

Parental Involvement: A Sine Qua Non in Adolescents' Educational  
Achievement

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## **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to my mom, Ernestina Wusuaa Somuaah, who in spite of her financial restrictions worked assiduously to bring me this far in my educational endeavors. Mom, I straight from my shoulder appreciate all that you have contributed in my life and ask for the blessings of God upon your life. Kudos for a great work done!!!

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## **Abstract**

This study was conducted in Ghana to investigate, (1) factors that predict parental involvement, (2) the relationship between parental home and school involvement and the educational achievement of adolescents, (3) the relationship between parental authoritativeness and the educational achievement of adolescent students, (4) parental involvement serving as a mediator between their authoritativeness and the educational achievement of the students, and (5) whether parental involvement decreases as children reach adolescence. 239 students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds between the ages of 15 and 20 as well as their teachers took part in the study. As expected, the results indicated a positive and significant correlation between mothers and fathers' home involvement and the academic achievement of the students. Mothers' school involvement, but not the fathers' was also positively and significantly correlated with the educational achievement of the students. However, with respect to stepparents, grandparents, and other guardians, their home and school involvement activities were found to be non-significant to the academic achievement of the students. Mothers' occupational status emerged as the best predictor of mothers' home involvement followed by nature of school, mothers' marital status, and program of study; whereas nature of school was the best predictor of mothers' school involvement, followed by mothers' occupational status, and program of study. Nature of school was the only factor that predicted fathers' home involvement. Furthermore, mothers and fathers' authoritativeness were positively correlated with the students' educational achievement whereas the authoritativeness of stepparents, grandparents, and other guardians were not significantly correlated with the school achievement of the students. Finally, parental involvement played a mediation role between their authoritativeness and the educational achievement of the students. The findings highlight the importance of parental involvement in adolescents' school success.

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# **1 Introduction**

## **1.1 The Role of Families in Children's Schooling**

In recent years, several international large-scale surveys have compared educational systems around the world (e.g., [www.upeace.org/about/newsflash](http://www.upeace.org/about/newsflash) , 2007). In evaluating the efficiency of schooling programs, attention has not only been made to influences originating from school, but also to linkages between families and schools. Quite obviously, schools do not function in a vacuum. This means that the social, intellectual, physical, moral development of children must be considered within an institutional context. These institutions ensure that the development of the child is not compromised. Crèche, preschool, and regular school are an essential component of a child's environment from infancy to late adolescence. Schools are institutions that put in place a series of developmental tasks for children. In order to assist and support their children in their efforts to meeting the demands of school, parents need to have knowledge about their children's schooling and access to resources to assist them. Since the family is the foremost institution through which children learn who they are, where they fit into society, and what kinds of futures they are likely to experience or have, it cannot be neglected in our attempt to develop the child. Thus, it is very essential for the environment within which they are raised or reared to provide the conditions that are needed to develop their innate characteristics. In other words, the family could ensure that the proper development of the growing child is not jeopardized. And again, because the child is not always in the home environment, but at times in the school, it would be worthwhile if parents liaise with the authorities of the school to ensure a proper and

enduring development of the child. Developmental theories have described the development of the child as the outcome or fall-out of reciprocal interactions between children and the multiple environments in which they are located (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Sameroff, 1994). To this end, the social development of the child could be observed as a marriage of the child, the child's parents, and the school (Litwak & Meyer, 1996).

The quest to improving the educational standard in Ghana has led civil society, social commentators, and other stakeholders to look at various and diverse alternatives to achieve this noble end. The government, civil society, and the various stakeholders in their attempts to finding out solutions in promoting the educational development in the country in most cases look outside the family and thus gross over the immense influence of the family in charting the academic course of their children. They always overlook the potency of parents in promoting the educational success of their children. Though, various stakeholders such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Danish Funds for International Development (DFID), social commentators, and more especially the government have over the years placed a strong emphasis on community participation in the educational process, its effects could not be the same as the direct involvement of the parents themselves. There is evidence which insinuate that most parents do not show interest in parent-teacher- association meetings and for that matter do not attend the meetings (Minor, 2006; Pryor & Ampiah, 2003a, 2003b). Although, community school participation has yielded a lot of benefits to most of the educational institutions such as the basic and secondary schools in terms of infrastructural development (e.g., Sopeneh, 2006), it is obvious that the engagement of parents in the

learning activities of their children could lead to tremendous impact on the educational gains of the children. This is why the same efforts that are utilized to get the community to actively engage in the teaching and learning process of children in the country should be used in getting parents to get involved in the education of their children.

Adolescence is a time of rapid change. During the adolescence period, they experience puberty, develop abstract thinking abilities, and transition into and out of middle school and then high school. Although most adolescents pass through this period without excessive stress, adolescents are at a greater risk of school drop out, arrest, drug use, and some psychological disorders than other age groups. To be successful in school and in life, adolescents need trusting and caring relationships. They also need opportunities to form their own identities, engage in autonomous self-expression, and take part in challenging experiences that will develop their competence and self-esteem (Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2000). Adolescents desire autonomy, independence, and time with peers, but at the same time, they continue to rely on guidance from parents and other adults (Eccles, 1999; Zarett & Eccles, 2006). Fischhoff, Crowell, and Kipke (1999) have stated that one of the ways through which adults can help adolescents is to assist them expand their gamut of options so that they can consider multiple choices. Due to the fact that adolescents who make abrupt decisions are more prone to be engaged in dangerous behaviors, adults could assist them to carefully weigh their options and consider their effects. That is why it is very important for parents to be proactive in the education of their adolescent children. The active involvement of their parents in their education could lead to their educational success and thus help in improving the dwindling fortunes of our educational standards.

In the past 3 decades, parental involvement has been consistently proven as a tool with the potency of improving the school achievements of students at all grades (Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, & Bloom, 1993; Simon, 1999). As Redding (2006) pointed out, “there is substantial evidence that family engagement in children’s learning is beneficial” (p. 149).

As a result of its overarching positive effects on the education of children, a lot of scholars and educators in the country are drumming home the need for parents to be out and about in the education of their children (e.g. Eyiah, 2005; Sopeneh, 2006). Speaking at a forum in Tamale, Ghana, where the Parent-Teacher-Association of the Anbariya Islamic Institute in collaboration with the old students association handed over a nine-room school building to the school authorities, madam Alexandra Sopeneh who is the regional director of education in that region urged parents to take a keen interest in the education of their children, especially the girl-child to empower them economically to contribute their share in the development of the country ([www.ghanaweb.com](http://www.ghanaweb.com), 2006). During a Speech and Prize-Giving day at a school in Accra, Justice Isaac Duose, an appeal court judge, advised parents not to spend all their time on wealth acquisition at the expense of their children's education. He emphasized that the best legacy parents could leave to their children is education and not properties which could be destroyed or mismanaged within a short period of time. According to him the shift in parental priority from the education of their wards to the pursuit of money should be a thing of the past and thus, advised parents to spend enough quality time with their children so as to unearth, unravel, and develop their hidden talents ([www.ghanaweb.com](http://www.ghanaweb.com), 2007).

Since there is a lot of evidence to the effect that children benefit most when parents, the community, and teachers team up to advance the educational success of children

(Christenson & Christenson, 1998; Sanders & Epstein, 2000), there is the need to whip up the interest of parents to play an active role in the teaching and learning process of their children.

The United States Department of education research publication *Strong Families, Strong Schools* (1994, p2) has described the parent as “a child’s first and most important teacher”. Walberg (1984a) has reported that students spend only 13 percent of their waking time and academically stimulating time in their first 18 years in school leaving the remaining 87 percent under the nominal control of their parents. This means that parents have control over 6 times more academically stimulating hours in the life of their children than the school. This suggests, in line with the above argument that parents who show concern and are active in the education of their children are more likely to significantly impact the educational success or achievement of their children than those parents who are apathetic and thus, do not show interest in the education of their children. That is why the contributions of parents as the “teachers” of their children in the home and also as the provider of the educational goods and services needed by the children, and their participation in the school activities of the children are very fundamental and crucial in the total development of the children of which education is a part.

Although research lends support to the effectiveness of parental involvement, much of it is correlational. Furthermore, there is a lack of agreement regarding what constitutes parental involvement and which forms of parental involvement are most effective in enhancing learning. Some studies have revealed higher achievement when parents take part in school activities (Reynolds, 1992), monitor homework and television viewing

(Walberg, 1984a; 1984b), and have higher aspirations and expectations for their children (Halle, Kurtz-Costes, & Mahony, 1997; Singh, Keith, Keith, Trivette, Anderson, 1995).

Findings of studies in the scientific literature, however, are not consistent as regards the nature and magnitude of effects (White, Taylor, & Moss, 1992) and appear to differ according to the age and sex of the child (Hickman, Greenwood, & Miller, 1995), the socio-economic status of the parents (Lee & Croninger, 1994), and whether the involvement takes place within the home or school environment (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; Hickman, Greenwood, & Miller, 1995; Izzo, Weissberg, Kaspro, & Fendrich, 1999; Trusty, 1999).

Although, many studies suggest a positive impact of parental involvement on the educational achievements of adolescents, there are also studies which have reported negative links between parental involvement and adolescents' school achievements. For instance, Shumow and Miller (2001) observed in their study that parental involvement at home was negatively associated with the students' academic grade point average (GPA) and math and science standardized achievement test scores even after controlling for parental educational level and the previous school adjustment of the children. Could this finding be that students' poor grades have called for their parents to be involved? In that study, however, they found that parental involvement at home was positively related to the adolescents' school orientation. They also reported that parental involvement at school was positively associated with academic GPA. This negative correlation between parental home involvement and academic GPA appears to be in contradiction to most findings which suggest that parental home involvement positively correlates with educational achievement more than parental school involvement (Christenson &



Sheridan, 2001; Hickman, Greenwood, & Miller, 1995; Trusty, 1999). Such inconsistencies in the parental involvement literature have been a source of worry to researchers of parental involvement and make it somewhat difficult to generalize the findings across cultures. Why should culture be an issue? Perhaps by shaping beliefs about parents' roles in children's schooling? Or by posing too many contextual stymies to parental involvement?

As a result of the significant impact of parental involvement on the academic achievement of students, and also coupled with the fact that it is extremely difficult to generalize the findings of studies from one culture to other cultures, I feel motivated and challenged to undertake this study in Ghana in order to have a fair idea about the effectiveness and impact of parental involvement in the country, and how this impact could help to arrest the falling standard of education in the country.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem/A focus on Ghana**

The standard of education in Ghana, especially in the secondary schools has assumed a downward trend in recent times. But some researches in their quest to finding out the causes of the dwindling fortunes of the standard of education, have identified areas in the economy such as: the general state of the economy, poor infrastructure, inadequate equipment and the disparate locations of some of the schools, and the unwillingness of most teacher trainees to accept postings to the most deprived areas as the causes of the problem (Dankwa, A., 1997). In reacting to the abysmal performance of Ghanaian 8th graders in the 2004 Trend in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Kwarteng and Ahia (2005) suggested that the government should involve stakeholders

such as teachers, teacher educators, professors, elders, business leaders to improve the standard of science and mathematics in the schools in the country. The former vice chancellor of the University of Education in Winneba, Professor Anamuah-Mensah in anatomizing the educational standards of the country during an interview with the Voice of America, indicated that the educational standard of the country was high before independence, but plummeted afterwards. According to him to improve the standard of education in the country demands pumping more money into the education sector, upgrading the current teachers in our schools, and providing junior and senior secondary school students with information technology facilities ([www.voanews.com](http://www.voanews.com), 2007)

While professional expertise provided by these diverse stakeholders may play a positive role, it would be possible that their contributions could well be negligible without the involvement of the family. Since the family is the first socializing agent of children, the social, emotional, physical, and educational development of the children largely depends on the conscious, intentional, as well as the unintended contributions from their families. In responding to the dwindling fortunes of education in the country, a senior lecturer of the University of Ghana, Mr. Opoku, indicated that the current state of affairs as regards the standard of education could be attributed to the lack of reading culture among students. He blamed this lack of reading culture on poor parental guidance and substandard materials in the basic schools. He indicated that this scenario is leading to the production of “illiterate graduates” in the country ([www.peacefmonline.com](http://www.peacefmonline.com), 2007). This revelation leads me to think that the active involvement of parents in the educational pursuit of their children could help in the improvement of the educational standard of the country.

In fact, documentary evidence on parental involvement in Ghana is not encouraging. Some of these studies do show that most parents do not show interest in their children's school (Casley-Hayford, 2000; Minor, 2006; Pryor & Ampiah, 2003a, 2003b). The revelations from these studies point to the fact that the dismal performance of Ghanaian students could be partly due to the lackadaisical attitude of parents in the education of their children. This situation calls for the need to encourage parents to actively engage in the education of their children. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) have observed that across a range of studies, there has emerged a strong conclusion that parental involvement in child and adolescent education generally benefits children's learning and school success.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to find out how the contribution of parents in the education of their adolescent children can help in arresting the falling standard of education in the Ghanaian society. Thus, the study was carried out to determine if parental involvement in school and in the home was associated with academic achievement and how their contributions could help in promoting the educational standard in the country. The rationale for this study is backed by the research literature which insinuates that parents play a vital and crucial role in the educational achievement of their children and that their individual contributions and involvement in home-school collaborations could bring about positive development in the lives of their children. In conducting this study, the following questions are addressed: 1. Do family's financial hardship, parental occupation, parental education (SES), family

structure, and gender trigger parental involvement? 2. Does parental involvement in school and home contribute to the educational achievement of adolescents net of the above stated background variables? 3. Does parental authoritativeness contribute to the educational achievement of adolescent students? 4. Could the impact of authoritative parenting style on school achievement be mediated by parental involvement? 5. Does parental involvement plummet as children reach adolescence?

#### **1.4 Overview of the Study**

In order to kick start the suggested study, a comprehensive theoretical background as well as studies conducted by researchers which are related to the study under consideration are reviewed.

Chapter two will introduce the reader to the theoretical background of the study. Taking a broad approach, it will look at Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Epstein's overlapping spheres of influence.

Chapter three introduces the reader to the main focus of the study-parental involvement. It provides relevant features of parental involvement in discussing parental involvement both at home and at school. Drawing on theoretical models and findings, factors that predict parental involvement are also discussed. Some of the outcomes of parental involvement are presented. It ends with a discussion on parenting styles which are considered as important context for specific parenting practices such as types of parental involvement.

Chapter four addresses the issue of adolescence. It begins with a brief description of who an adolescent is, and continues with a discussion on the academic development of

adolescents such as their cognitive and learning disabilities. Parent-adolescent relationships conclude the chapter.

Chapter five will introduce the reader to the Ghanaian Education System. It will take into account the historical development of education in the country and will be followed by the current structure of the school system and will be concluded with a highlight of the new education reform.

Chapter six deals with the hypotheses of the study.

Chapter seven Introduces the reader to the methods and procedures that were followed in conducting the study.

Chapter eight deals with the results of the study.

Chapter nine which ends the study deals with the discussion and recommendations of the findings.

## **2 Theoretical Background**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Different theoretical approaches have been used to analyze the role of the family in the educational activities of their children. In conducting this study, the theories that are going to be used are the ecological systems theory and the overlapping spheres of influence. These two theories were considered for the study due to the fact that they provide a sound foundation for the study of the family in their children's development. For instance, according to the ecological theory, if the relationships in the immediate microsystem breakdown, the child will not have the necessary tools that are needed to explore other parts of their environment. This makes them to look for the attentions that are supposed to be present in the parent-child relationship in improper places. These deficiencies are manifested especially in adolescence as anti-social behaviors, lack of self-discipline, and inability to provide self-direction (Addison, 1992).

Again, as a result of their overarching influence and impact on the study of the development of children, most researchers have used them as the theoretical framework of their studies (e.g., Gary, Sondra, & Eric, 1999; Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski, & Apostoleris, 1997; Newman et al., 2000; Scott-Jones, 1995).

## **2.2 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory**

This theory looks at the development of a child within the context of a system of relationships that make up their environment. Bronfenbrenner's theory defines complex "layers" of environment, each having an effect on the development of the child. This theory has recently been renamed "biological systems theory" to buttress the fact that a child's own biology is a primary environment promoting her development. The interaction between factors in the child's maturing biology, his immediate family/community environment, and the societal landscape enhances and promotes his development. Variations or dissension in any one layer will ripple throughout other layers (Paquette & Ryan, 2001). To study the development of the child, we need to realize that the understanding of human development demands going beyond the direct observation of behavior on the part of one or two persons at the same place; it demands the examination of multiple systems of interaction not restricted to only a setting and must take into account aspects of the environment beyond the immediate environment containing the subject. Examined below is the description of Bronfenbrenner's classification of the environment.

### 2.3 Structure of the Environment

Bronfenbrenner (1977) classified the environment into four distinct categories namely: the microsystem, mesosystem, esosystem, and macrosystem.

- The microsystem: This is the layer that is the nearest to the child and accommodates the structures with which the child has direct contact. The microsystem comprises the relationships and interactions a child has with their immediate environment (Berk, 2000). Structures that could be found in the microsystem consist of family, school, workplace, neighborhood, or childcare environments. The impact of the relationship at this level could be seen as bi-directional- both away from the child and toward the child. For instance, the parents of a child may influence their beliefs and actions; nonetheless, the child also may influence the actions and beliefs of the parents. The reciprocal action of structures within a setting or layer and that of structures between layers is pivotal to this theory. Bi-directional influences at this level are the strongest and have the greatest effect or impact on the child. This notwithstanding, interactions at outer levels still have the potential and capability of affecting the inner structures.
- The mesosystem: This layer includes the interactions among major settings that house the developing individual at a particular point in their life. This layer provides the connection between the structures of the child's microsystem (Berk, 2000). Thus, the mesosystem consists of interactions among the school, family, church, camp, peer group, etc. Example is the interaction between the child's teacher and their parents, between the child's church and their neighborhood, among others. In the nut shell, stated compendiously, a mesosystem is a system of



Microsystems. Despite the educational reform movements that have taken place in Ghana since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, schools have not been successful in educating the children in the country. Bronfenbrenner holds the opinion that even though it is essential for schools and teachers to provide stable, long term relationships; the primary relationship has to be with someone who can provide a sense of care that is meant to last for a long time. This relationship needs to be enhanced by people within the immediate sphere of the child's influence. Schools and teachers perform an important second function, but cannot provide the complicatedness of interaction that can be provided by primary adults (Paquette & Ryan, 2001) Other researchers in an attempt to comprehend children's educational success have focused on the home, although families cannot compensate for poor schools and the experiences of families alone will not be able to provide a thorough explication for children's educational success and drawbacks. Both families and schools are major contexts for the development of children. The effects of these two institutions become connected as children grow and develop in their families and then proceed through the formal educational system (Scott-Jones, 1995). Thus, in order to ensure the academic success of children, the family and school should be able to work hand in hand. Their partnership and collaboration are crucial in the academic advancement of the children.

- The exosystem: This layer defines the larger social system in which the child does not function directly. It is an extension of the mesosystem including other specific social structures, both formal and informal, that do not themselves contain the developing individual, but influence the immediate settings in which that

individual is located, and thus affect, delimit, or even determine what goes on there. The child may not be directly involved at this level, but they feel the positive or negative impact involved with the interaction with their own system. These structures consist of the important institutions of the society, which are both intentionally structured and spontaneously evolving, as they function at a concrete local level. They include the world of work, agencies of government (local, state, and national), the distribution of goods and services, communication of transportation facilities, inter alia.

- The macrosystem: This layer may be considered as the outermost layer in the child's development. It refers to the overarching institutional patterns of the culture or subculture, such as the educational, economic, legal, social, and political systems, of which microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem are the tangible manifestations. Macrosystems are understood and analyzed not only in terms of structure, but as carriers of information and ideology that, both explicitly and implicitly, add meaning and motivation to specific agencies, social networks, activities, roles, and their interrelationships. The effects of larger principles defined by the macrosystem have a cascading effect throughout the interactions of all other layers. For instance, if it is the belief of the culture that parents should be mainly responsible for bringing up their children, that culture is less likely to make resources available to help parents. This, in turn affects the structures in which the parents function. The parents' ability or inability to perform or execute that responsibility toward their child within the context of the child's microsystem is also affected. As a result of religious beliefs within the muslim community in

the northern region of Ghana, there is much more pressure for children to attend Islamic schools as it is believed that it is more important to learn Arabic than to study school topics such as English, Math, and Agriculture (Minor, 2006). This situation has led to most children of school going age to be out of school and instead, soliciting alms on the streets and working on the farms (Minor, 2006).

#### **2.4 The Theory of Overlapping Spheres of Influence**

Another theory that is worthy of consideration in helping to figure out the role of the environment in promoting the academic success of children is the overlapping spheres of influence proposed by Epstein (1987). This theory looks at the interrelationship between the school, family, and the community. Even though the present study focuses mainly on the family and the school, the significance of this theory in relation to the study cannot be simply overlooked. The connection between schools, families, and communities has been observed from different angles and view points (e.g., Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This theory is a coordination of sociological, educational, and psychological views on social organizations, and also studies about how educational outcomes are impacted by the environments of the family, school, and community (Epstein, 1987, 1992). Recognizing the interdependency of the key environments or agents that socialize and educate children, one cardinal axiom of this theory is that certain objectives of which students' academic achievement is no exception, have the mutual interest of each of these agents or environments and are best attained via their concerted partnership and prop. This perspective is represented by three spheres-schools, family, and community and their

connection is determined by the attitudes and practices of the people who are located within each environment (Epstein, 1992).

There is substantial evidence in the literature that supports the need for strengthening the link between home and school. Fostering a strong connection between the school, home and the community has a positive impact on the academic outcomes of students. “Families, schools and communities are most effective if they have overlapping or shared goals, missions, and responsibilities for children.” (Epstein & Hollifield, 1996, p. 270). When the school, family and community have similar goals and aspirations for their children, there is intersection between the various domains, and students’ outcomes.

Following her extensive years of research, Epstein (1995) discovered six types of school-family-community engagements which are very essential and pivotal to students’ learning and development. They are:

- Parenting: assisting all families to establish home environments that support children as students. Schools must assist parents to establish home environments that support learning by furnishing them with the information about issues such as the health of the children, nutrition, discipline, adolescents’ needs, parenting practices, among others. At the same time, schools must endeavor to fathom and imbibe aspects of their students’ family life into what is taught in the classroom. Schools are challenged to make sure that any family who needs this kind of information receives it in befitting ways.
- Communicating: designing and conducting effective means of communication about the programs of the school and children’s advancement. That is teachers are obligated to make information about students available to their parents, and these

information or feedback must be clear, unambiguous, and unequivocal. When parents receive frequent and positive messages from teachers, the more involved and engaged they are likely to become in their children's education (U.S. Department of Education, 1994). Schools must employ a variety of techniques for communicating with parents about their children's progress, decisions affecting their children, and school programs in general. These include parent-teacher association meetings, phone contacts, report cards, newsletters, curriculum nights, parent centers, etc.

- **Volunteering:** Schools enhance their connection to families by encouraging them to volunteer in school activities and attend school events. Families who volunteer become more familiar and comfortable with their children's schools and teachers. Volunteering efforts that tap parental talents enrich school programs and, particularly in upper grades, facilitate individualized learning. The use of a volunteer coordinator is advised especially at secondary school levels, where coordination of volunteer talents and time with teacher and student needs becomes increasingly complex. They are challenged to emboldened older students to volunteer in their community as part of the learning process.
- **Learning at Home:** Making information and ideas available to families about how best to assist students at home with school work and other school connected activities. Most parental participation in children's education occurs in the home. Schools must capitalize upon what parents are already doing by helping them to assist and interact with their children on home learning activities that reinforce what is being taught in school. Schools should aim to increase parents'

understanding of the curriculum and the skills their children need to develop at each stage in their schooling. Schools must also inform parents about their systems of tracking students and other practices so that parents can help make decisions that are in their children's best interests. Successful parent involvement programs must recognize the parent-child relationship as distinct from the teacher-child relationship. Parents should be relied upon as supporters and monitors of the learning process so that their children can become effective independent learners. Schools should encourage open discussions among all partners about the school curriculum and homework. Parent surveys show that parents talk more with their children about schoolwork and help their children develop skills when homework is designed to involve families (Epstein & Sanders, 1998; Epstein, 1992). Schools are thus challenged to design a menu of interactive work that taps parents' support skills and involves them in the learning processes. Schools must also work with parents to ensure that upper-level students set academic goals, prepare for career transitions, and make appropriate course selections.

- Decision-making: Making parents part and parcel of the decision making process of the school. Involving parents in governance, decision-making, and advocacy roles is yet another strategy for fortifying links between schools and parents. This development makes parents see themselves as significant stakeholders within the school community. It should be noted that parental participation in decision-making, when it is part of a comprehensive program involving parents in learning support activities as well, is associated with improved student outcomes. Parent

and community involvement in decision-making also helps make schools more accountable to the community. Parental participation in school decision-making can be strengthened by including parents on school boards, parent-teacher associations, and other committees.

- Collaborating with the Community: This involves keying out and harnessing resources and services from the community to strengthen and support schools, students, and their families. Schools and families must draw regularly upon community resources to support their efforts to educate children. In fact, community representatives and resources may be tapped for each of the other five types of involvement: communicating with families, volunteering, supporting learning, and participating in school committees. Student outcomes are greatest when families, schools, and community organizations and leaders work together. Children are provided with more opportunities for learning and for linking school knowledge with real world opportunities. They associate with individuals, other than their parents and teachers, who reinforce the importance of learning.

In line with the above discussed theories-the ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and the overlapping spheres of influence (Epstein, 1987) about the influence of the environment in shaping the life of the individual, it is assumed that parental involvement in the education of their children will lead to tremendous dividends in the educational achievements of their children. It should be noted that although both theories talk about the development of the child, the theory of overlapping spheres of influence provide a more specific approach to a child's educational development.

## 2.5 Definition of Terms

The following terms were used in this study:

- **Parental Involvement:** It refers to the activities that parents do which are considered worthwhile in the educational achievements of their children. It is used to delineate both parental home and school involvement.
- **Parental Home Involvement:** It refers to the school-related activities, actions, and behaviors that parents perform at home that impact on the academic success of the children. It includes activities such as helping children with their homework, discussion with the children about their school progress, provision of words of encouragement, etc.
- **Parental School Involvement:** It refers to the involvement or engagement of the parents in the school activities of the children with the aim of fostering their children's academic success.
- **Parent:** A parent in this context refers to the parent figure the adolescent is residing with. Thus, in this study, mother, father, male and female guardians were delineated as parents. The male and female guardians consisted of stepparents, siblings, and other relatives the student was living with.
- **Educational Achievement:** It is defined as the academic performance of the adolescents. It was measured in terms of their school grades in four core subject areas- Math, English, General Science, and Social Studies. The mean score of these subjects represents their educational achievement. The following synonyms-



academic success, academic performance, educational success in this study, were used interchangeably to mean the same thing- educational achievement.

- Nature of school: It refers to the type of school the student attended- full-day school or day and boarding school.
- Program of study: It refers to the course the student studied- General Science, General Arts, Business, and Vocational Studies.

### **3 Parental Involvement**

#### **3.1 Introduction and Overview**

The involvement of parents in the education of their children has attracted a lot of attention over the last three decades, and this subject continues to be of interest to most researchers. Throughout the 1990s, a large number of studies (e.g., Bogenschneider, 1997; Eccles, Jacobs, & Harold, 1990; Epstein, 1991, 92; Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski, & Apostoleris, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997, Muller, 1998; Schneider & Coleman, 1993; Smith, 1992; Snow, Barnes, Chandler, Goodman, & Hemptill, 1991; Useem, 1992) have contributed to the parental involvement literature. Their findings have widely been used to device ways of helping children to be successful with their education.

Parental involvement studies have over the years ranged from focusing on the characteristics, actions, and/or behaviors of parents and schools to the analysis of specific programs, interventions, and policies. According to Singh et al., (1995) attempts at generalizing parental involvement across studies should be done with precaution since parental involvement is a multi-dimensional or multi-faceted construct and that findings of research differ in accordance to the different interpretations or meanings ascribed to the term.

As at now there has not been a universally accepted or agreed upon definition of the construct, parental involvement. As a matter of fact, this construct or term has been defined differently by various researchers. In practice, parental involvement has been defined to include diverse parental behaviors and practices which include among other

things, parental expectations for their children's educational achievement and their transference of such expectations to their children (e.g., Bloom, 1990), the communication between parents and their children concerning the education of their children (e.g., Christenson et al., 1992), the participation of parents in school activities and programs (e.g., Stevenson and Baker, 1987), the rules parents impose on their children in the home that are considered to be educationally related (Majoribanks, 1983), the communication between parents and teachers about the progress of their children in their studies (Epstein, 1991), and the commitment of parents and their positive attention to the child-rearing process (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989).

Studies on parental involvement in Ghana are scanty, but there are a few studies that have focused on community participation in school activities (e.g., Addae-Boahene & Akorful, 2000; Boardman & Evans, 2000; Nkansah & Chapman, 2006). Even though, involving the community in school is a worthwhile activity due to its beneficial effects in improving the infrastructure base of the schools and also making resources available for the educational success of the students, the commitment of the individual parents and families is also very essential in ensuring that the community and school's objectives in producing a functional student is achieved.

Since the primary environment of the student is the home and not the community, it stands to reason that the impact on school achievement exerted by the parents or family will far outweigh and exceed that from the community or school alone. This point supports the revelation by several researches about the tremendous impact of parental involvement on school success (Eccles, 1992, 1994, Grolnick et al., 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1997, 2005; Reading, 2006).

According to a study conducted by Pryor and Ampiah (2003a & 2003b) in a village community called Akurase in the Ashanti region of Ghana, most of the parents were apathetic to the schooling of their children. These parents lacked interest in education and for that matter did not bother to engage in the learning activities of their children. Some of the explanations deduced from the data of the study were among others, (1) the parents' indifference to the progress of the children in their care, (2) the inability of the parents to afford the luxury of schooling as a result of their financial incapacity, and (3) the irrelevance of schooling to the children's future prospects as farmers. These attitudes of some of the parents did not, however, permeate throughout the community since a few of the parents who attended the school's management committee (SMC) and parent-teacher-association (PTA) meetings had great aspirations for their children to enroll in the secondary school and later find good and respectable occupation on the labor market. This category of parents were literates, but admitted that most of the parents did not subscribe to their philosophy of ensuring the academic achievements of their children. These parents were impugned for sending their children to school since according to their critics, it was a waste of time and resources.

The study further suggested that the perceptions held by both teachers and some members of the community were that the rate of drop out was significantly high, and that there were a lot of children who were absent from school who should have been there, and that this was due to the fact that there was a widespread belief that schooling was not worthwhile, and was simply put on the back burner. This assertion has been corroborated by some of the studies (for example, Casley-Hayford, 2000) who reported in her study that within the communities in northern Ghana, there were in some instances growing

objection to formal education. In certain parts of the country, especially in the farming communities, parents even intentionally requested from the teachers to allow them take their children home to take care of their younger siblings so that they can go to the farm. This information was revealed by Madam Agnes Agrobasa, a teacher of the Damango Presbyterian primary school during a community education program organized by the Konkomba and Basari tertiary students union at Damango ([www.ghanaweb.com](http://www.ghanaweb.com), 2007).

Although, this particular study and other evidence have insinuated a lack of interest and commitment among Ghanaian parents in the learning engagements of their children, it does not necessarily mean that parental involvement is virtually non-existent in Ghana. As a matter of fact, some parents, especially in the cities willingly partake in the educational career of their children by furnishing them with educational goods such as books and other learning aids, send them to private schools which are quite expensive for the average Ghanaian worker as a result of low wages in the country, and also enroll them in private classes or have special teachers to teach their children either in the home or outside of the home.

In fact, in his study conducted in the mid to late 90s which was supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Quansah (1997) indicated that of the students who performed creditably well in the criterion referenced test, were those students from private schools. Two of the reasons that were assigned to their success story were the interest of their parents in what they learned and also their attendance of “open days” which brought teachers, parents, and children together. In that study it was also revealed that students in the cities outperformed their counterparts from

the rural areas. This could be due to differences between parents in the cities and those in the rural areas as regards their socioeconomic status.

In proceeding under this section, I will first discuss differences between parental home and school involvement, address the outcome of parental involvement as well as predictors of parental involvement, and the role of parenting styles in adolescents' achievement.

### **3.2 Who becomes Involved and Why**

In studying why parents become active participants in their children's schooling, researchers have examined a host of factors that motivate or prompt parents to become part and parcel of their children's teaching and learning process. For instance, in their model, Grolnick and associates (1997) identified three factors that affect parental involvement: (1) Parent and child influences, (2) family context, and (3) attitudes and practices of teachers. Hoover- Dempsey and colleagues (2005) also came out with a theoretical framework about the factors that trigger parental involvement. They identified three major sets of contributors to parental involvement. These are: (1) parents' motivational beliefs, (2) parents' perceptions of invitations to involvement, and (3) parents' life-context variables that are likely to trigger their involvements. The above mentioned models have some parallels which are useful for this study. For instance, they both address the importance of parental characteristics such as parental efficacy and parental role construction as well as practices of the school which affect parental involvement in the education of their children. Based upon the above stated theoretical frameworks, I will be discussing some of these factors that serve as precursors to parental involvement. Among the predictors of parental involvement that I am going to address include: parental beliefs and role construction, family socioeconomic factors (parental education, parental occupation, and family financial situation), family structure, social networks, school and teacher practices, and gender.

### **3.2.1 Parental beliefs and role construction**

The extent to which parents become involved in the educational process of their children is by and large due to the motivational beliefs they have about the impact of their involvement on the development of their children. The model by Hoover-Dempsey and colleagues (2005) insinuates that the involvement of parents in the education of their children is motivated by the parents' sense of efficacy for helping the child to excel at school and their role construction for involvement. When parents strongly believe that they have a contribution to make in the education of their children, they might be more willing to partake in their learning activities. Over the years, motivational researchers have bickered that people are more likely to partake in activities in which they believe they can achieve success. This belief, according to Bandura (1977), is a central determining factor of behavior. According to Bandura and colleagues (1999), it is the belief that a person has in their ability to deliver an outcome which is observed as the cornerstone of human agency. Self-efficacy is an essential component or ingredient in decisions regarding the goals one opts to act on as well as effort and tenacity in working toward the achievement of those goals (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy theory insinuates therefore that parents decide to be involved partly because of their thinking and belief about the outcome that is likely to follow their actions (Bandura, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Brissie, 1992). This means that parents make up their minds to be involved when they are persuaded and convinced that their efforts are going to be rewarded. In connection to parental involvement, it transforms into parental belief that they have the skills and knowledge to help their children, that they can teach or help their children and that they can



provide additional resources for their children if the need arises (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995). For instance, Eccles, Midgley, Wigfield, Buchanan, Reuman, & Mac Iver, (1993) and Furstenberg (1993) indicated that parents are more likely to employ activities such as enrolling their children in after-school programs, taking them to the library, exposing to them the dangers in the community, among others if they strongly believe that their actions will surely have a positive effect on them. On the other hand, parents who do not believe that they could control their children's lives and their environments are less likely to influence their behaviors.

A number of previous studies have documented that parental efficacy is an essential predictor of parental involvement (Ames, DeStefano, Watkins, & Sheldon, 1995; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992, 1997, 2005). Parents who strongly believe that they could bring a change in the education of their children are more likely to partake in their learning activities (Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 1992). Bandura and associates (1996) for instance, disclosed that parents with stronger efficacy for managing and advancing middle school children's academic development were more likely than were lower efficacy parents to support children's educational activities and develop students' self-management skills for effective learning. Shumow and Lomax (2002) observed that a broad measure of parental efficacy predicted parental involvement and parental monitoring of students. Parents' involvement and monitoring of their children's success, also, predicted measures of students' academic success, such as grades, use of remedial, regular, or advanced courses, and school behavior.

Apart from parental efficacy which has been identified to be a precursor or trigger of parental involvement, another parental characteristic which has been scrutinized by

researchers is parental role construction. Parental role construction has been defined as the beliefs parents hold about what they are supposed to do in connection to their children's education and the patterns of parental behavior that follow those behaviors (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). According to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) parents are more likely to partake in their children's education if they see such participation as one of their obligations as parents. Role construction for involvement is prompted or triggered by the beliefs parents have about the development of their children, what parents have to do to effectively raise their children, and what parents would have to do at home to assist their children to excel in school. Current research on role construction has provided a lot of evidence about the importance parents attach to their decisions to be involved in their children's schooling. For instance, Grolnick and colleagues (1997) revealed that positive connections exist between the beliefs parents have about their active role in the education of their children and their involvement in intellectually challenging activities with their children. Drummond and Stipek (2004) in their study reported that parental involvement practices were inspired by parental role construction. In his study, Sheldon (2002) noted that role construction predicted both parents' home and school based engagement activities. For both types of involvement, the more parents believe that all parents should be engaged in the education of their children; the more likely they are to be involved themselves.

Studies in different cultures have reported similar findings. For instance, Chrispeels and Rivero (2001) have stated that the knowledge that Latino-Americans have about the befitting roles in the education of children inform them about how they have to get involved, the extent to which they have to be involved, and the meanings they have to put

into school invitations to involvement. Trevino (2004) has also revealed that parents whose children perform very well at the secondary school level from Latino migrant families hold active role construction for involvement in their children's education (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

### **3.2.2 Social economic resources**

The literature on the predictors of parental involvement has emphasized the role of demographic factors as triggers of parental involvement. Grolnick et al (1997) found that family socio-economic-status was a strong predictor of parental involvement. Several studies have reported that parents' education is linked to parental involvement (Davis-Kean, 2005; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Pena, 2000).

#### **3.2.2.1 Family financial resources**

Theory has established the need to analyze the behavior of parents within the context in which parents and their children live or function (Belsky, 1984; Bronfenbrenner, 1986). In other words, parental behavior in connection to their role and functions has to be looked at from the environment within which they are situated. The social context of parenting, from an ecological perspective, is the determining factor to the way resources are made available to the children. This point supports assertions raised by some researchers (e.g., McLoyd, 1990) to the effect that economic difficulties generally limit the effectiveness of parenting. Researchers such as (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, & Mariato, 1997; Conger, Conger, & Elder, 1997) have observed that financial hardship which is more prevalent in single-parent families do not only circumscribe options for leisure time

activities and investments in education, but also normally brings about strains in the family system that undermine parenting. These strains in the family could therefore serve as a disincentive for the parents to be engaged in the education of their children. It is thus true that the inability of parents to get involved in the education of their children could be attributed to their limited economic resources (e.g., Conger, Elder, Lorenz, & Simons., 1994; McLoyd, 1990).

Similarly, there is evidence that high levels of stress have a negative and disruptive impact on some parenting characteristics such as warmth and responsiveness (Belsky, 1984; Roberts, 1989). Because of the stressful situations within which parents are entangled as a result of their financial incapacity, they become psychologically disoriented and emotionally disturbed and thus become oblivious to involvement activities. On the other hand, social support has been found to be positively correlated with the provision of a caring and an attentive family environment (Crnic, Greenberg, Ragozin, Robinson, & Basham, 1983). These supports are capable of easing the burdens on parents and also providing them with the time to enable them to be involved and also mobilize some resources to help them handle the stress.

### **3.2.2.2 Parents' occupational status**

The occupational status of parents has been identified as one of the predictors of parental involvement. In his criticism of the over-emphasis on the collaboration between parents and school staff by home-school partnership models, Lareau (1996) attributed this trend to the researchers' under-estimation of the powerful influence of social class variations on the involvement of parents in school education. Some researchers have indicated that whereas parents of working class accommodate the view of separation of

obligation in education, middle-class parents see themselves as having a shared obligation in the educational process of their children. According to Dauber and Epstein (1989) working-class parents are more involved in their children's home learning activities and are unlikely to partake in their school activities. Ho (1999a, 1999b) showed that there is an attitude of discrimination that educational establishments show against working-class parents which prevents or hinders them from taking part in the learning process of their children. Hanafin and Lynch (2002) in reporting the views of working-class parents in a disadvantaged plan or strategy in the Republic of Ireland indicated that parental involvement in school is limited to giving and receiving of information, restricted consultation, and participation in some supplemental duties. According to them, although the parents were interested, informed and concerned about the education of their children, they had the feeling of being left out from taking part in the decision-making of the school management and organization, about issues that impacted them personally and economically, and about the success of their children. These recent findings corroborate previous findings by researches (e.g., Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1997; Lightfoot, 1978) who have lambasted schools of their discriminatory policy which makes middle-class parents more acceptable to the school than working-class families. It has also been documented that although teachers seek equable participation from parents from diverse classes, parents of upper-middle-class are normally more directly involved in both their children home and school education than lower and working-class parents (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1987; Ballantine, 1993).

### **3.2.2.3 Parental education**

Another important socioeconomic variable that prompts parents to get involved in the schooling of their children is the educational status of the parents. Many researchers have reported that parental education is connected to parental involvement (Davis-Kean, 2005; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Pena, 2000; Stevenson & Baker, 1987). Davis-Kean's (2005) study insinuates that the amount of schooling that parents received has an effect on how they structure their home environment and how they interact with their children to promote academic achievement. Finders and Lewis (1994) list a variety of reasons that function as stymies to parental involvement (difficulty in getting permission from work, cultural differences with the teachers, psychological barriers due to personal academic failures), which are related to the socio-economic status and the educational level of the particular parent. Heyns (1978) has stated that one efficacious aspect of parenting is making an active investment in the child's education, and the specific ways that this could be done are parental tutoring, organizing excursions to libraries, among others. Another study that was conducted by Baker and Stevenson (1986) revealed that educated mothers were abreast with their children's school performance, had more contacts with their teachers, and were more likely to have provided intervention, should there have been the need in order to supervise their children's educational success. It was also revealed that the mother's choice of college preparatory courses for their children was done regardless of the children's academic accomplishments. In a latter study, Stevenson & Baker (1987) similarly showed that the educational status of the mother is connected to the extent of parental involvement in the education of their children, so that parents who are higher up on the educational ladder are more involved. It was also observed that the

educational level of the mother and the age of the child are stronger predictors of parental involvement in schooling for boys than for girls.

In spite of the above evidence which suggests that differences in parental involvement could be as a result of differences in SES backgrounds, some researchers think otherwise (e.g., Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). According to these researchers, socioeconomic factors do not explain why parents become involved, nor do they explain why parents in similar or same SES genres differ tremendously in involvement practices or effectiveness (e.g., Clark, 1983; Scott-Jones, 1995; Shaver & Walls, 1998; cited in Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). But, this stance does not take away the fact that some parents are not able to take active part in the education of their children due to their deficient socioeconomic status background.

### **3.2.3 Family structure**

Family structure is another variable that is likely to serve as a trigger to parental involvement. The structure of a family- intact or non-intact could determine the extent to which parents could be involved in the schooling of their children. According to McLanahan (1991) children living with single parents and stepparents during adolescence receive less encouragement and less help with school work than those who reside with both biological parents. Similarly, Harris (1998) disclosed that the receipt of child support does not appear to have a significant effect on children and the presence of a step-parent does not significantly improve their situation, either. The stress, conflict, and problems that are associated with divorce, put divorced parents in a position of relative disadvantage as compared to non-divorced parents as regards the involvement in the

educational activities of their children (Amato, 2000). It is important to emphasize that divorce is not a singular life event; instead, it represents a series of stressful experiences for the entire family that begins with marital conflict before the actual separation and includes a multitude of life changes afterwards. Many families going through divorce witness a crisis period of a year or more in which the lives of all family members are made uncomfortable (Amato, 2000; Hetherington, 1989). Usually, both partners go through emotional and practical problems. Normally, the wife who obtains custody of the child in about 90% of divorcing families, is prone to show signs of anger, depression, and loneliness, although in some instances relieved as well. The husband is likewise expected to be distressed, more especially if he suspects that he is being prevented from seeing his children. Looking at their new status as single adults, both spouses normally have the conviction that they have been isolated from former married friends and other bases of social support on which they depended on as married couples (cited in Shaffer, 1992).

Another problem that confronts women with children is that they have to adjust to the problems of a diminished income, relocating to a lower income neighborhood, and trying to work and raise young children single-handedly. As Hetherington and Camara (1984) see it, families must often cope with the reduction of family resources, alterations in residence, assumptions of new roles and responsibilities, establishment of new patterns of family interaction, reorganization of routines, and possibly the introduction of new relationships (that is stepparent/child and stepsibling relationships) into the existing family. Again, divorce is connected to more difficulties in rearing children (Fisher, Fagor, & Leve, 1998; Hetherington & Clingempeel, 1992), less authoritative parenting (Ellwood



& Stolberg, 1993; Simons & Associates, 1996), and a greater toil in parental role among noncustodial as well as custodial parents (Rogers & White, 1998). All these challenges, coupled with its associated stress are likely to prevent parents from being effective, efficient, and responsible parents. This situation could be one of the reasons why children from divorced families perform worse on measures of academic achievement as compared with those who live with their biological parents (Allison & Furstenberg, 1989; Amato, 2000; Doherty & Needle, 1991; & Fauber, Forehand, Thomas, & Wierson, 1990; Frum, 1996; Ham, 2003; Jeynes, 1997; Pong & Ju, 2000). These arguments insinuate that when it comes to parental involvement in children's school activities, parents from biologically intact families will be more actively involved than those from non intact families (Flay, 2002; Grolnick et al., 1997).

### **3.2.4 Social networks**

According to Wasserman and Faust (1994), social networks are the set of social relationships and connections that exist between a person and other persons. As Bronfenbrenner (1979) put it, social networks serve as lines of communication that enable parents to recognize the resources-material and human they need, in addition to the sharing and transmission of information from one place to another.

Parents' social networks have been considered by some researchers as social capital. Coleman (1988) viewed social capital as a means to an end. For instance, a means by which parents can enhance the educational achievement of their children. Social capital that is acquired via parental visits to the school may exist in the following ways-information (about upcoming activities), skills (skills in parenting), access to resources

(books, learning materials, sources of assistance), and sources of social control (e.g., home-school collaboration on behavior expectations and educational values). All these resources are capable of helping parents to enhance the educational achievement of their children.

Coleman (1988) has bickered that social capital is very crucial and essential in the educational development of children. It is a resource that exists within the social relationships that parents keep with other adults. Social networks help in the production of social capital to the extent that social linkages help in promoting the exchange of information, shaping of beliefs, and enforcing of rules of behavior (e.g., Coleman, 1990; Portes, 1998; Stanson-Salazer, 1997). When parents interact with other parents while volunteering at school or attending PTA meetings, they stand the chance of gaining access to important information, skills in parenting, or resources that are available within the social network which is represented by the parents. Bodner-Johnson (2001) emphasized that parents should work in partnership with each other so as to figure out and respond to the needs and priorities of the family in order for them to better nurture the child's educational development. He also argued that parents are themselves the richest source of information and prop for each other; techniques that support parents in developing a sharing relationship with one another such as group discussion, focus groups, parent-to-parent mentoring, and informal question-and-answer sessions.

Research about the impact of parents' social networks with other adults suggests that social interactions could be a determinant on the frequency and form of parental involvement. Useem (1992) observed that mothers, who were networked with other parents in an informal fashion, knew more about school tracking policies than those

mothers who were isolated. In his study, Sheldon (2002) insinuated that parents' social networks are outcomes that may up parental involvement both at home and in the school.

### **3.2.5 Invitations by the School**

The power of the linkages that exists between families and schools may be a function of characteristics of the school and its representatives. Teachers are seen as parents' primary contacts within the school environment and therefore practices and developments in the classroom are likely to affect parental involvement. Dauber and Epstein (1993) revealed that teacher invitations and school programs that are meant to motivate parents to be involved in their children education were the strongest predictors of home and school-based involvement in their study. Epstein and Van Voorhis (2001) have indicated that the invitation of teachers for parental involvement led to more student time on homework and enhanced student performance. Researchers have frequently insinuated that the climate of the school affects the ideas of parents about the tendency to be involved in their children's education (Griffith, 1998; Hoovey-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). The qualities of the school climate, consisting of the structure of the school and its managerial practices are likely to improve and promote several facets of the relationships that exist between parents and schools such as parents knowledge that they are welcomed in the school, being abreast with the learning and progress of the students, and that the personnel of the school accord them respect, and also address their worries and suggestions (e.g. Adams & Christenson, 1998; Christenson, 2004; Griffith, 1998). A school climate that does not make families feel welcomed, respected, valued, and cherished stands

the peril of excluding parents in the educational activities of the school. Also, the perception of educators, and their attitudes towards parents are likely to promote or impair their engagement.

Differences in teachers' beliefs as to whether involving parents in their children's school process is an effective strategy for promoting the education of their children have been documented in the literature (Epstein & Becker, 1982; Johnson & Pugach, 1990). A section of teachers hold the belief that parents are concerned and are also willing and committed to help and that it is time-effective to get on board parents in the education of their children, whilst some hold the opinion that it could be an avenue of potential conflict between parents and their children and that parents will not wish to or be able to carry through commitments (Epstein & Becker, 1982). Also, some educators are scared or do entertain the fears about parental involvement, which to them, allows parents access into their domain or put in a different way allow parents to interfere in their work. They abhor and detest the idea of having parents perform decision-making functions in the school. Some studies about parental involvement in middle and high schools have revealed that educators have intentionally discouraged parental involvement (Eccles & Harold, 1996). As a matter of fact, teachers who view parents as obstacles or stymies, instead of supporters or collaborators in the educational process of their children, are denying parental involvement in the educational process and also preventing the schools from benefiting from their support and assistance.

Furthermore, teacher practices have the strength and ability of affecting the behavior of parents. Parents are more eager to engage in the education of their children and feel more positive about their capabilities to help when teachers are able to make parental

involvement an essential part in their teaching practice. Epstein (1991) has reported that teachers who used more parent involvement practices had students who were positive toward school and attained conceivably more success in reading than those whose teachers used fewer of these practices. In their study, Dauber and Epstein (1993) revealed that schools' practices to inform and engage parents are more important than characteristics such as parental education, family size, marital status, and even grade level in establishing if inner-city parents stay involved with their children throughout middle school. According to Epstein (1995), parents who are even very difficult to reach are reachable via appropriate school and teacher practices.

### **3.2.6 Gender**

Gender equality has gained tremendous acceptance in this contemporary world, and one would think that parents would treat their male and female children the same. In other words, it is expected that parents will put both their male and female children on the front burner instead of putting the latter on the back burner. This notwithstanding, research has shown that parents in most cases show favoritism towards male children over female children in diverse ways. For instance, studies have revealed that fathers are more involved with their male children (Harris & Morgan, 1991). In some societies such as Ghana, female children are requested to care for the home, look after their younger siblings as their parents go to the farm. Madam Agnes Agrobasah, a teacher at the Damango primary school in Ghana revealed that parents withdraw their daughters from school, especially during the farming season to care for the home whilst they go to the farm ([www.ghanaweb.com](http://www.ghanaweb.com), 2007).

Studies on the socialization role of gender hold that the treatment that parents met out to their male and female children differs as a result of the value our societies put on males, which make males superior to females in the social system (Lorber, 1994). Studies have revealed the male bias nature of the traditional socialization practices in our societies, which always provide and make available to sons greater chance for independence and success at the expense of daughters (Eccles et al., 1990; Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 1994). Studies conducted by Block, (1983), Marini and Brinton, (1984) have established an association or a connection between gender outcome disparities to socialization that traditionally has put premium on reliance, conformity, personal relationships, and obedience for daughters, as against independence, assertiveness, and personal achievement for sons. The differences in gender have been documented in the literature as regards educational exploits. Some of the gender differences in relation to academic achievement that have been reported include; perceptions of academic capability (Wigfield & Eccles, 1994), educational expectations (Hanson, 1994), and students' skills and participation in math and science courses (Catsambis, 1994), among others. Studies conducted by (Catsambis, 1994; Entwisle, 1994) insinuate that parents' incongruity in the treatment of their daughters and sons as regards their education soars as they reach the higher grades on the academic ladder. Also, it has been proven that the expectations that parents hold to the effect that sons will outperform daughters in math and science and the notion that these courses are harder for females than males seem not to be dependent on existent academic behavior (Eccles et al., 1990). Research has revealed the

detrimental effects that gender bias have on daughters. Wigfield and Eccles (1990) have shown that as compared to their male counterparts, female students have been identified to have lower self-concepts as regards their math ability. According to Hanson (1994), among high school seniors who exhibited precocious talents, daughters were found to be more likely than sons to yearn for a college degree, but fell short of their belief about their capability to achieve their desire.

Even though there is overwhelming documentary evidence to buttress the assertion that gender role socialization has a disastrous consequence on the educational expectation, experience, and achievements of females, other studies have shown that daughters earn high grades, are to an extent more likely to enroll and graduate from college at about the same rate as sons (Mare, 1995).

Some researchers such as (Catsambis, 1994; Lorber, 1994) have reported that due to the fact that female students are less likely to study higher level math and science programs, they are limited in terms of occupational outcomes since such academic choices are partly responsible to the discrepancies in occupational outcomes. Even though, the negative effects of gender role socialization against females appear to have diminished over the years (U. S. department of education, 1996; cited in Carter & Wojtkiewicz, 2000), the above evidence indicates that it puts female in a position of relative disadvantage.

In their study, Carter and Wojtkiewicz (2000) revealed that parents were involved in the education of their daughters more than sons. However, studies conducted by Keith et al., (1998) and Shaver and Walls (1998) showed no

significant difference in parental/family involvement between boys and girls. Though, there have been inconsistencies about parental involvement in connection to gender (Carter, 2000; Keith et al., 1998; Shaver & Walls, 1998), the above deduced evidence pin-point to the fact that parents are more likely to partake in the education of their male children than their female children. Thus, when parents are confronted with the challenge of choosing between their male and female children in terms of educational support and involvement, it is assumed that male children would be the beneficiaries.

### **3.3 Parental Home Involvement**

Parental involvement in the learning activities of the home has been identified as one of the most productive ways of promoting and enhancing the educational achievement of children. This means that parents who do engage in the home learning activities invariably are able to spend productive time with their children. More recent research about parental involvement suggests that parent/family involvement at home has a more significant effect on children than parental/family involvement in school activities (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow, & Fendrich, 1999; Trusty, 1999). The United States Department of Education (1994) has stated that the learning and behavior of children are promoted when their families perform the following activities or tasks; use television judiciously, schedule times for daily homework, read together, converse with their children, monitor their out-of-school activities, establish a daily routine, communicate positive values, and express high expectation and the offering of praise and encouragement for their success.



There are several evidence that buttress the positive impact of some of the actions and practices of parents such as participation in the educational and social life of the child (Henderson, 1987; Henderson & Berla, 1994), reinforcement of school achievement (Epstein, 1987; Fantuzzo et al., 1995), encouragement of school attendance (Sheats & Dunkleberger, 1979), encouragement to succeed (Steinberg et al., 1992), and the provision of reading materials in the home (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994). Simon (2001) collected data from 11,000 parents of high school seniors. The results showed that irrespective of students' background and prior achievement, various parenting, volunteering, and home learning activities positively influenced students grades, course credit completed, attendance, behavior, and school readiness.

There has been the development and production of a lot of school-based programs that are directed at enhancing the academically productive features of the home environment due to the notion that the effectiveness of parental involvement in the home will lead to children's eventual educational achievements. In their study, Hickman et al (1995) produced evidence about the potency of parental involvement strategies within the home environment. The study was meant to find out the relationship between students' high school achievements and various kinds of parental involvement. Out of the seven types of parental involvement indicators analyzed, it was revealed that only home-based parental involvement had a positive connection with the students' grade point average. However, this finding is in contrast to the findings by Shumow and Miller (2001) who found out that parental involvement in the home was negatively related with the students' academic GPA, but found a positive correlation between parental home involvement and the

students' school orientation. They also found out that parents of low-achieving adolescent students are more likely to be involved at home than parents of successful students.

In their study in which they examined data from the massive high school and beyond sample of 28,051 seniors to ascertain both the direct and indirect impacts of television viewing, homework, and the perception of students about parental involvement in their daily lives, school advancement, and influence on their plans after high school, Fehrmann, Keith, and Reimers (1987) and Keith, Reimers, Fehrmann, Pottebaum, and Aubey (1986) discovered that the perception of the students about parental involvement in their lives was positively correlated with the grades of high school seniors, but not with their standardized test achievements. These inconsistencies in the literature on the findings about the impact of parental involvement on the academic achievement of adolescent students are puzzling and worrisome, and as such call for more research so that researchers could figure out the underlying reasons.

The ways and manner through which parents are able to positively influence the educational success of their children should not be looked at only from the pro-school activities that parents perform in the home. This is to say that parents do not only influence their children learning through activities that they perform in the home environment, but also via their roles as positive role models and the emphasis they place on education and learning. In other words, what parents communicate to their children as regards the usefulness and importance of education and learning is very vital and crucial in influencing them to appreciate the value of education. There is countless number of evidence that link children educational outcomes to some process variables within the family. Some of these process variables that have been found to be connected to

educational achievements consist of the aspirations and expectations of parents (Seginer, 1983), the use of motivational practices (Gottfried, Fleming, & Gottfried, 1994), and parenting style (Dornbusch et al., 1987).

In their attempts to ensure that their children succeed in their educational pursuit, parents are expected to provide equal support to their children. But, it is a fact that these supports that are provided by parents do differ in some ways. These differences arise as a result of differences in socioeconomic backgrounds of the parents, the gender and age of the child, the ability of the child (Carter, 2000; Keith et al., 1986), and the educational level of the parents (Dornbusch et al., 1986; Majoribanks, 1987). As a result of these differences, it is likely that the support provided for children within a given household would not be necessarily the same. Although, these differences do exist, and serve as a challenge to parents, they are capable and thus do make a great and tremendous impact on the educational success of their children.

### **3.4 Parental Involvement in the School**

Parental involvement in the activities of the school has received attention in recent times. This development might be due to the impact that the involvement of parents in the activities of their children's school has on their children's school success. According to Elam, Rose, and Gallup (1994), areas of parental involvement within the school that have received tremendous attention and support consist of attendance at meetings in connection to school related problems, attendance at plays, concerts, and sporting events, and attendance at school board meetings..

Several studies have documented the importance and centrality of parental involvement in the school. Brittle (1994) has stated that children, schools, and parents themselves benefit when they are allowed to volunteer, act as audience for programs, and/or partake in the decision making process of the school. In a study conducted by Shumow and Miller (2001), it was revealed that parental involvement at school was positively correlated with academic grade point average. Atunez (2000) in her study affirmed that language minority students and English Language Learners in particular, are more likely to succeed when their parents participate in their education by attending school events, collaborating with teachers, serving as volunteers, or participating in school governance.

A survey conducted by Dornbusch (1986) revealed a strong connection between the degree of parental engagement in school activities and their children's grades irrespective of the educational level of the parents. These studies corroborate the findings by Stevenson and Baker (1987) who found that parental involvement itself has a significant impact on school performance despite the fact that the mothers' educational level was a strong predictor of parental involvement. This finding insinuates that in spite of the educational background of parents, their involvement in their children's school activities has the propensity of influencing their achievement results. Studies conducted by Eccles & Harold (1993) and Shumow & Miller (2001) have indicated that parents of high achieving students are more likely than parents of average or struggling students to participate in school governance and school activities.

Also, there is a lot of evidence which insinuate that parents who engage themselves in the activities of the school have children who have better attendance at school (Sheats et

al., 1979), higher achievement motivation (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994), and better behavior (Fantuzzo et al., 1995). Of course, these developments could be attributed to the keen interest that parents show in the activities of the school and the value they place on the education of their children. These children might see their parents as positive role models whose interest and desire are to ensure their educational success and their survival in this overwhelmingly competitive world.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Snow et al., (1991) in which 32 children from low-income households were observed in order to juxtapose home and school characteristics that influence their literacy achievement, revealed that formal school involvement was the most significant correlate of all literacy skills. In their explanation of the finding, they insinuated that the impact of formal parental involvement on academic achievement could be due to (1) the information that parents are provided with about the school environment, (2) the demonstration to the children about the value of school, and (3) the elevation of the child's potential in the eyes of the teacher.

### **3.5 Outcomes of Parental Involvement**

Extensive literature has shown that parental involvement in schooling relates to children's academic success or achievement (e.g., Epstein, 1992; Paulson, 1994). As indicated by Redding (2006), "there is substantial evidence that family engagement in children's learning is beneficial" (p. 149). Parental involvement can take various forms such as presence at school, communicating with teachers, or assisting at home with home work, among others (Epstein, 1992). There is enough conclusive evidence as regards the benefits of parental involvement on academic achievement at the basic level of education

(Barnard, 2004; Epstein, 1992). At the secondary school level, however, there have been some inconsistencies in the research literature about findings in respect to the impact of parental involvement on adolescents' school achievements.

Some of the studies have however, insinuated both positive and negative correlations between activities of parental involvement and school performance. In their respective studies, Lee (1994) and Deslandes (1996) observed a negative relation between parent-teacher interactions and school achievements. They insinuated that communications between parents and teachers were likely to occur in the event of the adolescent going through some problems in school. Shumow and Miller (2001) observed in their study that parental involvement at home was negatively correlated with the academic grade point average and math and science standardized achievement test scores even after controlling for parental education level and the previous school adjustment of the children. This negative correlation between parental home involvement and academic GPA appears to be in contradiction to most studies which suggest that parental home involvement positively correlates more with educational achievement as compared to parental involvement in the school (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; Hickman et al., 1995; Trusty, 1999). This negative correlation between parental home involvement and academic grade point average has been explained to be due to the difficulty level of the work that are done by both middle and high school students, and also the view that parents give more support to students who are struggling in school than those who are doing well. Another reason that has been deduced is parents' inability to consistently help the children to do their work correctly ([www.lewiscenter.org/research/pivachieve](http://www.lewiscenter.org/research/pivachieve) ).

On the other hand, there are several studies that have revealed the positive impact of parental involvement on children's school achievements. The notion that parental involvement has positive impact on the academic achievements of students is so overwhelming that it cannot be overlooked. As a result of this perception, policy makers (Van Meter, 1994; Wagner and Sconyers, 1996), school administrators (Khan, 1996; Wanat, 1994), parents (Dye, 1992; Schrick, 1992), and even students (Brian, 1994; Choi et al., 1994), have accepted and embraced the idea that parental involvement is very crucial for children's academic success (Akimoff, 1996; Edwards, 1995; Ryan, 1992). Parental involvement has been found to have a significant positive impact on student outcomes that permeate across the elementary, middle, and secondary school years. Studies conducted by (Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, & Bloom, 1993; Trusty, 1999) have revealed the enduring effects of parental involvement on the educational career of students throughout the grades. Simon (1999) found that although study habits, attitudes, and behavior patterns may be set by a student's senior year, an adolescent's success is influenced by their family through the last year of secondary school. Generally, studies have revealed a positive correlation between parental involvement and the academic achievements of students. For instance, researchers have shown that parental involvement has a positive effect on the grades and math test scores of adolescent students (Deslandes, 1996; Muller, 1998), decreases the dangers of a student dropping out of high school (Teachman et al., 1996), has a positive impact on the grades of seniors in the high school and the amount of time they assign to homework (Fehrmann, Keith, & Reimers, 1987), better student attendance (Henderson et al., 1986), more successful transitions to higher grades (Trusty, 1999), Higher rates of homework completion (Christenson, 1995),

improved student motivation (Christenson, Rounds & Gorney, 1992), increased self-esteem (Christenson, Rounds & Gorney, 1992), greater perceived competence (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994), leads to more positive school attitudes, higher aspirations, and other positive behaviors (Epstein, 1992), builds a foundation for future success (Keith et al., 1998), and help in the placement of students in high ability math groups (Useem, 1992).

Furthermore, parental involvement in the education of their children has been found to be beneficial to the parents themselves. For instance, it increases the interaction between parents and their child (Epstein & Dauber, 1991), the provision of positive changes in parenting styles (Hornby, 2000), soars the levels of parental self-esteem, self-efficacy, and empowerment (Griffith,1998; Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burrow,1987; Hornby,2000), and motivates parents to further their education (Haynes & Comer, 1996; Hornby, 2000).

Also, research has revealed the beneficial effects of parental involvement to the school. Available research has shown that parental involvement enhances the morale of teachers (Prosis, 1990), raises the level of teachers' sense of effectiveness (Desimone, Finn-Stevenson, & Henrich, 2000), and promotes more successful educational programs (Christenson, Rounds, & Franklin, 1992).

### **3.6 Parenting Styles**

Developmental psychologists have been concerned about how parents influence the development of their children's social and instrumental competence for over a century. One of the most robust approaches in the development of children's social and academic



achievement has been termed "parenting style." In the social science literature, there is enough evidence that suggest that parenting styles are correlated with children's school achievement. For instance, Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, and Fraleigh (1987) found that inconsistency and mixed parenting styles are correlated with lower grades for adolescents.

Parenting is a complex activity that consists of many specific behaviors that work individually and together to influence child outcomes. Even though specific parenting behaviors, such as taking children on excursion or reading aloud may influence children's development, looking at only a specific behavior in isolation may be erroneous. Researchers who try to describe this broad parental milieu depend mostly on Diana Baumrind's typology of parenting style. Parenting style as a construct is used to capture normal variations in parents' attempts to control and socialize their children (Baumrind, 1991). In understanding this definition, two points are very crucial. First, parenting style is meant to describe normal differences in parenting. This is to say that the parenting style model Baumrind developed should not be seen to comprise deviant parenting, such as might be observed in abusive or neglectful homes. Second, Baumrind assumes that normal parenting hinges around issues of control. Although parents may differ in how they try to control or socialize their children, it is assumed that the primary role of all parents is to influence, teach, and control their children.

Parenting style focuses on two major elements of parenting: parental responsiveness and parental demandingness (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Parental responsiveness (parental warmth or supportiveness) refers to the extent to which parents deliberately foster individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive, and

acquiescent to children's special needs and demands (Baumrind, 1991). Parental demandingness also referred to as behavioral control refers to the claims parents make on children to become integrated into the family whole, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts and willingness to confront the child who disobeys (Baumrind, 1991).

### **3.6.1 Parenting Styles and child outcomes**

Grouping parents according to whether they are high or low on parental demandingness and responsiveness creates a typology of four parenting styles: indulgent (permissive), authoritarian, authoritative, and uninvolved (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Each of these parenting styles shows different naturally occurring patterns of parental values, practices, and behaviors (Baumrind, 1991) and a distinct balance of responsiveness and demandingness.

- Authoritarian parenting- It is a very restrictive style of parenting whereby adults impose many rules, expect strict compliance, will rarely explain to the child why it is essential to comply with these rules, and will often depend on punitive, forceful tactics (i.e., power assertion or love withdrawal) to gain compliance. Authoritarian parents are not sensitive to their children's contrasting ideas, expecting instead for their children to accept their word as law and to respect their authority. Authoritarian parents tend to raise obedient adolescents who do not question authority (Baumrind, 1991; Jackson, Henriksen, & Foshee, 1998; Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts, & Dornbusch, 1994), and these adolescents

also tend to have low self-esteem and less social competence in school (Jackson et al., 1998). In other words, verbal give-and-take between parent and child is discouraged. Authoritarian parents can be categorized into two types: nonauthoritarian-directive, who are directive, but not intrusive or autocratic in their use of power, and authoritarian-directive, who are highly intrusive (Darling, 1999). Baumrind's study of preschool children observed that such a type of parenting style was related to low levels of independence and social responsibility. Baumrind later described the authoritarian style as been high in demandingness on the part of the parents and low in parental responsiveness to the child. In another study which focused on children between the ages of 8 and 9 years old (Baumrind, 1971, 1973), she observed that the authoritarian pattern, high in demandingness and low in parental responsiveness, had different consequences for girls and for boys. Girls, who came from authoritarian families, were more socially assertive. For both sexes, intrusive-directiveness was associated with lower cognitive competence (Dornbusch et al., 1987). Children and adolescents from authoritarian families (high in demandingness, but low in responsiveness) tend to perform moderately well in school and be uninvolved in problem behavior, but they have poorer social skills, lower self-esteem, and higher levels of depression (Darling, 1999). On a more specific note, adolescents from authoritarian homes are more likely to report positive school performance as compare to their counterparts from neglecting parenting homes but not to those from

authoritative parenting homes (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Jackson et al., 1998).

- Authoritative parenting- A more flexible style of parenting in which parents permit their children considerable freedom, but are careful to provide reasons for the restrictions they impose and will ensure that the children follow these laid down procedures. Authoritative parents are responsive to their children's needs and ideas and will often seek their children's views in family deliberations and decisions. But, they expect that their children abide with the restrictions they deem as essential and will use both power, if need be, and reason (i.e., inductive discipline) to ensure that they do. The female children of authoritative parents in the preschool sample were socially responsible and more independent than other children. Male children were also as independent as the other children were, and they seemed to be socially responsible. Between the ages 8 and 9, both male and female children of authoritative parents were high in social and cognitive competence (Baumrind, 1991; Weiss & Schwarz, 1996). Baumrind (1991) avers that, "unlike any other pattern, authoritative upbringing....consistently generated competence and deterred problem behavior" (p.91). Authoritative parenting has been found to be an essential factor in an adolescent's life in comparison with the other parenting styles. Authoritative parenting has been seen as the most effective in enhancing personal and social responsibilities in adolescents, without constraining their newly formed autonomy and individuality (Glasgow, Dornbusch, Troyer, Steinberg, and Ritter, 1997). Several studies have documented the positive impact of authoritative parenting style on academic

achievement. These studies have indicated that parental authoritativeness is associated with higher academic achievements (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Slicker, 1998; Steinberg, Dornbusch, & Brown, 1992). Steinberg, Brown, Cazmarek, Cider, and Lazarus (1988) observed that authoritative parenting facilitates school achievement. The empirical results of Steinberg and associates (1992) revealed that authoritative parenting and parental involvement in schooling are positively correlated with adolescents' school success, while parental encouragement to succeed is negatively correlated with adolescents' school achievement. Dornbusch and colleagues (1987) have found out that adolescents raised by authoritative parents, when compared with adolescents raised by authoritarian parents, have higher levels of academic performance in high school. But, other researchers, example, Jackson et al., (1998) observed that authoritative parenting style was positively associated with academic success for European and Mexican Americans but was not related to Asian and African Americans' academic achievements. More over, several researchers (e.g., Amato & Gilbrett, 1999; Dornbusch et al., 1987; Slicker, 1998; Steinberg et al., 1994) have shown that authoritative parenting is associated with a less propensity of disruptive behavioral practices.

- Permissive parenting (Indulgent) - It is a warm but lenient pattern of parenting in which parents make relatively few demands, allow their offspring to freely express their feelings and impulses, use as little punishments as possible, make few demands for mature behavior, do not closely monitor their children's activities, and rarely exert firm control over their behavior (Dornbusch, et al.,

1987). Baumrind observed in the study of his preschool children that children of permissive parents were immature, lacked impulse control and self-reliance, and showed a lack of social responsibility and independence. In the follow-up studies of children between the ages of 8 and 9 years, she found that these children were low in both social and cognitive competence (Dornbusch et al., 1987).

- Uninvolved parents- It is an extremely lax, uncontrolling approach exhibited by parents who have either rejected their children or are so inundated with their own stresses and problems that they don't have enough time or energy to devote to the child rearing process (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Even though, children of uninvolved parents lack both social and academic competence, they also tend to be very hostile and rebellious adolescents who are vulnerable to such antisocial or delinquent acts as alcohol and drug abuse, truancy, sexual misconduct, and a variety of criminal offences (Darling, 1999; Patterson et al., 1989). These children also report lower levels of self-esteem, peer acceptance, self-control, and also more likely to report substance use and being engaged in an aggressive act (Baumrind, 1991; Jackson et al., 1998; Slicker, 1998; Steinberg et al., 1994). According to Slicker (1998), "high school students who rated their parents as neglectful or permissive participated in significantly more problem behavior...than those students who rated their parents as authoritative" (p.361).

### **3.6.2 Parenting Styles as Context for Parental Involvement**

Baumrind's (1971) seminal work on the categorization of parenting styles has been instrumental in influencing research on parenting and its impact on children and adolescents. She identified three types of parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. Authoritative parenting which is an assemblage of parenting attributes that consist of emotional support, high standards, appropriate autonomy granting, and unequivocal, bidirectional communication has been proven to assist children and adolescents develop an instrumental competence distinguished by the balancing of societal and personal needs and responsibilities. Some of the marks of instrumental competence include responsible independence, cooperation with adults and peers, psychological maturity, and educational success (Baumrind, 1989, 1991a; cited in Darling & Steinberg, 1993). But, in spite of its remarkable consistencies in the socialization literature, it has become convincingly clear that the impact of authoritative parenting, together with the other parenting styles-authoritarian, permissive, and involved, differs in relation to the social context within which the family is located or situated.

Although, the beneficial effects of parental authoritativeness have repeatedly been proven for white samples with regard to both personal and interpersonal adjustment variables, as well as school-related variables, these impacts have not always been found for ethnic minorities (Dornbusch, et al., 1987; Steinberg, et al., 1991). For example, Baumrind's (1971) early work insinuated that authoritative parenting has beneficial effects on European- American families in enhancing the psychological health and academic achievement of adolescents. Latterly, several studies from the western world

have also observed differentially beneficial impact of parental authoritativeness as juxtaposed with the authoritarian or permissive styles on some adolescent outcomes—psychological competence, self-esteem, self-reliance, and academic competence and adjustment (Carlson, Uppal, & Prosser, 2000; Lamborn, et al., 1991; Steinberg, Elmen, & Mounts, 1989; Steinberg, et al., 1994). Based upon Baumrind’s typology of parenting styles, authoritative parenting has been documented as being the unsurpassed parenting style in connection with children’s outcomes. But, in some studies that used non-Caucasian samples, significant effects of authoritarian parenting style have been found. For instance, Baumrind (1972) reported that authoritarian parenting, which is associated with fearful, timid behavior and behavioral compliance among European-American children, is associated with independence/assertiveness among African-American girls. Also, Gonzalez, Greenwood, and Hsu (2001) observed that mothers’ authoritarian parenting style was related to mastery orientation among African-American undergraduate students. In connection with school-related variables, Park and Bauer (2002) reported that the positive association between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement was supported only in the case of the majority group (European Americans), but not supported in the case of the minority group (Hispanics, African-Americans, or Asian-Americans). In their study Blair and Qian (1998) found that parental control was positively associated with school performance of Chinese adolescents.

Based upon the above review, it is very important to look at the impact or effects of parenting style from the context within which the person or individual is embedded. Due to the differences in the impact of parenting styles on children’s outcomes as a result of



differences in cultures, Darling and Steinberg (1993) developed an integrative model-parenting style as context which conceptualized parenting style as a context that moderates the influence of specific parenting practices on the child. They argued that in order to fathom the processes through which parents influence their children's development, researchers must maintain a distinction between parenting style and parenting practice. They defined parenting practices as behaviors defined by specific content and socialization goals. Examples include attending school functions and spanking a child. On the other hand, they defined parenting style as a constellation of attitudes towards the child that are communicated to the child and provide an emotional climate in which the parent expresses their behavior. These behaviors consist of aspects of the behaviors that include parenting practices as well as other aspects of parent-child relationship that communicate emotional attitude but are not goal directed or goal defined-body language, tone of voice, inattention, among others. According to the authors, global parenting style is manifested partly via parenting practices, because these are some of the behaviors from which children make inferences about the emotional attitudes of their parents. In the model, both parenting practices and parenting styles are seen as resulting in part from the goals and values parents hold but then each of these parenting attributes affects the development of the child through different processes. Parenting practices have a direct impact on the development of specific child behaviors (e.g. Academic performance) and characteristics (high self-esteem). Thus, parenting practices are the mechanisms through which parents directly assist their children to achieve their socialization goals. On the flipside, the primary processes through which parenting style affects the development of the child are indirect. Parenting style changes

the faculty of the parent to socialize their children by altering the effectiveness of their parenting practices. From this view point, parenting style could best be seen as a contextual variable that moderates the relationship between particular parenting practices and specific development outcomes.

**Summary-** In sum, the above evidence shows the important role parents/families play in the education of their children and the academic gains and successes that are chalked which are very beneficial to the future success and survival of the children in this competitive world.

Even though, there have been some inconsistencies in the parent involvement literature as regards the positive impact of parental involvement on school achievement, which have been attributed to the different definitions that have been used to represent the construct- parental involvement, and the flaws in some of the methodologies that have been used in some of the studies among others, the evidence in the literature still remains clear that parental involvement is a powerful tool that brings the best out of children of all grades. Against this backdrop, schools must put in place effective measures that would bring on board parents to partake in the education of their children. Invitations to involvement by the school must be devoid of discrimination and thus the school climate must be welcoming to parents from different socio-economic backgrounds.

It seems that authoritative parenting (warmth and moderate parental control) is the parenting style that is closely associated with positive developmental outcomes. Children obviously need love and boundaries- a set of rules that enable them to structure and assess their conduct. Without such a direction they may not learn self-control and may

become quite selfish, unruly, and deficient in clear achievement goals. But if the guidance the children receive becomes too much and are hemmed in by restrictions, they may have few chances to become self-reliant and may lack confidence in their own decision-making abilities. Also, due to the fact that parenting styles produce different effects on students' outcomes base on the cultural background of the family, it will be proper if the analysis of the contribution of parenting styles on students' achievement is put within a context.

## **4 Adolescence**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Adolescence is a time of life from onset of puberty to full adulthood. The exact period of adolescence, which varies from person to person, falls approximately between the ages 12 and 20 and encompasses both physiological and psychological changes. Physiological changes lead to sexual maturity and usually occur during the first several years of the period. This process of physical changes is known as puberty, and it generally takes place in girls between the ages of 8 and 14, and boys between the ages of 9 and 16. In puberty, the pituitary gland increases its production of gonadotropins, which in turn stimulate the production of predominantly estrogen in girls, and predominantly testosterone in boys. Estrogen and testosterone are responsible for breast development, hair growth on the face and body, and deepening voice. These physical changes signal a range of psychological changes, which manifest themselves throughout adolescence, varying significantly from person to person and from one culture to another. Psychological changes generally include questioning of identity and achievement of an appropriate sex role; movement toward personal independence; and social changes in which, for a time, the most important factor is peer group relations. Adolescence tends to be a period of rebellion against adult authority figures, often parents or school officials, in the search for personal identity. Adolescents feel a constant tug between their willingness to break away from their parents and realizing how dependent they are on them. Adolescents' conflicting feelings are usually matched by their parents' ambivalence. Caught between wanting their children to be independent and at the same time wanting them to be dependent,

parents in most cases find it difficult to let go. According to Montemayor (1983) family dissension soars during early adolescence, becomes stable for a while, and decreases after the adolescent reaches 18 years. Most of the tensions result from arguments about mundane issues like schoolwork, friends, chores, among others. Many psychologists regard adolescence as a byproduct of social pressures specific to given societies, not as a unique period of biological turmoil. In fact, the classification of a period of life as “adolescence” is a relatively recent development in many Western societies, one that is not recognized as a distinct phase of life in many other cultures (Hine, 1999).

## **4.2 Adolescent Cognitive Development**

Cognitive development refers to the development of the ability to think and reason. Children between the ages of 6 and 12 develop the ability to think in concrete ways (concrete operations) such as how to combine (addition), separate (subtract or divide), order (alphabetize and sort), and transform (change things such as 1 euro = 100 cents) objects and actions. They are called concrete because they are performed in the presence of the objects and events being thought about.

Adolescence marks the beginning of development of more complex thinking processes including abstract thinking, the ability to reason from known principles, the ability to consider many points of view according to differing criteria, and the ability to think about the process of thinking. This dramatic change in the thinking of adolescents from concrete to abstract gives them a whole new set of mental tools.

The alterations in the way adolescents think, reason, and fathom could be more dramatic than their apparent physical changes. They now have the ability to analyze

situations logically in terms of cause and effect and to consider hypothetical situations and employ symbols, such as in metaphors, imaginatively (Piaget, 1950). According to Keating (1990) this higher-level thinking provides them with the ability to think about the future, assess alternatives, and set their own goals. Although there are significant individual differences in cognitive development among adolescents, these new capabilities enable them to partake in the kind of self-examination and mature decision making that once transcended their cognitive capability (APA; 2002).

Even though few significant changes have been observed in the cognitive development of adolescent as regards gender, it seems that adolescent boys and girls vary in their confidence in certain aspects of cognitive abilities and skills. Whilst adolescent girls tend to be more assured about their reading and social skills, adolescent boys also tend to be more assured about their athletic and math skills (Eccles et al., 1999). They have observed that the tendency to conform to gender stereotypes, instead of the discrepancies in capabilities appears to be what brings about the variations in their confidence levels.

In spite of the fact that adolescents develop the capacity to think on a higher level on a fast note, most of them still need guidance from their parents and other adults to develop their potential for making rational and informed decisions. In taking important and landmark decisions about certain areas of their lives such as attending college, finding a job, inter alia, adolescents prefer to consult with their parents or other grown-ups (Eccles & colleagues, 1993; cited in APA, 2002). Although, there is the existence of growing physical and psychological separation between adolescents and their parents, research indicates that throughout adolescence parents continue to influence their adolescents

(Rutter, 1980) and adolescents maintain a high degree of love, loyalty, and respect for their parents (Greenberg, Siegel, & Leitch, 1983; Troll & Bengston, 1982). It behooves on parents and these adults such as teachers to cash in this openness and trust reposed in them by the adolescents in order to guide them as they struggle with difficult decisions in their lives. Since the ability to make critical and important decisions is a major challenge that the adolescents are confronted with, it is incumbent on parents to help them so that the decisions they make would be beneficial to their future progress and success. Fischhoff and colleagues (1999) have stated that one of the ways through which adults can help adolescents is to assist them expand their gamut of alternatives so that they can look at multiple perspectives. Due to the fact that adolescents who make abrupt decisions are more prone to be engaged in dangerous behaviors, adults could assist them to carefully weigh their options and consider their effects. That is why it is very important for parents to be proactive in the education of their adolescent children. By being out and about in the education of their adolescent children, parents become aware of the problems they are going through and can therefore provide them with the support and assistance they need to succeed. The parents who take the trouble in finding out the difficult challenges their adolescent children are facing stand a better chance in helping them to overcome these challenges than those who are apathetic to the course of their children's education.

### **4.3 Adolescent Learning Disabilities**

Adolescents who have learning disabilities are normally bright, creative, and capable, but have neurological, behavior, or emotional issues that affect their performance in certain areas- reading, math, social skills, etc. An adolescent might be performing very well in one area, but very poor in another. These differences in performance normally put parents and teachers in a dilemma. They find it difficult to figure out why their child who is performing so well in one subject is so weak in another. The failure of parents and teachers to identify the learning disabilities of adolescent children could lead to the failure of the adolescent in school and in the world. When parents and teachers are not able to identify a learning disability earlier on in the lives of their children, they normally realize that the child's problems increase tremendously after they have passed puberty.

Learning disabilities refer to disorders that affect the capability to interpret what one sees and hears or to connect information from different parts of the brain (Neuwirth, 1993). Persons with learning disabilities may have problems with reading, spoken language, writing, arithmetic, or reasoning. Without careful observation and assessment, some youths with learning disabilities may be misconstrued as having behavior problems, and the cognitive problems underpinning their behavioral problems may be ignored (APA, 2002).

In high school, adolescents whose learning disabilities are not identified are usually disruptive, unhappy, and frustrated. They have not developed the necessary skills to keep up with their peers, and thus damage their self-esteem. These adolescents are not less intelligent than their peers, but rather have specific emotional, behavior, or neurological issues that demand specific interventions and teaching techniques to let them succeed in



school. Adolescents with learning disabilities are reported to go through intense emotional distress at rates 2 to 3 times higher than other adolescents, with daughters being more likely to experience these problems as compared with their male counterparts (Svetaz, Ireland, & Blum, 2000). In addition, adolescents with learning disabilities are more likely than adolescents in the general population to report having attempted suicide in the past year or to have been involved in violence. They are at especially high risk for these negative outcomes if they are going through emotional difficulties. For adolescents with learning disabilities, feeling connected to family and school and having a religious identity are all factors identified to be associated with lower risk for negative outcomes such as emotional distress, suicide attempts, and involvement in violence. Therefore, families, schools, and other institutions have significant roles to play in shielding these adolescents from disastrous consequences (Svetaz et al., 2000; cited in APA, 2002).

#### **4.4 Adolescent-Parent Relationship**

The family serves as the foremost initial context within which children learn both appropriate and inappropriate interaction styles. Relationships and behavioral trends in the home reasonably provide the platform for those that happen outside the home. Both school achievement (Hess & Holloway, 1984) and social functioning (MacDonald & Parke, 1984), mainly among adolescents, seem to be related to the relationship between parent and child.

Researchers (e.g., Amato, 1993; Emery, 1988; & Fincham, 1998) in explicating the disastrous consequences of parental divorce indicated that conflict and antagonism between biological parents play a significant role. Inter-parental conflict and parental

divorce are not mutually exclusive; they exist or occur concurrently. Inter-parental conflict may directly affect children, and is likely to weaken their emotional security in the family (Davies et al., 2002). Simultaneously, a substantial amount of evidence has revealed a spillover of inter-parental conflict into the parent-child relationships (Erel & Burman, 1995; Krishnakumar & Buehler, 2000). It appears that the tensions that occur between the parents are carried over into the parent-child relationship and contribute to increase negativity and lower levels of parental support which are made available to the children. These kinds of soared hostility and negativity in parent-adolescent relationship offer a very strong explanation about the disastrous consequences of inter-parental conflict on children's and adolescents' functioning (Harold & Conger, 1997; Harold et al., 1997). The conflicts between parents and adolescents during the period of adolescence have the tendency of soaring, more especially, between adolescent girls and their mothers. The conflict at this stage seems to be very essential due to its ability of making them independent from their parents whilst at the same time discovering novel ways of staying in touch with them (Steinberg, 2001). It has been found that daughters in particular, seem to uncover new ways of staying connected with their mothers (Debold, Wessen, & Brookins, 1999). In their quest for discovering novel ways of relating, girls may be clumsy and appear to be rejected. This development could lead to the eventual withdrawal of mothers which could then usher in a chain of mutual separation which in some instances are arduous to bring back to normalcy. Strommen (1974) observed in his study that 20% of the youths surveyed attested that there were some kinds of family turmoil. Inadequate communication between parents and adolescents coupled with the perception that their parents do not fathom them were some of the examples of the

problems in a family. Hall (1984) attested that conflict between parents and adolescents hinges around three basic or fundamental concerns: communication difficulties, poor problem-solving skills, and poor negotiation skills. Incidentally, family research has been directed at family interactions as meted by the amount of “talk time” and conflict. Whilst these interactions are essential components of the parent-adolescent relationship, they do not inevitably echo the affective dimensions. Walker and Thompson (1983) have contended that when researchers run short of distinguishing among contact, aid, and intimacy, they presume that the amount of interaction is synonymous to the quality of interaction and that material exchange is synonymous to emotional exchange.

The conflicts between parents and adolescents tend to rise with younger adolescents (Lauren, Coy, & Collins, 1998). There are two types of conflicts that usually occur: Spontaneous conflict over day-to-day matters, like the clothes the adolescent is permitted to buy or put on and if homework has been done, and conflict over essential matters, like academic achievement. The spontaneous conflict that happens on daily basis appears to be more disturbing to parents than it does to the adolescents (Steinberg, 2001). Parents are normally concerned with interactions that are conflict ridden, interpreting them to be rejections of their values or as signs of their unsuccessfulness as parents. On the other hand, adolescents may view the interaction as less important, which is another way of telling the parents that they are individuals. Steinberg (2001) has stated that parents must fathom that minor conflicts are normal and that these give-and-take do not mean that they are not effective parents. Amato (1994) studied mother and father relationships to young adults, and the results of his study showed that a close relationship with the parents influenced the young adults’ happiness, life satisfaction, distress, and self-esteem.

Because of its essentiality, intimacy has been given prominence in a lot of studies. In point of fact, researches into social support have proven that quality relationships can mediate the effects of crises and the promotion of positive mental health (Gottlieb, 1981; Whittaker & Garbarino, 1983). LeCroy (1988) revealed that father-adolescent intimacy was found to be related to self-esteem and problem behavior. Again, the study showed that father intimacy is a better predictor of adolescent development as compared with mother intimacy. Greenberg and colleagues (1983) in their evaluation of the significance of parents and peers in their study indicated that parental relationships were a more powerful predictor of self-esteem than peer relationships. Thus, it seems that the most effective parents are those who are warm and involved in their children's wellbeing, provide strict guidelines and boundaries, have the right and suitable expectations about the development of their children, and spice them to develop their own beliefs. Parents within this genre rely on the use of reasoning and persuasion, explanation of rules, discussion of issues, and listening to their children. Parents with this style of parenting seem to have adolescents who perform well in school, report less depression and anxiety, obtain higher scores in measures of self-reliance and self-esteem, and are less likely to be involved in delinquent behaviors and drug abuse (Carlson et al., 2000; Dornbusch et al., 1987; Steinberg, 2001). But it should be appreciated that there could be variations in the level of parental supervision and monitoring that are essential in ensuring sound adolescent development due to the characteristics that are situated in the adolescent's peer and neighborhood environments. For example, the setting of stricter boundaries may be convenient for adolescents who reside in neighborhoods where the level of parental

monitoring is relatively low, the level of risk being high, and higher levels of behavioral problem among peers, such as high crime communities (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2000).

**Summary:** The above review has clearly indicated the need for parents or the family to be involved in the life course of adolescents. Due to the biological and physiological changes that occur in their bodies at this period and also coupled with their desire to gain independence and autonomy from their parents, it is very important for parents to be involved so that they are not left on their own. Parents are needed to explain and advice them about some of the new biological developments emerging in their lives. They could also be helpful in terms of their academic activities and relationship with peers by providing them with guidelines that will serve the purpose of making them stay focus on their target. Since adolescents are confronted with the challenges of making decisions about their life at this stage in their development, it is advisable for parents to draw closer to them and provide them with the resources-support and guidance they need in order to make better and informed decisions. Failure of the parents to be proactive in the life course of their adolescent children could be a recipe for disaster in the whole development-academic, emotional, social, psychological, etc. of the adolescents.

## **5 The Ghanaian Educational System**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Formal education in Ghana preceded colonization. The first schools were established by European merchants and missionaries. During the colonial period, a formal state education structure was modeled on the British system. This structure has been through a series of reforms since Ghana gained its independence in 1957. In the 1980s, further reforms have brought the structure of the education system closer to an American model.

The first nationalist government headed by Nkrumah, introduced an accelerated plan for educational development. With legislation, he made primary education free and compulsory. Before this time, most of the schools belonged to religious bodies or the communities themselves and parents paid for school. Government took over the management of schools. The 1961 Education Act made elementary schools (junior secondary or middle) free and compulsory. Students began their 6 year primary education at the age of six. They then moved on to 4 years elementary/middle school. They again moved on to a 5 year secondary education, followed by 2 years of college preparatory education. It took 17 years to complete the pre-university education; however, some were allowed to complete it earlier, if they were academically ready. At the time of independence in 1957, Ghana had only one university and a handful of secondary and primary schools. Ghana's educational System is highly centralized. The Ministry of Education and its agencies are responsible for the entire educational system in the country. Entrance to universities is by examination following completion of senior

secondary school. A National Accreditation Board began in 1990. It is in charge of accrediting programs in all national institutions.

In 1987, Ghana's Ministry of Education introduced a restructured educational system that gradually replaced the British-based O-level and A-level system. The transition was completed in June, 1996, when the last class took A-level exams. The last O-level exams were administered in June 1994, although remedial exams were offered through 1999. The educational reform affected all Ghanaian schools, both public and private. The Senior Secondary School curriculum, including syllabi, schedules, exams, marking systems, and to some extent textbooks, is determined by the Ministry of Education and is identical in all 500 Ghanaian secondary schools ([www.lehigh.edu](http://www.lehigh.edu)).

## **5.2 Educational Policy**

The educational system in Ghana consists of 6 years of primary school, 3 years of junior secondary school (which forms 9 years of basic education) followed by 3 years of senior secondary school. This constitutes 12 years of pre-tertiary education. Tertiary education consists of 3 to 4 years of training at the Polytechnics, Teacher Training Colleges and other training institutions and university education. Children commence school at the age of 6 years. Basic Education is compulsory and free and it is compulsory for the pupils to complete the 9 years of primary and junior secondary schooling. Secondary education is not compulsory.

It should be noted that the Ministry of Education has introduced a new educational reform which was implemented on September 1, 2007. It starts with two years of kindergarten for pupils at age four; six years of primary school at which the pupil attains

age 12; to be followed by three years of Junior High School (JHS) till the pupil is 15 years. After the junior high school, the student may choose to go into different streams of the four years of Senior High School (SHS) which would offer General Education with electives in General, Business, Technical, Vocational and Agricultural Education options for entry into Tertiary Institutions or the job market.

### **5.3 Pre-School Education**

There are few pre-schools in the country. Only about 30% of children of age-group 3-6 years have access to a nursery or kindergarten education before entering the formal school. Pre-school education is desirable but not compulsory. These schools are established by private individuals, communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), churches etc. The Ghana Education Service (Ministry of Education) has a few model pre-schools in the districts and regions.

### **5.4 Primary Education**

Ghanaian children enter Class One (first grade) during the calendar year in which they reach their sixth birthdays. For the first three years, teaching may be entirely in English or may integrate English and local languages. The majority of teachers are certified, having graduated from three-year Teacher Training Colleges. Children are taught to read in English, and all textbooks are in English.



## **Objectives of the Primary Education System**

- Numeracy and literacy i.e. the ability to count, use numbers, read, write and communicate effectively;
- Laying the foundation for inquiry and creativity;
- Development of sound moral attitudes and a healthy appreciation of Ghana's cultural heritage and identity;
- Development of the ability to adapt constructively to a changing environment;
- Laying the foundation for the development of manipulative and life skills that will prepare the individual pupils to function effectively to their own advantage as well as that of their community;
- Inculcating good citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in national development.

### **5.5 Junior Secondary Schools**

Junior Secondary School comprises Forms 1 through 3 (grades seven through nine). Admission is open to any student who has completed primary class six; there are no entrance exams, and junior secondary schools are part of the country's nine-year Basic Education scheme to which all Ghanaian children are entitled to. Junior secondary schools are usually sited on the same compounds as primary schools, and the school year for both systems runs for forty weeks. The majorities of junior secondary school teachers are trained and certified teachers from the countries teacher training colleges. Some graduate teachers are also found on Junior Secondary School staff.

At the end of JSS Form 3 (ninth grade, fifteen years of age), about two hundred thousand students take the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). In 1998, the number of subjects examined was reduced from eleven or twelve to nine or ten, French being the optional subject. The Basic Education Certificate Examination is administered and graded by the West Africa Examination Council; grading is on a descending 1-9 scale and consists of Continuous Assessment grades submitted by the student's school (30%) and the BECE national exam (70%).

Admission to the Senior Secondary School is based solely on the Basic Education Certificate Examination results. In most of the competitive senior secondary schools in Ghana, a student may have to get grade one in all nine or ten subjects to gain admission to those schools.

Under the new education reform program which began in 1987, the Junior Secondary School is to give pupils a broad-based education including pre-disposition to technical and vocational subjects and basic life skills which will enable the pupils to:

- Discover their aptitudes and potentialities so as to induce in them the desire for self-improvement.
- Appreciate the use of the hand as well as the mind and make them creative and self-employable.

## **5.6 Senior Secondary School**

Senior Secondary School (SSS) consists of Forms 1 through 3, equivalent to the American grades ten through twelve. The new Senior Secondary School reform was

developed in response to criticism that, in the past, this level of education has been overly academic and removed from the country's development and manpower needs.

Education at this level is designed to cater for students of ages 16 to 18 years and lasts for 3 years after the completion of 9 years of basic education. The reform included a core curriculum to be followed by all Senior Secondary students along with five specialized programs, two or more of which will be offered in each school. Students will have to select one specialized program within which they will follow one option consisting of a package of three subjects.

The core curriculum originally consisted of seven subjects studied throughout the three year senior secondary period: English, Science, Mathematics, Agricultural and Environmental Studies, Ghanaian Language (9 different languages offered), Life Skills (renamed Social Studies in 1999) and Physical Education. Beginning with the class of 1998, the core curriculum was reduced to six subjects: English, Integrated Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, Physical Education, Religious and Moral Education. Students are examined only in the first four of these subjects.

In addition to the above core curriculum, each student entering Senior Secondary School first chooses one of the programs and then selects a group of Elective subjects from that program, as below. Through the class of 1998, each student took three Electives; beginning with the class of 1999, students may choose to take four Electives.

- General Arts: Literature in English, French, Ghanaian Languages (11), Economics, Geography, History, Government, Christian or Islamic Religious Studies, Music. The elective English Language course was discontinued after 1998.

- General Science: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics (advanced)
- Agriculture: General Agriculture (soil science, crop science, animal science, farm management), Farm Mechanization, Horticulture, Agricultural Economics & Extension.
- Business: Introduction to Business Management, Accounting, Typing, Clerical Office Duties, Business Math & Principles of Costing.
- Technical: Technical Drawing & Engineering Science, Building Construction, Woodwork, Metalwork, Applied Electricity, Electronics, Auto Mechanics.
- Vocational:
- Home Science: Management in Living, Clothing & Textiles, Foods & Nutrition.
- Visual Arts: General Knowledge in Art, Basketry, Leatherwork, Graphic Design, Picture Making, Ceramics, Sculpture, Textiles.

At the end of SSS Form 3 (12th grade), all students take the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations (SSSCE). The SSSCE is graded on a descending scale of A through F, with A-E as passing grades. Entrance into any of the countries universities is based on the successful completion of the Senior Secondary School with an aggregate of between 6 and 24.

### **Objectives of the Senior Secondary School System**

- To reinforce and build on knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired at the Junior Secondary School level.
- To produce well developed and productive individuals equipped with the qualities of responsible leadership capable of fitting into a scientific and technological

world and to contribute to the socio-economic development of their own areas and country as a whole.

- To increase the relevance of the content of the curriculum to the culture and socio-economic problems of the country ([www.ghanaembassy.or.jp/educational](http://www.ghanaembassy.or.jp/educational)).

### **5.7 Major Highlights of the 2007 Educational Reforms**

- Universal Basic Education shall now be 11 years, made up of:
  - 2 years of Kindergarten
  - 6 years of Primary School
  - 3 years of Junior High School (JHS)
- The medium of instruction in kindergarten and lower primary will be a Ghanaian language and English, where necessary.
- At the basic level, emphasis shall be on literacy, numeracy, creative arts and problem solving skills.
- After junior high school (JHS), students may choose to go into different streams at senior high school (SHS), comprising general education and technical, vocational and agricultural and training (TVET) or enter into an apprenticeship scheme with some support from the government.
- A new 4-year SHS will offer general education with electives in general, business, technical, vocational and agriculture options for entry into a tertiary institution or the job market.
- Technical, vocational and agricultural institutions will offer 4-year courses including the core SHS subjects.

- Teacher training colleges will be upgraded and conditions of service of teachers improved, with special incentives for teachers in rural areas.
- Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) shall be responsible for the infrastructure, supervision and monitoring of basic and senior high schools.
- A new National Inspectorate Board (NIB) outside the Ghana Education Service (GES) but under the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (MOESS) shall be responsible for periodic inspection of basic and secondary schools to ensure quality education.
- Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) and cost-sharing at the senior high and tertiary levels shall be maintained.
- Educational services will be widened to include library and information, guidance and counseling and distance education.
- The Private Sector will be encouraged to increase its participation in the provision of educational services.
- Greater emphasis will be put on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Science and Technology.
- Special Needs Education will be improved at all levels ([www.ghana.gov.gh](http://www.ghana.gov.gh))

## 6 Hypotheses

This chapter is going to focus on the hypotheses of the study. Five main hypotheses are going to be considered for this study. These are:

1. Family financial hardship, parental occupation, parental education (SES), family structure, gender, nature of school, and program of study are likely to predict the extent of parental involvement in their children's education.
  - Family financial hardship- The financial strength of a family has been found to determine the level of parental involvement. This is based on the premise that parents who are financially incapacitated, and as such going through psychological and emotional problems are restricted in their ability to provide effective parenting. Low-income individuals suffer from higher levels of psychological distress due to the fact that they experience more negative life events and suffer from higher levels of persistent economic stress (McLeod & Kessler, 1990; McLoyd, 1990). McLoyd (1990) has described a model in which conditions of poverty and economic loss augment parents' psychological distress, which reduces parents' capacity for involving themselves in their children's activities, which in turn contributes to the poorer or compromised socioemotional functioning among their children. Living in poverty may expose parents to a host of stressful life events (e.g., family illness, inadequate housing) over which they are impotent in averting. When families are entangled in the web of poverty and persistent psychological distress, they are very likely to employ harsh discipline and physical punishment and less likely to be

supportively and affectionately involved with their children. In his study of white children of the great depression (Elder, 1979; Elder, Nguyen, & Caspi, 1985), revealed that fathers who were hit by severe financial loss became more irritable, tense, and explosive, which led to an increase in the propensity of being punitive toward their child. These negative behaviors exhibited by the fathers were prognosticative of socio-emotional problems in the child. In their studies, Patterson, DeBarsyshe, and Ramsey (1989) showed clearly that stressful events increase psychological distress in mothers and produce alterations in family and childrearing practices. The increased use of aversive, coercive discipline by distressed mothers tends to add to the antisocial behavior in the child. Economic stress is associated with worse mental health, consisting of higher levels of depression and anxiety and lower levels of self-esteem, which has the potential of limiting parents' capability of providing cognitively rich interactions with their children (Garrett, Ng' andu, & Ferron, 1994; Takeuchi, Williams, & Adair, 1991). It is thus true that the inability of parents to get involved in the education of their children could be attributed to their limited economic resources (e.g., Conger et al., 1994; McLoyd, 1990). This situation is not different from Ghana. In fact, Pryor and Ampiah (2003a & 2003b) indicated in their study that one of the reasons why some of the parents did not deem it fit to be involved in the education of their children was as a result of their financial difficulties. In a country where about 44.8% of the population lives on less than one dollar a day



([www.womankind.org.uk](http://www.womankind.org.uk) ), it is likely that parental involvement in the education of their children will be low. As a result, parents who are wealthy are more likely to be involved in the education of their adolescent children than poor parents.

Thus, it is assumed that parents who are financially sound are more likely to be involved in the education of their children than their counterparts who are not financially sound (Pryor & Ampiah, 2003a & 2003b).

- Parental occupation- Another factor that triggers parental involvement is the occupational status of the parents. Dauber and Epstein (1989) have indicated that working-class parents are more involved in their children's home learning activities and are not likely to be involved in the activities of their school. This finding corroborates that of Ho (1999a, 1999b) which revealed the attitude of discrimination within educational institutions which is shown against working-class parents by excluding or preventing them from partaking in the education of their children. According to Hanafin and Lynch (2002), in spite of the fact that working-class parents were interested, were-abreast and concerned about the education of their children, they felt excluded from partaking in the decision-making process of the school management and organization, about issues that affected them personally and economically, and about the success of their children. Research has revealed that though teachers seek equable involvement from parents from various classes, parents of upper-middle –class are usually

more directly involved in both their children's home and school education than lower and working-class parents (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1987; Ballantine, 1993). In Ghana where the rate of literacy is 53.9% and a major part of the population falls within the working class category ([www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn)), it is expected that working class parents would involve themselves less in the education of their children as compared to upper and middle class parents.

Thus, flowing from the above discussion, it is assumed that upper and middle-class parents would be more involved in the education of their children than lower and working-class parents (Ballantine, 1993; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1987).

- Parental education- The educational status of parents is one of the family characteristic variables that have been found to predict the extent of parental involvement. This insinuates that parents who are lettered or educated are more likely to partake in the learning process of their children than the unlettered or uneducatered. Finders & Lewis (1994) listed a variety of reasons that function as stymies to parental involvement (difficulty in getting permission from work, cultural differences with the teachers, psychological barriers due to personal academic failures), which are related to the socio-economic status and the educational level of the particular parent. In their study, Baker and Stevenson (1986) disclosed that educated mothers were in tune with their children's school performance,

had more contacts with their teachers, and were more likely to have provided intervention, should there have been the need in order to supervise their children's educational success. Again, Stevenson and Baker (1987) indicated that the educational status of the mother is connected to the extent of parental involvement in the education of their children, so that parents who are highly educated are more involved. Davis-Kean's (2005) study insinuated that the amount of schooling that parents receive has an effect on how they structure their home environment and how they interact with their children to promote academic achievement. Abd-El-Fattah (2006) revealed in his study among Egyptian adolescents that parental education was the second best predictor of parental involvement in their children's school activities. In their study in a village community in Ghana, Pryor and Ampiah (2003a & 2003b) disclosed that the category of parents who were involved in the school activities of their children were the literates.

In line with the above evidence, therefore, it is assumed that highly educated parents in Ghana would be more involved in the education of their children than lowly educated or illiterate parents (Pryor & Ampiah, 2003a & 2003b).

- Family structure- Family structure is a family context variable that is likely to affect parental involvement. Family structure- intact or non-intact could determine how much parents are able to partake in the educational

activities of their children. The stress, conflict, and problems that are connected to divorce, put divorced parents in comparison to non-divorced parents, in a position of relative disadvantage as regards the involvement in the educational activities of their children. Several families going through divorce witness a crisis period of a year or more in which the lives of all family members are made uncomfortable (Amato, 2000; Hetherington, 1989; Hetherington, Cox, & Cox, 1982; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980b). Research on the impact of divorce on children's well-being have consistently shown that some of the negative effects come from the reduction in economic conditions following a divorce and the lower earning power of single mothers in general, that is divorced and never married (Entwisle & Alexander, 1995; McLanahan, 1997). All these challenges, coupled with its associated stress are likely to prevent parents from being effective, efficient, and responsible. This situation could be one of the reasons why children from divorced families perform worse on measures of academic achievement as compared with those who live with their biological parents. These arguments insinuate that when it comes to parental involvement in children's school activities, parents from intact families will be more actively involved than those from non intact families. In their study, Trusty and colleagues (1997) reported that family structure predicted parental involvement, though weakly. Also, Grolnick and colleagues (1997) revealed that although mothers from single parent families were less engaged on all three dimensions (individual, contextual,

institutional) than those in two-parent families, only school involvement was lower when SES was held constant. Similarly, according to Flay (2002), family structure does predict parental involvement to the extent that single parents are less likely to actively participate in their children's school.

From the foregoing, it is assumed that parents from intact families will be more involved than their counterparts from non-intact families in their children's education (Flay, 2002; Grolnick, et al., 1997; Trusty et al., 1997).

- Child gender- Research has shown that parents in most cases show favoritism towards their male children over their female children. Thus, in spite of the quest of society to ensure gender equality, the tendency of parents to put their male children on the front burner still persists. For example, research has shown that fathers are more involved with their male children (Harris & Morgan, 1991). Research has revealed the male bias nature of the traditional socialization practices in our societies, which always offer sons greater opportunity for independence and success at the expense of daughters (Eccles et al., 1990; Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 1994). Wigfield & Eccles (1994) have noted that females, during adolescence, suffer a decrease in self-esteem which negatively affects their expectations and achievements. The differences in gender in relation to educational achievements have been documented in the literature. Studies conducted by authors (Catsambis, 1994; Entwisle, 1994) insinuate that

parents' incongruity in the treatment of their daughters and sons as regards their education increase as they reach the higher grades on the academic ladder. Studies have revealed the disastrous consequences that gender bias has on daughters. Wigfield and Eccles (1990) have observed that in comparison to their male counterparts, female students have been found to have lower self-concepts with regard to their math ability. Hanson (1994) revealed that among high school seniors who exhibited precocious talents, daughters were found to be more likely than sons to aspire for a college degree, but fell short of their belief about their ability to attain their desire. Madam Agnes Agrobah, a teacher at the Damango primary school in Ghana has disclosed that parents withdraw their daughters from school, especially during the farming season to care for the home whilst they go to the farm ([www.ghanaweb.com](http://www.ghanaweb.com), 2007). Flowing from the above discussion and the evidence established, it is expected that when parents are faced with the option of choosing between their male or female children as regards the involvement in their education, male children would be preferred.

Thus, it is assumed in this study that parents are more likely to be involved in the educational activities of their sons than their daughters.

- Nature of school- According to Hoover-Dempsey and colleagues (2005) the perception parents have about the demands on their time and energy, particularly as connected to their work and other family obligations

contribute to the extent of their involvement in their children's schooling. Parents whose nature of work consists of stiff scheduling, have more than one job, and spend long hours on their jobs, tend to be less engaged, particularly at school as compared with parents with more flexible jobs and more reasonable work hours (e.g., Garcia Coll et al., 2002; Griffith, 1998; Machiada et al., 2002; Pena, 2000; Weiss et al., 2003). In Ghana where parents need to travel several kilometers in order to attend Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, sporting activities, etc. of their children in boarding schools, it is likely that they would be less involved in the education of their children in boarding schools as compared to those in full-day schools.

Thus, it is assumed that parents will be more involved in the education of their children in full-day schools than those in boarding schools.

- Program of study- The knowledge and skills that parents have in relation to what their children learn have been found to be a predictor of their participation in the education of their children (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1987, 2005). Research has shown that parents are less involved in the education of their adolescent children due to the difficult nature of the work they do. Several studies conducted by researchers such as (Adams & Christenson, 2000; Dauber & Epstein, 1993; Grolnick, Kurowski, Dunlap, & Hevey, 2000) have indicated that the assistance parents give to their children about homework plummets as children's subject gets closer to or

overrides the knowledge of the parents. Thus, when parents feel that the level of their knowledge is not enough to assist their children with their school work as their school work becomes more difficult and sophisticated, they are likely to be less involved. This means that parental involvement could be triggered by the nature of the program the student pursues. Base on the above review, it is likely that parents are more likely to be involved when the program the student pursues is easier as compared to a difficult program like general science, business, accounting, etc.

Thus, it is assumed that parents will be more involved when the student studies vocational studies as compared to general science, business, and general arts.

2. Parental involvement in their children's home and school activities will correlate with their children's academic achievement. More contemporary child development theories agree that both a child's genetic constitution and his environment play a significant role in change and growth. Theories now concentrate on the role played by each and the extent to which they interact in ongoing development. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory zeros in on the quality and contexts of the child's environment. He articulates that the interactions within these environments become sophisticated as the child develops. This complexity could arise due to the growth and maturation of the child's physical and cognitive structures. Thus, the question as to what the environment that surrounds the child does to promote or hinder the continued



development of the child is addressed by this theory (Paquette & Ryan, 2001). Further more, researches (e.g., Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, & Bloom, 1993; Trusty, 1999) have established the far-reaching benefits of parental involvement on the educational success of students at all grades.

In line with his theory of the influence of the environment in shaping the life of the individual, and the countless number of evidence which indicate the positive impact of parental involvement on the educational success of children, it is assumed that parental involvement in the education of their children in Ghana will lead to tremendous dividends in the educational achievements of their children.

3. Authoritative parenting style will correlate positively with adolescents' academic achievement. Authoritative parents are responsive to their children's needs and ideas and will often seek their children's views in family deliberations and decisions. Baumrind (1991) declares that, "unlike any other pattern, authoritative upbringing....consistently generated competence and deterred problem behavior" (p.91). Authoritative parenting has been found to be an essential factor in an adolescent's life as compared to the other parenting styles. Several studies have documented the positive impact of authoritative parenting style on academic achievement. These studies have indicated that parental authoritativeness is associated with higher academic achievements (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Slicker, 1998; Steinberg, Dornbusch, & Brown, 1992). Steinberg and colleagues (1988) observed that authoritative parenting facilitates school achievement. Dornbusch and associates (1987) have found out that adolescents raised by authoritative

parents, when compared with adolescents raised by authoritarian parents, have higher levels of academic performance in high school. Deslandes (1996) reported a positive relationship between the three dimensions of parenting style (i.e., warmth, supervision and psychological autonomy granting) and school grades.

Thus, in this study it is assumed that authoritative parenting style will positively contribute to the academic achievement of the students.

4. Parental involvement will mediate between the impact of parental authoritativeness and students' achievement. As already discussed under the previous section, authoritative parenting style is a more flexible style of parenting in which parents allow their children a large degree of freedom, but are heedful or meticulous in providing reasons for the restrictions they impose and will ensure that the children follow-through these laid down procedures. Many studies have documented the positive and beneficial impact of authoritative parenting style on children's academic and social wellbeing. Children and adolescents who have authoritative parents rate themselves and are rated by objective measures as more socially and instrumentally competent than those whose parents are non-authoritative (e.g., Baumrind, 1991; Miller et al., 1993; Steinberg et al., 1992; Weiss & Schwarz,1996). Steinberg and colleagues (1992) have documented the mediating role of parental involvement and parental encouragement of academic success in connection with parental authoritativeness and academic success. The results indicated that parental authoritativeness is connected to higher levels of parental school involvement and more encouragement of academic achievements.

Significantly, the analysis of the results revealed that parental involvement as a mediator accounted for the better school performance and stronger school engagement of adolescents from homes which were characterized as authoritative. On the flip side, parental encouragement of academic achievement did not appear to have a direct impact in promoting adolescents' academic performance or engagement once parental involvement was taken into consideration. This finding supports the integrative model- parenting styles as context proposed by Darling and Steinberg (1993). They argued that parenting styles moderate the impact of parenting practices (parental involvement) on students' outcomes. This is to say that parental involvement in the educational success of their children depends to an extent on the authoritativeness of their parents. In other words, the positive effects of authoritative parenting style on the academic success of the children could be mediated by the involvement of the parents in the educational activities of their children.

Thus, in this study, it is assumed that parental involvement will mediate between their authoritativeness and the academic success of their adolescent children.

5. Parental involvement is likely to decrease from childhood to adolescence. Sanders and Epstein (2000) have revealed that even though adolescents need more freedoms as compared to younger children, the need for guidance and support of the elderly in the home, school, and community during this period in their lives is very essential. Unfortunately, despite its significant contributions to the educational achievement of students, it has been observed that parental/family

involvement in education tends to decrease across middle and secondary school, due to adolescents' increasing desire for autonomy (Jessor, 1993), changes in school structure and expectation (Eccles et al., 1993), and the difficult nature of the work adolescents do (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Lee (1994) observed that high school parents as juxtaposed with middle school parents are fewer to maintain communication with their adolescent children and their teachers, to attend school programs, to get involved in learning activities at home, to discuss about school, and to attend a school meeting. Since about half of the Ghanaian population are illiterates ([www.state.gov/r/pa/ei](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei)), and coupled with the difficult nature of the work adolescents do, it is likely that parents will be less involved in the education of their adolescent children.

As a result of this observation, it is assumed that parental home and school involvement in the educational activities of their adolescent children is going to decrease.

## **7 Methods and procedure**

The purpose of the study was to find out about the impact of parental involvement on the educational achievement of their adolescent children. It took into cognizance both parental home and school involvement activities and how these activities enhance and promote the students' school success. In trying to find out this connection between parental involvement and school success, the students and teachers were asked to fill out two separate questionnaires. These two groups were considered for the study to try as much as possible to achieve some amount of consistency in the findings. This chapter looks at a description of the methodology of the study, the sample, the instruments used in the collection of data, and the procedures followed. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the procedures that were used in analyzing the data.

### **7.1 Sample and Settings**

The sample for the present study was drawn from three senior secondary schools or high schools in the central region of Ghana. Only second year and third year (final year) students were used in the study. Of the three schools, two are located in Cape Coast, the capital city of the region and the third one is situated in a nearby town called Assin Manso. The schools are; University Practice Secondary School, Ghana National College-both located in Cape Coast and Assin Manso Secondary School-located at Assin Manso. Cape Coast, which is usually referred to as the citadel of education in the country is home to some of the best and finest schools in Ghana. It is situated 165 kilometers west of Accra-the capital of Ghana on the Gulf of Guinea. It has a population of 82,291 according

to the 2000 census. In all, 239 adolescent students who were randomly selected from these three schools made themselves available for the study out of their own volition after an announcement was made by the teachers soliciting interested participants for the study. A brief description of the schools that took part in the study would suffice here.

- Ghana National College: It is one of the finest schools in the country. It was established on the 15th of July, 1948 through the initiative of the first president of the Republic Of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. The initial student population at the time of the establishment of the school was 40 students and had 5 teachers. Presently, the total student population stands at 1482. This consists of 916 girls and 566 boys. Out of this number, 47 students, representing 3.20% was used in this study. It has both boarding and day facilities. The programs offered by the school are; business, general arts, general science, and vocational studies- which consist of home economics and visual arts.
- University Practice Secondary School: It is a government co-educated day institution which was founded in September, 1976 following an agreement between the university of Cape Coast and the Ghana Education Service. The entire student population is 781, comprising 381 boys and 400 girls. Out of this number, 115 of the students representing 14.7% took part in the study. The programs offered by the school include general science,

business, vocational studies- home economics and visual arts, and agricultural science.

- Assin Manso Secondary School: It was one of the 34 teacher training colleges opened by the Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's Conventions People's Party government in 1965 to help train teachers for the country's expanded educational system. The college was opened on the 26th day of November, 1965 with an enrolment of 80 students made up of sixty men and twenty women and had only two teachers in the persons of Mr. Thomas Edward Kwaku Ahinful, the principal and Mr. N. A. Sarbah. Presently, the school has a population of 1500 students consisting of 810 boys and 690 girls. It has both boarding and day facilities. Out of this number, 77 representing 5.13% took part in the study. The programs offered by the school include general arts, agricultural science, vocational studies- home economics and visual arts, science, and business management.



**Figure 7- 1 Map of Ghana**

## **7.2 Descriptive Statistics**

This section presents some of the demographic variables that were used in the study. These variables include the age of the students, gender, nature of school, nature of household, the educational level and occupational status of the parents, and the marital status of mothers and fathers. Out of the 239 students used in the study, the mean age of the students was 17.57 years ranging from 15 to 20 years. With regard to gender, 45.2% of the students were males whereas 54.8% were females. Thus, the sample had an even distribution of males and females. With respect to nature of school, 48.1% of the students attended a full-day school, whereas 51.9 were enrolled in a day and boarding school.

In connection with nature of household, 62.3% of the students lived in nuclear families, 8.4% lived with single or divorced mothers, 5.9% lived in stepmother families, 3.3% lived with single or divorced fathers, 6.3% lived in stepfather families, and 13.8% lived in other arrangements (sister=(1)0.4%, brother=(3)1.3%, grandmother=(5)2.0%,



grandfather=(4)1.7%, only aunt=(6)2.5%, only uncle=(7)3.0%, aunt and uncle=(6)2.5%, and father's male friend=(1)0.4%).

As regards the educational level of the parents (table 7.1), 14% of the fathers had education below secondary school, 28.1% had education up to the secondary school level, 44.4% had education up to the university level, and 13.5% of the students did not know the educational level of their fathers. About the mothers, 37.5% had education below the secondary school level, 31.0% had education up to the secondary school level, 22.3% had university degrees, and 9.2% of the students were in the dark concerning the educational level of their mothers. Concerning the male guardians, 8.3% had education below the secondary school level, 30.6% had education up to the secondary school level, 52.8% had a university degree, and 8.3% of the students did not know the educational level of their male guardians. 21.9% of the female guardians had education less than secondary school, 50.0% had education up to the secondary school level, 12.5% had university degree, and 15.6% of the students did not know the educational level of their female guardians. A closer look at the figures for the fathers and mothers reveal that the fathers are higher educated than the mothers and also a large portion of the mothers have education less than secondary school. A similar trend is evident between the male and female guardians. The male guardians are more educated as compared with the female guardians. This scenario points to the skewness of educational attainment between males and females. It looks like males aspire to achieve more and higher educational laurels than their female counterparts.

Also the occupational status of the parents (table 7.2) shows that 12.9% of the fathers belonged to the upper class, 43.3% belonged to the middle class, 41.5% belonged to the

working class, 1.8% was unemployed, and 0.6% of the students did not know the occupational status of their father. About the mothers, 7.1% belonged to the upper class, 23.4% belonged to the middle class, 67.9% belonged to the working class, and 1.6% was unemployed. Concerning the male guardians, 13.9% were with the upper class, 30.6% were with the middle class, 52.8% were with the working class, and 2.8% was unemployed. For the female guardians, 21.9% belonged to the middle class, 75.0% belonged to the working class, and 0.6% was unemployed. None of them belonged to the upper class. A critical look at the figures show that majority of the mothers are found within the working class bracket as compared to the fathers. As regards the male and female guardians, the figures reveal the same trend as a lot of the female guardians as compared with the male guardians are found within the working class bracket.

Finally, the marital status of the fathers and mothers (table 7.3) shows that 87.1% of the fathers were married, 4.7% were divorced, and 8.2% were remarried. About the mothers, 81.0% were married, 10.9% were divorced, and 8.2% were remarried. This trend reveals that the rate of divorce between mothers and fathers is higher for the mothers as compared to the fathers.

**Table 7- 1 Parents' Education Level**

<b>Education Level</b>	<b>Father</b>		<b>Mother</b>		<b>Male Guardian</b>		<b>Female Guardian</b>	
	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Less than secondary school	14.0	24	37.5	69	8.3	3	21.9	7
Secondary school	28.1	48	31.0	57	30.6	11	50.0	16
University	44.4	76	22.3	41	52.8	9	12.5	4
Don't know	13.5	23	9.2	17	8.3	3	15.6	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>32</b>

**Table 7- 2 Parents' Occupational Status**

Occupational Status	Father		Mother		Male Guardian		Female Guardian	
	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency
Upper Class	12. 9	22	7. 1	13	13. 9	5	-	-
Middle Class	43. 3	74	23. 4	43	30. 6	11	21. 9	7
Working Class	41. 5	71	67. 9	125	52. 8	19	75. 0	24
Unemployed	1. 8	3	1. 6	3	2, 8	1	3. 1	1
Don't know	0. 6	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	100	171	100	184	100	36	100	32

**Table 7- 3 Mothers and Fathers' Marital Status**

	Father		Mother	
	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency
Married	87. 1	149	81. 0	149
Divorced	4. 7	8	10. 9	20
Remarried	8. 2	14	8. 2	15
Total	100	171	100	184

### **7.3 Measures**

The instruments used in the present study were all student and teacher self-report measures. Although the reliability of using self-report measures has been an issue of contention, the finding that people's thoughts and behaviors are affected not from mere reality, but their perception of it provides the basis for using self-report measures in the study.

#### **Obtaining Measures**

The instrument that was used for gathering the data for the study was a questionnaire. This instrument asked for specific factual information concerning the students' former and current living situation. The demographic variables that were gathered for the study were: nature of school, grade, program of study, age, gender, family structure, parental education, and parental occupation.

#### **Authoritative Parenting**

The authoritative parenting scale was developed to measure the degree of authoritativeness of the parents (Steinberg et al., 1991). It has three major components or dimensions: acceptance/involvement, firm control, and psychological autonomy granting. The original scale has a total of 36 items representing the 3 dimensions of the variable. The first dimension, acceptance/involvement has a total of 15 items with an alpha coefficient of 0.72. The second dimension which assesses parental monitoring and control has a total of 9 items with an alpha coefficient 0.76. The third dimension, psychological autonomy granting which assesses the degree to which parents use noncoercive,

democratic discipline and encourage the adolescent to express individuality within the family has a total of 12 items with an alpha coefficient of 0.72.

In the present study, 9 out of the original 36 items were used to measure the extent of parental authoritativeness. That is 3 items of each of the dimensions of acceptance/involvement, firm control, and psychological autonomy granting were taken and adapted to measure parental authoritativeness. The items were measured on a five-point likert scale ranging from 1-never to 5-always. Due to the nature of the study, the authoritativeness of four parental figures was measured or assessed. These were mothers' authoritativeness, fathers' authoritativeness, female guardians' authoritativeness, and male guardians' authoritativeness. The overall alpha coefficient of the authoritativeness mothers' scale is 0.606 (N=183). The overall fathers' authoritativeness scale has an alpha coefficient of 0.67 (N=170). The overall alpha coefficient of the female guardians' authoritativeness scale is 0.77 (N=32). The last but not the least of the parental figure is the authoritativeness of the male guardians. The overall alpha coefficient of this scale is 0.63 (N=36). Listed below are the items of the three subscales:

- Acceptance/Involvement- "How often do you count on your parents to help you if you have some kind of a problem?", "How often does your family do something fun together?", "How often do your parents help you out when you have problems with your peers or friends?"
- Firm control- "How much do your parents try to know where you go at night?", "In a typical week, how often do your parents prevent you from staying out deep into the night?", "How much do your parents really know what you do with your free time?"

- Psychological autonomy granting-“How often do your parents tell you that their ideas are correct and that you should not question them?”, “How often do your parents make you feel bad if you don’t do something right?”, “How often do your parents answer your arguments by saying something like ‘You will know better when you grow up’?”

### **Parental Involvement in Childhood**

This scale was self-developed and was used to measure the extent of parental involvement when the student or adolescent was a child. The students were familiar with the items since they consist of activities that parents perform in connection with their education. It was used to measure the four parental figures of mothers, fathers, female guardians, and male guardians’ involvement. The scale was measured on a five-point likert scale ranging from 1-almost never to 5-very often. The items on the scale are: “My parents used to read to me when I was a child”, “My parents used to help me with my homework when I was a kid”, “My parents used to restrict my leisure activities anytime I made a poor grade when I was a child”, “My parents used to discuss my school progress with me when I was a kid.” The total number of items on this scale is four. The alpha coefficients for the mothers’ scale is 0.72 (N=184). The fathers scale has an alpha coefficient of 0.75 (N=171). The female guardians’ scale has an alpha coefficient of 0.72 (N=32). The alpha coefficient for the male guardians’ scale is 0.74 (N=36).

### **Parental Home Involvement**

This scale was self-developed and was used to measure the extent of parental home school-related activities of the participants. The items on the scale were familiar to the students since they consist of activities that parents do in connection with their education. It was used to measure the four parental figures of mother, father, female guardian, and male guardian involvement in the home. The scale was measured on a five-point likert scale ranging from 1-almost never to 5-very often. The items on the scale are: “My parents discuss my school progress with me”, “My parents go on outings with me”, “When I need help about my homework, my parents help me”, “My parents grant me certain privileges whenever I make a good grade.”, “My parents make sure that I do my homework”, “My parents motivate me to try harder when I make a poor grade”, and “My parents offer to help me when I make a poor grade.” In all, seven items were measured on this scale. The alpha coefficients are: Mother=0.82 (N=184), father=0.80 (N=171), female guardian=0.90 (N=32) and male guardian=0.77 (N=36).

### **Parental School Involvement**

This scale was self-developed and was used to measure the extent of parental school involvement activities of the participants. The students were familiar with the items since they are made up of activities that parents perform in connection with their education. It was used to measure the four parental figures of mother, father, female guardian, and male guardian involvement at the school. The scale was measured on a five-point likert scale ranging from 1-almost never to 5-very often. The items on the scale are: “My parents discuss my school progress with my teachers”, “My parents visit me at school”,



“My parents attend organized functions of the school such as speech and prize giving days.”, “My parents attend my School’s Parent Teacher Association meetings”, “When there is a sporting activity in my school, my parents attend”, “My parents have arranged for private classes for me.” A total of six items were measured on this scale. The alpha coefficients are: Mother=0.77 (N=184), father=0.72 (N=171), female guardian=0.85 (N=32) and male guardian=0.73 (N=36).

### **Teacher Rating of Parental School Involvement**

This scale was a self-developed one and was used to measure teacher ratings of parental school involvement activities of their adolescent children. The teachers were familiar with the items since they consist of activities that parents perform in relation to the education of their children. It was used to measure the four parental figures of mother, father, female guardian, and male guardian involvement at the school. The scale was measured on a five-point likert scale ranging from 1-almost never to 5-very often. The items on the scale are: “The parents discuss their child’s school progress with me”, “The parents visit their child at school”, “The parents attend organized functions of the school such as speech and prize giving days.”, “The parents participate in Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings.”, “The parents provide learning materials for their child”, “The parents attend organized sporting activities of the school”, and “The parents enroll their child in ‘private classes’.” A total of seven items were measured on this scale. The alpha coefficients are: mother=0.74 (N=184), father=0.75 (N=171), female guardian=0.86 (N=32) and male guardian=0.84 (N=36).

### **Perceived Academic Competence (PAC)**

The Perceived Academic Competence scale was designed by Alasker (1989) to measure self-evaluations directly related to the academic area. The original scale was a seven- item, six-point likert scale. In the present study, the PAC was adapted by reducing the number of items from seven to five, on a four-point Likert Scale ranging from “not true” to “exactly true”. The items on the scale include: “I am satisfied with my school achievements”, “I am fairly good at solving tests at school”, “I understand most of what we have to learn at school”, “When it comes to important tests at school, I am usually successful” and in order to obtain reasonably good results at school, I have to work harder than others in my class”. The alpha coefficient of the original scale was 0.86. But for the present study, the alpha coefficient of the scale is 0.60 (N=239).

### **Financial Pressure Scale**

This scale is a nine item scale translated from the German version developed by Schwarz and colleagues (1997). The original scale came from Conger et al., (1994). The items on the scale are answered on a four point response format ranging from 1=not true to 4= exactly true. In this study it was used to measure the financial hardship of the adolescents and their families. The scale is divided into three distinct sub-components and each component has three items. The first, second, and third sub-components of the scale measure the perception of the children about their parents’ financial situation, their own financial restrictions, and how they see their financial resources in comparison with their peers respectively. Listed below are the items on the scale: “We have enough money for everything that we need”- this item was reversed coded, “My parents are often

worried whether they can pay their bills or not”, “We often run out of money”, “When I need materials for school, we sometimes don’t have the money for them”, “I cannot do certain activities with my friends due to lack of money”, “I often have to give up things because my family has to restrict its expenses”, “My school mates have better clothes than I do”, “My peers usually have more money for activities than I do”, and “I cannot afford buying as many things as my peers.” The scale has a reliability of 0.80.

## 7.4 Presentation of the Variables, Reliabilities and Authors of the Instruments

Table 7- 4 List of Variables and Reliabilities of the Instruments

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Reliabilities</b>
<b>Authoritative Parenting</b>	
Mother	0.61
Father	0.67
Female Guardian	0.77
Male Guardian	0.63
<b>Parental involvement in Childhood</b>	
Mother	0.72
Father	0.75
Female Guardian	0.72
Male Guardian	0.74
<b>Parental Home Involvement</b>	
Mother	0.82
Father	0.80
Female Guardian	0.90
Male Guardian	0.77
<b>Parental School Involvement</b>	
Mother	0.77
Father	0.72
Female Guardian	0.85
Male Guardian	0.73
<b>Teacher Ratings of Parental Involvement</b>	
Mother	0.74
Father	0.75
Female Guardian	0.86
Male Guardian	0.84
<b>Perceived Academic Competence</b>	0.60
<b>Family Financial Pressure</b>	0.80

## **7.5 Procedure**

Data collection for the study began in January, 2007 immediately after the students were back from recess. To begin the process, a written permission was sent to each of the headmasters of the three participating schools requesting their schools to be used as the population of the study. After the headmasters had acquiesced to the request, they communicated my mission to the teachers of their schools and some of them voluntarily consented and undertook the study. After agreeing to partake in the study, the teachers informed the students of their respective schools about the study, and those who voluntarily and willingly consented to be involved in it, were randomly selected from the various programs offered by the schools.

The questions answered by the students were to find out how their parents partook in their educational activities when they were kids, and also their current home and school involvement activities and their impact on their academic or educational achievements. In line with this, each teacher was also requested to respond to questions about parental school involvement relating to an individual student. To ensure that the teachers give a fair account or assessment of the students, teachers who were designated as form teachers or masters were used in the study since they are familiar with the students in their class and the fact that they are the first point of call when the headmasters need information about a particular student. To make the work of the teachers a bit easier in providing information about individual students and also making sure that the information provided by them refers to that student, the students and teachers' questionnaires were coded with the same values. This means that a teacher with a code number of for example A on their questionnaire responded to a student with a code number of A on their questionnaire.

After responding to the questions or items, the teachers were also asked to provide the academic grades of the students in the core subject areas-math, English, general science, and social studies. The scores from these subject areas were aggregated and the average score was used for the study. Because the teachers needed time to calculate the academic scores of the students for one academic year- terms I, 2, and 3, the data gathering process took a period of two and a half months to be completed. The completed questionnaires were mailed to me within the first week of May and the data were entered on SPSS two weeks later. A few of the questionnaires from one of the schools (Ghana National College) were rejected because the teachers failed to relate their questionnaires to that of the students who were under their care or control. For making time out of their busiest schedules to take part in the study, the teachers who took part in the study were given a thank you gift in monetary form as my appreciation to their sacrifice and commitment.

## **7.6 Statistical Treatment of the Data**

The data collected from the surveys were analyzed from diverse angles. Descriptive statistics was utilized to present an overall picture of the responses provided by the students. The study made use of parametric methods to address the hypotheses. The descriptive statistics was helpful in gaining insight into the distribution of the measured variables.

Secondly, in order to find out the predictors of parental home and school involvement, regression analysis was employed. The predictor variables were family financial situation, parental occupation, parental education, family structure, gender, nature of school, and program of study.

Thirdly, relationships between variables were analyzed according to the hypotheses. Correlational analyses were used to test for linear relationships among the variables. Students and teachers' ratings of parental involvement and their links to school grades were analyzed by using bivariate correlation. The relationship between parental authoritativeness and the school grades of the students was also analyzed by using bivariate correlation. Also, partial correlation was used to ensure that the relationship that exists between the variables (parental involvement and academic achievement) was not influenced by a third variable or external factor.

Fourthly, multiple regression analysis was employed to address the issue of mediation. It was used to establish whether parental involvement performed a mediating role between their authoritativeness and the school achievement of their adolescent students. In order to achieve this end, a correlation analysis was performed on the three variables to see if they were significantly correlated. Once the correlations among them were found to

be significant, multiple regressions were then conducted to determine whether there was a mediating effect. The mediation approach directly descended from the work of Judd, Baron, and Kenny and has most often been employed by psychologists. Using this approach, the criteria for establishing mediation, which are nicely summarized by Howell (2006), are, based on my hypothesis: 1. Parental authoritativeness must be correlated with academic achievement (School grades). 2. Parental authoritativeness must be correlated with parental involvement. 3. Parental involvement must be correlated with academic achievement, holding constant any direct effect of parental authoritativeness on academic achievement. 4. When the effect of parental involvement on academic achievement is removed, parental authoritativeness is no longer correlated with academic achievement (complete mediation) or the correlation between parental authoritativeness and academic achievement is reduced (partial mediation).

After this, Sobel test calculator was also used to find out whether the mediating variable produced a significant effect ([www.danielsoper.com](http://www.danielsoper.com)).

Finally, in order to find out whether there was a difference between parental involvement during childhood and adolescence, pair sample t-test was employed to achieve that end. T-test was used due to its ability of comparing the means of variables at different time periods.



## **8 Results**

### **8.1 Introduction**

This chapter addresses the results of the study. It deals with the presentation of the results of the analysis as responses to the hypotheses of the study. Listed below are the hypotheses of the study:

1. Family financial hardship, parental occupation, parental education (SES), family structure, gender, nature of school, and program of study are likely to predict the extent of parental involvement in their children's education.
2. Parental involvement in their children's home and school activities will correlate with the children's academic achievement.
3. Authoritative parenting style will correlate positively with adolescents' academic achievement
4. Parental involvement will mediate between the impact of their authoritativeness and their children's academic achievement.
5. Parental involvement is likely to decrease from childhood to adolescence.

## **8.2 Hypothesis 1- Predictors of Parental Involvement**

- Family financial hardship, parental occupation, parental education (SES), family structure, gender, nature of school, and program of study are likely to predict the extent of parental involvement in their children's education.

Regression analysis was conducted to ascertain the factors that motivate or prompt parents to be active in the learning process of their children. The regression analysis was based on the assessment by the students as regards their parents' involvement in their educational endeavors. The reason for using the assessments by the students was due to the fact that the pivot of the study was based on the students' self-report and their views about their parents' involvement in their educational success. Again, against the backdrop of the conflicting results of mothers and fathers' school involvement in the educational success of the students as revealed by the students and teachers, I decided to opt for the views of the students.

The predictor variables that were considered are: parental education, parental occupation, financial situation, family structure (mother & father marital status), gender, nature of school, and program of study.

### **8.2.1 Predictors of Mothers' Home Involvement**

The results of the regression analysis (table 8-1) revealed that of all the predictor variables that were measured- mothers' education level, mothers' occupation, mothers' marital status, financial hardship, gender, nature of school, and program of study, mothers' occupation happened to be the best predictor of mothers' home involvement

( $t(176)= 3.316$ ,  $p= 0.001$ ,  $b= 0.260$ ), followed by nature of school ( $t(176)= 2.928$ ,  $p= 0.004$ ,  $b= 0.209$ ), mothers' marital status ( $t(176)= 2.088$ ,  $p<0.05$ ,  $b= 0.149$ ), and program of study ( $t(176)= 2.040$ ,  $p<0.05$ ,  $b= 0.145$ ) in that order. Mothers' educational level, financial hardship, and gender did not have any significant impact on the outcome variable. The positive correlation between mothers' home involvement and nature of school indicates that mothers are more involved when their children are enrolled in day and boarding schools as compared to when their children are enrolled in full-day schools. As regards program of study, the positive correlation revealed that mothers involved themselves more when the adolescents studied vocational studies than when they studied business, general science, and general arts.

**Table 8- 1 Predictors of Mothers' Home Involvement (N=184)**

	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
Mothers' Education Level	-,031	-,438	,662
Mothers' Occupation (a)	,260	3,316	,001
Mothers' Marital Status (b)	,149	2,088	,038
Financial Hardship	-,060	-,746	,456
Gender	-,026	-,375	,708
Nature of School (c)	,209	2,928	,004
Program of Study (d)	,145	2,040	,043

Dependent Variable: Mothers' Home Involvement

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: married=3, remarried=2, divorced=1

c) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

d) coded as: general science=1, business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4

### 8.2.2 Predictors of Fathers' Home Involvement

The results of the regression analysis conducted (table 8-2) showed that of all the predictor variables measured- fathers' education level, fathers' occupation, fathers'

marital status, financial hardship, gender, nature of school, and program of study, nature of school was the only predictor of fathers' home involvement in the home-school related activities of their children ( $t(163)= 2.163, p<0.05, b= 0.169$ ). The positive and significant correlation of this variable shows that fathers are more involved when their children are enrolled in day and boarding schools as juxtaposed with full-day schools.

**Table 8- 2 Predictors of Fathers' Home Involvement (N=171)**

	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
Fathers' Education Level	,085	1,107	,270
Fathers' Occupation (a)	,170	1,878	,062
Fathers' Marital Status (b)	,003	,038	,970
Financial Hardship	-,100	-1,120	,264
Gender	,026	,335	,738
Nature of School (c)	,169	2,163	,032
Program of Study (d)	,068	,885	,377

Dependent Variable: Fathers' Home Involvement

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: married=3, remarried=2, divorced=1

c) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

d) coded as: general science=1, business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4

### **8.2.3 Predictors of Female Guardians' Home Involvement**

The results of the regression analysis (table 8-3) revealed that of all the predictor variables that were measured- female guardians' education level, female guardians' occupation, financial hardship, gender, nature of school and program of study, none of them was found to be a predictor of their home involvement.

**Table 8- 3 Predictors of Female Guardians' Home Involvement (N=32)**

	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Beta		
Female Guardians' Education Level	-,059	-,275	,785
Female Guardian's Occupation (a)	,162	,723	,477
Financial Hardship	,102	,465	,646
Gender	-,099	-,470	,642
Nature of School (b)	-,205	-,953	,350
Program of Study (c)	,257	1,125	,272

Dependent Variable: Female Guardians' Home Involvement

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

c) coded as: general science=1, business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4

#### **8.2.4 Predictors of Male Guardians' Home Involvement**

The results of the regression analysis (table 8-4) revealed that of all the predictor variables that were measured- male guardians' education level, male guardians' occupation, financial hardship, gender, nature of school, and program of study, program of study was the best predictor of male guardians' home involvement ( $t(29) = 2.896$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ,  $b = 0.422$ ), followed by gender ( $t(29) = -2.614$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $b = -0.366$ ).

**Table 8- 4 Predictors of Male Guardians' Home Involvement (N=36)**

	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Beta		
Male Guardian's Education Level	,280	2,006	,054
Male Guardian's Occupation (a)	,149	,915	,368
Financial Hardship	-,190	-1,155	,258
Gender	-,366	-2,614	,014
Nature of School (b)	-,074	-,489	,628
Program of Study (c)	,422	2,896	,007

Dependent Variable: Male guardians' Home Involvement

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

c) coded as: general science=1, business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4

### 8.2.5 Predictors of Mothers' School Involvement

The results of the regression analysis (table 8-5) revealed that of all the predictor variables that were measured, nature of school was found to be the best predictor of mothers' school involvement ( $t(176) = 5.089$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $b = 0.352$ ), followed by mothers' occupation ( $t(176) = 3.259$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ,  $b = 0.247$ ), and program of study ( $t(176) = 2.488$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $b = 0.171$ ) in that order. Mothers' educational level, mothers' marital status, financial hardship, and gender did not have any significant impact on the outcome variable (Mothers' school involvement). Also the positive correlation between mothers' school involvement and nature of school indicates that mothers involved themselves more when their children are enrolled in day and boarding schools as compared to when their children are enrolled in full-day schools. As regards program of study, the positive correlation showed that mothers involved themselves more when the child studied vocational studies than when they studied business, general science, and general arts.

**Table 8- 5 Predictors of Mothers' School Involvement (N=184)**

	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Beta		
Mothers' Education Level	-,035	-,519	,604
Mothers' Occupation (a)	,247	3,259	,001
Mothers' Marital Status (b)	,116	1,678	,095
Financial Hardship	,012	,160	,873
Gender	-,013	-,188	,851
Nature of School (c)	,352	5,089	,000
Program of Study (d)	,171	2,488	,014

Dependent Variable: Mothers' School Involvement

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: married=3, remarried=2, divorced=1

c) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

d) coded as: general science=1, business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4

### 8.2.6 Predictors of Fathers' School Involvement

The results of the regression analysis (table 8-6) revealed that of all the predictor variables that were measured, only nature of school predicted their involvement in the school activities of their children ( $t(163) = 2.259$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $b = 0.179$ ).

**Table 8- 6 Predictors of Fathers' School Involvement (N=171)**

	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Beta		
Father's Education Level	,030	,387	,699
Father's Occupation (a)	,112	1,214	,226
Financial Hardship	-,021	-,227	,821
Father's Marital Status (b)	,040	,516	,607
Gender	-,054	-,696	,487
Nature of School (c)	,179	2,259	,025
Program of Study (d)	,078	1,009	,314

Dependent Variable: Fathers' School Involvement

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: married=3, remarried=2, divorced=1

c) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

d) coded as: general science=1, business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4

### 8.2.7 Predictors of Female Guardians' School Involvement

The results of the regression analysis (table 8-7) revealed that of all the predictor variables that were measured, none of them was found to be a predictor of female guardians' school involvement.

**Table 8- 7 Predictors of Female Guardians' School Involvement (N=32)**

	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Beta		
Female Guardian's Education Level	,075	,370	,715
Female Guardian's Occupation (a)	,110	,514	,612
Financial Hardship	,230	1,109	,278
Gender	,145	,724	,476
Nature of School (b)	,204	,997	,329
Program of Study (c)	,073	,337	,739

Dependent Variable: Female Guardians' School Involvement

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

c) coded as: general science=1, business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4

### 8.2.8 Predictors of Male Guardians' School Involvement

After the regression analysis had been conducted (table 8-8), it was revealed that of all the predictor variables that were measured, program of study was found to be the best predictor of male guardians' school involvement ( $t(29) = 2.506$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $b = 0.440$ ), followed by their occupational status ( $t(29) = -2.557$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $b = -0.401$ ). This finding suggests that working class male guardians were more involved in the school activities of their children than their upper and middle class counterparts.



**Table 8- 8 Predictors of Male Guardians' School Involvement (N=36)**

	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Beta		
Male Guardian's Education Level	,273	1,823	,079
Male Guardian's Occupation (a)	-,440	-2,506	,018
Financial Hardship	-,229	-1,295	,205
Gender	-,198	-1,317	,198
Nature of School (b)	,062	,378	,708
Program of Study (c)	,401	2,557	,016

Dependent Variable: Male Guardians' School Involvement

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

c) coded as: general science=1, business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4

### **8.3 Hypothesis 2- Relationships between Parental Involvement and Adolescents' Academic Achievement**

- Parental involvement in their children's home and school activities will correlate with the children's academic achievement.

#### **8.3.1 Relationship between Parental Home Involvement and Adolescents' Academic Achievement**

The statistical analysis revealed a positive and significant relationship between mothers and fathers' home involvement and their children's school grades and their perceived academic competence (table 8-9). Mothers' home involvement was highly significantly linked to their children's school grades ( $r=0.409$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). In relation to the students' perception of their academic competence, mothers' home involvement was again significant ( $r= 0.210$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Similarly, the correlation between fathers' home involvement and the students' school grades was significant ( $r=0.412$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). With regard to the students' perception of their academic competence, the correlation was also significant, but weak ( $r=0.179$ ,  $P<0.05$ ). On the contrary, the analysis revealed a non-significant relationship between both male and female guardians' home involvement and the school grades and the perceived academic competence of the students.

The above results, in summary, inform us that in all, the home involvement of biological parents in connection to the academic performance of their children is positively related and significant as juxtaposed with the home involvement of non-biological parents-male or female guardians.

**Table 8- 9 Relationships between Parental Home Involvement and Adolescents' Academic Achievement**

	Student's School Grades	Perceived Academic Competence	Mothers' Home Involvement	Fathers' Home Involvement	Female Guardians' Home Involvement
Perceived Academic Competence	,404**				
	N= 239				
Mothers' Home Involvement	,409**	,210**			
	n= 184	184			
Fathers' Home Involvement	,412**	,179*	,733**		
	n= 171	171	149		
Female Guardians' Home Involvement	-,086	-,037	.(a)	,656*	
	n= 32	32	0	14	
Male guardians' Home Involvement	-,026	-,242	,838**	.a	,681
	n= 36	36	15	0	6

\*\*p< 0.01      \*p< 0.05

a. Cannot be calculated because at least one of the variables is constant

### **8.3.2 Relationship between Parental school Involvement and Adolescents' Academic Achievement**

As regards the relationship between parental school involvement and the school grades and the students' perception of their academic competence, it was unraveled that mothers' school involvement was significant and positively related to the school grades of the students ( $r=0.318$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), but not the perception of their academic competence (table 8-10 below). On the flip side, there was not a significant relationship found between fathers, male guardians, and female guardians' school involvement and the students' school grades and their perceived academic competence. This scenario indicates that when it comes to school involvement in particular, it is the mothers who stand out.

It was also observed that the correlation coefficients of mothers and fathers' home and school involvement in connection with the school grades and perception of academic competence of the students were different. The correlation coefficients of their home involvement were bigger than their school involvement. Also, there was a high and positive correlation between mothers and fathers' home involvement activities ( $r=0.733$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). This high correlation fell drastically to 0.476 when it came to their school engagements. Although this correlation was still significant-  $p< 0.01$ , it insinuates a tail away of parental involvement at the school level.

In conclusion, the hypothesis that parental involvement at the home and school correlates with the academic achievement of the students indicated that both mothers and fathers' home involvement activities significantly correlated with the academic performance of the students whereas male and female guardians' home involvement activities were found to be not significantly related to the academic performance of the

students. On the other hand, among all of the parental figures, it was mothers' school involvement that was positively and significantly correlated with the students' school grades but not their perceived academic competence. Thus, mothers' school engagement activities were significant to the academic performance of the students whilst the school engagements of fathers, male and female guardians' were found to be non-significant to the academic performance of the students.

**Table 8- 10 Relationships between Parental School Involvement and Adolescents' Academic Achievement**

	Students' School Grades	Perceived Academic Competence	Mothers' School Involvement	Fathers' School Involvement	Female Guardians' School Involvement
Perceived Academic Competence	,404**				
	N= 239				
Mothers' School Involvement	,318**	,137			
	n= 184	184			
Fathers' School Involvement	,116	,109	,476**		
	n= 171	171	149		
Female Guardians' School Involvement	,125	-,076	.a	,723**	
	n= 32	32	0	14	
Male Guardians' School Involvement	-,037	,164	,442	.a	,749
	n= 36	36	15	0	6

\*\*p< 0.01

a. Cannot be calculated because at least one of the variables is constant

### **8.3.3 Relationships between Teacher Ratings of Parental School Involvement and Adolescents' Academic Achievement**

The results of the teacher ratings of parental school involvement in relation to the students' school grades and their perceived academic competence produced different correlations as compared to the ratings by the students or adolescents. Whereas teacher ratings of mothers' school involvement and the students' school grades and perceived academic competence produced positive and significant correlations, their ratings of fathers' school involvement only had a positive and significant relationship with the students' school grades but not their perceived academic competence. This contradicts the ratings by the students which indicated that of all the parental figures, it was only the mothers' school involvement which was statistically significant to the students' school grades, and thus had a positive impact on the students' academic performance. According to the teacher ratings, the mothers' school involvement in relation to the students' school grades was significant ( $r=0.508$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Likewise, their involvement with the school also had a positive correlation with the students' perception of their academic competence ( $r=0.207$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Fathers' school involvement was also positively correlated with the students' school grades ( $r=0.336$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

But, a critical look at the ratings by both the students and the teachers produced different and interesting results. Whereas the assessments by the students indicated only a positive correlation between mothers' school involvement and the students' school grades, that of the teachers revealed positive and significant correlations between mothers' school involvement and the students' school grades and their perceived academic competence. Also, whilst the students' rating of their fathers' school

involvement did not produce any significant association with both their school grades and perception of their academic competence, the ratings by the teachers produced a positive and significant correlation between their fathers' school involvement and their school grades but not the perception of their academic competence. Again, a closer look at the correlation coefficients show that teacher ratings are bigger than those of the students insinuating that teachers rate parental involvement in school higher than the students. At least both the students and teachers acquiesce to the fact that mothers' school involvement has a positive and significant relation with the students' school grades, but do not agree when it comes to the positive and significant correlation between mothers' school involvement and the perceived academic competence of the students and also the positive effect of fathers' school involvement on the students' school grades.

Finally, both students and teachers' ratings of male and female guardians' school involvement revealed that their involvement was not significant with both the students' school grades and their perceived academic competence. Put in a different way, their involvement with the school did not produce any effects on the academic performance of the students.

In conclusion, teachers' ratings of parental school involvement on the academic performance of the students revealed that whilst fathers and mothers school involvements yielded positive and significant correlations with the academic performance of the students, the involvement of the male and female guardians did not have any significant relation with the academic performance of the students.



**Table 8- 11 Relationships of Teacher Ratings of Parental School Involvement and Adolescents' Academic Achievement**

	Student's School Grades	Perceived Academic Competence	Teacher Ratings of Mothers' School Involvement	Teacher Ratings of Fathers' School Involvement	Teacher Ratings of Female Guardians' School Involvement
Perceived Academic Competence	,404**				
	N=239				
Teacher Ratings of Mothers' School Involvement	,508**	,207**			
	n=183	183			
Teacher Ratings of Fathers' School Involvement	,336**	,121	,557**		
	n=171	171	149		
Teacher Ratings of Female Guardians' School Involvement	,242	,081	.a	,629*	
	n=32	32	0	14	
Teacher Ratings of Male Guardians' School Involvement	,253	,234	,637*	.(a)	,942**
	n=35	35	14	0	6

\*\*p< 0.01 \*p< 0.05

a. Cannot be calculated because at least one of the variables is constant

## **8.4 Partial Correlations**

In order to find out the genuine effects of mothers and fathers' home involvement on the academic achievement of the students, and also the mothers' school involvement on the academic achievement of the students, partial correlations were conducted. These analyses were precipitated due to the fact that I wanted to ascertain whether the above observed effects were not influenced in a way by a third variable or external factor. The following variables were controlled: parental education, parental occupation, financial hardship, family structure (mothers & fathers' marital status), and gender.

### **8.4.1 Partial Correlation- Mothers' Home Involvement**

The results of the partial correlation conducted (table 8-12) showed that mothers' home involvement in connection with the students' school grades was still significant although with a tailed off coefficient ( $r=0.366$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). This reduction in the correlation coefficient was due to the significant correlation between students' school grades and mothers' occupation and the family's financial hardship. The other three variables namely: mothers' education level, mothers' marital status (family structure), and gender did not have any effects on the dependent variable (Mothers' home involvement) since they were not significant.

**Table 8- 12 Partial Correlations of Mothers' Home Involvement**

Control Variables	Student's School Grades	Mothers' Home Involvement	Mother's Education Level	Mother's Occupation	Mother's Marital Status	Financial Hardship
Mothers' Home Involvement	,409**					
Mother's Education Level	,042	,022				
Mother's Occupation	,234*	,250*	,044			
Mother's Marital Status	,055	,142	,122	,029		
Financial Hardship	-,214*	-,178*	-,030	-,442**	-,162*	
Gender	,097	,018	-,022	,000	-,070	-,079
Mother's Education Level & Mother's Occupation & Mother's Marital Status & Financial Hardship & Gender						
Student's School Grades & Mother's Home Involvement						
		,366**				

\*p< .05      \*\*p< .01

#### 8.4.2 Partial Correlation- Mothers' School Involvement

The results of the partial correlation conducted revealed that after mothers' education level, mothers' occupation, mothers' marital status, financial hardship, and gender had been controlled, mothers' school involvement was still statistically significant. Thus, in

spite of the reduction of the correlation coefficient from 0.318 to 0.287, the correlation was still significant ( $r=0.287$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). This decrease in the value of the correlation coefficient was as a result of the significant correlation between students' school grades and the mothers' occupation ( $r=0.234$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and financial hardship ( $r=-0.214$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

**Table 8- 13 Partial correlations of Mothers' School Involvement**

Control Variables	Student's School Grades	Mothers' School Involvement	Mother's Education Level	Mother's Occupation	Mother's Marital Status	Financial Hardship
Mothers' School Involvement	,318**					
Mother's Education Level	,042	,019				
Mother's Occupation	,234*	,188*	,044			
Mother's Marital Status	,055	,094	,122	,029		
Financial Hardship	-,214*	-,075	-,030	,442**	,162*	
Gender	,097	,037	-,022	,000	-,070	-,079
Mother's Education Level & Mother's Occupation & Mother's Marital Status & Financial Hardship & Gender						
Student's School Grades						
		,287				

\* $p<.05$     \*\* $p<.01$

### **8.4.3 Partial Correlation- Fathers' Home Involvement**

The results of the partial correlation conducted (table 8-14) revealed that fathers' home involvement in connection to the students' school grades was still significant although with a tailed away correlation coefficient ( $r= 0.385$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). This decrease of the correlation coefficient was as a result of the significant correlation between students' school grades and fathers' occupation, fathers' marital status, and financial hardship. Fathers' education level and gender did not have any effects on the students' school grades due to its non-significant correlation.

In conclusion, the results of the partial correlations revealed that both mothers and fathers' home involvement in relation to their children's academic performance still remained significant after the background variables had been controlled though with a reduction in the coefficient. Also, mothers' school involvement, after the partial correlation still remained statistically significant although with a reduced correlation coefficient.

**Table 8- 14** Partial Correlations of Fathers' Home Involvement

Control Variables	Student's School Grades	Fathers' Home Involvement	Father's Education Level	Father's Occupation	Father's Marital Status	Financial Hardship
Fathers' Home Involvement	,412**					
Father's Education Level	-,002	,058				
Father's Occupation	,162*	,174*	,152*			
Father's Marital Status	,177*	,023	,074	,003		
Financial Hardship	-,290**	-,165*	,126	-,526**	-,090	
Gender	,114	,052	-,027	-,009	-,100	-,052
Father's Education Level & Father's Occupation & Father's Marital Status & Financial Hardship & Gender	Student's School Grades					
		,385**				

\*p<.05      \*\*p<.01

### **8.5 Hypothesis 3- Authoritative parenting style will correlate positively with adolescents' academic achievement.**

The statistical analysis conducted (table 8-15) revealed a positive and significant relationship between mothers and fathers' authoritativeness and their children's school grades (Academic achievement). Mothers' authoritativeness in relation to their children's school grades was significant ( $r=0.160$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Similarly, the correlation between fathers' authoritativeness and the students' school grades was highly significant ( $r=0.204$ ,  $p=0.004$ ). Fathers' authoritativeness in connection with the academic performance of the students was stronger than that of the mothers. On the contrary, the analysis revealed a non-significant relationship between both male and female guardians' authoritativeness and the school grades of the students.

The above results, in summary, inform us that in all, the authoritativeness of biological parents in relation to the academic performance of their children was positively related and significant as juxtaposed with the authoritativeness of non-biological parents-male or female guardians.

**Table 8- 15 Relationships between Parental authoritativeness and Adolescents' Academic Achievement**

	Student's School Grades	Mother's Authoritativeness	Father's Authoritativeness	Female Guardian's Authoritativeness	Male Guardian's Authoritativeness
Mother's Authoritativeness	,160* N=183				
Father's Authoritativeness	,204** N=170	,846** 148			
Female Guardian's Authoritativeness	,200 N=32	.(a) 0	,770** 14		
Male Guardian's Authoritativeness	-,008 N=36	,374 15	.(a) 0	,293 6	

\*p< .05    \*\*p< .01

a Cannot be computed because at least one of the variables is constant.



## **8.6 Hypothesis 4- The Mediating Role of Parental Involvement**

- Parental involvement will mediate between the impact of parental authoritativeness on students' achievement.

Multiple regressions were used to ascertain whether the positive effect of authoritative parenting style on the educational achievement of the students was mediated by mothers and fathers' home involvement as well as mothers' school involvement. The mediation analysis was based on mothers and fathers' home involvement and mothers' school involvement since they met the criteria for a mediation analysis (for details, refer to section 7.6)

### **8.6.1 Mothers' Home Involvement as a Mediator between their Authoritativeness and the Students' Academic Achievement**

The multiple regressions conducted (table 8-16) revealed that the zero-order unstandardized regression coefficient for predicting the mediator (mothers' home involvement) from the independent variable (mothers' authoritativeness) was 0.035 and the standard error was 0.016. The partial unstandardized regression coefficient for predicting the dependent variable (students' school grades) from the mediator (mothers' home involvement) holding constant the independent variable (mothers' authoritativeness) was 0.081 and the standard error was 0.015. The results showed that complete mediation had occurred since the correlation between the independent variable (mothers' authoritativeness) and the dependent variable (students' school grades) was not significantly different from zero  $p > 0.05$ . After the Sobel test calculator had been used to test for the significance of mediation by imputing the values stated above, it was shown

that mothers' home involvement mediated between their style of parenting (authoritative parenting) and the students' school grades. This is because the results showed a significant Sobel test statistic (Sobel test statistic=2.02746, P=0.02, One-tailed). This result proves an occurrence of complete mediation. The results, thus, provide strong support for the mediation hypothesis as regards the mediation role of mothers' home involvement. Thence, mothers' home involvement performs a mediating role between their authoritativeness and the educational achievement of the students.

**Table 8- 16 Mothers' Home Involvement as a Mediator between their Authoritativeness and the Students' Academic Achievement (N=183)**

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		Coefficients	Coefficients	Coefficients			Zero-order	Partial	Part
		B	Std. Error	Beta					
2	Mother's Authoritativeness	,035	,016	,160	2,181	,030	,160	,160	,160
	(Constant)	2,119	,471		4,499	,000			
	Mother's Authoritativeness	-,001	,016	-,006	-,086	,931	,160	-,006	-,006
	Mothers' Home Involvement	,081	,015	,411	5,531	,000	,409	,381	,376

Dependent Variable: Students' School Grades

### **8.6.2 Mothers' School Involvement as a Mediator between their Authoritativeness and the Students' Academic Achievement**

The multiple regressions conducted (table 8-17) revealed that the zero-order unstandardized regression coefficient for predicting the mediator (mothers' school involvement) from the independent variable (mothers' authoritativeness) was 0.035 and the standard error was 0.016. The partial unstandardized regression coefficient for predicting the dependent variable (students' school grades) from the mediator (mothers'

school involvement) holding constant the independent variable (mothers' authoritativeness) was 0.066 and the standard error was 0.016. The results revealed that complete mediation had occurred due to the fact that the correlation between the independent variable (mothers' authoritativeness) and the dependent variable (students' school grades) was not significantly different from zero,  $p > 0.05$ . After the Sobel test calculator had been used to test for the significance of mediation by imputing the above quoted values, it was realized that mothers' school involvement served as a mediating variable between their style of parenting (authoritative parenting) and the students' school grades. This is because the results showed a significant Sobel test statistic (Sobel test statistics=1.93257,  $P=0.026$ , one-tailed). The results, thus, provide strong support for the mediation hypothesis as regards the mediation role of mothers' school involvement. Thus, mothers' school involvement serves as a mediator between their authoritativeness and the educational achievement of the students.

**Table 8- 17 Mothers' School Involvement as a Mediator between their Authoritativeness and the Students' Academic Achievement (N=183)**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
2	Mother's Authoritativeness	,035	,016	,160	2,181	,030	,160	,160	,160
	(Constant)	2,346	,483		4,862	,000			
	Mother's Authoritativeness	,021	,016	,094	1,305	,194	,160	,097	,092
	Mothers' School Involvement	,066	,016	,298	4,140	,000	,319	,295	,291

Dependent Variable: Student's School Grades

### **8.6.3 Fathers' Home Involvement as a Mediator between their Authoritativeness and the Students' Educational Achievement**

The results of the multiple regressions conducted (table 8-18) revealed that the zero-order unstandardized regression coefficient for predicting the mediator (fathers' home involvement) from the independent variable (fathers' authoritativeness) was 0.041 and the standard error was 0.015. The partial unstandardized regression coefficient for predicting the dependent variable (students' school grades) from the mediator (fathers' home involvement) holding constant the independent variable (fathers' authoritativeness) was 0.088 and the standard error was 0.017. The results established the occurrence of complete mediation since the correlation between the independent variable (fathers' authoritativeness) and the dependent variable (students' school grades) was not significantly different from zero  $p > 0.05$ . After the Sobel test calculator had been used to test for the significance of mediation by imputing the values stated above, it was revealed that fathers' home involvement mediated between their style of parenting (authoritative parenting) and the school grades of the students. This is because the results showed a significant Sobel test statistic (Sobel test statistics=2.41707,  $P=0.008$ , one-tailed). The results; thus, provide strong support for the mediation hypothesis with regard to fathers' home involvement serving as a mediator. Hence, fathers' home involvement serves as a mediator between their authoritativeness and the educational achievement of the students.

**Table 8- 18 Fathers' Home Involvement as a Mediator between their authoritativeness and the Students' Academic Achievement (N=170)**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
2	Father's Authoritativeness	,041	,015	,204	2,707	,007	,204	,204	,204
	(Constant)	2,007	,433		4,636	,000			
	Father's Authoritativeness	-,005	,017	-,024	-,284	,777	,204	-,022	-,020
	Fathers' Home Involvement	,088	,017	,425	5,089	,000	,412	,366	,359

Dependent Variable: Student's School Grades

## 8.7 Hypothesis 5- Decrease in Parental Involvement during Adolescence

- Parental involvement is likely to decrease from childhood to adolescence.

In order to ascertain whether parental involvement in relation to the learning process of their children changes as the child reaches adolescence, paired sample t-test was conducted. Based upon the hypothesis captured above and most of the scientific studies in the literature, parental involvement in their children's education is expected to plummet.

But, on the contrary, the results revealed that both parental home and school involvement-mothers and fathers increased at adolescence. Thus, both mothers and fathers were more involved in the educational activities of their children in the home and at school now as compared to when they were kids. In other words, mothers and fathers involvement in the educational activities of their children in the home and at school increased at the adolescent stage. Fathers' involvement in childhood had a mean of 11.30 whilst their home involvement at the adolescent stage had a mean of 22.05. The correlation between their childhood and adolescence home involvement was highly significant ( $r=0.574$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

Similarly, mothers' involvement at the two time periods was also statistically significant ( $r=0.579$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Mothers' involvement in childhood had a mean figure of 10.88 whilst their present involvement at home had a mean figure of 22.06

As regards their school involvement, fathers' involvement in childhood had a mean of 11.30 whilst their school involvement at the adolescent stage had a mean of 12.55. The correlation between their childhood and adolescence school involvement was significant ( $r=0.406$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Similarly, mothers' involvement at the two time periods was also

statistically significant ( $r=0.395$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Mothers' involvement in childhood had a mean figure of 10.88 whilst their present involvement at school had a mean figure of 13.36.

Thus, in conclusion, the hypothesis regarding the trend or pattern of parental involvement in relation to the developmental age of the students indicated that both mothers and fathers increased their involvement or engagement in the education of their children now than when they were kids.

**Table 8- 19 Paired Samples Statistics of Fathers' Involvement in Childhood and Fathers' Home Involvement in Adolescence (N=171)**

		Mean
Pair 1	Fathers' involvement in Childhood	11,30
	Fathers' Home Involvement	22,05

**Table 8- 20 Paired Samples Test of Fathers' Involvement in Childhood and Fathers' Home Involvement in Adolescence**

		Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Fathers' involvement in Childhood - Fathers' Home Involvement	-10,76003	-30,475	,000

**Table 8- 21 Paired Samples Statistics of Mothers' Involvement in Childhood and Mothers' Home Involvement in Adolescence (N=184)**

		Mean
Pair 1	Mothers' Involvement in Childhood	10,88
	Mothers' Home Involvement	22,06

**Table 8- 22 Paired Samples Test of Mothers' Involvement in Childhood and Mothers' Home Involvement in Adolescence**

		Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Mothers' Involvement in Childhood - Mothers' Home Involvement	-11,17857	-33,359	,000

**Table 8- 23 Paired Samples Statistics of Fathers' Involvement in Childhood and Fathers' School Involvement in Adolescence (N=171)**

		Mean
Pair 1	Fathers' involvement in Childhood	11,30
	Fathers' School Involvement	12,55

**Table 8- 24 Paired Samples Test of Fathers' Involvement in Childhood and Fathers' School Involvement in Adolescence**

		Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Fathers' involvement in Childhood - Fathers' School Involvement	-1,26170	-3,512	,001

**Table 8- 25 Paired Samples Statistics of Mothers' Involvement in Childhood and Mothers' School Involvement in Adolescence (N=184)**

		Mean
Pair 1	Mothers' Involvement in Childhood	10,88
	Mothers' School Involvement	13,36

**Table 8- 26 Paired Samples Test of Mothers' Involvement in Childhood and Mothers' School Involvement in Adolescence**

		Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Mothers' Involvement in Childhood - Mothers' School Involvement	-2,48370	-7,051	,000



**Summary** This chapter dealt with the presentation of the results of the analyses as responses to the hypotheses of the study.

With regard to the hypothesis which sought to find out the predictors of parental involvement, the results of the regression analysis revealed that of all the predictor variables of mothers' home involvement measured-mothers' education level, mothers' occupation, mothers' marital status, financial hardship, gender, nature of school, and program of study, mothers' occupation happened to be the best predictor of mothers' home involvement, followed by nature of school, mothers' marital status (family structure), and program of study in that order. As regards the predictors of fathers' home involvement, the results indicated that of all the predictor variables measured, nature of school happened to be the only predictor of their home involvement. The positive and significant correlation of this variable shows that fathers' are more involved when their children are enrolled in day and boarding schools as compared with full-day schools. Concerning the predictors of male guardians' home involvement, the results showed that program of study was the best predictor of their home involvement followed by gender. None of the variables predicted female guardians' home involvement.

In connection with the predictors of parental school involvement, it was revealed that nature of school, mothers' occupational status, and program of study happened to be the predictors of their school involvement. Nature of school happened to be the only predictor of fathers' school involvement. Program of study and occupational status were found to be the predictors of male guardians' school involvement. None of the variables predicted the school involvement of female guardians.

As regards the hypothesis about the relationship between parental involvement and the academic achievement of the students, the results indicated that both mothers and fathers' home involvement activities positively and significantly correlated with the academic performance of the students whereas male and female guardians' home involvement activities were found to be not significant with the academic performance of the students. On the other hand, among all of the parental figures, it was mothers' school involvement that was significant and positively correlated with the students' school grades but not their perceived academic competence (students' ratings). Thus, mothers' school engagement activities correlated with the academic performance of the students whilst the school engagements of fathers, male and female guardians were found to be not significant to the academic performance of the students. This means that the correlation between mothers and fathers' home involvement and academic performance of the students supported the hypothesis whilst the non-significant correlation between male and female guardians' home involvement and the academic performance of the students failed to support the hypothesis. Finally, the positive and significant correlation between mothers' school involvement and the academic performance of the students supported the hypothesis whereas the non-significant correlation between fathers, male guardians and female guardians' school involvement and the academic performance of the students failed to support the hypothesis.

In order to find out the genuine effects of mothers and fathers' home involvement on the academic achievement of the students; and also the mothers' school involvement on the academic achievement of the students, a partial correlation was carried out. The results of the partial correlation conducted revealed that mothers' home involvement in

connection with the students' school grades was still significant although with a tailed off coefficient. This reduction in the correlation coefficient was due to the significant correlation between students' school grades and mothers' occupation and the family's financial hardship. The other three variables namely: mothers' education level, mothers' marital status (family structure), and gender did not have any effects on the dependent variable (school grades) since they were not significant.

The findings of the partial correlation conducted on mothers' school involvement indicated that after mothers' education level, mothers' occupation, mothers' marital status, financial hardship, and gender had been controlled; mothers' school involvement was still statistically significant.

The results of the partial correlation conducted on the fathers revealed that fathers' home involvement in connection with the students' school grades was still significant although with a tailed away correlation coefficient. This reduction in the correlation coefficient was as a result of the significant correlation between the students' school grades and fathers' occupation, fathers' marital status, and financial hardship. Fathers' education level and gender did not have any effects on the students' school grades due to their non-significant correlation.

With regard to the hypothesis about the association between parental authoritativeness and the academic achievement of the students, it was revealed that only mothers and fathers' authoritativeness was found to be positively and significantly associated with the academic performance of the students. The association between male and female guardians' authoritativeness and the academic achievement of the students was found to be not significant.

With respect to the hypothesis which was intended to find out if the positive effect of parental authoritativeness on the educational performance of the students was mediated by parental involvement, it was found out that both mothers and fathers' home involvement completely mediated between their authoritativeness and the students' school grades. Thus, the positive effect of mothers and fathers' authoritativeness on the educational achievement of the students was rendered non-significant when their involvement in the home was taken into account. Similarly, it was realized that mothers' school involvement mediated between their authoritativeness and the school grades of the students, although not as robust as their home involvement. This shows how important and essential parental involvement is to the educational success of children.

Finally, one observation which was discovered has to do with the hypothesis that parental involvement tends to diminish as children reach the adolescent stage. The results, after paired-sample t-test had been conducted indicated that parental involvement rather than decreasing at adolescence, increased. The increased in parental involvement was more remarkable at home than at school. The results showed that both mothers and fathers home and school involvement increased.

## **9 Discussion and Recommendations**

### **9.1 Discussion**

Interesting revelations have been observed from the findings of the study. The first hypothesis of the study was to key out the factors that predict parental involvement. The results in connection with the predictors of mothers' home involvement showed that mothers' occupation emerged as the best predictor of their home involvement, followed by nature of school, mothers' marital status, and program of study in that order. With regard to the occupation of the mothers, mothers who belonged to the upper and middle classes involved themselves more in the educational activities of their children at home than those who belonged to the working class. This finding corroborates previous studies conducted by (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1987; Ballantine, 1993) which indicated that though teachers seek equable involvement from parents from various classes, parents of upper-middle –class are usually more directly involved in both their children's home and school education than lower and working-class parents. The increased involvement of mothers in the upper class in relation to their children's education at home as compared to those in the working class might be due to the high social standing and prestige of the mothers in the society as they would want their children to follow in their steps. Similarly, married women were found to be more involved in the educational activities of their children at home than their divorced and remarried counterparts. This finding corroborates the study by Astone and McLanahan (1991) that showed that children living with single parents or step-parents during adolescence receive less encouragement and less help with school work than those who live with both parents. The stress, conflict, and

problems that are associated with divorce, put divorce mothers in a position of relative disadvantage as compared to non-divorced mothers as regards the involvement in the educational activities of their children. Another problem that confronts divorced women with children is that they have to adjust to the problems of a diminished income, relocate to a lower income neighborhood, and try to work and raise young children single-handedly (Amato, 2000; Entwisle & Alexander, 1995; McLanahan, 1997; Shaffer, 1992). These developments that work to limit the opportunities of divorced mothers prevent them from involving themselves in the educational activities of their children in the home. In Ghana where social support for the vulnerable such as divorced and single mothers are virtually non-existent, it will be extremely difficult if not impossible for divorced mothers to be actively involved in the education of their adolescent children. Also, mothers involved themselves more when their children attended a day and boarding school than when they attended a full-day school. This does not mean that all the schools must be turned into day and boarding schools, but rather authorities at the helm of full-day schools should put forward a framework to enable the mothers to also partake in the educational activities of their children in full-day institutions. There is a perception among the Ghanaian populace that boarding schools are the best and as such almost every parent wants their children to be in boarding schools. Only students who get the best grades after the basic education certificate examination (BECE) are given the first priority in boarding schools. The rest of the students who might be considered as the “second best” are offered day student status in the boarding schools. This perception among the population might be a reason why the parents are more involved in boarding schools than full-day schools. Finally, mothers involved themselves the most when their

children studied vocational studies than when they studied general science, general arts, and business. This revelation might be due to the fact that vocational studies as compared to the other subjects appears to be the easiest and thus the mothers do not need any specialized knowledge and huge financial commitment in order to be involved in their children's school, especially in the area of catering and sewing. As regards the factors that predict fathers' home involvement, the results showed that nature of school happened to be the only predictor of their home involvement. The positive and significant correlation of this variable shows that fathers' are more involved when their children are enrolled in day and boarding schools as compared with full-day schools. It is quite strange that only the nature of school predicted fathers' home involvement out of the other measured variables which then means that there might be other variables which were not considered by this study that motivate or challenge fathers to be involved in the educational activities of their children at home. This brings to the fore the need for further research about fathers' involvement by considering other predictors of their home involvement in their children's education. Also, male guardians' home involvement was predicted by program of study and the gender of the child. They were more involved when the child studied vocational studies as compared to business, general science, and general arts. With respect to gender, the results showed that male guardians were more involved in the education of the female students as compared with the male students and thus rejected the hypothesis.

With regard to the predictors of parental school involvement, the results of the regression analysis showed that nature of school was found to be the best predictor of mothers' school involvement, followed by mothers' occupation, and program of study.

The positive correlation between mothers' occupation and mothers' school involvement indicates that their involvement at school depends on their status in the economic classification, and thus mothers who belong to the working class involved themselves less in their children's school activities as compared to their counterparts in the upper and middle class categories. Thence, mothers who have higher socioeconomic status are more involved in the education of their children at school than those who have lower socioeconomic status. This finding corroborates the finding by researchers (e.g., Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1987; Ballantine, 1993) which indicated that though teachers seek equitable involvement from parents from various classes, parents of upper-middle –class are usually more directly involved in both their children's home and school education than lower and working-class parents. Apart from the fact that the increased involvement of mothers in the upper class in relation to their children's education at school as juxtaposed with those in the working class could be due to the social standing and prestige of the mothers as they would want their children to be at the level they are occupying on the socio-economic classification, another interesting point might be due to the fact that most of the women within the working class bracket are traders who have to spend so much time on the market to be able to raise money to support the family. This scenario might contribute to their less involvement in the educational activities of their children. Also, the positive correlation between mothers' school involvement and nature of school indicates that mothers involved themselves more when their children are enrolled in day and boarding schools as compared to when their children are in full-day schools. As regards program of study, the results revealed that mothers involved themselves more when the child studied vocational studies than when they studied



business, general science, and general arts. With respect to fathers, their school involvement was triggered by the nature of the school. They were more involved with children at boarding schools as compared with those at full-day schools. In connection with the school involvement of male guardians, the results showed that their involvement was triggered by program of study and their occupational status. Male guardians who belonged to the working class category were more involved in the education of the students at school than their upper and middle class counterparts. Could it be that upper and middle class male guardians are more involved in the education of their biological children and as such do not get involved in the education of their step or foster children? I suggest that this finding be investigated further by other researchers to find out why working class male guardians were more involved than upper and middle class male guardians. Again, they involved themselves more when the child studied vocational studies as compared with general science, general arts, and business.

It should also be noted that the educational level and financial hardships or difficulties of the parents did not trigger their involvement both at home and at the school. The finding that parental educational level does not predict their involvement in the educational activities of their children is somewhat puzzling. Several researchers (e.g., Abd-El-Fattah, 2006; Davis-Kean, 2005; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Pena, 2000; Stevenson & Baker, 1987) have revealed that parental education is related to parental involvement. Davis-Kean's (2005) study suggested that the amount of schooling that parents receive has an effect on how they structure their home environment and how they interact with their children to promote their academic achievement. Stevenson & Baker (1987) also discovered that the educational status of mothers is connected to the extent of

parental involvement in the education of their children, so that parents who are higher up on the educational ladder are more involved. Although, Dornbusch (1986) and Stevenson and Baker (1987) have observed that parental involvement in itself has a positive impact on school achievement in spite of parental education level, I suggest further research which could help in establishing the predictive role of parental education in relation to their involvement in their children's home and school learning in the country. The finding that the financial hardship of the family did not predict the extent of parental involvement in the education of their children and thus did not support the hypothesis failed to support assertions raised by some researchers (e.g., Conger et al., 1994; McLoyd, 1990) to the effect that economic difficulties generally limit the effectiveness of parenting. Therefore, the inability of parents to get involved in the education of their children could be attributed to their limited economic resources (e.g., Conger et al., 1994; McLoyd, 1990; Pryor & Ampiah, 2003a & 2003b). The study also revealed that except in the case of the male guardians, gender did not predict the extent of parental involvement in their children's education. Although, Carter and Wojtkiewicz (2000) revealed that parents were involved in the education of their daughters more than their sons, studies conducted by Keith et al., (1998) and Shaver and Walls (1998) showed no significant difference in parental/family involvement between boys and girls. Thus, according to the present study, with the exception of male guardians who were more involved in the education of the female students, mothers, fathers, and female guardians do not prefer one sex to the other when it comes to their involvement in their children's educational activities.

The fact that the socioeconomic status variables, with the exception of mothers and male guardians' occupational status were not found to be triggers of the parents'

involvement in the education of the students could be that they might not be strong predictors of parental involvement. Hoover-Dempsey and colleagues (2005) have stated that socioeconomic status variables do not explain why parents get involved in the education of their children.

The second hypothesis which dealt with the relationship between parental home involvement and the academic performance of the adolescents was supported in the case of mothers and fathers even after the background variables were controlled, but not supported in the case of male and female guardians. Similarly, the association that was expected to be between parental school involvement and the academic performance of the students was also supported only in the case of the mothers even after controlling for the background variables, but not in the case of the fathers, male guardians and female guardians. The positive and significant correlation that was found between mothers and fathers' home involvement and the educational achievement of the students was expected. It signals the importance of parental involvement in the educational achievement of children. This finding provides support for earlier studies conducted by researchers such as (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; Graue et al., 1983; Hickman et al., 1995; Kellaghan et al., 1993; Trusty, 1999; Walberg, Schiller, & Hartel, 1979). But, the non-significant correlation between male and female guardians' home involvement activities and the academic performance of the students is a development that needs to be investigated further by other researchers. According to Astone and McLanahan (1991) compared with their peers in two-biological-parent households, single parents and step-parents are less involved in their children's education in terms of interacting with their children, monitoring school progress, and providing overall supervision of social

activities. Similarly, Blackburn and Glick (2006) have indicated that children living in other relatives' homes are conceivably more at risk than those living with an own parent and may also have worse outcomes in part due to the fact that they are more likely to live in or near poverty. The fact that their involvement at home did not produce any gains on the educational achievement of the students is worrisome and needs to be taken seriously.

Also, mothers' school involvement was positively and significantly correlated with the academic performance of the students, but fathers, male and female guardians' school involvement in association with the students' academic performance was found not to be significant. This means that when it comes to parental school involvement, mothers stand out. The positive and significant association that was found between mothers' school involvement and the academic performance of the students corroborates with the findings of Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) who found that mothers were more involved than fathers on each of the three aspects of parental involvement in children's schooling: behavior, cognitive-intellectual, and personal. These mothers might hold the idea that the education of their children is their responsibility and thus have to sacrifice their resources-money, material, time, etc to ensure that their children succeed in school. In Ghana, it is not uncommon to see parents, especially mothers selling their personal property or even borrowing from the banks or friends in order to promote the educational success of their children.

Another surprising observation of this study was the non-significant correlation between fathers' school involvement and the academic performance of the students. In fact, it was expected that their school involvement would also positively impact on the academic performance of the students. Nord (1998) indicated that fathers can be a

positive force in their children's education, and that when they get involved, children have a better chance to succeed in school. The author also revealed that although children living in father-only households perform less well as juxtaposed with their counterparts living in two-parent families; those living in father-only households do better in school, are more likely to participate in extra curricular activities, enjoy school more, and are less likely to have been suspended or dismissed if their fathers are involved in school as compared with those whose fathers are not involved in their school activities. However, the teachers' rating of parental school involvement provided different results as compared with the ratings by the students, especially on the mothers and fathers. The teachers' ratings of both mothers and fathers' school involvement indicated a positive and significant association with the academic performance of the students. But the students' assessment of their fathers' school involvement in relation to their educational achievement was found to be not significantly correlated. This situation insinuates that either the students might be in the dark as regards their fathers' involvement in their school activities or the teachers are exaggerating the fathers' school involvement. This is because a closer look at the questionnaires that were filled out by the teachers, and my frequent communication with some of the teachers via the phone revealed that some of the fathers were in constant touch with the teachers over the phone about the educational progress of their children. But the reason why fathers might not be involved in their children's education at the school based on the students' assessments, might be due to the fact that fathers in the country are considered to be the head of the family and thus have to cater for the needs of the family. Considering the fact that about 44.8% of the population lives under one dollar a day, it is expected that most of the fathers have to

work extra harder in order to even provide one square meal for their families. This scenario makes fathers in most cases ask the mothers to represent them at school meetings and other events in the school.

Also, a critical examination of the correlation coefficients between mothers and fathers' home involvement and their school involvement insinuate that they involved themselves more in their children's home activities than their school activities. This finding supports previous studies which have opined that what parents do at home in connection with their children's education remains significant and more essential and crucial to their educational achievement than what they do within the school environment (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; Hickman, Greenwood, & Miller, 1995; Izzo, Weissberg, Kaspro, & Fendrich, 1999; Trusty, 1999). Again, teachers' ratings of both male and female guardians' school involvement was found not to be significant to the academic performance of the students which is a confirmation of the ratings by the students.

The fact that both mothers and fathers' home involvement and mothers' school involvement enhanced the educational achievement of the students and thus, supported the hypothesis; prove the potency and efficacy of parental involvement as a tool in promoting the educational success of students. However, it should be noted that certain characteristics of students could also call for parents' involvement in their children's schooling. For example, the performance of students could call for their parents' involvement. According to Eccles & Harold (1993) and Shumow and Miller (2001) parents of high achieving students are more likely than parents of average or struggling students to participate in school governance and school activities. Similarly, Shumow and Miller (2001) have indicated that parents of low-achieving adolescent students are more

likely to be involved at home. Thus, the performance of students could also cause parents to be involved in the education of their children. The failure of both male and female guardians' home and school involvement to impact the educational performance of the students, and thus, failed to support the hypothesis rings a bell to the effect that something might be wrong somewhere. This calls for a replication of the study in the country.

The third hypothesis dealt with the association between parental authoritativeness and the students' academic achievement. The results revealed a positive and significant relationship between mothers and fathers' authoritativeness and the academic success of the students. On the other hand, there was no significant relationship found between the authoritativeness of male and female guardians and the academic achievement of the students. The positive and significant association between mothers and fathers' authoritativeness and the academic achievement of the students supported the hypothesis. The fact that authoritative parenting style of mothers and fathers had a positive impact on the educational achievement of the students, supports earlier studies conducted by researchers such as (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Glasgow, Dornbusch, Troyer, Steinberg, & Ritter, 1997; Steinberg, et al., 1992; Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts, & Dornbusch, 1994) who have stated that adolescents who describe their parents as treating them warmly, firmly and democratically are more likely than their counterparts to perform better academically in school. Also, Deslandes (1996) reported a positive association between the three dimensions of parenting style (i.e., warmth, supervision and psychological autonomy granting) and school grades. According to Kracke (1997) authoritative parents encourage open, give-and-take communication and encourage the

child's independence and individuality. Authoritative parents provide a warm family climate, set standards, and promote independence which results in more active career exploration on the part of children. Bogenschneider (1990) has indicated that authoritative parents are more likely to be involved in school and more likely to encourage the educational excellence of their children. Steinberg and colleagues (1992) also indicated in their study that the impact of authoritative parenting on adolescent school success was as a result of the greater likelihood of authoritative parents to be involved in the school activities of their adolescent children. According to them these parents influence their children's achievement through their direct engagement in school activities, such as helping with homework or course selection or attending parent-teacher conferences, and through the specific encouragement of school success, both explicitly and implicitly, by setting and maintaining high performance standards.

The fourth hypothesis which was to find out about the mediation role of parental involvement was supported. The direct effect of mothers and fathers' authoritativeness on the educational achievement of the students was not significant once their home involvement was taken into account. Again, the direct effect of mothers' authoritativeness on the educational performance of the students was not significant once their school involvement was taken into account. This finding is consistent with the findings of Paulson (1994) and Deslandes (1996) who concluded that parental involvement dimensions predicted achievement above and beyond parenting style dimensions. Also Darling and Steinberg (1993) have indicated in their model that parenting style performs a moderating role on the effect of parenting practices (parental involvement) on school achievement.



The last but not the least issue to be discussed is the unexpected finding that parental involvement was reported to be higher in adolescence than in the early elementary years. This finding was contrary to the hypothesis since a few studies consistently suggest that parental involvement in general tails off as children grow older (Eccles et al., 1993; Jessor, 1993). In interpreting our findings, it must be emphasized that methodological restrictions may play a major role. Parental involvement was measured retrospectively and may thus be biased by selective memory. It is likely that some of the students forgot what actually transpired when they were kids, and as such underrepresented the contributions of their parents in their education. Furthermore, the wording of the items used to measure parental involvement at the two time periods (childhood and adolescence) was different. It is likely that these scenarios might have contributed to the seeming increase in parental involvement at the adolescent stage. However, some researchers have suggested that regardless of the fact that adolescents need more independence than younger children, the need for guidance and support of caring adults in the home, school, and community during this period of their lives is very essential and worthwhile (Sanders & Epstein, 2000). A lot more studies have reinforced the importance of parents expressing faith in adolescents and supporting autonomy as significant contributors to achievement among adolescents (Christenson & Christenson, 1998; Deslandes, Royer, Turcotte, and Bertrand, 1997). This notwithstanding, I suggest that a longitudinal study be conducted to figure out if parental involvement increases or decreases at the adolescent stage in the country.

## **Limitations of the Study**

In conducting this study, I was confronted with some factors which have the capabilities of affecting the results of the study. Thus, the interpretation of the results should be cautiously done.

The first limitation was my inability to travel to Ghana myself. This situation denied me the opportunity to help in solving some of the problems the students might have encountered in the course of filling out the questionnaires.

Another limitation was an item on the questionnaire that dealt with the educational level of the parents. The limited options given might have puzzled students whose parents' level of completed education was not captured among the given options. For example, a student whose parents had completed polytechnic or post-secondary education did not know which of the options to check.

Again, lack of a comprehensive national data on income distribution in the country made it difficult to get a fair assessment of the occupational status of the families of the participants.

Furthermore, the small sample size of male and female guardians could affect the relationship between their involvement and the school performance of the children in their care. The small sample size could lead to a loss of statistical power. This calls for caution in the interpretation of the findings in connection to their involvement in their children education.

Finally, due to financial restrictions, the subjects of the study could not be selected from all the 10 regions of Ghana. For this reason, the participants of the study were selected from only one region- the central region.

## 9.2 Recommendations

There are no qualms about the huge contributions of parental involvement in the education of their adolescent children. Although, some scholars have revealed the decline in parental involvement as children reach adolescence, this study has shown that parental involvement during the adolescent period is still valuable and worthwhile in the educational achievement of adolescents. According to Sanders and Epstein (2000), in spite of the fact that adolescents need more independence than younger children, the need for guidance and support of caring adults in the home, school, and community during this time in their lives is very significant. Other researchers (e.g., Christenson & Christenson, 1998; Deslandes et al., 1997) have observed that the expression of confidence in adolescents and the supporting of autonomy are important contributors to achievement among high school students. In this regard, the involvement of parents in the education of their adolescent children should be encouraged and practiced.

In the present study, the factors that predict parental involvement were revealed. Mothers' occupational status, nature of school, mothers' marital status (family structure), and program of study predicted the extent to which they participated in the educational activities of their children at home. Also, nature of school, mothers' occupational status and program of study were identified to predict mothers' involvement in their children's school activities. These predictors of mothers' home and school involvement should be anatomized by educators, policy makers in the educational arena, and other stake holders so that intervention programs could be designed to help those mothers who are not able to partake in the education of their children as a result of these factors. For example the government, district assemblies, non governmental organizations (NGO) could provide

support and counseling services for those parents who are not able to get involved in their children's education due to their lower socioeconomic status, divorce, among others. With regard to fathers' home and school involvement, it was shown that only nature of school triggered their involvement. It is therefore likely that other factors that were not considered by this study might motivate fathers to be involved in the education of their children at home and school. Therefore, I suggest that future research should look at other factors that might prompt fathers to be engaged in the education of their children.

Furthermore, it was revealed that the involvement of both mothers and fathers in the educational activities of their children at home led to tremendous gains in the educational achievement of their children. With this positive link between mothers and fathers' home involvement and the educational achievement of their children, it would be a step in the right direction if parents are challenged to be out and about in the education of their children at home. Thus, I suggest that educational authorities in the country provide parents with the necessary information required to support adolescents' educational trajectories. When parents are furnished with the information needed in enhancing their children's educational progress and learning opportunities, their children stand a greater chance of succeeding with their academics. Teachers should provide parents with information regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the students and measures to be taken to overcome the weaknesses and solidify the strengths. The school authorities can also institute a program that will bring parents together to exchange ideas about how to enhance their children's educational success. By creating a platform for parents to develop relationships with school staff and other parents, either via the planning, development, and implementation of school policies or programs or attendance at out of

school time programs, schools and community organizations can create avenues or platforms for families, students, and teachers to be acquainted with each other and also share ideas about the value of education. Whereas mothers' school involvement was positively and significantly correlated with the school achievement of the students, the school involvement of the fathers, although, positively correlated with the educational achievement of the students fell short of statistical significance. The positive impact of both mothers home and school involvement in the educational achievement of their children is consistent with prior studies (e.g. Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Stevenson & Baker, 1987). But, the finding that fathers' school involvement fell short of statistical significance is inconsistent with previous research and thus calls for further investigation (Nord, 1998). As already indicated, the rating by the teachers revealed a significant correlation between fathers' school involvement and the educational achievement of the students. Due to the tremendous impact fathers' school involvement have on the educational accomplishments of their adolescent children (Nord, 1998), I would suggest that school authorities design and implement programs that would encourage fathers to be out and about in the educational activities of their children in their schools. Teachers could develop a program that would bring fathers together to key out ways that would enable them to actively participate in the educational activities of their children in the school. Through this program they could form some social networks which could serve as a platform for exchanging information which could be beneficial in helping their children succeed in school.

Also, the results showed that the involvement of male and female guardians in both the home and school education of the students was not beneficial. This was due to the fact

that their involvement both at home and in the school was not found to be statistically significant. What makes this development alarming and worrisome is the fact that the ratings by the teachers also disclosed the non-significant impact of their involvement in the education of the students. This revelation puts children who do not live with their biological parent or parents in a position of relative disadvantage. It makes the educational achievement of this category of students to be hanged in a balance. Based upon this unfortunate and frightening revelation, I would suggest further research focusing on adolescents who do not live with their natural parent or parents. Specifically, this study should focus on either adolescents who live with step-parents, older siblings, or other relatives. This research if done would provide a clearer picture about the relationship between step-parents, older siblings, and relatives and the educational achievement of this group of adolescent students. Also, school authorities should develop programs that will bring on board step-parents and other relatives to partake in the educational activities of the children in their care.

Moreover, the finding that mothers and fathers authoritativeness was positively linked to the educational achievement of the students calls for parents to provide a democratic atmosphere in the home which could provide children the opportunity to share their views on important matters. These exchanges of ideas between parents and their children have the capability of expanding the horizon of the children.

Penultimately, the study showed that mothers and fathers' home involvement as well as mothers' school involvement completely mediated between their authoritativeness and the academic achievement of the students. This finding corroborates the results of studies conducted by Paulson (1994) and Deslandes (1996) who concluded that parental

involvement dimensions predicted achievement above and beyond parenting style dimensions. The fact that parental involvement both at home (Mothers & Fathers) and at school (Mothers) was able to eliminate the impact of mothers and fathers' authoritativeness on the educational achievement of the students is an indication of the importance of parental involvement in the school achievement of their children. This revelation therefore calls for the need to emphasize the need for parental involvement in their children's learning process.

Finally, the finding that parental involvement increased during adolescence as compared to when the students were still young is against evidence in the literature which has documented the reverse. Since the study was cross sectional and the students were asked to recollect the involvement of their parents in their school activities when they were kids, it is likely that the responses of most of the students might not reflect what might have actually transpired at that tender age. I therefore suggest a longitudinal and cross-cultural study by other researchers which could provide us with a clearer picture as to whether parental involvement in Ghana increases or decreases at the adolescent stage.

Over all, the study threw more light on the importance of parental involvement in the education of their adolescent children and how their involvement could help make a difference in the lives of these children in the area of their educational achievement. Just as early childhood and elementary school educators recognize that schools and early childhood programs alone cannot prepare students for academic success without the support of parents, educators in high schools, as well as practitioners of programs that serve adolescents, must acknowledge that parents play a critical role in helping adolescents succeed in high school and beyond. School personnel and policy makers in

the educational arena should develop programs to make parents active participants in the education of their children. It is significant to provide parents with choices as well as control over their participation. Intervention programs that are designed to up parents' faculty to assist with their children's education should reflect their perceived needs and interests. On a more important note, intervention programs should be aimed at getting male and female guardians to be actively involved in the education of their children.

In wrapping up, it should be appreciated that there is still much to be learned in the area of parental involvement. Even though, parental involvement might be important to ginger the work and values of the school, there is also the need for parents to feel that their efforts are making a difference in the educational achievement of their children. For this to occur, educators need to take a look back about the beliefs they hold about parents, their potentials, and their interests. In lieu of parents being seen as the causers of their children's problems, they must be treated as partners in progress in the educational process. It is worthy of recognition that parental involvement should not be restricted to programs that are meant to target students who are struggling to find their feet in their academics, but instead must be extended throughout the entire educational environment due to the multiplier effects it has on students' outcomes. To this end, I strongly recommend the replication of this study on different subjects in Ghana or else where on the African continent in order to find out how crucial, important, and beneficial the involvement of parents in the education of their children would help in ameliorating the dwindling fortunes of the educational standard in Ghana in particular, and Africa in general.



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## Appendix A- Students' Questionnaire

### **FAMILY AND SCHOOL: A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS**

- This is a study which tries to find out how parents contribute to their adolescents' educational success. We would be grateful if you could answer the questions below.
  - There is no right or wrong answer. We are interested in your personal experience and opinion.
  - For each item, please choose the answer which best describes your experiences.
  - The confidentiality of your information is guaranteed.
  - Remember that by taking part in this study, you are contributing to our knowledge about promoting adolescents' educational success.
  - **If you agree to participate, please fill in your personal information below. Take this sheet off from your questionnaire and hand it in separately. Please don't forget to return this sheet with your personal information!**
- 

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Your Name (last name, first name): \_\_\_\_\_ Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of your School: \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!**

**PLEASE CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE**



1 Please check the nature of your school:

Code: \_\_\_\_\_

- <sub>1</sub> Full Day School
- <sub>2</sub> Day & Boarding school

2. Please check your grade:

- <sub>1</sub> SSS 1
- <sub>2</sub> SSS 2
- <sub>3</sub> SSS 3

3. Please check your program of study:

- <sub>1</sub> Business
- <sub>2</sub> General Science
- <sub>3</sub> General Arts
- <sub>4</sub> Vocational studies
- <sub>5</sub> Agricultural Science

4. Your Age: \_\_\_\_\_ years

5. Please check your sex:

- <sub>1</sub> Male
- <sub>2</sub> Female

6. Number of Siblings: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you live with both of your biological parents?

- <sub>1</sub> Yes
- <sub>2</sub> No

8. Please check who you live with:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> Mother                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub> Stepmother / Foster Mother |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> Father                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub> Stepfather / Foster Father |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> Sister(s): _____ (number) | <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> Brother(s): _____ (number) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> Grandmother               | <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> Grandfather                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> Aunt                      | <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> Uncle                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> Cousin(s)                 | <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> Other: _____               |

9. Father's level of education:

- <sub>1</sub> Less than secondary school
- <sub>2</sub> Secondary school
- <sub>3</sub> University
- <sub>9</sub> Don't know

10. Mother's level of education:

- <sub>1</sub> Less than secondary school
- <sub>2</sub> Secondary school
- <sub>3</sub> University
- <sub>9</sub> Don't know

11. Male guardian's level of education

- <sub>1</sub> Less than secondary school
- <sub>2</sub> Secondary school
- <sub>3</sub> University
- <sub>9</sub> Don't know

12. Female guardian's level of education

- <sub>1</sub> Less than secondary school
- <sub>2</sub> Secondary school
- <sub>3</sub> University
- <sub>9</sub> Don't know

13. What is the occupation of your father? \_\_\_\_\_

14. What is the occupation of your mother? \_\_\_\_\_

15. What is the occupation of your male guardian? \_\_\_\_\_

16. What is the occupation of your female guardian? \_\_\_\_\_

**YOUR FAMILY: HOW OFTEN DO YOUR PARENT(S) / GUARDIAN(S) BEHAVE IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS?**

THIS IS HOW YOU CAN ANSWER:

1 = never, 2 = almost never, 3 = sometimes, 4 = almost always, 5 = always

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Mother</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Female Guardian</b>	Please check, whether you answer for your parents or for your guardians ← →	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Father</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Male Guardian</b>
never    almost never    some times    almost always    always		never    almost never    some times    almost always    always
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	17. How often do you count on your parents to help you out if you have some kind of a problem?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	18. How often do your parents help you out when you have problems with your peers or friends?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	19. How often does your family do something fun together?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	20. How much do your parents try to know where you go at night?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	21. In a typical week, how often do your parents prevent you from staying out deep into the night?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	22. How much do your parents really know what you do with your free time?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5

<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>23.</b> How often do your parents tell you that their ideas are correct and that you should not question them?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>24.</b> How often do your parents answer your arguments by saying something like “You will know better when you grow up”?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>25.</b> How often do your parents make you feel bad if you don’t do something right?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5

**HOW OFTEN DID YOUR PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S) PERFORM THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD?**

THIS IS HOW YOU CAN ANSWER

1=Almost Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Rather often, 5=Very often

<input type="checkbox"/> Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Female Guardian		<input type="checkbox"/> Father <input type="checkbox"/> Male Guardian
almost never   rarely   some times   rather often   very often		almost never   rarely   some times   rather often   very often
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>26.</b> My parents used to read to me at home when I was a child.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>27.</b> My parents used to help me with my home-work when I was a kid.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>28.</b> My parents used to restrict my leisure activities anytime I made a poor grade when I was a child.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>29.</b> My parents used to discuss my school progress with me when I was a kid.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5

**AND HOW IS IT PRESENTLY?**

<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>30.</b> My parents discuss my school progress with me.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>31.</b> My parents go on outings with me (museum, zoo, etc).	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>32.</b> My parents make sure that I do my homework.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5

<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>33.</b> When I need help about my home work, my parents help me.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>34.</b> My parents grant me certain privileges whenever I make a good grade.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>35.</b> My parents motivate me to try harder when I make a poor grade.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>36.</b> My parents offer to help me when I make a poor grade.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5

**HOW FREQUENT DO YOUR PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S) PERFORM THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES?**

THIS IS HOW YOU CAN ANSWER:

1=Almost Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Rather often, 5=Very often

<input type="checkbox"/> Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Female Guardian		<input type="checkbox"/> Father <input type="checkbox"/> Male Guardian
almost never   rarely   some times   rather often   very often		almost never   rarely   some times   rather often   very often
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>37.</b> My parents attend my school's Parent Teacher Association meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>38.</b> When there is a sporting activity in my school, my parents attend.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>39.</b> My parents attend organized functions of the school such as speech and prize giving days.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>40.</b> My parents visit me at school.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5

<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>41.</b> My parents discuss my school progress with my teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<b>42.</b> My parents have arranged for private classes for me.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5

**HOW DO YOU SEE THE FINANCIAL HARDSHIP OF YOUR FAMILY?**

THIS IS HOW YOU CAN ANSWER:

1=Not True, 2=Rather Not True, 3=Rather True, 4=Exactly True

	<b>not true</b>	<b>rather not true</b>	<b>rather true</b>	<b>exactly true</b>
<b>43.</b> We have enough money for everything that we need.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
<b>44.</b> My parents are often worried whether they can pay their bills or no.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
<b>45.</b> We often run out of money.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
<b>46.</b> When I need materials for school, we sometimes don't have the money for them.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
<b>47.</b> I cannot do certain activities with my friends due to lack of money.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
<b>48.</b> I often have to give up things because my family has to restrict its expenses.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
<b>49.</b> My school mates have better clothes than I do.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
<b>50.</b> My peers usually have more money for activities than I do.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
<b>51.</b> I cannot afford buying as many things as my peers.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

## YOUR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

THIS IS HOW YOU CAN ANSWER:

1=Not True, 2=Rather Not True, 3=Rather True, 4=Exactly True

	<b>not true</b>	<b>rather not true</b>	<b>rather true</b>	<b>exactly true</b>
<b>52.</b> I am satisfied with my school achievements.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
<b>53.</b> I understand most of what we have to learn at school.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
<b>54.</b> When it comes to important tests at school I am usually successful.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
	<b>not true</b>	<b>rather not true</b>	<b>rather true</b>	<b>exactly true</b>
<b>55.</b> I am fairly good at solving tests at school.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
<b>56.</b> In order to obtain reasonably good result at school, I have to work harder than others in my class.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

**OTHER COMMENTS:**



## Appendix B- Teachers' Questionnaires

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Name of your School: \_\_\_\_\_ Code: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Please check the nature of your school:  
1 Full Day School  
2 Day & Boarding school
3. Your level of education:  
1 Diploma  
2 First degree  
3 Masters degree  
4 PhD
4. How long have you been teaching?  
1 1-5 years  
2 6-10 years  
3 11-15 years  
4 16-20 years  
5 20 years and above
5. Your Age: \_\_\_\_\_ years
6. Please check your sex:  
1 Male  
2 Female
7. Please check your marital status:  
1 Never married  
2 Married  
3 Divorced/Separated  
4 Spouse is deceased

**TEACHER RATINGS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

This is how you can answer:

- 1=Almost Never
- 2=Rarely
- 3=Sometimes
- 4=Rather often
- 5=Very often

Teacher’s Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student’s Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student’s Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student’s class: \_\_\_\_\_

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Mother</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Female Guardian</b>						<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Father</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Male Guardian</b>				
almost never	rarely	some times	rather often	very often		almost never	rarely	some times	rather often	very often
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	8. The parents discuss their child’s school progress with me.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	9. The parents participate in Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	10. The parents attend organized sporting activities of the school.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	11. The parents attend organized functions of the school such as speech and prize giving days	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	12. The parents provide learning materials for their child.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	13. The parents visit their child at school	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	14. The parents enroll their child in “private classes.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

- Student’s academic grade (Core):
  - Math:
  - Science:
  - English:
  - Social studies:

## Appendix C- Statistical Results

**Table 1. Bivariate correlations of predictors of mothers' home involvement (N=184)**

	Mothers' Home Involvement	Mother's Education Level	Mother's Occupation	Mother's Marital Status	Financial Hardship	Gender	Nature of School
Mother's Education Level	,022						
Mother's Occupation (a)	,250**	,044					
Mother's Marital Status (b)	,142*	,122*	,029				
Financial Hardship	-,178*	-,030	-,442**	-,162*			
Gender	,018	-,022	,000	-,070	-,079		
Nature of School (c)	,176*	,045	,120	,037	,166*	,081	
Program of Study (d)	,167*	,079	,036	-,031	-,116	,077	,117

\*\*p < 0.01      \*p < 0.05

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: married=3, remarried=2, divorced=1

c) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

d) coded as: general science=1, business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4

**Table 2 Bivariate correlations of predictors of mothers' school involvement (N=184)**

	Mothers' School Involvement	Mother's Education Level	Mother's Occupation	Mother's Marital Status	Financial Hardship	Gender	Nature of School
Mother's Education Level	,019						
Mother's Occupation (a)	,188*	,044					
Mother's Marital Status (b)	,094	,122*	,029				
Financial Hardship	-,075	-,030	-,442**	-,162*			
Gender	,037	-,022	,000	-,070	-,079		
Nature of School (c)	,337**	,045	,120	,037	,166*	,081	
Program of Study (d)	,20*1	,079	,036	-,031	-,116	,077	,117

\*\*p < 0.01      \*p < 0.05

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: married=3, remarried=2, divorced=1

c) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

d) coded as: general science=1, business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4

**Table 3 Bivariate correlations of predictors of fathers' home involvement (N=171)**

	Fathers' Home Involvement	Father's Education Level	Father's Occupation	Father's Marital Status	Financial Hardship	Gender	Nature of School
Father's Education Level	,058						
Father's Occupation (a)	,174*	,152*					
Father's Marital Status (b)	,023	,074	,003				
Financial Hardship	-,165*	,126	-,526**	-,090			
Gender	,052	-,027	-,009	-,100	-,052		
Nature of School (c)	,134*	,044	,197*	-,142*	,112	,092	
Program of Study (d)	,087	,072	,043	,040	-,062	,097	,071

\*\*p< 0.01      \*p< 0.05

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: married=3, remarried=2, Divorced=1

c) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

d) coded as: general science=1, business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4

**Table 4 Bivariate correlations of predictors of fathers' school involvement (N=171)**

	Fathers' School Involvement	Father's Education Level	Father's Occupation	Father's Marital Status	Financial Hardship	Gender	Nature of School
Father's Education Level	,026						
Father's Occupation (a)	,080	,152*					
Father's Marital Status (b)	,016	,078	,006				
Financial Hardship	-,060	,131*	-,531**	-,092			
Gender	-,076	,027	,012	,081	,056		
Nature of School (c)	,161*	,043	,195*	-,126*	,114	-,086	
Program of Study (d)	,097	,073	,044	,034	-,060	-,100	,074

\*\*p < 0.01      \*p < 0.05

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: married=3, remarried=2, Divorced=1

c) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

d) coded as: general science=1, business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4

**Table 5 Bivariate correlations of predictors of female guardians' home involvement (N=32)**

	Female Guardians' Home Involvement	Female Guardian's Education Level	Female Guardian's Occupation	Financial Hardship	Gender	Nature of School
Female Guardian's Education Level	-,119					
Female Guardian's Occupation (a)	-,063	,159				
Financial Hardship	-,001	,277	,287			
Gender	-,082	,229	-,151	,223		
Nature of School (b)	-,102	-,010	,045	,126	,026	
Program of Study (c)	,149	-,164	,286	,033	-,044	,385*

\*p&lt; 0.05

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

c) coded as: general science=1,business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4

**Table 6 Bivariate correlations of predictors of female guardians' school involvement (N=32)**

	Female Guardians' School Involvement	Female Guardian's Education Level	Female Guardian's Occupation	Financial Hardship	Gender	Nature of School
Female Guardian's Education Level	,141					
Female Guardian's Occupation (a)	-,023	,159				
Financial Hardship	,280	,277	,287			
Gender	,232	,229	-,151	,223		
Nature of School (b)	,259	-,010	,045	,126	,026	
Program of Study (c)	,109	-,164	,286	,033	-,044	,385*

\*p&lt; 0.05

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

c) coded as: general science=1,business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4

**Table 7 Bivariate correlations of predictors of male guardians' home involvement (N=36)**

	Male guardians' Home Involvement	Male Guardian's Education Level	Male Guardian's Occupation	Financial Hardship	Gender	Nature of School
Male Guardian's Education Level	,206					
Male Guardian's Occupation (a)	-,301*	,049				
Financial Hardship	-,366*	-,126	,516*			
Gender	-,369*	,189	,082	,107		
Nature of School (b)	,143	-,074	-,179	,079	-,174	
Program of Study (c)	,434*	-,064	-,121	-,046	-,086	,386*

\*p &lt; 0.05

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

c) coded as: general science=1, business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4

**Table 8 Bivariate correlations of predictors of male guardians' school involvement (N=36)**

	Male Guardians' School Involvement	Male Guardian's Education Level	Male Guardian's Occupation	Financial Hardship	Gender	Nature of School
Male Guardian's Education Level	,256					
Male Guardian's Occupation (a)	,259	,049				
Financial Hardship	-,071	-,126	,516*			
Gender	-,180	,189	,082	,107		
Nature of School (b)	,134	-,074	-,179	,079	-,174	
Program of Study (c)	,382*	-,064	-,121	-,046	-,086	,386*

\*p &lt; 0.05

a) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1

b) coded as: full-day school=1, day and boarding=2

c) coded as: general science=1, business=2, general arts=3, vocational studies=4



**Table 9 Mothers' marital status as a predictor of their home involvement (N=184)**

	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Beta		
(Constant)		49,975	,000
Divorced	-,179	-2,442	,016
Remarried	-,150	-1,987	,045

Dependent Variable: Mothers' Home Involvement  
Constant: Married

**Table 10 Mothers' marital status as a predictor of their school involvement (N=184)**

	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Beta		
(Constant)		34,024	,000
Divorced	-,140	-1,894	,060
Remarried	-,057	-,766	,445

Dependent Variable: Mothers' School Involvement  
Constant: Married

**Table 11 Fathers' marital status as a predictor of their school involvement (N=171)**

	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Beta		
(Constant)		32,040	,000
Divorced	-,105	-1,369	,173
Remarried	,051	,660	,510

Dependent Variable: Fathers' School Involvement  
Constant: Married

## **Appendix D- Letter to the Schools**

Dear Sir,

### **LETTER OF PERMISSION**

I am a doctoral student of the University of Munich, Germany undertaking a study about the involvement of parents in the education of their adolescent children. Since the study is supposed to be undertaken in Ghana, I would be extremely grateful if you could allow me to use your school as the population of the study.

Secondly, since the study is to find out the impact of parental involvement on the educational achievements of the students, I would appreciate it if you could allow me access to the academic grades of the students. I vouch for the confidentiality of the information that would be furnished by the respondents.

Due to certain pressing commitments which are beyond my control at present, I would be grateful if you could allow Mr. Appau Amponsah, a friend, to conduct the study on my behalf.

I hope you would give me the nod and the needed support to undertake the study in your school.

Yours sincerely,

Kingsley Nyarko.

(Student)

## **Resume**

Name: Kingsley Nyarko  
Date of Birth: 10<sup>th</sup> June, 1973  
Place of Birth: Kumasi  
Nationality: Ghanaian

### **Education**

2005- 2007 Ph. D Student (Education), Ludwig Maximilians Universität München  
2002-2005 MA Psychology of Excellence, Ludwig Maximilians Universität München  
1997-2000 B. Ed psychology, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast-Ghana  
1995-1997 Advance Level  
1992-1995 Teacher Training College  
1986-1991 Ordinary Level

### **Professional Experience**

1995-1997 Teacher (Math, English, Science), Mile 18 Junior Secondary School  
2000-2002 Teacher (Government), Ejisuman Senior Secondary School

### **Positions Held**

1996-1997 Acting Headmaster- Mile 18 L/A Junior Secondary School, Amansie East District- Ghana  
2000-2002 Chaplain- Ejisuman Senior Secondary School, Ejisu- Ghana