

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Over the past decades, the unfortunate reality is that the income gap has widened between Northern Ghanaian families. Educational outcomes are one of the key areas influenced by family income. Children from low-income families often start school already behind their peers who come from more affluent families. The incidence, depth, duration and timing of poverty all influence a child's educational performance, along with community characteristics and social networks (Evan, 2004). However, both Northern Ghanaian and international organizations have shown that the effects of poverty can be reduced using sustainable interventions.

Meanwhile, poverty remains a stubborn fact of life even in rich countries. According to Harris (2006) complex web of social relationships student experience with peers, adults in the school and family members exerts a much greater influence on their academic performance. This process starts with student core relationship with parents or primary caregivers in their lives, which form a personality that is either secure and attached or insecure and unattached. Securely attached children perform better in school (Bali, Granger, Kivlighan, Mills-Koonce, Willongby & Greeberg, 2008). Once students are in school, the dual factors of socialization and social status contribute significantly to academic achievement. The school socialization process typically pressure student to be like their peer or risk social rejection, whereas the quest for high social status drives students to attempt to differentiate themselves in some areas, for example, socio-economic status forms a huge part in this equation. Children raised in poverty rarely choose to behave differently, but are faced daily with overwhelming challenges that affluent children never have to confront and their brains have adapted to suboptimal conditions in ways that undermine good school performance.

The human conditions which we might classify as being in poverty have a long history with a variety of interpretations; these conditions are influenced by a number of factors including resources, contemporary standards and public perceptions of what is minimally acceptable (Evans, 2004).

One of the social issues facing students of poverty is emotional trauma. The emotional

climate can often be very stressful and emotionally depriving. The lack of emotional nurturing can lead to feelings of alienation, inadequacy, depression and anxiety. Aggressive or impulsive behaviour and social withdrawal can also result, which in turn can affect their academic performance. However, the overall goal of this study is to provide an insight into the influence of poverty on student academic performance.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Strong, secure relationships devoid of poverty and lack help stabilize children's emotionally and provide the core guidance needed to build lifelong social skills. Children who grew up with such relationships learn healthy, appropriate emotional responses to everyday situations. But children raised in poor homes often fail to learn these responses, to the detriment of their school performance. For example, students with emotional instability may get so easily frustrated that they give up on a task when success was just moments away. Social dysfunction may inhibit students' ability to work well in cooperative groups, quite possibly leading to their exclusion by group members who believe they aren't "doing their part" or "pulling their share of load". This exclusion and the accompanying decrease in collaboration and exchange of information exacerbate at-risk students' already shaky academic performance. However, the researcher is examining the effects of poverty on the academic performance of the students in Gushegu Midwifery College.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of this study:

1. To examine the effects of poverty on the academic performance of the students in Gushegu Midwifery College.
2. To identify other factors affecting the academic performance of the students of Gushegu Midwifery College.
3. To determine the factors encouraging poverty in the society.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the effects of poverty on the academic performance of the students in Gushegu Midwifery College?
2. What are the other factors affecting the academic performance of the students of Gushegu Midwifery College?

3. What are the factors encouraging poverty in the society?

1.5 HYPOTHESIS

H_0 : There is no significant relationship between poverty and student's academic performance

H_A : There is significant relationship between poverty and student's academic performance

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The following are the significance of this study:

1. The result of this study will educate the general public on the effects of poverty on the performance of students.
2. This research will be a contribution to the body of literature in the area of the effect of personality trait on student's academic performance, thereby constituting the empirical literature for future research in the subject area.

1.7 SCOPE/LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study will cover the poverty level and its effect on the performance of the students of Gushegumidwivory college.

LIMITATION OF STUDY

Financial constraint- Insufficient fund tends to impede the efficiency of the researcher in sourcing for the relevant materials, literature or information and in the process of data collection (internet, questionnaire and interview).

Time constraint- The researcher will simultaneously engage in this study with other academic work. This consequently will cut down on the time devoted for the research work.

effect of poverty on the morality and academic performance

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