

**THE SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN AND ACADEMIC  
ATTAINMENT OF THEIR CHILDREN: A STUDY AT SRODAE, BETOM  
AND ADWESO IN THE NEW JUABEN MUNICIPALITY**

**By**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the M.A Degree in Sociology and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to God, my late father Mr. Paul Opoku and all the Opoku Family as well as Lisa Owusu Domena who was a tremendous force to reckon with throughout the entire period of the thesis preparation.

KNUST



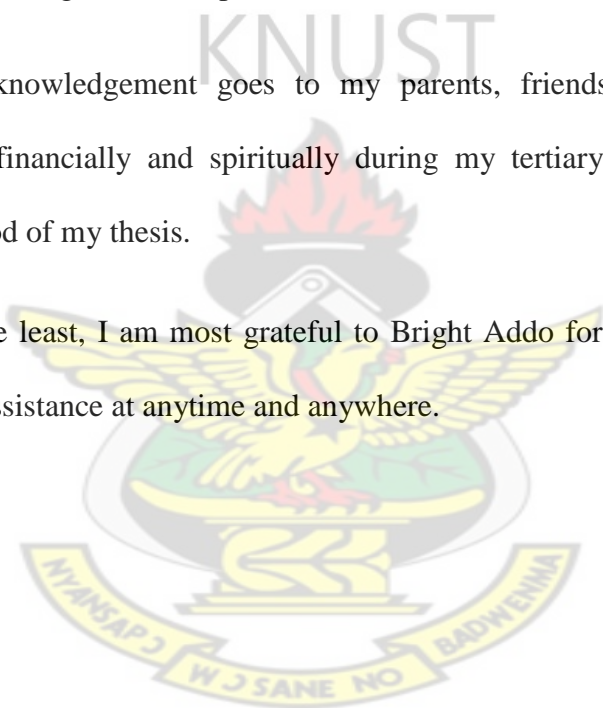
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## ABSTRACT

The past four decades have witnessed a significant rise in women's social and economic well-being, particularly among women with children in the home. This shift has sparked considerable academic debate regarding the consequences mothers' socioeconomic background has on the development of their children, especially their academic attainment. Surprisingly, this area of study has received little attention in the Ghanaian context. The general objective of the study was to examine the effects of socioeconomic status (SES) of women (occupation, marital status, economic status of women and women's education) on the academic attainments of their children. The study also sought to determine which of the four identified SES significantly predicted academic attainment of children. To achieve these objectives, a cross-sectional survey was conducted using structured interview guide on a probability sample of 275 respondents identified through the multi-stage sampling technique. Respondents consisted of women who were 41+ years and had a child. The data was analyzed using direct logistic regression and chi-square test of independence. The results of the bivariate analysis showed that, occupation of women, education of women, marital status of women and economic status of women were all significantly related to the academic attainment of their children, at  $\alpha = 0.05$ . The direct logistic regression analysis also revealed that none of the four SES variables measured proved to be a statistically significant determinant of children's academic attainment. However, women who were professionals were three (3) times (OR = 3.49) more likely than non-professionals to have children with high level of academic attainment. Mothers who were educated were three (3) times (OR=3.29) more likely to have children with high academic attainment than mothers who were not educated. Women who were married were also two (2) times (OR= 2.16) more likely than unmarried women to have children with high level of education. The economic status of women on the contrary had a negative effect on the likelihood that children will attain high education. Findings of the study suggest that, women SES affect the academic attainment of their children. The researcher recommends that, women groups in Ghana such as Ghanaian Women's Social Leadership Program (GWSLP), Ghana International Women's Club (GIWC) should all add their voice to emphasizing women education and for that matter, female education in their programmes taking a cue from this study.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ACS</b>	-	American Census Survey
<b>SES</b>	-	Socioeconomic Status
<b>ES</b>	-	Economic Status
<b>GIWC</b>	-	Ghana International Women's Club
<b>GWSLP</b>	-	Ghanaian Women's Social Leadership Program
<b>GLSS</b>	-	Ghana Living Standard Survey
<b>GSS</b>	-	Ghana Statistical Services
<b>GNECC</b>	-	Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition
<b>HREOC</b>	-	Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission
<b>MOWAC</b>	-	Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs
<b>OECD</b>	-	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>SESAACI-</b>	-	Socioeconomic Status of Women and Academic Attainment of Children Inventory
<b>SMTDP</b>	-	Sector Medium Term Development Plan
<b>UN</b>	-	United Nations
<b><math>X^2</math></b>	-	Chi-square

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

*“Society can survive only if there exists among its members a sufficient degree of homogeneity; education perpetuates and reinforces this homogeneity by fixing in the child from the beginning the essential similarities which collective life demands”, (Durkheim, 1961).*

Education, as a social institution, is an instrument that facilitates the reproduction of social structures (Haralambos & Holborn, 2004). The education of children starts with what they learn from their parents and from what they learn in the first few years of their lives (Amato, 1987). This initial education impacts the rest of their lives, and inherently society's future. Because children learn both at home and in school, it is not surprising that family characteristic, such as socioeconomic status and parental education, are important predictors of children's school success (Hess, Holloway, Dickson, & Price, 1984; Lee & Croninger, 1994; Scott-Jones, 1984).

Globally, the importance of women socio-economic status (SES) in the family is a commonplace fact. SES affects overall human functioning, including development across the life span, physical and mental health. Variance in socioeconomic status, including disparities in the distribution of wealth, income, and access to resources, affects everyone; however, women are overrepresented among those living in poverty. Women are more often responsible for raising children and are increasingly likely to raise children alone. This fact is one of the many reasons that the socioeconomic standing of women is of great importance to the well-being of future generations and as such to this study. Everyone benefits from an increased focus on the foundations of

socioeconomic inequities and efforts to reduce the deep gaps in socioeconomic status in the United States and abroad (Birrell & Khoo, 1995). Inequities in wealth and quality of life for women are long standing and exist both locally and globally (Keith & Benson, 1992). Historically and presently, in the United States, men are paid more than women, even when they have the same level of education and are in the same occupational field (Ibid). Findings of the American Census Survey (ACS) indicate that among individuals possessing a graduate or professional degree, on average, the women earned about 66.4% of what the men earned (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006). While they make less money, women are more likely to be single heads of household than men, thus bearing the responsibility of raising children with fewer economic resources. In 2006, there were about 14 million female heads of household, compared to 5 million male heads of household in the United States (Ibid.).

Women are a cornerstone of African economic development (OECD, 2011). According to the Ghana Living Standards Survey of 2000 (GLSS 4), a female heads a family in every household in Ghana which means that more and more women are becoming the backbone of the family as breadwinners and are working quietly and unacknowledged to keep the economy of Ghana going.

Parents' education and encouragement are strongly related to improved student achievement. Parental education and social economic status have an impact on student achievement. Children whose parents are of high educational scales have a far better statistical chance of participating in secondary Education (Oloo, 2003) and in this sense focusing on women education. Important factors include parental involvement in their children education, how much television children are allowed to watch and how often students change schools (Hammer, 2003).

Socioeconomic status of parents in one way or the other affects academic achievement. Omoraka (2001) noted that children with rich parents have certain needs, physical and sociological which when met, contribute positively to their academic performance. These needs may include a conducive reading atmosphere, good food, playing ground, provision of books and other material and attendance at the best schools available.

The New Juaben Municipality is one of the municipalities in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The municipality is rich with different cultures with most women carrying out varying occupations. There is a mixture of lettered and unlettered women in the municipality. While some of them are actively employed in the formal sector where they earn salaries, others are engaged in petty trading, farming and casual work, earning profits. Furthermore, some are single mothers and others receive husband support etc. Meanwhile, they all have children who attend common schools and competing in the same classes. How does the difference in mother characteristics affect the academic attainment of their children? Hence a redirection of the focus on both parents as exhibited by other studies to a careful study of the effect of SES of mothers on the academic attainment of their children in the selected areas.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The past four decades have witnessed a significant rise in women's occupation, particularly among women with children in the home. This shift has sparked considerable academic debate regarding the consequences of mothers' occupation, education, marital status for families, and especially for children (Jacobs & Gerson, 2004). Many studies cite socioeconomic status as a leading cause of differences in educational attainment of children but there are no such studies in the New Juaben

Municipality particularly Adweso, Betom and Srodae. Inadequate literature based on Ghana leads to dependence on foreign literature. Indeed if women are a cornerstone of African economic development (OECD, 2011) and according to the Ghana Living Standards Survey of 2000 (GLSS 4), a female heads a family in every household in Ghana which means that more and more women are becoming the backbone of the family as breadwinners and are working quietly and unacknowledged to keep the economy of Ghana going, then much needs to be done in the area of research/studies to establish the relationship between the SES of women and academic attainment of children in the selected areas.

The importance of the home environment, mother's education and occupation has been emphasized many times to have some level of influence on students' academic attainment. Ichado (1998) notes that the environment in which the students come from can greatly influence his performance in school. Ajila and Olutola (2007), Nzewuawah (1995) emphasized the same opinion that the home environment has been recognized as having a relationship with the academic attainment of children.

The effects of broken homes may impact greatly on the internal organization of the family and by extension; affect a child's emotion, personality and academic achievement. Bearing in mind the role of the family in a child's education, the failure of the family to perform its duties could hinder the child's academic achievement.

Despite the fact that these communities have both lettered and unlettered parents, varying occupations, different financial backgrounds, the academic attainments of these children leaves much to be desired. Could the SES of a mother have anything to do with the academic attainment of the child looking at the fact that more and more

women are becoming the backbone of the family (GLSS, 2000) in every household in Ghana?

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The focus of this research called for investigations into the following questions:

- 1 Does women's education significantly relate to the academic attainment of their children?
- 2 Does a woman's economic status predict the level of education attained by their children?
- 3 Does women's marital status determine the academic attainment of their children?
- 4 Does women's occupation determine the education attained by their children?

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The general objective of the study was to examine the effects of SES of women on the academic attainments of their children.

Most specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the relationship between women's education and academic attainment of their children.
2. Establish the relationship between occupation of women and academic attainment of their children.
3. Find out the relationship between economic status of women and the academic attainment of her children.



4. Determine the relationship between marital status of women and the level of education attained by their children.

### **1.5 Research Hypotheses**

**H1:** There is significant relationship between women's education and educational attainment of children.

**H2:** The occupation of women is significantly related to the level of education attained by their children.

**H3:** Women with high economic status significantly have more children who have attained high level of education.

**H4:** Married women are significantly more likely than unmarried to have children with high academic attainment.

### **1.6 Theoretical Framework of the Study**

Researchers have employed a variety of theories to explain SES of parents and its influence on child academic attainment. The notable amongst them include Randall Collins and Credentialism, Annette Lareau and Concerted Cultivation etc. This research was informed by two major theories; the theory of Cultural Capital by Pierre Bourdieu, and Family System Theory.

#### **1.6.1 Academic attainment in social theory**

Social theory seeks to explain change in society: how it develops, what factors facilitate and inhibit it, and what results from it. Looking at foundational texts within the discipline, the researcher considered the principal ideas offered by some leading theorists and how those ideas relate to the social and intellectual contexts in which



they were produced. More important, the researcher considered their relevance for ongoing issues people face today. Below is a careful consideration of what each theorist has written with a critical analysis to our interpretation.

### **1.6.2 Cultural Capital Theory**

Pierre Bourdieu stated that education leads to social reproduction and creation of a stratified society through honoring the cultural capital of the elite class.

The term cultural capital refers to non-financial social assets, for example educational or intellectual, which might promote social mobility beyond economic means. It is a sociological concept that was first articulated by Pierre Bourdieu when he attempted to explain differences in educational outcomes in France during the 1960s. Bourdieu's concern in relation to cultural capital was with its continual transmission and accumulation in ways that perpetuate social inequalities. Bourdieu sees the concept of cultural capital as breaking with the received wisdom that attributes academic success or failure to natural aptitudes, such as intelligence and giftedness. Bourdieu explains school success by the amount and type of cultural capital inherited from the family background rather than by measures of individual talent or achievement. For him, ability is socially constructed and is the result of individuals having access to large amounts of cultural capital. Ability is itself the product of an investment of time and cultural capital (Ainley et al, 1995).

Generally Parents provide their children with cultural capital by transmitting the attitudes and knowledge needed to succeed in the current educational system. Children from higher socioeconomic status have an advantage over other children that give them better educational success and consequently higher status in society.

### **1.6.3 The Family System Theory**

The family system theory establishes the fact that the family is a system. As a system it is made up of different parts. All the parts play interdependent role to ensure the survival of the whole. In the case of academic attainment, the family system theory states that, the academic attainment of a child is as a result of contributions from different units within the system. Thus the father, mother, siblings and even external relations have a hand in the academic attainment of the child (Haralambos & Holborn, 2004).

### **1.7 Justification of the study**

Although a positive relationship between Socioeconomic status and academic achievement is well established, how SES of mother varies with the academic attainment of children is rare. Extensive research in the sociology of education offers conclusive evidence of a positive relationship between family SES and the academic achievement of students (Sirin, 2005; White, 1982) but not a major focus on the SES of the mother and academic attainment of children. Researchers have examined the underlying family processes that mediate the relationship between SES and educational outcomes (Chao & Willms, 2002; Guo & Harris, 2000; Hanson, McLanahan, & Thomson, 1997; Lareau, 2002; Yeung, Linver, & Brooks-Gunn, 2002; Willms, 2003); the extent to which socioeconomic gaps in academic achievement are consistent across subject areas (Ma, 2000); the school practices that can effectively reduce achievement inequalities across SES groups (e.g., Cohen, 1982; Rutter & Maughan, 2002; Scheerens, 1992); the extent to which the effect of SES on student performance varies between communities and why (OECD, 2003, 2004, 2007; Willms & Somers, 2001); and how economic and political forces act upon the

relationship between socioeconomic background and schooling outcomes over time (Heath & Clifford, 1990; Willms & Raudenbush, 1989).

What has been less extensively investigated is whether socioeconomic status of women has any significant relationship with the children's academic attainment especially in the context of Africa and particularly Ghana, hence, the need for this study.

### **1.8 Significance of the study**

The outcome of this research will serve as guideline for policy formulation which will throw light on, the influence women have on their children's education drawing more attention on women SES unlike previous studies.

Secondly, the researcher would also establish the influence socio-demographic variables such as SES of women have on the academic attainment of children.

The findings of this research will be its conceivable contribution to policy consideration in the economic and education sector. This study is especially designed to establish the effect of socioeconomic status of women on children's educational attainment in the three selected areas (Adweso, Betom and Srodade).

This study also enriches the researchers understanding of issues regarding women and children academic attainment, especially the SES of women vis a vis its effects on children. The study will also help the researcher to advance in knowledge of women and prepare for further studies involving women and children.

Lastly, the study will provide a milieu upon which further studies may be carried out. Findings from the study will again be published as additional academic information and also be used by government agencies.

## **1.9 Scope of the study**

Myriad of studies have been done on women SES but this research is restricted to the SES of women who are 41 years and above who consent to be part of the study and reside in Betom, Srodae and Adweso as at the time of the study. Information was derived from these women concerning the highest academic attainment of their children.

### **1.9.1 Organization of study**

Chapter one dealt with a presentation of the background to the study. It also contains the statement of the problem, significance of the study, area and scope of the study, the justification for the study and the objectives of the study.

Chapter two also dealt with a review of related literature on the subject matter. It is divided into three parts. The first part dealt with the measure of educational attainment, the second part also dealt with Socioeconomic Status (occupation, marital status, economic status, education) of women and the last part also dealt with academic attainment of children and mediating factors on the academic attainment of children.

Chapter three, dealt exhaustively with the research methodology. This included description of the target population, sample size, sampling design and techniques, sources of data, method of collecting data, data analysis and interpretation as well as the limitations of the study.

Chapter four comprised the presentation and analysis of data. This involved a systematic study of the responses given to the administered questions.

The fifth chapter is the final chapter of the study. It summarized the various findings of the study, drew conclusive relationship between variables and made recommendations.

### **1.9.2 Summary**

This chapter sets the focus of the study on SES of women and academic attainment of children. The chapter discussed the background information which revealed the trend of women engagement in their children's education in Africa and Ghana especially, briefly highlighted the empirical and the theoretical framework of the study. This was followed by a statement of the research problem, objectives, questions and hypotheses. The chapter also presented the significance and scope of the study as well as the organisation of the study report.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Introduction

Chapter two presents a thematic review of literature on the following; Socioeconomic Status (occupation, marital status, income, women education) of women and academic attainment of children and mediating factors on the academic attainment of children. Each of these themes is discussed with reference to existing body of literature.

#### 2.1 Conceptual Definitions

**Academic attainments** – academic attainments here refers to the highest degree of formal education an individual has completed (i.e. primary, secondary and tertiary).

**Women's education-** formal education received by women. The term “women's education” and “mother's education” are used interchangeably to refer to the highest degree of formal education completed (i.e. primary, secondary and tertiary).

**Household-** people who live in the same house and share one kitchen.

**Socioeconomic Status-** the social and economic background.

#### 2.2 Women Education

As has been aptly stated in the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women (UN, 1995) in Beijing, the girl-child today is the woman of tomorrow. The skills, ideas, and energy of the girl-child are vital for full attainment of the goals of equality, development, and peace. For the girl-child to develop her full potential, she



needs to be nurtured in an enabling environment, where her spiritual, intellectual, and material needs for survival, protection, and development are met and equal rights safeguarded. In the Ghanaian case, especially the limited education women receive could be detrimental to social development needs of women and girls. There is considerable evidence that the education of women has a direct impact on various aspects of the social, economic and political well-being of a country. For instance, Anderson & Huesmann (2003) suggests that the mother's educational level has a direct influence on economic productivity and on the level of her daughter's education. Research findings show that investing in female's education may be the most cost-effective measure a developing country can take to improve its standard of living (Aaronson, 2000). Furthermore, Kofi Annan, Ghanaian former UN Secretary General, at the World Education Forum (2000), also stated:

*"No development strategy is better than one that involves women as central players; it has immediate benefit for nutrition, health, savings and reinvestment of the family, community and ultimately, country level. In other words, educating girls is a social development policy that works. It is a long-term investment that yields exceptionally high returns. We need those with power to change things to come together in an alliance for girl's education: governments, voluntary progressive groups, and above all, local communities, schools and families. Similarly, the Preston Education Fund for Girls (1995), a sub-group of the Global Fund for Women, reports, "failing to invest in the education of women and girls has long-term consequences for health, population, growth, and environmental security." While it is undeniable that educating females is one of the surest ways of empowering them and enhancing national development, gross gender gaps continue to impede women's participation in higher education. Well-intentioned initiatives such as the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) have not been successful in overcoming the numerous constraints impeding most women from participating in higher education. These constraints include socio-cultural barriers, economic constraints, and institutional obstacles, as well as political and personal factors".*

There is evidence that supports the notion that maternal educational investments might have positive spillover effects on children's outcomes. This could be due to the existence of role model effects. In qualitative research on mothers who return to

school, Kelly (1982) reports that children of these mothers showed increased interest in and commitment to their own schoolwork. In addition, positive spillovers might exist if education increased a mother's ability to help with homework, or made her more likely to read to her children. Higher levels of parental education have been found to be correlated with more studying, less television watching, and more reading on the part of the children (Timmer et al, 1985). Tracey and Young (2002) find that types of maternal interaction with children depend upon educational level. Mothers with high school education were more likely to correct their children's errors during oral reading, while college-educated mothers tended to ask more high-level critical thinking questions. This was the case even though there were equal numbers of above- and below-average readers in each group.

Furthermore, it has been suggested that the process of educational attainment in the United States involves coordination of multiple decisions (choice of classes, participation in extra-curricular activities), and that parental assistance is necessary for successful navigation of this system (Baker & Stevenson, 1986). Mothers who invest in their own education might learn about the educational system and be better able to help their children succeed within that system. As has been established, these positive spillover effects compete with negative time allocation effects to provide ambiguous predictions for the direction of the relationship between maternal schooling and child outcomes.

### **2.3 Marital Status and Academic Attainment of Children**

In a study by Aliko, Edosa & Ogboro (2012), the relationship between broken homes and academic achievement of students were investigated. The statistical method used in analyzing the data was the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient ( $r$ ).



Reliable and validated questionnaires which were designed to elicit information on the hypotheses of study were used. Six senior secondary schools were randomly selected for the study. One hundred and fifty respondents from single parent homes were used for the study. Twenty-five respondents were randomly selected from six schools. Results showed a significant relationship between broken homes and academic achievement of students. It was also discovered that female students from broken homes perform better in their studies than the male students, moreover, the result showed that low socioeconomic status, also had an adverse effect on the academic performance of children from broken homes (Ibid). The study however failed to establish the extent to which mother's absence or presence in the home influenced the academic attainment of the children since single parenting with the woman as the head is a common phenomenon in Africa. The sample size was not large enough to grant sufficient picture of how broken homes and academic achievement of students were related. This current study used a sample of 275 to allow for easy generalization.

Researchers in the US have consistently found adverse effects of single-parent families on the child's educational achievement. For example, in reviewing research results from large longitudinal data, Zill (1996) found that students from nuclear intact families had the best academic performance, while students from alternative family types such as step-parent families and single-parent families performed not so well. Moreover, although the effects of family types weakened a little after background variables such as parental education and ethnicity were added into the model, family type effects did not vanish. On the other hand, although students from stepparent families appeared to perform better than those from single-parent families, once other background characteristics were taken into consideration, however,

performance of students from stepparent families became indistinguishable from that of single-parent families (Ibid). Han and Huang (2000) also found that in Taiwan, children in single-parent families had a lower rate of attending college than those from intact families.

Why are students from single-parent families at such a disadvantage? Through what mediating mechanisms does family structure affect the adolescents' educational achievement? In general, researchers attributed the disadvantage to three types of resource: (1) economic resources: single-parent families are often trapped in poverty or have greater economic burden; (2) socialization resources: single-parent families are less able to provide a good environment for children in terms of educational involvement and educational aspiration; (3) network resources: single-parent families have fewer network ties for obtaining information and other types of support related to children's learning. In the following, each of these three mediating factors in greater details are examined and special attention paid to the possible benefits that co-residing grandparents may bring, which enhance the advantage of nuclear intact families or compensate for the deficiency experienced by single parents. It should be noted that the latter two kinds of resources are closely related to Coleman's concept of social capital (Ainley et al, 1995).

### **2.3.1 Economic Resources**

Many researchers have found that a crucial reason for the disadvantage of single-parent family students was the poor economic condition that usually accompanies this type of families (Entwisle & Alexander 1995: 1996; McLanahan & Sandefur 1994). Particularly, McLanahan and Sandefur (1994) found that economic conditions explained 50 % of the variation of achievement scores. McLanahan and Bumpass

(1988) also found that the effect of intact versus single-parent families on high school graduation rates dropped 30 to 50% once family income was added into the model. They offered as the explanation that, owing to lack of economic resources, children from single-parent families had fewer accesses to books and to cultural activities that would have helped develop their cognitive ability and intelligence, which resulted in the higher dropout rate than peers from intact families. In Taiwan, Huang (2000) found that single-parent families had fewer economic resources and that such families spent less on children's education and single-father families spent even less on education (Huang, Wen-Jui, & Garfinkel, 2000).

In order to increase economic resources, single parents could remarry and reconstitute their families (Ganong & Coleman 1989). Stepparent families seemed to enjoy the same level of economic resources as those in the intact families (Downey, 1995). The transition, however, may not necessarily increase the money invested in the children (Popenoe 1994; Daly & Wilson 1980).

In so far as economic resources are concerned, the addition of grandparent(s) in an intact family might or might not be an asset to the family and therefore to the child. It is conceivable that if the grandparent needs long-term care, the family would expend extra to cover the costs and cut back on other things, which might include expenditures for the child's education (Hu, 1985). On the other hand, wealthier grandparent(s) might provide housing or bring in extra income for the family. Several studies have found that, even though the rate of cohabitating with older parents is declining, adult children still feels obligated to support their parents financially (Chattopadhyay & Marsh 1999; Lee, Parish, and Willis 1994; Linet et al., 2003). The study of Lee, Parish and Willis (1994) on intergenerational support in Taiwan further indicated that older parents tended to live with poorer sons and received financial

support from other more resourceful children. If this is the case, then the cohabitation of old parents in the family might not be too much a liability. It may even be a blessing for the single parents. Older parents may ask their widowed or divorced adult children to live with them (Tang, 2002) and provide financial and material support out of their own pocket or simply transfer the support given by other adult children, in addition to helping take care of the adult child and grandchildren.

### **2.3.2 Socialization Resources**

Socialization resources refer to parents' or other family adults' behavioural and psychological involvement of children's education. Many researchers have found that, regarding children's achievement, effects of socialization on children's educational achievement were independent of those of socioeconomic status (Astone & McLanahan 1991; Ho & Wilms 1996; Lee 1993).

Parents may be involved in children's learning in many ways, such as the home-based involvement of monitoring after school activities, monitoring school studies, and advising on studying strategies; or the school-based involvement of directly intervening in school administration by changing classes or tracks assigned for the children, selecting teachers or talking to teachers on behalf of the child. These actions are generally found to benefit children's learning achievement (Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Fehrmann, Keith, and Reimers 1987; Ho & Wilms 1996; Stevenson & Baker, 1987). In fact, monitoring children's home activities was constantly found to be positively related to their achievement (Crouter & MacDermid 1990; Muller 1993; Muller & Kerbow 1993). In general, single-parents and stepparents tended to provide less supportive parental practices for children's schooling (Cooksey & Fondell, 1996; Thomson, McLanahan and Sandefur 1994; Lee

1993). In comparison with parents of intact families, they monitored their children less (Dornbusch et al., 1985; Muller & Kerbow, 1993) and tended to involve less in children's schools (Nord & West, 2001). Persuading children into taking more academically oriented courses or intervening in school administration by changing class or teachers are two aggressive types of involvement.

Gamoran (1987) found that the high correlation between family socioeconomic status and achievement dropped dramatically once the course taking strategies were taken into consideration. Most of the time, parents were the hands behind such strategies. Baker and Stevenson (1986), Lareau (1987), and Stevenson and Baker (1987) traced the effect of family socioeconomic status on achievement to such parent actions. Useem (1992) also found that the higher the mother's education is, the clearer she is about the importance of selecting classes and courses. Such mothers are also likelier to talk children into selecting more demanding courses and to actively try to understand school affairs and intervene in school decision-making processes. For such form of involvement, parents of intact families again can afford more time and efforts than single-parents and are more concerned than stepparents (Useem, 1992).

Researchers have also examined parental expectations for children's educational achievement. Parents' educational expectation for children has been repeatedly found to be positively related to the children's achievement outcome (Astane & McLanahan, 1991; Entwisle & Alexander 1996; Milne et al., 1986; Sewell & Hauser 1980). Several studies even found that parents' stated expectations had predictive power for their children's achievement a few years later (Entwisle, Alexander & Olson, 1997; Entwisle & Hayduk, 1988). One important reason is that parents with high expectations do more than having positive and encouraging attitudes toward the children. They also provide resources (such as buying books, puzzles and games,

telling stories, and going to the library) to help developing the cognitive ability, so that the children can live up to the expectations. Thus parental expectation is, to the children, another form of resource in addition to economic capital and human capital (Ibid).

In contrast to families with two biological parents, single parents are usually pressed by the burden of living and thus cannot afford much time and support for the children. They are also stressed out with frustrations of all kinds, have lower self-esteem and likewise have lower expectations for the children. Children in stepfamilies are also at a disadvantage because they cannot access the resource that parents hold. The parent-child relationship in stepfamilies is usually more distant than in the former two types of families. Parents usually provide less support and thus have lower expectations for the children. In short, whether the single-parent cannot afford enough or the step-child cannot access, children in these two types of families receive lower educational expectations and obtain lesser the accompanying socialization for them to adjust in school (Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Entwisle & Alexander, 1996).

Grandparents in addition to two biological parents in the family may or may not be a blessing for the grandchild's socialization. On the one hand, the co-residence of grandparents in the intact family might cause tension because of conflicts between the first two generations in aspects of habits, ways of thinking, and parenting principles (Hu, 1985; Kung, 1999). Such tension might divert parents' attention away from the child or produce conflicting normative expectations for the child, in which case the child might be at a loss and on the loose. An earlier study in Taiwan also found that multigenerational families often were more hierarchically structured than nuclear intact families, the former providing more external control for the grandchildren and thus less opportunity for the grandchildren to develop intrinsic motivation, which



might also interfere with the grandchild's achievement (Olson, 1974). These possibilities make the grandparents in an intact family a possible liability.

On the other hand, co-residing grandparents may provide more psychological support for the grandchildren as well as for the adult son (or daughter), help convey parents' expectation and advice to the grandchild, and constantly monitor the grandchild's activities at home. There are quite a few pieces of evidence of grandparents providing extra care for the grandchild in the U.S. literature, though most of it is in the context of single-parent families. For example, Geronimus (1997) found that grandparent(s) nurtured children of single mothers living with their own parent(s) by providing financial support for the children and taking care of the grandchildren. Although studies found that, teenage mothers living with their parents were often the worst adjusted of the peers, least able as well as least motivated to live independently (Chase-Lansdale & Brooks-Gunn, 1994), children of such mothers developed better in kindergarten in terms of cognitive, emotional, and behavioural aspects in comparison with those living with teenage mothers that did not live with their parents (Leadbeater & Bishop, 1994; Pope et al., 1993).

Deleire and Kalil (2002) also found that children living in their single mothers and with at least one grandparent could have educational and other developmental outcomes as good as or even better than those living in nuclear intact families. Aquilino (1996) found that adolescents of single parents living together with grandparents had lower high school dropout rates than those of single parents not living together with grandparents. Several studies in Taiwan also showed that grandparents who cohabitated with their adult children helped with household chores

(Lee et al. 1994) and assisted in caring for the grandchildren, especially when the mothers were in the labour force (Hu & Chou, 1996).

### **2.3.3 Network Resources**

Network resources such as relatives outside the family (Shavit & Pierce, 1991), neighborhoods (Entwisle, Alexander & Olsen, 1994), or schools (Ho & Wilms, 1996) were found to benefit the child's educational achievement, by providing support to the adults, supplementary monitoring of the children, as well as better facilities for learning such as the library and parks. With the disappearance of the spouse, however, single-parents lose potential resources from relatives of the spouse. Moreover, pressed with the load of livelihood, single-parents are less likely to pay attention to the management of networks with friends and relatives. As a result, they are less likely to obtain resources or information from the networks of relatives or other parents. Since it has been found that the step-parents are less involved in children's schools (Nord & West, 2001), it is reasonable to assume that stepfamilies also have less opportunities to involve in sharing and obtaining information beneficial to the children. The presence of grandparents, on the other hand, may give additional linkage to relatives and schools and, hence, contribute to grandchildren's learning (Ibid).

### **2.4 Parents' Level of Education and children's Educational Attainment**

Pupils with families where parents have less education tend to systematically perform worse than pupils whose parents have more education. According to Nannyonjo (2007) pupils with parents who did not finish primary or just finished primary, pupils with parents who finished senior four or senior 6 or university performed considerably better. The highest increase in test scores was for pupils whose fathers had a



university degree. Compared to earlier research, for example by Hanushek, found mother's education has a significant effect on pupils test scores. Fathers' education had a stronger influence than mothers. Those results possibly reflect the ability of parents to support the pupils' school work, and likely interactions of literate parents with their children in school related or literacy nurturing activities as well as their ability to support their children with homework or help with difficult homework questions. Hanushel's work is contextualized and may not hold for different geographical settings.

Similarly Okumu et al (2008) in a study of Socioeconomic Determinants of Primary School Dropout found that High academic attainment of a mother and father significantly reduces chances of primary school drop out for both boys and girls in rural and urban areas. For a mother, this phenomenon could be attributed to the fact that educated mothers reduce the time spend doing household chores while increasing the time spend with their children than their uneducated counterparts. Also educated mothers are more effective in helping their children in academic work. In doing so, they are also able to monitor and supervise their children's academic progress. While for fathers it's attributed to the fact that educated fathers are also interested in their children thus they would be willing to spend more time in helping their children in academic problems. Educated fathers are as well aware of the possible returns to their children and they are more likely to have access to information and social networks necessary for their children to engage into relatively human capital intensive activities yielding high returns to education.

## **2.5 Parents' Occupation and Educational Attainment**

Coleman (1988) argues that the most significant negative effect of increasing female labor force participation is on the cognitive achievement of children of employed women. Ruhm (2004) provides empirical support for this proposition. A second set of studies finds that maternal employment neither affects the quality of the mother-child relationship, nor the academic achievement of children measured in test scores (Muller, 1995; Golberg, Greenberger & Nagel, 1996; Parcel, Nickoll & Dufur, 2000, McGroder et al., 2005). Still other scholars suggest that maternal employment generally has favorable effects on child outcomes (Vandell & Ramanan, 1992; Parcel & Menaghan, 1994; Hoffman & Youngblade, 1999).

Checchiand (2010) found that in Ghana some negative correlation emerged with the probability of enrolment and low income jobs. However one third of Ugandans classified as unemployed were actually taking up unpaid family jobs, thus agreeing with Okumu et al(2008), finding that a large percentage of the economically active persons are economically unproductive; thereby vindicating the household's dependence burden implying that educated workers accept only high quality jobs and possibly experience long spells of unemployment and or migration. This squeezes out the household's resources, resulting into pupils in the family dropping out of school. Brooks-Gunn, Han, and Waldfogel (2002) also argue that the timing and intensity of maternal employment is important in explaining the negative effects of maternal employment on children. They find that the children of mothers who worked long hours after the child was three years old had lower cognitive development scores.

In addition, Ruhm (2004) observes that the children of women who were employed during the child's first three years of life had significantly lower reading and mathematics achievement than those children whose mothers stayed at home in the

same period. These findings resonate with Coleman's (1988) argument that maternal employment has unfavorable effects on social capital [that is, "the relations between children and parents"] in the household because it translates into less time the mother spends with children. Coleman (1988) argues that the level of human capital of the mother is of small importance if she does not use her human capital to increase the social capital of children in the home.

## **2.6 Economic Status of Parents and Academic Attainment**

Another factor that may affect academic performance of students is socioeconomic background. This background refers to parents' educational attainment, occupation, level of income and social class placement. When a child's needs are not properly addressed, his learning ability could be affected due to lack of motivation (Ajila & Olutola, 2007). Bliss (2004) is of the view that many students from low socioeconomic homes respond incomprehensively to classroom teaching because their home environment has not exposed them to the kinds of materials used in schools. If home environment is not intellectually stimulating, some students find it difficult to cope in school and may eventually dropout of school.

Bandura (1986) asserts that irrespective of national equality of opportunity, children of parents in higher socioeconomic status tend to achieve greater academically than children of parents from lower socioeconomic status.

Furthermore, the home has been identified as an overwhelming factor affecting student's performance academically. It would appear, then, that, broken homes may present a very real danger to the emotional, personality, and mental adjustment of the young adolescent. These impinge on students' academic achievement.

A considerable number of researches repeatedly have shown that Low-SES is linked to a range of indicators of child and adolescent well-being, including students' academic achievement (Beauvais & Jensen, 2003). Birch and Gussow (1979) claim that poverty contributes toward educational failure, not simply because poor children are "culturally disadvantaged", but because their health and nutritional status is inadequate to allow for the maximum mental development and for the realization of their educational potential. The likelihood that the poor children would end up being at-risk in terms of deficient development is a reality that could begin even before birth. In that regard, Birch and Gussow emphasized that society should concern itself more with the full range of factors contributing to educational failure, among which the health of the child is a variable of potential primary importance (Ibid).

According to Rumberger (1995) student's family background is widely recognized as the most significant important contributor to success in schools'. Rumberger's position supports the finding of earlier scholars who argued that the home has a major influence on student school success (Swick & Duff, 1978) and that it is the quality of relationships within the student's home environment that has an important effect on school performance (Neisser, 1986; Selden, 1990; Caldas, 1993). Additionally, Jacobs and Harvey recently established that many variables in the family background have strong (direct and indirect) associations with students' success throughout school and in young adults' eventual educational and occupational attainment. Such variables include family structure (socioeconomic status and intact/single-parent family status), parent education level, parental involvement, and parenting style (Jacobs & Harvey, 2005).

According to Evans (2004) lower income children have less stable families, greater exposure to environmental toxins and violence, and more limited extra-familial social support networks. There is no doubt that parents in such settings would report lower educational expectations, less monitoring of children's school work and less overall supervision of social activities compared to students from high socioeconomic and intact families. Evans repeatedly discovered that low SES children are less cognitively stimulated than high SES children, as a result of reading less and being read to less, and experience less complex communications with parents involving more limited vocabulary (Ibid).

Earlier on, Bliss (2004) estimating a path model for low SES African American youth, found the direct effect from parents' education and that family income has little if any direct effect on achievement. The investigation carried out by Keith and Benson (1992) also examined effects on high school grades across five ethnic groups and concluded that the path from family background to achievement was constrained to zero because it was found to be non-significant.

There are some factors that could despite the impact of SES, enable the students perform successfully at school. It is on record that a number of scholars have studied what they termed individual characteristics that could account for the academic achievement of the students who are ordinarily distinguished as being 'at risk'. Two of those researchers, Borman and Overman (2004) while studying the Academic Resilience in Mathematics among Poor and Minority Students, developed four measures of individual characteristics: Self-esteem, students efficacy, student engagement, and students' overall disposition toward school. According to their findings, the "univariate analyses for resilience status revealed statistically significant main effects for all four outcomes, student engagement, self-efficacy in mathematics,

positive attitude toward school, and self-esteem, all of which favoured resilient students". Similar characteristics are identifiable in other studies: individual characteristics of resilient children typically include high self-esteem, high self-efficacy, and autonomy (Wang, Haerttel & Walberg, 1994). While poverty and students' low SES background could be considered a concern regarding students' academic performance, they are not too belaboured because the individual characteristics are variables that align to students' performance (Overman, 2004).

There is no doubt that such conditions can impact students negatively, but the strongly determined and motivated students are likely to beat the odds of greater risk of academic failure and perform with distinction in school. These students were identified as resilient children. Resilient children also are actively engaged in school (Finn & Rock, 1997), have strong interpersonal skills, and maintain healthy expectations, and have a high level of activity (Benard, 1991). According to Borman and Overman (2004) all of these characteristics highlight the underlying perseverance, strong will, and positive disposition of the resilient child. Scales, Roehlkepartain, Neal, Kielsmeier, and Benson (2000) concluded that "a developmentally attentive school environment and a more experimental curriculum may help compensate for the detrimental effects of low SES. This confirms the study done by (Hoy et al., 1991), that the single best organizational climate predictor of student achievement is academic emphasis. These researchers using high school as a focus point, found that high schools with an orderly and serious learning environment, with teachers who set high but achievable goals, and with students who work hard and respect others who do well academically, have higher levels of student achievement, even when data are controlled for socioeconomic status (Hoy et al., 1991).



Schools that foster student resilience have been found to emphasize academic learning and opportunity for all students, active student and parent involvement, and sensitivity to student diversity (Wang & Gordon, 1994). According to Floyd (1996) teachers who bridge the gap between home and school and are sensitive to and knowledgeable of their students cultural and community heritages provide better learning environments, particularly for students from low SES backgrounds.

Several studies have identified resilience as a factor that enhances higher academic performance among students of a low SES background. In his studies, Floyd (1996) noted that there are students who succeeded despite economic hardships in their respective families. Floyd observed that in their homes, there was limited money for extracurricular activities like football or basketball games, dances or senior proms, or even senior pictures. Furthermore, Floyd found that these students managed to continue focusing on and excelled in their education despite the occurrence of serious problems due to or related to socioeconomic insecurity (Ibid).

In terms of socioeconomic status (SES) factors, the positive link between SES and children's achievement is well-established (Sirin, 2005; White, 1982). McLoyd's (1989; 1998) seminal literature reviews also have documented well the relation of poverty and low socioeconomic status to a range of negative child outcomes, including low IQ, educational attainment and achievement, and social-emotional problems. Parental education is an important index of socioeconomic status, and as noted, it predicts children's educational and behavioral outcomes. However, McLoyd (1998) has pointed out the value of distinguishing among various indices of family socioeconomic status, including parental education, persistent versus transitory poverty, income, and parental occupational status, because studies have found that income level and poverty might be stronger predictors of children's cognitive

outcomes compared to other SES indices (e.g., Duncan et al., 1994; Stipek, 1998). Thus, in the present study, we control for other indices of socioeconomic status when considering the effects of parental education.

In fact, research suggests that parental education is indeed an important and significant unique predictor of child achievement. For example, in an analysis of data from several large-scale developmental studies, Duncan and Brooks-Gunn (1997) concluded that maternal education was linked significantly to children's intellectual outcomes even after controlling for a variety of other SES indicators such as household income. However, along with those contemporaneous links between SES and children's outcomes, longitudinal research dating back to groundbreaking status attainment models (e.g., Blau & Duncan, 1967; Duncan, Featherman, & Duncan, 1972) indicates clearly that family of origin SES accounts meaningfully for educational and occupational attainment during late adolescence and into adulthood (e.g., Caspi, Wright, Moffitt, & Silva, 1998; Johnson et al., 1983; Sobolewski & Amato, 2005; Whitson & Keller, 2004). For example, Caspi et al (1998) reported that lower parental occupational status of children ages 3–5 and 7–9 predicted a higher risk of the child having periods of unemployment when making the transition from adolescence to adulthood. Johnson et al (1983) found that mothers' and fathers' educational level and fathers' occupational status were related positively to their children's adulthood occupational status. Few studies, however, are prospective in nature spanning such a long period of time (i.e., a 40-year period from childhood to middle adulthood). Also, few studies include a wide range of contextual and personal predictor variables from childhood and potential mediators of the effects of those variables from adolescence (Amato, 1987).



## **2.7 Other Factors that Influences Academic Attainment of Children**

The researcher has reviewed issues on the main variables of the study which includes women education, occupation and academic attainment, marital status and academic attainment, economic status of parents and academic attainment of children. There are other factors that could also influence the academic attainment of the children.

### **2.7.1 Family Structure**

Socioeconomic status may therefore be linked to family structure. As sole parent families on average have lower levels of income, are headed by parents with lower educational attainment and are less likely to be in the labour force, children from these families are likely to have lower educational performance (Rich, 2000). Other factors in sole parent families that are likely to adversely affect educational outcomes of children compared to those from two-parent families are said to include: reduced contact between the child and non-custodial parent; the custodial parent having less time to spend with children in terms of supervision of school-work and maintaining appropriate levels of discipline; the lack of an appropriate role model, especially for males; increased responsibilities on children such as childcare roles, domestic duties which impede the time available for school work; and the nature of parent-child relationships in sole parent families may cause emotional and behavioural problems for the child (Buckingham, 1999; Rich, 2000).

The influence of family structure has been found to be only weakly associated with educational attainment, however, once controlling for other variables (Machin, 1998). It is more detrimental when children in sole parent families also experience a range of other risk factors such as low income (Sparkes, 1999). Family process models (e.g., Conger et al., 2002; McLoyd, 1989; Mistry, Vanderwater, Huston, & McLoyd, 2002)

have proposed that the effects of socioeconomic stress (e.g., financial strain, unstable employment) on child outcomes are mediated through parenting stress and family interaction patterns (e.g., parental depressed mood; lower levels of warmth, nurturance, and monitoring of children). That is, family structural variables such as parental education and income affect the level of actual interactions within the family, and concomitantly, the child's behavior. It is well established within broader social learning models (e.g., Huesmann, 1998) that parents exert substantial influence on their children's behaviour. For example, children exposed to more rejecting and aggressive parenting contexts, as well as interparental conflict, display greater aggression (Cummings & Davies, 1994; Eron et al., 1971; Huesmann et al., 1984; Lefkowitz et al., 1977) and the effects between negative parenting and child aggression are bi-directional (Patterson, 1982). Presumably, children learn aggressive problem-solving styles as a result of repeated exposure to such models, and in turn parents use more power assertive techniques to manage the child's behavior (Sparkes, 1999).

Researchers also have shown that behavioural problems such as early aggression impair children's academic and intellectual development over time (e.g., Hinshaw, 1992; Huesmann, Eron, & Yarmel, 1987). Stipek (1998) has argued that behavioural problems affect young children's opportunities to learn because these youth often are punished for their behaviour and might develop conflictual relationships with teachers, thus leading to negative attitudes about school and lowered academic success. Thus, it is possible that low socioeconomic status (including low parental educational levels) could affect negative family interaction patterns, which can influence child behaviour problems, and in turn affect lowered academic and achievement-oriented attitudes over time (Ibid).

Parent education and family interaction patterns during childhood also might be linked more directly to the child's developing academic success and achievement-oriented attitudes. In the general social learning and social-cognitive framework (Bandura, 1986), behaviour is shaped in part through observational and direct learning experiences. Those experiences lead to the formation of internalized cognitive scripts, values, and beliefs that guide and maintain behaviour over time (Anderson & Huesmann, 2003; Huesmann, 1998).

According to Eccles (2004) this cognitive process accounts for the emergence and persistence of achievement-related behaviours and ultimately to successful achievement. Eccles' framework emphasizes in particular the importance of children's expectations for success, with parents assuming the role of "expectancy socializers" (Frome & Eccles, 1998). Thus, for example, a child exposed to parents who model achievement-oriented behavior (e.g., obtaining advanced degrees; reading frequently; encouraging a strong work ethic) and provide achievement-oriented opportunities (e.g., library and museum trips; after-school enrichment programs; educational books and videos) should develop the guiding belief that achievement is to be valued, pursued, and anticipated. This belief should then in turn promote successful outcomes across development, including high school graduation, the pursuit of higher learning, and the acquisition of high-prestige occupations. Not surprisingly, there are positive relations between parents' levels of education and parents' expectations for their children's success (Davis-Kean, 2005), suggesting that more highly educated parents actively encourage their children to develop high expectations of their own. Importantly, on the other hand, McLoyd's (1989) review found that parents who experience difficult economic times have children who are more pessimistic about their educational and vocational futures.

### **2.7.2 Type of School**

Research has shown the importance of the type of school a child attends in influencing educational outcomes. While research in the US has found that SES variables continue to influence educational attainment even after controlling for different school types, the school context tends to affect the strength of the relationship between SES and educational outcomes (Portes & MacLeod, 1996). Similarly, research in Britain shows that schools have an independent effect on student attainment (Sparkes, 1999). While there is less data available on this issue in Australia, several studies using the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth have found that students attending private non-Catholic schools were significantly more likely to stay on at school than those attending state schools (Long et al., 1999; Marks et al., 2000). Students from independent private schools are also more likely to achieve higher end of school scores (Buckingham, 2000a). While school-related factors are important, there is again an indirect link to SES, as private schools are more likely to have a greater number of students from high SES families, select students with stronger academic abilities and have greater financial resources. The school effect is also likely to operate through variation in the quality and attitudes of teachers (Sparkes, 1999). Teachers at disadvantaged schools, for instance, often hold low expectations of their students, which compound the low expectations students and their parents may also hold (Ruge, 1998).

### **2.7.3 Ethnicity**

The ethnic background or immigrant status of parents is also an important mediating variable on the influence of SES on children's educational performance. Studies of the academic performance of second-generation school students in the US have found

that while their performance is also influenced by the SES of their parents and type of school, their national background plays a significant independent role (Portes & MacLeod, 1996). The authors found that some first-generation immigrant parents (e.g., Cuban, Vietnamese) through the process of migration and subsequent incorporation in the host society, come to see education as a key means of upward mobility for their children, despite their own low levels of education and income (Portes & MacLeod, 1996). Children from these communities did well despite coming from low SES backgrounds whereas the negative effects of SES were not ameliorated in the academic performance of children from immigrant communities with low levels of social capital (e.g., Haitian, Mexican) (Ibid).

Similar findings have emerged within the Australian experience. While the children of immigrants were seen to be at a disadvantage up until the mid-1970s (Martin, 1978), the gradual introduction of multicultural policies in the classroom from that time may have improved the situation (Cahill, 1996). A series of studies based on Census data suggests that the second generation (especially those of European, Indian and Chinese origin) have achieved substantial educational mobility in terms of staying on at school, compared to those from British, German, Dutch and Australian origin (Birrell & Khoo, 1995; Khoo, 1995). As a consequence, higher percentages of children from non-English speaking background (NESB) achieve tertiary qualifications compared to those from English-speaking background (ESB) (Birrell & Khoo, 1995; Dobson et al., 1996). As with the US research, however, there is a great deal of variation between different ethnic groups. Studies have found that it is more likely that people from Vietnamese, Chinese, Eastern European and Korean backgrounds are in higher education than people from ESB. Whereas those whose language group was Arabic,

Khmer and Turkish were half as likely to be in higher education than those from ESB (Dobson et al., 1996; Cahill, 1996; see also Marks et al., 2000).

#### **2.7.4 Geographical Location**

Students from non-metropolitan areas are more likely to have lower educational outcomes in terms of academic performance and retention rates than students from metropolitan areas (Cheers, 1990; HREOC, 2000). Despite an adequate number of educational facilities in rural and remote Australia, school children from these areas remain disadvantaged by other factors. Issues affecting access to education in regional areas include costs, the availability of transport and levels of family income support.

In addition, inequity exists with regard to the quality of the education that rural students receive, often as a result of restricted and limited subject choice. Furthermore, students may also have limited recreational and educational facilities within their school (HREOC, 2000).

#### **2.7.5 Housing Type**

Lower educational attainment has also been found to be associated with children living in public housing compared to those in private housing (Sparkes, 1999). This may be due to the effects of overcrowding, poor access to resources and a lack of social networks, and in this sense, housing type may also be a measure of neighbourhood influence. A recent Australian study based on 171 Year 12 students from 10 state schools, found that neighbourhood effects were an important influence on students. Educational plans to continue further post-secondary education, after controlling for a range of individual and family socioeconomic characteristics (Jensen & Seltzer, 2000). Measures of the neighbourhood included the level of neighbourhood income, the unemployment rate, an index of educational attainment and the



percentage employed in professional fields. This study was unable to identify, however, the precise transmission mechanisms for such neighbourhood effects.

Whether, for instance, they were due to spillover effects such as peer group influence, the presence or lack of job networks and role models or whether the neighbourhood variables were acting as proxies for school quality or housing type.

#### **2.7.6 Paternal Absence**

Following a parental separation, most children live in the primary custody of one parent, although joint custody arrangements have become increasingly common over recent years (Anger, Silke, & Guido Heineck, 2009). In many instances, the custodial parent is the mother, which means that a significant aspect of the experience of post-separation family life, for most children, is the absence of their father. Although other custody arrangements are increasingly common, the research in this area has still tended to focus on the socioeconomic status of women and its influence on academic attainment of children focusing on indicators of SES of women such as occupation, women education, economic status and marital status of women.

There are a range of a priori reasons to hypothesize that the absence of the father from the home might have a negative impact on children's wellbeing. As Amato (1993) notes, the absence of one parent means a deficit in terms of parental time available to do the work of parenting (and all the other work in the household, which further restricts the available time for parenting). Children will also lack exposure both to an adult male role model and to the skills and processes involved in a committed adult relationship, including such things as communication, negotiation, compromise and expression of intimacy (although it must be said that many couples in intact relationships model such things imperfectly at least part of the time). In addition,

children are susceptible to suffer where the absence of their father from the home means that they have lost effective contact with him (Ibid).

Despite these hypothetical grounds for expecting a “father absence” effect, research studies have generally failed to find evidence to show that this plays a strong role in explaining the differential outcomes experienced by children from divorced and intact families. Two pieces of evidence, in particular, weigh against it.

First, children whose parents separated do worse than children who have experienced a parental bereavement. Biblarz and Gottainer (2000) found that, compared with children of widowed mothers, children of divorced mothers had significantly lower levels of education, occupational status and happiness in adulthood. They found no evidence that divorced mothers were less competent parents than widowed mothers and speculated that the contrasting positions in the social structure of different types of single-mother families may account for observed differences in child outcomes. In particular, they realize that widows occupied an advantaged position in the social structure, in terms of employment, financial position and occupational status, compared with divorced mothers. This suggests that the absence of the father, if it has an effect, has a much weaker effect than that of these economic factors (Ibid).

Secondly, as has already been noted, remarriage does not generally improve the wellbeing of children, despite the gain of another adult to help with the task of parenting. As a number of studies have noted, outcomes for children in remarried families are generally little different from those of children in sole-parent families. It is important to note also that remarriage generally results in an improvement in economic circumstances. As noted above, there appears to be something associated with stepfamilies – perhaps the complexities of the new pattern of relationships that

need to be established and worked at before the family can settle down into new comfortable ways of living together – that weighs against both the economic gain and the gain of an additional adult figure. This suggests that the absence of the father, by itself, does not play a strong role in explaining the differences between children from divorced and intact families (Aaronson, 2000).

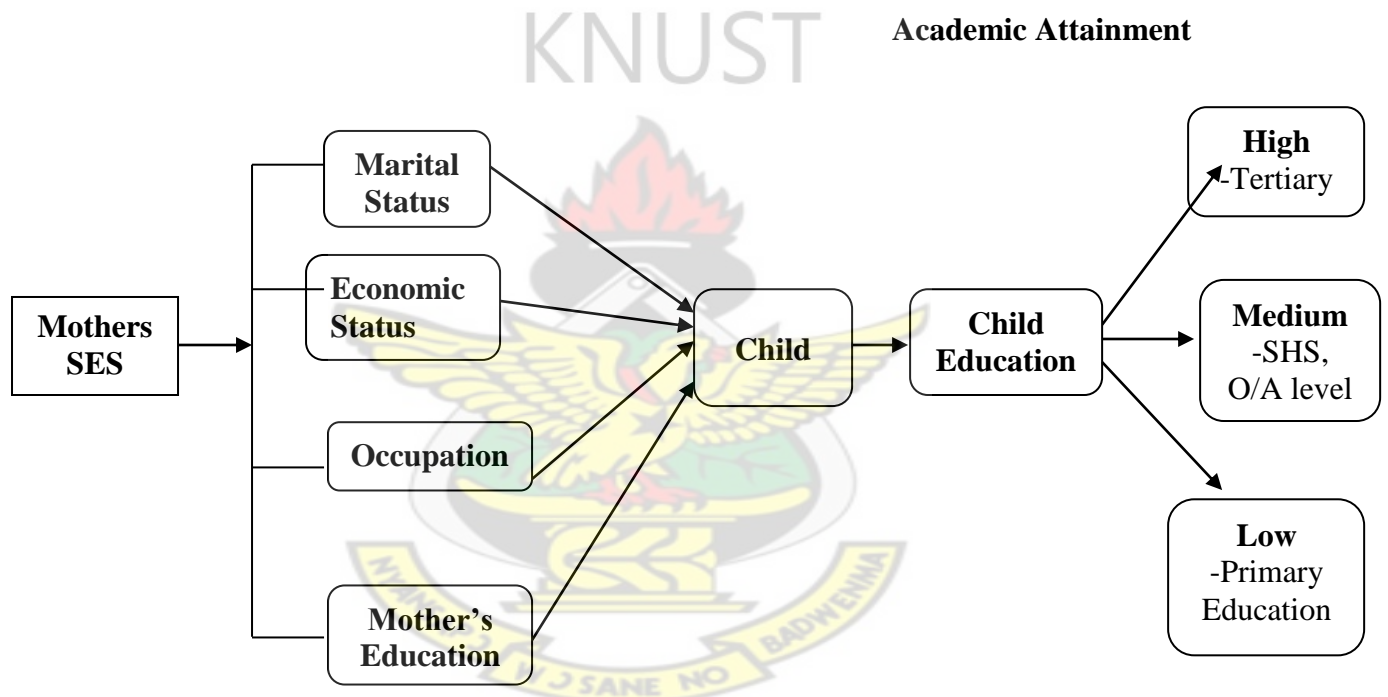
There are various reasons why the impact of the father's absence might be less than expected. Other adults may be filling the gap by providing adult role models and support to lone parents, and many fathers continue to make significant contributions to their children's wellbeing after separation. It may not just be the father's presence in the home that is important; it is his presence in the child's life (Ibid).



## 2.8 A conceptual framework on SES (Socioeconomic Status) of women and its influence on the academic attainment of their children

The conceptual framework of the study is also established. Conceptual frameworks, according to educational researcher Smyth (2004), are structured from a set of broad ideas and theories that help a researcher to properly identify the problem they are looking at, frame their questions and find suitable literature. Most academic research use a conceptual framework at the outset because it helps the researcher to clarify his research question and aims.

**Figure 2. 1**



**Source:** Author's field survey, May 2013

The independent variable in the study is mother's socioeconomic status (SES). The dependent variable is the academic attainment of the children. In that regard, mother's SES (independent variables) is established as having a direct influence on the academic attainment of the children (dependent variable). Thus marital status, occupation of women, education of women, and economic status all have a tendency

to influence the academic attainment of the child. Notwithstanding, the child may end up pursuing higher education, medium or fall within the low category of the education ladder depending on how he/she appreciates the influence from the mother. The child whose mother is highly educated may not necessarily mean that, that child would be highly educated. In the same vein, the marital status of a mother being intact may not necessarily give a reason for the high academic status of the child. How the child may appreciate the SES of the mother will culminate in the child being highly educated or not.

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## **2.9 Summary**

The literature revealed that, quite a number of scholars' associate parent's education with child academic outcome/attainment. Marital status of women is also known to have an influence on academic attainment of children. Also, the SES of a mother has been identified by scholars as a significant contributor to the academic attainment of children. Other factors that mediate academic attainment include housing type, family structure, school type etc. It was also known from the literature that, despite the fact that a father may be absent from the home, what matters is his impact in the life of the child/children. The researcher therefore anticipated similar findings looking at the trend of results attained by other scholars. However, literature focusing on SES of women was rare to come by. The Chapter three threw light on the methods for conducting the research.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

Research methods define the systematic and scientific procedures used to arrive at the results and findings for a study against which claim for knowledge are evaluated (Nachamias et al., 1996; Saunders et al., 2007). The sub titles included research setting, research design, sample size, sampling procedure, sources of data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations and field problems.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The research design for this study was a cross-sectional descriptive survey with a structured interview guide which was used to provide answers to the research questions. The dependent variable in the study is academic attainments of children. The independent variables are mother's education, mother's occupation, marital status and economic status.

#### **3.2 Sources of data**

The study employed the use of both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data are data in their most basic and elementary form: unembellished. These are often the raw data, i.e. data not yet influenced or shaped by researchers. Once researchers do something to these primary data, they become secondary data. Secondary data, or processed data, can be a combination or recombination of data or data that are recoded, categorised or visualised. Secondary data are often the data that are communicated to the outside world in one way or another, depending on the discipline or domain, either in publications (enhanced or otherwise) or in data collaboratories.



The primary source was data from the field with the use of structured interview guide. The secondary source was gathered from academic books on education, SES, articles on children's academic attainment and related academic sites on the internet, more specifically SAGE. The advantages of using the primary data included better interpretation of data, addressing targeted issues, efficient spending for information and using the primary data to address specific research issues though it was time consuming and very costly (Babbie, 2003). The advantages of using the secondary data also included immediate availability of information, easily accessible, provided the researcher with essential background which helped to clarify and refine research problem. It is however expensive to use (Ibid).

### **3.3 Research setting**

The study was conducted within the New Juaben Municipality which is located in the Eastern region of Ghana. The Municipality has a total land area of 110km<sup>2</sup> with a populace of 136,768 (Population and Housing Census, 2000). For the purpose of this research, three (3) communities were selected from the municipality (Adweso, Betom and Srodæ). This was because, these communities were densely populated and were heterogeneous in nature and the researcher could get all the characteristics from these communities.

### **3.4 Population of the study**

The communities selected have both urban and rural women and prevent homogenous characteristics. New Juaben Municipality has an estimated women populace of 70,124 (GSS,2010). There are 23 communities under the New Juaben Municipality.

### 3.4.1 Target Population

The target population was women who were 41 years and above and were resident for at least 10 years or more and have offspring born to her and who consent to be part of the study. The reason for this age group was that, women reach their prime age from 22- 35. It was likely that women who were 41 years and above could have children aged 21 years and above and since the researcher was interested in academic attainment of all categories, the age 41 years and above was suitable.

### 3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

A multi-stage sampling technique was employed to obtain the sample of respondents. The study area was clustered into five zones out of which three were randomly selected. Proportionate sampling was used to determine respective sizes from the selected areas due to unequal population sizes. The systematic sampling technique was then used to select 300 houses. The breakdown is as follows:

**Table 3.1:** Sample distribution for the various communities selected for the study

Community	N	Proportion	Final Sample
Adweso	172	28%	84
Srodae	320	52%	156
Betom	123	20%	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>615</b>		<b>300</b>

**Source:** Extract from GSS (2010)

$K^{\text{th}}$  term = 2

One respondent was selected from every second house and where there were more than one woman, the list of the women were prepared and random selection was made to select the respondent for the study giving all the women the chance to be selected

for the study. A woman who had a child and was 41 years and above was selected for this research from every household. One woman who has a child and was 41 years or above was selected because; the researcher anticipated that, mothers who were 41 years and above would have children who have attained some level of education suitable for this research. Instances where certain households did not satisfy age range of mothers required for this research, respondents were sought from households that had more than one woman.

The mothers selected were asked questions on the highest level of academic attainment of her children. Out of the 300 targeted respondents, 275 were interviewed giving a response rate of 92% ( $275/300 \times 100\%$ ). This number was sufficient or adequate to conduct multivariate analysis (Pallant, 2000).

### **3.6 Variables**

The dependent variable in this study was academic attainment of children. The independent variables were: occupation, marital status, economic status and level of education of mother.

#### **3.6.1 Measurement of study variables**

For the purpose of analysis, variables in the study were explained to afford their measurement.

##### Academic attainment

Academic attainment was measured both at nominal and ordinal level. Academic attainment as a dependent variable was assessed by two items: level of education attained by mother and level of education attained by the child. Each of these items had the same response categories; none or no education, Primary, J.H.S,

S.H.S/MSLC/O&A Level and Tertiary. The researcher sought for the child with the highest level of academic attainment from their mothers.

#### Occupation of mother

Occupation was measured as a categorical variable. It was measured at the nominal level. The various occupations were as follows; trader, civil servant, public servant, farmer, business executive and housewives. For the sake of logistic regression, the occupations were collapsed into two broad categories. These were professional and non-professional occupations. The professional occupations included Civil servants, public servants, business executives and the non-professional occupations included farmers, traders and housewives.

#### Economic status

As economic status of a woman has been found to significantly relate to academic attainment of children (Williams, 1987), three items measured this variable. The first item measured the salary/profit of the study participants while item two measured whether respondent was a homemaker or not. The third item measured participant's possession of the following items (motorbike/ bicycle, motorcar, computer, internet, mobile phone). The total score of these three items was taken as the measure of economic status. This was further categorized into three; low (total score of less than 5), average (total score of between five and seven) and high (a total score of between 8 and 10).

#### Marital status of mother

Marital status was measured at the nominal level. Marital status was categorized into four groups; married, divorced/separated, widowed and courting. The groups were

later collapsed into two main categories; married and unmarried. This was to facilitate easy analysis of the data.

### **3.6.2 Pre-testing of research instrument**

Ayeduase is part of the Asokwa sub-metro district and is located to the south-east of Kumasi just at the eastern edge of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010). Permission was sought from the Chief of the Ayeduase community to conduct the pre-test exercise. With permission granted 15 respondents were first briefed on the purpose of the study after which consent forms that explain the relevant ethical issues of voluntary participation, anonymity and confidentiality was distributed to them. The structured interview guide was divided into three parts. The pre-test helped the researcher identify ambiguity in the structured interview guide, and in the procedures of interviewing, as well as in the instructions for the respondents.

### **3.7 Unit of Analysis**

The unit of analysis was women at Betom, Srodæ and Adweso community who have children and are at least 41 years or above.

### **3.8 Data Collection Techniques**

Data collection took place between 19 and 25 April, 2013 after pre-test of the research instrument was conducted. The researcher used structured interview guide in collecting data. Two research assistants were recruited and trained to assist in the collection of data. The data collected were later coded and analyzed quantitatively.

### **3.9 Data Handling**

Social research generates information that must be coded, analyzed and interpreted. In order to make meaning out of the data collected, data handling processes such as; coding, editing, entry and cleaning were engaged in:

The first stage of the data handling processes involved data coding. This process aimed at simplifying data entry and analysis. In the exercise of translating words into numbers a scheme called coding instruction was prepared to direct the process. The first step in this process was to provide a coding frame, or the coding scheme. The scheme was then used by the researcher as a guide to help translate the responses in the structured interview guide into numbers. The responses given by respondents were categorized into similar responses and then had codes assigned to them.

Data editing was carried out during and after data collection. The purpose of this was to examine the data to find out whether all the questions have been answered correctly and also to ensure that information on the structured interview guide was ready to be inputted into the computer program for analysis.

Data once edited was entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Software (Version 16). Variables were defined in the variable view phase of the SPSS programme while data was subsequently entered into the data view of the software programme to create a data file.

It was of importance that the researcher checked thoroughly for errors or mistakes after data has been inputted into the computer program to be used. Data cleaning in this stage involved eliminating errors in coding and transmitting the data into the computer. Since data processing errors are inevitable, the researcher paid much attention to the entry of data and used all possible means for checking mistakes. This



was done by periodically running the researcher's eyes down the various columns and rows in which data has been entered in order to identify them. Mistakes identified were corrected or deleted where necessary.

### **3.9.1 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Univariate analysis was done to describe the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were employed.

Bivariate analysis was done to establish relationship between independent and dependent variables. The independent variables were women's economic status, occupation, marital status and women education. The dependent variable is academic attainment of children. Chi-square test of independence was employed to determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. All tests were carried out at 5% (0.05) significance level. Predictors or determinants of academic attainment of children were identified by the multivariate analysis technique; logistic regression. SES variables with  $p < 0.05$  were entered into the regression model.

### **3.9.2 Ethical Consideration**

The research addressed ethical concerns which includes informed consent, anonymity of study respondents, confidentiality of information and harm.

In order to unnecessarily invade the privacy of participants, the researcher made prior visits to Srodae, Betom and Adweso before the data collection commenced. Neither names nor any identifiable information from respondents was taken as a way of

ensuring the ethical principle of anonymity in social research. This was to prevent possible victimization of respondents in cases where certain responses may be viewed as unpalatable to other stakeholders.

While interviewing the respondents, the researcher verbally informed all respondents who agreed to participate that their participation was voluntary. They could, therefore opt out at any stage of the research process without suffering any penalty. They could also skip questions they were not willing to answer or did not know the answers. Otherwise, any guess they made would be taken as a correct answer for analysis of the data. This was done to ensure voluntary participation on the part of respondents.

Pieces of information cited from earlier studies on SES and child academic outcome to support the review of related literature were duly acknowledged through both citation and referencing in order to avoid academic dishonesty otherwise known as plagiarism. Conscious efforts were made to reduce any psychological tension created especially when income of participants was asked.

### **3.9.3 Problems encountered**

A major limitation of this study is non-inclusion of many factors which could have equally contributed to influencing the academic attainment of children. Some of these factors include family structure, type of school, housing type, geographical location etc. Also, the highest academic attainment was sought from the mothers of the children. Probing questions could have elicited information from children to augment that of the mothers though the non-inclusion of children did not render this study invalid, thus sticking to the objectives of the set out study. Wrong numbering of houses posed a limitation to this study but efforts were made to locate houses according to the K<sup>th</sup> term to ensure fairness in the chances of each house selected.

Notwithstanding, the findings revealed a similar trend by other researchers complimenting studies on the socioeconomic status of women.

It is important to note that in spite of these limitations, the validity of the research findings and conclusions had not been compromised.

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## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter dealt with the presentation and analysis of the data. Descriptive information of mothers is displayed as well as the bivariate analysis of the independent and dependent variables. Determinants of academic attainment of children have also been established using direct logistic regression. A discussion of the findings of the study is compared with result of the extant literature on socioeconomic characteristics of women and academic attainment of their children. This discussion is based on the research objectives of the study.

#### **4.1 Section A: Descriptive Statistics of mothers (women) (N=275)**

Descriptive statistics was primarily used to provide information on the distribution of research variables. In Section “A” of the analysis, frequencies were determined on the following categorical variables; ethnicity, religious identity, marital status, level of education and interval variables: respondents’ age-range.

In Section “B” of the analysis, frequencies were also determined on categorical variables such as occupation and interval variable such as income/ profit range of respondents.

#### 4.1.1 Background Characteristics of respondents

**Table 4.1a:** Frequency Table for Age range of Mothers

Age range of mothers	Frequency	Percentage
41-46	115	42
47-52	51	19
53-58	41	15
59-64	52	19
65 and above	16	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Author's field survey, 2013

The frequency Table 4.1a for age range indicates the age range of respondents. From the table it can be seen that respondents between the age range of 41-46 constituted the majority (115, 42%). This was followed by those who were in the age category of 59-64 years (n=52, 19%). Mothers who were 65-years or more were the least represented in the sample (n=16, 5%). The implication of this data is that, most women fell in the active age group. It presupposes that the majority of children whose academic attainment was analyzed in this work belong to mothers in the 41-46 age groups. That is to say, their mothers were in the middle age group.

**Table 4.1b:** Frequency Table for Income/profit level of respondents

Monthly profit /Salary range	Frequency	Percent
Below Gh¢ 250 a month	56	20
Gh¢ 251- Gh¢550	86	31
Gh¢551- Gh¢ 850	115	42
Gh¢851- Gh¢1100	15	6
Gh¢1101 and above	3	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Author's field survey, May 2013

Table 4.1b indicates the income level of respondents. Mothers who received income of below GhC 250 a month represented (n=56, 20%), those who earned between GhC 251-GhC550 represented (n= 86, 31%), those who earned GhC551- GhC 850 constituted (n=115, 42%), GhC851- GhC1100 indicates (n=15, 6 %) and GhC1101 and above represented (n=3, 1%). The descriptive here implies that, most of the women at Srodæ, Betom and Adweso received appreciable levels of income. They came from different economic backgrounds justifying the different degrees of academic attainment.

#### 4.1.2 Formal Education attained by mothers

**Table 4.1c:** Frequency Table for Formal Education of Respondents (Mothers)

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	210	76
No	65	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Author's field survey, May 2013

Table 4.1c indicates the response of the mothers (respondents) to the question if they had attained any formal education. (n= 210, 76%) of the mothers reported 'Yes' whilst (n=65, 24 %) reported no to the question of acquisition of formal education. The data presented implies that, majority of the respondents have had some level of education. It is explicit that, the women at Adweso, Betom and Srodæ have received appreciable level of formal education.



**Table 4.1d:** Frequency Table for Level of Education of mothers

Level of education	Frequency	Percentage
None	65	24
Primary education	41	15
J.H.S	79	29
Secondary/MSLC/O&A Level	57	20
Tertiary	33	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Author's field survey, May2013

Table 4.1d reported the respondent's level of education. Primary education (n=41, 15%), J.H.S (n=79, 29%), Secondary/MSLC/O&A level (n= 57, 20%) and Tertiary (n=33, 12%). The frequency distribution of formal education reveals that, mothers who had had education up to the J.H.S level were the majority. Some of them had acquired tertiary education. The implication is that, most of the women were in the position to read and write and could fairly answer the questions during the interview.

**Table4.1e:**Ethnic Background of Mothers

Ethnic Background	Frequency	Percentage
Akan	197	72
Ga	21	8
Dagomba	14	5
Nzema	3	1
Ewe	25	9
Frafra	4	1
Ga-Adamgbe	11	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Author's field survey, May 2013

Table 4.1e reports the ethnic background of respondents. Akans ( n= 197, 72%), Ga (n= 21, 8%), Dagomba (n= 14, 5%), Nzema (n=3,1%), Ewe (n= 25, 9%), Frafra (n=4, 1%) and Ga-Adamgbe (n=11, 4%). It could be inferred from Table 4.1 that, the selected areas are predominantly dominated by Akans even though the areas are generally occupied by different ethnic groups. It was not surprising to find out that the majority of mother respondents were Akan. This is because, the Eastern region is one of the five regions in the country which are dominated by the Akans in terms of population distribution.

**Table 4.1f:** Religious identification of Mothers

Religious Affiliation	Frequency	Percentage
Muslim	97	35
Christian	127	46
Free thinker	32	12
Traditionalist	19	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Author's field survey, 2013

Table 4.1f indicates the various religious affiliations of the mothers (respondents). Muslims (n= 97, 35%), Christians (n= 127, 46%), Free thinkers (n= 32, 12%) and traditionalist (n= 19, 7%). Majority of the mothers had both Christian and Islamic background.

## 4.2 Section B: SES of Mother and academic attainment of children

This section reports the use of chi-square test of independence to establish relationships between SES (economic status, occupation, mother's education and marital status) of mother and academic attainment of children.

### **Relationship between mother's education and academic attainment of children**

There will be a significant relationship between mother's education and educational attainment of children.

In order to determine if the results of the analysis support the first hypothesis, that is, the relationship between mother's education and educational attainment of children, a Chi-square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) was conducted to determine the relationship between women's education and children academic attainment. The Chi-square test of independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) was conducted because the hypothesis involved two variables which were measured at the nominal level and also because the variables each had two response categories.

The Chi-square test for independence (with Yates' Continuity Correction) analysis results as depicted in Table 4.2a indicates a statistically significant relationship between women's education and children's academic attainment,  $\chi^2(1, n=275) = 32.74$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ,  $\phi = 0.367$  and  $\alpha = 0.05$ . The *phi value* is the measure of the association between two binary variables.

Therefore, based on the results of the analysis conducted, the research hypothesis predicting a significant relationship between mother's education and academic attainment of children is supported. This means that, the proportion of women who reported to have had formal education also had children who had also attained formal education. The positive value of *phi* (+0.367) obtained affirms this direct relationship between the two variables. It can be concluded that, women's education influences the academic attainment of their children (Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 1997).

**Table 4.2a:** Relationship between women's education and academic attainment of child

Formal education of mother	Formal education of child		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	210 (76.4%)	0 (0%)	210 (76.4)
No	54 (19.6%)	11 (4.0)	65 (23,6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>264 (96.0)</b>	<b>11 (4.0)</b>	<b>275 (100)</b>
$\chi^2 = 32.7$ <p style="text-align: center;"><math>p\text{-value} = 0.000</math> (s)      <math>\phi = 0.367</math></p>			

Source: Author's field survey, May 2013

### Relationship between Mother's Occupation and Level of Education Attained by their Children

The occupation of a woman will significantly be related to the level of education attained by their children.

In determining if the results of the analysis support the second hypothesis, that is, the relationship between the occupation of women and academic attainment of the children, a Chi-square test for independence was conducted to determine the relationship between the occupation of women and the level of education attained by their children. The occupation of women was categorized into two broad variables; professional and non-professional. The professional included civil servant, public servants, business executive whilst the non-professional included farmers, traders, and housewives.

The Chi-square test for independence analysis results as depicted in Table 4.2b indicates a statistically significant relationship between occupation of women and academic attainment of the child.  $\chi^2(3, n=275) = 95.7$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$  and  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

Therefore, based on the results of the analysis conducted, the research hypothesis predicting a significant relationship between mother's occupation and academic attainment of children is supported. This means that, the occupation of women was significantly related to the academic attainment of their children. This result supports the idea that, professionals who are schooled will tend to educate their children to the highest level. Mostly in the world of work, business professionals tend to earn more income than non-professionals simply because of higher qualification, expertise and experience. From the analysis, this position of professionals shows a positive effect on children's academic attainment since it was found that the majority of professionals had their children in higher level of education. Maternal occupation generally has favorable effects on child outcomes (Vandell & Ramanan, 1992; Parcel & Menaghan, 1994; Hoffman & Youngblade, 1999).

**Table 4.2b:** Relationship between women's occupation and academic attainment of child

Occupation	Highest level of formal education of children					Total
	None	Primary	J.H.S	S.H.S	Tertiary	
Professional	11 (4.0)	43 (15.6%)	22 (8.0%)	89 (32.4%)	20 (7.3%)	185(67.3%)
Non professional	0 (0.0)	9 (3.3%)	9 (3.3%)	54 (19.6%)	18 (6.3%)	90(32.7%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>11 (4.0)</b>	<b>52 (18.9%)</b>	<b>98 (35.6%)</b>	<b>76 (27.6%)</b>	<b>38 (13.8%)</b>	<b>275 (100%)</b>

$\chi^2(1, n=275) = 95.7$        $p\text{-value} = 0.000$  (S)       $\alpha = 0.05$ .

Source: Author's field survey, May 2013

## **Relationship between economic status of mothers and academic attainment of children**

Women with high economic status will significantly have more children who have attained high level of education.

Three items measured this variable. The first item measured the salary/profit of the study participants while item two measured whether respondent was a homemaker or not. The third item measured participant's possession of the following items (motorbike/ bicycle, motorcar, computer, internet, mobile phone). The total score of these three items was taken as the measure of economic status. This was further categorized into three; low (total score of less than 5), average (total score of between five and seven) and high (a total score of between 8 and 10).

To determine if the results of the analysis support the third hypothesis, that is the relationship between economic status of mothers and academic attainment of children, a Chi-square test for independence was again conducted to determine the relationship between the economic status and the level of education attained by their children. The economic status of women was categorized into three; Low, Average and High.

The Chi-square test for independence analysis results as depicted in Table 4.2c indicates a statistically significant relationship between economic status of women and academic attainment of their children,  $\chi^2(8, n=275) = 85.97, p\text{-value} = 0.000, \text{gamma} = 0.54$  (strong relationship) and  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

Therefore, based on the results of the analysis conducted, the research hypothesis predicting a significant relationship between mother's economic status and academic

attainment of children is supported. This means that, the economic status of a woman has an effect on the level of education attained by their children.

**Table 4.2c:** Relationship between women's economic status and academic attainment of children

Economic status	The highest level of formal education of children					Total
	None	Primary	J.H.S	S.H.S	Tertiary	
Low	11 (4.0%)	6 (2.2%)	4 (1.5%)	10 (3.6%)	11 (4.0%)	42(15.3%)
Average	0 (0.0%)	6 (2.2%)	6 (2.2%)	28 (10.2%)	12 (4.3%)	52 (18.9%)
High	0 (0.0%)	40 (14.5%)	88(32.0%)	38(13.8%)	15 (5.5%)	181(65.8%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>11 (4.0%)</b>	<b>52 (18.9%)</b>	<b>98 (35.6%)</b>	<b>76 (27.6%)</b>	<b>38 (13.8%)</b>	<b>275 (100%)</b>
$\chi^2(8, n=275) = 85.97$ $p\text{-value} = 0.000 (S)$ $\text{Gamma} = 0.538$ $\alpha = 0.05$						

Source: Author's field survey, May 2013

### Relationship between marital status of women and academic attainment of children

Married women would significantly be more likely than unmarried to have children with high academic attainment.

To determine if the results of the analysis supports the fourth hypothesis, a Chi-square test for independence was conducted to determine the relationship between marital status of women sampled and the level of education attained by their children. The four categories of marital status of women measured (i.e. married, single, divorced/separated and courting) was collapsed into two categories (married and



unmarried) as the initial analysis of the chi-square test using the four categories indicated some cells with expected counts less than 5 which violated one of the chi-square test assumptions.

The Chi-square test for independence analysis results as depicted in Table 4.2d indicates a statistically significant relationship between marital status of women and academic attainment of children,  $\chi^2(4, n=275) = 55.80$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ,  $\alpha = 0.05$  with married women having more children ( $n=18$ ) with high (tertiary) academic attainment than children ( $n=10$ ) of the unmarried.

Therefore, based on the results of the analysis conducted, the fourth hypothesis of the study is supported. This means that, the marital status of a woman has an effect on the level of education attained by their children. The result of this chi-square test establishes that, married women tend to have children who attend higher education. This phenomenon could be attributable to many factors amongst which financial support, moral support from both parents in the marriage setting are a key factor. When partners stay together, the children derive a host of benefits of which support in their academics cannot be written off as Zill (1996) found that, students from nuclear intact families had the best academic performance, while students from alternative family types such as step parent families performed not so well.

**Table 4.2d:** Relationship between women's marital status and academic attainment of child

The highest level of formal education of children						
Marital status	None	Primary	J.H.S	S.H.S	Tertiary	Total
Married	0 (0.0%)	43 (15.6%)	90 (32.7%)	49 (17.8%)	18 (10.2%)	210(76.4%)
Unmarried	11 (4.0%)	9 (3.3%)	8 (2.9%)	27 (9.8%)	10 (3.6%)	65 (23.6%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>11 (4.0%)</b>	<b>52 (18.9%)</b>	<b>98 (35.6%)</b>	<b>76 (27.6%)</b>	<b>38 (13.8%)</b>	<b>275 (100%)</b>
$\chi^2(4, n=275) = 55.80$ <p style="text-align: center;"><i>p-value</i> = 0.000 (S)      <math>\alpha = 0.05</math>.</p>						

Source: Author's field survey, May 2013

A summary of results of the hypotheses is presented in Table 4.3

**Table 4.3:** Results Indicating Significance of Tested Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Significant	Not Significant
<b>H1</b> There will be a significant relationship between women's education and educational attainment of children.	0.000	-
<b>H2</b> The occupation of a woman will significantly be related to the level of education attained by their children.	0.000	-
<b>H3</b> Women with high economic status will significantly have more children who have attained high level of education.	0.000	-
<b>H4</b> Married women would significantly be more likely than unmarried to have children with high academic attainment.	0.000	-

Source: Author's field survey, May 2013

$\alpha = 0.05$

#### 4.4 Socio-economic determinants of Academic Attainment of Children

To determine which socio-economic variables of a mother has an effect on the academic attainment of their children; a direct logistic regression was performed to assess the impact of a number of factors on the academic attainment of children. The model contained four independent variables (educational attainment of mother, marital status, economic status and occupation). The full model containing all predictors was statistically significant,  $\chi^2(3, n=275) = 55.87, p < 0.05, \alpha = 0.05$ , indicating that the model was able to distinguish between mothers who reported and did not report having formal education. The model as a whole explained between 18.4% (Cox and Snell R square) and 64.4% (Nagelkerke R squared) of the variance in academic attainment of children, and correctly classified 96.0% of cases.

As shown in Table 4.4, none of the independent variables made a unique and statistically significant contribution to the model. This is because, the p-values are all greater than the (alpha)  $\alpha = 0.05$ . The strongest predictors of high academic attainment of children were occupational status and education of women. A detailed interpretation and analysis of the results on the various statistics in Table 4.4 is presented beneath the table.

**Table 4.4:** Logistic regression predicting likelihood of high academic attainment of Children (N=275)

Variable	B	Exp(B)	S.E.	Wald	P-value
<b>Occupation</b>					
Professional	1.981	3.49	0.66	0.12	0.08
Non Professionals (ref)	0	1	.	.	.
<b>Economic status</b>					
High	-1.366	0.255	0.68	1.6	0.53
Average	0.73	1.50	0.02	4.46	0.34
Low (ref)	0	1	.	.	.
<b>Marital status</b>					
Married	2.189	2.16	0.26	3.45	0.07
Unmarried (ref)	0	1	.	.	.
<b>Education</b>					
Educated	1.141	3.32	0.36	1.2	0.20
Non-educated (ref)	0	1	.	.	.
<b>Constant</b>	1.74	5.7	0.68	1.81	0.18
<b>Source:</b> Fieldwork, May, 2013					<b>* <math>p &lt; 0.05</math></b>

Table 4.4 depicts the results of the direct logistic regression conducted to identify the significant determinant of children's academic attainment. The beta values in the first column of Table 4.4 represent the co-efficients of the independent variables entered into the model. From the table, it can be seen that, marital status of women recorded the highest beta value (2.189), followed by occupation of a woman which recorded a beta value of 1.981, with the least value of beta recorded for education of mother. This indicates that, marital status is a stronger determinant of high academic attainment of children. An inspection of the beta (B) values reveal that the variables: occupation, marital status and education has a positive effect on children's' high academic attainment. The economic status of women on the contrary had a negative effect on the likelihood that children will attain high education.

The Wald values in the fourth column of Table 4.4 also indicate the contribution made by each of the independent variables to the model which predicts high academic attainment of children. From the table it can again be seen that marital status contributed most to model. This was followed by economic status of women (i.e. women with average economic status) (4.46) and education of women (1.2). Occupation of women made the least contribution to predicting high academic attainment of children.

The *P*-values in the table also indicate the significance of the variables in determining the academic attainment of children. From the table none of the predictors significantly contributed to the model (occupation:  $p = 0.08$ , economic status :  $p = 0.53$ , marital status:  $p = 0.07$  and education :  $p = 0.20$ ) as they were all greater than 0.05.

Table 4.4 also indicates the odds ratio for each of the independent variables. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), the odds ratio represents ‘the change in odds of being in one of the categories of outcome when the value of a predictor increases by one unit’ (p.461). From the table, it can be observed that, occupational status of women, recorded an odds ratio of 3.5 which is the highest. This indicates that mothers/women who had professional careers were over 3 times more likely to have children with high academic attainment than their counterparts who are non-professionals. The odds ratio of 3.32 for education indicates that, mothers who are educated are 3 times more likely to have children with high academic attainment than mothers who were not educated. The odds ratio of 2.2 for marital status also indicates that women who are married are 2 times more likely than those who are single to have children with high academic attainment. The odds ratio of 0.53 for economic status indicates that, women with high economic status are more likely than women with

average or low economic status to have children with high academic attainment. However, the difference between women who have high economic status and average economic status with respect to the educational attainment of their children is so small such that it can be concluded women with high economic status do not necessarily have children who are highly educated as it is evident in the negative co-efficient value obtained for economic status.

#### **4.4.1 Discussion of Research Objective1**

The first objective was to determine the relationship between women's education and academic attainment of their children. The results of the study revealed that, women's education influences the academic attainment of their children. The Chi-square test for independence (with Yates' Continuity Correction) analysis was used with ( $p=0.000$ ), ( $\phi = 0.367$ ). The above results raise several implications for public policy with respect to education and human services more generally.

This finding is consistent with other studies. For instance, (Swainson, as cited in Tanye, 2003) suggests that the mother's educational level has a direct influence on economic productivity and on the level of her daughter's education. In qualitative research on mothers who return to school, Kelly (1982) reports that children of these mothers showed increased interest in and commitment to their own schoolwork. In addition, positive spillovers might exist if education increased a mother's ability to help with homework, or made her more likely to read to her children. Also, Tracey and Young (2002) find that types of maternal interaction with children depend upon educational level. Mothers with high school education were more likely to correct their children's errors during oral reading, while college-educated mothers tended to

ask more high-level critical thinking questions. This was the case even though there were equal numbers of above- and below-average readers in each group. Compared to earlier research, for example by Hanushek (1992), found mother's education has a significant effect on pupils test scores.

Okumu et al (2008) in a study of Socioeconomic Determinants of Primary School Dropout found that High academic attainment of a mother and father significantly reduces chances of primary school drop out for both boys and girls in rural and urban areas with the aid of a logistic model analysis.

The study utilized data collected by Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) in 2004 for the National Service Delivery Survey (NSDS). The household survey questionnaire collected information on social-economic variables of households in relation to service delivery based on four regions of Uganda, namely Northern, Eastern, Central and Western Uganda using stratified sampling. The sample size was 17,681 household, covering all the regions of the country.

For a mother, this phenomenon could be attributed to the fact that educated mothers reduce the time spent doing household chores while increasing the time spend with their children than their uneducated counterparts. Also educated mothers are more effective in helping their children in academic work. In doing so, they are also able to monitor and supervise their children's academic progress.

#### **4.4.2 Discussion of Research Objective2**

The second objective of the study was to establish the relationship between occupation of women and academic attainment of their children. The occupation of women was categorized into two broad variables; professional and non-professional.



The professional included civil servant, public servants, business executive whilst the non-professional included farmers, traders and housewives. The results of the study showed that, there was a significant relationship between occupation of women and academic attainment of their children with ( $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ). This finding affirms the study conducted by Onzima (2011) who focused on both parents. The researcher used Tables, charts and Pearson's correlation to describe and analyze quantitative data while qualitative data was analyzed on the basis of themes. 92 candidates, the head teacher and one class teacher were interviewed. Onzima used purposive sampling to select the class. The results showed that there was a positive correlation between the parents' occupation with pupil's educational performance. Parents' occupation was significant at (0.757).

The researcher concluded that parent's low socioeconomic status impacted negatively on pupils' performance, through denying the children access to resources which are readily available to children from higher socioeconomic status. However, the sample Onzima used was small making it possible for possible errors. The use of purposive sampling could also be fraught with problems as there was not equal chance given for selection and may represent a partial picture of the responses.

Also, Coleman (1988) argues that the most significant negative effect of increasing female labor force participation is on the cognitive achievement of children of employed women. Ruhm (2004) provides empirical support for this proposition. A second set of studies finds that maternal employment neither affects the quality of the mother-child relationship, nor the academic achievement of children measured in test scores (Muller, 1995; Golberg, Greenberger, Nagel, 1996; Parcel, Nickoll, Dufur, 2000, McGroder et al., 2005). Still other scholars suggest that maternal employment

generally has favorable effects on child outcomes (Vandell & Ramanan, 1992; Parcel & Menaghan, 1994; Hoffman & Youngblade, 1999).

#### **4.4.3 Discussion of Research Objective3**

The third objective was to determine the relationship between economic status of women and the academic attainment of her children. A Chi-square test for independence was conducted to determine the relationship between the economic status and the level of education attained by their children. The economic status of women was categorized into three; Low, Average and High. The results indicated that, the relationship between economic status of women and the academic attainment of the child was statistically significant with ( $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ), ( $\gamma = 0.54$ ) (strong relationship).

The findings confirm the findings of other studies in the literature review. For example, Bliss (2004) is of the view that many students from low socioeconomic homes respond incomprehensively to classroom teaching because their home environment has not exposed them to the kinds of materials used in schools. If home environment is not intellectually stimulating, some students find it difficult to cope in school and may eventually dropout of school.

Health (1990) asserts that irrespective of national equality of opportunity, children of parents in higher socioeconomic status tend to achieve greater academically than children of parents from lower socioeconomic- status.

#### 4.4.4 Discussion of Research Objective 4

The fourth objective of the study was to determine the relationship between marital status of women and the level of education attained by their children. A Chi-square test for independence was conducted to determine the relationship between marital status of women sampled and the level of education attained by their children. The four categories of marital status of women measured (i.e. married, single, divorced and courting) was collapsed into two categories (married and unmarried) as the initial analysis of the chi-square test using the four categories indicated some cells with expected counts less than 5 which violated one of the chi-square test assumptions. The results of the study revealed statistically significant relationship between marital status of women and academic attainment of children with ( $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ). This corroborates results of some studies conducted by other researchers. For example, in a study by Alike and Ejona (2012), the relationship between broken homes and academic achievement of students were investigated. The statistical method used in analyzing the data was the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient ( $r$ ). Reliable and validated questionnaires which were designed to elicit information on the hypotheses of study were used. Six senior secondary schools were randomly selected for the study. One hundred and fifty respondents from single parent homes were used for the study. Twenty-five respondents were randomly selected from six schools. Results showed a significant relationship between broken homes and academic achievement of students.

#### 4.5 Summary

This finding lends support to the notion advanced by some studies that the social and the economic components of the socioeconomic status equation may have distinct and

separate influences on educational outcomes. While both components are important, social factors, such as women's educational attainments, have been found to be more significant than economic factors in explaining children's educational outcomes and among the most replicated results in child development studies (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000).

Over all, the consistent patterns in the analyses of the results of the study tend to reflect the findings of socio-economic status of women and academic attainment of their children from the extant literature.

The two theories which underpinned this study were the Cultural Capital theory by Pierre Bourdieu and the family system theory. The cultural capital theory was reflected in the results of this study as women who had acquired high academic attainments were likely to have children who had also acquired high academic attainments. Thus, according to the cultural capital theory, Parents provide their children with cultural capital by transmitting the attitudes and knowledge needed to succeed in the current educational system. Children from higher socioeconomic status have an advantage over other children that give them better educational success and consequently higher status in society. The role of women to their children's education was vividly seen from the results of the study which is also underpinned by the family system theory. According to the family system theory, the mother as a unit contributes to the well being of the other units particularly the children.

The next chapter summarizes, concludes and offers recommendation to the findings revealed by the study as well as offering insight into further areas of study.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **5.2.1 Introduction**

This chapter consisted of four sections. The first section dealt with the summary of the research findings, the second section gave a conclusion to the findings and the last section emphasised recommendations of the study and implications for further studies.

#### **5.2 Summary**

The study was an attempt to find the relationship between SES of women and its effects on the academic attainment of children. The specific objectives were to determine the relationship between women's education and academic attainment of their children, establish the relationship between occupation of women and academic attainment of their children, determine the relationship between economic status of women and the academic attainment her children and determine the relationship between marital status of women and the level of education attained by their children. The researcher also hypothesized that, all the four independent variables were significantly related to child academic attainment.

The relationship established proved that, women education, occupation, economic status and marital status were of significant relationship with the academic attainment of children. Although the independent variables proved to be significant in terms of their relationship with the academic attainment of children, when the direct logistic regression was run, none of the independent variables made a unique statistically significant contribution to the model.

The strongest predictor of academic attainment of children was occupational status of women, recording an odds ratio of 3.5. This indicated that mothers/women who had professional careers were over 3 times more likely to have children with high academic attainment than their counterparts who were non-professionals, controlling for all other factors in the model. The odds ratio of 3.3 for mother's education indicates that, mothers who were educated were 3 times more likely to have children with high academic attainment than mothers who were not educated. The odds ratio of 2.2 for marital status also indicates that women who are married are 2 times more likely than those who are single to have children with high level of academic attainment, controlling for other factors in the model. Most previous studies of the effects of family circumstances on children's academic attainment have been narrowly focused. This study follows a different tradition taking a divergent turn from family circumstances to revealing the effects that come from the mother's SES which is most typical of Africa and for that matter Ghana.

### **5.2.2 Conclusion**

Although there is a vast literature on the relationship between family socioeconomic status and the academic attainment of children, greater attention have not been given to the SES (marital status, occupation, economic status and education) of women and how they affect the academic outcomes of the child/children independent of other factors in the context of Africa and Ghana where the contribution of women are grandiose. This is not to divorce other factors that contribute to the academic attainment of children from the SES of women but to come out with an empirical finding on how women influence the academic attainment of their children. Many



studies have looked at performance in the classroom and the mediating effects from the school environment, peers, quality teachers and what have you but this studies sought to establish how the socioeconomic status of women tend to influence the academic attainment of their children. The results of the study established that, women education, occupation, economic status and marital status were of significant relationship with the academic attainment of children. Although the independent variables proved to be significant in terms of their relationship with the academic attainment of children, when the direct logistic regression was run, none of the independent variables made a unique statistically significant contribution to the model.

It could be said that, women occupation, marital status, women education and economic status of women are significantly related to child academic attainment though none of these independent variables uniquely and statistically predicted child academic attainment. However, it is explicit that there may be other variables that could also predict the academic attainment of the child. For example, the fact that a woman has a high economic status does not necessarily mean that, the child will automatically have high academic attainment, hence the need for further studies in this area.

### **5.2.3 Recommendation**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are hereby proffered. The main policy prescriptions of this study are that;

The findings of study have revealed that, women who are married tend to have children who have attained high academic attainment. The researcher recommends



that, the Social Work Agencies in Ghana organize periodic programs for couples aimed at curbing divorce knowing very well that intact families offer numerous benefits to children in their schooling.

This study also showed that, women are mostly instrumental in the academic attainment of children. The mother's education is influential to some extent on the children's academic attainment. The researcher recommends that, women groups in Ghana such as Ghanaian Women's Social Leadership Program (GWSLP), Ghana International Women's Club (GIWC) should all add their voice to emphasizing women education and for that matter, female education in their programs taking a cue from this study.

It was also realized from the study that, occupations of women was significantly related to child academic attainment. Women are to be encouraged despite their occupations to give their support to their children in terms of schooling.

The study also found out that, economic status of women had a significant relationship to the academic attainment of the children. Government should therefore pay particular attention to women and how they could be resuscitated financially through the numerous women groups in Ghana though the high economic status of some women did not really mean that they automatically had children with high academic attainment.

#### **5.2.4 Implications for future research**

This study does not serve as the end to establishing relationships between mother's SES and academic attainment of children. Further studies could investigate into the reasons culminating in the level of education of the child of such mothers. A

qualitative study involving interviews could be conducted to complement the quantitative method employed in these studies to probe more into issues such as how ethnicity of a parent would for example influence the academic attainment of the children. Are there boundaries on ethnic lines, religious lines, thus preventing or promoting higher academic attainment? These and other questions could be answered in further studies involving children academic attainment in the context of Africa and Ghana precisely.



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## APPENDIX A

### **A structured interview guide on Socio-economic status of women and its effect on the academic attainment of their children**

I am a final year postgraduate student at the Department of Sociology and Social Work writing my thesis on women education and academic attainment of their children. The work is for academic purpose only and I assure you that any information you give would be kept confidential and would not be disclosed to unauthorized individuals and agencies.

The structured interview guide is divided into three main sections. **Section A** involves the background characteristics of the mother, **Section B** involves the SES of women and **Section C** comprises the academic attainment of the child.

#### **SECTION A**

##### **BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS OF MOTHER**

1. My age range is    a. 41-46 (   )   b. 47- 52 (   )   c. 53- 58 (   )   d. 59-64 (   ) e. 65 and above (   )
2. Have you had any formal education?   a. Yes (   )   b. No (   )
3. If yes, what is the level of your education?  
a. primary (   )   b. J.H.S (   )   c. Secondary / Middle School leaving Certificate/ 'O' level/ 'A level (   )   d. Tertiary (   )
4. Marital Status  
a. married (   )   b. divorced / separated (   )   c. widowed (   ) d. courting (   )
5. Ethnicity  
a. Akan (   )   b. Ga (   )   c. Dagomba (   )   d. Nzema (   )   e. Ewe (   ) f. Frafra (   ) g. Other, specify.....
6. Religion  
I am   a. Muslim (   )   b. Christian (   )   c. free thinker (   )   d. Traditional African Religion (   )

#### **SECTION B: SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS OF MOTHER**

##### **SOCIAL STATUS**

7. How many children do you have?

a. 1 ( ) b. 2-5 ( ) c. 6-10 d. 11 and above ( )

8. I am living in a

a. compound house ( ) b. Self-contained house ( ) c. Residential area ( ) .  
Other, specify.....

9. Who owns the dwelling? a. Owned by household head ( ) b. Parent/Individual ( )  
c. Public/Government ownership ( )

## **ECONOMICSTATUS**

10.Occupation

a. Trader ( ) b. Civil servant ( ) c. Farmer ( ) d. Business executive ( )  
e. Public servant ( ) f. Other, specify.....

11. My salary range/monthly profit is.....

a. below Gh C250 a month( ) b. GhC251- GhC550 ( ) c. GhC 551- GhC850 ( )  
d. GhC 851- GhC1100 ( ) e. GhC1101 and above

12. Are you the breadwinner of the family? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

13. Do you have any of the following:

- |                       |       |        |
|-----------------------|-------|--------|
| i. Bicycle/ motorbike | 1. No | 2. Yes |
| ii. Motorcar          | 1. No | 2. Yes |
| iii. Computer         | 1. No | 2. Yes |
| iv. Internet          | 1. No | 2. Yes |
| v. Mobile phone       | 1. No | 2. Yes |

## **SECTION C: ACADEMIC ATTAINMENT OF CHILD/CHILDREN**

14. Has your children ever had any form of formal education?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

15. If yes to question 14, what is the highest level of formal education of your children?

a. Primary ( ) b. J.H.S ( ) c. S.H.S/MSLC/O&A Level ( ) d. Tertiary ( )

16. What is the gender of your child with the highest level of education?

(a) Male ( ) (b) female ( )

17. Kindly explain why this is so

.....  
.....  
.....

18. What is/was the status of the last school your ward attended? a. Public school ( )  
b. Private ( )

19. How will you rate your husband/partners contribution towards your children's education?

(a).Very significant( ) (b) significant ( ) (c) less significant ( ) d. Not significant ( )

20. What is/was the educational level of your husband/partner?

a. primary ( ) b. J.H.S ( ) c. Secondary / Middle School leaving Certificate/ 'O' level/ 'A level ( ) d. Tertiary ( )

### **Mother's Involvement With The Child/Children's Education**

21. .Who paid/pays the child's school fees?

a. myself ( ) b. My husband ( ) c. Relatives ( ) d. Other, specify.....

22. Who catered for extra classes for the child?

a. myself ( ) b. My husband ( ) c. Relatives ( ) d. Other, specify.....

23. Which other factors influenced/influences your children's education? Please tick as many as is applied to you.

- a) area of residence ( )
- b) culture ( )
- c) father's assistance ( )
- d) influence from friends ( )
- e) paternal absence ( )
- f) gender of the child ( )

**Thank You for your cooperation!**

**APPENDIX B**

**KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK**

**Consent form**

Dear respondent,

The purpose of this study is to find out the effects of socioeconomic status of women on the academic attainment of their children. Please read the following instructions.

- You are not expected to write your name, contact or any personal information during this exercise.
- Your responses will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous.
- You may decide to withdraw your participation in this exercise at any time you want to do so.
- You are at liberty to answer questions you only feel comfortable with.
- This is not an examination; there is no right or wrong answer and that is why you are encouraged to answer all questions.

The exercise will take about 10 minutes.

Please sign below to indicate that, you have read the instructions and agree to participate in this survey.

Signature.....

Date.....