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Article

Academic Achievement of Low- Social-Economic-Status (SES) of Junior High School Students

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Abstract: The purpose of the study was to assess Academic achievement of Low- Social-Economic-Status (SES) of Junior High School Students in Ghana. The study employed a descriptive, cross-sectional survey design. The population for the study comprised all JHS students and teachers in the Aboom Circuit of the Cape Coast Metropolis. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling table, Purposive and randomly sampling techniques were used to select schools, teachers and students for the study. The sample frame for the study was all students and teachers in the five selected JHS of the Aboom Circuit of the Cape Coast Metropolis. The sample size for the study was 350 for students and 30 for teachers. The main instrument for data collection for the study as questionnaire. Research question was analysed using mean and standard deviation; hypothesis was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The study revealed that continued, consistent and persistent presence of these student-related factors such as hunger, lack of self-motivation, poor study habit, watching TV, laziness, and students' truancy or absenteeism negatively affect students' academic achievement. The results of the study also indicated that there was a moderate, negative correlation between student-related factors and students' academic achievement with high levels of perceived student-related factors with low levels of students' academic achievement. It is recommended that, the role of guidance and counseling session in schools is to assists students to be focused on their studies. Therefore, guidance and counseling sessions in various schools should be effectively organised to prevent students' truancy. It is also recommended that School administrators in partnership with PTA leadership and NGOs should educate students on the relevance of education and give social support to students from low socio-economic backgrounds and motivate them in their studies.

Keywords: Students, Low, Academic Achievement, Statues

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1. Introduction

Students are the key assets of every school and schools have no worth without students. The social and economic development of the country is directly linked with students' academic achievement. The students' academic achievement plays an important role in producing the best quality graduates who will become great leaders and constitute the manpower for the country, or become responsible for the country's economic and

social development [1, 2]. High education achievement depends upon the academic achievement of students measured. The measurement of students' previous educational outcomes is the most important indicators of students' future achievement. That is, the higher the previous achievement, the better will the student's academic achievement in future endeavors be [3]. In Ghana, the academic achievement of students who go through basic education is assessed through Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). Unfortunately, the BECE results have been disappointing with high numbers of failures every year. For example, from 2008 to 2011, the BECE pass rates had drastically declined from 62.18% in 2008, 50.21% in 2009, 49.12% in 2010 and 46.93% in 2011. This buttresses the fact that poor achievement in BECE is a problem which needs to be tackled. Over the past decade, a total of 1,562,270 (representing about 42.6%) students have failed their BECE out of a total number of 3,669,138 [4].

In 2014, Ghana Education Service announced that over 182,000 students who failed one or more core subjects in BECE were not placed in any senior high school by the Computerized School Selection System and as a result, the GES was giving a second chance to candidates who could not get placement into second cycle institutions. According to the General Resume of the WAEC Chief Examiners Report on the standard of papers for the April 2015 BECE examinations, in Integrated Science, some candidates' inability to apply scientific knowledge to physical phenomenon was evident. Again, according to the Chief Examiner's Report for Mathematics and Integrated Science, it was observed that some candidates were unable to write figures in standard form [5]. Students' achievement is considered a vital indicator of good schooling; so the poor achievement of pupils at the basic level of education has not only led to public outcry, but also educationists have been increasingly occupied in their attempt to identify factors that influence pupils' achievement especially in the BECE in Ghana [2].

From the literature, it is seen that student's achievement is affected by social, psychological, economic, environmental and personal factors. These factors strongly influence student achievement, but they vary from person to person and country to country [6]. Many researchers have discussed the different factors that affect the student academic achievement in their research [1, 7] There are two types of factors that affect the students' academic achievement. These are internal and external classroom factors. Internal classroom factors include students' competence, class schedules, class size, text books, class test results, learning facilities, homework, environment of the class, complexity of the course material, teachers' role in the class, and technology used in the class and exams systems [8, 9]. External classroom factors include extracurricular activities, family problems, work and financial problems, social problems among others [8, 9].

Studies have shown that students' achievement depends on many factors such as learning facilities, gender and age differences and so on that can affect student achievement [10]. The most important factor with positive effect on students' achievement is parental involvement. It is important for us to know that the findings of these studies varies from region to region and their results differ in cities and rural areas [11]. A study on socio-economic status of the parents of students and concluded that the socio-economic background has a great impact on student's academic achievement. It has been a main source of educational imbalance among students and students' academic success [12]. A study on the influence of social and economic disadvantage on the academic achievement of school students, noticed that parents or guardians who have social, educational and economic advantage definitely strengthen the level of their child's success in future [13]. Even in families with above average income, parents often lack the time and energy to invest fully in their children's preparation for school, and they sometimes face a limited array of options for high-quality child care both before their children start school and during the early school years [14].

Families with often lack the financial, social, and educational supports that characterize families with high socio-economic status. Poor families also may have inadequate or limited access to community resources that promote and support children's development and school readiness [15]. Parents may have inadequate skills for such activities as reading to and with their children, and they may lack information about childhood immunizations and nutrition [15]. Having inadequate resources and limited access to available resources can negatively affect families' decisions regarding their young children's development and learning. As a result, children from families with are at greater risk of entering kindergarten unprepared than their peers from families with median or high socio-economic status [16]. A student who is successful in his/her desired career has good study habits. In line with this, she stated that students should apply these habits in all their lessons. She also suggested that students should not try to study all the subjects in a single period [17]. Several studies found that increased frequency of activities were associated with higher levels of child misbehavior in the classroom [18, 19]. A study significantly accentuated the importance of having qualified teachers in the field of teaching, and found that the success of any programme is conditioned by the ability of the teacher to teach. He further found that if there is failure at this point, the whole structure fails. Hence, the implementation, selection, preparation, and supervision of education will be affected [20]. Moreover, good teachers are continually on the watchful for methods and instructional materials that will make learning meaningful. With the wise selection and use of a variety of instructional materials or audio-visual materials, experiences may be provided to develop understanding [21].

From these findings, we can deduce that the factors affecting a student's academic achievement arise from several reasons. In Ghana, the socio-economic status (henceforth, SES) of a family is usually linked with the family's income, parents' educational level, parents' occupation and social status [22]. A study followed this logic while examining parental influences on students' school achievement, by focusing on specific socio-demographic factors, including parents' level of education, marital status and family income. It is generally believed that children from high and middle SES parents are better exposed to a learning environment at home because of provision and availability of extra learning facilities. But does the affirmed impact of low SES of the parents really account for students' low academic achievement? Socio-demographic variables do not fully account for the academic successes or failures of minority students [23]. Despite the severe threats and challenging obstacles inherent in low-SES, and/or low parental educational attainment, and other possible unforeseen obstacles, some of these students record remarkable successes in their education. The current study sought to examine factors that contribute to the academic low-SES students in the Aboom Circuit.

A study of the BECE results of the schools from 2009 to 2015 buttresses this observation. In 2009, only 50.21% of the candidates passed their core subjects (Mathematics, English and Integrated Science). In 2010 and 2011, only 49.12% and 46.93% respectively of the students passed. The Chief Examiner's Report revealed that the standard of the candidates' achievement was diverse. Candidates' achievement in Mathematics, English, Social Studies, French, and Religious and Moral Education was considered as average. Their achievement in Fante was described as poor. The standard of achievement in Integrated Science was reported to be below that of the previous year's [15]. According to the Chief Examiner's Report, about 437,942 candidates took the exams, with 229,651 being males and 208,291 females, and the results of 6,812 candidates, had been withheld pending the conclusion of investigations into alleged examination malpractices. Again, in 2016, the Chief Examiner's Report revealed that the entire results of candidates from 321 schools have been withheld for alleged examinations irregularities and that 188 students had some of the results cancelled while 22 candidates had their entire results cancelled owing to examination malpractices [5, 24]. In 2017, statistics on academic achievement of students in the Aboom circuit recorded a pass of 42.0% [25]. The

statistics indicate a decline in students' achievement. This implies that school-related factors such as school time schedule, resources, school climate, guidance and counselling, school-parents' relationship that contribute to students' academic achievement if not properly instituted affect students academically [26].

The pertinent questions to address, therefore, are: what is the cause of this poor academic achievement of students? Is the fault entirely that of teachers or students or both of them? A considerable number of studies [27] have shown repeatedly that low-SES is linked to a range of indicators of child and adolescent well-being, including students' academic achievement and student family background is widely recognised as the most significant important contributor to success in schools [27]. Lower income children have less stable families, greater exposure to environmental toxins and violence, and more limited extra-familial social support networks, which collectively leads to low academic achievement [28]. However, there are some students of low-SES who are able to achieve high academic achievement against all odds. Several studies have identified individual effort as a factor that enhances higher academic achievement among students of a low-SES background [1, 29]. At its face-value, observations in the Aboom Circuit appear to align with this information regarding the resiliency of children despite their low-SES status. Unfortunately, it appears not much have been done in terms of scientific research to ascertain the factors responsible for such academic success. This study therefore sought to examine the factors responsible for academic achievement of students of Low-SES in the Aboom circuit. The study was guided by a research question and hypothesis - what are the student-related factors that contribute to the academic achievement of low-SES JHS students in the Aboom Circuit? H_0: There is no significant correlation between student-related factors and academic achievement of low-SES JHS students in the Aboom Circuit.

Student-Related Factors and Academic Achievement

Several pupils' characteristics have generally been identified as influences on their academic achievement. These include time with books and homework, attendance in school, pupils' attitude towards schooling, pupils' self-concept and motivation, intelligence, student competence, study habit, students' anxiety health and nutritional status of pupils. The most important factor with positive effect on students' achievement is student's competence in English. If the students have strong communication skills and have a strong grip on English, it increases the achievement of the students [11]. The achievement of the student is affected by communication skills; it is possible to see communication as a variable which may be positively related to achievement of the student in open learning. A major distinction of this study from previous studies is that it focuses on open learning [30]. Students' academic achievement largely depends on motivation, study habits, anxiety, adjustment, responsibility and interaction between teachers/students [31].

Poor academic achievement might result from irregular class attendance, lack of preparation before class, lack of class attention, lack of revision after class, and lack of class participation [32]. Regarding interaction between instructors /students, it was found that interaction between instructors /students was positively related to academic achievement of students [33]. The interaction between instructors /students held a positive relation to students' academic achievement with the statistical significance at the level of .001, and the academic achievement could be predicted with the interaction between instructors /students significantly at .001 [34]. Different researchers found positive and significant relationship between achievement motivation and academic achievement of the students. Researchers have also found a positive relationship between motivation and academic achievement of the students is the product of good home environment and parental encouragement [35, 36].

Moreover, regardless of intelligence, students who spend more time on assignments and homework are very important activities to improve their grades. The amount of time students invests in homework's and other related activities have also been found to be strongly related to motivation [37]. Homework to be a correlate of academic achievement. He stated that homework bore a positive relationship with learning outcomes when it is relevant to learning objectives, assigned regularly in reasonable amounts, well explained, motivational and collected and reviewed during class time and used as an occasion for feedback to students [9]. For him, homework is in reality, an interaction between school and the home, and an essential ingredient of the educational process when measuring academic achievement [38]. Also, a study conducted an analysis by assessing the impact of the pupils' initial characteristics (gender, ethnicity, parental education, geographic region and age) and the academic achievement. They found that the students' initial characteristics have a modest impact on their academic achievement and among them parental education is the most significant. In addition, school attendance has a high correlation with individual academic achievement. The success of a pupil in school is predicated on regular school attendance [39].

Poor attendance such as truancy or unexcused absence from school, cutting classes, tardiness, and leaving school without permission are seen as important in determining pupils' academics [40]. There is a negative relationship between student academic achievement and work during school hours [41]. Additional working hours decrease a child's reading and computational ability, whereas with additional hours of school attendance and study, the reading and computational ability increases [42]. A study concluded that time spent at work had negative impact on education variables with marginal impact weakening at higher levels of study hours and an unbalanced demand of work and education places a physical and mental strain on students and often leads to poor academic achievement. A research investigated the significant role of pupil attitudes towards learning with regard to their academic achievement. Pupils' attitudes such as absenteeism, truancy, indiscipline, etc can affect their achievement. The study found that, by distinguishing between the attitudes of high and low achievers, five attitudinal factors were significantly related to academic achievement. Pupils' attitudes may therefore not only affect academic achievement directly, but also, it may indirectly influence the effect of other factors as well [44]. Another study, found out that the effect of attitudes on student level of aspiration. Despite the difference between the findings of these two studies, the authors achieved consensus regarding the significance of attitudes in predicting achievements [45]. A similar study further complemented the results of earlier studies, with the former proving that the pupil's initial attitude towards school was significantly related to academic achievement, while the latter found that attitudes predicted the pupil's basic approach to learning [46].

Among one of the personal variables most studied is self-concept, which concerns the group of thoughts and beliefs that a pupil has about his/her academic ability. Self-concept results from the pupil's internalisation of his social image. It is developed from different interactions with the social environments and agents. Great importance is assigned the pupils' self-image and the acceptance or rejection by others [47]. A research on "*The Impact of Social Self-Concept on the Academic Performance of Teacher-Trainees in Ghana*" published in Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities revealed that academic and social self-concepts of teacher trainees are related to their academic performance positively. This means, teacher trainees' ability to develop positive relationship with their peers, teachers, parents and others, and also developing positive feeling about their academic ability help in enhancing their academic performance significantly [48]. Contrary to these results, another study found that elementary school achievement did not affect prior self-concept [49]. Self-concept better predicts achievement than variables such as age or student gender. Another personal variable most studied is motivation. Motivation is considered to be the element that initiates the pupil's own involvement in

learning [50]. When a student is strongly motivated, all his efforts and attention are directed towards the achievement of a specific goal, thus bringing to bear all his or her resources [47].

In relation, students' academic achievement motivation is influenced by the students' perception of parental support and involvement. If students' perception is positive on their parents' support and involvement, they will achieve well [51]. Parental motivational practices have significant direct effects on academic intrinsic motivation, and indirect effects on subsequent motivation and achievement [52]. Students' perceptions that their parents are involved and interested in their schooling and that they encourage them to do well are positively related to academic achievement [37]. Through their involvement, parents convey the message that school is important and provide their children with positive emotional experiences in relation to school. Students performed significantly worse in Reading, Mathematics and Science in schools whose principals reported that learning was strongly hindered by the lack of parental support. However, some researches have shown most aspects of the relationship between educational support of parents and scholastic achievement of children to be negative [53]. Other studies have looked at children's nutritional and health status on school indicators such as classroom concentration, general intelligence and achievement on selected cognitive tasks including achievement test scores [54]. Research by the Ghana National Commission on Children ([GNCC], found that in total, a little over 16 per cent of school-aged children surveyed, suffered recurring health problems such as headache, malaria/fever, stomach disorder and other ailments [55]. A study on malnutrition among school age children in Ghana and found that about 36 per cent of children surveyed were malnourished. Most weighed below the 80 percent Harvard weight-for-age standard [56]. The GNCC survey (2000) also reported that only about a third (29%) of children ate meals with protein [55]. The research indicates that in general, malnutrition is higher in Northern Ghana, where socio-economic indicators are low. In these regions, enrolment, attendance, completion rates and achievement tend to be lower [56].

Health has the potential to affect access to schooling. Research indicates a child's health can be influenced when and whether they go to school, their functioning in school and how long they are expected to stay in school. Research in Ghana indicates a correlation between malnutrition, stunted growth and delayed enrolment in school [57]. A child's health status affects how the child functions at school. Children who suffer malnutrition, hunger, or those who lack certain micronutrients do not have the same potential for learning as healthy and well-nourished children [54]. A research found out that there is a statistically significant relationship between health and nutritional indicators and academic achievement. They concluded that the influence of poor health and nutritional status on achievement begins early in a child's life and have cumulative impact on pupil's achievement [58]. Although the mechanisms by which malnutrition affects academic achievement are not known, deficiencies in proteins, calories and micronutrients are believed to impair cognitive development [59]. There are three aspects of nutritional status that affect academic achievement adversely: temporary hunger, micronutrient deprivation and protein-energy malnutrition [60].

2. Materials and Methods

The study employed a descriptive, cross-sectional survey design. The descriptive method was used to identify and describe the factors that affect the academic achievement of pupils of low-SES. A cross-sectional research describes an existing relationship between variables [61]. In this regard, the descriptive and the cross-sectional survey design was considered appropriate as a means of achieving the main objective of the study which w as to establish the factors contributing to the high academic achievements of students in the Aboom Circuit of the Cape Coast Metropolis.

The population for the study comprised all JHS students and teachers in the Aboom Circuit of the Cape Coast Metropolis. Records from the Ghana Education Service (GES) indicated that there are 10 JHS in the circuit (Cape Coast Metropolitan Education Directorate [CCMED], 2015). The accessible population, however, comprised all JHS students and teachers from the five selected schools in the Aboom Circuit namely: St Nicholas, St. Monica, Aboom Methodist B, Aboom Zion A and Aboom Zion C. The total population of the students and teachers from the five selected schools were 859 and 30 respectively, according Cape Coast Metropolitan Education Directorate [CCMED]. This population was chosen for the study because it was a mixed school population and was easy to access in terms of proximity and transportation to make the collection of data easy to the researcher. Also, the necessary character traits of the behaviour and attitude and all the components of a complete community could easily be found in these school settings. Krejcie and Morgan sampling table, Purposive and randomly sampling techniques were used to select schools, teachers and students for the study. The sample frame for the study was all students and teachers in the five selected JHS of the Aboom Circuit of the Cape Coast Metropolis. The sample size for the study was 350 for students and 30 for teachers. The sample size for students from the five selected schools was determined by using Krejcie and Morgan sampling table [63]. Two sets of self-developed questionnaires were used in the data collection. The questionnaires were designed for both school teachers and students and they related to factors which might be affecting students' academic achievement in the school. The copies of the questionnaire returned were collected and checked for completeness and accuracy. The data were entered in a pre-designed template in the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software, version 21. The data were analysed using descriptive (frequency and percentages, mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (correlation, multiple regression).

3. Results and Discussion

This section presents results and discussion on a research question and hypothesis - what are the student-related factors that contribute to the academic achievement of low-SES JHS students in the Aboom Circuit? H_0: There is no significant correlation between student-related factors and academic achievement of low-SES JHS students in the Aboom Circuit. The main objective of this study was to examine the views of teachers and students concerning student-personal-related factors that contribute to academic achievement of low-SES JHS students. On a four-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree), both teachers and students were asked to indicate their levels of agreement or disagreement with statements posed by the researcher on students-related factors. The result was discussed using means and standard deviation. *A mean of 2.50 and above indicates respondents' agreement with the factors while a mean of 2.49 and below indicates respondents' disagreement with the factors*. The results are presented in Table 1.

From Table 1, pertaining to respondents' view on students' related factors that contribute to students' academic achievement, it was observed that both teachers and students had varied concerns. Most teachers agreed to some statements as factors contributing to students' academic achievement while the students disagreed to those factors. For example, the majority of the teachers indicated (M=2.77; SD=0.90) that the students only studied when there was a class test or an exercise while the students disagreed (M=1.93; SD=1.08) to the same statement. This result means that the teachers believed that most students had poor studying habit while the students believed they always learned. It is important for us to know that students' studying habit is a significant factor that contributes to students' academic achievement. When students have positive studying habits, their academic achievement meaningfully and positive get improved and vice versa.

To the statement, "The students listen to radio/watch TV when they are learning at home", it was found that the majority of the teachers strongly agreed (M=2.80; SD=0.86) to the statement while the majority of the students strongly disagreed and refuted (M=1.73; SD=1.13) the statement (see Table 1). To the teachers, they agreed that the media (TV, radio) is a factor that affects students' academic achievement while the students disagreed. It is of essence to establish the fact that most 21st century students in Ghana watch TV and listen to radio. These students are attracted and engrossed by the movie shows on the media. Some students watch movies deep into the night and most of them end up not studying or revising their notes. This practice could negatively affect students' academic achievement (Table 1).

Table 1. Student-Related Factors that Contribute to the Students' Academic Achievement

Statements	Teachers (n=30)		Students (N=347)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
The students sometimes feel sleepy in the classroom	2.67	0.97	2.64	0.83
The students sometimes feel hungry in the class	2.77	0.90	2.71	0.78
The students find it difficult to see clearly on the boards and to hear the teachers	2.10	1.19	1.77	1.11
The students only study when there is a class test or an exercise	2.77	0.90	1.93	1.08
The students listen to radio/watch TV when they are learning at home	2.80	0.86	1.73	1.13
The students sometimes feel lazy, tired, or bored to study	2.57	0.97	2.75	0.71
The students are sometimes disturbed by their friends when they (the students) are learning	2.56	0.99	3.05	0.69
The students sometimes copy their assignments and homework from their friends	2.90	0.77	1.44	1.21
Sometimes, the students are involved in school activity	3.03	0.67	3.01	0.65
The students sometimes lack self-motivation to perform well in school	2.80	0.86	3.60	0.54
The students always absent themselves from the school or come to class late	3.17	0.59	3.27	0.63
Mean of Means/SD	2.74	0.88	2.54	0.85

As shown in Table 1, it was observed that the majority of the teachers strongly indicated (M=2.90; SD=0.77) that most of the students sometimes copied their assignments and homework from their friends while the majority of the students strongly disagreed (M=1.44; SD=1.21) with the statement that they copied their assignments and homework from their colleagues. This result suggests that both teachers and students had varied perspective of the statement. Likewise, both teachers (M=2.67; SD=0.97) and students (M=2.64; SD=0.83) agreed to the statement that most of the students sometimes felt sleepy in the classroom. In the same way, to the statement, "The students sometimes feel hungry in the class" it was realised that both teachers (M=2.77; SD=0.90) and students (M=2.71; SD=0.78) agreed to the statement. These results suggest that most students might not be having sufficient money for school as a result of these of their parents. This hunger would make students feel asleep in the classroom while the teachers are teaching. This hunger condition would significantly affect students' academic achievement negatively because the student's zeal and motivation to learn or study would be affected.

It was observed that both the teachers (M=2.10; SD=1.19) and students (M=1.77; SD=1.11) strongly disagreed with the statement that, "The students found it difficult to

see clearly on the boards and to hear the teachers". This result suggests that most students in the schools see clearly from the blackboard during instructional process and it is believed that students might almost get every concept from the classroom right. From Table 1, it was found that both teachers (M=2.57; SD=0.97) and students (M=2.75; SD=0.71) again agreed to the statement that, "The students sometimes feel lazy, tired, and bored to study". Congruently, to the statement, "The students sometimes lack self-motivation to perform well in school", it was found that both teachers (M=2.80; SD=0.86) and students (M=3.60; SD=0.54) agreed that lack of students' motivation is a significant factor that contributes to students' negative academic achievement. Students' self-motivation is considered to be students' intrinsic motivation and students' intrinsic motivation is revealed to be a significant factor that influences and determines students' academic achievement. Students' intrinsic motivation is usually influenced by students' self-concept, self-esteem and self-efficacy.

From Table 1, concerning the statement, "The students are sometimes disturbed by their friends when they (the students) are learning" it was noted that both teachers (M=2.56; SD=0.99) and students (M=3.05; SD=0.69) strongly agreed to the statement. This result infers that most of the students were disturbed by the colleagues during the course of learning. This could be associated with peer pressure which is a significant factor that contributes to students' academic achievement. Harmoniously, to the statement, "Sometimes, the students are involved in school activity", it was found that both teachers and students agreed with the statements. This was evident by the mean score of (M=3.03; SD=0.67) for teachers and (M=3.01; SD=0.65) for students. Respectively, the majority of the teachers (M=3.17; SD=0.59) and students (M=3.27; SD=0.63) revealed that most of the students always absented themselves from the school or came to class late. This could be said to relate to student truancy and absenteeism, and student truancy or absenteeism is seen as a major factor considered to affecting students' academic achievement. From these results, it is concluded that on the average, both teachers (MM=2.74; SD=0.88) and students (MM=2.54; SD=2.54; SD=0.85) agreed to the statements concerning student-related factors that contribute to academic achievement. This result means that most of the teachers and students believed that continued, consistent and persistent presence of these student-related factors such as hunger, lack of self-motivation, poor study habit, watching TV, laziness, and students' truancy or absenteeism would negatively affect students' academic achievement.

Several researchers have investigated the significant role of students' attitudes towards learning with regard to their academic achievement. Students' attitudes such as absenteeism, truancy, indiscipline, and so on have been found to affect students'' academic achievement as revealed by the current study. Pupils' attitudes may not only directly affect academic achievement, but also may indirectly influence the effects of other factors as well. The results are incongruence with the findings of Abu-Hilal (2000) that attitudes affect students' level of aspiration. The results also collaborated with the findings of another study that students' study habits was a factor used in predicting academic achievement. Paying attention in class was positively related to academic achievement [64]. Again, the results of the current study are similar to the findings a similar which concluded that the environment and the personal characteristics of learners play an important role in their academic successes [65]. The results also confirmed the findings another study that poor academic achievement might result from irregular class attendance, lack of preparation before class, lack of class attention, lack of revision after class, and lack of class participation [32]. The results also buttressed the findings of a previous study concluded that poor attendance such as truancy or unexcused absence from school, cutting classes, tardiness, and leaving school without permission are important factors in determining pupils' academic achievement [40]. The results of the current study are consistent with the findings of a similar study that lack of students' achievement motivation and negative study attitudes, can all result in a learner's study

problems [66]. The results also confirmed the findings of previous researchers that students' motivation is positively correlated with students' academic achievement [35, 36].

Hypothesis: There is no significant correlation between student-related factors and academic achievement of low-SES JHS students in the Aboom Circuit.

Table 2. The Relationship between Students-Related Factors and Students' Academic Achievement

Variables	N	df	R	R^2	Sig. (2-tailed)
Students-related factor					
	377	375	0.45*	0.20	0.004
Academic achievement					

Significant at P< 0.05

As evident in Table 2, the relationship between student-related factors and students' academic achievement was investigated, using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure that there were no violations of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. The results of the study indicated that there was a moderate, negative correlation between student-related factors and students' academic achievement [r = -0.45, n=377, p < 0.005], with high levels of perceived student-related factors with low levels of students' academic achievement. This result implies that negative students-related factors would significantly determine and influence students' academic achievement negatively and vice versa. In the same way, based on the coefficient of determination value (R square = 0.20), it could be concluded that student-related factors explain or account for only approximately 20% of the changes in students' academic achievement. This therefore implies that there are about 80% of the changes in students' academic achievement which is accounted for by other variables or factors. It is concluded that there is a statistically-significant correlation between students' personal related factors and students' academic achievement of low-SES JHS students in the Aboom Circuit. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected.

The results of the current study corroborated with the findings of Chupinit (2007), that students' study habits was a factor used to predict academic achievement. Again, paying attention in class was positively related to academic achievement. The results of the study are similar to the findings of a previous study that the environment and the personal characteristics of learners play an important role in their academic success [67]. The results also confirmed the findings of a previous study that poor academic achievement might result from irregular class attendance, lack of preparation before class, lack of class attention, lack of revision after class, and lack of class participation [32]. The results buttressed the findings of an earlier study that poor attendance such as truancy or unexcused absence from school, cutting classes, tardiness, and leaving school without permission are important factors in determining pupils' academic achievement [40]. The results of the current study are consistent with the findings of a previous study that the lack of students' achievement motivation and negative study attitudes can all result in a learner's study problems [66]. Also, the results of the study supported the findings of an earlier researcher that there is positive relationship between students' achievement motivation and their academic achievement [35, 36].

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study revealed that continued, consistent and persistent presence of these student-related factors such as hunger, lack of self-motivation, poor study habit, watching TV, laziness, and students' truancy or absenteeism negatively affect students' academic achievement. The results of the study also indicated that there was a moderate, negative correlation between student-related factors and students' academic achievement with high levels of perceived student-related factors with low levels of students' academic achievement. It is recommended that, the role of guidance and counseling session in schools is to assists students to be focused on their studies. Therefore, guidance and counseling sessions in various schools should be effectively organised to prevent students' truancy. It is also recommended that School administrators in partnership with PTA leadership and NGOs should educate students on the relevance of education and give social support to students from low socio-economic backgrounds and motivate them in their studies. BKO

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