819

Global Scientific JOURNALS

INTER RELATIONSHIP OF FACTORS IMPACTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: THE CASE OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE BEKWAI MUNICIPALITY OF GHANA

Kennedy Nyeseh Ofori
Wesley College of Education, Kumasi, Ghana
Email: kennyofori@yahoo.com

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to assess the relationship among factors impacting academic performance of Senior High School (SHS) students at the Bekwai Municipality of Ghana. Four SHS out of a total of eight were randomly selected to participate in this study. Four hundred and twenty students were then sampled through systematic random sampling to serve as study participants. The instruments used in this study were five sets of questionnaires. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical analysis tool was used to test the five null hypotheses. The five null hypotheses were tested and rejected at an alpha level of 0.05. The major findings of this study revealed significant relationship among Guidance and Counselling awareness, study habits, attitude to school and students' academic performance. It was concluded that Guidance and counselling awareness have a positive relationship with all the variables studied. Recommendations were forwarded amongst which were that; SHS Headmasters and headmistresses should provide adequate resources for the effective running of guidance and counselling programmes in their schools. Also, the Guidance counsellor should provide the right therapeutic atmosphere during counselling sessions.
Keywords: Guidance and Counselling, Academic Performance, Attitude, Relationship, Study Habits

1. Background to the Study

Education is an important asset for the individual and as well as the society. It is said to be an essential process for achieving personal goals and individual aspirations (Shah, Dwyer & Modood, 2010). Education is a tool for overall change in economic and social development. Education has been defined in so many ways. Dioha & Baiti (2002) consider education to be a process by which society or nation moulds the individual by subjecting him/her to a selected and controlled environment for the purposes of attaining social competence and optimum individual development.

Sanda (2009) considered education as a key tool for effective national development. Abubakar (2009) argues that education involves socializing the individual to become an integral part of the society in which he/she lives. The main goal of education is to empower individuals through acquisition of knowledge, useful skills, desirable values and attitudes. It is also aimed at helping individuals acquire habits that will enable them to adjust themselves to the changing condition of the world in which they live. Education is the foundation for the development of any society in all spheres of life. To achieve this aim of education requires Guidance and Counselling, which happens to be one of the pillars in the field of Education in Ghana. Tailor & Buku (2006) citing Shertzer & Stone (1976) wrote that guidance has been defined in many ways. Guidance is derived from its root word 'to guide'. To guide means to direct, pilot, manage or steer. They then defined guidance as the process of helping an individual to understand himself and his world.

Ali, (2002:4) views guidance and counselling as "services available to each student to facilitate his or her academic success in school, to help gain better understand of

his or her strengths and limitations, to identify his or her interests, to aid him or her in planning for attaining realistic goals". She further regarded it as a process of helping the individual to be aware of her or her personal identity and to build interpersonal relationships. Guidance can thus help an individual to realise himself or herself, his or er potentialities, attitudes, capabilities, interests, abilities, needs and aspirations in order to formulate his or her own goals and make adequate plans for realizing those goals. Guidance and counselling is the bedrock for achieving self-actualisation.

Effective guidance and counselling services in schools cultivate in the students good attitudes and behaviour leading to a fruitful life. A student who loses confidence in his or her ability and who devalues himself or herself lacks concentration and this may lead to continuous academic failure (Rutondoki, 2000:63). The provision of guidance and counselling services in schools may help curb these problems. UNESCO (2002:1) states that "where there is no guidance and counselling, schools lose those children who are not able to cope with specific academic standards". Guidance and counselling service enhance students' performance, improve students' attitudinal determinants, reduce student dropout rates and prepare students for the world of work and life (Chireshe 2006:28). Brock (2010) state that students who receive guidance and counselling services have shown significant increases in academic persistence and achievement, school attendance, classroom behaviour, better self-concepts and improved attitudes towards school work and peers. In the light of the above discussions, we can deduce that guidance and counselling affects the formation of attitudes of students.

Various studies (Dikko, 2008, Bakori, 2008 & Kagu, 2002) have shown that academic achievement is linked with a number of variables. Such variables may include motivation, level of intelligence, teachers' professionalism, self-concept, study habits, attitude to school and attitude to an academic subject. There is no doubt that these factors constitute an integral part of educational success. Study habits are said to be "all the skills and techniques put together in devotion to acquire more knowledge" (Dikko, 2008:113). Owusu-Acheaw & Larson (2014) once defined study habits as a well-planned and deliberate patterns of study which has attained a form of consistency on the part of students towards understanding academic subjects and passing examinations. Kagu (2002) and Acqyuino (2011) viewed study skills as instrumental to effective learning and subsequent higher academic performance. Study habits of the child definitely play an important role in his/her academic achievement.

A number of empirical studies revealed that students' study habit is related to mass failure. Abayomi (2008) in his study of the factors responsible for effective study habits in high schools in Kebbi State, Nigeria, found that some students performed woefully in examination not because they are not intelligent but because they were too anxious and also lacked the techniques for developing effective study habits. He recommended the development of study habits right from primary schools as this will give a more lasting effect under the use of effective study skills. Dikko (2008) in his study; an analysis of different study habits and their effects on Academic performance of students in Federal College of Education Katsina discovered that, there is a significant relationship between students' study habit and their academic performance. Similarly, Adane (2013) in her studies among students in Junior High School in Aburi, Ghana, found that poor study habits ranked high when compared with other factors responsible for poor academic performance. Attitude to school plays an important role in the development of the child's behaviour and thus in the academic achievement of the child. One can also see that the way a child views his school, his teachers and the school environment has significance in shaping academic achievement.

2. Statement of the Problem

In Ghana, the introduction of Free Senior High School Education (FSHSE) in September, 2017 by the government ensured that every citizen had access to secondary education. The FSHSE is supposed to encompass the entire three years of formal secondary education. Young people in Ghana enroll at about fifteen (15) years of age and emerge out of the school at the age of eighteen (18) years. Thus, these teenagers will be in school throughout their sensitive and formative years, the period when physical and intellectual development, sound societal values, religious and moral values will be taking firm roots. By the time they emerged from SHS they would already have established the patterns of their further academic and training pursuits and therefore their likely life careers. They would have been moulded into honest and productive members of society. It is, therefore, in the light of the above that guidance and counselling is considered very important part of the educational process.

Literature shows that guidance is for all ages (Wentworth & Wentworth, 2013). For this reason students in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions need guidance and counselling services Durlak et al., (2011) revealed that "many students fail examinations because they have an improper combination of subjects, personal, social or psychological challenges, and may have no reliable person in the school system to discuss such problems". Hence, majority of the youth end up with results that may not get them admission to universities or other analogous tertiary institutions. This probably happens because of lack of assessment of abilities, aptitudes, interests and personality for the proper selection of subjects that one can perform well. The main thrust of this study, therefore, is to examine the relationship among guidance and counselling awareness, study habit, attitude to school and academic performance of SHS students in the Bekwai Municipality of Ghana.

3. Hypotheses

This study tested the following null hypotheses:

1. There is no significant relationship between guidance and counselling awareness and study habits of SHS students in the Bekwai Municipality of Ghana.
2. There is no significant relationship between guidance and counselling awareness and students' attitude to school of SHS students in the Bekwai Municipality of Ghana.
3. There no significant relationship between study habits and academic performance of SHS students in the Bekwai Municipality of Ghana.
4. There is no significant relationship between attitude to school and academic performance of SHS students in the Bekwai Municipality of Ghana.
5. There is no significant relationship between academic achievement and students' attitude to school of SHS students in the Bekwai Municipality of Ghana.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

The correlational survey design was employed for the study. According to Sibley, & Etnier (2003) a correlational study is a type of descriptive research that is concerned with determining the relationship between variables. Neuman (2000) and Cole & Gonyea (2010) observed that the correlational method is the most appropriate for obtaining factual data or attitudinal information or for research questions about self-reported beliefs, opinions, values, motives, ideas, habits, feelings, desires, characteristics and present or past behaviour. Since the present study sought to obtain data from SHS students regarding the inter relationship among factors such as their study habits, attitude to school, guidance and counselling awareness and academic achievement, the correlational design was deemed most appropriate.

4.2 Population of the study

The population for this study consisted of all students in the eight SHS in the Bekwai Municipality of Ghana. The population of second year students for the 2018/2019 academic year was a total of three thousand six hundred and nine (3,609). This population included one thousand seven hundred and sixty-two (1,762) males and one thousand eight hundred and forty-seven (1,847) females. Only Form two students were employed in the study because the third years were busy writing their mock examinations, which was in preparing towards their final examination. Again, the first year students were new to SHS life and still adapting to the school environment. As a result, it was more appropriate to concentrate on the SHS two students for the study since they were deemed to have found a middle ground on campus.

4.3 Sampling technique

The sample for this study was drawn from four selected SHS in the Bekwai Municipal of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. In the selection of the schools that participated this study, the simple random sampling technique was employed. A total of four hundred and twenty (420) SHS two students were systematically sampled from the selected SHS. This is because according to Pearson & Mundform (2010), 420 should serve as sample for a population that is up to ten thousand (10,000). The researcher with the aid of two data collection assistants, who had been recruited and trained for ten days, administered the questionnaires to the participants.

4.4 Instrumentation

Four different sets of questionnaires were employed as instruments for the study. The questionnaires were adopted from the Federal Ministry of Education Questionnaire, Attitude to School Scale (ATS"), Study Habits Inventory ("SHI") by Dikko (2008), Guidance and Counselling Services Provision Rating Scale ("GCSPRS") constructed by Kolo (2000) and Self constructed Achievement Tests in English and Mathematics.

4.5 Validity of the Instruments

Three out of the four aforementioned instruments had earlier validation from different experts and as such the current study adopted the instruments as they were reported. For instance, the Federal Ministry of Education Questionnaire on Attitude to School Scale (ATS) was validated by test experts from Nigerian Universities, the study habit inventory was validated by Dikko (2008), the Guidance and Counselling Services Rating Scale was validated by Kolo (2002) and the Academic achievement test validated by experts in mathematics and english.

4.6 Reliability of the Instruments

The reliability of the three out of the four instruments was established by the originators of the instruments and the following results were obtained: - The reliability of the instrument was established through test re-test between an interval of eight weeks and the reliability index was found to be 0.72 at the first administration and 0.78 at the second administration. The reliability of Guidance and Counselling rating scale was established by Kolo (2002) using Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics. A reliability level of 0.88 and 0.86 was achieved with an interval of two weeks between first and second administration. The reliability of Study habit inventory was established by Dikko (2008). The instrument was administered to 20 students, 10 males and 10 females. The reliability of 0.72 and 0.74 were established after an interval of four weeks.

The reliability of Academic Achievement test in English and Mathematics was established by the researcher through test re-test. Twenty students were selected randomly in two SHS within the Amansie Central District, which has similar characteristics with respondents at Bekwai. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistic was used to compute the result and a reliability of 0.86 was found after first and second administration between an interval of two weeks.

4.7 Data Analysis Procedure

The data collected were analysed with the aid the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to test the five (5) null hypotheses. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient is used because it is very fast and suitable for the type of data obtained. To retain or reject hypotheses, an alpha level of 0.05 was set

5. Research Findings

The findings from the study are presented as follows:

Hypotheses 1: There is no significant relationship between guidance and counselling awareness and study habits of students in SHS at Bekwai Municipal of Ghana.

Table 1: Analysis of the relationship between Students' Study Habits and Guidance and Counselling awareness.

Variables	No	Mean	SD	r-cal	r-crit	Remark
Study Habits	420	61.378	27.727	0.676	0.345	**Rejected**
Guidance & Counselling awareness	420	47.489	20.218			

Source: Field Survey, 2019

From 1, the correlation index of r-cal stands at 0.676 while r-crit stands at 0.345. The high value suggests that the degree of relationship between scores from guidance and counselling and those of study habits is significantly high. The positive value of the r-cal coefficient is an indication that the two variables are positively related, that is the nature of movement between the variables is direct. The value also indicates fairly strong degree of correlation between the two variables under study. While the high value of correlation coefficient remains very important.

In view of the above, the null hypothesis was hereby rejected. This meant there is significant relationship between guidance and counselling awareness and students' study habits.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between guidance and counselling awareness and students' attitude to school.

Table 2: Analysis of the relationship between Attitude to School and Guidance and Counselling awareness

Variables	No	Mean	SD	r-cal	r-crit	Remark
Attitude to school	420	58.465	24.143	0.690	0.346	**Rejected**
Guidance & Counselling awareness	420	47.489	20.218			

Source: Field Survey, 2019

As shown from table 2, it can be seen that the correlation coefficient between scores on attitude to school and those of guidance and counselling awareness is both significant and positive. The value of the r-cal stands at 0.690 while r-crit stands at 0.346. This indicates a strong and positive relationship between the variables. This discovery also leads us to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, there is significant relationship between guidance and counselling awareness and attitude to school.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between guidance and counselling awareness and students' academic achievement.

Table 3: Analysis of the relationship between Academic Achievement and Guidance and Counselling, awareness.

Variables	No	Mean	SD	r-cal	r-crit	Remark
Academic Achievement	420	48.751	20.52	0.794	0.326	**Rejected**
Guidance & Counselling awareness	420	47.489	20.218			

Source: Field Survey, 2019

From table 3; the value of correlation coefficient is value of the r-cal is 0.791 while the r-crit is 0.326. As can be seen, the r-cal is high which indicates a relationship, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. Meaning there is significant relationship between academic achievement and guidance and counselling awareness.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationship between students' academic achievement and students' study habits.

Table 4: Analysis of the relationship between Academic Achievement and study habits.

Variables	No	Mean	SD	r-cal	r-crit	Remark
Academic Achievement	420	48.751	20.520	0.702	0.428	**Rejected**
Study Habits	420	61.378	27.727			

Source: Field Survey, 2019

From table 4; it can be seen that the r-cal is positive and stands at 0.702 while r-crit stands as 0.428. Following this finding, the correlation coefficient is high, thus

there is significant relationship between students' academic achievement and their study habits. Therefore, the null hypotheses is rejected, that says there is no significant relationship between academic achievement and study habits. In other words, a relationship exists between students' academic achievement and students' study habits.

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant relationship between academic achievement and students' attitude to school.

Table 5: Analysis of the relationship between Academic Achievement and Attitude to school

Variables	No	Mean	SD	r-cal	r-crit	Remark
Academic Achievement	420	48.751	20.520	0.706	0.428	**Rejected**
Attitude to School	420	58.465	24.143			

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Results from table 5, shows r-cal is 0.706 and r-crit is 0.428. The findings indicates that the r-cal is high and positive, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. In other words, there is a significant relationship between academic achievement and attitude to school.

6. Discussion

The findings in this study indicated that there was a significant relationship between guidance and counselling awareness and study habits. In other words the provision of guidance and counselling in these SHS has made the students to develop effective study habits. This can be seen from the analysis of hypothesis one. Therefore, guidance and counselling if well planned, guided and effectively provided has the capacity of improving the study habits of students. This finding is in line with Dikko (2008) who discovered that students study habit have a significant relationship with guidance and counselling.

From the result of the findings of hypothesis two, it was observed that a significant relationship exists between guidance and counselling and student attitude. This study also observed that there is a significant relationship between guidance and counselling and students' attitude to school. This can further be seen from the result of the analysis of hypothesis three. This indicated that the provision of guidance and counselling in these SHS has made the students to develop a positive attitude towards the school. This is in agreement with Gysbers & Henderson (2014) who states that guidance and counselling is considered an important part of the educational process as it enables the student to adjust better and fit in the SHS system. When a learner is well adjusted in school and is assisted in finding his or her way around the complicated curriculum, the individual will definitely develop a positive attitude towards the school.

It was observed from the analysis of hypothesis four that there is a positive relationship between guidance and counselling and students' academic achievement. This means that the educational information on their ability, aptitude and interest they get through guidance and counselling awareness adds knowledge to improve their performance. Lehr & Sumarah (2002) also concur with this finding when they state that schools with fully implemented guidance and counselling services had students who earned higher

grades. In relation to this finding also, Kay, Muola & Ondima (2019) found that underachieving students who received guidance and counselling improved significantly in their grades and self-rating scale of classroom behaviour.

The fifth hypothesis showed no significant relationship between students' academic achievement and their study habits was also rejected. That is to say there was a significant relationship between students' academic achievement and their own habits. In other words, positive study habits, improve students' academic achievement. This is in agreement with Rabia et al., (2017) who in their study found that poor study habits is responsible for poor academic performance among students. Similarly, Kagu (2002) emphasized that faulty or defective study habits are responsible for mass failure and examination malpractices in Nigeria. Sambo (2008) also agrees with this finding when he stated that students' academic problem include failure to learn how to study well. Abayomi (2008) is also in agreement with this finding as he states that students' poor study habits is related to mass failure. This means that when one has a positive attitude towards school, he or she is likely to perform better academically and when he or she has a negative attitude towards school he or she is likely to perform poorly.

7. Conclusions

From the findings of this study, it is concluded that guidance and counselling has a positive relationship with students' study habits, students' attitude to school and students' academic achievement. Guidance and counselling also assists students to overcome negative parental expectations. It is also concluded that students' study habits and students' attitude to school have a significant relationship with their academic achievement. In sum, students in SHS need guidance and counselling and that these services should be provided by professionally qualified counsellors.

8. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- The Ghana Education Service should also monitor and supervise the efficiency with which the guidance and counselling services are rendered. Since guidance and counselling has a significant relationship with students' study habits.
- Headmasters and headmistresses should provide adequate resources for the effective running of guidance and counselling in their schools. This includes providing office space, time slots on the time-table during which students will be free from regular teaching-learning chores to seek guidance on individual or group basis.
- Guidance Counsellors should give maximum attention to students no matter the class level. The students need to understand themselves, their individuality, their aptitude, attitudes and abilities to plan, decide and choose to succeed in life. They should provide relevant and useful materials. These materials should include information that is valid and accurate, which will assist the student in making a choice and adjustment.
- The Guidance counsellor needs to provide the right therapeutic atmosphere during counsellng sessions to encourage students to open up to them. This will help them to feel free to discuss their challenges pertaining to study habits, choose of subject combinations and other personal issues which may service as a barrier to good academic performance

Consent and Ethical Approval

Permission was sought from the Bekwai Municipal Director of Education and from all the SHS headmasters involved in the study. The identity of the respondents was made anonymous and they were also assured of

confidentiality. Before each respondent was given a set of all the questionnaires to fill, their written informed consent was sort and they were made aware that participation was voluntary.

Conflicts of Interest

The author do hereby declares that, no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper exist.

References

Abayomi, A. F (2008). Factors responsible for effective study habits in secondary schools: A case study of some selected secondary schools in Kebbi. *Gobarau Journal of Education, 5(3),* 57-61

Abubakar, M. A (2009). Quality community for sustainable development in Nigeria. *Unpublished paper presented at the first National Conference organised by Isa Kaita College of Education, Dutsinma, Katsina state.*

Acquino, L.B. (2011). Study habits and attitudes of freshmen students found of Language. *Teaching and Research, 2(5),* 1116-1124

Adane, L. O. (2013). *Factors affecting low academic achievement of pupils in Kemp Methodist Junior High School in Aburi, Eastern region* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Ghana). Retrived from http://197.255.68.203/handle/123456789/5828 on 20th October, 2020

Ali, B. A (2002). The effect of Guidance services on students academic performance. *Unpublished M.ed Thesis, ABUZaria, Kaduna state. Nigeria*

Alos, S. B., Caranto, L. C., & David, J. J. T. (2015). Factors affecting the academic performance of the student nurses of BSU. *International Journal of Nursing Science*, *5*(2), 60-65.

Bakori, F. I (2008). Attitude to academic subjects, Locus of control and academic achievement of senior secondary schools in Sokoto state. *Unpublished M.ed Thesis, Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto.*

Brock, T. (2010). Young adults and higher education: Barriers and breakthroughs to success. *The future of children*, *4(6),* 109-132.

Chireshe, R. (2006). An evaluation of the effectiveness of school Guidance and Counselling services in Zimbabwean secondary schools. *Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of South Africa.*

Cole, J. S., & Gonyea, R. M. (2010). Accuracy of self-reported SAT and ACT test scores: Implications for research. *Research in Higher Education*, *51*(4), 305-319.

Dikko, S. (2008). An analysis of different study habits and their effect on academic performance of Pre-NCE students in Federal College of Education Katsina. *Gobarau Journal of Education, 5(3) 113-120*

Dioha, R. C & Baiti, M. B (2002). Assessment of Guidance and Counselling in Secondary schools in Kebbi state. *Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria Journal of counselling and Human development. 1(1),* 56-89.

Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child development*, *82*(1), 405-432.

Gysbers, N. C., & Henderson, P. (2014). *Developing and m anaging your school guidance and counseling program*. John Wiley & Sons.

Kagu, B (2002). Developing effective study habits through Counselling among Nigerian students: A remedy for Mass failure and examination malpractice. *Ahmadu Bello University Journal of Counselling and Human development. 1(1),* 103-109

Kay, J., Muola, J., & Ondima, P. C. (2019). Influence of Guidance and Counselling Programmes on Secondary School Students Academic Engagement in Nyamira County, Kenya.

Kolo, F. D (2000). *Guidance and Counselling in Perspectives.* Zaria: Triumph Printers

Owusu-Acheaw, M., & Larson, A. G. (2014). Reading habits among students and its effect on academic performance: A study of students of Koforidua Polytechnic. *Library philosophy and practice*, *10(1).*

Pearson, R. H., & Mundform, D. J. (2010). Recommended sample size for conducting exploratory factor analysis on dichotomous data. *Journal of Modern Applied Statistical Methods*, *9(2)*, 5.

Rabia, M., Mubarak, N., Tallat, H., & Nasir, W. (2017). A study on study habits and academic performance of students. *International Journal of Asian Social Science*, *7*(10), 891-897.

Rutondoki, E.N. (2000). Guidance and Counselling. *Makerere University, Institute of Adult and Continuing education.*

Sambo, S (2008). Understanding Guidance and Counselling: Zaria. Ahmadu Bello University Press.

Sanda, M. U (2009). Towards curtaining examination malpractice in schools. Management for quality education and sustainable development in Nigeria. *Unpublished paper presented at the first National conference organised by Isa Kaita College of Education, Dutsinma, Katsina state. Nigeria*

Shah, B., Dwyer, C., & Modood, T. (2010). Explaining educational achievement and career aspirations among young British Pakistanis: Mobilizing 'ethnic capital'?. *Sociology*, *44*(6), 1109-1127.

Taylor, A.I & Buku, D. K. (2006). *Basics in Guidance and Counselling (2nd ed.)* Winneba: Deptment of Psychology & Education.

UNESCO, (2002). *Terms of reference. The first International conference on Guidance and Counselling and youth development in Africa*. Nairoba, Kenya.

Wentworth, R. A. L., & Wentworth, F. (2013). *Montessori for the new millennium: Practical guidance on the teaching and education of children of all ages, based on a rediscovery of the true principles and vision of Maria Montessori*. Routledge.