

**OPEN-DAY AND REGULAR STUDY SCHEDULE WITH A PRIVATE
TIME TABLE AS DETERMINANTS OF PUPILS' PERFORMANCE IN
SCHOOL WORK IN GHANA**

**BY
DR THOMPSON, N. RICHARD
DEPARTMENT OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
GHANA**

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the influence of open-day and regular study schedule with a private time table on pupils' performance in school work in Ghana. The population of this study consisted of all primary five pupils in all the public primary schools in the country. The study adopted Ex-post facto research design while simple random sampling technique was used in selecting the respondents. Data was obtained using a research questionnaire "Home-School Partnership and Performance Questionnaire (HSPPQ). The result proved that there is significant relationship between regular study schedule with a private time table and pupils' performance in school work. It was also proved that open day has significant influence on children's' performance in school work. Data obtained from respondents was analysed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) while Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha levels. It was concluded that there is significant relationship home-school partnership and pupils' performance in school work. One of the recommendations was that schools should create occasions where parents are invited to give talks on things that bother the child, at home and in schools.

KEY WORDS: Home-School Partnership, Open-Day, Private Time Table, Pupils' Performance, Ghana.

INTRODUCTION

The role of parental involvement in children's education has become a central issue in educational policy and research. Parental expectations have a greater impact on student's educational outcome. Parental involvement may include activities like helping children in reading, encouraging them to do their homework independently, monitoring their activities inside the house and outside the four walls of their house, and providing coaching services for improving their learning in different subjects (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). In Ghana, public primary schools seem to be an "Island", that is; separated from the home they serve. Christenson and Sheridan (2006) stated that when the home and school relationship gets strained, it results in disruptive behaviour like truancy, dropout,

lateness, absenteeism, lying and maladjustment which negatively impact on the academic performance of pupils. The negative impact resulting from the dichotomy may be responsible for the poor performance of pupils in their school work which manifests negatively in their learning outcome at higher levels of their educational pursuit

Parental involvement is very essential in school-based activities of their children. These activities may involve contacts with teachers, checking the attendance of children in school, monitoring their activities in school, checking their periodical academic progress reports. All these things might be very helpful in higher level academic achievement of children. Parents become more concerned about the learning opportunities that secondary schools provide. As children move from the middle grades to the secondary school, parents also crystallize their educational expectations for their children. As students complete school education, parents become increasingly concerned about their teen's further education and about the effects of secondary school programs on postsecondary opportunities (Catsambis & Garland, 1997).

Home-school partnership has been suspected to be the major panacea for the myriad of problems which have been observed in pupils academic lives. The success of any educational system largely depends on the foundation. The foundation starts from the home in which parents are the first teachers. Therefore, if the home fails in its responsibility, there is bound to be a total delay in the educational system. To deal effectively with this, the home and the school need to partner effectively for the interest of the child and the nations' educational system. Home school partnership could be enhanced through reading at home, volunteering, study habit and open-day.

The lack of home-school partnership may contribute to the purported falling standard in the educational system. Parents and teachers attitude towards home-school partnership in public primary schools have implications in the performance of the pupils in the primary school and other levels of education. It is therefore worthwhile to unravel the necessity of home-school partnership. Hence, the study dimensions of Home-school partnership and academic performance of pupils in Social Studies in public primary schools in Ghana was conceived to address the problem.

Statement of the Problem

It is observed that the home have distanced itself from the school and the necessary importance and benefits that accrue from such partnership are denied the pupils. Nowadays, pupils are found dropping out of schools, involving in one crime or the other and Juvenile delinquency is on the increase as well. Most pupils lag behind academically because of lack of information and feedback from home to school and vice versa This study recognizes the fact that the performance of pupils in school work has other determining factors, which include: classroom environment, teachers' mastery of the subject, method of teaching, parent educational background, and socio economic status of parent, parent occupation, family size and home-school partnership variables. This study therefore singles out home-school partnership variables to examine how they influence the performance of pupils in social studies. Therefore the fundamental problem for this study is centred on regular study schedule and open day on pupils' performance in school work. In other words, the study is to find out whether there is any significant

relationship in pupils' performance in school work based on the home-school partnership variables in Ghana.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to determine the influence of open-day and regular study schedule with a private time table on pupils' performance in school work in Ghana. The specific objectives include:

1. To examine the relationship between home-school partnership in regular study schedule with a private time table and pupils' performance in school work.
2. To examine the relationship between home-school partnership in open-day and pupils' performance in school work.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between having regular study schedule with a private time table and pupils' performance in school work?
2. To what extent does open day relate with pupils' performance in school work?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between regular study schedule with a private time table and pupils performance in school work.
2. There is no significant relationship between open day and pupils' performance in school work.

Literature Review

Regular study schedule and Pupil's Academic Performance

Study is a process that requires a systematic and organized way for academic success. Chall and Snow (2006) described study habit as a panacea for academic success. David (2006) Implied that effective study habit propels a child's academic performance whereas a defective one mars a child's performance. McGregor (2006) pointed to good study techniques for studying that parents and teachers should adopt in helping children achieve higher grades to include; making available the reading materials, freeing the child from badly behaved children, devoting time to supervise the child at study and providing a quiet place for adequate learning. Okonkwo (2002) stated that parents and teachers should note that no child is born stupid, the child failed because his potentials have not been harnessed by exposing him to positive study habits, guidance and motivational experience. For example, Cairney (2003) pointed out that the performance of an individual is determined by 50 to 60 percent from intelligence and special abilities, 30 to 40 percent from industry, effort and effective study habits, and 10 to 15 percent from chance and environmental factors. Furthermore, Ipeya (2007) reiterated that there is no magic for high academic performance at any level of education but acquisition of good study habit. He added that equally, the teacher can only do little as an individual to help pupils acquire good learning skills except assistance from parents in that direction, since home facilities and activities can alter strategies and effort.

Robinson (2005) developed a common guideline for effective study by pupils. The formulae include survey, read, recite and review. The teachers and parents are expected to help the child form good study habits using the formulae. Result of research carried out by Kobi (1999) on study techniques and performance in social studies in junior secondary schools in Delta State revealed some study techniques that a child could employ during his private reading for better performance which include:

- Understanding what is read rather than cramming
- Use of note books for revision instead of textbooks
- Revising with past question papers
- Participating in extra-curricular activities for good health and physical fitness.

Similarly, Baker and Stevenson (2007) identified effective study techniques to include: having regular study schedule with a private time table, studying in a particular place at the same time each day, observed regular breaks for rest and relaxation, revising notes immediately after lessons, having high concentration level, not leaving work to the end of term and not being motivated to read because examination is at the corner. Educationists have come up with effective study habits that teachers and parents should adopt in achieving academic performance of the child like reading after at home, sitting on the hard backed upright chair is better than sitting in an armchair etc. Fishman (2005) stated that effective study habit considers where, when and how, a child studies. Discussing the place of study, Dodd (2006) stated that the place of study should be devoid of noise or any form of distraction. Another important aspect of place according to Saronji (2007) is comfort. As regards when to study, Jordon and Zilak (2005) pointed out that regular and consistent study is more effective than raving and rushed study due to approaching tests on examination. Analyzing how a pupil should study for effectiveness, Jordon advised that the teacher and parents should collaborate to help the pupils compute the hours they have for private readings, after school, and based on the total hours, make a weekly time-table for every evening of the week. He summed his technique for effective study by emphasizing on the learner having a peaceful state of mind, revising what has been taught often and note-taking to improve retention. Contributing, Epstein (2001) advised that sitting on a hard backed upright chair is better than sitting in an armchair.

Open day and Pupil's Academic Performance

Simmons (2005) posited that children do better in school when parents talk often with teacher on a one-on-one basis. Simmons referred to the one-on-one contact between teachers and parents to discuss the affairs of pupils as open day. Levine (2006) added that the parent-teacher open day is a good opportunity to lavish a partnership between parents and teachers that will function during the school year. Noted the importance of open-day in the words “making an effort to do this will help the teacher better understand you (parents), your child, and how you (parents) will support the education of your child. Simmons (2005) further added that open day help open the lines of communication and facilitate reporting to parents on their child's progress.

Contributing, Martin and Waltman (2005) posited that open day gives parents and guardians the opportunity to have their views presented to the school through the teacher

on policy matters and decisions affecting the education of their child. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) further affirmed that a positive parent- teacher open day contributes to the child's school success. In the words of Hoover-Dempsey "a positive parent – teacher relationship helps your child feel good about school and be successful in school. It demonstrates to your child that he can trust his teacher, because you do. This positive relationship makes a child feel like the important people in his life are working together" (Sandler, 2005). Rim (2006) stated that communication between parents and teachers through open-day is extremely important. He noted that the parents need information about what they know their child is learning, and the teacher needs important feedback from the parent about the child's academic and social development.

Oyobo (2006) stated that students tend to respond very well when parents participate in their schooling by seeing them on open-day and sort to know about their progress and their achievement in various subjects. Where communication is not possible, accumulated problems and needs are sorted out and solved during open-day. It is a fact that problems and needs confronting the child will slow down his learning abilities, therefore, as crucial as open-day is to the child's learning, open-day should be held below on month. Ziegler (2006) opined that open-day encourages sharing of information between the school and pupils' families, leads to visibility of a child's interests, strengths and commitments as well as information about school events and developments that will put parents in a stronger position to help the child's learning, and to ensure children get the most out of the educational system. Azikiwe (2005) further stated the benefits of open-day to include: maintenance of discipline among learners and teachers, checking of illegal charges and discussing problems confronting the child and school. He further noted that meetings between parents and teachers on matters relating to homework and passing on details of achievements and rewards can generate positive relationship between home and school and helps combat the negative assumption about school activities. In a nutshell, Clark (2006) outlined effective ways of preparing for the parent-teacher open day for parents:

- Assemble relevant materials to help prepare for the open day; this could include records from previous school years, such as report cards, test scores, health records, and so on.
- Review the materials and see if any important material is missing and put them together properly.
- Talk with your child before the open-day.
- Prepare a list of questions you want to ask your child's teacher.
- Be ready to collaborate, not attack or defend.

However, Duncan (2007) refuted parent-teacher open-day as contributing to academic achievement of the child. Duncan noted that on open-day, children whose parents could not attend are always demoralized. This takes them more days to recover and face their studies. On the other hand, children who have their parents on open-day spend more time talking about it and not their studies. Discussing it further, he cited cases of indiscipline

from children of rich parents after open-day. David (2006) argued that open-day negatively impact on the academic activities of both the children and the teachers. He observed that the day after and night prior to open-day is always rowdy for academic activities as children are busy talking about it, to the detriment of their studies. Aside from these, he remarked that open-day takes more of the teacher's time and energy discussing with parents and children. Such teacher will get stressed which negatively impact on his lesson preparation and delivery.

METHODS

Research Design

The design of the study is ex-post facto research design. It is an enquiry design in which the researcher has no control over the independent variables because they had already occurred.

Area of the study

The area of this study is Ghana.

Population of the Study

The population of the study consisted of all primary five pupils in all the public primary schools in Ghana.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample size for the study is 360 pupils. They were obtained using a simple random sampling technique.

Instrumentation

Instrument for data collection for this study was "Home-School Partnership and Performance Questionnaire (HSPPQ)". The Questionnaire was divided into two parts. A and B. Part A elicited information about pupil personal data while part B consisted of information on the dimensions of Home-School partnership

Validation of the Research Instruments

The Home-School Partnership Questionnaire (HSPQ) was submitted to experts in Test and Measurement for the initial validation.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability study was conducted with the use of 30 respondents from primary schools who were not a part of the main work. Cronbach's Alpha technique was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the instrument. From the reliability coefficient of 0.7, the instrument was considered high enough to justify the reliability of the instrument.

Method of Data Analysis

The research questions were answered using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) while Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha levels.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question One

The research question sought to find out the relationship between Regular study schedule and pupils' performance in school work. In order to answer the research question, Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was performed on the data collected as shown in table 1.

Table 1
Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between having regular study schedule with a private time table and pupils’ performance in school work.

Variable	N	Arith metic mean	Expe cted mea n	r	Remark s
Having regular study schedule	358	16.70	12.5	0.94	*Strong to perfect Relation ship
Pupils’ performance in school work		63.01	50		

Source: Field Survey

Table 1 presents the result of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between having regular study schedule with a private time table and pupils’ performance in school work. The two variables were observed to have moderate relationship at 94%. The arithmetic mean for Regular study schedule (16.70) was observed to be greater than the expected mean score of 12.5. In addition to that, the arithmetic mean as regards pupils’ performance in school work (63.01) was observed to be higher than the expected mean score of 50. The result therefore means that there is relationship between having regular study schedule with a private time table and pupils’ performance in school work.

Research Question Two

The research question sought to find out the extent to which open day relate with pupils’ performance in school work. In order to answer the research question, Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was performed on the data collected as shown in table 2.

Table 2
Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the extent to which open day relate with pupils’ performance in school work.

Variable	N	Arith metic mean	Expe cted mea n	r	Remarks
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Open day	14.04	12.5		
	3		0	*moderately
	5		7	strong
	8		9	Relation
Pupils' performance in school work	63.01	50	*	ship

Source: Field Survey

Table 2 presents the result of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the extent to which open day relate with pupils' performance in school work. The two variables were observed to have moderate relationship at 79%. The arithmetic mean for open day (14.04) was observed to be greater than the expected mean score of 12.5. In addition to that, the arithmetic mean as regards pupils' performance in school work (63.01) was observed to be higher than the expected mean score of 50. The result therefore means that there is remarkable relationship between open-day and pupils' performance in school work.

Hypothesis One

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between regular study schedule with a private time table and pupils performance in school work.

. In order to test the hypothesis, two variables were identified as follows:-

1. Regular study schedule as the independent variable.
2. Pupils' performance in school work as the dependent variable.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was then used to analyze the data in order to determine the relationship between the two variables (see Table 3)

TABLE 3
Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between regular study schedule with a private time table and pupils performance in school work.

Variable	$\sum x$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum xy$	r
	$\sum y$	$\sum y^2$		
Regular study schedule	6013	101637	385245	0.95*
Pupils' performances in school work. (y)	22685	1466767		

***Significant at 0.05 level; df =358; N =360; Critical r-value = 0.113**

The above Table 3 presents the obtained r-value as (0.95). This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical r-value (0.113) at 0.05 level with 358 degree of freedom. The obtained r-value (0.95) was greater than the critical r-value (0.113). Hence, the result was significant. The result therefore means that there is significant relationship between Regular study schedule and Pupils’ performance in school work.

Hypothesis Two

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between open-day and Pupils’ performance in school work. In order to test the hypothesis, two variables were identified as follows:-

1. open-day as the independent variable.
2. Pupils’ performances in school work as the dependent variable.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was then used to analyze the data in order to determine the relationship between the two variables (see Table 4)

**TABLE 4
Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between open-day and Pupils’ performances in school work.**

Variable	$\sum x$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum y$	$\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r
Open-day (x)	5055	72357				
Pupils’ performances in school work. (y)			22685	1466767	324196	0.79*

***Significant at 0.05 level; df =358; N =360; Critical r-value 0.113**

Table 4 presents the obtained r-value as (0.79). This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical r-value (0.113) at 0.05 level with 358 degree of freedom. The obtained r-value (0.81) was greater than the critical r-value (0.113). Hence, the result was significant. The result therefore means that there is significant relationship between open-day and Pupils’ performances in school work.

Discussion of Findings

Analysis of data presented on Table 3 shows that the result was significant as the obtained r-value (0.92) was greater than the critical r-value (0.113) at 0.05 level of significance with 358 degrees of freedom. The result implies that there is a significant relationship between reading at home and pupil’s academic achievement. The findings agree with Baker and Stevenson (2007), who identified effective study techniques to include: having regular study schedule with a private time table, studying in a particular place at the same time each day, observed regular breaks for rest and relaxation, revising

notes immediately after lessons, having high concentration level, not leaving work to the end of term and not being motivated to read because examination is at the corner.

Analysis of data presented on Table 4 shows that the result was significant as the obtained r-value (0.95) was greater than the critical r-value (0.113) at 0.05 level of significance with 358 degrees of freedom. The result implies that there is a significant relationship between Parent–teacher open day and pupil’s academic achievement. The findings agree with Duncan (2007), who stated that open day demoralized children and took days to recover for academic work. It also agrees with Uzo (2008) who cited cases of indiscipline from children of rich parents after open day. The significance of the result caused the null hypothesis to be rejected while the alternative one was retained.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that majority of the parents do not assist the children to read at home which negatively influence their performance in school work. It is concluded that there is significant relationship between regular study schedule and pupils’ performance in school work. Also, open-day has influence on childrens’ performance in school work.

Recommendation

1. Schools should create occasions where parents are invited to give talks on things that bother the child, at home and in schools.
2. Parent should create a regular study schedule for their children, this will improve their academic performance.
3. The school organization should adopt a democratic approach to issues relating pupils/school welfare. This will enable the parents cooperatively solve common problems.

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