (Singal, 2013), preventing girl trafficking in Indonesia by Save the Children and a local Indonesian NGO and to stop Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in Egypt (Masterson & Swanson 2000), in Uganda, to help girls who were child soldiers with the Lord's Resistance Army to reintegrate into their communities (Singhal & Lucia Dura, 2010), in Sudan, in agriculture to introduce new practices (Ochieng, 2007) and in drastically cutting down the spread of hospital-acquired

infections in U.S. healthcare institutions (Pascale, Sternin, & Sternin, 2010; Singhal, 2010).

According to Singhal (2013), in recent years, the PD approach has been increasingly applied to educational and learning settings, to address complex problems that vulnerable and disadvantaged minority student populations face. Most attention has been paid to the problem of high drop-outs and absenteeism in schools and colleges, especially focusing on at-risk students who come from low socio-economic strata, from first and second-generation immigrant populations, and those with physical and learning disabilities. Examples include using PD to address the incidence of high school dropout in Argentina's rural province of Misiones and also stem the tide of school dropouts in Merced, California by 25 per cent. In El Paso, Texas, PD was used to improve graduation rates of Hispanic minority groups and students with disability (Ayala, 2011).

The PD experiences in educational and learning environments also hold important implications for the learners. The Positive Deviance approach can explain what enables certain learners to take more responsibility for their own learning. A PD inquiry may determine the presence of positive deviant learners who against all odds and with no access to any extra resources have found a way to self-motivate and self-direct their learning. Similarly, there are parents, teachers, pastors, neighbours, and influencers who engage in certain practices that enable others to take more responsibility for their lives, e.g., for their learning. Once positive deviants are identified at multiple levels, one can dig deeper to discern what enables, or leads to, more self-directed, life-long learning.

"Positive deviants," against overwhelming odds, find ways to solve problems in a more effective manner than their peers. However, there are always social pressures that they must resist or ignore when they deviate from norms. Positive deviants exercise courage when they disrupt the natural flow of things, step away from familiarity into the unknown, and face whatever potential obstacles, risks and threats this may unleash to achieve one's goals. According to Rios (2012) the ability to withstand social pressures depends on three factors. The first factor he identified is "attitude strength" which refers to the meaning or how deeply one cares about something to give him reason to risk deviating from the norms. The second factor, "social group or category identification" refers to the degree to which one identifies with a social group. Low identification makes it easier to deviate from norms while high identification with the group leads to more conformity (Packer & Chasteen, 2009). The third factor is "one's self-concept or social identity". Rios (2012) and Imhoff and Erb (2009) argue further that a minority can also be motivated by a need for uniqueness in one's self-concept, and a related need to bolster self-certainty by clarifying one's self-concept. Where the individual feels threatened or constrained by the group, he reacts to carve out his or her individual self-concept.

Non-conformism or dissent does not necessarily have to be linked to disengagement with the majority. Dissenters who are motivated by doing what they think is in the collective good, are different from those motivated by individual aims. The former tends to practice an engaged dissent, while the latter disengages from the group (Packer and Chasteen, 2009; Packer & Mines, 2012).

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The PD approach can be used to influence attitudes towards participation in KG programmes. Within communities where there is low enrolment, the examples of individuals who enrol their children in KG could be used to garner support for individuals, families and, even, communities to participate in ECE programmes.

According to Quintero (2015), the PD approach ignores the fact that public education efforts to achieve change have been typically through a series of different reforms. Some reforms have been initiated through laws, national organizations, or state initiatives, while others have been initiated within individual school systems or schools. Also, the PD approach is also not able to indicate precisely what motivates or enables an individual to deviate from the norms of their referent group (Packer & Chasteen, 2009; Packer & Miners, 2012), and potentially start down the path to the extraordinary. Finally, the approach does not explain how the positive deviants are able to influence other compatriots to change except the suggestion that the results of their endeavours serve as motivation for others.

Human Capital Theory

Human capital theory assumes that education determines the marginal productivity of labour and this determines earnings (Heckman & Stefano, 2014; Marginson, 2017). Since the 1960s it has dominated the economics, and policy and public understanding, of relations between education and work. Human capital is the stock of productive skills, talents, health and expertise of the labour force, just as physical capital is the stock of plant, equipment, machines, and tools. The stocks of human and physical capital are produced through a set of investment decisions, where the investment is costly in terms of direct costs and,

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for human capital investment, in terms of the opportunity cost of the individual's time. It encompasses the notion that there are investments in people (e.g., education, training, health) and that these investments increase an individual's productivity. Hence, education and training are two of the most important investments in human capital.

The concept of human capital goes back to the days of Adam Smith when he noted that the acquisition of talents during education, study, or apprenticeship, costs a real expense, which is capital in a person. Those talents are part of his fortune and likewise that of society (Smith, 1776). The theory was, however, made popular by Becker's (1962, 1964) human capital theory which is one of the more widely used frameworks to understand families' investment behaviours in children. The theory applies the economic approach in analysing various social issues, specifically weighing returns in investment in individuals against investments in their training and education based on their economic productivity. Becker's human capital investment model says that investments are more likely when the returns are higher, the costs are lower (possibly lower with economies of scale provided by schools), and the discount rate (possibly a function of parental income and greater certainty) is lower.

Becker (1962, 1964) argues that individuals' behaviours and investments are not motivated solely by self-interest. Rather, individuals attempt to maximize resources by basing and limiting decisions on the possible consequences of their behaviours through their perception of potentials and weaknesses within themselves or within others. According to Becker, no discussion of human capital can omit the influence of families on the knowledge, skills, values, and habits of their children. Even slight differences

among children in the preparation provided by their families are frequently multiplied over time into large differences when they are teenagers. Parents have a large influence on the education and many other dimensions of their children's lives.

Fuglini and Yoshikawa's works (2003) applied Becker's (1962, 1964) human capital theory in investigations about parents' investment behaviours in children and concluded that parental satisfaction is determined by children's future outcomes and productivities (which are in turn products of children's inherent characteristics prior to investments and parents' investments) over the costs of parents' investments throughout the course of children's development. Accordingly, the amount and quality of parents' investments are influenced by parents' wealth as well as their expectations of returns to their investments. As a result, parents who have less wealth will invest less in children compared to parents who have greater wealth. The theory also postulates differences in parents' patterns of investments across different children depending on expectations of returns from the individual child, for example between boys and girls.

Fuglini and Yoshikawa (2003) report that Indian families may invest more in boys during lean seasons due to their perception of boys' greater economic productivity. Critics of the theory point out that household investment in children may not be consensual and balanced among different family members (Fuglini & Yoshikawa, 2003). In fact, there are evidences that mothers'-controlled resources seem to be spent more on children than fathers'-controlled resources (Fuglini & Yoshikawa, 2003). Alternative postulations from the theory suggest that investments do not necessarily have to be

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consensual and balanced such that each family member or each parent may manifest different investment behaviours. This perspective has often been used to assess families' and individuals' material investments, thus, findings have often pointed to material resources as a major determinant of investment decisions.

However, the increase in public interest and investment in children's development in recent years has increased the availability of welfare and social services, as well as other community and social resources that families may have access to, to invest in children. That is, given proper motivation, even with limited resources, parents may invest in children's development. Thus, recent conceptualizations of investment about children's development are not limited to material resources. In fact, research shows that other aspects of parenting also positively influence children's developmental outcomes (Fuglini & Yoshikawa, 2003).

Many scholars in the political economy of education and labour have challenged the Human capital theory. For instance, Hennessy (2014) argues that the notion of human capital, floating free of other forms of capital, implies that those with social advantages succeed not because of their birth and connections, but because of their abilities and powers of application. The capacity of parents to pass on endowments to their children may also lead to unequal economic and social outcomes that cannot be attributed to education (Delaney, Harmon & Redmond, 2011). Britton, Dearden, Shephard and Vignoles (2016) studied UK graduates with 10 years in the labour market, investigating the effects of variations in socioeconomic background, gender, institution attended and field of study. They note high dispersion in graduate outcomes and find that

'graduates' family background – specifically whether they come from a lower or higher income household – continues to influence graduate's earnings long after graduation'. Graduates from higher income households earn at least 10 per cent more at the median than graduates from low income households after factoring out other student characteristics, institution attended and field of study.

Again, as Becker admitted, individuals' behaviours and investments are also influenced and limited by income, time, memory, calculating capacity, and available opportunities in the environment. Finally, the theory ignores the fact that in almost all places and during most historical periods, education has been publicly provided and publicly funded by the State. There have been times when the private sector has been larger but the public sector has almost always increased in relative importance compared with the private sector. In such situations, it is not just individual choices that ensures the enrolment of children in school.

Chapter Summary

Selecting an appropriate theory or combination of theories to adequately explain a social issue like behaviour is not an easy task as multiple factors influence behaviours in any given situation. Effective explanation and practice, therefore, depends on using a combination of theories and strategies that are appropriate to a situation. Several theories have been postulated to explain the ever-increasing recognition of the importance of influencing behaviour to achieve positive policy outcomes (Prager, 2012). Some of these cover the use of behaviour change models in general (Darnton, 2008) while others focus on behaviours relevant to specific contexts such as climate change (Southerton,

McMeekin, & Evans, 2011), sustainable consumption (Jackson, 2005), or the impact of volunteering on environmental behaviour (Hine, Peacock, & Pretty, 2008). "The sheer complexity of human behaviours and motivations makes it very hard to predict with certainty what the impacts of policy interventions on people's behaviour are going to be" (Jackson, 2005, p. 119). Choices are influenced by moral, normative, emotional and social factors, as well as facilitating conditions and the force of habit, and the, so-called, rational deliberations and intentions (Jackson, 2005).

The individual motivational theories focus attention on the power of individuals to make their own informed choices and to implement them. Whilst they can explain how many parents adopt or modify their attitudes towards KG education, they do not consider that, in the case of school enrolment for instance, certain actions may be beyond the control of the individual. An individual may lack the needed information that ensures informed decision-making and/or may not find the resources or facilities to facilitate the needed action. The desire to enrol a child in KG may be hampered by the lack of facilities, e.g. schools, within the reach of the individual. The theories do not, therefore, offer explanations as to how individual decision is influenced by the force of the entire society or even an external force to initiate actions towards KG education of his/her children.

It is, therefore, not possible for any single one of the three theories analysed in this thesis to, on its own, fully explain what motivates parents to enrol their children in KG. Even though all the theoretical frameworks have some validity in certain circumstances, their inability to individually explain fully the factors which influence parents to send their children to KG confirm

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Kollmuss and Agyeman's (2002) assertion that the question of what shapes behaviour is such a complex one that it cannot be visualized through one single framework or diagram. Consequently, the Needs theories, the Positive Deviance theory and the Human Capital theory which have been shown to have some bearing on the research, were applied as and when necessary to explain the source of parental motivation for enrolling their children in KG.

The needs theories, for instance, were key in the exploration of how KG enrolment meets the aspirations or goals that parents have for their children. The PD theory, on its part, demonstrates why in some communities some parents enrol their children in KG when other parents do not do so, sometimes even against opposition or discouraging remarks to their decision.

The PD theory also demonstrates the influence of outsiders, including the State, in the individual's decision-making process as the State and other actors seek to promote universal KG education. With regard to the Human Capital theory, while it is generally assumed that people with more wealth are more likely to invest in their children's education than those with less, there are instances where people with wealth have rather kept their children out of school while those with less wealth had done the opposite.

Consequently, the study used a combination of these theories to explain what motivate parents to initiate and maintain a behaviour. Admittedly, the theories, in themselves, may not be able to conclusively bring about behaviour change, nor can they predict with certainty what changes in behaviour will occur. They, nevertheless, will be able to aid policy makers, implementers and others involved in trying to bring about improvement in KG enrolment to have

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a better understanding of why and how behaviour change occurs and what the factors and conditions are that drive parents to enrol their children in KG.

Conceptual and Empirical Reviews

This section provides an overview of previous research that relate to the motivation of parents to enrol their children in kindergarten. The main themes reviewed in this section were the importance of early childhood development, ECE and its linkage with education and human development, School Readiness and parental decision-making and investment in children's early learning and development. Also reviewed were children's characteristics and parents' choice of childcare, parents' expectations for children in cultural context as a determinant of investments, investments at home and in early care and education settings and challenges to parent investment in formal ECD programmes.

Importance of Early Childhood Development

Neuroscience conclusively demonstrates the critical impact that early experiences have on brain architecture. It demonstrates further that conditions and experiences in the early years can have a permanent impact on all aspects of an individual's life and, consequently, the social and economic development and human capital formation of a nation (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2005). Knudsen, Heckman, Cameron and Shonkoff (2006) agree and note that the basic principles of neuroscience indicate that providing supportive conditions for early childhood development is more effective and less costly than attempting to address the consequences of early adversity later. To this end, a balanced approach to emotional, social, cognitive and language

development will best prepare all children for success in school and later in the workplace and community.

Shonkoff, Boyce, and McEwen (2009) go further to emphasise that the first years of life are important, because what happens in early childhood can matter for a lifetime. According to them, stable, responsive, nurturing relationships and rich learning experiences in the earliest years provide lifelong benefits for learning, behaviour and both physical and mental health. Shonkoff et al. add that, in contrast, research on the biology of stress in early childhood shows how chronic stress caused by major adversity, such as extreme poverty, abuse or neglect, can weaken developing brain architecture and permanently set the body's stress response system on high alert, thereby increasing the risk for a range of chronic diseases.

Earlier, UNICEF (1984) had emphasised the need for ECD programmes and argued that, from a human rights perspective, ECD was very important because children have a right to live and to develop to their full potential. UNICEF, again, uses a moral and social values argument to show that it is through children that humanity transmits its values. This transmission begins with infants; so to preserve desirable moral and social values in the future, one must begin with children. From an economic standpoint, UNICEF maintains that investments in health, nutrition and stimulation, early in life, can yield a high return by increasing productivity in later years. Moreover, preventive programmes produce savings by, for instance, reducing the need later for expensive health care or by improving the efficiency of educational systems through reductions in dropout, repetition, and remedial programmes. UNICEF, again, uses a programme efficacy argument to draw attention to the fact that

child development strengthens and complements the organisation's drive to increase child survival. This argument seems to address the concerns raised by Myers (1992) by placing necessary emphasis on survival while also addressing the question of what will happen to the vast majority of children who survive and who may, for the most part, continue to live in the same debilitating conditions of poverty that once put their lives at risk and also threaten their development.

UNICEF (1984) also emphasised that ECD programmes can also produce significant benefits to society. It can provide a rallying point for social and political actions that can help to build consensus and organisation for the common good. It can also help to eliminate social inequities by providing a common developmental platform for all children. Finally, implementation of ECD programmes can lead to increased labour force participation of women, promote increased primary school attendance of older siblings, help to radically re-orient society by beginning at the bottom (e.g. Nicaragua), be used to address concerns for childcare related to female employment (e.g. Colombia), or serve as part of a human resource strategy (e.g. Chile).

In recent years, UNICEF (2009), has added to the argument by stating that there is a wealth of research available on the impact of the early years on later growth and development of children. These research findings have established, scientifically, that the early years are critical in the formation of intelligence, personality, and social behaviour, and that the effects of early neglect can be cumulative. Children are born with physical, social, and psychological capacities which allow them to communicate, learn, and develop. If these capacities are not recognised and supported they will wither rather than

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improve. Consequently, children whose caregivers interact with them in consistent, caring ways will be better nourished and less apt to be sick than children who do not receive such care. Establishing a loving relationship in the early months of life has been shown to affect the ability later in life of a person to love and to establish permanent relationships. UNICEF (2009), again, believes that costly wastage in both financial and human terms can be avoided by investments in good quality early childhood services prior to children entering school. This improves the efficiency of the schooling system and saves money by reducing repetition and drop-out and improving completion rates and achievement, especially for girls and marginalised groups.

Siddiqi and Hertzman (2007) also note that the process of early experience shapes brain and biological development in ways that influence human development throughout life. Early intervention can prevent the consequences of early adversity. They report that research shows that later interventions are likely to be less successful and, in some cases, are ineffective. Nelson, Zeanah, Fox, Marshall, Smyke, and Guthrie (2007) found, for example, that when children who experienced extreme neglect were placed in responsive foster care families before age two, their intelligence quotients increased more substantially, and their brain activity and attachment relationships were more likely to become normal than if they were placed after the age of two.

While there is no "magic age" for intervention, evidence exists to show that, in most cases, intervening as early as possible is significantly more effective than waiting (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2007). Britto et al. (2013) also note that learning starts in infancy, long before formal education begins, and continues throughout life. Consequently, early

learning begets later learning and early success breeds later success, just as early failure breeds later failure. Success or failure at this stage lays the foundation for success or failure in school, which in turn leads to success or failure in post-school learning. Britto et al. add that investments in early childhood have shown remarkable success and indicate that the early years are important for early learning. Moreover, early childhood interventions of high quality have lasting effects on learning and motivation.

Heckman (2004) adds that a common error in the analysis of human capital policies is the assumption that abilities are fixed at very early ages. This static conception of ability is at odds with a large body of research in the child development literature, which shows that it is in the early years of life that basic abilities can be altered. Heckman concludes that societies cannot afford to postpone investing in children until they become adults, nor wait until they reach school age, a time when it may be too late to intervene. In fact, costly wastage in both financial and human terms can be avoided by investments in good quality early primary education combined with quality early childhood services prior to children entering school.

The early years of human development (conception to ages 6-8), affect the later stages of human development, as well as the later stages. From a child rights' perspective, UNICEF (2009) argues that the child's right to personality is meaningful from the moment of birth. Thus, for example, the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) requires State parties to develop national and international structures and processes to ensure that children are noticed and cared for, both individually and collectively, as people worthy of respect. Such recognition serves ultimately as the foundation for children's

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development and their participation as productive citizens contributing to the well-being of the community and enjoying its concern for them as human beings.

Available data also emphasise the long-term cost effectiveness and savings that result from early childhood interventions. The 2011 Lancet Series on ECD calculated the economic effect of preschool enrolment, just one component of a comprehensive early childhood development agenda. Their calculations show a benefit of USD$10.6 billion by increasing preschool enrolment to 25 per cent in all low-income and middle-income countries, and USD$33.7 billion by increasing preschool enrolment to 50 per cent, with a benefit-to-cost ratio from 6.4 to 17.6, one of the best returns on investment (Engle et al., 2011).

Significant examples of long-term cost savings that result from such early intervention programmes include that of the Perry Preschool Project in the USA (Schweinhart et al., 2005). The Schweinhart et al. survey points out that investment in young children is cheaper in terms of survival and development of the human potential, at both individual and social levels. According to them, studies in the United States of America suggest that the return cost of investment in young children is $7 for every $1 invested. Investment in the care and development of young children will have an impact on the economic productivity of the future adult, because an adult, whose physical and intellectual abilities are fully developed, can obviously contribute better to his or her community.

In an earlier study of children who had participated in the Perry Preschool Project, Schweinhart and Weikart (1980) found that when schools

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invest about $3,000 for one year of preschool education for a child, they immediately begin to recover their investment through savings in special education services. Benefits included $668 from the mother's released time while the child attended preschool, $3,353 saved by the public schools because children with preschool education had fewer years in grades, and $10,798 in projected lifetime earnings for the child.

The evidence from these longitudinal studies led Schweinhart et al. (2005) to make some far reaching conclusions about the long-term effects of ECE programmes. Firstly, benefits of ECE interventions go beyond basic learning to include improved school attendance and performance, reduced repetition, increased employment and reduced delinquency during the teenage years, and reduced teenage pregnancy.

Secondly, the earlier attention is given to the child's development, the better, since children's development is cumulative in nature. Improving a young child's health and nutrition, as well as providing opportunities for stimulating interaction and early education can bring a high economic return to society as well as to the individual.

Thirdly, investment in early childhood development can help to reduce economic and social inequities. Children living in conditions of poverty and/or discrimination often fall behind their more fortunate peers at an early age. This reinforces existing differences. Investments in ECE programmes can reduce the growing gaps in development, and, therefore, can reduce the differential consequences. Indeed, there is increasing evidence that children from more-disadvantaged backgrounds can profit more from good early childhood programmes than more-advantaged children.

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Finally, early childhood programmes are likely to have multiplier effects. In the case of programmes of parental education, the effects will carry over to the raising of additional children. To the extent that programmes of early childhood care and development affect subsequent education, the evidence suggests that they will also influence fertility and population growth.

In conclusion, there is evidence about how critical the early years are to a child's development. The benefits of ECE encourage greater social equity, increase the efficacy of other investments and address the needs of mothers, while helping their children. Integrated programmes for young children can modify the effects of socioeconomic and gender-related inequities, some of the most entrenched causes of poverty. Ensuring healthy child development, therefore, is an investment in a country's future workforce and capacity to thrive economically and as a society.

Early Childhood Education, Education and Human Development

Van der Gaag (2002) sought to prove that Early Childhood Development and Human Development (HD) are closely linked. He noted that Chenery and Srinivasan (1989) had shown that early approaches to development, which were characterized by mathematical planning models, had been replaced gradually by development models which recognise that people are both the means and the ultimate cause of development. Van der Gaag noted, further, that this shift from planning models to people is illustrated by the salient contributions of four Nobel laureates in economics, namely, Jan Tinbergen (who shared the prize in 1969 with Ragna Frisch), Schultz (and Lewis) co-winners in 1979, Fogel (1993 winner), and Sen (Nobel winner in 1998) all of whom were rewarded for their work on development.

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Van der Gaag (2002) showed that these four Nobel laureates all stressed the importance of investing in human capital (skills and knowledge) to increase productivity and entrepreneurship. All four laureates emphasized the importance of "people development" because they recognised the central role of investing in people. According to them, investing in people results in higher income due to higher productivity. Sen (1999) especially underscores better health, higher education levels, and improved nutrition as separate goals which, in addition to higher income, represent non-monetary aspects of the quality of life (i.e. of "human development") that are valuable in and of themselves.

These models underscore the importance of investing in young children as a central means to foster development. Human Development is, thus, closely linked to ECD, hence, investing in ECD is the natural starting point for developing the human resource of a country. Eventually, Van der Gaag, (2002), showed through four critical "pathways" how ECD is linked to HD.

The first pathway, from ECD to HD, is through education. The importance of ECD for subsequent educational performance and the role of education in economic and human development are well-known and supported by extensive scientific evidence accumulated from neurophysics, paediatrics, the medical sciences, child development, education, sociology, and economics (Knudsen et al. 2006; Britto et al. 2013). Van der Gaag's (2002) writings confirm that children who participate in ECD programmes show higher intelligence quotients and improvements in practical reasoning, eye and hand coordination, hearing and speech, reading readiness, lower grade repetition and dropout rates, higher performance at school and increased probability that the child will progress to higher levels of education. The education pathway clearly

demonstrates that the link between ECD and HD is straightforward; hence, increased investments in ECD programmes can be fully justified.

Health is also an important pathway to HD. Van der Gaag notes that leading development agencies, including the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and the World Bank, have emphasized the importance of providing good nutrition, immunization, and other basic health care services for young children because of the benefits of these services to children. ECD programmes are associated with decreased morbidity and mortality among children, fewer cases of malnutrition and stunting, improved personal hygiene and health care, and fewer instances of child abuse. Like education, investments in health are an investment in human capital and have long-term benefits.

Van der Gaag adds that the third pathway links the notion of improved social behaviour, because of being enrolled in an ECD programme, with the formation of socially acceptable behaviour. He notes that the "social" benefits of ECD programmes are less well defined than the health and education benefits. Yet, many studies have noted the effects of ECD programmes on the change in children's behaviour (Kagitçibasi, 1996). Such children are less aggressive and more cooperative, they behave better in groups, and they accept instructions well. Overall, the children have higher self-concepts and are more socially adjusted. Long-term (tracer) studies point to similar outcomes for the children's adult life: improved self-esteem, social competence, motivation, and acceptance of the culture's norms and values. In particular, evidence suggests that participation in ECD programmes leads to reduced criminal behaviour and less delinquency as an adult (Schweinhart et al., 2005).

In the fourth pathway, ECD is linked to HD by the potential of ECD programmes to address inequity in society. Equity may refer to a level playing field in education, health, or social capital. Like education, health, and social capital, equity is good in itself and contributes to the economic performance of a nation. With a relatively small investment, ECD programmes can decrease the disadvantage of poor children, compared to their more fortunate counterparts, in nutritional status, cognitive and social development, and health. The benefits of greater equality begin in education and health and lead to equality of opportunity, better education and health, and then to higher income. The link between ECD and HD, through the pathway of equality, is complex, but strong.

Education, health, social capital, and equality are all-important contributors to economic growth and constitute the mutually reinforcing elements of a comprehensive framework for HD. This framework could be expanded easily, for example, to include gender issues or poverty, as it relates to equity. The framework also shows that all of these outcomes, such as education or health, are of value themselves, and the benefits are immediately tangible at the time of intervention (i.e., in a child's early years) and in the long term for the children as they mature into adults and for their nations as a whole.

The human resources of a nation are considered the engine of growth of the country. However, these must be adequately developed and efficiently utilized. It is through education that life-long acquisition of knowledge, values, attitudes, competence and skills are acquired. Enrolment in school, therefore, represents the largest component of the investment in human capital in most societies (Van der Gaag, 2002).

Perhaps, no one concludes the discussion on the importance of ECD in human development better than Harbison (1973, p. 3), when he notes that "it is the human resources of a nation, more than its physical and material resources, which ultimately determine the character and pace of its economic and social development and that human resources constitute the ultimate basis for the wealth of nations". According to him, capital and natural resources are passive factors of production while human beings are the active agents who accumulate capital, and exploit natural resources, build social, economic and political organisations, and carry forward national development.

Clearly, a country which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its people and to utilise them effectively in the national economy will be unable to develop anything else. Education is a powerful means to reduce poverty and achieve economic growth. Education empowers people, improves the individual's earning potentials, and is essential for the promotion of a healthy population and economy. To achieve the full benefits of education, however, a proper foundation must be laid in the early years of the child.

While the link between education and human development is clear, the education system must be efficient to produce the anticipated results. Educational facilities, for instance, are very necessary in the promotion of enrolment in education. The quantity and quality of schools are important for educational participation, especially of specific groups like the poor and girls (Colclough, Rose, & Tembon, 2000; Ersado, 2005). The case for quantity seems obvious as when there are no schools available, children are not able to acquire education. However, besides the number of schools, the distance to school also plays a crucial role in children's participation. According to Colclough et al.,

various studies have concluded that schools are mostly attended by children living in the neighbourhood. Colclough et al. found that in Ethiopia and Guinea, on average, children lived two kilometres and one kilometre, respectively, from school and that in both countries the schools served families that lived much more dispersed. This suggests that children who lived further away were less likely to be in school.

Mugisha (2006) also notes that availability of more and better facilities makes it easier and less costly for parents to send their children to school, and thus socio-economic resources and family structure have less influence on participation. When on the other hand the local educational facilities are of low quality or even completely lacking, only the parents with most resources or motivation to send their children to school might be able to achieve education for their children (Mugisha, 2006).

Quality is also important in getting children to participate in education. It determines to what extent children benefit from going to school so when parents realise that their children will gain less from low quality education, they may be less willing to send their children to school. Quality indicators that could be thought of as having impact on educational attainment include class size, teaching and learning materials, quality of teaching and state of school buildings (Colclough et al., 2000). The availability of female teachers is another factor, which might prove important especially for girls' chances of going to and staying in school. Many parents feel more comfortable entrusting their girls to female teachers than to male teachers. According to such parents, male teachers might not provide girls with enough support, or might even be sexually threatening to girls (Colclough et al., 2000; Leach, 2006).

Huisman and Smits (2007) also identified a number of factors, which could influence parents' decision to send their children to school. According to them, most parents give high consideration to reward for human capital. Consequently, parents who expect that, through education, their children's future reward, especially income, will be higher relative to present reward will invest more in their children's education. To such parents, therefore, what a child could have contributed to the family income by not going to school, (i.e. the opportunity cost of going to school) becomes a critical consideration when deciding if a child should go to school. This contribution can take the form of earning money outside the household, helping in the family business or doing household chores and thereby making it possible for someone else to earn additional income. Huisman and Smits, therefore, concluded that the opportunity costs of going to school are likely to be more important for parents who are self-employed, such as small-scale farmers, since they are more likely to expect their children to help out in times when there is a lot of work to be done, such as during harvests. To Huisman and Smits, this will especially be the case in developing countries where education is sometimes not compulsory or where laws regarding compulsory education are often not strictly enforced.

Uncertainty about the potential returns on the investment in education could also influence parents about the education of their children. For poorer households the relative costs of such investments are usually higher. Hence, they will probably be less willing to take the risk. Educated and rich parents generally have a wider horizon, which makes them better able to see beyond the here and now and discern opportunities elsewhere or in the future. Therefore, Huisman and Smits maintained that the effect of parental wealth and education

on the participation of their children in education will be stronger even in districts where the local labour market offers fewer opportunities for educated persons.

Expected employment of children after school also factors in parents' decision to enrol their children. When estimating future reward, parents will consider their children's employment prospects. Most parents will, therefore, look at the local labour market structure. In districts where agriculture is a major sector, parents are less likely to pursue education for their children since there are often many low-skilled jobs and few jobs for people with an education (Colclough et al., 2000; Smits & Gunduz-Ho_Gor, 2005). Sakwa (2006), for instance, found that students he interviewed in Kenya were ambivalent about education as a poverty alleviation end because they realized that education is not a guarantee of earning an income that one can survive on. Since a job in the formal sector requires at least primary education, parents are more likely to send their children to school if formal job opportunities are realistic. If it is easier for men than women to find a well-paid job, parents may also take their child's sex into account (Colclough et al., 2000; Song, Appleton, & Knight, 2006).

Huisman and Smits (2007) argue further that labour market prospects are not the whole story. According to them, in the absence of pension schemes, as is the case in some developing countries, children are expected to provide for their parents when they are old. Therefore, parents will not only take into account the future rewards of education that accrue to their children, but also the expected rewards for themselves. This means that, in cultures where sons are expected to look after their parents in old age, parents are more inclined to invest in their sons. This is not limited to their sons' education, but also includes

investment in their health. Moreover, this also means that in cultures where "a girl's allegiance after marriage is mainly to her future husband's family, the balance of perceived benefits to parents is likely to favour the education of sons over daughters" (Colclough et al., 2000, p. 7). However, some authors cast doubt on this assumption.

Eloundou-Enyegye and Calvès (2006), for instance, found that in sub-Saharan Africa, where one would expect parents to favour boys in their educational investment because patrilocality is disproportionately the preferred residential arrangement, some daughters still had a "substantial" capacity to remit their parents. They found that women's capacity to remit increased with their education level, thereby, making it unlikely that fewer remittances from married daughters is the reason in Africa not to send them to school. Levine and Kevane (2003) also found that in Indonesia virilocality (i.e. where daughters move away from their parents upon marriage) does not influence investments in daughters' education.

Children from families with more socio-economic resources are more likely to go to school as direct costs associated with education, such as fees, books, uniforms, are less likely to be an obstacle to wealthier families (Huisman & Smits, 2007). Opportunity costs of children not being able to help at home, at the family farm or by earning additional income through child labour are also likely to be less important for parents with more socio-economic resources. Moreover, wealthier families are less affected by credit constraints. Imperfect credit markets have been found to be a major constraint for the education of children from poor families (Ersado, 2005).

Besides household income, the occupation and education of the parents also play a role in the decision to send children to school or to keep them out of school. Huisman and Smits (2007) found that when the father is employed in farming or another form of self-employment, the chances that children are in school decrease, because they may have to help in the family business. If the father is working in dependent employment and especially if he works in a non-manual occupation, he is generally more aware of the importance of education and, therefore, tends to invest more in his children's education.

Employment of the mother might increase her power within the household and this may increase the likelihood that her children will get an education. Huisman and Smits (2007), use the resource theory of conjugal power to show that the degree to which partners can influence important household decisions depends on the extent to which they bring in valued resources into the marriage. In support of this theory, Huisman and Smits again stated that Lakwo (2007), for instance, found that in Uganda, women who through their access to micro-credit were engaged in daily income-generating activities, gained the power to do things that social norms previously denied them. This implies that mothers who are gainfully employed and, hence, contribute to the household income have more influence on family decisions than women who are not employed. It seems likely that such more independent women may be better able to create the possibility for their children and especially for their daughters to go to school. On the other hand, when the mother is forced to work because of poverty, the daughters may have to take over her household tasks and, therefore, have fewer chances to go to school.

The effects of mother's employment may, thus, be different under different circumstances (Huisman & Smits, 2007).

With regard to the educational level of the parents, there is ample evidence that children of better educated parents are more likely to go to school and to stay in school (Colclough et al., 2000; Ersado, 2005; Smits & Gündüz-Ho_Gör, 2005; UNESDOC (EFA), 2005). Again, Huisman and Smits (2007) argue that parents who have reached a certain educational level may want their children to reach, at least, the same level. For the educational participation of girls, the education of the mother might be especially important. Mothers who have succeeded in completing a certain level of education, have experienced the value of education and know that it is within the reach of girls to complete that level. It is, therefore, expected that they would use the power and insights derived from their higher education to make sure that their daughters get educated too (Huisman & Smits, 2007). Another factor, which Huisman and Smits thought was an important consideration in enrolment of children in school, is the working status of mothers. To them, a child whose mother is working might be expected to do the household chores and so might not be enrolled.

On their part, Buchmann and Hannum (2001) believed that competition within the family might also influence opportunity costs of education. The authors maintained that there is evidence to support the case that in developing countries the cost of high fertility may be borne by older siblings, rather than by the parents themselves. The younger children in such families may be luckier and have more opportunities to go to school because the older children do the household chores or contribute to the household income by working and earning

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some extra money. In effect, the more siblings an older child has, the more likely it is he or she will not be in school, because the child has to work inside or outside the house. Buchmann and Hannum, however, conceded that the opposite might happen in extended families, where relatives help in the household and add to the household income, making it less necessary for children to stay out of school.

Generally, however, in both Western societies and some developing countries, family size tends to be negatively correlated to educational participation, probably because the available resources have to be divided among more children (Buchmann & Hannum). Another factor which according to Huisman and Smits (2007) also influences children's enrolment in school is whether the child is the biological child of the parents or was adopted or is being fostered. To them, parents favour their own children over adopted or foster children. Consequently, biological children of parents are more likely to go to school.

The causes underlying problems with educational participation of young children can be expected to be different in different regions of the developing world. This means that standard solutions to such problems may often not work and that policy measures aimed at improving participation should be as specific as possible for each problem situation (Huisman & Smits, 2007). Huisman and Smits argued, further, that the assumption underlying this approach is that the uniqueness of a situation influences its solution and that the degree to which the recommended solution works depends on the characteristics of the larger context of that situation.

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Financial support may be very helpful in persuading poor parents to send their daughters to school in many parts of the developing world, but not in some rural areas in Middle Eastern countries, where the access of women to public places is restricted by cultural traditions. It also makes little sense to try to influence household-level decision-making, for example, by giving financial support or broadcasting programmes about the importance of education for children if there are no educational facilities available. Even if such facilities are available, they might remain underused in regions where there are no job opportunities for educated people.

Regarding cultural traditions, Huisman and Smits (2007) expected that in areas where women have a stronger position within the household they will use their power to get their children, both boys and girls, into school. This implies that in such areas the effects of socio-economic hardship or of competition within the family are expected to be less pronounced than in areas where women are in a more dependent position.

With regard to the effect of modernisation, status attainment theory predicts that parents living in more modern regions will invest more in their children's education, because in such regions there are fewer possibilities to acquire a good position for their children via direct occupational transmission or via transference of capital (Huisman & Smits, 2007). Modernisation is generally associated with urbanisation, lower distance to schools, better road and communication infrastructure, and more impact of globalisation, including the diffusion of modern value patterns that stress the importance of education and of equality among the sexes.

In urban areas, the State's influence generally is also stronger and there will be more pressure on parents to send their children to school. Families living in cities may also have moved there because of the better educational opportunities for the children there. Huisman and Smits (2007), therefore, expect the effects of the socio-economic characteristics of family background to become stronger and the differences between boys and girls to be smaller in more modern and urbanised areas. Consequently, Huisman and Smits concluded that they expected the effects of most factors at the household level to be weaker in districts with better educational facilities, with a more favourable labour market structure, and with a better position of women.

In conclusion, it can be argued that while there are sound economic reasons to show why parents enrol their children in school, many social factors also impact either positively or negatively on the ability and/or willingness of the parents to actually enrol their children and keep them in school.

School Readiness

Until the 1990s, the concept of readiness was poorly defined and interpreted differently in different contexts. There was even little consensus as to whether it is the children who should be ready for school or the schools that should be ready for the children or the society that should provide appropriate support for the children and the schools (Lewitt & Baker,1995; Justice, Bowles, Pence Turnbull, & Skibbe, 2009). According to Lewitt and Baker, interest in school readiness had been at the level of the individual with the focus on whether a child was ready for school and how the child's parents and the school might make the transition proceed as smoothly as possible.

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In recent years, the earlier definitions of "School Readiness" have been criticised because of their narrow focus on a set of pre-determined cognitive skills that a child should possess to qualify for first school admission. Readiness for school is now being examined within a broader context to include physical health, social and emotional adjustment, the child's approach to learning and their level of language, cognition and general knowledge. It is also starting to be used as a benchmark to measure the degree to which early childhood policies, programmes and parental support have been effective at a community, as well as a societal, level (Janus & Offord, 2007; Altun,2018). This definition recognises that the task of preparing children for school is a community responsibility, not only a family responsibility.

While widespread misconceptions still abound, the understanding of what school readiness means has increased greatly in recent years and there is general consensus, based on a wealth of research, that children's readiness for school depends on their level in five distinct but interconnected domains namely, physical well-being and motor development, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, language development, and cognition and general knowledge. "Most teachers agree with the above definition because teachers would prefer their children to be healthy, confident, active and attentive; able to communicate their needs, feelings and thoughts; enthusiastic and curious about new class activities" (Arnold et al., 2007, p.1).

School readiness, therefore, means that a child is ready to enter a social and educationally based environment and to be able to work independently, attend or listen to what someone else is saying, get along with other children of the same age and learn or participate in structured situations, such as play and

story reading. The children must also be able to focus or key in and listen to one central person in the classroom, learn (acquire the necessary social skills/ability) in a co-operative learning environment where children learn from teachers and from one another and play with other children.

Children need to be ready for school, but schools and communities also need to be ready to support children's future success across multiple developmental domains (Pretti-Frontczak, 2014). Generally, "School Readiness" has been divided into three main components namely, "Children and their Readiness for School", "Schools and their Readiness for Children" and "School Readiness of a Community". "Child Readiness for school" refers to the extent to which children enter school prepared to cope with the school environment and to participate meaningfully in it (Arnold et al., 2007; Blair & Raver, 2015, Diamond, 2010; Bhise & Sonawat, 2016). Beyond attitude and well-being, equally important for teachers are skills, such as the ability to follow directions, not being disruptive in class and being sensitive to others. However, educators and parents often have different definitions of school readiness. Teachers put more emphasis on the social domain whereas many parents emphasise academic readiness. Interestingly, this often changes as parents experience the benefits of ECD programmes. Examples abound from programmes serving low-income rural families in different parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America, where parents who had clearly demanded 'school learning' in the beginning are most appreciative of their children's social development. They delight in their children's cleverness but talk most about their being polite, respectful, obedient and friendly and, at the same time, confident, curious and comfortable even with strangers (Kids Count, 2005, Diamond, 2010). Readiness

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is, therefore, more than basic knowledge of language and mathematics. Readiness expectations should include all areas such as physical, cognitive, social and emotional competencies as well as positive attitude towards learning (Janus, 2007).

There are multiple factors that influence a child's overall development and readiness (Weitzman, 2003, Janus, 2007). Economic pressures, for instance, are a fundamental concern for families with children as lack of resources undermines their capacity to adequately provide for children. Weitzman notes that evidence shows that family poverty adversely affects children's health, intellectual capabilities, academic achievement and behaviour. Many poor children are denied the opportunity to go to school while others enrol but are not ready to make the most of the opportunity. Consequently, they perform poorly or drop out altogether (Weitzman, 2003, Bhise & Sonawat, 2016). Again, poverty means poor diets, resulting in poor behavioural and cognitive development in infants and children. Malnourished children are less engaged, less active and have shorter attention spans than their well-nourished counterparts. Consequently, malnourished children score lower in school and have less emotional control (Weitzman, 2003).

Arnold et al. (2007) also emphasise that reading to pre-school children, books in the home and children's own direct experience with print are all facilitative precursors for language development, reading and success in school. In addition, a caring and nurturing adult is paramount for a child's healthy growth and development. Sound caregiver-child relationships are typically characterised by children who are well-fed and kept safe, and by consistent affection, responsiveness, conversation, stimulation and opportunities to learn

about their world. Hence, the quality of the home environment affects the child's development and learning.

Home learning environment, defined as activities that offer learning opportunities to the child, has been found to be more strongly associated with children's intellectual and social development and make them ready for school. Major activities in the home learning environment include reading to children, teaching songs and nursery rhymes, playing with letters and numbers, visiting the library, painting and drawing and having friends visit for play. Consequently, what parents do with their children is more important than who the parents are. Findings from a childrearing study in Nepal by Arnold, et al. (2007) found many examples of 'positive deviance' – families from the most disadvantaged groups who provided learning opportunities by engaging their children in everyday activities and conversations. This support and warmth from a caregiver resulted in greater social competence and explains why some children who grow up in materially wretched conditions are nonetheless healthy and productive at school and in society and develop good relationships with others.

Early academic performance may be predictive of later academic performance. Students trained in pre-reading skills e.g. letter recognition, letter naming, and letter sound production performed significantly better during subsequent reading instruction than their counterparts who did not receive such training. Further children trained in prereading skills required fewer trials than their counterparts during subsequent reading instructions (Gettinger, 2013).

Arnold et al. (2007) also discovered that quality ECD programmes maximise synergism between protection, good health and nutrition, supportive

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and affectionate interaction, stimulation, and opportunities for exploring the environment. The authors add that children who participate in early childhood programmes do better in school than those who have not. The variance is attributed mainly to differences in attitude and motivation with children who have participated in ECD programmes being able to work independently, being more self-confident and having higher aspirations for their future. Schweinhart et al. (2005) have also observed that ECD programmes seem to confer long-term gains by developing in children the dispositions that enable them to achieve greater success as they begin school. This early success triggers higher motivation, better performance and higher regard from teachers and classmates.

The resilience of ECD benefits, even when schooling is poor, is consistent with the understanding of the active role children play in their own learning. According to Bartlett, Arnold, and Sapkota (2003), children's success in this regard is attributable to the direct gains in children's confidence and learning, and the positive effects that this has on both parents and teachers when the children go to school. The children are perceived by their parents, teachers and fellow children as being self-assured, capable, articulate and highly motivated, as well as neat and clean, respectful and helpful. Consequently, parents develop increased interest in their children while teachers appreciate their pupils as eager learners and sometimes enlist their help in assisting other children in the class. Where resources for quality learning experiences are limited, children benefit most from having those experiences early in life. ECD programmes, therefore, help to create children 'ready' for school and the world beyond.

Meisels (1999) defines four theoretical approaches to looking at children's readiness for school as the nativist/maturationist point of view, the empiricist/environmentalist viewpoint, the social constructivist viewpoint and the interactionalist view. From a nativist/maturationist point of view, readiness is seen as a 'within the child' phenomenon, with little or no impact from the environment. The child develops through predictable stages. All children follow the same stages, with differences in rate being defined by his or her genetic make-up. External influences may have a transitory positive or negative effect but ultimately, they make little difference.

The empiricist/environmentalist viewpoint argues that there are a set of skills, which must be acquired before a child starts school. The focus is on external evidence learning, such as knowing colours, shapes, how to write one's name, letters of the alphabet and counting to ten. Children can be trained in these skills and testing the curriculum of specific tasks will reflect whether a child has mastered these skills, which in turn reflects their school readiness.

The social constructivist viewpoint argues that the community and the environment in which the child lives needs to be considered to obtain a fair assessment of the child's readiness to learn. It rejects the notion that readiness is something within the child, or something absolute and external to the child that can be learned. It argues that readiness is a set of ideas or meanings constructed by the people in the communities, families and schools. It shifts the focus of assessment away from the child and towards the community. However, under this definition, readiness may differ from one community to the next, so it "provides little or no guidance on how to resolve differences that are found among communities, schools or even classrooms" (Meisels, 1999, p. 48).

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The interactionalist view incorporates information about the child as well as the community in which the child is reared. It is a bi-directional concept which focuses on the children's current skills, knowledge and abilities and on the conditions in which the children are reared and taught (Meisels, 1999). It integrates "an emphasis on child development with a recognition that the perception of the individuals in the child's environment shape the content of what is taught, learned and valued" (Meisels, p. 49). In doing so, it looks at the contributions of the child and the school to an understanding of readiness.

The second component of School Readiness, "Schools and their Readiness for Children", relates to the environment within which children learn. An increasing understanding that children exist within and interact with social contexts has led to an increasing focus on the readiness of schools for children, consisting of availability and accessibility (including time, distance, cost, etc;), and quality. In fact, some recent research has found that high-quality classrooms, with integrated social and academic learning, contribute positively to student outcomes in reading and math (Rimm-Kaufman, Fan, Chiu, & You, 2007).

The way society looks at schools is changing, and schools are recognised as significant personal and social environments for learners while quality education is increasingly accepted as going beyond academic learning by encompassing children's social development, their emotional and physical well-being and protection from harm (Rimm-Kaufman, et. al., 2007). Consequently, an appropriate school that is ready for children is the one in which all children can learn, where staff members are welcoming and appreciative of children's

efforts, ensure their safety and sense of security and provide effective learning opportunities which enable children to interact effectively with their world.

Child-friendly schools and other similar initiatives are some of the best-known expressions of "ready schools". In such schools, the tenet of keeping the best interests of the child at the centre results in emphasis on teaching and learning processes appropriate to the child's developmental level and learning style with emphasis on active, participatory, structured learning methods, problem-solving and critical thinking which lead to good learning outcomes.

Child-friendly schools is education based on the reality of children's lives, and the strong connections between home, community and school, which influence and inform curriculum, language of instruction, flexible school calendar, strong community involvement in school management committees, and parental involvement in school life. It is also about active promotion of equality, respect and inclusion in a supportive, nurturing, safe and healthy learning environment where there is respect for each other's rights, dignity, diversity and equality. Finally, it involves the participation of parents and other stakeholders in school decisions and reforms (Osher, Kelly, Tolani-Brown, Shors, & Chen, 2009; Das, 2014)).

The level of a school's readiness for children is defined by the level of inclusion that shows how schools are receptive of all children, including those with physical and mental challenges. Other factors which also define a school's readiness include the gap between families and schools, parents' levels of involvement with, and confidence in schools (related to language, culture and other factors), quantity and quality of schools, and, appropriateness of teaching

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methods focused on active and carefully structured learning methods (Ainscow, Booth, & Dyson, 2006; Osher et. al., 2009).

On the other hand, certain factors might adversely affect a school's readiness for children. In a study he undertook in Botswana in 2002, Le Roux found that language gap was a major disincentive, strongly discouraging children from staying in school. He added that corporal punishment was the single most direct reason for children abandoning school. He found further that among the San, serious lack of cultural understanding between parents and teachers prevailed. The education system was poorly adapted to the reality of San children and the routine in school interfered with the children's traditional eating habits and this affected their attendance in school.

Consequently, Arnold et al. (2007) concluded that, where the culture and language of the local community are different from the teacher's, there could be misunderstandings that escalate the dropout rate. The language of instruction is especially a key factor in children's early learning experiences. Many children enter school unable to understand anything the teacher says. In Malawi, for example, students in Grades 1 to 4 often learn in three or four languages – Chichewa (Malawi's national language), English (the language of instruction), the teacher's first language and the students' first language (Chilora & Harris, 2001). Chilora and Harris found out, not surprisingly, that students whose first language was the same as the teacher's, even if the language of instruction was different, performed significantly better in primary school.

The formal education system is often threatening, not just to the child, but to parents who themselves have not attended school (Aga Khan Foundation, 2006). Engagement with parents is often too cursory and parent involvement is

most often reduced to annual meetings with parents or demands for contributions, rather than regular exchanges between teachers and parents on the social interactions and learning progress of their children.

With regard to policies, Psacharopoulos (2006) assert that it may or may not allow for flexibility in the school calendar or daily timetable to accommodate the realities of the local context and family needs, such as harvest time or extreme adverse weather. He, therefore, advised that flexibility is particularly critical in the early years, when core literacy and language skills are developing. Sometimes, circumstances conspire against enrolment. Many education systems require birth registration documents for enrolment. While birth registration is rightly championed to help ensure children's rights, it can be a double-edged sword, particularly where the process is hampered by confusing bureaucratic procedures. In such adverse circumstances, the attitude taken by the school is critical (Arnold et al., 2007).

Some classrooms can be notoriously overcrowded and oversubscribed. While the mixed effects of large class sizes on student achievement are debatable in upper classes, for the early years of learning, the results show that large class sizes adversely affect children's performance (O'Sullivan, 2006). Large early-grade classes interfere with both teaching and learning capacities, especially when children have limited and no access to materials such as storybooks and teaching aids, for developing numeracy and problem-solving skills.

Generally, lower grade teachers tend to be viewed as less important than those teaching higher grades. They are, therefore, unlikely to have had specialised training to help them organise, manage and teach very young

learners ranging in age from four to six years. Yet it is vital to have teachers who are trusted, conscientious and motivated, who are specially trained to support children's social and emotional development, and who encourage and promote learning (Shaeffer, 2006).

Rutter, Giller, and Hagell, (1998) have also clearly demonstrated that schools are different in the way they impact on child outcomes. By comparing the population of two schools which were geographically close and whose children came from similar socioeconomic and family backgrounds, Rutter et al note that one school had significantly higher academic achievement, less delinquency, better retention rates and less truancy. The reasons for these were related to the ethos of caring for the children that was generated by the Principal and transmitted via the teachers. It was also related to a discipline style where responsibility was taught by public praise rather than punishment.

Generally, where teachers were more experienced, classes had children of similar ability, individual work was displayed and there was a system of pastoral care in place, child outcomes were more positive. While this group was made up of ten-year old boys, similar discipline styles and values have subsequently been found to provide positive outcomes in younger populations. Children may do better where the values of home and school are more congruent (Ting-Toomey, 1989).

The third component of School Readiness, "School Readiness of a Community", is used as an index of how well a community has served a cohort of children through their early childhood years. It is a benchmark to measure the degree to which early childhood policies, programmes and parental support have been effective at a community as well as societal levels (Janus & Offord,

2007; Vernon-Feagans & Blair, 2006). This definition, thus, extends the concept of school readiness beyond the assessment of the developmental level or maturity of the child or a test of parenting skills within the family to the responsibility of the community or society towards its young children. This implies that all children in the entire community deserve a good start early in life and not just a small sub-group of 'at risk' families and their children.

One way of assessing how well a community has served its youngest members is to check their progress against a wider societal norm. A logical time for this check is when children start school. In Canada there was a commitment to extend the informal school readiness check of individual children by parents and teachers to a more formal process "so that we can assess our progress in providing children with the best possible start" (Janus & Offord, 2000, pp. 71-72). Similarly, Lapointe, Ford, and Zumbo (2007) particularly found neighbourhood characteristics were significantly related to children's school readiness, especially in the area of physical well-being. By assessing the school readiness of all children, at best nationally and at least in some communities, it may be possible to monitor or keep score of children's progress and to direct resources where they are most needed. In this sense, readiness for school is far removed from a knowledge race. Rather, it is a time when the community evaluates itself and ensures that it is doing the best it can for its young children. It is less the children being checked and measured than the community and governmental policies and programmes.

To assess the level of school readiness at a community level in Canada, the Early Development Index (EDI) was developed (Janus & Offord, 2007; Guhn, Janus, & Hertzman, 2007). This was based on the National Longitudinal

Survey of Children and Youth, which examined correlates of healthy development of children and adolescents. This survey produced a list of indicators of children's readiness to learn, of which five domains were deemed most relevant. These were physical health and well-being; social knowledge and competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive development; and, communication skills and general knowledge.

The aim of this instrument is to assess strengths and deficits in groups of children, assess the effectiveness of early childhood interventions and provide a predictor of how well this group might do in primary school. It is intended as an index of the effectiveness of early childhood services and policies within a community. Individual scores are not made available so specific children cannot be labelled or refused entry to school on the grounds that they are not ready. Rather, the overall results are made available to the community and can be used to assist in deciding which services might be required to overcome any gaps that are apparent. The results for an area can then be fed back to the community and, in collaboration with the community, service providers can work on strategies which are likely to improve outcomes. 'Bottom up' rather than the prevailing 'top down' models allow the community to have input into, and take responsibility for, developing programmes, rather than have them imposed upon them (Guhn, et. al., 2007).

Parental Decision-making and Investment in Children's Early Learning and Development

Generally, the investments parents make in a child's early learning environments (i.e., home and child care) shape the child's experiences, which in turn, influence their school readiness (Fetalvero, 2010). According to the

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developmental-ecological theory, for instance, children's development and learning occurs within a series of embedded and interactive contexts or systems, ranging from distal (e.g., culture and society) to proximal (e.g., school and family), and their effect on child development may be direct or indirect (Xu & Filler, 2008). All systems influence and are influenced by the cultural and socio-economic context; however, two of the most influential systems for young children are their homes and their early childhood education programmes. Both systems serve as critical learning environments for children. Harmonious interactions between systems promote family engagement and children's development (Xu & Filler). Evidence from available research shows that parents are influenced by several factors when making decisions that affect their children's early development. These include the parents' natural role as caregivers of the child, parental aspirations for the child, expected returns from their investment in their children, children's characteristics and parents' choice of child care**,** etc.

Particularly during the early years, adults are the primary facilitators of children's transactions with the environment, an aspect of parenting generally referred to as gate-keeping (Duncan, Magnuson, & Ludwig, 2004; Hirshberg, Huang, & Fuller, 2005). In the broader context of such macro-level factors as the economy, labour market, social service system, and other cultural and environmental factors, parents' choices and investments contribute to the type and quality of contexts that children experience (Kohen, Leventhal, Dahinten, & McIntosh, 2008). These factors, either individually or collectively, influence parents' gate-keeping decisions and the corresponding investments that the

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parents make that either directly or indirectly affect their children's early development and school readiness outcomes.

These factors also, to an extent, show why families differ in the way they invest in their children's early learning environment. A recurring theme in child development studies is the presence of differences in levels of parental investments according to parents' characteristics and beliefs which seem then to determine the manner and extent to which environmental and contextual factors affect children's development (Kohen, et. al; 2008; Lahaie, 2008). Kohen et al., and Lahaie highlight the importance of context in children's development, especially the home and early learning and education setting where most development stimulation occurs in the early stage and emphasize that the factors that place children in particular contexts are important considerations in the study of children's school readiness. They argue that, in the early stages of life, children do not decide their context but are largely dependent on their parents and families.

Generally, the type and quality of children's early learning and development contexts are determined by their parents' gate keeping, decision making, commitment of support, and use of resources, be it personal/family resources, community resources, or time. Accordingly, children's school readiness may be directly and indirectly influenced by parents' decisions and investments towards their developmental contexts. Even amidst poverty or lack of resources, parents with stronger motivations to support children's learning and development invest a larger portion of their resources in child care and nutritious food items (Duncan, Magnuson, & Ludwig, 2007).

Specifically, parents' ethnicity, education, language proficiency, mental health, employment, and income status, among other factors, have been shown to be associated with the quality of children's early learning settings, the quality of the home environment, as well as the level of parents' involvement in children's learning and development. For instance, the decisions about how children are raised, the type of food they eat, the people children interact with, and how information and materials are received from the social and physical environment by children seem to vary according to parents' characteristics and beliefs.

However, it is unclear how much of these decisions that parents make about their children's development are determined by their level of resources and how much are influenced by their parenting values and beliefs. This question may even be more pertinent among lower income families that live with very limited resources for meeting basic needs let alone for supporting children's learning. The quality of the home environment has been known to explain the relationships between income and children's developmental outcomes. For example, there is evidence that income influences parenting behaviours and investments in developmentally supportive home environment as well as the nature of parents and children's interactions at home that directly link to development (Vortruba-Drzal, 2003). The Vortruba-Drzal study further demonstrates a non-linear relationship between income changes and home environment quality, where increases in income were more beneficial to lower income families' home environment quality compared to higher income families.

Bingham (2007) found that apart from family resources, parents' beliefs, specifically mothers' literacy beliefs influence children's home learning environments (e.g., in terms of the number of books that parents purchase and the time they spend with their child reading). Mothers who place high value on reading and literacy tend to implement more literacy promotional behaviours at home and accordingly, their children manifest higher levels of literacy in the early years of development.

Moreover, Lahaie (2008) found that parents' involvement in children's education and learning at home significantly increases children's developmental outcomes and school achievements. The author reported that having books, videos, pictures, storytelling, reading activities, and singing at home was associated with lower achievement gaps between children of natives and immigrants. Cabrera, Shannon and Tamis-Lemonda (2007) found that fathers' engagement has significant effects on young children's cognitive and socio-emotional development over and above mothers' engagement and family resources. Specifically, fathers who have better education and income, who are also most likely to have higher supportiveness and lower intrusiveness within the father-child interaction, tend to have children scoring higher on language tests and measures of socio-emotional regulation.

On the other hand, the study found negative effects of parental intrusiveness on children's cognitive and socio-emotional outcomes contingent to children's age with older children showing more negative outcomes. The author suggests that the result may be due to older children's increased need for autonomy and independence. Interestingly, Cabrera et al. (2007) also found that family resources matter more for older children than younger ones, which they

assume to be because of older children's need for more stimulating environment and experiences. These reviews suggest that the quality and structure of the home learning environment as well as the nature of learning-focused parent-child interactions at home influence children's development outcomes.

Parental involvement in schools and children's early education settings has been shown to have positive effects on children's school readiness outcomes. Lahaie (2008) found that kindergarten children of parents who have seen teachers at least once, showed an increase of 3.5 points in mathematics scores. Factors which appear to influence parents' decisions about children's early education and learning include levels of income, education, employment; parents' characteristics, beliefs, values and children's characteristics and levels of development (Fetalvero, 2010). Parents appear to make child care decisions subject to a variety of options, availability of resources, other limitations presented by the social system, and contingent to their belief systems (Fetalvero, 2010).

Different investigations have attempted to determine which factors may be the strongest determinant of parents' decisions and investments on children. Davis and Connelly (2005) found a considerable influence of child care market price and availability on the choice of type of child care. Furthermore, Shlay, Tran, Weinraub, & Harmom, (2005) found that parents may desire high quality care but find that this type of care is both inaccessible and unaffordable within their community, as affordability is highly correlated with supply. High centre care prices and lack of affordable quality care in neighbourhoods may prompt parents to make use of non-formal child care regardless of their preferences. This suggests the primacy of market supply, service cost, and parents' resources

on choice over parents' preferences, which is consistent with the propositions of the human capital framework.

On the other hand, Shlay et al. (2005) found that parents may perceive some child care characteristics to be more important and attach high monetary value on such characteristics but concomitantly be unwilling to pay for them depending on how highly those characteristics rank in their priorities. Therefore, it appears that more than simply the matter of service costs, parents consider several quality criteria in selecting care arrangements, which are dependent on their parenting beliefs and ideologies. For instance, parents who believe young children must be nurtured at home by their own parents may prefer to keep their children at home instead of using formal child care despite exposure to information of the benefits of formal care. On their part, Meyer and Jordan (2006) found that parents will choose centre-based care arrangements (for preschool-aged children among all other options if they are of comparable cost.

Parents' characteristics and beliefs also influence their choice of child care. In looking at minority parents' decision making in choosing types of child care, Hirshberg, Huang, and Fuller (2005) found that parents' ethnicity, education, hours of employment, and family income predict parents' propensity to choose non-parental child care. Ethnicity, particularly among parents belonging to minority groups, has also been found to be associated with preferences regarding caregiver's ethnicity and the racial mix of children within the care setting. It appears that parents are more trusting of caregivers who have the same sets of child-rearing and cultural beliefs.

Moreover, worry over possible racial discrimination towards their children may lead minority parents who reside in generally white communities

to choose settings with a more racially diverse group of children (Rose and Elicker, 2008). Rose and Elicker found, however, that the association between ethnicity and child care decisions disappears once maternal education and income are added in the equation.

Furthermore, mothers with lower income place more importance on low-cost care, whereas middle-income mothers prefer middle-cost care that are near their place of work and residence compared to parents with the highest income level. It appears that family and parental characteristics influence choice of child care because of differences in parenting beliefs across levels of characteristics. That is, belonging to a particular ethnic group and socio-economic level suggests differences in values, belief systems, ideologies, and parenting orientations among others that subsequently result in differences in parenting practices, behaviours, and decisions.

Exploration of the standards that parents consider reveals different sets of priorities and considerations. Use of childcare may be child development-focused or employment focused (Blau, 2002). For some parents, childcare may serve primarily to facilitate employment; other parents may rely on childcare to augment their children's development, whereas for some, the intent may be to achieve both goals. Depending on the intent of the use of childcare, parents may prefer some settings to others according to practical (affordability and accessibility) or standard based (curriculum, adult-child ratio, etc.) considerations. Even parents who make use of childcare for child development purposes prioritize and value different aspects of quality.

Kim and Fram (2009) used latent class analysis to generate broad categories of choice considerations that parents prioritise when deciding on a

childcare arrangement. Their analysis revealed four categories, which they identified as learning-focused, practicality-focused, an "everything's important" category and a "something else" category. Learning-focused parents lend primacy to centre curriculum, learning environments and standards adherence; practicality focused parents attach value to low-cost and accessible settings; 'everything important' parents desire both criteria; whereas 'something else' parents consider safety and care-giver warmth as most important.

Furthermore, Kim and Fram (2009) identified general dimensions of parents' criteria in selecting child care, which relate to parental characteristics and demographics. They found that parents who have the education, economic, and structural wherewithal to be selective of their child care choice tend to prioritize development and learning focused criteria. These parents choose child care characteristics that can support their children's developmental needs at the time. On the other hand, parents who are economically and structurally constrained in their choice are more likely to emphasise practicality factors over development related factors. These parents will likely compromise quality criterion for accessibility and affordability.

Lastly, Kim and Fram (2009) found another two sets of parents with one group finding everything important; this group seems to consist of very low education and low-income groups. The last group appears to value some other aspect of quality as important, which parents associated with child age. Contrary to the child care selection process that Kim and Fram projected, Meyers and Jordan (2006) propose that child care selection is a process of accommodation; accommodation of development focused criteria practical considerations, and the limitation of information that parents use to make decisions. Essentially,

these authors are suggesting that all parents make trade-offs given the restrictions of what they know, what they have, and what the environment offers.

Children's Characteristics and Parents' Choice of Child Care

Children's characteristics such as their age, temperament, and level of development seem to also influence parents' decisions-making process when selecting child care. Gamble, Ewing, and Wilhelm (2009) found from their survey of 2,290 parents that parents use more child centred criteria when choosing child care settings compared to structural, schedule, and logistic considerations. Parents appear to be very conscious of how various child care options might contribute to their children's school readiness and development. However, the use of development and education-based criteria in the selection process is contingent on children's age, where parents of older children are more likely to consider centre and curriculum-based care as opposed to parents of younger children.

Parents of younger children tend to prioritise similarities in child-rearing beliefs and caregivers' warmth and interaction with children when selecting child care. This seems to be because parents of younger children feel that their children are not ready for an academic oriented curriculum. For instance, parents' perception of children's difficult temperament was shown to be associated with less value on school readiness and curriculum issues as a factor when selecting child care. Particularly, the level of children's shyness and immaturity were both negatively correlated with the level of priority that parents attached to school readiness as a factor in choosing childcare.

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Parents' assessment of their children's ability to focus was also associated with the value they placed on curriculum concerns and schooling. They found that parents who perceive their children to be more temperamental or unable to focus in activities tend to downplay school readiness and curriculum criteria when selecting child care, and yet they still identify quality of care curriculum as an important factor when selecting care settings.

Parents' Expectations for Children in Cultural Context as a Determinant of Investments

Parents' expectations, which have been conceptualized in some studies as parents' aspirations for their children's school achievements and future employment, have been associated with children's school readiness outcomes. Hill (2001) found that parents' academic expectations are positively correlated with children's pre-reading and math scores; meanwhile, expectations of children's future employment outcomes were associated with pre-reading but not math scores.

Chao (1996), as cited in Feltavero (2010), explored determinants of differences between Chinese-American and European-American students' academic performances and found Chinese-American students tend to generally score higher on standardized intelligence assessment tests. She found that these differences were associated with the different values that Chinese and European-American parents place on education and the corresponding expectations they have for their children's education. Chinese parents have higher expectations about their children's academic achievements and consequently tend to be more involved with their children's academic careers. Chinese parents are more willing to relocate neighbourhoods; separate the

family for better educational opportunities and sacrifice larger portions of the family resources on children's education.

Consequently, Chao (1996) suggests that Chinese parents' needs for support and child development services are camouflaged by their greater family sacrifices. On the other hand, this study found that European-American parents focus less on academic achievement as the central goal of education and instead value that their children find learning and development a fun experience. In addition, more than academic skills, they emphasize the importance of the development of their children's socio-emotional skills. Therefore, European-American parents may not be as involved in their children's academic career as their Chinese counterparts. For Chao, parenting beliefs shape parents' expectations that then shape parent-child interaction and parents' development supportive behaviours.

Gamble, Ewing and Wilhlem (2009) argue that children's characteristics also shape expectations and parents' subsequent choice of childcare. They found that parents' low expectations of children's success in centres using academic-based curricula are associated with parents' lower preference for such setting. Therefore, parenting beliefs and expectations as well as children's characteristics may be influencing parents' decisions on investments. It may be likely that the interaction between parents' expectations and their assessments of children's characteristics ultimately determine how much effort they place in support of child development.

The influence of parents' expectations on child development investments may be particularly salient among parents with a more collectivist orientation (Benokraitis, 2002). This may be because families with collectivist

orientations have greater adherence to filial piety, or the expectations for children to uphold the family name and to take care of their parents in old age. Accordingly, there is more at stake for parents in investing on children given that the goal and outcome of investments in children affect the entire family and even the community. In looking at Asian families, Benokraitis mentioned that having children is a form of insurance for financial stability especially after parents' retirement. In this context, raising children and supporting their growth and development may be literally considered as financial investments that support not only children's future, but families' stability as well. Asian and Hispanic families are generally known to have higher collectivist orientations (Benokraitis).

This suggests that parents' expectations may differ across different cultural backgrounds. Feltavero (2010) reports that Chao (1996) illustrated how Chinese mothers emphasize academic achievement as an important goal for their children whereas Uttal (1997) found that Mexican-American/Hispanic mothers place value on cultural socialization and their children being raised by care-givers with the same child-rearing and cultural values as their own.

Investments at Home and in Early Care and Education Settings

Though not well explored, the relationship between parents' investments at home with investments in out-of-home settings for their children, has been established. Weiss, Caspe and Lopez (2006) emphasized the significance of the continuity of quality and development support initiatives from the home to child care and vice versa in order to adequately address children's developmental needs. Therefore, in exploring parents' investment

decisions, it will be interesting to find how they allocate investments within the home and childcare settings. Folbre (2006) argues that parents' involvement and investments in the home are more complementary than supplementary to their childcare investments. For instance, childcare investments should not completely replace parents' involvement in children's development at home.

On the contrary, the two settings must provide continuity of experiences for children. Accordingly, family time, parents' work with children at home, and parental investments in the home learning structure must be acknowledged and counted as child development investments as much as their more institutional childcare investments, justifying support for parents at home such as work-time flexibility, leaves, etc. Although there have been studies about the quality of the home environment and its effects on children's early learning outcomes (Vortruba-Drzal, 2003) there is a dearth of information about parents' decision making in regard to this type of investment.

Research has, however, found that parent engagement in child learning at home were more likely to have children with higher academic functioning, greater academic achievement, and higher academic motivation (Harris & Goodall, 2008; Bouffard & Weiss, 2008). Parent engagement includes families who promoted learning at home, structured the home environment to support children's learning, and spent time talking with children about their school-based activities.

Challenges to Parent Investment in Formal ECD Programmes

Social exchange theory may shed light on how social partnerships develop and maintain. According to this theory, social relationships develop depending on the exchange of resources between parties and the weighing of

costs and benefits. Perceived resources or benefits can be tangible (e.g., adult education courses) or intangible (e.g., warm and welcoming environment). The concept of trust is also at the essence of social exchange theory. As mutual trust evolves between the family and the programme so will the extent and commitment to the partnership. If trust is lost, however, the commitment to the relationship will begin to diminish, as will feelings of engagement (Nakonezny & Denton, 2008).

In a review of why families become involved, Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Sandler, Whetsel, Green, Wilkens, & Closson (2005) found that "how welcoming the programme is" was one of the most influential indicators of family engagement. Intangible benefits that result from a welcoming environment such as feelings of acceptance and appreciation are also important for promoting partnerships with families (Constantino, 2008). Where parents do not feel welcome, they may not want to become involved. Cultural differences and language barriers may lead to misconceptions about families' participation in their children's education. Biases, even unconscious biases, by teachers and administrators can harm the partnerships between programmes and families and discourage families from participating in their children's education (Ferguson, Ramos, Rudo, & Wood, 2008; Sanders, 2008).

A very important but often over-looked form of family engagement is the concept of shared decision making between families and programmes. Early childhood education programmes need to provide families with an opportunity to voice their opinions and share in the decision making of programme practices and policies that affect their children. Including families within the decision-

making process demonstrates that families' opinions are valued and generates a sense of parent "ownership" and pride in the programme (Cochran, 2007).

While some programmes may offer forms of parent leadership, Flaugher (2006) suggests that their opportunities to engage in decision making in their children's programmes are usually quite limited. Research on culturally-diverse families also indicates feelings of reservation and alienation on the part of family members from participating in school leadership councils (Schaller, Rocha, & Barshinger 2007; Sohn & Wang, 2006). To support a true family-programme partnership, programmes must work to empower families and find ways to incorporate the voices of all families across race, cultural background and socioeconomic status.

Even though research has found positive relations between parent participation in school activities and outcomes for pre-kindergarteners and kindergartners (Mantzicopoulos, 2003), some concerns have been raised regarding the traditional parent involvement paradigm, especially with regards to cultural sensitivity. Souto-Manning and Swick (2006) suggest that the traditional paradigm for parent involvement focuses on the deficiencies of parents and strives to adapt parents to the methods applied by the schools. According to this definition, the responsibility for involvement is placed on the parent and suggests that to be involved parents need to participate in school defined practices such as volunteering in the classroom.

In addition, programmes that implement a traditional parent involvement model may also be perceived as insensitive to family members' time, financial, or educational limitations. In the case of culturally-diverse families, other practices implemented at home that support children's education

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may be overlooked and under-appreciated. These misperceptions of early childhood education programmes may lead to a disconnect in the partnership between families and programmes (Quiocho & Daoud, 2006; Wong & Hughes, 2006).

Lastly, in some cultures, multi-generational households are common, and extended family members and fictive kin have important roles in caring for and raising children. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (2009) highlights the importance of family by recognizing that "all family members" (siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and fictive kin, who may be friends or neighbours), often contribute in significant ways to children's education and development. Traditional parental involvement models, however, do not incorporate other important family members that are active participants in the child's development and learning.

Parents' decisions about what investments to make for their children depend not solely on market forces and financial resource. The analysis so far, has shown that parents, depending on their motivation to support their children's development, often choose arrangements that are most beneficial to their children's development over and above childcare costs. Differences in childcare preferences arise according to factors like parents' income, education, ethnicity, and children's characteristics. This suggests rationalisation of parents' decisions that are beyond family resources and service availability and more about family processes and ideologies. Although explorations of this subject have revealed interesting and useful information about parents' decision making, questions remain and the scope of factors influencing parents' selection of childcare may be wider than has been previously considered. Parents' cultural backgrounds,

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set of beliefs, and motivations are just a few of the factors that may also influence parents' choice of childcare arrangements.

Conceptual Framework for Parental involvement

The conceptual framework for this study was adapted from Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) model of parental involvement process. According to them, even though parent involvement in education is associated with positive outcomes for students, little is known about why parents decide to be involved in children's education. Therefore, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, in their research on parental involvement, used a psychological perspective to explain why parents become involved in their children's education. The model suggests that parents' involvement is motivated by two belief systems: role construction for involvement, and sense of efficacy for helping the child succeed in school. The two belief systems combine with various other elements in the parents' environment to influence the actions they take about their children's education.

"Parental role construction" is defined as parents' beliefs about what they are supposed to do in relation to their children's education and the patterns of parental behaviour that follow those beliefs (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey, Wilkins, Sandler, & O'Connor, 2004; Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, & Hoover-Dempsey, 2005; Mncube, 2009). Role construction for involvement is, thus, influenced by parents' beliefs about how children develop, what parents should do to rear their children effectively, and what parents should do at home to help children succeed in school. Role construction is also shaped by the expectations of individuals and groups

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important to the parent about the parent's responsibilities relevant to the child's schooling.

According to Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler (1997) and Anderson & Minke,(2007), parents develop these beliefs and understandings as a result of their membership and participation in relevant child-rearing groups such as families, schools, churches, and the broader culture. Role construction is, therefore, socially constructed and is shaped by the expectations of relevant social groups and personal beliefs. It is created from parents' experiences over time with individuals and groups related to schooling, including the parent's personal experiences with schooling, prior experience with involvement, and ongoing experiences with others related to the child's schooling (e.g., teachers, other parents). Since it is socially constructed, parents' role construction for involvement is subject to change, often, in response to variations in social conditions, and it may change in response to intentional efforts to alter role construction.

Studies on role construction offer considerable support for its importance to parents' decisions about involvement and underscores the power of role construction as a motivator of parents' involvement in their children's education at the elementary and secondary levels and across ethnic and cultural groups. For example, Drummond and Stipek (2004), who studied parents of African American, Caucasian, and Latino elementary students, reported that role construction motivated parents' involvement practices. In their work among Latino parents of elementary and secondary students, Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski, and Apostoleris (1997) reported positive links between parents' beliefs that they should take an active role in their children's education.

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Chrispeels and Gonzalez (2004) subsequently reported that parental role construction was the strongest predictor of parental involvement in their children's education. They also concluded that parental role construction, is consequently, built on parents' sense of personal or shared responsibility for the child's educational outcomes and concurrent beliefs about whether one should be engaged in supporting the child's learning and school success.

Personal characteristics of parents as well as their environments are known to affect their involvement in their children's education. According to Lee and Bowen (2006), central to the home-school bond and the ability of parents to become involved is the social and cultural capital available to the individual parent. Likewise, low-paying jobs limit parents' involvement in their children's education (Anderson & Minke, 2007). Also, one of the obstacles to effective parent involvement in school life is the low recognition by teachers of the parents' help both in school activities and in-home support (Anderson & Minke, 2007). Hence, parents who live in a low socio-economic environment seem to lack networks and relationships in their society that enable them to function effectively. Such families generally lack the social assets to promote social success. Therefore, Msila (2012) and Smith (2006) contend that social and cultural capital are both aspects that poor parents are unlikely to have.

Consequently, children of low-income families often experience non-involvement by their parents due to constraints that might be tied to their economic circumstances, their educational capabilities, their view of the appropriate division of labour between teachers and parents, and the material resources available in the home. These affect parents' view of their role in their

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child's education and, subsequently, their involvement in the children's schooling.

A second personal motivator of parental involvement is self-efficacy, or belief in one's abilities to act in ways that will produce desired outcomes (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler 1997). According to them, parental efficacy, along with role construction, is a strong contributor to parents' involvement, hence, self-efficacy is a significant factor in decisions about the goals one chooses to pursue as well as effort and persistence in working toward the accomplishment of those goals. Self-efficacy theory, thus, suggests that parents make their decisions about involvement in part by thinking about the outcomes likely to follow their actions. Parents, therefore, develop behavioural goals for their involvement based on their appraisal of their capabilities in the situation (Yap & Baharudin, 2016; Suldo & Shaffer, 2007; Sapungan & Sapungan, 2014; Lau, Li & Rao, 2011).

Thus, parents who are high in efficacy will tend to make positive decisions about active engagement in the child's education. Further, they are likely to persist in the face of challenges or obstacles and work their way through difficulties to successful outcomes. Relatively weak self-efficacy for involvement is often associated with lower parental expectations about outcomes of efforts to help the child succeed in school and relatively low persistence in the face of challenges (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Jones & Prinz, 2005; Glatz & Buchanan, 2015).

Self-efficacy, like role construction, is socially constructed. Bandura (1997) suggests that it is grounded in personal experiences in four major domains: personal mastery experiences (success in achieving goals in the given

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area), vicarious experiences (observing similar others' success in achieving goals in the area), verbal persuasion (encouragement from important others that one is capable of successful performance), and physiological arousal (physical and affective states that individuals process as information about the importance of given goals and personal ability to achieve them). These sources suggest strongly that schools and important others (family members, social groups) exert significant influence on parents' sense of efficacy for helping their children succeed in school.

As with role construction, research on efficacy offers considerable support for its influence as a motivator of parental involvement. Similarly, these findings appear across groups that vary in socioeconomic circumstance, ethnicity, student school level, and type of student educational programme, thus underscoring the power of both constructs as motivators of parental involvement in children's education (Wang, & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014; Wu, Han, Wei, & Luo, 2013; Jeynes, 2012).

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) model suggests, further, that elements of parents' life context serve as the third major motivator of their decisions about involvement. Elements of life context most important to understanding parents' involvement decisions are the knowledge, skills, time, and energy that they bring to the possibilities of involvement. Parents' perceptions of their personal skills appear to shape their thinking about the kinds of involvement activities that may be possible for them to undertake with a reasonable likelihood of achieving success (LaRocque, Kleiman & Darling 2011; Lee & Bowen, 2006; Baeck, 2010; Jeynes, 2011). If parents perceived their skills to be adequate, they tended to be positive about engaging in the

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activity. On the other hand, if they believed their skills were inadequate, parents tended to ask others in the family to help, ask the child to get more information at school, or seek additional help themselves (e.g., call the teacher or knowledgeable family member or friend (Matshe, 2014).

Walker, et al. (2005), built on the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) model and used "parents' motivational beliefs" to explain why parents become involved in their child's education. They explained further, that as a psychological predictor of motivational beliefs, this variant focuses on parents' own attitudes, ideas and experiences as basis of their decisions within their child's education. They went on to define role construction within parents' involvement process "as parents' beliefs about what they should do in relation to the child's education" (p.89). This includes beliefs about parents' rights, responsibilities, and obligations as well as their "personal history with and affective responses to school" (Walker et al., p. 92). These beliefs and attitudes help parents to "imagine and anticipate" (Walker et al., p. 89) behaviour towards best practices necessary for their child's educational success. In this context, it is possible to define the kinds of involvement activities parents consider important, necessary, and permissible.

While assessing the construct of parental role construction, three major patterns were suggested: (a) parent-focused, (b) school-focused, and (c) partnership-focused (Walker et al., 2005). A parent-focused role construction sees the ultimate responsibility for the child's education with the parents whereas a school-focused role construction sees the responsibility with the schools (Walker et al.). Lastly, a partnership-focused role construction reflects

"beliefs and behaviours that parents and schools together are responsible for the child's education" (Walker et al., p.90).

Walker et al. (2005) confirm Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler's (1997) definition of parental self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capability to act in ways that will produce desired outcomes [influencing] people's goal selection, effort, persistence, and ultimate goal accomplishment" (p. 93). They add that parents' beliefs in their abilities to help their child succeed in school influence their goals, persistence and what they do. Parents, therefore, develop goals for their behaviours based on these anticipations, and plan actions designed to achieve these goals. Parents with positive self-efficacy are more likely to conceptualize their contributions to their child's learning and engage in a range of involvement activities than parents with low self-efficacy (Walker et al.).

The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) model discussed above tries to explain why parents are motivated to get involved in their children's education. Consequently, in this study, the conceptual framework was used to show how, for instance, "Role construction" of parents, as shaped by the expectations of individuals and groups important to the parent about the parent's responsibilities relevant to the child's schooling, motivate parents to enrol their children in KG. In this regard, the model further serves as the underlying explanation for some of the theoretical underpinnings of the research, especially the Positive Deviance Theory which explains how innovation, which is introduced from external sources, influences behaviour change in a group of people.

The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) model also helps to explain the drivers of the Needs theories of motivation. It is also able to explain the

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Human Capital theory with regards to parents' beliefs in their abilities to help their child succeed in school. Consequently, it throws light on what influence parental goals, persistence and what they do. Eventually, it helps to explain what motivate parents to develop goals for their behaviours based on these anticipations, and parents plan actions designed to achieve these goals.

Again, the framework demonstrates why parents, especially those with low efficacy, remain apathetic to efforts by the State and groups or individuals to influence them to enrol their children in ECE programmes. It also, attempts to explain why even in the face of opposition from others in similar circumstances, some parents become deviant and take actions, which eventually become very successful and are emulated by others.

In spite of the insights, provided by the conceptual framework and the theoretical underpinnings of the study, it is not certain if they can amply explain what motivates parents in Ghana, and especially, those in Kwahu Afram Plains North District to enrol their children in KG. For instance, the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) model did not determine some key elements which act as both primary and secondary motivating factors. In the conceptual framework for this thesis, these primary and secondary motivating factors are analysed to identify their effect on parental motivation to enrol their children in KG.

The influence of parental demographic characteristics on their level of motivation, which the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) model did not discuss, are also discussed in the thesis. It is this gap that the framework and the theoretical underpinnings of the study were designed to explain. The theoretical underpinnings play a complementary role to the conceptual framework by providing explanations at the individual level, which the framework does not.

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The framework in Figure 2 shows and explains the factors that motivate parents

in the decision-making process towards their children's education.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│   Parental decision making towards        │
│        Enrolment of Children in KG        │
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Parents' Demographic Characteristics

1.   Place of residence (Urban, Rural)
2.   Sex
3.   Educational Background
4.   Age

Primary Motivating Factors

- Parental responsibility
- Family Aspirations & Expectation
- Policy and parental awareness of policy
- Perception of importance of KG Education
- Children's Characteristics

Secondary Motivating Factors

- Support Systems
- Advocacy & Influence of Social Groups
- Availability of Facilities
- Distance from home to facilities
- Cost of Education
- Quality of Service

Figure 2: Parental Decision Making Towards KG Enrolment

Source: Adapted from Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) model

of parental involvement process

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used in this research. In this chapter, the processes, methods and tools used to accomplish the research objectives and, consequently, the systematic management, direction and guidance to the project are presented. This chapter, therefore, discusses the research approach with a focus on the underlying research philosophy as well as the research design used, the study area, the study population, the sampling procedures, sources of data, data collection instruments, pretesting of instruments, ethical considerations, the fieldwork, challenges and limitations of the study and the data processing and analysis.

The Research Philosophy

This research was influenced by both the positivist approach and interpretivism. The positivist approach allows the researcher to employ quantitative methods, thereby making it possible for generalisation of the results of the study. Blending this approach with interpretivism allowed for the development of new and useful theory which the use of pure deduction (positivism) alone might prevent. The quest for the most appropriate methodological perspective to use in this research necessitated a review of several philosophical paradigms after which positivism and interpretivism were adopted for the study because the two cancel out the disadvantages of each other.

As a philosophy, positivism adheres to the view that only "factual" knowledge gained through observation, including measurement through objective methods, is trustworthy (Dudovskiy, 2013). The positivist philosophy believes that the world is external and that there is a single objective reality to any research phenomenon or situation regardless of the researcher's perspective or belief. Thus, positivists take a controlled and structural approach in conducting research by identifying a clear research topic, constructing appropriate hypotheses and by adopting a suitable research methodology (Carson, Gilmore, Perry, & Gronhaug, 2001).

Carson et al., (2001) assert that positivist researchers remain detached from the participants of the research by creating a distance, which is important in remaining emotionally neutral to make clear distinctions between reason and feeling. They also maintain a clear distinction between science and personal experience, and fact and value-judgement. It is also important in positivist research to seek objectivity and use consistently rational and logical approaches to research (Carson et al., 2001).

In positivism studies, the role of the researcher is limited to data collection and interpretation through objective approaches. The research findings are usually observable and depends on quantifiable observations that lend themselves to statistical analysis. Statistical and mathematical techniques are central to positivist research, which adheres to specifically structured research techniques to uncover single and objective reality (Carson et al., 2001; Crowther & Lancaster, 2008; Wilson, 2010). It has been noted that "as a philosophy, positivism is in accordance with the empiricist view that knowledge stems from human experience. It has an atomistic, ontological view of the world

as comprising discrete, observable elements and events that interact in an observable, determined and regular manner" (Collins, 2010, p.38).

The main advantages associated with positivism, according to Armstrong (2010), include wide coverage of the range of situations, being fast and economical, and are useful in large samples. Its main disadvantages include the fact that its methods tend to be inflexible. Also the perspective is not very effective in understanding processes or the significance people attach to actions and is not very helpful in generating theories. Because it focuses on what is or what has been recently, it makes it hard for policy makers to infer what actions should take place in the future.

Contrary to the view of the positivists, the position of interpretivism is that knowledge acquired in research is socially constructed rather than objectively determined and perceived (Carson et al., 2001). Interpretivism assumes that reality is multiple and relative and that these multiple realities also depend on other systems for meanings. It is, therefore, difficult to interpret these events in terms of fixed realities. Accordingly, "interpretive researchers assume that access to reality (given or socially constructed) is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, and instruments" (Myers, 2008, p.38). In general, the interpretivist approach is based on the belief that people cannot be separated from their knowledge, therefore, there is a clear link between the researcher and the research subject.

Interpretivists avoid rigid structural frameworks such as in positivist research and adopt a more personal and flexible research structures which are receptive to capturing meanings in human interaction and make sense of what is perceived as reality (Carson et al., 2001). They believe that the researcher and

his informants are interdependent and mutually interactive. The interpretivist researcher enters the field with some sort of prior insight of the research context but assumes that this is insufficient in developing a fixed research design due to complex, multiple and unpredictable nature of what is perceived as reality. The researcher remains open to new knowledge throughout the study and lets it develop with the help of informants. Therefore, the goal of interpretivist research is to understand and interpret the meanings in human behaviour rather than to generalise and predict causes and effects. For an interpretivist researcher, it is important to understand motives, meanings, reasons and other subjective experiences which are time and context bound.

The main disadvantages associated with interpretivism relate to the subjective nature of this approach and great room for bias on behalf of the researcher. Again, primary data generated in interpretivist studies cannot be generalized since data is heavily impacted by personal viewpoint and values. Therefore, reliability and representativeness of data is undermined to a certain extent as well. On the positive side, thanks to adoption of interpretivism, qualitative research areas such as cross-cultural differences in organizations, issues of ethics, leadership and analysis of factors impacting leadership etc. can be studied in a great level of depth.

The adoption of both positivism and interpretivism approaches for this study agrees with Carson et al (2000) who propose such a combination claiming that pure induction (interpretivism) without prior theory might prevent the researcher from benefiting from existing theory whilst pure deduction (positivism) might prevent the development of new and useful theory. Onwuegbuzie, Johnson and Collins (2009), maintain that the difference

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between the two philosophies are often exaggerated and that triangulation of methods from different approaches in current day research is common and justifiable. The use of the positivist approach in this study allowed the researcher to employ quantitative methods which allowed for generalisation of the results. The use of interpretivism, on the other hand, allowed for the employment also of a qualitative method to investigate the underlying motives of behaviour, in this case, the factors that motivate parents to enrol their children in KG. This offered the opportunity for the development of new and useful theories which a purely quantitative approach would not be able to do.

Research Design

In line with the research philosophy adopted for the study, a cross-sectional, multi-method approach was used to investigate the factors which motivate parents to enrol their children in kindergarten in Kwahu Afram Plains North district. Mixed methods research is a methodology for conducting research that involves collecting, analysing and integrating quantitative (e.g., experiments, surveys) and qualitative (e.g., focus groups, interviews) research. The approach made it possible for data to be collected on individual characteristics that affected the motivation of parents to enrol their children in KG in KAPN. It, thus, allowed for an investigation to be carried out into the relationship between various demographic factors of parents and their motivation to enrol their children in KG.

A mixed method approach, adopted for this study because it provides strengths that offset the weaknesses of either a quantitative or qualitative research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Generally, quantitative research uses

numerical comparisons, statistics and other mathematics-based methods to explain social phenomenon in a structured way. They also allow for a broader study involving a greater number of subjects, allow for greater objectivity and accuracy as well as enhance the generalisation of results (Yegidis & Weinback, 2009). Quantitative methods usually involve few variables and many cases and employs prescribed procedures to ensure validity and reliability.

Finally, quantitative methods are relatively easier to analyse, be compared with similar studies and replicated. However, quantitative research collects a much narrower and sometimes superficial dataset and results are limited as they provide numerical descriptions rather than detailed narrative and elaborate accounts of human perception. The quest to ensure absolute objectivity in this type of research means that the research is often carried out in an artificial environment so that a level of control can be applied to the exercise. This level of control might not normally exist in the real world, so the research might yield laboratory results as opposed to real world results. Also, pre-set answers do not necessarily reflect how people feel about a subject and, in some cases, might just be the closest match. Finally, the development of standard questions by researchers can lead to 'structural' bias and false representation, where the data sometimes reflects the view of the researcher instead of the participating subject.

Qualitative methods, on the other hand, usually provide descriptions and the context of particular situations through the words and actions of research participants (Yegidis & Weinback, 2009). They also provide depth and detail by looking deeper into issues such as attitudes, feelings and behaviours. They

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create openness by encouraging people to expand on their responses that were not initially considered.

This type of research appeals to social scientists because it allows the researcher to investigate the meanings that people attribute to their behaviour, actions, and interactions with others. However, usually fewer subjects are studied and collection of qualitative data is generally more time consuming than in quantitative data collection. Also, they are not easy to generalise results because fewer people are generally studied. Again, it is difficult to make systematic comparisons, especially, if people give widely differing responses that are highly subjective. Finally, they depend highly on skills of the researcher particularly in the case of conducting interviews, focus groups and observation and can, therefore, be subjected to the influence of the interviewer or researcher (Yegidis & Weinback, 2009).

Mixed methodology is the corner stone of research within social science that is experienced within everyday life (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). It has been described as "the third paradigm" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:15); a "third methodological movement" (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009:1); and includes both quantitative and/or qualitative approaches (Morse & Niehaus, 2016). It no longer restricts the researcher to particular paradigms that have been traditionally the case and is considered a legitimate means of undertaking research in social and human science (Creswell & Plano Clark). It helps to address broader questions providing a more expansive and creative approach to research (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie).

Mixed methods research provides more comprehensive evidence for studying a research problem than either quantitative or qualitative research

alone. Researchers are given permission to use all the tools of data collection available rather than being restricted to the types of data collection typically associated with qualitative research or quantitative research (Creswell & Plano Clark). Using mixed methodology can help understand the topic area in greater depth and help to increase confidence in findings, providing more evidence while offsetting possible shortcomings from using a single approach (Creswell & Plano Clark).

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), the approach is "practical" in the sense that researchers are free to use all methods possible to address a research problem. It allows researchers to combine inductive and deductive thinking thereby, enabling them to present a complete and comprehensive picture of an issue under investigation. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), argue that using mixed methodology can help blend different approaches allowing the researcher to design research questions within the context and parameters of their study, thereby linking the purpose (research questions) with procedures (research methods).

The approach may include a multi-level strategy incorporating a two-phase approach where, for example, quantitative research is undertaken first, followed by qualitative research in a systematic and planned approach to research (Flick, 2011). Each phase can then be triangulated into a third phase where quantitative data can provide general patterns and width and, qualitative data reflects upon experience and depth. The findings from the qualitative data can also help contextualise and enrich findings (Bryman, 2008), increase validity when interpreting the data and generate new knowledge (Stange, 2006).

Despite its value, conducting mixed methods research is not easy. It takes time and resources to collect and analyse both quantitative and qualitative data. It complicates the procedures of research and requires clear presentation if the reader is going to be able to sort out the different procedures. Further, investigators are often trained in only one form of inquiry, quantitative or qualitative, and mixed methods requires that they know both forms of data management. These limitations are significant, but they are not insurmountable, and the value of mixed methods research seems to outweigh the potential difficulty of this approach (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011).

In conclusion, the mixed method approach used in this study, ensured that both quantitative and qualitative questions were posed, both forms of data collected and analysed, and a quantitative and qualitative interpretation made. The partial use of the quantitative approach allowed for the use of numbers, percentages and statistical information that made it possible for the quantifying and generalising the findings to the entire study population while the qualitative aspect allowed for a better understanding of the experience and context of the research participants. The adoption of a mixed method approach allowed for the study to benefit from the advantages of both the quantitative and qualitative research methods while at the same time, offsetting the disadvantages of both.

The Study Area

The study area, Kwahu Afram Plains North in the Eastern region of Ghana, was purposively chosen because of its unique position as a typical deprived district, and a complete outlier among deprived districts which had made effort to promote KG education. In that sense, it was a positive deviant among deprived districts in KG education promotion. It was also the first district

in the country to receive direct assistance from UNICEF to promote education and the only one in the country which has been receiving direct assistance from UNICEF to promote education since November 1994. The District has, thus, had a unique, long standing relationship with UNICEF and has played a pioneering role in involving parents in education delivery.

In the beginning, UNICEF partnered the District Education Office and Afram Plains Development Organisation (APDO), a local NGO to initiate a project known as the "Child-School-Community Process in Education" (CHILDSCOPE) in the district. CHILDSCOPE was started in six pilot schools and 12 surrounding communities whose children attended these schools. The project brought together the staff and school management to work closely with a supportive network of stakeholders which included parents with children in the schools, community members and leaders, the District Education Office, APDO and public institutions such as Ghana Health Service, the Department of Social Welfare, Non-Formal Education Division and the District Assembly (Agarwal & Hartwell, 1998). The model sought to assist the schools to improve the quality of education management, enhance the quality of teaching and learning, and increase access and participation, especially of girls. By 2000, CHILDSCOPE was operational in seven districts: Afram Plains (Eastern Region), Builsa (Upper East Region), Yendi, Tolon-Kumbungu, Savelugu-Nanton and Zabzugu-Tatale (Northern Region) and Bawku-East (Upper East Region).

Two basic principles central to CHILDSCOPE were community participation and parental involvement in promoting universal enrolment in the early grades, Kindergarten and Primary Class One. Through participatory

learning approaches, parents were encouraged to recognise their roles and responsibilities regarding their children's education, especially in promoting enrolment and retention of children in school.

Consequently, Kwahu Afram Plains North, whose Education Office in Donkorkrom, initiated Childscope and supported other districts was purposefully chosen to assess the factors which motivated some parents to enrol their children in KG and what deterred other parents from doing same. This selection conforms to Lewis-Beck, Bryman and Liao (2004) assertion that even though purposive sampling is seldom used because there is no involvement of probability, it is still permissible when it is not possible to adopt any random procedure for the selection of sampling units. In such a situation, a researcher will adopt purposive sampling according to his/her purposes or when the selected cases are a good representation of the population.

KAPN district has a total land area of approximately 2,341.3 km^2 and is bounded by Kwahu Afram Plains South District to the south and Sene district in the Bono East Region to the north (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). The Volta River lies to the east of the District, forming its boundary with Biakoye District in the Oti region and Kpando, North Dayi and South Dayi Districts in the Volta Regions. Three main water bodies (the Afram River in the west, the Volta River in the east and the Obosom River in the north) drain the district and influence the district in three main ways: transportation and agriculture and a lot of tourism potentials, yet to be harnessed to the fullest.

Donkorkrom, the capital of KAPN district is 347 kilometres from Koforidua (the regional capital), 405 kilometres from Accra and 258 kilometres from Kumasi. Map 1 shows the landmass of KAPN.

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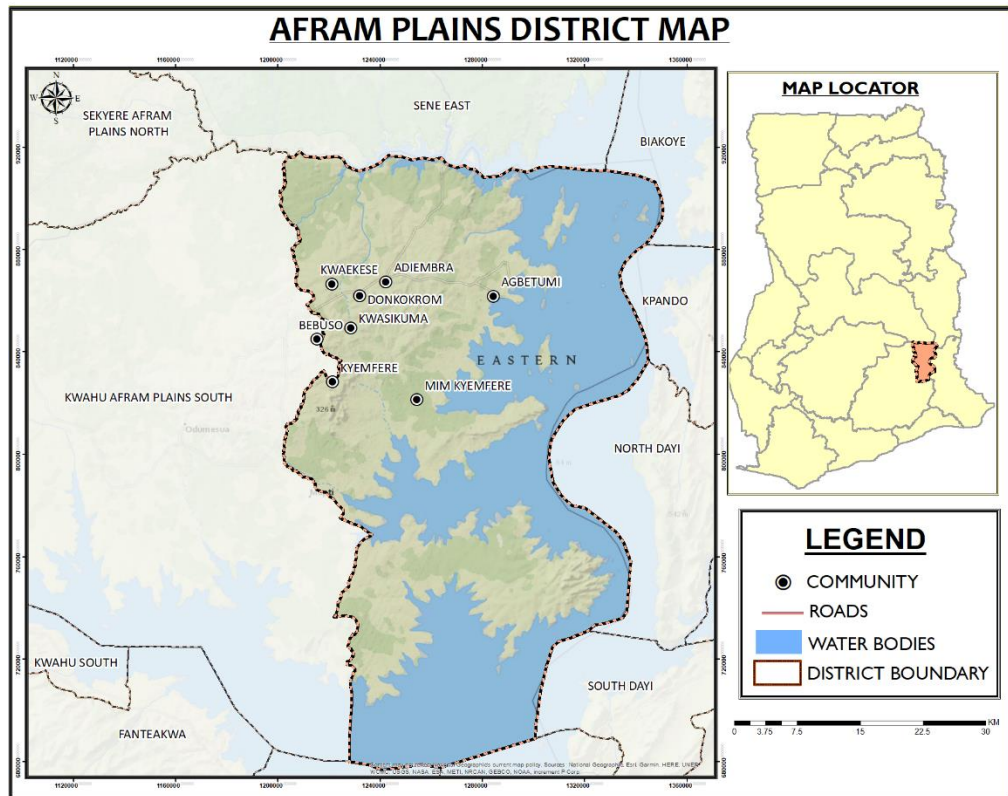
Figure 3: Map of Kwahu Afram Plains North District

Source: Ghana Statistical Service, GIS (2012).

Two main routes serve as entry points to the district from the national capital, Accra. The first branches off at Nkawkaw in the Eastern Region on the main highway from Accra to Kumasi, Ghana's second largest city. This route passes over the Kwahu scarp through three major towns, Atibie, Mpraeso and Kwahu Tafo, through a hilly terrain to Adawso, a village inland shore, from where a pontoon travels about thirty minutes to the shore at Ekye-Amanfrom on the Kwahu Afram Plains South side of the River Afram. From Ekye Amanfrom, it takes about one hour and thirty minutes to reach Donkorkrom through Tease, the capital of Kwahu Afram Plains South District. The second main entry point to KAPN district, from Accra, branches off on the Accra to Ho highway to pass through Kpando town to Kpando-Torkor, a busy commercial inland shore of the

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River Volta in the Kpando District. Here a pontoon traverses some 18 nautical miles to Agordeke, the eastern docking shore for the pontoon in the Kwahu Afram Plains North District and thence, by road to Donkorkrom, 27-kilometres away. The district has a fair distribution of accessible, though untarred, roads majority of which link the Volta Lake and Afram River (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012).

According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2012), the District, in 2010, had a total   population of 102,423 of which 54,183 (52.9%) were males while 48,240 (47.1%) were females and has a population density of 43.7 persons per square kilometre. Persons of Ghanaian parentage, as expected, constitute the largest percentage of the population (89.4%) which is lower than the regional average (95.4%). The main ethnic groups that live in the district are the Ewes who are in the majority, Northerners, Akans and Krachis. Most (86.1%) of the people in the district live in the rural areas while the rest (13.9%) live in the urban areas, principally, the district capital, Donkorkrom (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012).

Among the population, 85.7 per cent were economically active while 14.3 per cent was found to be economically not active persons in the District (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). The major occupations for the population 15 years and older in the district are Agriculture, forestry and fishery (70.6%), Craft and related trades (14.6%), Service and sales (7%), Managers and professionals (3.9%), and miscellaneous activities (2.9%). The higher proportion of workers in the agricultural, forestry and fishery type of occupation is as the result of the vast land and the two major rivers, Lake Volta and the Afram River in the district (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012).

According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2012), as in 2010, the total population of those who attended school in the past constituted 25,816 made up of primary level (33%), JSS/JHS (27.7%), Middle School (24.3%), SSS/SHS (7.5%), and tertiary (3.7%). The Ghana Statistical Service (2012) explained further that between the sexes, more males 14,274 (55.3%) attended school in the past than females 11,542 (44.7%). For the KG sector, the enrolment trend since 2,001 is as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Kindergarten Enrolment Rates in Kwahu Afram Plains District (2001/2002 – 2015/2016)

| YEAR | ENROLMENT RATE (%) | | | | | |
| | GROSS | | | NET | | |
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
2001-2002	12.0	11.0	11.5	9.0	8.0	8.5
2002-2003	12.9	12.2	12.6	11.1	10.4	10.7
2003-2004	12.7	12.3	12.5	8.1	7.3	7.7
2004-2005	13.2	13.0	13.1	8.7	8.3	8.5
2006-2007	53.9	57.1	54.0	35.6	36.6	36.1
2007-2008	57.5	57.6	57.5	39.4	39.8	39.6
2008-2009	68.4	65.3	66.8	36.1	34.5	35.3
2009-2010	83.3	78.4	80.8	46.2	44.2	45.2
2010-2011	81.01	76.3	78.6	45.0	43.1	44.0
2011-2012	74.2	73.9	74.0	45.3	44.4	44.8
2012-2013	64.4	61.4	62.9	39.7	37.1	38.4
2013-2014	71.5	76.7	74.0	48.7	52.2	50.4
2014-2015	107.5	116.8	112.2	60.3	64.3	62.4
2015-2016	79.4	86.1	82.7	44.1	47.1	45.6

Source: Ministry of Education (EMIS: 2001 – 2002 to 2015 - 2016)

Study Population

A research population is a well-defined collection of individuals or objects known to have similar characteristics or the entire group of people about

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whom the researcher needs to obtain information (McDaniel & Gates, 2006). The study population in this study was all parents or guardians who had children in the 80 primary schools in KAPN. Primary schools were selected to enable the researcher to select pupils and use them to identify parents for the survey. Using KGs would have given a one-sided view of only those who sent their children to KG. Also, primary schools were used because of the need to investigate why even though they could have enrolled their children directly into primary school, some parents still ensured that their children had KG experience first.

As at 2016, KAPN was divided into seven education Circuits, with a total of 80 Primary Schools and 11497 pupils (MOE-EMIS, 2016). Consequently, the parents or guardians of the 11,497 pupils formed the population for the study. The basis for selection of this group was that this group of parents was the one that could express views on what influenced parents to either enrol or not enrol their children in KG.

Sampling Procedures

Multiple sampling techniques were used to select the respondents in the study. After the selection of KAPN as the Study Area, the seven education Circuits in the district, with a total enrolment of 11,497 pupils, were grouped into two, urban and rural. Three Circuits (Donkorkrom East, Donkorkrom West and Adeemmra) being part of the district capital and, hence, the most urbanised in the district, were classified as "urban" in the study. The remaining four Circuits (Mem-Chemfre, Ntonaboma, Nyakuikope, and Senafukope), because of their characteristics and distance from the district capital, were classified as "Rural". A simple random sampling procedure was used to select a circuit each

from the rural and urban settings. This was done using the lottery method, where for each of the settings (urban and rural), names of the circuits within the group were written on a similarly cut out sheet of paper, folded and shuffled together in a bowl. A sheet was then randomly picked from each of the bowls containing the names of circuits in the respective groups. Eventually, Donkorkrom East and Mem-Chemfre were selected to represent the urban and rural circuits, respectively, in the study.

The total enrolment of 11,497 pupils formed the sampling frame from which the study population was derived. Consequently, Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) method was used to generate a sample size of 627.8 pupils, approximated to 628 pupils, whose parents were to be interviewed. Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula for sample size calculation is:

$$S = \frac{X^2 NP(1-P)}{d^2(N-1) + X^2 P(1-P)}$$

where, S = required sample size

X^2 = table value of chi square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence interval (6.64)

N = Population size

P = population proportion assumed to be 0.5 since this world give the maximum sample size, and

d = degree of accuracy (0.05)

$$S = \frac{6.64 \times 11,497 \times (0.5) \times (1-0.5)}{[(0.05) \times (0.05) \times (11,497-1)] + [6.64 \times (0.5) \times (1-0.5)]} = 627.7967$$

The sample size formula was used because it was easily applicable and its key requirements of a sampling frame was generated during the study. The

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sample size generated through this process by Krejcie and Morgan's method at a confidence level of 95 per cent, and a margin of error of five per cent produced a sample size of 370 for the population of 11,497, while at a confidence level of 99 per cent, and a margin of error of one per cent, a sample size of approximately 628 was produced for the same population. The sample size of 628 provided by this approach was adopted in order to minimise the margin of error in the representativeness of the sample across the entire district. Since there were a total of 22 Primary Schools in the two Circuits (Donkorkrom East -8; Mem-Chemfre -14), to get the 628 respondents meant an average of 4.8 (approximated to 5) pupils per class. As a result of this approximation, the sample size increased from 628 to 660 respondents (Table 2).

Table 2: Sample Distribution by Locality

Status of Locality	Urban	Rural	Total
No. of Primary Schools	8	14	22
Total No. of classes	48	84	132
No. Pupils per Class (P1 –P6)	5	5	
Total Households represented	240	420	660

Source: Ghana Education Service, District Education Office, 2016

A simple random sampling method was used to select the pupils from all the primary schools in the two circuits and through them their parents were reached. To ensure that no two children were picked for the same parent, all siblings were identified, and a simple lottery method was used to eliminate one of them. Incidentally, there were only two of such cases. The school children were used as a proxy to reach the parents due to the absence of a sampling frame for the parents in the district. To minimise disruption of classes, the names of

pupils in the class attendance registers were used, through a random sampling process, to identify the children whose parents were subsequently interviewed. All the names of children in each class in each of the circuits were written and placed in a bowl, out of which five names were chosen to represent the class. Two additional names were picked to standby, in case some of the original choices of parents could not be reached. Each child selected was followed to the house and the principal parent or guardian who was responsible for their schooling, especially for enrolling them in KG, was interviewed.

Apart from the parents who were the main respondents in the interview, two Focus Group interviews were also conducted in the two circuits (Donkorkrom East and Mim Kyemfre). A focus group discussion (FGD) is a good way to gather together people from similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest. Unlike the main interviews which are used to explore the views, experiences, beliefs and motivations of individual participants, FGDs use group dynamics to generate qualitative data. The main advantage of focus groups is that they are useful to obtain detailed information about personal and group feelings, perceptions and opinions. They can save time and money compared to individual interviews and they can also provide a broader range of information. In the selection of the focus group discussants, care was taken to ensure equal representation of males and females as well as balance in power relations to ensure that no discussant might feel intimidated by another during discussions. To achieve this, the eight people in each group were grouped as follows: Teacher and Head teacher, Circuit Supervisor and PTA Chairman, and a traditional or opinion leader and three parents. Consequently, in each Circuit, a teacher, a head teacher, a Circuit Supervisor,

the Chairman of the PTA, a traditional or opinion leader, and three parents were purposively selected to participate in a focus group discussion. From each group, 50 per cent of the members were females. Care was also taken to ensure the democratic rights of all participants in the groups during discussions.

Sources of Data

Both primary and secondary sources of data were used in the survey. Primary data was collected through interviews from the principal respondents in the study (parents and guardians) and the focus group discussions. Secondary data, which consisted of official statistics and other information, was also collected through a desk review of existing documents, mainly from the Ministry of Education's Education Management Information system and the District Education Office's Planning and Statistics Office.

Data Collection Instruments

The main data collection instrument used in the survey was the Interview schedule (Annex A). The use of this instrument conformed to King and Horrocks (2010) statement that the purpose of an interview is to allow for discussions that lead for an exchange of understanding and views which meet the aims of the research. Even though it is known that this instrument has a major disadvantage of the presence of the interviewer being able to influence responses, as well as being more expensive to use and time consuming, this method was preferred because of its suitability for both literates and illiterates. It also permits clarification of questions when necessary. Finally, it has a higher response rate than mail questionnaires.

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The interview schedule was made up of both close-ended and open-ended questions. The schedule covered issues related to parental awareness of the ECE policy environment, parents' perception of the importance of KG education for children, demographic characteristics of parents and how they affected motivation of parents, issues of importance to parents when they enrolled their children in KG, the influence of children characteristics on their school enrolment and factors that made some parents fail to enrol their children in KG.

For the focus group discussions, a discussion guide was used (Annex B). The main issues covered in the FGD mirrored those in the main interviews, except that the issues discussed were more general than those in the individual interviews. Consequently, the FGDs provided more general information than the individual interviews.

Pre-Test of Interview Schedule

A pre-test was conducted prior to the main study. This was done in conformity with the advice of Krosnick and Presser (2010) that a pre-test was essential part of research. The pre-test led to a review of three main things in the survey: the interview guide itself, individual questions and data analysis. With regard to the interview schedule itself, issues that were considered include the length of the interview schedule, the number of lines (space) to leave for responses, and the sequencing of questions. The individual questions were also reviewed to remove ambiguities and any confusion in the questions. Any terminologies that were unfamiliar to most respondents were either removed or clarified. For instance, the pre-test revealed the multiple terminologies and

confusion among the respondents about terms like "Nursery", "Kindergarten" and "Preschool". This led to the adoption of a common definition for KG as the two years of formal education before enrolment in Primary class One. Finally, a brief data analysis was conducted to ensure that the questions would elicit responses that met the objectives of the study.

The pre-test was conducted on 24 parents whose children attended Tease District Authority Primary School in Kwahu Afram Plains South, a district that together with KAPN used to be one district and so share similar characteristics in many respects. Two children (one boy and one girl) were randomly chosen from each class in the primary school.   All the 24 parents whose children were selected were interviewed and their responses analysed. The results formed the basis for review of the instruments for data collection as well as the sampling method to be used. For instance, the pre-test, apart from providing rationale for the review of some of the questions in the interview schedule, also revealed that unless extra effort was made, most women whose participation in the study was crucial in order to cross-reference data collected might not participate. These findings influenced a review of the interview schedule and the research methodology.

Ethical Considerations

According to Leedy (1997), when dealing with research ethics, it is necessary to keep in mind that the principles of ethical propriety at the base of most of these guidelines resolve into simple considerations of fairness, honesty, openness of intent, disclosure of methods, the ends of the researcher to guarantee unequivocally individual privacy, and an informed willingness on the

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part of the subject to participate voluntarily in the research activity. Consequently, there is no general agreement among philosophers about the answers to what constitutes an ethical consideration hence it is the researcher's conscience which operates to inhibit any questionable practice (Zikmund, 2000). Researchers are, therefore, reminded that research is conducted for research purposes and not intended to use the data collected for any other purpose. Confidentiality and anonymity are also paramount to both the researcher and the participants (Wong, 2014).

Ethical issues addressed in the study, therefore, included the appropriate protocols related to institutional and community entry, confidentiality and anonymity of respondents, openness, etc. Proper introduction of the researcher, the theme and purpose of the research was done to institutions, communities and individuals in the research. For example, the approval of Ghana Education Service, both Headquarters and District levels, were granted before participant selection was conducted in schools. The respondents participated in the research voluntarily and were assured of their privacy and anonymity, as well as the confidentiality of their responses, except for academic purposes. In a particular instance when a participant felt uncomfortable about giving information about the challenges of sending her child to KG because of her status as a single parent, she had to be re-assured and the question rephrased before the interview continued. Care was also taken to minimise disruption of classes in the schools where the fieldwork was conducted. This explains why names in the class registers were used to select the children whose parents were interviewed. This also ensured that the feelings of children whose names were not selected were not hurt, especially when the process was also explained to them. All the data

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gathered were coded and analysed only for the study and none has been used for any other purpose except for this thesis and any subsequent publications that may result thereof.

The Fieldwork

The actual fieldwork was carried out twice over a period of six months, each by a team of 22 trained Research Assistants (one per school) working under the direct supervision of two Coordinators and the researcher. The first data collection was done over a six-month period (July to December, 2015). Unfortunately, as a result of an unfortunate occurrence, the entire data collection exercise (selection and training of the data collectors and the actual data collection in the field) had to be done again from August, 2016 to October, 2016). In the first instance, after the completion of the first data collection exercise and data entry and Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) analysis, some thieves broke into my friend's car at night and made away with some of the materials related to the fieldwork in three rural communities. The data had to be collected again, in different localities in the same circuits at extra cost and time.

All the people involved in the data collection exercise were trained together on how to administer the interview schedule and to interpret the questions. The training involved power point presentations on the rationale for the study, ethics and protocols of data collection, selection of respondents, dealing with respondents and on how to ensure quality in the data collected.

A mock data collection exercise was done by the data collectors in three languages (English, Ewe and Twi) to ensure that the main languages used in the District were covered. Efforts were also made to ensure that native speakers of

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Ewe and Twi were assigned to communities where one particular language was predominantly spoken. In some homes in some communities, the two coordinators of the data collection exercise had to step in to assist the data collectors who found it difficult to communicate effectively in the language that the respondents understood well. In each Circuit selected for the study, one focus group discussion was held and the results were used to cross-check the responses of the main respondents.

Challenges and Limitations

It was not easy to get some of the respondents to participate. In some instances, the interviews had to be conducted on the farm, during the farmers' lunch break. Eleven previously selected interviewees had to be replaced with their alternates, as they had travelled during the fieldwork. Also some female parents were reluctant to be interviewed and would have preferred their husbands to be interviewed instead. For ethical reasons, it was not possible to inform the families that their own children had indicated earlier on that they were the main support for their education. It took time to get these women, sometimes with the support of their husbands, to get them to participate in the interviews.

In the urban location, five of the respondents were not ready to offer themselves to be interviewed. Such potential urban respondents either did not have time or just did not see the benefit of participating in the survey for either themselves or their children. In line with ethical principles of voluntary participation of respondents (Wong, 2014), two of them who could not be convinced to participate in the interviews were excused from the interviews and replaced with their alternates.

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Finally, there were some memory loss with regard to some questions that related to children in Upper Primary (Classes 4 – 6) due to the long period when they were in KG. The data collectors spent relatively long periods with such respondents.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data gathered from the study was edited and coded and later analysed using Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 22 with facilities for descriptive statistics, cross - tabulations and frequency distributions. The SPSS was used to conduct chi square estimation on the quantitative data as well as to calculate the Cramer's V to ascertain the size effect of the sample on the chi square. Analyses of the field data involved deriving quantitative statistics like frequencies, cross tabulations and chi-square tests to describe and interpret data from the field. Through this process, it was possible to determine whether differences in responses among various sub-groups of the respondents could be attributed to their socio-economic characteristics and were statistically significant enough to justify the conclusions of the study.

In testing the relationship between respondents' demographics and the motivation to enroll their children in KG, the demographic variables were measured as nominal categories while the motivation to enroll children in KG was also measured as a nominal category. Therefore, the chi-square (χ^2) test is appropriate in testing the relationship between respondents' demographic variables (location, gender, age, educational background) and the motivation to enroll their children in KG. However, the chi-square test is highly sensitive to sample size. As sample size increases, absolute differences become a smaller

and smaller proportion of the expected value. Generally, when the expected frequency in a cell of a table is less than 5, chi-square can lead to erroneous conclusions (Akoglu, 2018). While the chi-square is the most appropriate test of the hypothesis that the variables are independent, it does not give a measure of the strength of the association. Thus, the size of the chi-square statistic may not provide a reliable guide to the strength of the statistical relationship between the variables. Chi-square generally gets larger with a higher sample size. Therefore, to obtain   an accurate measure of strength, removal of the influence of sample size is essential. Another challenge with the chi-square is that the value of the chi-square statistic may change depending on the number of cells in the table.

To address these problems, the chi-square statistic can be adjusted for either the sample size or the dimension of the table, or both of these. Phi (φ), Cramer's V (V) and odds ratio (OR) are measures of association that carry out this adjustment, using the chi-square statistic. Phi and Odds Ratio are only suitable for a 2x2 contingency table while Cramer's V is suitable for larger contingency tables. Cramer's V is a commonly-used effect size for the chi-square test of independence and is based on adjusting chi-square significance to factor out sample size. In this study, Cramer's V is the most appropriate test to use in determining the effect size since the contingency tables are larger than a 2x2 contingency. Additionally, though the value of the chi-square statistic may change depending on the number of cells in the table, Cramer's V is applicable regardless of table size (Agresti, 1996). Cramer's V was calculated as:

$$V = \sqrt{\frac{\chi^2}{n \cdot df^*}}$$

where $df^* = \min(r - 1, c - 1)$ and $r =$ number of rows and $c =$ number of columns in the contingency table.

According to Cohen (1988), the rule of thumb for Cramer's V is as follows*:*

    i. $0.10 < 0.30 =$ small effect

    ii. $0.30 < 0.50 =$ medium effect

    iii. 0.50 or more $=$ large effect

In summary, it is insufficient to report the significance of a chi-square test since significance alone does not validate conclusions about the magnitude of an effect (Akoglu, 2018). Accordingly, this study performed a post-hoc test by reporting the effect size of the chi-square values through the application of Cramer's V test.

The NVivo version 10 application software was used to analyse the qualitative data for both the interviews and focus group discussions. This allowed for easier coding of the responses into themes which could be presented in a cohesive manner. Analysis of the qualitative data helped to determine the meaning and rationale behind some of the conclusions, for example, what motivates a parent to enrol his or her child in a particular KG.

Even though the study adopted a mixed method approach, it leaned more towards a quantitative methodology (about 70%) than a qualitative methodology (30%). Discussions of the study are presented according to the themes, as presented in the chapter outline. The consensus reached in the group discussions as well as results of the discussions of staff of the various Ministries and Departments were used to either cross-check or buttress issues or concerns raised by the parent-respondents in the interviews.

CHAPTER FOUR

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS AND ENROLMENT OF RESPONDENTS' CHILDREN IN KINDERGARTEN

Introduction

This first part of this section describes the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents involved in the study. Even though this part of the study is not directly linked to the research questions, it helped to obtain relevant information about respondents sampled for the study. The demographic characteristics of the respondents were not used as criteria for their inclusion in the survey. Therefore, the predominance of certain characteristics, such as, dominance of respondents in certain age groups, occupations and educational backgrounds in the findings was purely by chance and only reflect the major backgrounds of people in the areas selected for the study.

This second section of the chapter presents the main findings of the study regarding the enrolment of respondents' children in KG. It also presents views of respondents whose children did not benefit from KG education. Finally, the chapter ends with a section on the respondents' motivation to recommend KG to other parents.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Six hundred and sixty (Urban -240, Rural - 420) parent respondents, whose children had been pre-selected through a simple random process, were expected to participate in the study. However, 653 (98.9% of the expected) parents were actually interviewed. The 653 respondents were made up of 236 (98.3% of the expected) urban respondents and 417 (99.3% of the expected)

rural respondents. The lower-than-expected response rate was due to the absence of some of the parents targeted for the study. In all seven cases the original prospective respondent and the two alternates were all absent and could not be replaced, due to time constraints. In all, urban respondents (236) constituted 36.1 per cent while the rural respondents (417) formed 63.9 per cent of the respondents in the study.

Out of the 653 respondents, 224 (34.3%) were females while the remaining 429 (65.7%) were males. The female respondents, even when they were said to be the ones who enrolled their children in KG, generally, preferred their husbands whom they referred to as the "family head" to be the parent interviewed. In some cases, as soon as some of the women learnt that the interview was about children's education, they invited their husbands to provide the information. In such cases, it sometimes took some effort to convince such women to participate. Once they started, however, they were as enthusiastic about the interview as the male participants. Further analysis of the responses showed that there were relatively more (68.2%) urban male respondents than rural respondents (64.3%) in the survey. On the other hand, there were proportionately more (35.7%) female rural respondents than female urban respondents (31.8%) in the survey. The ages of the respondents ranged from 20 to 59 years. For ease of analysis in this research, the respondents were group into three categories ("Young", "Middle-aged", and "Old"). Consequently, 173 of the respondents were classified as "Young" respondents (20-34 years) constituted 26.5 percent of the total respondents. The "Middle-aged" group (35-49 years) was made up of 360 respondents and formed 55.4 per cent of the total respondents. Finally, the group which was classified as "Old" (50 years and

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above) was made up of 120 respondents and formed 18.1 per cent of all respondents in the study.

The educational background of the respondents was generally low. Ninety-seven (14.9%) of the respondents did not have any formal education while 447 respondents (68.4%) had only basic education (Primary/JHS/Middle Form 4) as their highest educational qualification. Seventy-six respondents (11.6%) had second cycle (Senior Secondary/Technical/Vocational) qualifications while only 33 respondents (5.1%) and tertiary qualifications, respectively.

Enrolment of Respondents' Children in Kindergarten

All the 653 respondents identified formal education as the best preparation they could offer their children. They explained that it was mainly through formal education that children could be prepared for the future, and especially, for the highly paid and valued professional careers that parents coveted for their children. One participant, Kwaku Anane, a 29-year-old mechanic went further to add that "these days, even to acquire a driving license, you need formal education. You also need basic writing and mathematics skills if you are a dressmaker. I feel embarrassed when I go to the Bank to withdraw money and have to thumbprint instead of signing my name like the literates do". The findings confirm Van der Gaag's (2002) assertion about the importance of education and human development and that investments in education are an investment in human capital development.

The FGDs also corroborated the findings in the main interviews about the importance of formal education (including KG education) for children. The FGDs concluded that parents prefer salaried and highly-valued professional

careers for their children and were prepared to invest in the education of their children to enable the children to become what the parents aspired for them.

All the 653 respondents in the survey knew about KG, which some of them variously referred to as "Nursery", "Day Nursery" or "School for young children". Again, all of the respondents also claimed that they knew children in their communities who had attended KG in the past or were doing so at the time of the interviews. These children included their own children or those of friends, relatives and neighbours. According to the respondents, through the work of the government and the various organisations, they had a high awareness about KG education and this was a very strong source of motivation for their involvement in the KG education of their children.

The respondents also acknowledged that attending KG contributed to the achievement of parental expectations and aspirations for their children. A breakdown of the responses showed that 502 (76.9%) of the respondents believed that KG provided a foundation for a child's future. Another 85 (13%) also thought that KG enabled children to acquire the skills needed for primary school. Finally, 43 (6.6 per cent) of the respondents reported that KG helps children to develop an early interest in formal learning which they build on later in life to prepare them for their future careers. However, according to 23 (3.5%) respondents, KG did not contribute in any way towards the attainment of parental aspiration for their children. The FGDs in both Donkorkrom and Mim Kyemfre circuits, agreed that KGs play a role in the attainment of parental aspirations for children and that this belief could serve as a strong motivation for parents to enrol their children in KG. The conclusions drawn in the FGDs agreed with the view of the respondents who enrolled their children in KG that

when parents have a positive notion of KG education and see it as a pathway to social and occupational mobility for their children, they developed a positive attitude towards KG education.

Even though all the 653 respondents acknowledged the importance of schooling in their quest to prepare their children for the future, not all of them enrolled their children in KG prior to their enrolment in primary school. The results of the survey revealed that 576 (88.2%) of the respondents reported that their children had KG education before entering primary school while the remaining 77 (representing 11.8% of the 653 respondents in the study) reported that their children did not. This implies that for some respondents, parental belief about the relevance of KG in child development did not always translate into the actions they took regarding their children's enrolment in KG.

The respondents whose children entered Primary school without KG experience gave reasons to explain why it happened so. The two leading deterrents to KG enrolment that were mentioned by the respondents were "Distance to school" (23.4%) and "inability of parents to afford the cost of their children's schooling" (19.5%). Further analysis revealed that "distance to school" was a real challenge to the respondents in communities where there were no KGs or where the existing KG was far away from the child's place of residence. In such cases, the parents were reluctant to allow their children to commute long distances to school. Regarding "cost of education" it was revealed that this was a challenge for parents who lived in communities where there were only private KGs or those who could not afford major indirect costs of education such as school uniforms, feeding at school or cost of transportation to school.

Another reason which was reported as a major contributory factor to explain why 11.7 per cent of the respondents whose children did not have KG experience prior to entering primary school was that, though essential, KG experience is not a legal requirement. In many rural schools KG experience is not required or demanded by school authorities. This made KG enrolment optional hence, some parents decided not to enrol their children. Such parents waited until their children of primary school age and enrolled them directly.

Some parents (10.4%) also reported that there were relatives and other people at home to help them to take care of children, as and when necessary, so they were able to keep their children out of KG. Lack of the required legal documents, especially birth certificates, was mentioned by some (10.4%) respondents as the challenge they could not overcome in their desire to enrol their children in KG. They explained that they had been informed that this was a requirement for admission and since they did not have the documents, they did not even bother to seek admission for their children.

Other deterrents that were mentioned by respondents as the reason why they did not enrol their children in KG were "poor quality of KG education" (7.8%), "bad attitude of some teachers" (7.8%), "enrolment of children in alternative programmes such as in Qur'anic schools" (3.9%), "sickness or disability of children" (3.9%), and "refusal of the child to attend" (1.3%).

Analysis of the findings revealed that the respondents' place of residence had some level of influence on the factors that deterred them from enrolling their children in KG. For instance, "distance to school" was a stronger deterrent for the rural respondents (35.4%) than it was for their urban counterparts (3.4%). Also, the practice of enrolling children who did not have

KG experience directly into primary school was more of a rural-area occurrence (Rural – 18.8%, Urban 0.0%). The availability of other people at home to help to take care of young children also affected rural respondents more (Rural – 14.6%, Urban 3.4%).

On the other hand, certain factors were much stronger reasons for the urban respondents to keep their children out of KG than they were for the rural respondents. These were "inability to afford the high cost of education" (Urban 21.7%, Rural – 18.5%), lack of the documents needed for admission (Urban 26.1%, Rural – 3.7%), poor quality of services provided in some KGs (Urban 13.0%, Rural – 5.6%), and the negative attitude of some teachers (Urban 21.7%, Rural – 1.9%). The differences in the reasons why some urban and rural respondents kept their children out of KG were statistically significant. Table 3 presents respondents' reasons why some parents did not enrol their children in KG education by age of respondents.

Table 3: Reasons for not Enrolling Children in KG by Place of Residence of Respondents

Reason	Rural		Urban		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Distance to school	17	31.5	1	4.3	18	23.4
Cost of education	10	18.5	5	21.7	15	19.5
KG experience not required	9	16.7	0	0.0	9	11.7
Mother/caretaker at home	7	13.0	1	4.3	8	10.4
Lack required documents	2	3.7	6	26.1	8	10.4
Poor quality of KG education	3	5.6	3	13.0	6	7.8
Teachers' negative attitude	1	1.9	5	21.7	6	7.8
Child attending another prog	2	3.7	1	4.3	3	3.9
Disability/sickness of child	2	3.7	1	4.3	3	3.9
Child refused to attend	1	1.9	0	0.0	1	1.3
Total	54	100.0	23	100.0	77	100.0

$X^2 = 27.738$,   df = 10,   P = 0.001

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

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The findings showed, also, that educational background of the respondents had some effect on what the respondents reported as the factors which made them keep their children out of KG. For instance, for the respondents with tertiary level education only two in-school related reasons made them keep their children out of KG. These were "Poor quality of education (33.3%) and "Negative attitude of teachers" (66.7%). The two reasons were also proportionately more significant for the respondents with second cycle education than they were for those with basic education and those without formal education. Finally, distance to school, KG experience not being a requirement, mother or caretaker being at home to take care of the child etc. were the reasons which made some of the respondents in the other groups keep their children out of KG. The differences among the education status groups to explain what made them keep their children out of KG were statistically significant. Table 4 presents respondents' reasons why some parents do not enrol their children in KG education by education status of respondents.

Table 4: Reasons for not Enrolling Children in KG by Educational Status of Respondents

Reason	No Formal Education		Up to Basic		2nd Cycle		Tertiary		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Distance to school	5	33.3	11	21.2	2	28.6	0	0.0	18	23.4
Cost of education	5	33.3	10	19.2	1	14.3	0	0.0	16	20.8
KG experience not required	1	6.7	8	15.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	11.7
Mother/caretaker at home	1	6.7	6	11.5	1	14.3	0	0.0	8	10.4
Lack required documents	1	6.7	7	13.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	10.4
Poor quality of KG education	1	6.7	3	5.8	1	14.3	1	33.3	6	7.8
Teachers' negative attitude	1	6.7	1	1.9	1	14.3	2	66.7	5	6.5
Child attending another prog	0	0.0	3	5.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	3.9
Disability/sickness of child	0	0.0	2	3.8	1	14.3	0	0.0	3	3.9
Child refused to attend	0	0.0	1	1.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.3
Total	15	100.0	52	100.0	7	100.0	3	100.0	77	100.0

$X^2 = 27.384$,   df = 30,   p = 0.443
Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The findings in the study also showed some differences between the reasons given by the males and females as to why they kept their children out of KG. "Distance to school" was, for instance, the most cited reason by the females (21.2%) as compared to a smaller proportion (25.0%) of the males who gave this reason. On the other hand, "Negative Attitude of teachers" was cited far more by the male respondents (4.5%) than it was by the female respondents (12.1%). Again, other areas of clear differences between the female and male respondents were when only female respondents kept their children out of KG because the children were attending other programmes or the children were either sick or disabled. On the other hand, only one male respondent reported that his child did not attend KG because the child refused to. The differences between the male and female respondents about what made them keep their children out of KG were, however, not statistically significant. Table 5 presents respondents' reasons why some parents do not enrol their children in KG education by sex of respondents.

Table 5: Reasons for not Enrolling Children in KG by Sex of Respondents

Reason	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Distance to school	11	25.0	7	21.2	18	23.4
Cost of education	9	20.5	6	18.2	15	19.5
KG experience not required	5	11.4	4	12.1	9	11.7
Mother/caretaker at home	5	11.4	3	9.1	8	10.4
Lack required documents	5	11.4	3	9.1	8	10.4
Poor quality of KG education	3	6.8	3	9.1	6	7.8
Teachers' negative attitude	2	4.5	4	12.1	6	7.8
Child attending another prog	2	4.5	1	3.0	3	3.9
Disability/sickness of child	2	4.5	1	3.0	3	3.9
Child refused to attend	0	0.0	1	3.0	1	1.3
Total	44	100.0	33	100.0	77	100.0

$X^2 = 8.097$,   df = 10,   p = 0.474
Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The analysis showed further, that distance to school (27.7%) and the cost of education (25.5%) were more of a constraint for the "Middle-aged" respondents than they were for the "Young" and the "Old" respondents. For the "Young" respondents, the main reasons why they kept their children out of KG were "KG education was not a requirement for entry into primary school" (18.8%), "lack of required documents (18.8%), "cost of education" (12.5%), "mother or caretaker at home to take care of children" (12.5%) and "poor quality of education" (12.5%). The single most significant reason that made the "Old" respondents keep their children out of KG was "Negative attitude of teachers" (27.3%). On the whole, the differences among the three age groups in the study about why they made their children stay out of KG were found not to be statistically significant. Table 6 presents respondents' reasons why some parents do not enrol their children in KG education by age of respondents.

Table 6: Reasons for not Enrolling Children in KG by Age of Respondents

Reason	Young		Middle		Old		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Distance to school	1	6.7	13	27.7	4	26.7	18	23.4
Cost of education	2	13.3	12	25.5	1	6.7	15	19.5
KG experience not required	3	20.0	5	10.6	1	6.7	9	11.7
Mother/caretaker at home	2	13.3	5	10.6	1	6.7	8	10.4
Lack required documents	2	13.3	4	8.5	2	13.3	8	10.4
Poor quality of KG education	2	13.3	3	6.4	1	6.7	6	7.8
Teachers' negative attitude	1	6.7	2	4.3	3	20.0	6	7.8
Child attending another prog	1	6.7	1	2.1	1	6.7	3	3.9
Disability/sickness of child	1	6.7	1	2.1	1	6.7	3	3.9
Child refused to attend	0	0.0	1	2.1	0	0.0	1	1.3
Total	15	100.0	47	100.0	15	100.0	77	100.0

$X^2 = 19.337$,   df = 20,   P = 0.371

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The chi-square test shows that only location had a significant relationship with the reasons for which the respondents did not enrol their

children in KG (p<0.05). The Cramer's V test further confirms the significant effect of the relationship (Cramer's V> 0.500) and that location had a large effect on respondents' reasons for not enrolling their children in KG is large (Table 7).

Table 7: Reasons for not Enrolling Child in KG Across Demographics

Demographics	χ^2	$df*$	Cramer's V	Approx. Sign (p)
Location	27.738	1	0.600	0.001
Sex	8.097	1	0.324	0.474
Age	19.337	2	0.354	0.371
Educational Background	27.384	3	0.344	0.443

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The FGDs confirmed all the reasons offered by the respondents except that the participants thought that the cost of education was the most serious deterrent to KG enrolment. According to the discussants, some parents often cite this as the reason for non-enrolment of their children in school even when that may not be the case. The FGDs also added that parental ignorance and irresponsibility also accounted for why some parents did not enrol their children in KG. With regard to the issue of required documents, it was realised that even though some school authorities asked for it, children were never denied admission if they did not have the documents.

Chapter Summary

The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents showed that the respondents could be classified into various sub-groups according to factors like place of residence, sex, age and educational background. All the respondents had positive impressions about ECE because of the belief that it was mainly through formal education, including ECE, that children are prepared for the future, and for cherished professions. For those whose children did not attend KG, it was not because they did not acknowledge the importance of KG. Their reason for not sending their children to KG included long distance to school, cost of education, KG experience not required for school admission, mother/caretaker at home and lack required documents.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRIMARY MOTIVATORS FOR KINDERGARTEN ENROLMENT

Introduction

This chapter presents the main findings of the study regarding the main underlying factors which motivated parents to act towards their children's kindergarten education. Central to the findings presented and discussed in this chapter are the underlying reasons that motivated parents to enrol their children in KG. The chapter presents the findings under themes like parental responsibility for their children's development, parental aspirations for their children, awareness of policies and initiatives introduced by the government and other actors to promote ECE, and parental perception of the importance of ECE. The results of the effect of four characteristics of the respondents (place of residence, educational background, age and sex) which were cross-tabulated with the variables above are also presented in this chapter.

Objective 1: Review the Effect of Parental Perception of their Responsibility for their Children's Development on their Motivation to enrol Children in KG.

The research findings revealed that one of the strongest sources of motivation for parents to enrol their children in KG was the acknowledgment of the primary responsibility that the immediate family of the child was reported to have towards their children's development. As confirmation of respondent's recognition of parental role in children's development, the respondents reported that both parents together (41%), the fathers alone (35.4%) or the mothers (41%) took the decision to send their children to KG. The findings also showed again that when parents were unable or unwilling to enrol their children in KG, older

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siblings of the children (6.9%) or friends and relatives of the respondents (4.7%) stepped in to enrol the children in KG. The support provided by other people close to the family confirm the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (2009) assertion that in some cultures "all family members" (siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and fictive kin, who may be friends or neighbours), often contribute in significant ways to children's education and development. Figure 4 shows respondents' views on the person responsible for enrolling children in KG education.
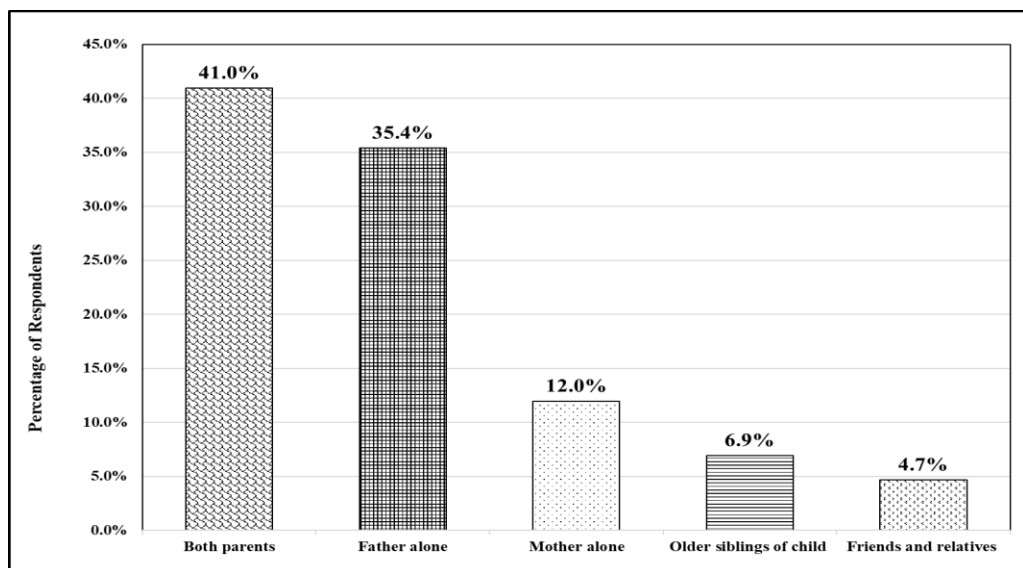
Figure 4: Person Responsible for Enrolling Children in KG

Source: Field Survey, October 2016

There was also consensus in the FGDs that parents were responsible for the enrolment of their children in KG. The conclusion that was drawn from the FGDs was that at this age, the child is too young to decide what to do with his or her life and that it is the responsibility of parents to prepare children for the future.

Analysis of Figure 4 shows further that both parents took great interest in their children's education, and that when it came to enrolling children in KG

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there was some level of joint decision-taking within the family. The proportion of respondents (41%) who reported that the decision to enrol children in KG was a joint father-mother decision, was larger than those who reported that fathers alone took the decision to (35.4%), mothers alone took the decision (12%) or other people took the decision (11.6%).

The FGDs in the two circuits could not explain conclusively why fathers were more responsible for their children's enrolment than mothers. While some of the discussants thought it was because the fathers were the head of the households, others thought that the fathers had more financial resources and wielded more power. Some of the discussants in Donkorkrom even suggested that it might not even be true that the fathers took the decision to enrol their children in KG. According to them, even when mothers took the decision, traditional courtesy demanded that they give the honour to their husbands when asked in public.

The findings show that parents' acknowledgement of their role in their children's development is a major determinant and predictor of parental support for children. Once parents identified their role in their children's development, this served as strong motivation to act appropriately. The conclusion is consistent with research findings, especially those by Chase-Lansdale & Pittman (2002), Duncan, Magnuson, & Ludwig (2004), Hirshberg, Huang, & Fuller (2005), Kohen et al. (2008) and Lahaie (2008) that in the early stages of life, children do not decide their context but are largely dependent on their parents and families. Hence, the type and quality of children's early learning and development contexts are determined by their parents' gate keeping, decision making, commitment of support, and use of resources, be it

personal/family resources, community resources, or time, factors which are also dependent on parents' characteristics and beliefs. The recognition of parental responsibility towards their children's development is, therefore, a critical first step in parental motivation for their children's enrolment in KG. Invariably, it is this acknowledgement of their responsibility which made the parents to take the initiative to enrol their children in KG.

Objective 2: Examine the Effect of Parents' Aspirations for their Children on their Motivation to enrol Children in KG.

The study examined whether parental aspirations for their children's future occupation had any association with their motivation to enrol their children in KG. Generally, the respondents had wide and varied future career aspirations for their children and were prepared to assist their children to attain them if it was within their means to influence or choose for the children. These career aspirations included those in the health sector, education, engineering, security services, and vocations like hairdressing, and dressmaking. The findings show that the two most prominent career choices that the respondents aspired for their children were education and health, mostly doctors, pharmacists and nurses. A small minority (5.3%), however, did not have any particular career expectation for their children, and reported that they would allow their children to follow their own passions. Figure 5 shows respondents' future career expectations for their children.

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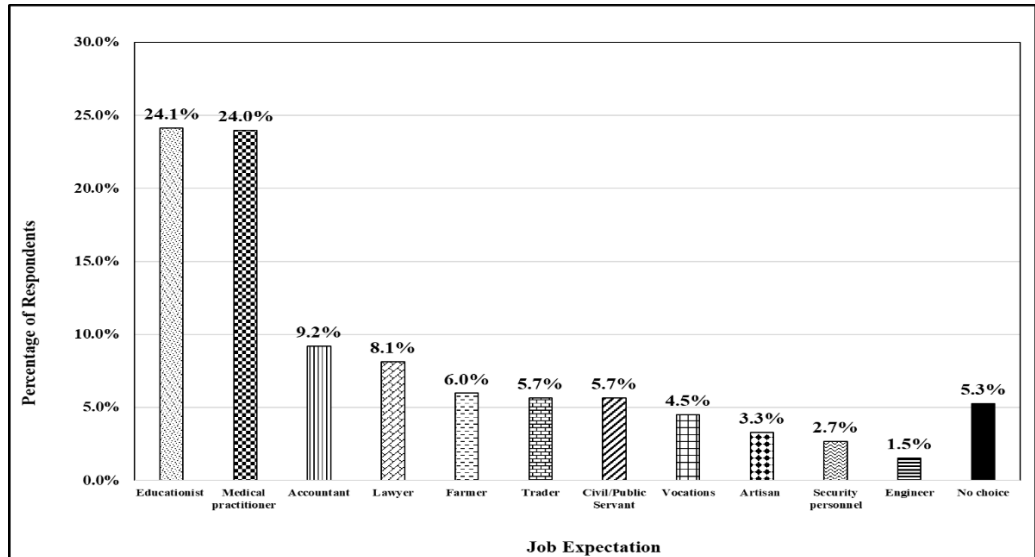
Figure 5: Respondents' Future Career Expectations for their Children

Source: Field Survey, October 2016

The discussants in the FGDs gave three reasons to explain why the respondents had such strong preference for careers in the health and education. Firstly, these professions were held in high esteem by society. Secondly, professionals in these sectors earned relatively high salaries. Finally, it is easier for trained personnel to gain employment in these sectors than in many other professions.

Another striking feature about the career preferences that the respondents had for their children was a differentiation in career preferences that the respondents had for their male and female children. It was only for careers in the health and education sectors the sex of their children did not appear to influence the kind of aspiration that respondents had for their children. For all the other career aspirations, marked differences were observed in the aspirations that the respondents had for their children that suggest that the sex of the child influenced the career choice. Even in their choice of careers in the health sector for their children, the parents showed their biases for certain

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particular career options for boys over girls and vice versa. For instance, out of the 165 parents who chose the "medical profession" for their daughters, 149 (90.3%) wanted them to become "Nurses". Only 9.7% chose "Doctors" and "Pharmacists" for their daughters. On the other hand, all the 148 parents who chose "medical profession" for their sons wanted them to become "Laboratory Technicians", "Doctors" and "Pharmacists".

For the other career choices, the respondents showed strong biases in the way some careers were seen as the preserve of a particular sex. For instance, typical male dominated career choices, as selected by the respondents, included "Accounting" (Males – 14.8%; Females – 3.5%), "Law" (Males – 10.1%; Females –5.5%), and "Farming" (Males – 7.2%; Females – 4.8%). The female dominated career choices included "Public/civil service" (Males – 2.4%; Females – 8.9%) and trading (Males – 0.9%; Females – 10.4%). The influence of sex on career choice for children was demonstrated more powerfully when professions like artisans (masonry, carpentry, plumbing, etc.,), engineering and security services were preferred choices for boys, but not for their girls. The opposite was also true for vocations like hairdressing, dressmaking and catering which nine per cent of the respondents chose for their girls, but none chose for their boys. Finally, the survey results showed that relatively fewer (1.2%) of the respondents were not certain of what careers they preferred for their sons, as compared to 9.3 per cent of them who had no future career preference for their daughters.
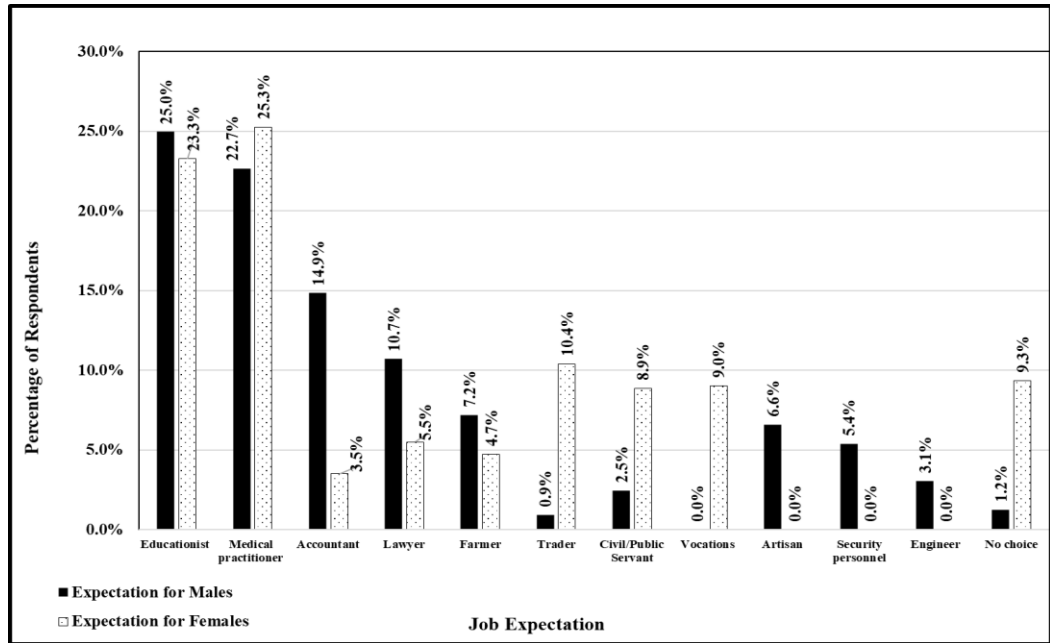
Figure 6: Respondents' Future Career Expectations for their Children by Sex of Children.

Source: Field Survey, October 2016

The participants in the FGDs also maintained that there should be a clear distinction between career aspirations for girls and those for boys. They reported that they would be satisfied with their daughters ending up as hairdressers, dress makers and caterers but would not choose these career for their sons, preferring occupations like carpentry, masonry and driving for the sons, instead. Two female participants in the FGDs gave responses which, most likely, might explain the higher level of indecision among the respondents about their future career preferences for their daughters. The first participant claimed that "choosing a profession for a girl is difficult, because her future husband may not want her to do that". The second participant, on her part, remarked that "it was more important to have high aspirations for boys and help them to achieve the expectations. After all, they will be the future breadwinners for their families".

The findings on the differentiation in career aspirations for male and female children in the study appear to confirm and reinforce widely held beliefs among many Ghanaians that certain professions are the traditional preserves of women while others are for men. They also confirm the World Bank's (2008) assertion that men and women's careers differ greatly, whether across sectors, industries, occupations and countries.

An overwhelming majority (96.5%) of the respondents maintained that there was a strong link between KG education and the achievement of their aspirations for their children. The reasons that the respondents gave for their belief was that KG helped to lay the foundation for children's future (76.9%), KG built skills for primary school (13%), and KG helped children to develop interest in learning (6.6%). A small proportion (3.5%) did not see any link between KG attendance and the attainment of the aspirations they had for their children.

Analysis of the findings show that the personal characteristics of the respondents had some influence on what they claimed were the impact of KG on the achievement of parental aspirations for children. For instance, the respondents' place of residence appeared to have some influence on their perception that KG attendance contributed to the achievement of the aspirations they had for their children. Consequently, there were differences in the proportions of the urban and rural respondents who believed that "KG provided a foundation for a child's future" (Rural – 72.9%; Urban – 83.9%), "KG enabled children to acquire the skills needed for primary school" (Rural – 16.8%; Urban – 6.4%) and "KG helps children to develop an early interest in formal learning" (Rural – 7.2%; Urban – 5.5%). Differences were also observed among the

respondents who did not see any link between KG and meeting future expectations (Rural – 3.1%; Urban – 4.2%). The conclusion that could be drawn from the findings is that the place of residence has some influence on their perception on the contribution of KG on the achievement of the aspirations that parents have for their children. The chi-square calculation shows that there were marked statistical differences between the rural and urban respondents in the perceptions about the contribution of KG towards the achievement of parental aspiration for children. Table 8 presents respondents' views on KG contribution to achievement of parental aspiration for children and their locality.

Table 8: KG's Contribution to Achievement of Parental Aspiration for Child by Locality

Contribution	Rural		Urban		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Foundation for our child's future	304	72.9	198	83.9	502	76.9
Skills for primary school	70	16.8	15	6.4	85	13.0
Interest in learning	30	7.2	13	5.5	43	6.6
No contribution	13	3.1	10	4.2	23	3.5
Total	417	100.0	236	100.0	653	100.0

$x^2 = 16.154$,   df = 3, P = 0.001

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

Even though both the males and female respondents agreed that KG contributed to the achievement of the aspirations that parents have for their children, there were some differences in the reasons they gave to support their beliefs. For instance, as can be seen from Table 9, the proportions of the male respondents who thought that "KG enabled children to acquire the skills needed for primary school" and "KG helped children to develop an early interest in formal learning" were relatively higher than the respective proportions of the

female respondents who thought so. On the other hand, the proportion of female respondents who reported that "KG provided a foundation for a child's future", as well as those who did not see any link between KG and meeting future expectations was higher than those of the male respondents. Even though there were differences between the male and female respondents about the role KG played in the achievement of parental aspiration for children, the differences were found to be statistically insignificant. Table 9 shows the contribution of KGs to achievement of parental aspiration for children and sex.

Table 9: KG's Contribution to Achievement of Parental Aspiration for Child by Sex

Contribution	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Foundation for our child's future	329	76.7	173	77.2	502	76.9
Skills for primary school	62	14.5	23	10.3	85	13.0
Interest in learning	30	7.0	13	5.8	43	6.6
No contribution	8	1.9	15	6.7	23	3.5
Total	429	100.0	224	100.0	653	100.0

X^2=12.055,   df = 3, p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

Also, as shown in Table 10, there was consensus among most of the respondents of all age groups in the study that there was a positive relationship between KG attendance. However, over all, the proportion of the Young (98.8%) and the Old respondents (98.3%) who asserted that KG attendance contributed to the achievement of the aspirations parents had for their children were higher than that of the Middle-aged respondents (94.7%) who thought so. In confirmation of the above analysis, the proportion of the Middle-aged

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respondents (5.3%) who did not see any positive relationship between KG attendance and the achievement of parental aspirations for children was, however, higher than that of the other age groups (Young – 1.2%, Old – 1.7%). The differences among the respondents which could be attributed to age was found to be statistically significant. Table 10 shows respondents' views on KG contribution to achievement of parental aspiration for children by age.

Table 10: KG's Contribution to Achievement of Parental Aspiration for Child by Age

Contribution	Young		Middle		Old		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Foundation for our child's future	146	84.4	254	70.6	102	85.0	502	76.9
Skills for primary school	24	13.9	50	13.9	11	9.2	85	13.0
Interest in learning	1	0.6	37	10.3	5	4.2	43	6.6
No contribution	2	1.2	19	5.3	2	1.7	23	3.5
Total	173	100.0	360	100.0	120	100.0	653	100.0

X^2=30.921,   df = 6, p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

As can be seen from Table 11, large majorities of each education status group thought that there was a link between KG attendance and the achievement of the aspirations they had for their children and gave various reasons to explain why they thought so. However, there were differences in the reasons that were given by the respondents which could be attributed to the educational background of the respondents.

One major observation that can be noted from Table 11 is that only respondents without formal education (11.3%) and those with only Basic education (2.7%) reported that they did not think that there was any link between KG attendance and the achievement of the aspirations they had for their

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children. No respondent with either second cycle or tertiary education reported this way. Despite these differences, the consensus in each of the groups was that there was a strong relationship between the two variables and that this contributed to their motivation to enrol their children in KG. The effect of differences in the educational status of the respondents on their perception about the link between KG attendance and the achievement of the aspirations they had for their children was found to be statistically significant. Table 11 presents respondents' opinion on contribution of KG to achievement of parental aspiration for child and their educational background.

Table 11: KG's Contribution to Achievement of Parental Aspiration for Child by Educational Background

Contribution	No formal Education		Basic Education		Second Cycle		Tertiary Education		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Foundation for our child's future	61	62.9	361	80.8	56	73.7	24	72.7	502	76.9
Skills for primary school	19	19.6	46	10.3	14	18.4	6	18.2	85	13.0
Interest in learning	6	6.2	28	6.3	6	7.9	3	9.1	43	6.6
No contribution	11	11.3	12	2.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	23	3.5
Total	97	100.0	447	100.0	76	100.0	33	100.0	653	100.0

X^2=33.840,   df = 9, p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The chi-square test shows that there is a significant relationship between the respondents' demographics (sex, age, location, education) and KG's contribution to the achievement of parental aspiration ($p<0.05$). However, the Cramer's V test shows that the relationships are weak (Cramer's V < 0.30), and that the effect size of the demographics on KG's contribution to the achievement of parental aspiration is small (Table 12).

Table 12: Contribution of KG to the Achievement of Parental Aspiration Across Demographics

Demographics	χ^2	df*	Cramer's V	Approx. Sign (p)
Location	16.154	1	0.157	0.001
Sex	12.055	1	0.136	0.000
Age	30.921	2	0.154	0.000
Educational Background	33.840	3	0.131	0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The evidence from this study reveal that parents who have high aspirations for their children's future are likely to be more willing to exert efforts to ensure that those aspirations are realised. Therefore, parents are likely to do more for their children by enrolling them in school activities that would prepare them to attain the goals aspired for them. The research findings confirm that educational and occupational aspirations are associated with the ways in which parents shape children's activities, time, and learning environment (Cardin, 2005; Li, 2004; Murphey, 1992; Yang & Kayaardi, 2004). The findings further confirm Drèze & Sen's (2002), Chiapa et al. (2012), and Samal's (2012) assertions that evidence from many countries indicate a positive correlation between parental aspirations and children's educational participation, especially in the children's school enrolment. The conclusion that could be drawn from the findings is, consequently, in line with the assertion by Polidano, Hanel and Buddelmeyer (2013) and Goodman and Gregg (2010) that parental aspiration and expectation of the outcome of education is a predictor of parental motivation to support their children in ECE.

Objective 3: Explore the Influence of Government's Early Childhood Education Policies on Parents' Motivation to enrol their Children in KG.

Parental awareness about policies and initiatives introduced by the government and organisations to promote KG education were found to have influence on parental motivation to enrol children in KG. All the respondents reported that they were aware that the Government of Ghana and other stakeholders have prioritised KG education and have adopted measures to promote KG education in the country.

The respondents were able to mention the introduction of pro-poor policies like free feeding and the extension of capitation grant (leading to elimination of certain fees) to the KG sector and sensitisation that children should enrol in KG at the official age of enrolment into KG as the main government interventions they were aware of. Other measures that were mentioned were the policy to make KG part of the basic education system by attaching KGs to every public Primary school in the country, provision of school uniform and free feeding to some pupils and the training of KG professional teachers in seven of the 38 public Colleges of Education in the country. For the respondents whose children enrolled in KG, this awareness contributed significantly to the decisions they took regarding the children's enrolment. Figure 7 illustrates the government's initiatives to promote KG education that the respondents mentioned that they were aware of.
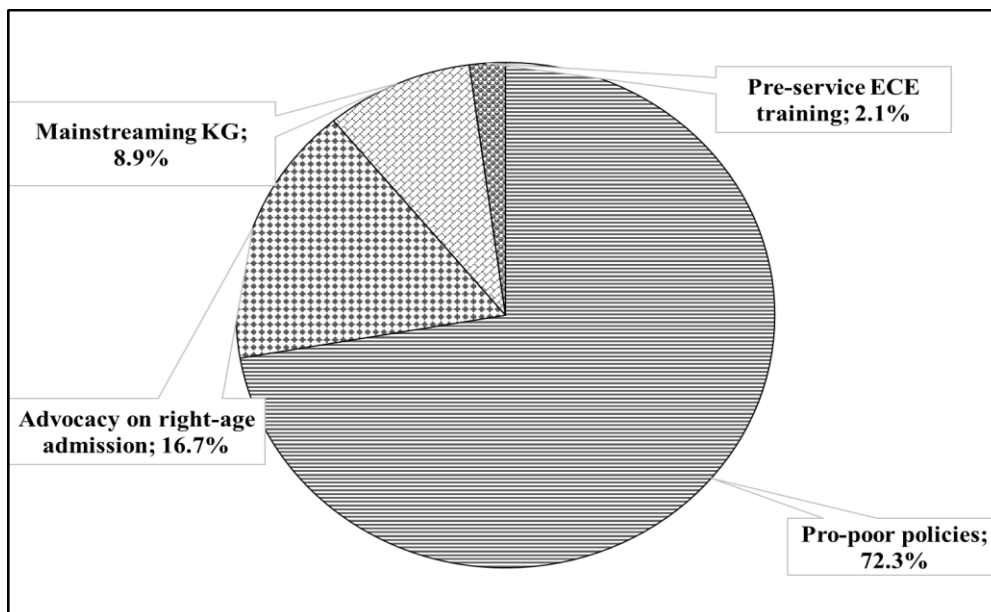
Figure 7: Government Initiatives to Promote KG Education

Source: Field Survey, October 2016

The FGDs in both circuits agreed that awareness about measures that both the Government of Ghana and other stakeholders have taken to promote KG education in the country was high. The findings show that awareness of the Government's pro-poor interventions was very high, a situation that the FGDs said was due to the high inducement value of this intervention for school enrolment. Evidence from the FGDs showed again that "Advocacy on right-age enrolment" was also known because this was an exercise that was conducted in most of the communities in the study area. However, knowledge about mainstreaming of KG into the basic school system and pre-service teacher training in Colleges of education was limited to much fewer people, especially those in the education sector. The two groups differed in their awareness about the main measure that the government has taken in this direction. For instance, while the FGD in the Mim Kyemfre Circuit mentioned the introduction of pro-poor policies as the main measure that has been introduced to promote KG, the

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FGD in the Donkorkrom Circuit mentioned sensitisation on right-age enrolment into KG as the main government intervention they were aware of.

The study revealed further that the background of the respondents influenced the specific information they had about the policies and initiatives to promote Kindergarten education. For instance, major differences were noted in the respondents' level of awareness about specific measures being undertaken to promote KG that the respondents' in the different locations in the study. A particular example is that even though both the rural and urban respondents knew about the introduction of pro-poor interventions to subsidise the cost of education at the basic education level, proportionately more of the urban respondents (93.2%) knew about this than the rural respondents (60.4%). However, as can be seen in Table 13, the respondents from the rural locations appeared better informed than their urban counterparts about measures to promote right-age enrolment in KGs, the government's policy to attach KGs to public primary schools and the introduction of ECE courses in selected Colleges of Education to prepare teachers for the KG sector. Table 13 presents respondents' views on their place of residence and government initiatives to promote KG.

Table 13: Awareness of Initiatives to Promote KG Education by Place of Residence of Respondents

Government Initiatives to promote KG education	Rural		Urban		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Implementation of pro-poor policies	252	60.4	220	93.2	472	72.3
Advocacy on right age admission	108	25.9	1	0.4	109	16.7
Mainstreaming KG	43	10.3	15	6.4	58	8.9
Pre-service ECE training	14	3.4	0	0.0	14	2.1
Total	417	100.0	236	100.0	653	100.0

$X^2 = 81.979$,   df = 3, p = 0.000
Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

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The educational background of respondents also appeared to affect about the awareness levels of the respondents about the measures adopted to promote KG (Table 14). For example, only 24.2 per cent respondents with tertiary level education mentioned were aware that the government was using pro-poor interventions to promote KG education. However, pro-poor interventions were the main measures known by most of the respondents without tertiary education (no formal education - 58.8%; Basic Education – 81.2%; 2nd cycle Education – 57.9%). The findings indicate that the tertiary educated respondents were rather, better informed about the mainstreaming of KG into the formal education system and pre-service ECE teacher training than the other groups of respondents. Awareness of the right-age enrolment was spread out fairly among all the respondents but the mainstreaming of KG into the basic education system was better known among respondents without formal education and those with tertiary education than it was among those with Basic and Second Cycle education. Finally, no respondent with second cycle education knew about the introduction of ECE teacher training in selected Colleges of Education. Table 14 presents government initiatives to promote KG education and respondents' educational background.

Table 14: Awareness of Initiatives to Promote KG Education by Educational Background of Respondents

Government Initiative to Promote KG education	No formal Education		Basic Education		2nd Cycle		Tertiary Education		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Pro-poor policies	57	58.8	363	81.2	44	57.9	8	24.2	472	72.3
Right age enrolment	15	15.5	57	12.8	28	36.8	9	27.3	109	16.7
Mainstreaming KG	24	24.7	18	4.0	4	5.3	12	36.4	58	8.9
Pre-service ECE training	1	1.0	9	2.0	0	0.0	4	12.1	14	2.1
Total	97	100.0	447	100.0	76	100.0	33	100.0	653	100.0

X^2= 133.00,   df = 9, p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

Overall, there were differences in the proportions of the male and female respondents about their awareness of the measures that the government has undertaken to promote KG education in the country. Even though high proportions of both sexes mentioned "Pro-poor policies" as the most significant measure that the government has undertaken to promote KG education in the country, analysis showed that relatively more females were aware of this measure than were the males (Males – 71.6%; Females – 73.7%). Again, the proportion of females (12.5%) who were aware that the government had mainstreamed KG into basic education was higher than that of the males (7.0%) who knew about this. The males (19.1%) knew about "Right-age enrolment" more than the females (12.1%). Finally, relatively more males (2.3%) knew about "Pre-service ECE training of teachers" than did the female respondents (1.8%). The difference between the responses of the male and female responses were found to be statistically significant. Table 15 presents government initiatives to promote KG education and respondents' sex.

Table 15: Awareness of Initiatives to Promote KG Education by Sex of Respondents

Initiative	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Pro-poor policies	307	71.6	165	73.7	472	72.3
Right age enrolment	82	19.1	27	12.1	109	16.7
Mainstreaming KG	30	7.0	28	12.5	58	8.9
Pre-service ECE training	10	2.3	4	1.8	14	2.1
Total	429	100.0	224	100.0	653	100.0

$X^2 = 9.714$,   df = 3, p = 0.021

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

Evidence from the study revealed that majority of all the age-groups ("Young" – 69.7%, "Middle-aged" – 67.2%, "Old" -92.2%) were aware of the government's pro-poor policies which help to promote KG in the country. Besides the awareness of the government's pro-poor policies, the only other measure that the "Old" respondents knew about was the introduction of pre-service teacher training in selected Colleges of Education (7.2%). The "Young" and the "Middle-aged" respondents, however, were also aware that the government was using a campaign on "right-age" enrolment and mainstreaming of KG into FCUBE to promote KG in the country. The difference among the different categories of the age groupings in their responses were found to be statistically significant. Table 16 presents respondents' views on government initiatives to promote KG education and their age.

Table 16: Awareness of Initiatives to Promote KG Education by Age of Respondents

Initiative	Young		Middle		Old		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Pro-poor policies	122	69.7	244	67.2	106	92.2	472	72.3
Right age enrolment	31	17.7	78	21.5	0	0.0	109	16.7
Mainstreaming KG	22	12.6	36	9.9	0	0.0	58	8.9
Pre-service ECE training	0	0.0	5	1.4	9	7.8	14	2.1
Total	175	100.0	363	100.0	115	100.0	653	100.0

$X^2 = 36.858$,   df = 6, p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The chi-square test shows that there is a significant relationship between respondents' demographics (sex, age, location, education) and awareness of initiatives to promote KG education. However, the Cramer's V test shows that except for location and educational background, the relationships are weak, and that gender and age had a small effect (Cramer's V<0.30) on respondents' awareness of initiatives to promote KG education. Location and educational background had a medium effect (Cramer's V > 0.30) on respondents' awareness of initiatives to promote KG education (Table 17).

Table 17: Awareness of Initiatives to Promote KG Education Across Demographics

Demographics	χ^2	df*	Cramer's V	Approx. Sign (p)
Location	81.979	1	0.354	0.000
Sex	9.714	1	0.122	0.021
Age	36.858	2	0.168	0.000
Educational Background	133.00	3	0.451	0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The respondents had access to multiple channels through which the government disseminated information and this might have accounted for their high awareness level about policies and measures that the government has taken to promote KG education in the country. The main channel through which the respondents were made aware of government policies on education in the district was GES (Parent-Teacher Association meetings - 23%; direct sensitisation by officials of the District Office - 20.7%). The mass media (Radio - 26.2% and TV – 2.9%), the District Assembly system (10.1%), Relatives and friends (8.1%), and Traditional Authority, mostly through chiefs (7.8%), were also important communication channels for the respondents. The Member of Parliament (1.2%) was also mentioned as a channel for receiving information on government policy. Figure 8 shows the main sources for receiving information on government policy on KG.
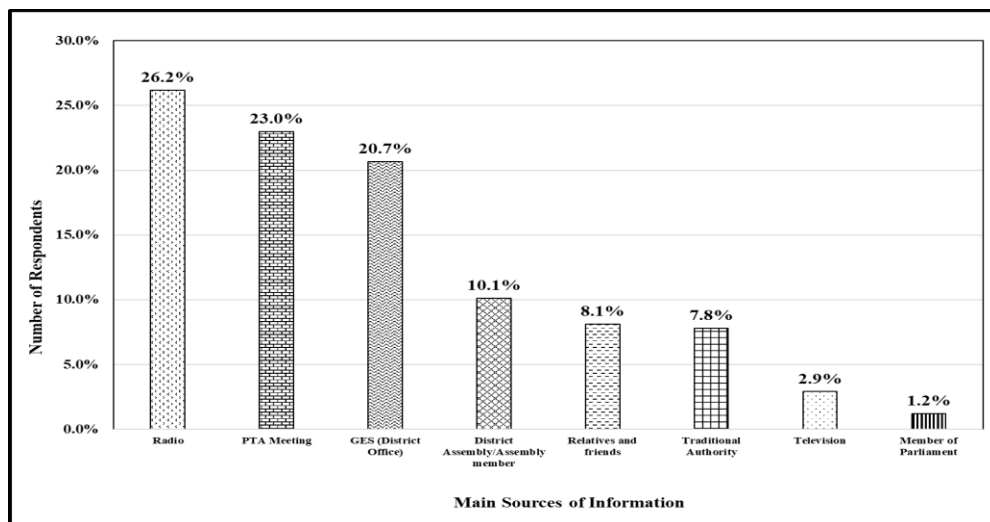
Figure 8: Main Source for Receiving Information on Government Policy on KG

Source: Field Survey, October 2016

The analysis suggests that the personal and social characteristics of the respondents appear to influence how they got information from the government

on KG-related policies and initiatives. The findings show clearly that the Radio, PTA meetings and Ghana Education Service (District Office) were important channels for information on government policy on ECE for both the urban and rural respondents. However, the three channels of information dissemination, together, were relatively more important for the urban respondents (75.4%) than they were for the rural respondents (66.7%). The District Assembly and Assembly members as well as friends and relatives were, on the other hand, more important sources of information for the rural respondents (11.5%) than they were for the urban respondents (7.6%). It appears that the influence of traditional authority, as a source of information dissemination was felt almost entirely in the rural areas (13.0%) and virtually non-existent in the urban areas (0.4%). The influence of the Member of Parliament (MP) as sources of dissemination of government policies and other vital information to the respondents was limited in both locations (Rural – 1.2%; Urban – 1.3%). Table 18 presents the main sources of information on government policy on KG education and respondents' place of residence.

Table 18: Main source for Receiving Information on Government Policy on KG by Place of Residence

Source of Information	Rural		Urban		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Radio	105	25.2	66	28.0	171	26.2
PTA Meeting	82	19.7	68	28.8	150	23.0
GES (District Office)	91	21.8	44	18.6	135	20.7
Assembly members	48	11.5	18	7.6	66	10.1
Relatives and friends	26	6.2	27	11.4	53	8.1
Traditional Authority	50	12.0	1	0.4	51	7.8
Television	10	2.4	9	3.8	19	2.9
Member of Parliament	5	1.2	3	1.3	8	1.2
Total	417	100.0	236	100.0	653	100.0

X^2= 39.136,   df = 7, p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The findings revealed further that both the male and female respondents mentioned that the radio, PTA meetings and the District Education Service were their top three sources of information. The main difference between the male and female respondents was with regard to the relative importance of particular sources of information for the different groups. For both males and females in the study, television and Members of parliament were the least used sources of information on government policy, especially those concerning KG promotion. Table 19 shows the main sources of information on government policy on KG by sex.

Table 19: Main Source for Receiving Information on Government Policy on KG by Sex

Source of Information	Male No.	Male %	Female No.	Female %	Total No.	Total %
Radio	104	24.2	67	29.9	171	26.2
PTA Meeting	106	24.7	44	19.6	150	23.0
GES (District Office)	91	21.2	44	19.6	135	20.7
Assembly members	44	10.3	22	9.8	66	10.1
Relatives and friends	39	9.1	14	6.3	53	8.1
Traditional Authority	28	6.5	23	10.3	51	7.8
Television	12	2.8	7	3.1	19	2.9
Member of Parliament	5	1.2	3	1.3	8	1.2
Total	429	100.0	224	100.0	653	100.0

$X^2 = 7.843$,   df = 7, p = 0.347

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

Differences were noted in the way the different age-category groups in the study received information on government policies on KG. For instance, even though the radio was an important source of information for all the respondents, it was relatively more so for the "Young" (26.3%) and "Middle-aged" (27%) than it was for the "Old" respondents (23.5%). The "Old" respondents (31.3%), however, relied more on PTA meetings than did the "Young" (18.9%) and "Middle-aged" (22.3%) respondents. The District Education Office was also an important source of information for the "Young" (32%) and "Middle-aged" (27%) but relatively far less important for the "Old" respondents (7%). The "Old" respondents also relied more on relatives and friends, traditional authority, television and their Member of Parliament as sources of information than did the "Young" and "Middle-aged" respondents. Reliance on Assembly members for information was more important for the "Middle-aged" respondents (12.6%) than it was for the "Young" respondents

(4.6%) and the "Old" respondents (8.7%). Table 20 illustrates the main sources of information on government policy on KG by age.

Table 20: Main Source for Receiving Information on Government Policy on KG by Age

Source of Information	Young		Middle		Old		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Radio	46	26.3	98	27.0	27	23.5	171	26.2
PTA Meeting	33	18.9	81	22.3	36	31.3	150	23.0
GES (District Office)	56	32.0	71	19.6	8	7.0	135	20.7
Assembly members	10	5.7	46	12.7	10	8.7	66	10.1
Relatives and friends	11	6.3	31	8.5	11	9.6	53	8.1
Traditional Authority	11	6.3	26	7.2	14	12.2	51	7.8
Television	6	3.4	6	1.7	7	6.1	19	2.9
Member of Parliament	2	1.1	4	1.1	2	1.7	8	1.2
Total	175	100.0	363	100.0	115	100.0	653	100.0

$X^2 = 215.70$,   df = 14,   p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

Evidence from Table 21 shows the likely influence of educational status on the sources of information on government policy on the respondents in the study. For example, the mass media (both radio and television) and relatives and friends, as sources of information on government policy on KG, was more relevant to the better educated respondents than it was for the relatively less educated respondents. However, the less educated respondents received their information more from GES-related sources (District Office and PTA meetings), Assembly members and traditional authority than the better educated respondents. Proportionately more of the tertiary educated respondents and the respondents without formal education seemed to have benefited more from their Members of Parliament than their other counterparts.

Table 21: Main Source for Receiving Information on Government Policy on KG by Educational Status

Source of Information	No formal Education		Basic Education		Second Cycle		Tertiary Education		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Radio	16	16.5	120	26.8	23	30.3	12	36.4	171	26.2
PTA Meeting	27	27.8	95	21.2	21	27.6	7	21.2	150	23.0
GES (District Office)	26	26.8	99	22.1	7	9.2	3	9.1	135	20.7
Assembly members	11	11.3	47	10.5	6	7.9	2	6.1	66	10.1
Relatives and friends	6	6.2	36	8.1	8	10.5	3	9.1	53	8.3
Traditional Authority	6	6.2	39	8.7	5	6.6	1	3.0	51	7.8
Television	3	3.1	8	1.8	5	6.6	3	9.1	19	2.8
Member of Parliament	2	2.1	3	0.8	1	1.3	2	6.1	8	1.2
Total	97	100.0	447	100.0	76	100.0	33	100.0	653	100.0

$X^2 = 149.00$,   df = 21, p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The chi-square test shows that with the exception of sex, there is a significant relationship between respondents' demographics (age, location, education) and the main source for receiving information on government policy on KG. However, the Cramer's V test shows that age and educational background had a medium effect (Cramer's V> 0.30) on respondents' main source for receiving information on government policy on KG while location had a small effect (Cramer's V<0.30).

Table 22: Main Source for Receiving Information on Government Policy on KG Across Demographics

Demographics	χ^2	df*	Cramer's V	Approx. Sign (p)
Location	39.136	1	0.245	0.000
Sex	7.843	1	0.110	0.021
Age	215.7	2	0.406	0.000
Educational Background	149.00	3	0.478	0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The efforts of organisations and individuals in the study area also influenced the respondents to make decisions about their children's enrolment in KG. The respondents reported that besides the efforts by the government to promote KG, there were also some institutions and individuals who were implementing KG-related programmes in their communities. Analysis of the results show that Ghana Education Service (61.7%) was the main agency which the respondents claimed was undertaking KG-related programmes in their communities. Other institutions which were also undertaking activities to promote KG in their communities were NGOs/Faith-based Organisations (18.1%), District Assemblies (17.3%) and community members living outside (2.9%).

The respondents identified sensitisation on the importance of KG, training of teachers, supervision of KG activities, distribution of uniforms and supply of teaching and learning materials as the main KG-related activities GES implemented in their communities. The District Assembly's main interventions to promote KG were listed as "school feeding", "sensitisation on the importance of KG", and "supply of furniture". Finally, the respondents reported that some "NGOs", especially, Afram Plains Development Organisation, the United

Nations' Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and World Vision International also contributed to the KG sector in their communities. The NGOs were reported to have constructed schools, trained teachers, provided teaching and learning materials, and trained community members on their responsibilities in education delivery. However, it was difficult for the respondents to give exact details of the contribution by these Development Partners and NGOs in both the rural and urban areas. This, according to the FGDs, was because most of the support from these NGOs was implemented through third parties, mostly GES and the District Assembly.

The findings have shown, so far, that the respondents received information on government policies and initiatives to improve KG from several sources. Consequently, the respondents were well informed about these policies and initiatives. The respondents were equally aware of programmes that various organisations and individuals were undertaking in their communities to promote KG. As asserted by Jackson (2005, p. 119) "the sheer complexity of human behaviours and motivations makes it very hard to predict with certainty what the impacts of policy interventions on people's behaviour are going to be". However, altogether, the respondents' awareness of the policies and initiatives by the government, various organisations and individuals was a significant contributory factor to the motivation of the respondents in their decision to enrol their children in KG.

Objective 4: Review the Influence of Parents' Perception of the Importance of KG Education on their Decision to enrol their Children in KG.

The results of the survey showed that the respondents perceived that KG education was important for children. As a result, the majority (99.7%) of them thought that it was important to send young children to KG before they enrolled in Primary school. The respondents gave reasons to support their belief that KG was important. An overwhelming majority (88.7%) of them believed that KG was important to children because it prepared children for primary school. Other reasons that were provided by the respondents were "Government law requires them to attend" (5.2%); "KG allows parents to work" (4.9%); and "KG allows older siblings to do other things such as go to school or learn a trade" (1.2%).

Furthermore, the respondents reported that when a child enrolled in KG, a host of stakeholders also benefitted. The respondents named the children themselves (33.3%), their families (26.5%) and their communities (14.9%) as the main beneficiaries of a child's enrolment in KG. Other beneficiaries mentioned by the respondents were the children's schools, the entire nation, older siblings, ethnic groups and religious groups. Figure 9 shows the respondents' views on the beneficiaries of KG education.
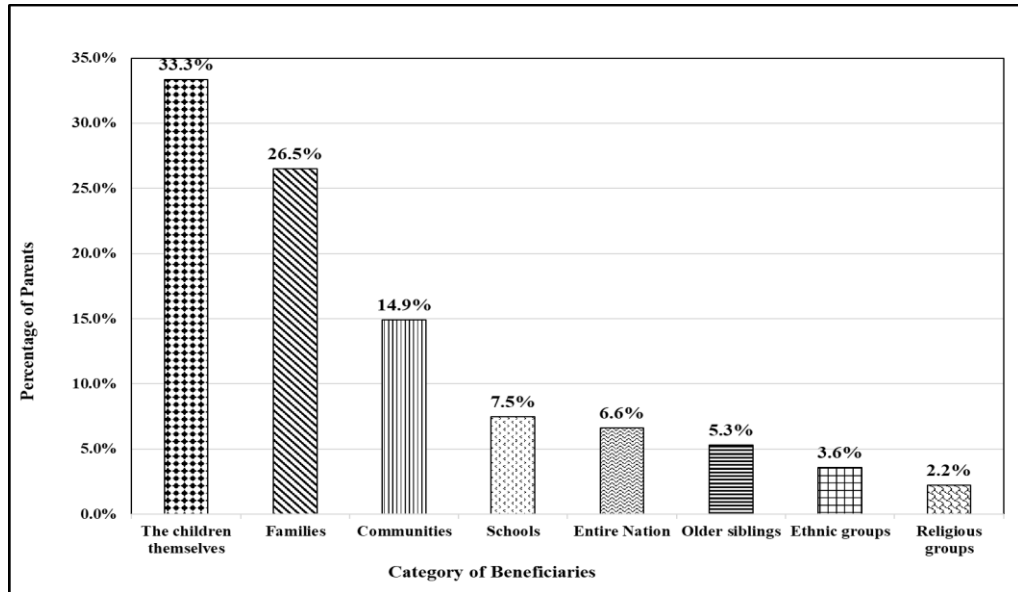
Figure 9: Main Beneficiaries of Children's Enrolment in KG

Source: Field Survey, October 2016

The respondents rated the importance of KG for different beneficiaries. In terms of KG education being "very important", the findings show that an overwhelming majority (82.3%) of the respondents rated KG as "very important" for children. Far fewer proportions rated it so for parents (35.9%) and much less so for communities (7.0%). The majority (60%) of the respondents rated KG education "important" for the family while 41.7 per cent thought it was important for the community. Of the three stakeholders, the respondents mentioned communities (51.3%) as the ones to whom a KG was of "Least importance". Far less proportions of the respondents thought that KG was of least importance to children (0.3%) and families (4.2%). Figure 10 presents the respondents' opinions on the importance KG education to the child, family and community.

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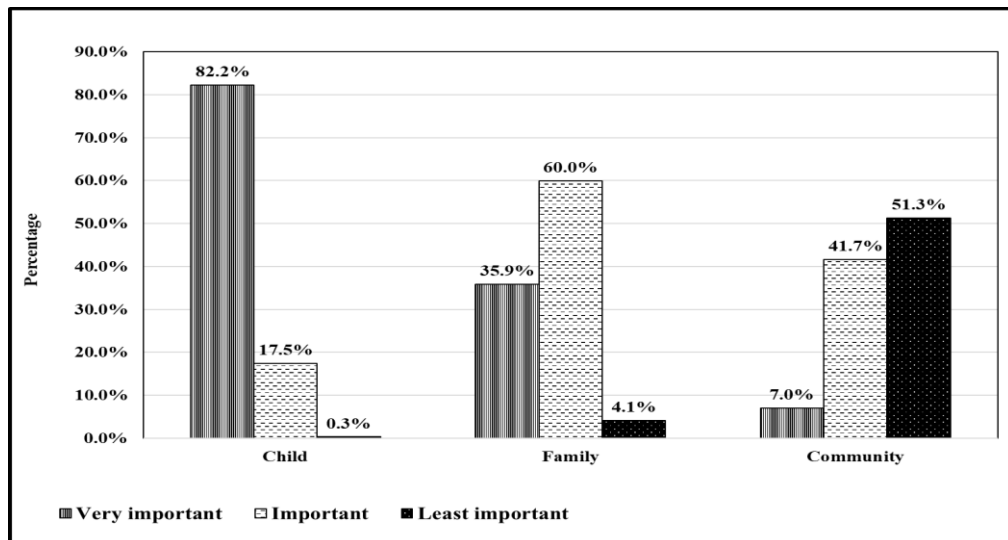
Figure 10: Respondents' Rating of the Importance of KG to the Child, the Family and the Community

Source: Field Survey, October 2016

The participants in the FGD also acknowledged the importance of KG to children and their families because it prepared children for the future which benefitted the family as well. They however added that KG's importance to other stakeholders like the community and the nation was rather indirect. To the focus group discussants, KG education eventually contributed to the development of quality human resources for the country. The participants in the focus group discussions added further that the belief that the child and his or her family benefitted the most from children's attendance in a KG programme accounted for why some people in the communities who did not have children in KG felt reluctant to contribute their time and other resources to KG promotion in their communities.

An examination of the views of the respondents as to why they thought KG education was important showed differences in responses which might be attributed to the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. For instance, whilst all the female respondents reported that KG education was

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important for children, a little less of the male respondents (99.5%) thought so. The explanation given by Adwoa Mansah, a female respondent in Donkorkrom, was particularly revealing. When she was asked to explain why KG was important, she responded thus:

> As a woman, I bear the brunt of caring for my young child and know how difficult it is to add this task to my trading business. It is such a relief when my daughter goes to "school" and this burden is lifted off my shoulders.

Further analysis of the findings revealed that the two males who did not think that KG education was important for children were both rural respondents without any formal education. The focus group discussion helped to explain, to an extent, why some rural respondents did not think that it was important to send their young children to KG. It was revealed that in some of the rural communities, some children enrol directly in Primary Class One without passing through KG hence, some of the respondents did not see the need to send children to KG before enrolling them in primary school. Again, for some of the rural respondents, their careers made it possible for them to take care of their children themselves. They are able to also rely on the support system provided by relatives and neighbours in their rural settings to cater for their young children. Some of the existing KGs were far from the localities of the respondents so they did not find it easy to send their children to KG. Finally, some KGs were of poor quality so some parents did not see the difference between children who attended KG and those who did not. The opposite was the case in the urban centres where prior KG experience was a prerequisite for Primary school enrolment. Also, most urban residents do not have any support

from relatives and friends to care for their children so enrolling the children in KG becomes the only alternative for them.

The findings of the study suggest further that even though "Preparation for primary school" was important to respondents from both localities in the study, it was emphasised more by the respondents from the rural localities (99%) than those from the urban localities (70.3%). For a good proportion of the urban respondents, their children were sent to KG for "non-education" reasons. For instance, for 14 per cent of the Urban respondents, they sent their children to KG because "it was a legal requirement" but only one (0.2%) rural respondent enrolled her child in KG because of this reason. Finally, according to the urban respondents, "sending children to KG allowed parents to go to work" (12.3%) and also made it possible for older siblings of the child to engage in other ventures, including schooling (3.4%) were also strong reasons that made sending their children to KG important to them.

For the Rural respondents, however, it appeared that besides "preparation for primary school", which was arguably the single most direct reason why enrolling children in KG was important, other reasons were peripheral considerations. The chi-square analysis showed that there were significant statistical differences between the respondents from the rural and urban localities in the study with regard to their views on the importance of KG. Table 23 illustrates the importance of KG in relation to respondents' place of residence.

Table 23: Importance of KG by Place of Residence of Respondents

Response	Rural		Urban		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Preparation for school	413	99.0	166	70.3	579	88.7
Legal requirement	1	0.2	33	14.0	34	5.2
Allows parents to work	3	0.7	29	12.3	32	4.9
Allows older siblings to do other things	0	0.0	8	3.4	8	1.2
Total	417	100	236	100	653	100

X^2= 124.0,   df = 3, p = 0.000
Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The educational background of respondents also seemed to have some influence on the perception that parents had about the importance of KG education to children. For example, as shown in Table 24, the proportion of the respondents who reported that KG education prepared children for primary school decreased as the levels of education of the respondents increased. Also, the more educated the respondents became, the more that they thought that children would attend KG because it was a legal requirement or allowed parents to work. The relatively less educated members in the survey also believed that KG attendance by children was supposed to allow siblings of the children who attended to work but no respondent who had second cycle or tertiary education thought so. The chi-square analysis revealed that the effect of educational background of the respondents on their views about why KG is important was statistically significant. Table 24 shows the respondents education status and the importance of KG education.

Table 24: Importance of KG by Education Status of Respondents

Response	No Formal Education		Basic		2nd Cycle		Tertiary		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Preparation for primary school	89	91.8	401	89.7	68	89.5	21	63.6	579	88.7
Legal requirement	2	2.1	22	4.9	4	5.3	6	18.2	34	5.2
Allows parents to work	3	3.1	19	4.3	4	5.3	6	18.2	32	4.9
Allows siblings to do other things	3	3.1	5	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	1.2
Total	97	100.0	447	100.0	76	100.0	33	100.0	653	100.0

X^2 = 18.43, df = 9, p = 0.030

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

Again, evidence from the study revealed that very large proportions of both the male and female respondents stated that KG was important because it prepared children for primary school. However, the proportion of the male respondents (91.4%) who stated so was larger than that of the females (83.5%) who reported so. However, larger proportions of the females reported that KG was important because it was a "legal requirement" (females – 5.4%, Males – 5.1%), "Allows parents to work" (females – 8.5%, Males – 3%), and "KG allows siblings to do other things" (Females – 2.7%, Males – 0.5%). The responses showed that for the females, other reasons mattered to them when they were deciding to enrol their children in KG, other than just preparing their children for primary school. Once again, even though both the male and female felt that KG was important, there were significant statistical differences in the reasons they gave to back their perception about KG. Table 25 shows the respondents' sex status and their views about the importance of KG education

Table 25: Importance of KG by Sex of Respondents

	Male		Female		Total	
Importance of KG	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Preparation for primary school	392	91.4	187	83.5	579	88.7
Legal requirement	22	5.1	12	5.4	34	5.2
Allows parents to work	13	3.0	19	8.5	32	4.9
Allows siblings to do other things	2	0.5	6	2.7	8	1.2
Total	429	100.0	224	100.0	653	100.0

X^2= 2.205,   df = 3, p = 0.531
Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The finding shows that the age of the respondents had some effect on their perceptions about the importance of KG. For instance, whilst 93.1 per cent of the "Young" respondents thought that preparing children for primary school was the prime purpose of KG, the respective proportions of the "Middle-aged" and "Old" respondents who thought so were 88.4 per cent and 82.6 per cent. On the other hand, proportionately more of the "Old" respondents (13%), as compared to less proportion of the "Young" and "Middle-aged" respondents (1.1% and 4.1%, respectively) reported that KG made it possible for parents to work. Incidentally, no "Old" respondent reported that KG allowed older siblings to do other things whilst one "Young" respondent (0.6%) and 1.9 per cent of the "Middle-aged" respondents, reported so. The chi square analysis showed that there were significant statistical differences in the views of the respondents about why KG is important that could be attributed to their ages. Table 26 presents importance of KG education and respondents' age status.

Table 26: Importance of KG by Age Status of Respondents

Importance of KG education	Young		Middle		Old		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Preparation for primary school	161	93.1	318	88.3	100	83.3	579	88.7
Legal requirement	9	5.2	20	5.6	5	4.2	34	5.2
Allows parents to work	2	1.2	15	4.2	15	12.5	32	4.9
Allows siblings to do other things	1	0.6	7	1.9	0	0.0	8	1.2
Total	173	100.0	360	100.0	120	100.0	653	100.0

X^2= 9.405,   df = 6, p = 0.152
Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The chi-square test shows that respondents location and educational background had a significant relationship with their views on the importance of KG education (p<0.05). However, respondents' sex and age did not have any significant relationship with their views on the importance of KG education (p>0.05). Cramer's V for sex and age further shows a very week relationship with the respondents' views on the importance of KG education.

Table 27: Importance of KG Across Demographics

Demographics	χ^2	df*	Cramer's V	Approx. Sign (p)
Location	124.0	1	0.432	0.000
Sex	2.205	1	0.058	0.531
Age	9.405	2	0.085	0.152
Educational Background	18.43	3	0.168	0.030

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The findings show that the respondent's perception of the importance of KG education was a significant motivation for them to enrol their children in KG. Also, the findings agree with the conclusions made by Ceglowski and Bacigalupa (2002), that among the many considerations that parents weigh when choosing an early care and education setting (e.g., enrolment of their

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children, cost, location, hours of care, etc.) is their perception about the programme and the potential benefits that could be derived from it. They, further, agree with Bauch (1991) that parents' positive attitude towards their children's education is important in determining school attendance and academic achievement of the children.

Characteristics of Children as a Motivating Factor for Enrolment in Kindergarten

The survey findings show that the sex of children or disability did not affect parents' motivation to enrol children in KG. In fact, 487 (74.6%) of the respondents insisted that the sex of children should not be used as a criterion by parents to decide which child goes to school. This, according to them, was because every child has a right to education. The remaining 166 (25.4%) of the respondents, however, reported that the sex of the child should be taken into account by parents when taking the decision to enrol their children in school.

Among the 166 respondents who thought that the sex of children should be considered when deciding to enrol children in school, there were some significant findings. Within this group, 91 respondents, representing 54.8 per cent of the 166 respondents who thought that the sex of children should be considered when deciding to enrol children in school, had a strong preference for boys while the remaining 75 (45.2%) claimed that they would prefer the enrolment of girls over that of boys. Further analysis of the findings showed that 261 (62.6%) of the urban respondents as compared to 226 (95.8%) of the rural respondents did not have a special preference for a particular sex. The findings suggest that the rural respondents had a stronger bias for boys (20.6%) than the urban respondents (2.1%). Similarly, the proportion of the urban respondents

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(2.1%) who claimed that they would prefer the enrolment of girls over boys was far less than the rural respondents (16.8%) who reported so. There was a significant statistical difference between the urban and rural respondents about the influence of children's sex on parental decision to enrol the children into formal school. Table 28 shows respondents' sex preference for formal education by place of residence of respondents.

Table 28: Respondents' Sex Preference for School Enrolment by Place of Residence of Respondents

Sex Preference	Rural		Urban		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Boy	86	20.6	5	2.1	91	13.9
Girl	70	16.8	5	2.1	75	11.5
No special preference	261	62.6	226	95.8	487	74.6
Total	417	100.0	236	100.0	653	100.0

X^2= 87.500,   df = 2, p = 0.000
Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The findings indicate further that the male respondents (80%) were less likely to be influenced by the sex of their children during enrolment into school than were the female respondents (64.3%). Consequently, the proportion of female respondents who had sexual preferences for enrolment into school (boys - 22.3%, Girls - 13.4%) was higher than the proportion of male respondents who had such preferences (boys - 9.6%; girls - 10.5%).

In the FGDs in the two circuits, most of the female respondents argued that boys needed better preparation for the roles society had crafted for them as future heads of families. However, one male participant in the FGD argued that

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these days many women were the real providers for their families, hence, girls should be helped more. He added, that his own daughter remitted him more often than any of his two sons who even earned more than the daughter. There were significant statistical differences between the male and female respondents about the role children's sex played in the decisions parents made about children's enrolment into school. Table 29 shows the respondents' sex preference for school enrolment by sex.

Table 29: Respondents' Sex Preference for School Enrolment by Sex of Respondents

Sex Preference	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Boy	41	9.6	50	22.3	91	13.9
Girl	45	10.5	30	13.4	75	11.5
No special preference	343	80.0	144	64.3	487	74.6
Total	429	100.0	224	100.0	653	100.0

$X^2 = 6.356$,   df = 2, P = 0.042
Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The findings indicate, also, that apart from the respondents without any formal education, all the education-status groups believed that the sex of children should not be taken into account when parents were deciding to enrol their children into school (No formal education - 17.5%; Basic education – 90.4%; Second Cycle – 51.3%; Tertiary – 81.8%). The respondents without formal education also had a greater preference for boys enrolment (57.7%) over that of girls (24.7%) An interesting finding was that apart from the respondents with Basic education background, all the respondents who had a special sex preference, stated a stronger preference for the enrolment of boys to that of that

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of girls. Significant statistical differences were observed in the views expressed by the education status groups about their views on whether sex of children should be a consideration when parents were deciding to enrol their children in school. Table 30 shows respondents' sex preference for school enrolment by educational background.

Table 30: Respondents' Sex Preference for School Enrolment by Educational Background

Sex Preference	No Formal Education		Basic		2nd Cycle		Tertiary		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Boy	56	57.8	12	2.7	19	25.0	4	12.1	91	13.9
Girl	24	24.7	31	6.9	18	23.7	2	6.1	75	11.5
No special preference	17	17.5	404	90.4	39	51.3	27	81.8	487	74.6
Total	97	100.0	447	100.0	76	100.0	33	100.0	653	100.0

$X^2 = 36.567$,   df = 6, p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

Further analysis of the research findings showed that significant majorities of the "Young" respondents (87.4%) and the "Middle-aged" respondents (79.9%) did not believe that the sex of children should be a critical consideration during their enrolment in school. However, a much smaller proportion of the "Old" respondents (38.3%) agreed with this view. The proportion of the "Old" respondents who thought that boys (36.5%) deserved preferential consideration over girls (25.2%) was much higher than those of the "Young" respondents (Boys – 6.9%, Girls – 5.7%) and the "Middle-aged" respondents (Boys – 10.2%, Girls – 9.9%). The differences in the responses of the respondents in the three age groupings about whether the sex of children should be a factor in their enrolment in school was found to be statistically

significant. Table 31 shows respondents' sex preference for KG enrolment by age.

Table 31: Respondents' sex Preference for KG Enrolment by Age

Sex	Young		Middle		Old		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Boy	12	6.9	37	10.3	42	35.0	91	13.9
Girl	10	5.8	36	10.0	29	24.2	75	11.5
No special preference	151	87.3	287	79.7	49	40.8	487	74.6
Total	173	100.0	360	100.0	120	100.0	653	100.0

$X^2 = 17.286$,   df = 4, p = 0.002
Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The chi-square test shows that there is a significant relationship between respondents' demographics (sex, age, location, education) and sex preferences for school enrollment ($p<0.05$). However, Cramer's V test shows that except for location, the relationships are weak and that the effect size of the demographics (sex, age, education) on sex preferences for school enrollment is small (Cramer's V<0.30). Location had a medium effect (Cramer's V > 0.30) on respondents' sex preferences for school enrollment. Interestingly, sex of the respondents had the smallest effect on their sex preferences for school enrollment (Cramer's V = 0.099).

Table 32: Respondents' Sex Preference for School Enrolment Across Demographics

Demographics	χ^2	df*	Cramer's V	Approx. Sign (p)
Location	87.500	1	0.366	0.000
Sex	6.356	1	0.099	0.042
Age	17.286	2	0.115	0.002
Educational Background	36.567	3	0.167	0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

With respect to disability, 498 (76.3%) of the respondents reported that disability of children should not prevent parents from sending their children to KG. The remaining 155 (23.7%) of the respondents, however, reported that children with disability should be kept out of KG.

In the FGD, it was revealed that GES, with support from UNICEF, has developed an Inclusive Education policy that seeks to address the challenges faced by children with disabilities in accessing education. Some districts, including KAPN have been oriented on the policy. This appears to be influencing parental attitude towards disability and schooling.

The respondents also expressed their views about the type of school that children with disabilities should attend. The findings show majority (66.9%) of the respondents showed a strong preference for Special Schools because, according to them, this would guarantee children with disabilities the special care they needed. For those who chose "Ordinary Schools" (26%), their reason for doing so was that enrolling children in these schools would enable the children mix and develop alongside other "normal" children. A small minority (7.1%) of the respondents either did not think it mattered which school children with disability attended or were undecided about the type of school such children should attend.

The findings suggest that the urban respondents (93.6%) were relatively more predisposed to sending children with disability to KG than their rural counterparts (66.4%). The FGDs explained that urban schools had better facilities to cater for children with disabilities hence the urban respondents felt more comfortable to enrol children with disabilities in school. Also, without the

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support of other family members to take care of children, urban residents had no choice but to enrol children with disability in school.

The educational status of the respondents also appeared to have an influence on the respondents' perception about enrolling children with disability in KG. The findings revealed that, generally, the more educated people became, the more inclined they were towards the education of children with disability in KG (Tertiary Education - 87.9%, Second Cycle – 86.8%, Basic Education – 81.0%, No formal education - 42.3%). There was a significant statistical difference among the education status groups about their inclination towards the education of children with disabilities in KG. The discussions in the FGDs revealed that most of the educated people were aware that people with disability could perform as well as supposedly normal people. Another reason given in the FGDs was that some of the educated people in the study did not have the support of relatives and friends in taking care of children with disability. These reasons, according to the FGD discussants, might account for why the educated people were more inclined to sending children with disability to KG. Table 33 illustrates the enrolment of children with disability in KG by educational background of respondents.

Table 33: Enrolment of Children with Disability in KG by Educational Background of Respondents

Enrolling in school	No Formal Education		Basic		2nd Cycle		Tertiary		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	41	42.3	362	81.0	66	86.8	29	87.9	498	76.3
No	56	57.7	85	19.0	10	13.2	4	12.1	155	23.7
Total	97	100.0	447	100.0	76	100.0	33	100.0	653	100.0

$X^2 = 2.428$,   df = 3, p= 0.488

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

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The findings also suggest that age has a strong influence on parental decision to enrol children with disabilities in school. The findings indicate that, generally, the younger a parent, the more inclined they were to send their children with disabilities to school (Young - 84%, Middle-aged – 81.5%, Old – 47.8%). The reverse was, however true as the majority (52.2%) of the "Old" respondents would prefer to keep children with disabilities out of school. There was a significant statistical difference among the different age groups about their inclination towards the education of children with disabilities in KG. In the FGDs, it was revealed that the young ones in the study were more aware of the benefits of educating people with disability due to sensitisation by public institutions and NGOs. Some of the discussants added that most of the young respondents were also better educated than the old respondents and so were more aware of the benefits children with disability got from formal education. Table 34 shows the enrolment of children with disability in KG by age.

Table 34: Enrolment of Children with Disability in KG by Age

Enrolling in school	Young		Middle		Old		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	143	82.7	290	80.6	65	54.2	498	76.3
No	30	17.3	70	19.4	55	45.8	155	23.7
Total	173	100.0	360	100.0	120	100.0	653	100.0

$X^2 = 0.053$,   df = 2, P = 0.974

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

From the analysis, the evidence indicates that the male respondents (81.6%) in the study were also more predisposed to sending children with disability to school than the female respondents (66.1%). Once again, there was a significant statistical difference among the male and female respondents about

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their inclination towards the education of children with disabilities in KG (X^2 = 19.565, df = 1, p = 0.000).

The chi-square test shows that location and sex had a significant relationship with respondents' views on the enrolment of children with disability in KG (p<0.05). However, respondents' age and educational background did not have any significant relationship with their views on the enrolment of children with disability in KG (p>0.05). The Cramer's V for age (Cramer's V= 0.009) implies that there is almost no relationship between respondents age and views on the enrolment of children with disability in KG.

Table 35: Enrolment of Children with Disability in KG Across Respondents' Demographics

Demographics	χ^2	df*	Cramer's V	Approx. Sign (p)
Location	8.268	1	0.113	0.004
Sex	19.565	1	0.173	0.000
Age	0.053	2	0.009	0.974
Educational Background	2.428	3	0.061	0.488

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

From the FGDs, it was revealed that the females were more concerned about leaving their children, especially those with disabilities, with outsiders. The explanation that was provided for this was that women are the ones who spend more time with the children and know their special needs. They are also more aware that it is not easy to attend to the needs of children with disabilities so they feel uncomfortable leaving the children with people who might not handle them well.

The findings in this Section are consistent with the postulation of Fuglini and Yoshikawa (2003) that differences that may occur in parents' patterns of investments across different children also depend on expectations of returns from the individual child, for example between boys and girls. Fuglini and Yoshikawa illustrate this point by stating that Indian families may invest more on boys during lean seasons due to their perception of boys' greater economic productivity.

Again, the findings reflect the vision of the "Expanded Commentary on the Dakar Framework for Action" (EFA, 2000) which places a special emphasis on vulnerable children who are likely to be marginalised and excluded. The vision identifies Special Education as one of the key strategies to address the challenge of marginalisation and exclusion. In Ghana, there is a strong perception, borne out of anecdotal evidence, that some parents, especially those in rural communities, keep their children with certain disabilities away from public and social gatherings, including sending them to school. Finally, the findings echo the views of Gamble, Ewing, and Wilhelm (2009) that children's characteristics such as their age, temperament, and level of development seem to influence parents' decisions-making process when selecting child care.

The findings presented in this chapter collaborate research findings elsewhere that in order to achieve high enrolment rates, critical attention must be paid to demand and supply side determinants that influence the participation of young children in formal education. The supply factors include school characteristics, availability of educational facilities (both quantity and quality), location of schools, policy on education (e.g. whether compulsory or free or fee paying), and the state's influence and ability to put pressure on parents to send

their children to school (Chakrabarti & Roy, 2010; Chumacero et al., 2011; Hastings & Weinstein, 2008). On the demand side, factors like household resource constraints, socioeconomic status of the family (including family wealth, educational background especially that of mothers, occupation, family structure and size, etc.), and cost of education (both direct and indirect costs), parental perception of the future rewards of education that accrue to their children and the parents themselves, parental aspirations for their children, power relations within the family, distance to school, and place of residence of parents are also major influencers (Yang & Kayaardi 2004).

In conclusion, it can be noted that the discussions in this chapter reflect what the respondents view as underlying factors which influenced their motivation to take actions to promote the development of their children. The principal ones included parents' notion of their responsibility towards their children, the States actions to promote certain services which is often reflected in policies and parental awareness of such policies. Also, the aspirations that parents have for their children, parental perception of the importance of the services available to help them to achieve the aspirations are all factors that motivate parents to act to support their children's development. Finally, the actions parents take in their children's development also depend on significant characteristics of the children.

CHAPTER SIX

SECONDARY MOTIVATING FACTORS THAT AFFECT

KINDERGARTEN ENROLMENT

Introduction

In the previous chapter, it was noted that several fundamental factors help to shape parental action towards their children's education. Besides these underlying factors, some other mediating factors also affect the motivation of the parents to enrol their children in KG. The main findings related to these general and mediating motivating factors which also affected the respondents in the study to enrol their children in KG are presented and discussed in this chapter. These variables include the possibility of enrolling children directly into primary school instead of through KG, the choice of enrolment into particular KGs and distance to KG.

Objective 5: Analyse the influence of General Factors that Motivated Parents to Enrol Children in Kindergarten

The findings of the study indicated that a number of mediating factors also motivated the respondents to enrol their children in KG. The findings reveal that the respondents' desire to prepare their children adequately for primary school and the "need for places to keep their children during working hours" were strong motivation for them to enrol their children in KG. The respondents also took advantage of the "pro-poor policies" of the government (such as the Capitation grant, supply of school uniforms and free feeding) and availability or nearness of KG in their communities to enrol their children in KG. Advocacy work from civil society organisations and pressure from friends and relatives were also important motivators for parents. One female respondent claimed that

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she bowed to pressure from her Church Pastor and other Church members to enrol her child in KG because the KG was established by her church. Figure 11 presents respondents' views on factors motivating them to enrol their children in KG education.
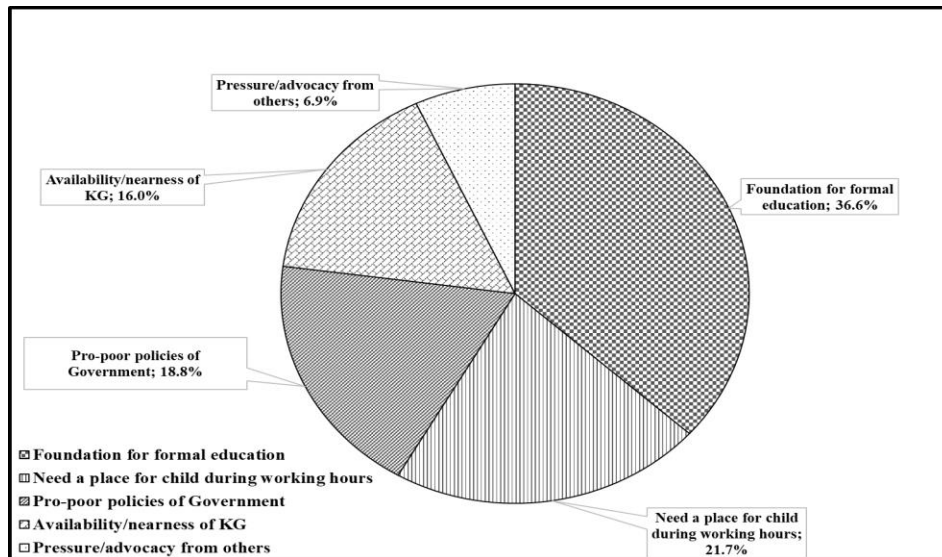
Figure 11: Motivating Factors for Sending Children to KG

Source: Field Survey, October 2016

The effect of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents on the mediating factors which motivated them to enrol their children in KG were also analysed. The analysis indicated that laying a good foundation for their children was important for virtually the same proportion of both the urban dwellers (36.7%) and the rural dwellers (36.6%). Incidentally, this was the only item about which the two groups agreed on. For instance, while 35.8 per cent of the urban respondents sent their children to KG because they "needed a place to keep the children while the parents went to work", only 13.8 per cent of the rural respondents enrolled their children due to this reason.

In addition, the government's pro-poor interventions served as a greater motivation for the urban respondents (21.7%) than it did for the rural

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respondents (17.1%). On the other hand, "Advocacy and pressure from other people" was a more powerful motivating factor for enrolment into KG in the rural areas (8.9%) than it was in the urban areas (3.4%). Finally, proximity of the KG to the child's home was a more important consideration for 23.6 per cent of the rural respondents who enrolled their children in KG but far fewer urban respondents (2.4%) mentioned this as a motivating reason for enrolling their children in KG. A chi-square analysis of the findings showed that, generally, the differences between the urban and rural respondents with regard to the secondary motivating factors for their children's KG enrolment were statistically significant. Table 36 presents respondents' views on factors motivating them to send their children to KG in relation to their locality (place of residence).

Table 36: Motivating Factors for Sending Children to KG by Locality

Motivating factors	Rural		Urban		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Foundation for formal education	126	34.7	85	39.9	211	36.6
Need a place for child during working hours	51	14.0	74	34.7	125	21.7
Pro-poor policies of Government	63	17.4	45	21.1	108	18.8
Availability/nearness of KG	90	24.8	2	0.9	92	16.0
Pressure/advocacy from others	33	9.1	7	3.3	40	6.9
Total	363	100.0	213	100.0	576	100.0

$X^2 = 89.017$,   df = 5, p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

One issue that came out strongly in the FGD was that most urban respondents had lost the support of the extended family and community system for their young children and had to rely on KGs as an alternative. One urban discussant remarked that but for the availability of a KG she could not have

been able to take care of her twins and work at the same time. Another issue that also was discussed passionately in the FGDs was that the school feeding programme introduced by the government was an incentive for some of the urban respondents to enrol their children in KG.

The effect of the educational status of the respondents on their motivation to enrol their children in KG was also assessed. The analysis showed that the proportion of respondents who enrolled their children in KG because KG served as a major foundation for education increased as the educational status of the respondents improved (No formal Education - 23.2%, Basic Education – 35.2%, Second Cycle Education 49.3%, Tertiary Education – 63.3%).

For the respondents with tertiary level education, besides laying a foundation for education for their children, the only other reason why some (36.7%) of them enrolled their children in KG was because they needed a place to keep the children while they worked. The other groups, however, had other reasons to explain their motivation to enrol their children in KG. For instance, the findings also revealed that "pro-poor policies" were more important motivators for 24.4 per cent of the respondents without formal education, 19.5 per cent of those with Basic Education and 15.9 per cent of the respondents with Second cycle education (15.9%).

In addition, the findings showed that pressure from others accounted for why 17.1 per cent of the respondents without formal education and 6.6 per cent of those with only Basic education sent their children to KG. No respondent with secondary or tertiary level education needed to be prodded by friends or relatives before enrolling their children in KG.

Finally, availability or nearness of KG to the respondents' home or place of work, while not an issue for the respondents with tertiary level backgrounds, were significant motivating factors for those with no formal Education (15.9%), Basic Education (16.5%) and those with Second Cycle Education (20.3%). The differences among the respondents as to what secondary factors motivated them to enrol their children in KG were found to be statistically significant.

The FGDs gave an indication of why the respondents with tertiary level education had far less reasons than the other groups to explain the mediating factors which motivated them to enrol their children in KG. Generally, this group of respondents were the more urbanised who did not have the support of relatives and friends to care for their children and, hence, KGs became a second home where their children received care and protection. Also, this group knew the importance of education and the contribution of KG to children's development, hence, the large proportion of this group who enrolled their children in KG to acquire the needed knowledge and skills before entering primary school. Finally, the respondents with tertiary education were also less concerned about the availability and/or nearness of a KG to the places of residence since they were more likely to be able to afford to transport their children to school. Table 37 presents the reasons that motivated respondents to send their children to KG and their educational status.

Table 37: Motivating Factors for Sending Children to KG by Educational Status of Respondents

Motivating factors	No Formal Education		Basic		2nd Cycle		Tertiary		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Foundation for education	19	23.2	139	35.2	34	49.3	19	63.3	211	36.6
Need a place to keep child	16	19.5	88	22.3	10	14.5	11	36.7	125	21.7
Pro-poor policies	20	24.4	77	19.5	11	15.9	0	0.0	108	18.8
Availability or nearness of KG	13	15.9	65	16.5	14	20.3	0	0.0	92	16.0
Pressure/advocacy from others	14	17.1	26	6.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	40	6.9
Total	82	100.0	395	100.0	69	100.0	30	100.0	576	100.0

$X^2 = 85.392$,   df = 15,   p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The findings showed, further, that the "Young" respondents (48.1%) appeared to be more concerned about laying a good foundation for their children than were the "Middle-aged" (37.4%) and "Old" respondents (17.1%). The "Young" (30.4%) were also more concerned about the availability and/or nearness of a KG to the places of residence than did the "Middle-aged" (8.3%) and "Old" respondents (17.1%).

On the other hand, proportionately more "Middle-aged" respondents (26.5%), needed places where they could keep their children whilst they worked than did the "Young" (13.9%) and the "Old" respondents (19.0%). The pro-poor policies of the government were also more of an incentive for the "Middle-aged" respondents (25.2%) than it was for the "Young" (7.0%) and the "Old" respondents (17.1%). The influence of pressure and advocacy on the "Old" respondents (29.5%) was, however, far greater than it was on the "Young" (0.6%) and the "Middle-aged" respondents (2.6%). The differences among the respondents as to what motivated them to enrol their children which could be

attributed to the differences in their ages was statistically significant. Table 38 presents factors motivating respondents to send their children to KG and their age.

Table 38: Motivating Factors for Sending Children to KG by Age of Respondents

Motivating factor	Young		Middle		Old		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Foundation for education	76	48.1	117	37.4	18	17.1	211	36.6
Need a place to keep child	22	13.9	83	26.5	20	19.0	125	21.7
Pro-poor policies	11	7.0	79	25.2	18	17.1	108	18.8
Availability or nearness of KG	48	30.4	26	8.3	18	17.1	92	16.0
Pressure/advocacy from others	1	0.6	8	2.6	31	29.5	40	6.9
Total	158	100.0	313	100.0	105	100.0	576	100.0

$X^2 = 66.654$,   df = 10,   p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The analysis shows, again, that the need to lay a solid foundation for their children was the single most important reason why the male respondents (44.9%) enrolled their children in KG. This reason appealed to a much less proportion (19.9%) of the female respondents. Each of the remaining reasons, however, appealed more to the female respondents than they did to the male respondents. For instance, relatively more female respondents (28.8%) claimed that they needed a place to keep their children whilst they worked but only 18.2 per cent of the male respondents found this a compelling reason to enrol their children in KG. Also, the pressure on the female respondents (11%) to enrol their children in KG was far greater than it was on the male respondents (4.9%). The differences among the respondents as to what motivated them to enrol their children which could be attributed to the differences in their sex was statistically

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significant. Table 39 presents the factors motivating respondents to send their children to KG by their sex.

Table 39: Motivating Factors for Sending Children to KG by Sex of Respondents

Motivating factor	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Foundation for education	173	44.9	38	19.9	211	38.7
Need a place to keep child	70	18.2	55	28.8	125	14.8
Pro-poor policies	69	17.9	39	20.4	108	16.7
Availability or nearness of KG	54	14.0	38	19.9	92	20.3
Pressure/advocacy from others	19	4.9	21	11.0	40	9.5
Total	385	100.0	191	100.0	576	100.0

$X^2 = 18.426$,   df = 5, p = 0.002

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The chi-square test shows that there is a significant relationship between respondents' demographics (sex, age, location, education) and the motivation factors for sending children to KG. However, the Cramer's V test shows that except for location and educational background, the relationships are weak and that sex and age had a small effect on the motivation factors for sending children to KG (Cramer's V<0.30). The location and educational background of the respondents had a medium effect (Cramer's V > 0.30) on their motivation for sending children to KG (Table 40).

Table 40: Motivating Factors for Sending Children to KG Across Demographics

Demographics	χ^2	df*	Cramer's V	Approx. Sign (p)
Location	89.017	1	0.393	0.000
Sex	18.426	1	0.179	0.002
Age	66.654	2	0.241	0.000
Educational Background	85.392	3	0.385	0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The findings in this Section suggest that certain mediating factors also play critical roles in motivating parents to devote their energy towards their children's schooling. However, these the importance of these mediating factors differ from parent to parent, depending on the socio-demographic characteristics of the individual. It is, therefore, not surprising that the mediating factors that motivated parents to enrol their children in KG confirm the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (2009) statement that parents' decisions about what investments to make for their children depends on a range of reasons, notably market forces and financial resource as well as their motivation to support their children's development.

Age of Children as a Motivation for Enrolling Children into Kindergarten

The study results showed that age of children played a major motivational role in the enrolment decisions that parents made. Even though the official age for enrolling children in KG in Ghana is four years, the survey findings showed that less than half (48.1%) of the respondents enrolled their children in KG at this age. The remaining 216 (51.9%) respondents, however, enrolled their children outside the official age when the children were either

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younger than four years (14.4%) or older than four years (41.1%). Table 41 shows the age of enrolment of children in KG.

Table 41: Age of Enrolment of Children in KG

Age of enrolment	No.	%
Below 4 years	83	14.4
4 years	277	48.1
5 years and above	216	37.5
Total	576	100.0

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

Table 42 shows that the motivation to enrol their under-aged children (below four years) was stronger among the rural respondents (16.8%) than it was among the urban respondents (10.3%). On the other hand, relatively more urban respondents (50.2%) were motivated to enrol their children at the officially approved age as compared to 46.8 per cent who did so. There were also relatively more urban respondents (39.4%) who enrolled their children when they were older than the official age than did the rural respondents (36.4%). This confirms the FGDs conclusions about authorities of some schools' insistence that all new entrants to primary school should have KG experience. Proportionately fewer rural respondents enrolled their children at the officially approved age (46.8%) or when the children were older (36.4%). Again, the FGD conclusions might very likely be the reason for the enrolment pattern in the rural areas where long distances to school often account for the over-aged enrolment in KG while incentives for schooling, in some instances, encourage under-age enrolment. The differences in the ages at which the urban and the rural respondents enrolled their children in KG was statistically significant. Table 42 shows the age of enrolment of children in KG by place of residence of respondents.

Table 42: Age of Enrolment of Children in KG by Place of Residence of Respondents

Age of enrolment	Rural		Urban		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Below 4 years	61	16.8	22	10.3	83	14.4
4 years	170	46.8	107	50.2	277	48.1
5 years and above	132	36.4	84	39.4	216	37.5
Total	363	100.0	213	100.0	576	100.0

$X^2 = 22.761$,   df = 3, p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The age of the respondents appeared to have some effect on the age at which their children were enrolled in KG. For instance, the "Young" respondents (7%) were less eager to enrol under-aged children (below four years) than the "Middle-aged" respondents (15.3%) and the "Old respondents (22.9%). The "Young" respondents (70.3%), however, complied more with the official policy relating to age of enrolment (4 years) than did the "Middle-aged" respondents (44.4%) and the "Old respondents (25.7%). The "Old" respondents (51.4%) had a stronger preference for the enrolment of their children when they were older than the official enrolment age than did the "Young" respondents (22.8%) and "Middle-aged" respondents (40.3%). The differences in the ages at which the respondents in the different age categories enrolled their children in KG was statistically significant. Table 43 illustrates the age of enrolment of children in KG by age of respondents.

Table 43: Age of Enrolment of Children in KG by Age of Respondents

Age of enrolment	Young		Middle		Old		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Below 4 years	11	7.0	48	15.3	24	22.9	83	14.4
4 years	111	70.3	139	44.4	27	25.7	277	48.1
5 years and above	36	22.8	126	40.3	54	51.4	216	37.5
Total	158	100.0	313	100.0	105	100.0	576	100.0

$X^2 = 61.216$,   df = 6, p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

Further analysis revealed that the female respondents (55%) had a stronger motivation to enrol their children in KG at the official age than did the male respondents (44.7%). Also, the proportion of the female respondents (18.8%) who enrolled under-aged children was larger than that of the male respondents (12.2%) who did so. Meanwhile, preference for over-aged enrolment (five years of age or more) in KG was higher among the male respondents (43.1%) than it was for the female respondents (26.2%). The respondents in the FGDs explained that mothers were more eager than men to send their children to KG early to enable them attend to other duties. Consequently, it was not surprising that there was significant statistical difference between the male and female respondents about the age of enrolment of their children in KG. Table 44 shows the age of enrolment of children in KG by sex of respondents.

Table 44: Age of Enrolment of Children in KG by Sex of Respondents

Age of enrolment	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Below 4 years	47	12.2	36	18.8	83	14.4
4 years	172	44.7	105	55.0	277	48.1
5 years and above	166	43.1	50	26.2	91	15.8
Total	385	100.0	191	100.0	576	100.0

$X^2 = 24.298$,   df = 3, p = 0.002
Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The findings of the study with regard to the effect of education on the age at which the respondents enrolled their children in KG appeared not to follow a particular trend. With under-age enrolment, for example, the proportion of respondents who reported that they did this varied from 26.7 per cent for the respondents with tertiary level education, 14.7 per cent for those with Basic education, 13.4 per cent for respondents without formal education to 8.7 per cent for the group who had second cycle education. Enrolment at the officially approved age (four years old), was favoured mostly by the respondents with basic education (52.2%) than it was for the respondents with Second cycle education (46.4%), tertiary education (43.3%) and, finally, those without formal education (31.7%). With regard to over-aged enrolment, this was relatively more popular among the respondents without formal education (54.8%) than it was for the other groups (Basic education – 33.1%; Second cycle education – 44.9%; and, Tertiary education - 30%). The differences among the respondents regarding the ages at which they enrolled their children in KG which could be due to their educational status was statistically significant. Table

45 illustrates the age of enrolment of children in KG by educational status of respondents.

Table 45: Age of Enrolment of Children in KG by Educational Status of Respondents

Age	No formal Education		Basic Education		Second Cycle		Tertiary Education		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Below 4 years	11	13.4	58	14.7	6	8.7	8	26.7	83	14.4
4 years	26	31.7	206	52.2	32	46.4	13	43.3	277	48.1
5 years & above	45	54.8	131	33.1	31	44.9	9	30.0	216	37.5
Total	82	100.0	395	100.0	69	100.0	30	100.0	576	100.0

$X^2 = 20.748$,   df = 6, p = 0.014

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

While the chi-square test shows that there is a significant relationship between respondents' demographics (sex, age, location, education) and age of enrolling children in KG, the Cramer's V test shows that the relationships are weak and that the effect size of the demographics on the age of enrolling children in KG is small.

Table 46: Age of Enrolling Children in KG Across Demographics

Demographics	χ^2	df*	Cramer's V	Approx. Sign (p)
Location	22.761	1	0.199	0.000
Sex	24.298	1	0.205	0.002
Age	61.216	2	0.231	0.000
Educational Background	20.748	3	0.110	0.014

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

Several reasons were given by the respondents to explain why they decided to enrol their children in KG at the officially approved age or when the children were either below or above the official enrolment approved age. For the respondents who enrolled their children before the official enrolment age,

the single most significant reason for doing so was the parents' desire to give the children an "early start" in education. Two major reasons, "abiding by policy requirement to enrol children to start school at the right age" and "sensitisation by GES/School authorities", were what influenced the parents to do so. For the respondents who chose to their over-aged children (above 4 years), the most significant reason that caused this was the long distance from the children's home to school (Table 47).

Table 47: Reason for Enrolling Children in KG at a Particular Age

Age of enrolment	Reason	Total No.	%
Below 4 years	To give children an early start	38	6.6
	Encouragement from School authorities	17	3.0
	No one at home to care for the child	25	4.3
	Our child wanted to go to school	3	0.5
4 years	Wanted child to start school at the right age	105	18.2
	Sensitisation by GES/School	172	29.9
Above 4 years	Child had to develop interest in school first	23	4.0
	Someone at home to care for child	46	8.0
	KG was too far away	107	18.6
	Child was not old enough to learn	31	5.4
	Child fell sick often	9	1.6
Total		576	100.0

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents appeared to influence the reasons for enrolling the children at the various ages. For instance, as can be seen from Table 48, majority (88.0%) of the respondents who enrolled their under-aged children in KG were rural dwellers. The main reason why the rural respondents enrolled their under-aged children in KG was the belief that this would "give the children an early start" in education (52.1%). Other reasons

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assigned by the rural respondents to explain why they enrolled under-aged children in KG were that they were encouraged by School authorities to do so (23.3%), there was no one at home to care for the child (20.5%) or that the children themselves wanted to go to school (4.1%). For the urban respondents who enrolled under-aged children in KG, their only reason was that there was no one at home to care for the child. Table 48 shows respondents' reasons for enrolling under-aged children in KG by the respondents' place of residence.

Table 48: Reason for Enrolling Under-Aged (Below 4 Years) Children in KG by Place of Residence of Respondents

Reason	Rural		Urban		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
To give children an early start	38	52.1	0	0.0	38	45.8
Encouragement from School authorities	17	23.3	0	0.0	17	20.5
No one at home to care for the child	15	20.5	10	100.0	25	30.1
Our child wanted to go to school	3	4.1	0	0.0	3	3.6
Total	73	100.0	10	100.0	83	100.0

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The respondents who enrolled their children at the officially approved age were also influenced by several factors. Out of the 136 urban respondents who enrolled their children at the officially approved age, the clear majority (88.2%) were influenced through sensitisation by GES/School authorities to do so but the remaining (11.8%) did so because they wanted their children to start schooling at the right age. On the other hand, majority (63.1%) of the 141 rural respondents who enrolled their children at the officially approved age did so because they wanted their children to start schooling at the right age. The rest

(36.9%) of the rural respondents enrolled their children at the "right age" because they were sensitised by GES/School authorities to do so.

Incidentally, the findings confirm an earlier assertion by the respondents that orientation by GES on right-age enrolment occurred more in the rural areas than in the urban areas, leading to better awareness of the official enrolment age among the rural respondents. The findings also seem to suggest that sensitisation of parents to enrol their children in KG at age four influence the urban respondents much more than it did the rural respondents. This further corroborates the FGD information that GES and school authorities did a lot of sensitisation in the urban centres to get parents to enrol their four-year old children in KG. This was done to ensure that school authorities would not be obliged to make over-aged children acquire KG experience before entering primary school.

As Table 49 shows, in both the rural and urban areas, long distance to the nearest KG served as the single most significant reason for over-aged (five years and above) enrolment of children in KG. When the respondents thought that their four-year old children were too young to walk long distances to the nearest KG, the children were kept at home until the parents were convinced they could commute to and from school.

Also, when there were other people, especially relatives and friends at home to care for children or when the parents wanted their children to develop interest in school before enrolling them in KG, the children were enrolled late. Finally, sometimes the parents just decided that the children were not old enough to learn or that the children fell sick too often so delayed their enrolment into KG. Table 49 shows respondents' reason for enrolling children in KG when

the children are older than the official enrolment age and their place of residence.

Table 49: Reason for Enrolling Over-Aged (5 Years and Above) Children in KG by Place of Residence of Respondent

Reason	Rural		Urban		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Child had to develop interest in school first	21	14.1	2	3.0	23	10.6
Someone at home to care for child	26	17.5	20	29.9	46	21.3
KG was too far away	72	48.3	35	52.2	107	49.5
Child was not old enough to learn	24	16.1	7	10.4	31	14.4
Child fell sick often	6	4.0	3	4.5	9	4.2
Total	149	100.0	67	100.0	216	100.0

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

In the focus group discussions, two major reasons were given to explain why many parents did not enrol their children at the official age for enrolling children in KG. For the over-aged enrolment, it was explained that in the rural areas, this was due mostly to long distances to school, while in the urban areas, the insistence of some school heads that children, irrespective of their ages, should have KG experience before entering primary school accounted for this phenomenon. On the other hand, under-aged enrolment occurred mainly because some parents needed secure and safe places to keep children during working hours. Also, the absence of crèches and nurseries for children below four years in both the rural and urban communities also accounted for under-aged enrolment in the area. Finally, in schools where children had free lunch, this became a strong incentive for parents to enrol their children early. Finally, the desire by some school authorities to improve enrolment in KGs and, ultimately, in their primary schools were contributory factors to much under-

aged enrolment in some areas. In the urban circuit, Donkorkrom East, the headteacher in the group concluded for the group thus: "my school is always in competition with other schools, especially the private ones, in my area. If I don't enrol the children early, I lose them to the other schools".

Objective 6: Explore the factors parents consider when enrolling their children in KG and/or retaining them in KG in KAPN.

According to officials of GES Basic Education Directorate and the District Education Office, even though it is the goal of the GES to ensure that every child acquires KG experience before entering primary school, it was still permissible for children who did not have KG experience to enrol directly to Primary Class One. This happens especially in schools in rural areas and in primary schools with low enrolment. Also, in some cases, heads of schools may admit children who may be several years over the KG age directly into primary school, even though such children may not have KG experience. The 576 respondents whose children had KG education explained why they did not take advantage of this provision to keep their children at home until they were ready to enrol them directly in Primary School. Two hundred and ninety-nine (51.9%) of the respondents indicated that they wanted their children to acquire the foundation in education given at KG. One hundred and twenty-three   (21.4%) other respondents did not enrol their children directly into Primary School because their children were too young to enrol directly in Primary school at the time. According to One hundred and eleven (19.3%) of the respondents, they thought KG attendance was a legal requirement while the remaining forty-three (7.5%) respondents reported school authorities refused to admit children without KG experience.

There was no consensus between the two focus groups about why parents would decide to ensure that their children acquired KG experience before entering primary school. According to the FGD in the urban circuit (Donkorkrom), most parents often needed places to keep their children whilst they went to work. Also many school authorities refused to admit children without KG experience. On the other hand, the focus group in the rural circuit (Mim Kyemfre) maintained that KG provided good foundation for children, hence, parents may not their children to miss KG.

The reasons that the respondents gave to explain why they enrolled their children in KG instead of waiting and enrolling them directly into Primary school later seem to have been influenced in some way by their socio-demographic characteristics. For instance, the place of residence of the respondents seemed to have an influence on the reasons they gave to explain their responses. The review showed that "KG offers children a good foundation for formal education" was less motivating for the rural respondents (47.4%) than it was for the urban respondents (59.6%).

Also, even though some respondents from both locations agreed that enrolling children in KG enrolment was a legal requirement, relatively fewer rural respondents (17.9%) believed so than did the urban respondents (21.6%). In addition, the proportion of rural (1.4%) and urban (17.9%) who reported that school authorities refused to admit their children in primary school because the children did not have KG experience confirmed the belief that this "policy" was applied more in the urban than in the rural areas. Finally, only a very small proportion (0.9%) of the urban respondents claimed that they did not enrol their children directly in primary school because they were too young. On the

contrary, a much larger proportion (33.3%) of the rural respondents who enrolled their children in KG instead of directly into primary school did so because they did not consider the children old enough to enter primary school. The differences in the reasons that motivated the rural and urban respondents to enrol their children in KG instead of waiting and enrolling them in Primary school directly was statistically significant. Table 50 illustrates reasons for not enrolling children directly into Primary Class One and place of residence of respondents.

Table 50: Why Children were not Enrolled Directly into Primary Class One by Place of Residence of Respondents

Reason	Rural		Urban		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Foundation Needed	172	47.4	127	59.6	299	51.9
Child too young	121	33.3	2	0.9	123	21.4
Legal requirement	65	17.9	46	21.6	111	19.3
Admission Requirement	5	1.4	38	17.9	43	7.5
Total	363	100.0	213	100.0	576	100.0

$X^2 = 56.253$,   df = 4, P = 0.000
Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The findings showed, again, that the sex of the respondents also appeared to exercise some influence on the respondents' reasons for enrolling their children in KG and not straight to Primary Class One. For instance, a relatively larger proportion of female respondents (57.6%), as compared to a smaller proportion (49.1%) of the male respondents reckoned that their children needed a good KG foundation prior to enrolling in primary school. Again, whilst 12.6 per cent of the female respondents reported that School authorities refused

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to admit children without KG experience, only 4.9 per cent of the male respondents cited this reason to justify why they enrolled their children in KG instead of into primary school directly.

However, other reasons were considered more significant for KG enrolment by the male respondents than they were by the female respondents. For example, the "young age" of children was considered a more cogent reason for KG enrolment prior to entry into primary school by the male respondents (25.7%) than it was by the female respondents (12.6%). Finally, satisfying the legal requirement of enrolling children in KG before primary school was a greater motivation for a larger proportion (20.3%) of the male respondents than it was for the female respondents (17.3%). There was a significant statistical difference between the male and female respondents in their explanation of what motivated them to enrol their children in KG instead of waiting to enrol them directly in Primary school later. Table 51 illustrates reasons for not enrolling children directly into Primary Class One and sex of respondents.

Table 51: Why Children were not Enrolled Directly into Primary Class One by Sex of Respondents

Reason	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Foundation Needed	189	49.1	110	57.6	299	51.9
Child too young	99	25.7	24	12.6	123	21.4
Legal requirement	78	20.3	33	17.3	111	19.3
Admission Requirement	19	4.9	24	12.6	43	7.5
Total	385	100.0	191	100.0	576	100.0

$X^2 = 29.435$,   df = 4, P = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The findings showed further that enrolling children in KG before they entered primary school because "KG gave children a good foundation for

further education" was the single most significant motivating factor for all respondents, irrespective of their educational status. However, this reason appeared more popular among the respondents with relatively lower educational status (No formal Education – 50%, Basic Education – 54.9%) than it was for the respondents with relatively higher education (Second cycle education - 42%; Tertiary education - 40%). The motivation to enrol children in KG instead of directly in primary school because the parents thought they were too young was also higher among the relatively better educated groups (second cycle education - 36%, tertiary education - 30%) also had a stronger motivation in their children being too young to enrol directly into primary school than the less educated groups (No formal education – 22%, Basic education – 18%).

There was no pattern among the reasons that the respondents gave to explain why they ensured that their children began formal education from KG (No without formal education – 22%; Basic education - 18.5%; Second cycle education - 21.7%; Tertiary education - 16.7%). It was, therefore, not possible to conclude that educational status had effect on the respondents' reasons for enrolling children in KG rather than directly in primary school.

There were also some differences among the respondents from the different education backgrounds who responded that they enrolled their children in KG because it was an admission requirement for entry into primary school. No respondent with second cycle education reported that they enrolled their children in KG because it was an admission requirement into primary school. However, 6.1 per cent of those without formal education, 8.6 per cent of those with Basic education and 13.3 per cent of respondents with tertiary education did so for this reason. The differences among the education status groups in the

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study about what motivated them to enrol their children in KG rather than directly into Primary school were found to be statistically significant. Table 52 illustrates reasons for not enrolling children directly into Primary Class One and educational background of respondents.

Table 52: Why Children were not Enrolled Directly into Primary Class One by Educational Background of Respondents

Reason	No Formal Education		Basic		2nd Cycle		Tertiary		Total	
	No	%	No.	%	No	%	No	%	No.	%
Foundation Needed	41	50.0	217	54.9	29	42.0	12	40.0	299	51.9
Child too young	18	22.0	71	18.0	25	36.2	9	30.0	123	21.4
Legal requirement	18	22.0	73	18.5	15	21.7	5	16.7	111	19.3
Admission Requirement	5	6.1	34	8.6	0	0.0	4	13.3	43	7.5
Total	82	100	395	100	69	100	30	100	576	100

$X^2 = 21.387$,   df = 12,   p = 0.045

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The age of the respondents also appeared to influence why they enrolled their children into KG rather than straight into Primary school. The findings from the study show that the "Old" respondents (91.4%) were motivated mostly by the fact that their children needed the good foundation provided at the KG level before entering Primary class One. Fewer proportions of the Middle-aged (38.3%) and the Young respondents (52.5%) cited this reason as their motivation for not enrolling their children directly into primary class One.

The young age of the child was also a major consideration for the "Middle-aged" respondents (31%) and the "Young" respondents (16.5%) but not for the "Old" respondents. Again, the proportion of the "Young" respondents (31%) who reported that the action they took was because it was a legal requirement, was far larger than the proportion of the "Middle-aged"

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(16.9%) and the "Old" respondents (8.6%) who thought so. Finally, no "Young" or "Old" respondent enrolled their children in KG instead of directly in primary school because this was an admission requirement, unlike 13.7 per cent of the "Middle-aged" respondents who did so. The differences in the reasons advanced by the "Young", "Middle-aged" and "Old" respondents to explain why they enrolled their children in KG rather than directly into Primary school was, statistically, very significant. Table 53 illustrates reasons for not enrolling children directly into Primary Class One and age of respondents.

Table 53: Why children were not Enrolled Directly into Primary Class One by age of Respondent

Reason	Young		Middle		Old		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Foundation Needed	83	52.5	120	38.3	96	91.4	299	51.9
Child too young	26	16.5	97	31.0	0	0.0	123	21.4
Legal requirement	49	31.0	53	16.9	9	8.6	111	19.3
Admission Requirement	0	0.0	43	13.7	0	0.0	43	7.5
Total	158	100.0	313	100.0	105	100.0	576	100.0

$X^2 = 135.50$,   df = 8, p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The chi-square test shows that there is a significant relationship between respondents' demographics (sex, age, location, education) and reasons for not enrolling children directly into Primary Class One (P 1). However, the Cramer's V test shows that except for location and age (Cramer's V > 0.30), the relationships are weak and that gender and educational background had a small effect (Cramer's V < 0.30) on respondents' reasons for not enrolling children directly into Primary Class One (P 1).

Table 54: Why Children were not Enrolled Directly into Primary Class One Across Demographics

Demographics	χ^2	df*	Cramer's V	Approx. Sign (p)
Location	56.253	1	0.313	0.000
Sex	29.435	1	0.226	0.000
Age	135.50	2	0.343	0.000
Educational Background	21.387	3	0.111	0.045

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

Motivation to Enrol Children in Particular KGs

Once the respondents decided to enrol their children in KG, there were many factors which influenced them to choose a particular KG for their children. From a list of ten pre-selected items provided, the respondents were asked to pick the one, which influenced them most to enrol their children in a particular KG. The items were "Location convenience/availability of KG in the community", "discipline and safety record of the school", "Affordability", "extracurricular activities like sports and club activities", "Quality of teaching and learning in the school", "class size", "Reputation/prestige of school", "Attitude of teachers/school authorities", "Social and religious factors", and "language of instruction". Analysis of the responses showed that the single most significant factor, which influenced the enrolment of respondents' children in the KGs they attended was the availability of KG in their communities (59.9%). According to this group of respondents, often the KGs were the only ones in their communities. The cost of education was also an important consideration for some of the respondents, hence, they rated "Affordability" high (15.3%). The distance from the respondents' home or place of work to the

KG their children attended ("Location convenience") was also an important consideration for some (11.6%) to the respondents, as it allowed them to drop off their children at school, fairly easily. "Quality of teaching and learning in the school" and the "Reputation of school" (10.1%), "the attitude of teachers/school authorities" (2.1%) and "social factors", especially religion, (1.0%) were the remaining factors that influenced some of the respondents to enrol their children in selected KGs.

The respondents did not consider certain factors worth their consideration when enrolling their children in KG. The list of factors from which the respondents were to pick those which were worth their consideration when selecting KGs for their children included "discipline and safety record of the school", "extracurricular activities like sports and club activities", and "class size". However, none of these factors was selected by any respondent.

The personal and demographic characteristics of the respondents seem to have influenced the choice of specific KGs that the respondents chose for their children. For instance, the large majority (82.1%) of the rural respondents reported that the KGs that their children attended were the only ones available in their communities. However, only a much smaller proportion (22.1%) of the urban respondents reported that way. The cost of education was also a significant influence for the selection of particular KGs for the children in both the rural and urban areas, but especially so for the urban respondents (Rural - 12.9%, Urban – 19.2%).

Generally, factors like "Location convenience" (1.7%), "Quality and reputation of school (1.4%), attitude of teachers/school authorities (0.6%) and religious and social reasons (1.4%) were minor considerations for most of the

respondents in the rural communities. However, for the urban respondents, "Location convenience" (28.6%), and "Quality and reputation of school" (24.9%), and the "attitude of teachers/school authorities" (4.7%) were major influencing factors for the enrolment of their children in specific KGs. "Social" (religious) reasons appeared to be more of a motivating factor for the rural respondents (1.4%) than it was for the urban respondents (0.5%). The differences in the factors which motivated the rural and the urban respondents to select particular KGs for their children were statistically significant. Table 55 illustrates factors motivating parents to select KG and place of residence of respondents.

Table 55: Motivating Factors for KG Selection by Place of Residence for Respondents.

Motivating factor	Rural		Urban		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Only KG in the Community	298	82.1	47	22.1	345	59.9
Affordability	47	12.9	41	19.2	88	15.3
Location convenience	6	1.7	61	28.6	67	11.6
Quality/Reputation	5	1.4	53	24.9	58	10.1
Attitude of teachers/authorities	2	0.6	10	4.7	12	2.1
Social reasons	5	1.4	1	0.5	6	1.0
Total	363	100.0	213	100.0	576	100.0

$X^2 = 254.10$,   df = 6, P = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The findings show that there were relative differences between the male and female respondents about their reasons for choosing specific KGs for their children. For example, the proportion of the female respondents (69.3%) who reported that they had to choose specific KGs because they were the only ones in their communities was larger than their male counterparts (55.2%) who chose

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Kgs for their children due to this reason. Financial considerations were also relatively more important for the female respondents (17.2%) than it was for the male respondents (14.3%). However, as Table 56 shows, "Location convenience" and "Quality and reputation of school" were more important for the male respondents than they were for the female respondents. The only factor which recorded equal proportions of both the male and female respondents was "Social and Religious reasons". On the whole, there was significant statistical difference between the male and female respondents about the factors which motivated them to select particular KGs for their children. Table 56 illustrates factors motivating parents to select KG and sex of respondents.

Table 56: Motivating Factors for KG Selection by Sex of the Respondents

Important factor	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Only KG in the Community	213	55.2	132	69.3	345	59.9
Affordability	55	1%4.3	33	17.2	88	15.3
Location convenience	57	14.8	10	5.2	67	11.6
Quality/Reputation	49	12.8	9	4.7	58	10.1
Attitude of teachers/authorities	7	1.8	5	2.6	12	2.1
Social reasons	4	1.0	2	1.0	6	1.0
Total	385	100.0	191	100.0	576	100.0

$X^2 = 21.677$,   df = 6, p = 0.001

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The findings of the study indicate also that respondents in different age groups had different reasons for selecting specific KGs for their children. Analysis of the survey findings show that when the KG was the only one in the Community, for instance, it was far more attractive for the older respondents than it was for the relatively younger respondents ("Young" – 53.2%, "Middle-

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aged" – 58.8%, "Old" – 73.3%). The cost of education ("Affordability") was also a more significant motivating factor for the older respondents in the survey ("Old" respondents - 18.1%, "Young" - 15.2%, "Middle-aged" (14.4%). Again, even though "Location Convenience" was also important for all, it was more so for the "Young" (12%) and the "Middle-aged" (12.8%) than it was for the "old" respondents (7.6%).

On the other hand, the relatively younger respondents ("Young" -16.5%; "Middle-aged" - 9.9%) considered "Quality and reputation of school" as a much more motivating factor in school selection than did the "old" respondents (1.0%). Also, the study results show that when selecting KGs for their children, the relatively younger respondents were more concerned about the "attitude of teachers/school authorities" and "Social factors" than were the "old" respondents (Table 57). The differences among the age groups about what motivated them to select particular KGs for their children were found to be statistically significant. Table 57 illustrates factors motivating parents to select KG and age of respondents.

Table 57: Motivating Factors for KG Selection by age of Respondents

Motivating factor	Young		Middle		Old		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Only KG in the Community	84	53.2	184	58.8	77	73.3	345	59.9
Affordability	24	15.2	45	14.4	19	18.1	88	15.3
Location convenience	19	12.0	40	12.8	8	7.6	67	11.6
Quality/Reputation	26	16.5	31	9.9	1	1.0	58	10.1
Attitude of teachers & authorities	1	0.6	11	3.5	0	0.0	12	2.1
Social reasons	4	2.5	2	0.6	0	0.0	6	1.0
Total	158	100.0	313	100.0	105	100.0	576	100.0

$X^2 = 57.369$,   df = 12,   P = 0.000
Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The large majority (76.5%) of the respondents with Basic education background claimed that the KGs they enrolled their children in were the only ones available in their communities. This factor was, therefore, very critical for this group of respondents. Much fewer proportions of the other education-status group in the study were forced to enrol their children in specific KGs because there were no other KGs in their communities (Table 58). Also, the respondents without formal education found the cost of education (Affordability) a more compelling reason to select particular KGs for their children than it was for any other education-status groups.

However, the relatively better educated respondents (Second cycle – 40.6%; Tertiary – 46.7%) found the quality of service provided in the KGs more important than did the less educated respondents (no formal education – 2.4%; Basic education – 3.5%). The "Attitude of teachers/authorities" was also more important for the respondents with Second cycle (7.2%) and those with Tertiary level backgrounds (16.7%) than it was for those without formal education (2.4%) and the respondents with only Basic education.

For the respondents with only Basic education, the attitude of teachers was not considered at all when they were choosing KGs for their children. "Social reasons" were considered by all the education specific groups but were stronger influencers for the Tertiary level respondents (3.3%) and those without formal education (2.4%) than they were for the respondents with only Basic Education (0.5%) and those with Second Cycle education (1.4%). There were significant statistical differences among the education status groups with regard to the specific factors which motivated them to select particular KGs for their

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children. Table 58 illustrates factors motivating parents to select KG and education background of respondents.

Table 58: Motivating Factors for KG Selection by Education Background of Respondents

Motivating factor	No Formal Education		Basic		2nd Cycle		Tertiary		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Only KG in the Community	35	42.7	302	76.5	5	7.2	3	10.0	345	59.9
Affordability	34	41.5	43	10.9	9	13.0	2	6.7	88	15.3
Location convenience	7	8.5	34	8.6	21	30.4	5	16.7	67	11.6
Quality or Reputation	2	2.4	14	3.5	28	40.6	14	46.7	58	10.1
Attitude of teachers and authorities	2	2.4	0	0.0	5	7.2	5	16.7	12	2.1
Social reasons	2	2.4	2	0.5	1	1.4	1	3.3	6	1.0
Total	82	100	395	100	69	100	30	100	576	100

$X^2 = 82.966$,   df = 18,   p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The chi-square test shows that there is a significant relationship between respondents' demographics (sex, age, location, education) and the motivation factors for selecting a particular KG ($p<0.05$). However, the Cramer's V test shows that except for location, the relationships are weak and that the effect of sex, age and educational backgrounds on the motivation factors for selecting a particular KG is small (Cramer's V<0.30). Location of the respondents had a large effect (Cramer's V > 0.50) on their motivation for selecting a particular KG.

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Table 59: Motivating Factors for KG Selection Across Demographics

Demographics	χ^2	df*	Cramer's V	Approx. Sign (p)
Location	254.10	1	0.664	0.000
Sex	21.677	1	0.194	0.001
Age	57.369	2	0.223	0.000
Educational Background	82.966	3	0.219	0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The discussants in the FGDs in both circuits maintained that a number of factors accounted for why parents enrolled their children in particular schools. According to them, "cost of education" was a critical factor when a parent was deciding if his/her child should go to KG. According to them, even though "Capitation Grant" took care of direct costs like school fees and levies for sports and culture activities in public basic schools, there were many indirect costs that were borne by parents. These indirect costs included providing for uniforms, feeding and stationery, and in some cases, providing transportation for children when the school was far away from the child's home. One other conclusion drawn from the FGDs was that factors like quality of education and a school's reputation are often not important consideration to parents in rural areas mainly because these group of respondents often have no option than to send their children to the only school available in the community.

This finding confirms the assertion that educational facilities are very necessary in the promotion of enrolment in education, especially of specific groups like the poor and girls. The case for quantity seems obvious as when there are no schools available, children are not able to acquire education

(Colclough et al., 2000; Handa, 2002; Ersado, 2005). Furthermore, the findings agree with Kim and Fram (2009) that some parents choose child care characteristics that can support their children's developmental needs at the time while others may compromise quality criterion for accessibility and affordability.

Distance to KG as a Critical Factor in KG Enrolment

The findings of the study showed that distance to KG was a major motivating factor for the respondents. The majority (54.3%) of the respondents reported that they enrolled their children in KGs which were within one-kilometre radius from their homes. Another 36.8 per cent of the respondents chose KGs which were situated between one and three kilometres from their homes for their children. The rest (8.9%) claimed that their children had to commute distances longer than three kilometres to get to their KG.

In the FGDs, it was noted that majority of the children who travelled beyond three kilometres (some, up to six or more kilometres) to school each day did so because of the parents' desire to get quality education for their children and not because of the absence of KGs in the communities or closer.

The findings of the study indicate that, generally, the children of the urban respondents commuted longer distances to school while the respondents in the rural areas preferred to enrol their children in KGs which were closer to their homes. The majority (66.1%) of the rural respondents enrolled their children in KGs which were within one kilometre whilst far less (34.3%) of the urban respondents reported so. Also, while 30.6 per cent of the children of the rural respondents commuted between one and three kilometres to get to KG, 47.4 per cent of the urban children were reported to have commuted this

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distance to get to KG. Finally, only few (3.3%) of the rural respondents enrolled their children in KGs which were located over three kilometres away from their places of residence. However, 18.3 per cent of the urban respondents were not concerned about distance and enrolled their children in KGs located over three kilometres away from their places of residence. The differences in the distances covered by the rural and urban children to get to KG was statistically, very significant. Table 60 presents respondents' view on commuting distance to KG by place of residence of respondents.

Table 60: Commuting Distance to KG by Place of Residence of Respondents

Distance to KG	Rural		Urban		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 1 Km	240	66.1	73	34.3	313	54.3
1Km - 3Km	111	30.6	101	47.4	212	36.8
Above 3Km	12	3.3	39	18.3	51	8.9
Total	363	100.0	213	100.0	576	100.0

$X^2 = 67.004$,   df = 3, p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

Considering the distances their children commuted to school daily, it is not surprising that most (79.3%) of the respondents reported that their children went to school on foot. The rest reported that their children were carried to school on bicycles/motorbike (14.2%), in canoes (3.7%) or in cars/buses (2.8%). Further analysis of the findings revealed that walking to school though common in both localities, was more popular in the rural location (86.0%) than in the urban locality (68.1%). The use of bicycles and motorbikes as means of commuting to school was, however, less common in the rural localities (8.3%) than in the urban areas (24.4%). The 5.8 per cent of the respondents who claimed that their children travelled by canoe to school lived in the rural areas.

On the other hand, all the respondents (7.5%) whose used cars and buses to get to school were urban residents.

The chi-square test shows that there is a significant relationship between respondents' demographics (sex, age, location, education) and commuting distance to KG ($p<0.05$). However, the Cramer's V test shows that except for location, the relationships are weak and that gender, age and educational backgrounds had a small effect on commuting distance to KG (Cramer's $V<0.30$). Location had a medium effect (Cramer's $V > 0.30$) on the commuting distance to KG.

Table 61: Commuting Distance to KG Across Demographics

Demographics	χ^2	df*	Cramer's V	Approx. Sign (p)
Location	67.004	1	0.341	0.000
Sex	9.744	1	0.130	0.021
Age	29.265	2	0.159	0.000
Educational Background	19.747	3	0.107	0.020

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The FGDs concluded that parents were concerned about their young children walking long distances to school and that if schools were far away from their homes, they were likely to keep the children out of school. It added, however, that distance was not a major problem in cases where the KGs were sited near the parents' places of work or where safe and reliable transportation was available to take children to school. The FGD showed, further, that distance to KG was more important to rural residents than it was to urban residents. In

urban centres, availability of reliable and better means of transportation for children to school allowed parents to enrol their children in schools far away from their homes but this was not the case in the rural areas.

The findings in the study suggest that that KGs were mostly attended by children living in the neighbourhood. This finding confirms the conclusion of Colclough et al. (2000) that besides the number of schools, the distance to school also plays a crucial role in children's participation and that children who lived further away were less likely to be in school.

Motivation to Keep Children in KG After Enrolment

The study found that once the respondents enrolled their children in KG, they were motivated to keep the children there because of two main reasons. The respondents' main motivation to keep their children in KG, after enrolment was as a result of what they claimed to be positive changes they observed in their children which they attributed to the result of their enrolment in KG. The second reason that motivated the respondents to retain their children in KG was that certain benefits accrued to them, their families and their communities because their children attended KG.

The changes that the respondents observed in their children after enrolling them in KG was reported to have motivated the respondents to keep the children in KG. The respondents reported that they observed major changes ranging from "academic skills", "social skills" to "attitudes" in their children. Among the changes, the acquisition of academic skills appears to be the strongest motivation for parents to keep their children in KG. The majority (77.6%) of the respondents reported that they were motivated to keep their children in KG because of they observed that their children acquired academic

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skills such as changes in the children's vocabulary and speech after the children enrolled in KG. Some of the specific changes reported by the respondents were that the children became more eloquent and coherent in their speech, even in their own local language. Most important to some of the respondents, their children even started speaking English and acquiring skills in basic numeracy at this stage.

The strongest motivation for some of the respondents (16.3%) to keep their children in KG was because of the "social changes", (that is, how the children related with other people) they observed in their children. They explained further that their children became more respectful, greeted them on their return from school, were prepared to take turns in games and shared what they had with others. Madam Abena Amoakowaa, a female respondent added: "My son, after spending time in KG, preferred group play to individual play and whilst in the past, he always wanted to be with me, he now wanted to be with their friends more".

The remaining (6.1%) of the respondents reported that they saw changes in the attitude of their children and that this motivated them to retain their children in KG. They claimed that the children became neater, more inquisitive, more confident, and, generally, more "troublesome" than they were before they enrolled in KG. Finally, the children became more tolerant of others and behaved better than they were before they entered KG.

The discussants in the FGD noted that most parents sent their children to KG with the expectation that the children would acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills that would make their transition to primary school easier. This expectation was met more in the urban areas because of relatively better-quality

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service provided there than occurred in the rural areas. The consensus in the FGD was that other "non-academic" benefits also accrued to the children who enrolled in KG. For instance, it was noted that as the children interacted more with other children, they also developed in language and social skills. Finally, the discipline and order in the KGs also helped to moderate the attitudes of the children positively.

The analysis of the findings appears to suggest that the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents defined the factor which motivated them to keep their children in KG. For instance, the findings show that the majority of both urban and rural respondents claimed that they were motivated to retain their children in KG because of the significant academic gains the children made after they enrolled in KG. However, relatively more urban respondents (91.4%) found "academic gains" more motivating than did the rural respondents (69%).

On the other hand, relatively more rural respondents (22.8%) as compared to 5.9 per cent of the urban respondents reported that they kept their children in KG because of the "social skills" the children acquired in KG. Similarly, relatively more rural respondents (8.2%) claimed that the source of their motivation to keep their children in KG was "attitudinal changes" that occurred in their children". A much smaller proportion of the urban respondents (2.7%) reported that they kept their children in KG because of this reason. Table 62 presents observed changes in children after enrolment in KG education by place of residence of respondents.

Table 62: Motivating Factors to Keep Children in KG by Place of Residence of Respondents

Motivating factor	Rural		Urban		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Academic skills	253	69.0	194	91.4	447	77.6
Social skills	81	22.8	13	5.9	94	16.3
Attitudinal changes	29	8.2	6	2.7	35	6.1
Total	363	100.0	213	100.0	576	100

$X^2 = 37.267$,   df = 3, p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The study showed that generally, larger proportions of respondents with lower academic backgrounds (No Formal Education – 76.8%; Basic Education – 89.4%) were motivated by the academic skills acquired by their children than did the respondents with high academic background (Second Cycle – 33.3%; Tertiary – 26.7%). On the other hand, the high academic status group respondents were motivated more by social and attitudinal changes in the children than did the lower academic status groups. The reported differences in the benefits that accrued to the children who enrolled in KG by the different education status groups were statistically significant. Table 63 presents observed changes in children after enrolment in KG education by educational status of respondents.

Table 63: Motivating Factors to keep children in KG by Educational Status of Respondents

Motivating factor	No Formal Education		Basic Education		2nd Cycle		Tertiary		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Academic skills	63	76.8	353	89.4	23	33.3	8	26.7	447	77.6
Social skills	13	15.9	33	8.4	36	52.2	12	40.0	94	16.3
Attitudinal changes	6	7.3	9	2.3	10	14.5	10	33.3	35	6.1
Total	82	100	395	100	69	100	30	100	576	100

$X^2 = 174.958$, df = 9, p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The FGDs provided an insight into the motivating factors among the groups of respondents with different educational backgrounds. The FGDs revealed that most high academic status group members live in nuclear settings and it is only in KG that their children mix with other children. It is in these interactions that the children acquired social and attitudinal skills unlike the lower academic status group members whose children acquire these skills at home. On the other hand, some children from the high academic status backgrounds enter KG with some basic academic skills hence their parents do not notice much difference in their academic skills after entry to KG. Most children from the low academic status background, however, enter KG without any formal academic skills. Their parents are, therefore, able to detect more easily the changes that occur in their children and take pride in their children's ability to demonstrate their academic prowess. This, therefore, serves as motivation for the parents to keep their children in KG.

Another major finding in the study was that the respondents' motivation to keep their children in KG was the acknowledgement benefits from children's participation in ECE programmes accrued to their families and communities as

well. According to the respondents, it was not only the children who attended KG who benefitted from their attendance. Other family members also benefitted in several ways from their children's enrolment in KG. The survey findings show that the respondents listed the benefits that accrued to the entire family as a result of a child's enrolment in KG as the family "had time to work or attend to other responsibilities" (57.5%); "had peace of mind to attend to their business, knowing that their children were safe and secure" (28.5%); "enjoyed peace at home because of reduced disturbance by children when they were away or even as a result of the discipline taught at KG" (6.6%); "reduced demands by the children for things that the family had to spend money on" (4.7%); and, "less quarrels among children in the family or household" (2.8%).

The respondents maintained further that individual family members also benefitted from the children's attendance in KG. For mothers, the main benefits were that they now had "more time to attend to their chores or engage in some work" (75.0%), "there was less demand for attention and, hence, less disturbance from their children" (16.3%) and "reduced stress of combining caring for children with work" (8.7%). Fathers also benefitted from their children's attendance in KG in a number of ways. The respondents reported that fathers "had the psychological satisfaction that came with the knowledge that they were doing something useful for their children, that is, preparing them for their future" (53.9%), "had more time for their work" (33.9%) and "had peace of mind, knowing that their children were in a secure place" (12.1%). Older male siblings of the children who attended KG also had their share of the benefits resulting from their younger siblings attending KG. These male siblings became more responsible, especially when they were the ones who sent their

younger siblings to and from school daily (70.5%), which ultimately, served as a strong motivation for the older male siblings to attend school regularly (29.5%). Older female siblings of the children who attended KG were also affected in three main ways, namely, "taking the children to school" (51.9%), "preparing children for school and cooking for them" (31.8%) and "those of them who were in school were compelled to go to school always because they had to take their younger siblings to school" (10.3%).

The children's communities were also reported to have benefitted in a number of ways when the children went to KG. According to the respondents, when the children in the communities went to KG, it offered an "opportunity for the achievement of future expectations for children in the community" (31.6%), "improved security/safety for young children in the community" (20.7%), "it served as motivation for other children in the community to go to school" (19.8%), "it made it possible for community members to engage in other duties" (8.3%) and "it served as a mobilising point for community initiated programmes and, hence, community development" (6.1%). Incidentally, 78 (13.5%) of the respondents did not see any benefit of their children's attendance in KG for their communities and reported that "the children's attendance did not have any effect on the community". These benefits that the respondents claimed accrued to significant others in the child's life were what the respondents claim also motivated them to keep their children in KG.

The chi-square test shows that the respondents' location and educational background had no significant relationship with the motivating factors to keep children in KG (p>0.05). The Cramer's V for both location and educational background are very small (Cramer's V< 0.30), suggesting that the respondents'

location and educational background had a very weak relationship with the motivating factors to keep children in KG (Table 64).

Table 64: Motivating Factors to keep children in KG Across Demographics

Demographics	χ^2	$df*$	Cramer's V	Approx. Sign (p)
Location	0.867	1	0.039	0.648
Educational Background	4.367	3	0.062	0.627

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The findings confirm Gargiulo and Kilgo's (2005) assertion that early intervention for children has definite advantages for society, the family and the child.

The findings also confirm Kids Count's (2005) assertion that examples abound from ECE programmes serving families in Asia, Africa and Latin America, where parents who had clearly demanded 'school learning' in the beginning later become most appreciative of their children's social development. Such parents delight in their children's cleverness but talk most about their being polite, respectful, obedient and friendly and, at the same time, confident, curious and comfortable even with strangers (Kids Count, 2005). Finally, the findings above confirm UNICEF's (1984) assertion that Early Childhood Development plays a very important role in society. According to the organisation, generally, ECD helps children to develop to their full potential, acquire desirable moral and social values, which will benefit them and society in the future. ECD also helps to improve the efficiency of educational systems and helps to eliminate social inequities as well as promotes increased primary school attendance of older siblings, especially girls. Also, ECD can serve as a

rallying point for social and political actions that can help to build consensus and organisation for the common good and also lead to increased labour force participation of women. Finally, ECD can help to radically re-orient society by beginning at the bottom (e.g. Nicaragua), be used to address concerns for childcare related to female employment (e.g. Colombia), or serve as part of a human resource strategy (e.g. Chile).

Objective 7: Identify the main factors which motivate parents to recommend KG education to other parents

Out of the 653 respondents in the study, 584 (89.4%) reported that they would recommend KG education for young children to other parents while the remaining 69 (10.6%) claimed that they would not. The main reasons given by the respondents to explain why they would recommend KG education to other parents were that KG prepared children for formal education (41.3%) and that when children attended KG, it allowed parents, especially mothers, time to attend to other chores (24.8%). Other reasons which were given by some respondents were that "KG education in public schools is free" (13%), "KG education brings honour and respect to the family" (10.3%), and "KG helps to shape children's attitude positively" (9.2%). The rest (1.4%) of the respondents reported that the only reason why they would do so was that they did not know anything negative about KG.

The FGD participants in both circuits unanimously agreed that they would recommend KG to parents because KG helped to lay a good foundation in education for children. According to them, children with KG experience stood a very good chance of doing well in primary school and beyond. Even

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though the participants in the FGDs reported that they would recommend KG to parents with KG-aged children, they were however, concerned about the cost of education. The conclusion was that although basic education is supposed to be free in Ghana, there were many indirect costs that parents who send their children to KG must bear. Thus, the high cost of KG education might deter some parents from recommending KG to already over-burdened parents.

Analysis of the findings showed that there were differences among the respondents in the reasons they gave to explain why they would recommend KG education for young children to other parents. Further analysis revealed that these differences could be attributed to differences in the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics. The findings revealed that the single most significant reason why the respondents from the rural communities would recommend KG to other parents was that "KG prepared children for formal education" (53.9%). However, this was only the third significant reason for the urban respondents with only 19.5 per cent of them citing this as the reason why they would recommend KG to other parents. Again, proportionately more rural respondents (26.6%) than urban respondents (21.9%) thought that "KG provides parents enough time to do other things" was enough motivation for them to recommended KG education to other parents.

On the other hand, the findings of the study appeared to indicate that the cost of education was a much stronger concern for the urban respondents than it was for the rural respondents. Whilst 26 per cent of the urban respondents were motivated to recommend KG to other parents because "Education is free", far fewer rural respondents (5.4%) were motivated by this reason to do likewise.

Also, relatively more urban respondents (19.1%) as compared to their rural counterparts (5.2%) said that they would recommended KG education to other parents because "It brought honour and respect to the parents". There were equally larger proportions of urban respondents than the rural respondents who would recommend KG to other parents because "It helped to shape children's attitude positively" and that they "had nothing negative against KG education". There were significant statistical differences between the urban and rural respondents in their explanation of why they recommended KG education to other parents.

The research findings showed, further, that the educational background of the respondents also influenced their reasons for recommending KG education to other parents. For instance, the number one reason why the respondents who had formal education will take this action was that KG prepared children for formal education (Basic Education - 41.5%, Second Cycle Education – 52.2%, Tertiary – 43.3%). For the respondents without formal education, however, their number one reason for recommending KG to other parents was that it allowed parents "free time to attend to other chores" (36.8%).

Overall, the more educated respondents (second cycle and tertiary educated respondents) offered fewer reasons for recommending KG to other parents than did the less educated respondents (No formal education and Basic education). For instance, the more educated respondents gave only three reasons (preparation for formal education, shaping attitudes and freeing time for parents) to explain why they would recommend KG to other parents. The less educated respondents added two more reasons (honour and respect that KG education brought to parents and KG being free) to the reasons provided by the

more educated (Table 65). The differences in the reasons given by the respondents to explain why they would recommend KG education to other parents which might be due to their educational status were statistically significant. Table 65 presents respondents' reasons why some parents would recommend KG education to other parents by educational status of respondents.

Table 65: Motivation to Recommend KG to Other Parents by Educational Status of Respondents

Reason	No formal Education		Basic Education		Second Cycle		Tertiary Education		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Preparation for formal education	27	31.0	165	41.5	36	52.2	13	43.3	241	41.3
Free time for parents	32	36.8	84	21.1	23	33.3	6	20.0	145	24.8
KG Education is free	10	11.5	66	16.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	76	13.0
Honour and respect	11	12.6	49	12.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	60	10.3
Shaping attitude	5	5.8	28	7.0	10	14.5	11	36.7	54	9.2
Nothing negative against KG	2	2.3	6	1.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	1.4
Total	87	100.0	398	100.0	69	100.0	30	100.0	584	100.0

$X^2 = 75.772$,   df = 18,   p = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The age of the respondents also appeared to have some influence on the reasons why they would recommend KG to other parents. The evidence shows that the relatively younger respondents ("Young" – 48.14%; "Middle-aged" - 46.1%) reported that their main reason was that it prepared children for formal education. However, a smaller proportion of the "Old" respondents (16.8%) said they would recommend KG to other parents for this reason. For the "Old" respondents, the only other reasons why they would recommend KG to other parents were that "KG was free" (64.5%) and "KG allowed parents enough time to attend to other duties" (18.7%). The "Young" and "Middle-aged"

respondents, however, had "It brings honour and respect to the parents", "parents have enough time to attend to other duties" and "KG shapes the attitude of children positively", as reasons to justify why they would do so (Table 66). The differences in the explanations given by the respondents in the different age groups to justify why they would recommend KG to other parents was statistically significant. Table 66 presents respondents' reasons why some parents would recommend KG education to other parents by age of respondents.

Table 66: Motivation to Recommend KG to Other Parents by Age of Respondents

Reason	Young		Middle		Old		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Preparation for formal education	76	48.1	147	46.1	18	16.8	241	41.3
Free time for parents	22	13.9	103	32.3	20	18.7	145	24.8
KG Education is free	0	0.0	7	2.2	69	64.5	76	13.0
Honour and respect	48	30.4	12	3.8	0	0.0	60	10.3
Shaping attitude	11	7.0	43	13.5	0	0.0	54	9.2
Nothing negative against KG	1	0.6	7	2.2	0	0.0	8	1.4
Total	158	100.0	319	100.0	107	100.0	584	100.0

$X^2 = 411.079$ df = 12,   P = 0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The reasons provided by the male and female respondents to justify why they would recommend KG to other parents could be grouped into those that they generally agreed about and those about which they differed. Areas of some agreement were "Preparation for formal education" (Males - 41.3%, Females – 41.1%), "Free time for parents to do other things" (Males - 26.4%, Females – 21.8%), "KG education is free" (Males - 12.9%, Females – 13.2%) and "Nothing negative against KG" (Males - 1%, Females – 2%). The major areas of significant disagreement between the two groups were "KG education brought honour and respect to parents (Males – 12.9%, Females – 5.1%) and

"KG helps to shape children's attitude positively" (Males – 5.4%, Females – 16.8%).

The chi-square test shows that respondents age and educational background had a significant relationship with their views on the motivation to recommend KG to other parents ($p<0.05$). However, the Cramer's V test shows that only age had a large effect (Cramer's V > 0.50) on the motivation of respondents to recommend KG to other parents (Table 67).

Table 67: Motivation to Recommend KG to Other Parents Across Demographics

Demographics	χ^2	df*	Cramer's V	Approx. Sign (p)
Age	405.00	2	0.577	0.000
Educational Background	100.30	3	0.234	0.000

Source: Field Survey, October (2016)

The findings seem to suggest that the initial positive impression that most of the respondents had about KG and which motivated them to enrol their children in KG persisted. This perception about the positive effects of KG, most probably, fuelled the respondents' motivation to recommend KG to other parents. The findings showed further, that some of the parents who did not enrol their children in KG might do so now, if it were possible to do so. This fact was confirmed by the number of respondents (584, eight more than those who enrolled their children in KG) who reported that they would recommend KG to other parents. This change is a positive sign and signify the probability that advocacy work by stakeholders is yielding results and helping more parents have to acknowledge the benefit of KG education.

For the 69 respondents who would not recommend KG education for young children to other parents, the majority (56.5%) were concerned about the

cost incurred on KG education. According to them, enrolling children in KG imposed some financial burden on parents, such as the provision of uniforms and learning materials and feeding of children in school. They were, therefore, reluctant to recommend KG to other parents, especially those without adequate financial resources. The findings showed that proportionately more urban respondents (71.4%), as compared to a smaller proportion of the rural respondents (50%), cited "cost of education" as the reason why they would not recommend KG education to other parents. This might imply that the urban dwellers were affected by the cost of sending their children to KG more than the rural respondents.

Another significant reason offered by the respondents to explain their reluctance to recommend KG to other parents was that caring for young children should be the responsibility of parents and that this responsibility should not be shifted to the KG (Total - 20.3%, Males - 23.8%; Females - 14.8%). It is significant that proportionately more male respondents thought that parents should devote enough time for their young children. The smaller proportion of females who wanted parents to take care of young children might be the result of the drudgery of caring for children, a responsibility often performed by women. The fact that some of the female respondents might want to work could have accounted for the smaller proportion of female respondents who wanted parents to take care of young children.

What happened in KGs once children enrolled and, subsequently, the quality of KG services, were of a major concern to 15.9 per cent of the respondents. This proportion of respondents maintained that children only went to KG to play, hence, they were not prepared to recommend it to other parents.

Incidentally, the proportion of the rural respondents (18.8%) who thought that children only went to KG to play was almost twice that of the urban respondents (9.5%) who reported so. This observation raises critical concerns regarding differences in the quality of services offered in the KGs in the two locations. On a positive note, it is possible that more rural areas were well aware of what actually took place in the KGs that their children attended unlike some of the urban respondents who only saw KG as a place to keep their children whilst they went about their chores.

Finally, 7.3 per cent of the respondents reported that they did not know the benefits that were derived from children's attendance in KG, hence, they were not eager to recommend KG education to other parents. Figure 12 illustrates reasons why some parents do not recommend KG education to other parents.
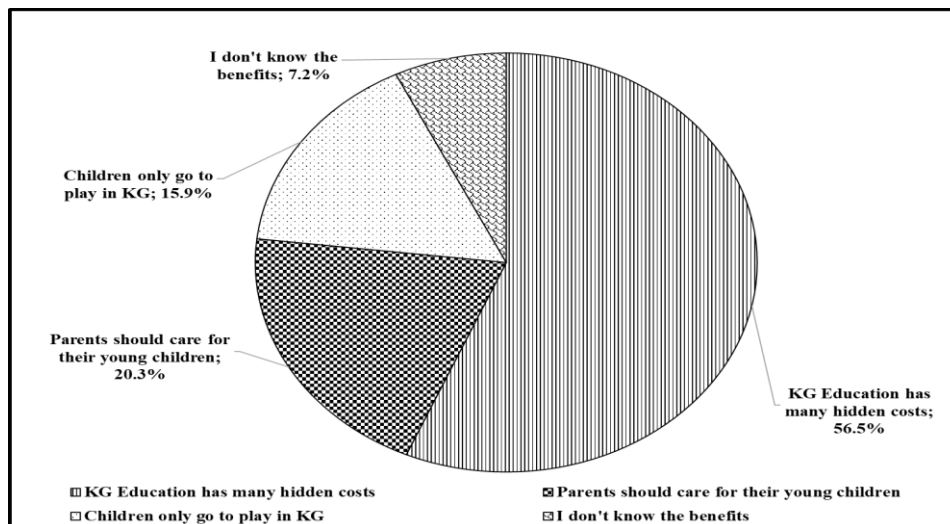
Figure 12: Why Some Parents did not Recommend KG to other Parents

Source: Field Survey, October 2016

The conclusion that can be drawn from this chapter is that the parents in the survey were prepared to play their gate-keeping and decision-making roles by committing their support and resources to the development of their children.

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However, their motivation to do so was dependent on how the programme reflected their personal motivation to achieve a particular goal or need. In sum, it can be observed that the decisions that parents take about their children's KG enrolment depends on a range of factors, the principal among which is the parent's perception of the role KG plays in a child's development. In addition, the availability and quality of services, the affordability of those services also influence parents to utilise the services. Finally, it also depends on parents' perception of how it supports their agenda for their children's development as well as the benefits the programme has for the parents themselves, their families and communities.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the major findings of the study, followed by the major conclusions derived from the study. Also presented in this chapter are recommendations for various stakeholders in the education sector. The chapter ends by highlighting the limitations of the study and suggests areas that need further research.

Summary

The study used a mixed methods approach to investigate the factors that motivate parents in Kwahu Afram Plains North District to enrol their children in KG. To achieve this goal, a number of objectives and follow-up research questions were developed to guide the research. These research questions related to parental perceptions about their role in their children's education, the future career aspirations parents have for their children and whether these called for formal education of the children, awareness of policies and interventions to promote KG in the country, and the respondents' perception about the importance of Kindergarten education, especially for children.

Other research questions were also crafted to find out the influence of the characteristics of their children as well as various major supply and demand factors on parental motivation to enrol their children in KG. Theoretical, conceptual and empirical literature related to parental motivation and relevant to the study were reviewed. Also reviewed in the study was the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1995, 1997) model of parental involvement process

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which was adapted to explain the "whys" of the decisions parents make about their involvement in their children's education.

The study employed a cross-sectional, mixed-method exploratory approach and used question guides to elicit responses to both close and open-ended questions from parents in the key participant interviews. Focus group discussions were also used to collect additional information to validate the findings. Qualitative data analysis involved thematic analysis and narrations while the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) Version 22.0 was used to conduct chi square estimation on the quantitative data as well as to calculate the Cramer's V to ascertain the size effect of the sample on the chi square. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, pie charts and bar graphs were used to present data on the findings.

In all, 653 parents were interviewed. There were 236 urban and 417 rural respondents in the study, with ages ranging from 20 years to 59 years. Out of the 653 respondents, 224 (34.3%) were females while the remaining 429 (65.7%) were males. The educational background of the respondents was generally low ("No Formal Education" – 14.9%, "Basic education" – 68.5%, "Second Cycle" – 11.6% and "Tertiary" – 5.1%). All the respondents in the survey had children in Primary School who served as the reference point for their parents' motivation to enrol them in KG.

All the 653 respondents acknowledged the importance of formal education in the preparation of children for highly paid and valued professional careers. Significantly, the respondents were aware that KG is part of the formal education system. However, while most (96.5%) of the respondents were aware that attending KG provided a foundation for children's future development, a

smaller proportion of them (88.2%) ensured that their children had KG education before entering primary school.

The respondents whose children entered Primary school without KG experience (11.8%) were constrained mainly by "long distance to school", "inability to afford the cost of KG education" and most primary schools in rural areas did not make prior KG experience a prerequisite for primary school enrolment. The availability of relatives and other people at home to help them to take care of children, lack of the required legal documents such as birth certificates, "poor quality of KG education", "bad attitude of some teachers", "enrolment of children in alternative programmes such as in Qur'anic schools", "sickness or disability of children" and "refusal of the child to attend" were also some of the reasons why some parents never enrolled their children in KG prior to their enrolment in primary school.

As a result of the benefits that the respondents associated with children's participation in KG education, majority (89.4%) of them said that were prepared to recommend KG education for young children to other parents while the remaining 69 (10.6%) claimed would not. The main reasons which were given by the respondents to explain their willingness to recommend KG education to other parents were that KG prepared children for formal education and also made it possible for parents to attend to other chores. The financial burden on parents who enrolled their children in KG was the single most significant reason why some of the respondents were reluctant to recommend KG education for young children to other parents.

The principal factors which motivated parents to enrol their children in KG were explored in the study. These factors were parental responsibility for

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their children's development, parental aspirations for their children, awareness of policies and initiatives introduced by the government and other actors to promote ECE, and parental perception of the importance of ECE. The effect of selected socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents (place of residence, educational background, age and sex) on the responses of the respondents were also explored.

The first objective of the study addressed parental responsibility towards their children's development as a motive for parental involvement in their children's education. The main finding under this objective showed that the respondents acknowledged that the development of children, including their education, was the responsibility of parents. Consequently, the majority (88.4%) of the respondents reported that they themselves, or together with their spouses or their spouses alone, were responsible for their children's enrolment in KG.

The findings also demonstrated the vital role that other family members (siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.) and fictive kin, who may be friends or neighbours, play in the education and development of children. The findings revealed that in situations where parents were unable or unwilling to enrol their children in KG, other relatives and neighbours stepped in to enrol the children in KG.

The second objective of the study explored parental aspirations for children as a source of motivation for the enrolment of children in Kindergarten. The most significant finding was that the respondents had wide and varied future career aspirations for their children which they were prepared to assist the children to attain. The career aspirations preferred by the respondents for

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their children were those that were considered to be held in high esteem by society, paid relatively high salaries or those which offered easy employment. These included careers in the health sector, education, engineering, security services, and vocations like hairdressing, and dressmaking, though differentiated for the children according to the sex of the child.

The respondents asserted that there is a strong link between formal education, including KG, and the achievement of the aspirations and expectations they had for their children, hence, their willingness to enrol their children in KG. Parental aspirations for their children was, therefore, found to be a strong source of motivation for parents to enrol their children in school. The findings showed, finally, that the personal characteristics of the respondents, such as place of residence, sex, educational background and age, had some influence on what they claimed were the impact of KG on the achievement of parental aspirations for children.

The third objective of the study was to find out if the respondents' awareness of ECE policies and initiatives inspired the enrolment of their children in KG. The respondents were very much aware of policies and programmes adopted by the Government of Ghana and other stakeholders to promote KG education in the country. They could, therefore, mention the introduction of pro-poor policies such as provision of school uniform, free feeding and the capitation grant (leading to elimination of certain fees), the policy to make KG part of the free compulsory basic education system, sensitisation on right-age enrolment (four years for KG), and, pre-service KG teacher training in selected Colleges of Education as some of the KG-promoting interventions the government had introduced.

The respondents were also aware of what the District Education Office, the District Assembly, and "NGOs" were doing to promote KG in their district. The KG-related interventions and services provided by these stakeholders included sensitisation of parents on the importance of KG, training of teachers, and supervision of KG-related activities. They were also involved in the distribution of uniforms, supply of teaching and learning materials, school feeding, supply of furniture, and school construction and repairs.

The respondents were aware of what was happening in the KG sector because they had access to several sources of information on development issues. These sources of information included GES, Parent-Teacher Association meetings, the mass media (Radio and TV), the District Assembly, Relatives and friends, Traditional Authority, and the Member of Parliament. Once again, the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents were found to have some effect on the level of awareness of policies and interventions that promote KG programmes as well as access to specific sources for information on development issues. Overall, the high awareness level of the respondents of policies and KG-related interventions motivated most of them to enrol their children in KG.

The fourth objective that was explored was whether parental perception of the importance of KG education motivated the respondents to enrol their children in KG. The key finding was that, generally, the respondents had a very positive impression about KG and maintained that children needed KG experience prior to enrolling in Primary school. This perception was borne out of the belief by the respondents that KG prepares children for primary school and also that it was a legal requirement that children had to attend KG prior to

primary school enrolment. Some of the respondents also believed that when children attended KG, it allows parents to focus on their work and allows older siblings to do other things such as go to school or learn a trade.

Again, the respondents noted that the importance of KG extended beyond the children who were enrolled. Other stakeholders, especially families and their communities benefitted as well. Even though the general perception of the respondents was that KG education is important, the differences in reasons they gave to explain their perception suggest that their socio-demographic characteristics had some influence on the responses. On the whole, the respondents claimed that the positive impression that they had about KG influenced their children's enrolment in KG.

The fifth objective that was explored was about whether the characteristics of children should either motivate parents to enrol their children in KG or deter them from doing so. The main finding was that children's physical characteristics, especially sex and disability, should not affect their right to formal education. Regarding whether parents should be influenced by sex of their children when deciding who to enrol in KG, the majority (74.6%) of the respondents insisted that the sex of children should not be used as a criterion by parents to decide which child goes to school. However, for the few who had sex preferences, the majority would prefer to enrol boys in KG and not girls. The explanation that the respondents gave for the preference for boys was that boys needed better preparation for the roles society had crafted for them as future heads of families.

With respect to disability, the majority (76.3%) of the respondents, while maintaining that disability of children should not be a reason for denying

them education, however, preferred that children with disabilities should attend Special Schools to enable them benefit from the special care they deserved. The characteristics of children were found not to be motivating factors for the respondents when deciding to enrol their children in KG.

The sixth objective in the study explored the secondary or mediating factors that motivated the respondents to enrol their children in KG. The findings indicate that the main direct compelling factors that motivated parents to enrol their children in KG were the desire to prepare their children adequately for primary school as well as have places to keep their children during working hours. The government's "pro-poor" policies (such as Capitation grant, supply of school uniforms and free feeding), availability of KG in their communities or the nearness of KG, and, "advocacy from others and pressure from peers" also motivated some parents to enrol their children in KG.

Even though the official age for enrolling children in KG in Ghana is four years, only less than half (48.1%) of the respondents enrolled their children in KG at this age. The majority (51.9%) enrolled their children outside the official age (Younger than four years - 14.4%; Older than four years - 41.1%). For the respondents who enrolled their children before the official enrolment age, the single most significant reason for doing so was the parents' desire to give the children an "early start" in education. However, the respondents who enrolled their children at the right age did so because they wanted to abide by policy requirements. For the respondents who chose to their over-aged children (above 4 years), the most significant reason was that the respondents were not motivated to let very young children commute long distances to KG and waited till they were older.

Even though it was possible to for children without KG experience to enrol directly to Primary school, 576 (89%) of the respondents did not take advantage of this provision but rather enrolled their children in KG. The motivation to enrol the children in KG was strongest among the respondents who thought that their children needed the foundation in education given at KG. Other respondents also enrolled their children into KG prior to primary school because the children were too young to enrol directly in Primary school, the respondents thought KG attendance was a legal requirement or that the School authorities insisted that the children acquired KG experience.

The respondents selected specific KGs for their children for a number of reasons. The main reasons were that the KGs were the only one in the communities or were close to the respondents' home or place of work. The distance that children commuted to KG was a significant consideration for the respondents, especially for those in the rural areas where most children went to school on foot. Other reasons that made the respondents enrol their children in specific KGs also included the fact that the KGs were affordable, the quality of teaching and learning in the particular KG was good, or that the school has a good reputation.

Once the respondents enrolled their children in KG, they were motivated to keep the children there because the respondents observed many positive changes (academic, attitudinal and social) in their children which they attributed to the result of their enrolment in KG. The respondents also claimed that certain benefits accrued to them, their families and their communities because their children attended KG.   For instance, the family "had time to work or attend to their other responsibilities".

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The final objective of the study was to find out if parental motivation to enrol their children in KG was influenced by their personal characteristics such as place of residence, sex, age, and educational background. Across all the objectives of the study, the conclusion was that parental characteristics had a significant influence on the decisions they made regarding their children's enrolment in KG.

Conclusions

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the major findings in the study. The general conclusion from the study is that parents are motivated by several factors to enrol their children in Kindergarten. This confirms the assertion by Prager (2012) that several factors influence behaviour to achieve positive outcomes hence an understanding of the reason for a particular behaviour may lie in "behaviour change models" (Darnton, 2008) and "specific contexts" (Southerton, McMeekin, & Evans, 2011).

Specific conclusions could also be derived from the findings of the study to support this general conclusion. For instance, the study concludes that parental awareness and acceptance of their responsibility and gatekeeping roles towards the development of their children is a strong motivation for their involvement in their children's education. In the study, parental acknowledgement of their responsibility for their children's education was a key factor in getting the respondents to enrol their children in KG. Even when other family members, especially older siblings of the children, family friends and relatives assisted to enrol the children in KG, this happened with the approval of the parents.

The study concludes further that parental aspirations for their children is a strong predictor of parental motivation to become involved in their children's education. The respondents had future career aspirations for their children which they thought could earn the children highly valued and well-paying careers. The realisation by the parents that education was the route through which these aspirations could be achieved was one of the strongest reasons for enrolling children in KG.

Another conclusion that could be made from the study is that awareness of ECE policies and initiatives adopted by the Government of Ghana and other stakeholders to promote KG education in the country inspired majority of the parents to enrol their children in KG. Access to multiple sources of information led to the higher parental awareness of ECE-related policies and programmes and, consequently, high parental motivation to enrol their children in KG.

The study concludes, again, that perception of the importance of KG education is a strong source of motivation for parents to enrol their children in KG. The belief that when children attend KG, both the children and other stakeholders, especially their families and communities benefitted created a positive impression about KG among the respondents and motivated them to enrol their children in KG.

It can also be concluded from the study that, generally, as a result of their responsibility and commitment to the education of their children, parents did not discriminate against any group of children based on their physical characteristics, especially sex and disability. In fact, the parental notion of fairness and equity made majority of the respondents recommend Special

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schools for children with disabilities to enable such children benefit from the special care provided they needed.

Many secondary or mediating factors are equally strong motivating factors for parents when enrolling their children in KG. For instance, when parents needed places to keep children during working hours or when there was a KG in a community or nearby, parents were motivated to enrol their children in KG before entering Primary school.

A further conclusion from the study is that parents take special interest in the KGs they enrol their children in. When enrolling children in KG, parents would consider factors like distance to the nearest KG, the cost of schooling, quality of teaching and learning in the school, the reputation of the school, the attitude of teachers/school authorities and social factors, especially religion.

Parents continue to take interest in what happened in KGs, even after they enrolled their children. Consequently, parental motivation to retain their children in KG after enrolment, depended mainly on the major improvements that the respondents observed in their children during their stay in KG as well as the benefits that accrued to the parents themselves, their families and communities, such as parents getting time to work or attend to their other responsibilities.

Also, a major conclusion from the study is that parents could become strong advocates to promote KG education. The study shows that once parents became convinced about the importance of KG and saw the benefits from the programme, they themselves became strong advocates of the programme.

Finally, it can be concluded that parental motivation to enrol their children in KG is influenced by socio-demographic characteristics of the parents

such as place of residence, sex, age, and educational background. Across all the objectives of the study, the conclusion was that parental characteristics had a significant influence on the decisions they made regarding their children's enrolment in KG.

The study concludes that parents are motivated by multiple factors to enrol their children in KG, so it is difficult to use a single theory to explain why parents enrol their children in KG. The findings in the study show, for instance, that individual motivational theories can be used to explain the power of individual respondents to make their own informed choices (deciding to enrol their children in KG) and to implement them (i.e., enrol their children in KG). In some instances, however, the ability of the individual respondents to make decisions and to implement the decisions was influenced by certain actions which may be beyond the control of the individual e.g. lack of facilities. Consequently, while it can be concluded in this study that the needs' theories, for instance, explain to a point the decisions the respondents made about their children's KG enrolment, the Needs theories do not offer explanations as to how individual decision is influenced by the force of the entire society or even an external force to initiate actions towards KG education of children. Hence, the Positive Deviance theory and the Human Capital theory were used to complement the conclusions that could explained away using the Needs theories. The PD theory, on its part, demonstrates why in some communities some parents enrol their children in KG when other parents do not do so, sometimes even against opposition or discouraging remarks to their decision. The PD theory demonstrates, further, the influence of outsiders, including the State, in the individual's decision-making process as the State and other actors

seek to promote universal KG education. The Human Capital theory generally defines the reason why some parents enrolled their children in KG, in the hope that the expected future rewards that would accrue to both the children and their parents would more than compensate for current sacrifices.

Also, the findings from the study confirm the theoretical framework that parents' involvement is motivated by their belief about what they are supposed to do in relation to their children's education as well as their belief in their ability to act in ways that will produce desired outcomes. It can, therefore, be concluded that parents who believe that they have a role to play in their children's education and are able to contribute, tend to make positive decisions about active engagement in the child's education. Further, they are likely to persist in the face of challenges or obstacles and work their way through difficulties to successful outcomes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made for the consideration of policy makers and field level practitioners:

In Ghana, the State is neither able to make education of children entirely free nor able to enforce compulsory universal basic education for children. These situations combine to make parents a major decision-maker in the enrolment of their children in KG. There is the need for the State to design a programme that will formalise and strengthen the involvement of parents in enrolment campaigns in the country, especially at the KG level. Parental education must, therefore, be made part of the State's efforts to extend KG education to all children. Major influencers such as political,

religious and traditional leaders must be mobilised by the State to lead an advocacy campaign. Also, institutions like the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) and the Department of Community Development (DCD) should be equipped and resourced to implement an enrolment campaign that targets parents, especially, those with KG-aged children. GES should also use its convening powers to mobilise PTAs to assist in the parent education campaign.

In some communities, children who do not have KG experience can enrol directly into primary school. State institutions such as GES and DCD which are mandated to promote ECE, must use various strategies such as seminars, mounting of customised billboards, workshops, sensitization at community gatherings and parent education programmes to orient both school authorities and parents on the benefits of KG education. The programme must focus on how ECE supports the achievement of parental aspirations for their children as well as allows parents to concentrate on their work.

Where KGs are not available, complementary ECE programmes which use non-formal approaches to train children should be introduced and be made compulsory for children to attend, prior to primary school enrolment. Such programmes could be designed on the lines of the Complementary Basic Education programme (CBE), which use flexible, non-formal approaches to prepare out-of-school children for primary school. The CBE programme has been used effectively in many rural and hard-to-reach areas in the country to prepare over-aged children for primary school. The CBE strategy can be modified and expanded to offer an abridged ECE

for children in areas which do not have KG. To be successful, this strategy must run on the back of a massive parent education programme on the importance of ECE, to make parents demand the complementary services for their children.

Also, special short-term programmes should be introduced in schools by GES to help new entrants in primary school who do not have KG experience to acquire basic skills to enable them catch up with their more fortunate colleagues who have KG experience. To make this possible, GES must design a special intervention programme and train primary grade one teachers to implement the special remedial programmes for children who enrol in Primary school without KG experience.

There is the need to bring schools closer to communities e.g. by ensuring that all primary schools have KGs attached to them. District Assemblies must prioritise the construction of KGs, especially in areas that do not have them and ensure that primary schools which do not have KGs attached to them are provided KGs. As far as possible, the Ministry of Education's policy on siting of primary schools and KGs within three kilometres of the catchment areas they serve should be adhered to. Where this is not possible, satellite KGs could be built closer to children and to serve as feeders to nearby primary schools.

In situations where communities show interest in providing ECE facilities themselves, District Assemblies and GES must support them to do so. GES, in particular, must provide the teachers/caregivers training, as and when needed. The District Assembly could also support them with needed

logistics. As early as possible, GES must enrol such community-initiated interventions unto State-owned programmes.

Because of the importance of awareness of government policies on ECE and interventions in the promotion of KG in the country, conscious effort must be made by public institutions, especially GES, Department of Community Development and District Assemblies, to create more awareness about such policies, e.g. by making the awareness campaigns part of an overall parental education strategy. The underserved urban poor and rural communities could be a special target for this programme. Private institutions could be mobilized to support this endeavour in diverse ways. For example, mobile phone companies and private radio stations, as part of their corporate social responsibility, could be encouraged to use their networks to disseminate information on ECE.

Both official and unofficial channels of communication such as social media, traditional communication channels, public institutions, etc. must be recognised by statutory state institutions and strengthened for parent education programmes. Appropriate technology must also be identified and used to expand the reach of parental education programmes. For instance, mobile phone service providers could be encouraged to send text messages on ECE to their network users. Also, communication channels like radio, television, folk theatre, village/town hall meetings, and festivals must be used, when found appropriate, to provide information to parents.

Education-based Civil Society Organisations (e.g. Faith-based organisations, NGOs and CBOs) must build capacity of parents and communities in rural areas to demand KG services. Community members,

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especially parents, must be sensitised by the NGOs/CBOs not only to play roles in the education of their children but also to demand quality KG services. Both public institutions like GES and DCD and Civil Society Organisations must train parents on ECE issues and encourage them to volunteer to become ECE advocates in their communities, to educate other parents on the importance of KG education and to encourage parents with KG-aged children to enrol such children in KG. Through this, the parents themselves can become change agents themselves who can be used to mobilise other parents to enrol their children in KG.

Even though the policy on KG enrolment, especially regarding official age for enrolment exist and is clear, some parents are not aware of it while others also flout it with the connivance of some school heads who only think of filling their classrooms. GES must make education on the official age for enrolling in KG part of its parent education campaign on right age enrolment.

Although KG, as part of the country's free Universal Basic Education structure, is both tuition and fee free, there are some financial burdens that parents bear when their children attend KG. The Government and education-based Development Partners/NGOs must expand support services such as conditional cash transfer (CCT) programmes, as part of a broader package of poverty alleviation initiatives, to cushion poor parents against these costs. The Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme offers opportunity for the implementation of an enhanced CCT programme in that could lead to increased enrolment of children in KG, especially if enrolment of children in KG is made a qualification condition for the cash transfer.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study has contributed to knowledge in a number of ways. In general, the study has demonstrated the link between parental motivation and the education of their children. The findings of the study add to the empirical literature on the factors that affect the motivation of parents to enrol their children in KG, especially in Ghana. The findings of the study also contribute to the debate on the importance of parents in the provision of education. It goes further to prove the conditions under which parents will be motivated enough to participate in their children's education.

Another contribution to knowledge made by the study is the acknowledgement of the interaction between the factors that motivate parents and their personal characteristics like place of residence, age, sex and educational background. This allows for a deeper appreciation of the complexities of decision-making processes, especially, with regard to enrolment of children in school.

The study builds on the implementation problem of reaching the group of children that are still not accessing KG services and has identified the motivation of parents as the critical factor which needs to be worked on to improve both access for their children. The research has provided an in-depth understanding of how an improvement in the motivation levels of parents about the importance of KG education would improve their demand for KG services.

Finally, the study has confirmed the relevance of theories of motivation such as the need theories (Maslow, 1943), the Positive Deviance theory (Pascale & Sternin, 2005; Singhal & Dura, 2009), and Human Capital Theory (Becker, (1962, 1964) in the attempt to understand what makes parents support their

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children in school. The study also shows the validity in Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) psychological model of parental involvement process by identifying the main factors that motivate parents to enrol their children in KG.

Limitations of the Study

The main limitation of the study is that the study area was limited to a particular district (Kwahu Afram Plains North). Again, the respondents were parents who were randomly selected from the study area to represent the entire district. As a result, the generalisation of this study beyond the target population may be limited.

Suggestions for Further Research

There is the need to support continuing research into ECD, especially, in areas that serve to enhance and strengthen the active involvement of various stakeholders in the promotion of ECE services, including its monitoring and evaluation. Possible research areas in the KG sector in Ghana include:

1. Strategies for expanding cost-effective quality ECE approaches to KG;

2. Longitudinal studies on benefits of KG education for children;

3. Strategies for improving partnerships for ECE; and,

4. Strategies to improve parental involvement in education delivery, especially KG in Ghana.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS IN KWAHU AFRAM PLAINS NORTH DISTRICT

A. RESPONDENT'S BACKGROUND

1. Name of Educational Circuit ………………………………

2. Name of community: …………………………………………...

3. Status of community: Rural [   ]   Urban   [   ]

4.   Sex: Male   [   ]   Female [   ]

5. Ethnic Background: ………………………………….

6. What is your religion?

    a.   Christianity   [   ]

    b.   Islam   [   ]

    c.   Traditional   [   ]

    d.   Other (Specify) …………………………

7. Age: ……………………………….

8. What is your highest level of education? ………………………

    a.   No formal education   [   ]

    b.   Primary Education only   [   ]

    c.   Up to middle form 4/JHS.3   [   ]

    d.   Second cycle   [   ]

    e.   Tertiary   [   ]

9. What is your main occupation /what do you do for a living? ....

10. How much do you earn per month? …………………………………….

11. What is your marital status?

    a.   Single   [   ]

      b. Married   [   ]

      c. Separated   [   ]

      d. Divorced   [   ]

      e. Widowed   [   ]

12. How many children (own) do you have?   ………..

13. How many other children (who are not your own) do you cater for? ......

B. RESPONDENTS PERCEPTION OF PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS THEIR CHILDREN

14. What do you consider as a parent's principal responsibility towards their children?

15. Who do you think should be responsible for the upkeep/upbringing of children?

      a. Parents   [   ]

      b. Relatives   [   ]

      c. Community [   ]

      d. Government [   ]

      e. Other   [   ]   (specify) ………………

16. Who do you think should be responsible for the education of children?

      a. Father   [   ]

      b. Mother   [   ]

      c. Both   [   ]

      d. Other   [   ]   (specify) ………………

C. RESPONDENTS FUTURE ASPIRATIONS FOR THEIR CHILDREN

17. If you had the power to decide, what would you want your child to become in future? - your preferred profession for the child

    Boy:……………………………………………………………….

    Girl:……………………………………………………………….

18. How will you prepare your child to achieve the expectation/aspiration you wish for him/her (with reference to Q 17 above)?…..………………

19. In your opinion, what is the link between education (including KG) and the achievement of the future expectations/aspirations that you have for your child?………………………..

C. AWARENESS OF POLICIES AND INTERVENTIONS FOR KG EDUCATION

19. Are you aware of any measures that the Government or the Ministry of Education/Ghana Education Service has taken to promote KG education in the country? Yes   [   ]   No   [   ]

20. If yes, mention or list those that you know

    a. …………………… b. ………………… c. ……………………

21. What is the main source/media from which you receive information on government policy on KG? ………………………

22. Mention any organisations or groups which you are aware of that are supporting or promoting KG education in your district? ………………

23. For the group mentioned in question 22, what is the nature of support?

    a.   ……………… b. ………………….. c. …………………….

D. PARENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF

KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION

24. What is Kindergarten KG)? ……………………….…………………

25. What is the relevance of KG in a Childs Education/why is KG Important?

26. Who are the main beneficiaries of KG?

27. In what way do beneficiaries mentioned in question 26 above benefit from KG education?

28. On the whole, how do your rate the importance of KG for

Rating	Child	Family	Community
Very Important			
Important			
Least Important			

E. CHILDREN'S CHARACTERISTICS INFLUENCE ON PARENTS'

MOTIVATION

29. If a parent's resources can enrol only one child in KG, which must he/she enrol? a. Girl [   ]   b. Boy [   ]   c. No preference [   ]

30. Explain your answer to question 29

31. Should a child with disability be enrolled in KG?

    Yes   [   ]   No   [   ]

32. If yes to 31, why?

33. If yes to 31, in what school?

    a. Ordinary [   ]   b. Special [   ]   c. Indifferent [   ]

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F. MEDIATING MOTIVATING FACTORS

34.   Did you enrol your child in KG before Primary?

Yes   [   ]   No   [   ]

35.   If yes, Why ………………………………………..

36.   If no, Why ……………………………………………..

37.   What is the official age for starting KG in Ghana? ………

38.   At what age did you enrol your child in KG? ………………..

39.   Why did you enrol your child at the age you did? ……………

40.   Why did you not send your child straight to Primary Class One (P1)?…..

41.   Should a child attend KG before entering primary school?

Yes [   ]   No [   ]

42.   Explain your answer ……………………………………..

43.   From the list below select the single most significant factor that motivated

you to choose a particular KG for your child?

  a.   Location convenience/availability of KG in the community

  b.   Discipline and safety record of the school

  c.   Affordability

  d.   Extracurricular activities like sports and club activities

  e.   Quality of teaching and learning in the school

  f.   Class size

  g.   Reputation/prestige of school

  h.   Attitude of teachers/school authorities

  i.   Social and religious factors

  j.   Language of instruction

44.   Was the KG you child attended located in your community?

Yes[   ]   No[   ]

45.   What was the distance to your child's KG?

    a. Less than 1 km   [   ]

    b. 1km – 2km   [   ]

    c. 3km – 4km   [   ]

    d. 5km and Above   [   ]

46.   By what means did your child commute to school? ……………..

47.   What motivated you to keep your child in KG after enrolling him/her?

48.   Did you see any changes in your child that you might attribute to his/her

    attendance in KG?   Yes   [   ]   No   [   ]

49.   If so, what were the observed changes in your child?………………..

50.   Besides the child him/herself, list other people/groups that also benefited

    from the child attendance to KG.

E. FACTORS THAT DETERRED PARENTS FROM ENROLLING CHILDREN IN KG

51.   What was the main reason why your child did not attend kindergarten

    before entering Primary school? ……………………………………

F. RECOMMENDATION OF KG TO OTHER PARENTS

52.   Will you recommend KG to other parents?

    Yes   [   ]   No   [   ]

53.   Why? …………………………………………………………..

APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD) GUIDE

1. Name of Educational Circuit ……………..……….…….……

2. Name of community: ……………………………………...

3. Status of community: Rural [   ]   Urban   [   ]

4.   Sex composition of group: Male: …………   Female: …………

5. What do you consider as a parent's principal responsibility towards their children?

6. Who do you think should be responsible for the upkeep/upbringing of children?

7. Who do you think should be responsible for the education of children?

8.   What are the main profession you would prefer for children in this area?

     Boy:……………………………………………………….

     Girl:……………………………………………………….

9. What should parents do to prepare their children to achieve aspiration desired for them?

10. In your opinion, what is the link between education (including KG) and the achievement of the future expectations/aspirations that you have for your child?

11. What are some measures that the Government or the Ministry of Education/Ghana Education Service has taken to promote KG education in your community?

12. What are the main means through which people in this area receive information on government policy on KG?

13. Are there any organizations or groups supporting or promoting KG education in your community?

14. What have been their contribution(s)?

15. Who are the main beneficiaries of KG?

16. How did KG education affect these beneficiaries?

17. Should there be a preference for a particular sex to enrol in KG?

18. Should a child with disability be enrolled in KG?

19. If yes, what type school?

20. Is it common for children in this area to enrol in KG before Primary?

21. Why are children sometimes send straight to Primary Class One (P1)?

22. Should a child attend KG before entering primary school?

23. What factors do parents mostly consider when enrolling their children in particular KGs?

24. What motivate parents to keep children in KG after enrolling them?

25. What changes usually occur in the children who attend KG?

26. What are the main reasons why some parents in this community do not send their children to KG?

27. Why will you recommend/not recommend KG to other parents?

28. On the whole, what motivate parents to send their children to KG?