

## Parental Involvement and Public Basic School Pupils' Academic Achievement in Cape Coast: The Moderating Role of Academic Effort

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**Abstract:** The study investigated the influence of parental involvement, moderated by academic effort of pupil, on public basic school pupils' academic achievement in Cape Coast, Central Region of Ghana. The ex post facto research design was used. The study population was 17,220 public basic school pupils. The computer random number selection procedure was used to select 70 public basic schools, and 391 pupils made up of 190 boys and 201 girls. A questionnaire and achievement test for pupils and an interview guide for parents were the instruments used. Out of the 391 pupils targeted, we were able to collect data from 387 pupils, representing 99.0% response rate. Both descriptive and inferential statistical tools were used to analyse the data. Parental involvement contributes only 49.3% of the variance in pupils' academic achievement. However, the total contribution of parental involvement when pupils' academic effort was introduced increased to 79.7%. Pupils' academic effort is able to boost the potency of parental involvement on pupils' academic achievement up to 38.1%. Also, lack of resources, lack of cooperation between parents and schools, time constraints, and parents' work schedule are some of the factors that normally bar parents from actively participating in the schooling of their children. In all, parental involvement does not strongly influence pupils' academic achievement. It does so when pupils are able to exhibit high level of academic effort. We recommend to the Director of Education in the Metro to organise workshops and other activities that specifically target the training of parents and teachers on family responsibilities and roles, and guidance and counselling services in schools. This will help both parents and teachers to be educogenic, and also help them to counsel and motivate pupils to help boost their academic effort which in the long run will enhance academic achievement of pupils, all things being equal.

**Keywords:** Academic Achievement, Academic Effort, Parental Involvement, Parenting

### 1. Introduction

Globally, schooling in modern society plays a crucial role in providing formal education to citizens, a

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phenomenon that helps in the attainment of the social needs and aspirations of every nation and community. Schooling, a concept synonymous with education in modern society, is seen as the key to a nation's development (Adu-Agyem & Osei-Poku, 2012). Hence, governments in Ghana, both past and present, have invested significant resources into expanding and improving the schooling system in the country, with the view to raising the standard of education (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2018).

According to MoE (2019), the expenditure on education has increased over the years. In 2018, Ghana spent 4.0% of her GDP on education, and she is projected to spend more in the coming years as a result of her quest to continue with the full-scale implementation of 'free' senior high school education. This shows that the government is investing a lot of state resources into schooling, with the view to raising the standard of education. However, a lot still needs to be done by other stakeholders because the burden and responsibility of educational delivery cannot be entirely left to the government alone. Parents need to complement the effort of the government.

As indicated by Chowa, Ansong and Osei-Akoto (2012), in boosting pupils' potential from schooling, there is the need for parents to participate totally in their education. Also, there is the need for the pupils to exhibit some level of personal effort in their academic activities (Hanif & Alwi, 2019). This is so because the difficulties that pupils in Ghanaian basic school's face cannot be resolved effectively by the various agencies in education without the involvement of parents/families. All stakeholders must be on-board in order to help achieve quality education with ease (Smokoska, 2020). This calls for more synchronisation and collaboration among the various agencies in education in order to help eliminate or narrow the difficulties pupils face in our schools. Therefore, attempts to enhance parental involvement and pupils' academic effort in education should occupy the attention of all.

In modern societies, parents are expected to perform multiple roles in the upbringing of their children. They are expected to function as teachers, counsellors, mentors, and role models. Within the realm of schooling, they are to ensure democratisation and development of school programmes (Lara & Saracostti, 2019; Otero, Moledo, Otero & Rego, 2021; Zhao & Akiba, 2009). Therefore, the culture of today's schools should provide parents with information, give them a voice, and encourage partnership with schools. Likewise, pupils should exhibit a significant level of effort in their academic activities in order to help boost the role their parents' participation has on their academic achievement.

In assessing school expectations of parental involvement and student mathematics achievement comparatively in the United States of America and South Korea, Zhao and Akiba (2009) indicated a progressive link between the parents' participation in their children education and their children triumph in schools. Most schools in these countries have been able to integrate meaningful components of parental participation activities into pupils' daily activities. However, in Ghana, there has not been any conscious effort on the part of the government to come out with a clear policy or white paper or a fiat of the sort (Fuudia, 2019). Notwithstanding this, some parents have continuously participated meaningfully in augmenting their children's scholastic advancement in the area of good home nurturing, supervision and monitoring of child school progress, and school governance (Fuudia, 2019; Lim, 2021; Oluwatelure & Oloruntegbe, 2009).

Largely, pupils spend a considerable part of their day with their parents in the house. It is, therefore, prudent that parents show and develop an interest in the education of their children (Liu, Sulaimani & Henning, 2020). This is so because a person upbringing has a profound influence on how he/she sees the world and how he/she processes information. Also, a child education depends on what he/she brings to the classroom, including his/her academic effort. According to Fuudia (2019), what children bring to the classroom depends on what their parents choose to provide at home. Parents are known as their children first teacher and are responsible for laying the foundation of their children's future in education (Hanif & Alwi, 2019; Otero et al., 2021). This makes parental active participation in the schooling of children a treasured constituent of pupil's education.

Hypothetically, when parents participate actively in their kids' home-schooling, they succeed in schooling and vice versa (Fuudia, 2019). This is so because children spent almost 87% of their daily life activities at home, all things being equal (Lim, 2021; Smokoska, 2020). However, this influence may become more potent when pupils put in meaningful effort in their academic activities. Therefore, there is the need for researchers to look at the moderating role of the academic effort of pupils on this two-directional link. Consequently, it behoves every school management committee (SMC) to ensure that there is strong and quality functional links among the school, the community, and the family.

Even though, in recent times, there has been a general improvement in school enrolment across Ghana as a result of many government interventions such as 'free' basic education and the school feeding programme (Fuudia, 2019; MoE, 2018), information on parental involvement and the form it takes is, however, not available (Chowa et al., 2012). There has been very little or no conscious effort to find out how parental involvement contributes to the academic achievement of public basic school pupils, particularly those in Cape Coast. The question, therefore, is can parental involvement, moderated by the academic effort of pupil, be part of the remedy to the problem of low academic achievement in our public basic schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis of the Central Region of Ghana?

Virtually, in Ghana, there has not been much conscious effort by the government or parliament to come out with a policy regarding the involvement of parents in the education of their children as done in the US and the United Kingdom (Adu-Agyem & Osei-Poku, 2012; MoE, 2018). Neither has any missionary school made such an attempt (Fuudia, 2019). A study of this nature, therefore, will be of tremendous importance in that it will provide evidence to policymakers, which can be used to formulate effective parental participation policy and intervention. Also, the outcomes of this paper will help parents to better understand the association between their participation in their children schooling and the children's academic achievement. Also, through counselling, the schools can inspire parents or guardians to deeply participate in their kids' schooling by creating a learning environment that would increase the academic success of students, particularly at home.

## **2. Research Questions**

The resulting research questions were coined to direct the argument of the study:

1. In what ways do parents' involvement in their children's education influences their academic achievement.

2. To what extent does academic effort of pupils moderate the relationship between their parents' participation in their education and their academic accomplishment?
3. What problems keep parents from including themselves in their children's schooling?

### 3. Literature Review

Throughout the history of formal education, the relationship between home and school has shifted drastically, as have the duties and responsibilities that parents and teachers are expected to fulfil. In the course of educational changes, parents have been presented as both a friend and a foe. Parental involvement has not always been welcomed in the school community, and some people still see parent-school interactions as a power struggle (Hanif & Alwi, 2019). According to Fuudia (2019) some studies revealed little to no influence of parental participation on basic school student's academic progress.

Generally, nonetheless, instructors and administrators welcome some assistance in the packed classrooms of the government funded schools and concur that parental association is one approach to connect the breakage between the school and the community. Today, it is broadly perceived that parents assume a fundamental part in their kids' school life; including psychosocial and psychomotor achievement in schools (Chowa et al., 2012; Otero et al., 2021; Smokoska, 2020).

Generally, academic achievement and parental involvement are directly proportional to each other such that if the latter increases it ensures the higher levels of the former. This proposes that the more families support their kids' learning and instructive advancement, the more their kids will in general do well in school and proceed with their schooling. Most researchers have indicated that the impact that parents can have on their children's learning and achievement transcends income levels and social status (Lara & Saracostti, 2019; Lim, 2021). The most accurate predictor of a student's academic accomplishment, according to Fuudia (2019), is the amount to which that student's family is able to build a positive home environment that inspires learning. In the same vein, Smokoska (2020) and Otero et al. (2021) asserted parents encouraging pupils' learning, setting high (but not unattainable) goals and future careers, and involving in their children's education at school and in the community are all predictors for pupils' academic achievement. This shows that if two of these models are cultivated, kids of low pay families will be able to accomplish at or over the levels expected of working-class children.

Despite the fact that multiple studies have shown that parental involvement is critical in children's education, there are still some problems that normally impede parents from participating actively in their children's education. A portion of the issues that keep parents from taking part in the schooling of their kids include inclination of unwantedness in school, absence of premium, time requirements of working parents, and feeling that their inclusion was not no joking matter to their kids' schooling dependent on instructors' disposition or attitude (Fuudia, 2019; Lim, 2021). Notwithstanding the boundaries to parental contribution, educators' mentalities and convictions seeing parental inclusion were considered as the principal basic hindrance. Chan (as cited in Fuudia, 2019) had demonstrated that parental contribution requires collaboration and participation among parents and schools. Along these lines, if instructors consider parents/guardians as less significant, educators will only sometimes configure school activities or homework that can include parents actively.

Additionally, parents' mentality about their job is significant since, in such a case that they do not see their job in their kids' schooling as significant, it prompts disengagements between the home and the school. On the off chance that parents do not have the foggiest idea what occurs in their children's classroom, they may lose the capacity to pass judgment on their kids' school success and formative level. Absence of time is seen as another huge hindrance, particularly among working parents. With some level of academic effort on the part of children, parents' active participation can be a huge factor to support in the boosting of pupils' academic achievement (Otero et al., 2021).

The argument of the study is based on Epstein's (2001) discourse towards a theory of family-school connections. On the basis of her argument, six types of parental involvement facets were considered. Epstein's parental participation structure is by far the most referenced and broadly acknowledged theoretical model of parental contribution to schooling of children. Parental involvement, within the context of this study, is seen as families and networks who take dynamic job in establishing a caring instructive climate. As per Epstein, parents who are engaged with their kids' schooling are those who reliably show great nurturing abilities, speak with school staff, volunteer their time in the school, assist their kids with homing, take on dynamic job in school-related dynamic, and who consistently team up with the school local area. In this study, Epstein's six (6) facets of parental participation in schooling are contextualised and treated as independent variables. These six facets are presented in Figure 1.

Generally, the impact of parents' participation in schooling on their children academic achievement has widely been acknowledged by many researchers (Fuudia, 2019; Lim, 2021), however, it is not enough to determine academic achievement. Therefore, some moderating variables such as 'academic effort' will be necessary. In other words, parental involvement in their various forms will motivate their children to set high academic goals or educational aspirations and this will, in turn, stimulate their wards to work hard to achieve them. The attainment of the set goals will be determined by a number of factors, among which is academic effort. This may mean that no matter how well-educated parents are, no matter how much or how frequently parents reinforce their children's academic work, children's academic achievement will not automatically improve unless the reinforcement stimulates them to put more effort into their studies. This, therefore, means that with the use of appropriate schedules of reinforcement by parents, children will be stimulated to show more academic enthusiasm towards their studies, which will translate into high academic achievement. This process is depicted in Figure 1.

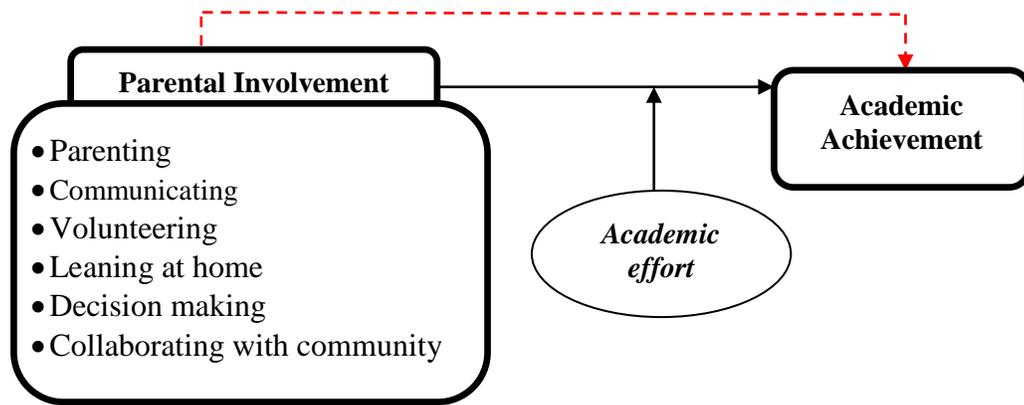


Figure 1: A Model on the Moderating Role of Academic Effort on the Influence of Parental Involvement on Pupils' Academic Achievement

The argument of the study is that parental involvement in the education of their children will motivate them to set high expectations/aspirations, and this will, in turn, stimulate them to put in a lot of academic efforts (devote a lot of learning hours/periods to their private studies). The academic efforts made by students will finally result in high academic achievement, defined as a percentage average score on a test in English language, Natural Science, and Mathematics at the basic level (Basic nine).

#### 4. Research Methods

The research design chosen was the ex post facto research design. This design is a method of teasing out possible antecedents of events that have happened and cannot, therefore, be controlled, engineered, or manipulated by the investigators (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018). The adopted design helped us to observe the variations in pupils' academic achievement against the influencing factor of parental involvement which has already occurred, taking into consideration the individual academic effort exhibited by the pupils.

##### 4.1 Population, Sample, and Sampling Procedure

The study population was all public basic school pupils in Cape Coast, Central Region of Ghana. According to Educational Management Information System (EMIS, 2020), there are 17,220 pupils, made up of 8,864 (51.5%) girls and 8,356 (48.5%) boys, in the various basic schools in Cape Coast. A sample of 391 was selected using Yamane's (1967) recommended formula. This formula was used because it specified the precision of estimation desired for the population and it had been tested and used for most

survey and case studies (Cohen et al., 2018). The formula:  $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)}$ , where  $n$  is the sample size,  $N$  is the population size, and  $e$  is the level of precision.  $n = 17,220 \div [1 + 17,220 (0.05)^2] = 17,220 \div 44.05 = 390.92 \approx 391$ . Table 1 depicts the population and sample distribution of the study.

Table 1: Population and sample of public basic school pupils in Cape Coast

Gender of Pupils	Population Size		Sample Size	
	No.	%	No.	%
Boys/Male	8356	48.5	190	48.6
Girls/Female	8864	51.5	201	51.4
Total	17220	100	391	100

Source: Educational Management Information System (EMIS, 2020)

The basic nine (9) students were chosen on purpose since they are the most experienced and matured pupils at the basic level of education. The computer random number selection procedure was used to select 70 public basic schools within Cape Coast and 391 pupils made up of 190 boys/males and 201 girls/females based on the sampling frames designed by the researchers. All the circuits in Cape Coast were considered. A sample proportion of 2.3% was used in each of the schools to select the pupils randomly.

#### 4.2 Data Collection Instruments, Procedure and Analysis

To collect data on parental involvement facets, we used 29 close-ended item questionnaire that reflects Epstein six-construct structure. The items were designed based on the level of basic nine (9) pupils such that they were able to read and react to the questions without the help of the researchers or their teachers. That is, simple English devoid of ambiguities, Jargons and other terminologies which are not familiar to the pupils was used. The use of questionnaire guaranteed uniformity (Larini & Barthes, 2018). In relation to pupils' academic achievement, we constructed three different multiple-choice type objective tests involving the three core subjects: namely English Language, Mathematics and Natural Science in basic nine (9). Responses to the questionnaire and the three objective tests were based on four optional type that were measured numerically using discrete scale. Also, interview guide was designed for parents on the study issues, particularly, the challenges they face regarding their participation.

The validity of the instruments was enhanced by experts in the area of educational sociology, counselling and psychology. In relation to the achievement test for basic nine (9) pupils, content validity of the test in English, Natural Science and Mathematics was ensured by contacting subject specialists. The instruments were pre-tested on a sample of 45 respondents at Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abrem (KEEA) Municipality to refine it. The items were factor analysed using confirmatory factor analysis with Varimax (orthogonal) rotation. Also, the KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity both indicate that the set of variables are at least adequately related for factor analysis. The respondents were selected because they share similar characteristics as those in Cape Coast, closer to the researchers and are easily accessible. The Cronbach's alphas of the questionnaire and the achievement test generated were .781 and 0.812 respectively, and were perceived to reliable (Larini & Barthes, 2018).

The instruments were administered personally by the researchers after obtaining the requisite permissions from Cape Coast Metropolitan Education Directorate and the headteachers of the selected schools. We were able to collect completed data from 387 pupils, representing 99.0% response rate. Linear multiple regression analysis was used to analyse the data regarding the first research question. In

relation to the second research question, hierarchical multiple regression cum Hayes (2018) moderation process analyses were used to analyse the data. Frequency count and percentage were used regarding the third research question. These statistical tools were used because the preliminary analysis show that the respondents were homogeneous, the distribution was moderately normal, and also the answers to the items/questions used in the questionnaire were measured discretely.

#### **4.3 Ethical Issues Considered**

By following the established principles and procedures of research ethics, the researchers, research subjects, and clients of the study were protected from any negative implications of the study. Right to privacy, voluntary involvement, no harm to participants, anonymity, confidentiality, deception, and scientific misconduct are among the ethical considerations discussed. The consents of the pupils were sought individually using the consent form designed for their parents to sign. Only pupils whose consent forms were signed by their parents were considered. The purpose of the study and the goal it aimed to attain were explained to both the students and their parents. Respondents were advised that they might choose whether or not to participate. They also had the option of withdrawing their consent at any time and with no repercussions.

#### **5. Results/Findings**

The results/findings of the study were presented logically based on the research questions of the study. As indicated earlier, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data. Parental involvement of the pupils was made up of the average score of the six (6) facets scores. Also, their academic achievement was measured using the total response score of the three subjects that were pooled together.

Research question one: In what ways do parents' involvement in their children's education influences their academic achievement.

In analysing the data in order to answer the first research question, the six facets of parental involvement were used as the independent variables while pupil' academic achievement was used as the dependent variable. As presented in Table 2, the standardised beta co-efficient for collaborating with the community ( $\beta = .278 (.022)$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and learning at home ( $\beta = .111 (.022)$ ,  $p < .01$ ) were the components of parental involvement that influenced academic achievement of pupils significantly. However, those of volunteering, communication, decision-making and parenting components contribute negligibly to pupils' academic achievement.

Table 2: Influence of parental involvement on pupils' academic achievement (N = 387)

Variables	Unstandardised Coefficient		Standardised Coefficient	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta ( $\beta$ )		Tolerance	VIF
Volunteering	.029	.024	.032	.217	.469	2.132
Communication	.046	.025	.045	.064	.528	1.896
Decision-making	.029	.023	.036	.208	.379	2.639
Learning at home	.098	.022	.111**	.000	.481	2.079
Parenting	.046	.025	.047	.069	.463	2.158
Collaborating with the community	.283	.022	.278**	.000	.627	1.595
Constant			1.464			
R			0.611			
R Square			0.493			
Adjusted R Square			0.471			

Source: Field survey (2021) \*\* $p < .01$  Dependent Variable: Pupils' academic achievement

Results from Table 2 further show that the unique proportional contribution ( $R^2$ ) of parental involvement to students' academic achievement was .493, with an adjusted  $R^2$  of .471. This means that parental involvement was able to explain only 49.3% of the variance in pupils' academic achievement. It, therefore, means that besides parental involvement recognised, extra factors not yet in the model have a chance of explaining 50.7% to pupils' academic achievement in English language, Mathematics and Natural Science. The result suggests that other factors can help boost the influence parental involvement has on pupils' academic achievement.

Research question two: To what extent does academic effort of pupils moderate the relationship between their parents' participation in their education and their academic accomplishment?

The rationale of the second research question was to explore the moderating role of academic effort on the relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement of pupils. As indicated in Table 3, pupils' academic effort was entered into the first model (Table 2) to examine its role. The argument here is that the potency of the independent variables on the dependent variables can be enhanced by the moderating variable. The results from Table 3 show that all the six components of parental involvement became statistically significant when pupils' academic effort was introduced into the first model.

Specifically, collaborating with the community contributed 37.7% while learning at home and parenting contributed 24.2% and 23.7% respectively. Pupils' academic effort ( $\beta = .197$ ,  $p < .01$ ) was statistically significant when it was entered into the model. It contributed 19.7% to pupils' academic achievement. This shows that the explanatory powers of parental involvement on pupils' academic achievement are shared with pupils' academic effort. The total contribution ( $R^2$ ) of parental involvement when pupils' academic effort was introduced increased from .493 to .797. The rate of increase of the  $R^2$  was 38.1%. The results from Table 3 show that the six components of parental involvement do not strongly influence

pupils' academic achievement. They do so when pupils' academic effort is considered. This finding reinforces most researchers' arguments that pupils' academic effort is a booster to most predictors of academic achievement.

Table 3: Moderating role of pupils' academic effort on the link between parental involvement in education and their academic achievement

Variables	Unstandardised Coefficient		Standardised Coefficient	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta ( $\beta$ )		Tolerance	VIF
Volunteering	.081	.030	.083**	.007	.341	2.933
Communication	.046	.025	.044*	.016	.527	1.896
Decision making	.097	.046	.098**	.001	.752	1.329
Learning at home	.222	.054	.242**	.000	.807	1.239
Parenting	.223	.057	.237**	.000	.753	1.329
Collaborating with the community	.382	.022	.377**	.000	.627	1.596
Academic effort	.186	.053	.197**	.001	.743	1.346
Constant			0.746			
R			0.893			
R Square			0.797			
Adjusted R Square			0.784			

Source: Field survey (2021) \*\*p<.01; \*p<0.05 (N = 387)

Dependent Variable: Pupils' academic achievement

Further analysis was conducted to establish the direct, total, and indirect effect of parental involvement on pupils' academic achievement through pupils' academic effort. A model was estimated simultaneously taking into consideration the dimensions of parental involvement. A serial-multiple moderation model six was conducted to find out how the effect of the predictors on the criterion is explain through causal effect of one moderator to the other. The statistical significance of the tested model in this study was investigated using Hayes (2018) software, a technique based on ordinary least-squares regression, and the bootstrap method. The analysis used 10,000 bootstrap samples using 95% confidence level. For learning at home to influence pupils' academic achievement, the relationship needs to be moderated by pupils' academic effort,  $b = .009$ , BootCI [.000 - .012]. Similar result was found for collaborating with community,  $b = .007$ , BootCI [.002 - .016] and parenting,  $b = .011$ , BootCI [.003 - .021], suggesting that pupils' academic effort is a moderator in the influencing factors and the criterion.

The study, therefore, adopts the conceptual framework of the study since it reflects the trend of the results. The model was found to be fit based on the assertion of Hayes (2018) that the Mean Square Error (MSE) of the model should be closer to zero. In the case of this model, MSE obtained was .139 which shows that the model is fit.

Research question three: What problems keep parents from including themselves in their children's schooling?

With regard to this last research question, emphasis was placed on the problems that normally impede parents from participating actively in their kids' schooling. As indicated in Table 4, majority of the respondents agreed that lack of resources (70.0%), lack of cooperation between parents and schools (70.0%), time constraints (54.3%), poor attitude of parents (51.4%), poor attitude of teachers (50.9%), and work schedule (50.1%). However, apathy, low level of parents' education, feeling unwelcome in school, and lack of interest or caring were not some of the problems that normally prevent parents from involving themselves in their kids' schooling.

Table 4: Problems that impede parental participation in kids' schooling

Items	Disagree		Agree	
	No.	%	No.	%
Lack of resources	116	30.0	271	70.0
Lack of cooperation between parents and schools	116	30.0	271	70.0
Time constraints	177	45.7	210	54.3
Poor attitude of parents	188	48.6	199	51.4
Poor attitude of teachers	190	49.1	197	50.9
Work schedule	193	49.9	194	50.1
Apathy	216	55.8	171	44.2
Low level of parents' education	221	57.1	166	42.9
Feeling unwelcome in school	233	60.2	154	39.8
Lack of interest or caring	237	61.2	150	38.8

Source: Field survey (2021) (N = 387)

In order to obtain the views of parents on this subject matter, four focus groups were interviewed. The first group of parents who were mainly farmers and traders indicated that the main problems that make their involvement in their children's education difficult are lack of resources and time, timing of school programmes, and the fact that their level of education makes it difficult to help their children in studying at home. The second group of parents were made up of public and civil servants. They indicated lack of time and timing of programme as the major constraints inhibiting them from helping their children learn at home. The third group was largely artisans (carpenters, mechanics, electricians, and electronic repairers) in the informal sector. They also cited lack of resources and time, and work schedule as the main problems that prevent them from involving themselves in their children's education. In all, the results show that the main constraints to parental involvement in their children's education are the issue of lack of resources and time, timings of school programmes, poor cooperation between parents and schools, and work schedule of parents.

## 6. Discussion

From the results presented, it shows that parental involvement with regard to collaborating with community, learning at home, parenting, communication, volunteering, and decision-making is able to predict 49.3% of pupils' academic achievement. This means, the more parents get involved in their children education, the higher the academic achievement of their children. Epstein (2001) indicated that

parenting, communication and volunteering exhibited by parents results in the academic achievement or performance of their wards. However, this was contrary to the conclusion reached by Fuudia (2019). According to her, the only dimension of parental involvement that is remotely consistent in terms of improving achievement is parent-child discussion.

Parents who consistently demonstrate good parenting skills, communicate with school staff, volunteer their time in the school, assist their children at home, take an active role in school-related decision-making, and collaborate with the school community on a regular basis can help their children improve their academic achievement. However, this impact becomes more potent when the children are able to exhibit significant level of academic effort in their schooling. The findings are in line with the view of Smokoska (2020) who posits that students whose parents participate in a greater number of activities at home and at school performed consistently better in school. It is expected that when children are inspired by their parents to achieve, they will devote a lot of time and energy into their studies, and thereby improve their academic achievement.

In addition, the finding that parental involvement in their children's education is able to influence academic achievement of children strongly only when the children are able to demonstrate some significant level of academic effort shows that the potent influence is indirect. This finding corroborates the view of Fuudia (2019) who avers that active engagement of parents in the day-to-day activities of their children outside the school enhances the academic achievement of only the children who have high level of academic effort. However, the finding is incongruent with the submissions of Hanif and Alwi (2019), Lara and Saracostti (2019), and Otero et al. (2021) who all indicated a direct influence of parental involvement on academic achievement of pupils.

According to Fuudia (2019), lacking parental help may lead a kid to feel overpowered and subsequently to pull out from school. Fuudia found that parents with high educational levels are associated with high aspirations in children, and that this association accounts for a significant part of the association between father's and sons' educational attainment. This suggests that academic achievement for children of all types is linked to parents' purposeful attempts to instil academic discipline and effort in their children. This shows that the more a family supports their children's learning and academic advancement, the more likely their children are to succeed in school and continue their education. According to Smokoska (2020), it is very important for parents to encourage and also get involved in their children's education even after not so satisfactory results because they would help them to improve the results in the future.

In addition, the result seems to support the position of Coleman (as cited in Fuudia, 2019) on the prominence of social assets in the education of the child. Social capital of the family is the relationship between children and parents. According to Coleman, social capital within the family is extremely important for a child's intellectual development. It can be inferred from the result of the study that parents spend time and effort with their children on intellectual materials relating to their academic activities. Low-income and single parents in Ghana are noted for not spending as much time at home supporting their children as middle-class parents who have more education and spare time. This behaviour of lack of time on the part of such parents normally influences parents not to be involved in their children's education. This negative behaviour in the long run can affect negatively the academic achievement of pupils, and also their social and psychological adjustment to the school.

Furthermore, the findings that parents' lack of resources, time and attitude are problems that normally prevent them from involving themselves in their children's education corroborate with the views of Chowa et al. (2012) who aver that there are strong interactions between parents' participation in their kids' schooling and their work schedule, resources, and attitude. The work schedule, resources and negative attitudes of parents makes it difficult for them to get involved in their children's education as expected. The views of Chowa et al. are consistent with that of Hanif and Alwi (2019) who posit that parental involvement is much less influential on the academic performance of students.

### **7. Limitations**

A number of factors affect academic achievement of pupils. They include their health status, psychological state, and availability of teaching and learning materials. Other factors include conditions of the classroom, and teacher competency and personality. These factors were not controlled. Also, the study considered only basic nine pupils in the selected schools. This could reduce the generalisability to a general population of pupils in the schools sampled. Similarly, the findings and conclusions of the study may not be projected for the future since issues related to parental involvement and academic achievement of pupils keep changing with time and place.

### **8. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The study concludes that the contribution of parental involvement to the variance in students' academic achievement is negligible. That is, parental involvement alone does not contribute significantly to students' academic achievement in any way and that they do so when academic effort of pupils is considered. Also, support to children's education is now popular among parents of all classes, both literate and illiterate parents; and that parents' level of education does not affect their involvement in their children education. Similarly, parents are not apathetic to the education of their children. They want to be involved in their children's education but the difficulties that confront them render them incapable of doing so. Contrary to the assertion of many researchers, this study does not establish that low level of parental education contributes to the difficulty that parents have for involving themselves in the education of their children.

It is evident from the findings of the study that parental involvement works better when pupils exhibit significant level of academic effort. Therefore, it is recommended to the Director of Cape Coast Metropolitan Education Directorate to design workshops and other activities that specifically target the training of parents and teachers on guidance and counselling services in schools. This will help both parents and teachers to counsel and motivate pupils to help boost their academic effort and academic achievement in the long run. From the study it is evident that parents are eager to be involved in their children's education, but they are constrained by such factors as work schedule, lack of resources and time, and timing of school events. It is, therefore, recommended to headteachers in the various public basic schools to conduct a small survey to find out when parents want school events and programmes to take place so that the school can time such events accordingly to adjust to parent's convenience.

In addition, management of public basic schools should arrange events for parents so they can interact with each other, teachers, and school management freely. This will help them to understand the

academic needs of their children. Also, headteachers should have a feedback system to collect data from parents and pupils regarding academic environment. This will assist the schools to develop a favourable learning environment. The Ghanaian media should launch awareness programmes highlighting the significance of parental participation in children education and its consequences on the children's academic success.

Students' academic achievement is essential for every well-meaning parent. It is, therefore, important that in-school counsellors liaise with teachers, parents, and school management in conducting efficient appraisal service so that the counsellor can use that information to assist the students, parents, teachers and school management. This will give school-community collaborators and parents a greater sense of involvement in students' academic achievement, thereby getting the parents to support fully their educational needs.

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