



## **Study Habits and Academic Performance of Basic School Learners of Atwima-Nwabiagya District of Ashanti Region, Ghana**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of the study was to investigate study habits and academic performance of basic school learners. The design used was descriptive survey. The accessible population was 3,150 learners, made up of 1,514 boys and 1,636 girls. The sample was 355 basic eight learners of the schools. Computer random number method of proportionate simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample, which was made up of 171 boys and 184 girls. Questionnaire with a generated reliability coefficient of 0.827 was the instrument used. Both primary and secondary data were used. Means, standard deviations and linear multiple regression analysis were used to analyse the data. The study revealed that learners do not study at least for three hours each day after classes and also, they do not attend extra classes. Again, learners' parents do not help them in managing their private time to study at home. Learners' study habit contributes 64.1 percent significantly to their academic performance. It is, therefore, recommended that headteachers and teachers of basic schools should ensure that learners develop and maintain positive attitude towards learning and that they will make use of appropriate study habits in the school. Parents should also help learners to manage their private time judiciously and effectively in studying to boost their academic performance.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Basic School, Study Habits and Time Management

### **Introduction**

The academic world is becoming more and more competitive such that quality of learners' academic performance has become the key factor for personal progress (Alhassan, 2018). It is the desire of parents that their children climb the academic ladder to a high level. This desire for high level of academic performance among learners puts a lot of pressure on all stakeholders in education (Wunnia, 2017). In fact, it appears as if the whole educational system revolves around the academic performance of learners. Thus, a lot of time and effort of the schools are employed in helping learners to achieve better in their scholastic endeavours.

Education inculcates knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to enable individuals to cope effectively with their environment (Kumar, 2012). Considering the numerous advantages that are derived from education, no amount of resources expended on it can be described as enough. According to Cerna and Pavliushchenko (2015), a person's education is closely linked to his or her life opportunities, income level and well-being. In line with the stated eufunctions of education, it is important for all stakeholders in education to have a clear understanding of what benefits or hinders citizens' educational attainment. Parents and guardians in modern society take their children to school to acquire relevant educational skills, knowledge and good morals so as to be useful to themselves and the society as a whole. However, reports on the high rate of poor academic performance in public basic schools in Ghana are of great concern to many stakeholders (West Africa Examinations Council (WAEC), 2018). Wunnia (2017) blamed this problem to the issues of dysfunctional time management, concentration, homework and assignments, reading and note-taking, and examination culture of learners.

Research on the correlation between study habit and learners' academic performance has for long received attention from scholars and educational agencies. For instance, Rezaie, Fazelpour, Masoule, Chehrzad and Kazem's (2017) study examined the relationship between the study habits and academic performance of medical science learners. They found that there was a relationship between learners' academic performance and their study habits. However, studies on school achievement indicate that most learners are under achievers (Jafari, Aghaei & Khatony, 2019; Oli, Hossain & Rana, 2018). A major reason for learners under developed potentialities may be in their lack of learning strategies or adopting inappropriate study habits.

Generally, it is not an infrequent occurrence that learners, who spend inordinate amounts of time memorising study materials are still barely getting by. According to Rabia, Mubarak, Tallat and Nasir (2017), the learner's personal, emotional and social development may suffer from the pressures created by the use of relatively inefficient learning strategies. Study habits are learning tendencies that enable learners to work privately, after classroom learning so as to attain mastery of the subject (Jafari et al., 2019). It is also the learner's way of study whether systematic, efficient or inefficient. This means, good study habits produce positive academic performance while inefficient study habit leads to academic failure. Good study habits are good assets to learners because habits assist learners to attain mastery in areas of specialisation and consequent excellent performance, while the opposite constitute constraints to learning and achievement leading to failure on the part of the learners (Jafari et al., 2019; Wunnia, 2017).

In Ghana, there are so many factors influencing the ability of learners to cultivate effective and efficient study habit. Environmental influence is one of the major factors in the development of learner's study habit (Wunnia, 2017). According to Alhassan (2018), the environment of most children in Ashanti Region of Ghana is not conducive for studying

which results in learners' poor performance. This non-conducive environment may be one of the reasons why most parents in Ghana prefer their children to go to boarding school for proper discipline and to inculcate better learning habit. Most parents perceive the environment of boarding school to be more conducive for academic activities and have control interventions to shape learners behaviour (Amonoo, 2014). Therefore, boarding schools are in a better position to develop and nurture good study habits of learners which in the long run, lead to improve learners' academic performance (Alhassan, 2018). Unfortunately, public basic schools in Ghana are non-boarding, as a result have dynamic school environment that are usually influenced by the social and cultural dynamics within the community. This situation calls for the need for researchers and policy makers to give scholarly attention to the environmental factors that can influence the development of good study habits of learners if we want to boost learners' academic performance in these schools.

Largely, performance of learners in Ghanaian basic schools are measured quantitatively using assessment scores (Wunnia, 2017). The West Africa Examinations Council (WAEC, 2018) has identified school achievement contents according to school subjects which are classified as core or elective subjects. Both the school and home environments have significant influence in learners' study habits (Alimohamadi & Dehghani, 2018). Many of the studies that examined study habits and learners' academic performance, focused on developed nations, and in most cases focused on predictors of poor study habits (Alimohamadi & Dehghani, 2018). Alhassan (2018) and WAEC (2018) complained about poor academic performance of public basic schools in the various rural communities in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Poor academic performance may be as a result of learners' inability to develop good study habits. This ostensibly calls for the need to ensure good study habits among the learners. Therefore, it is appropriate for this study to examine the influence of study habits on academic performance of basic school learners of the Atwima-Nwabiagya District of Ashanti Region of Ghana.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of study habits on academic performance of Basic Eight learners of Atwima-Nwabiagya District of Ashanti Region of Ghana. Based on the purpose, four specific objectives were formulated to guide the study. These objectives were to:

1. find out time management skills among learners after close of school, during weekends and during holidays for their private studies.
2. find out whether teachers and parents help learners to manage their leisure times to study.
3. find out whether the school and community environments encourage learners to learn on their own, and

4. examine the influence of study habits on academic performance of basic school learners of Atwima-Nwabiagya District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

### **Significance of the Study**

The findings would inform stakeholders in education to know about the effect of study habits on the academic performance of learners so as to enable them know the kind of assistance they can offer to support the learners. Also, the findings would motivate teachers to constantly guide learners to adopt and use appropriate study habits to help improve their academic success. Counsellors could also use the study habits inventory to assess pupils and learners in general to facilitate counselling sessions on especially study habits of learners with the ultimate aim of promoting academic performance among learners. Finally, it would enable parents and guardians to see the need to help their children and wards to use their leisure time at home judiciously.

### **Delimitation**

There are many constructs or variables that can serve as determinants of pupil's/learners academic performance, but the study was delimited to only study habits. This is as result of the fact that some studies have already shown their influence on academic performance of learners from the western culture and not in the Ghanaian context, especially in the Ashanti region where the researcher's interest lies. Geographically, the study was delimited to all basic schools in Atwima-Nwabiagya and covered only Basic Eight learners of the selected basic schools in the district. The Basic Eight learners were considered because the researchers were interested in learners with some meaningful years of experience with the schools and are not preparing for external exams. The Basic Seven learners do not have much experience while that of the Basic Nine were preparing for their external examinations at the time of the study.

### **Literature Review**

There are many environmental factors that influence study habits of learners. The first factor to consider was the home which is the first school for every child and the mother, being the first teacher. If the home environment is good, automatically the child's nature in school will be good as well (Ebele & Olofu, 2017). Good parents-child relationship help promotes the child's mental, linguistic and socio-emotional development (Idris, Hussain & Ahmad, 2020). According to Wunnia (2017), healthy parent involvement and intervention in children's day-to-day life lay the foundation for better social and academic skills. This means, having a strong relationship with children, as parents, it can help nurture them as they grow from an infant all the way to adulthood. This relationship underpins the development of children's personality, the choices they make throughout life, and much

more (Faudzi, Sumari & Nor, 2020). This shows that with appropriate parenting style, parents can help boost the academic performance of their learners through the development and nurturing of appropriate study habits.

Assertions by most researchers (Faudzi et al, 2020; Idris et al., 2020; Jafari et al., 2019; Wunnia, 2017) suggest that the child's relationship with his or her family members at home can influence his or her performance in school. That apart, children in modern societies spend more time in school and for that matter the school environment needs to be made conducive to promote learning. As teachers and peers of learners are seen as part of the school physical and social environments, the live of both teachers and learners in general must, therefore, not be taken for granted since they have the tendency to influence the child academic success positively or otherwise. Rezaie et al. (2017) are of the view that intelligence plays a pivotal role in developing good study habits among learners. Therefore, if the child finds himself in the company of brilliant peers, he is most likely to develop good study habits for academics.

Also, other factors like the background characteristic such as gender has the capacity to influence study habits significantly. In a patriarch society like Ghana, children study habits can be influence largely by their gender (Wunnia, 2017). Most learners in the Ashanti Region of Ghana, particularly those in Atwima-Nwabiagya District, are socialised from birth with gender identity that is predetermined by the values and norms of the Ghanaian community. This phenomenon is making girls do all household chores; a situation which may be making them adapt to poor study habits. In addition, the curriculum of the school, the community of the learner and his or her personality traits have the capacity to influence study habits significantly (Jafari et al., 2019; Rezaie et al., 2017 & Wunnia, 2017). This means that with rich and attractive extra-curriculum in schools, needed facilities and sociocultural capital in the community and positive personality traits, learners stand a chance of developing good study habits.

Individual study habits play a pivotal role in determining learners' academic performance. A learner's success or failure in school depends upon several factors namely: special interest in subjects, study facilities available, school organisational culture, effective teaching, educogenism of parents, and teacher commitment (Cerna & Pavliushchenko, 2015; Faudzi et al., 2020; Kumar, 2012; Wunnia, 2017). Wunnia posits that most learners are defective in their performance due to lack of appropriate study habits. According to Wunnia, study habits are associated with scholastic performance, and that there is always a difference between the study habits of the most successful and the least successful learners or between the bright and the dull learners. Ebele and Olofu (2017) in another study, compared learners study habits scores with composite measures of performance. The correlation ranged from 0.46 to 0.51. Ebele and Olofu reported that study habits are one of the important factors, such that when they are adopted appropriately, will yield results among learners.

Rezaie et al. (2017) also examined the relationship between study habits and the academic performance of medical sciences learners. The results indicated that males had a greater predisposition to better study habits, favourable parental attitude and a better ideal self than females. However, females showed a higher reading ability and academic performance than males. Also, the study showed that there was positive correlation between study habits and academic performance. Oli et al. (2018) also examined the role of self-esteem and study habits on academic achievement of university learners. The study revealed that learners who worked for long hours made slightly better grades than those who worked for modest periods. Wunnia (2017) and Jafari et al. (2019) in their respective studies also show that there is a positive and significant correlation between study habits and academic performance of learners.

Deductions from the reviewed literature show that learners who worked for long hours or adopt appropriate study habits gained slightly better grades than those who worked for modest periods or adopt poor study habits. That is, with appropriate academic culture in relation to time management, concentration, homework and assignments, reading and note-taking, and examination, learners will be able to boost their academic performance (Alimohamadi & Dehghani, 2018; Cerna & Pavliushchenko, 2015; Rezaie et al., 2017; Wunnia, 2017). This means good study habits can be seen as good assets to learners because habits assist learners to attain mastery in areas of specialisation and consequent excellent performance, while the opposite constitute constraints to learning and achievement leading to failure (Rezaie et al., 2017).

Good teaching without good study habits developed by learners may lead to undesirable effects such as poor academic performance. Therefore, to enhance the quality of education, it is necessary to improve the study habits and study attitudes of learners. As true as this might sound, research works in Ghana and other developing countries are yet to gather adequate research evidence to prove that the kind of habits learners adopt or adapt in studying is a key factor on why learners fail (Alhassan, 2018). Therefore, it is appropriate for us to examine the impact of study habits on academic performance of learners of Atwima-Nwabiagya District.

### **Research Methodology**

In order to examine the views of learners regarding their current study habits and academic performance, the study employed the descriptive survey design. This design was used since it is the research type mostly used to examine the views of respondents on problems pertaining to current phenomenon. The target population was all learners in the 105 Junior High Schools (JHSs) in the Atwima-Nwabiagya District. According to Educational Management Information System (EMIS, 2019), there are 9,451 learners in the 105 JHSs in the district. However, the accessible population was all basic eight (JHS

2) learners in the 105 JHSs in the district at the time of the study. The total number of learners in basic eight was 3,150 (EMIS, 2019). These learners were more accessible to us because they were better prepared socio-psychologically to be engaged in the exercise as they did not have any final examination ahead of them to write like the basic nine (JHS 3) learners. Basic seven (JHS 1) learners were also not considered appropriate because they were only one-year-old in the school and have not acquired enough study experience at the time of the study.

The calculated sample of the study was 355. This sample was obtained using Yamane's (1967) recommended formula. This formula was used because it specified the precision of estimation desired for the population, and it has been tested and used for most survey and case studies. The formula is  $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)}$ , where  $n$  is the sample size,  $N$  is the population size, and  $e$  is the level of precision.  $n = 3,150 \div [1 + 3,150 (0.05)^2] = 3,150 \div 8.875 = 354.93 \approx 355$

Table 1: Accessible population and sample distribution of public junior high school learners in Atwima-Nwabiagya District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana

Gender of learners	Accessible population		Sample	
	No.	%	No.	%
Boys/Male	1,514	48.1	171	48.2
Girls/Female	1,636	51.9	184	51.8
Total	3,150	100	355	100

Source: Educational Management Information System (EMIS, 2019)

As indicated in Table 1, for proportional gender representation, we calculated for gender representation of the sample proportionally. The sample size selected was appropriate since the learners were homogeneous and representative enough when the proportional sampling procedure and a recommended and tested sample formula were used. Since the accessible population was homogeneous with regard to class nature, a sample frame was created for each of the 105 JHSs using excel 2016. We used computer random number method of proportionate simple random sampling technique to select the 355 learners.

A questionnaire, with a reliability coefficient of 0.817, was adopted and used to collect data on pupil's study habits. The questionnaire was developed, validated and used by Wunnia (2017). The adopted questionnaire was pre-tested at Wurie Methodist JHS, and the reliability coefficient generated was 0.827. Prior to the administration of the questionnaires, the Directorate of Ghana Education Service was contacted with a letter for permission to conduct the study in the selected schools. Familiarisation visits were also made to the schools where the headteachers were contacted mainly for the confirmation of the learners' numbers and other relevant information about the schools and the respondents.

With the help of some teachers, we personally collected the data using four weeks. During the administration of the questionnaires, the learners were briefed on the objectives of the study and the need to respond as frankly as possible to the items. At the end of the data collection, 352 completed questionnaires, out of 355 questionnaires administered, representing 99.2 percent response rate, were retrieved from the field. Secondary data were used for learners' academic performance. Thus, the second term end-of-term examination scores of the basic eight learners were used to measure learners' academic performance. Specifically, four core courses were considered: English Language, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

Test of normality was conducted and the preliminary results showed that the distribution was normal per the recommendations of Pallant (2005). Specifically, the means, medians and modes of the study variables were approximately the same. Also, the skewness values were within the threshold of -0.40 to 0.42. Again, the standard deviations were also moderate and closer to each other, indicating the non-dispersion in a widely-spread distribution. The moderateness of the standard deviations of the distribution shows that the views of the respondents were coming from a moderate homogeneous group that is, a group with similar characteristics or similar understanding with regard to the issues under consideration. However, the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic show that the significant value was 0.037, suggesting violation of the assumption of normality.

The data were analysed using means, standard deviations, and linear multiple regression analysis. Responses to the closed-ended items were measured on a five-point unilinear scale ranging from one to five where an average response score of a statement get close to one respondents strongly disagrees with it, and it get close to five they strongly agree to it. Specifically, we adopted mathematical approximation technique to interpret the mean scores. Thus Strongly Agree (4.5 – 5.0), Agree (3.5 – 4.4), Uncertain (2.5 – 3.4), Disagree (1.5 – 2.4), and Strongly Disagree (1.0 – 1.4).

### **Results and Discussion**

The first objective examined how JHS learners of Atwima-Nwabiagya District managed time after school, during weekends and holidays for private studies. Seven closed-ended items were used to collect data on this issue. The results are presented in Table 2. As indicated in the table, the results regarding the standard deviations show that the respondents used for the study were homogeneous group who had the same level of understanding of the concept under study.



Table 2: Time management among learners after school, during weekends and holidays

Statements	Mean	SD
I waste too much time watching TV or listening to the radio instead of studying	3.48	0.57
I see that having many other things to do at home causes me to lag behind in class	4.34	0.45
Problems at home or outside the classroom cause me to neglect my school work	3.86	0.43
I study for at least three hours each day after classes	2.45	0.62
I spend too much time on some subjects than others when I am studying	3.78	0.51
I attend extra classes after close of school	2.98	0.52
I neglect all school related work after close of school	3.03	0.59

Source: Field data (2020) Where *SD* = Standard Deviation (N = 352)

Furthermore, results from Table 2 show that learners waste too much time watching TV or listening to the radio instead of studying (Mean = 3.48, Std. Dev. = 0.57). The table further shows that learners having many other things to do at home causes them to lag behind in class (Mean = 4.34, Std. Dev. = 0.45). Also, problems at home or outside the classroom cause them to neglect their school work (Mean = 3.86, Std. Dev. = 0.43). However, learners disagreed that they study for at least three hours each day after classes (Mean = 2.45, Std. Dev. = 0.62) and that after close of school, they attend extra classes (Mean = 2.98, Std. Dev. = 0.52). This means, learners do not study at least three hours each day after classes and also they do not attend extra classes. Furthermore, the table shows that learners spend too much time on some subjects than others (Mean = 3.78, Std. Dev. = 0.51) and that after close of school, learners neglect all school related work (Mean = 3.03, Std. Dev. = 0.59).

The findings show that time management among basic eight learners after school, during weekends and holidays are not encouraging and do not in any way promote the urge for private studies. Consequently, this situation can have some negative effects on academic performance of JHS learners of Atwima-Nwabiagya District. The findings are in line with the assertion of Alhassan (2018) who posits that most learners waste too much time doing things that are of no relevance to the development of their cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains to enhance academic work in school. The findings also show that learners lack sense of direction in respect of managing their time well to enable them organise themselves for their private studies to compliment what is learnt in class. This can be attributed to the failure on the part of parents not contributing their quota by way of

helping these children to manage their times judiciously home (Idris et al., 2020; Rabia et al., 2017).

The second objective focused on how teachers and parents help learners to manage their leisure times for their private studies. The results are depicted in Table 3, where there is an indication that parents do not help their children in managing their leisure times for their private studies (Mean = 2.37, Std. Dev. = 0.53), neither do their parents ensure that they have private time table for studies (Mean = 2.24, Std. Dev. = 0.54). The learners further indicated that their parents do not encourage them to read books prescribed by their teachers at home (Mean = 2.91, Std. Dev. = 0.57). However, learners were of the view that their teachers have good rapport with them (Mean = 3.23, Std. Dev. = 0.41). The learners added that their teachers often helped them to manage their leisure times for their private studies (Mean = 3.11, Std. Dev. = 0.56).

Table 3: Help that learners' receive from parents and teachers in managing their leisure times for private studies

Statements	Mean	SD
My parents help me in managing my leisure times for my private studies	2.37	0.53
Teachers in my school have good teacher-learner relationship with me	3.23	0.41
My parents make sure that I have private time table for studying	2.24	0.54
Teachers in this school help learners to manage their leisure times for their private studies	3.11	0.56
My parents encourage me at home to read all books prescribed by my teacher	2.91	0.57

Source: Field data (2020) (N = 352)

The views of the learners show that their parents do not help them in managing their leisure times for their private studies. However, their teachers do help them in that direction to study on their own. The views of the learners are consistent with the comments of Cerna and Pavliushchenko (2015) who posit that most parents in developing countries exploit their children and do not monitor them consistently to be with their books. However, learners' views about teachers helping them manage their time support the assertions of Wunnia (2017) who avers that generally teachers help learners to manage their leisure times effectively to become productive. Teachers do that for the purpose of assisting learners to form the habits of managing and channelling their little time at their disposal to their private studies, with the ultimate aim of improving their academic performance.

The third objective was to find out whether the school and community

environments encourage learners to desire or crave for private studies. Again, five items were used to elicit data on this issue. The results are presented in Table 4. As shown in the table, learners indicated that they find it easy to concentrate on whatever they learn in school (Mean = 2.11, Std. Dev. = 0.57). Again, learners were of the view that their home environment does not encourage them to learn privately as compared to the school environment (Mean = 2.23, Std. Dev. = 0.58).

Table 4: School and community environments that encourage learners to desire private studies

Statements	Mean	SD
I find it difficult to concentrate on whatever I learn in school	2.11	0.57
Outside interruptions in the community disturb me while studying	3.71	0.54
I can only study when a place is completely quiet	3.01	0.59
I like learning privately in the school rather than home	3.33	0.55
My home environment encourages me to learn privately as compared to the school environment	2.23	0.58

Source: Field data (2020) (N = 352)

However, as indicated in Table 4, learners agreed that outside interruptions in the community disturb them while they are studying (Mean = 3.71, Std. Dev. = 0.54). The learners further agreed that they could only study when a place is completely quiet (Mean = 3.01, Std. Dev. = 0.59). Lastly, learners agreed that they liked learning privately in the school rather than home (Mean = 3.33, Std. Dev. = 0.55). The results that emerged from Table 4 show that learners learn better in conducive and attractive school and home environments. The findings are consistent with the comments of Rezaie et al. (2017) and Jafari et al. (2019) who posit that the school and the community must be conducive to the learner and he or she must be assisted to take advantage of these environments, especially that of the school to learn to be studious. There should not be interruptions in the school nor the community that may disturb or disrupt learners' learning. Therefore, both the school and the home environments must always be under proper control by those in the helm of affairs so as to look very conducive and attractive to encourage or promote effective private learning among learners in both our schools and communities.

The fourth objective examined the influence of study habits on academic performance of basic school learners of Atwima-Nwabiagya District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Five study habit inventories were treated as the independent variables while the second term end-of-term examination scores of the learners in basic eight were used to measure individual learners' academic performance, which was the dependent variable. The rationale was to find out whether learners' study habits predict their academic

performance. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Influence of study habits on learners' academic performance

Variables	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t-value	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	SE	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
Time management	0.139	0.061	0.126*	2.274	0.024	0.515	1.943
Concentration	0.152	0.062	0.124*	2.454	0.015	0.622	1.608
Homework and assignments	0.203	0.061	0.217**	3.309	0.001	0.369	2.713
Reading and note-taking	0.105	0.032	0.155**	3.287	0.001	0.716	1.397
Examination	0.349	0.060	0.351**	5.835	0.000	0.437	2.291
(Constant)	0.267						
R	0.800						
R Square	0.641						
Adjusted R Square	0.620						

Source: Field data (2020) \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05 (N = 352)

Dependent Variable = Learners' Academic Performance Where SE = Standard Error

As indicated in Table 5, a diagnostic test was conducted to check for multicollinearity among the independent variables. The results show that there is no possible undesirable situation where the correlations among the independent variables are strong. This was determined using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance values. As indicated in Table 5, all the VIF values for the independent variables were within the acceptable threshold. This shows that none of the values was greater than five (5), which means there was no collinearity associated with the variables. The VIF values were also inversely related to the Tolerance values ( $VIF = 1/Tolerance$ ). Also, the condition index values for all the entered variables were less than 15, indicating that there was no problem.

The results from Table 5 show that all the inventories of learners' study habits contribute significantly to their academic performance. In order of importance, the results indicate that the standardised beta co-efficient for examination [Beta = 0.351 (0.060),  $p < 0.01$ ], homework and assignments [Beta = 0.217 (0.061),  $p < 0.01$ ], reading and note-taking [Beta = 0.155 (0.032),  $p < 0.01$ ], time management [Beta = 0.126 (0.061),  $p < 0.05$ ], and concentration [Beta = 0.124 (0.062),  $p < 0.05$ ] were significant with regard to their contributions to learners' performance. In addition, the unique proportional contribution of the study habit inventories to learners' academic performance was 0.641 with an adjusted R<sup>2</sup> of 0.620. This means that the study habit inventories are able to explain 64.1 percent of the variance in learners' academic performance. It, therefore, means that besides these inventories of study habit identified, other factors not yet identified in the model have a

chance of predicting about 35.9 percent to learners' academic performance in the school. The result suggests that the inventories of study habits alone do not contribute significantly to learners' academic performance and that they do so when other variables are considered. This may mean that when learners adopt appropriate and effective study habits towards their education they will be able to improve their academic performance.

The findings corroborate with the submission of other researchers (Cerna & Pavliushchenko, 2015; Ebele & Olofu, 2017; Rabia et al., 2017) who have found in their various studies that individual study habits play a pivotal role in determining learners' academic performance. A learner's progress or failure in the classroom depends upon several factors namely: interest in the subject, study facilities, own study habits, school organisational culture, effective teaching and teacher commitment (Wunnia, 2017). Again, the findings are consistent with the assertions of Wunnia who posits that learner's study habits in themselves do not strongly predict learners' academic performance, and that they do so through good teaching by teachers and the level of effort learners exert in learning. This calls for the need to consider these factors when developing and nurturing learners' good study habits. Alimohamadi and Dehghani (2018) also pointed out that learner who spends more time on their academic work scores higher on measures of performance and attitude than learners who spend little or no time at all. Again, the findings are consistent with the submission of Alhassan (2018) who avers that with good and effective study habits, stakeholders can help narrow or eliminate the problem of poor academic performance of public basic schools in Ashanti Region of Ghana.

### **Limitations**

The first limitation of the study was the number of participants considered. Considering only basic eight (JHS 2) learners could reduce the generalisability to a general learner population. Also, maturation of learners through the normal progression of the term was particularly relevant to first and second year learners whose normal assimilation to school may account for some of the increase in study habit inventories. Finally, the findings and conclusions of the study may not be projected for the future since issues related to learners' study habits and academic performance keep changing with time and place.

### **Conclusions**

The findings show that when learners develop good and appropriate study habits, it helps them to do well in class. They do not get nervous neither do they get confuse. This means that effective and appropriate behaviour of learners toward examination, taking homework and assignment seriously, constantly reading their notes and also taking down their notes in class, may lead to an improvement in their academic performance. Similarly, learners strengthening their level of concentration when studying and their abilities to

manage their leisure time effectively, also lead to their academic performance positively. Therefore, learners' time management, examination, reading and note-taking, homework and assignments, and concentration are able to influence their academic performance. However, the inventories of study habits alone do not contribute fully to learners' academic performance; they do so when other variables are considered. We, therefore, conclude that learners' study habits to some extent do not directly influence their academic performance fully. They do so only when the learners are able to exert some level of effort in learning what they have been taught by their teachers with regard to English Language, Integrated Science, Mathematics and Social Studies.

### **Implications for Practice**

Since the study has shown the predictability of the concept of study habits on academic performance of learners in positive terms, teachers are to go the extra mile to expose learners to various learning strategies and guide them to form possibly permanent good habits, especially when organising academic counselling for learners (Wunnia, 2017). In doing so, much premium be placed on study habit inventories where time management which is needed most to strategise private studies, comes paramount. Here, sociometric cum counsellor-centred approach is most appropriate, so that learners can thoroughly be taken through how best they can manage or use time at their disposal judiciously to plan their private studies both at home and school. This can help learners apportion time equally for all disciplines.

Learners should also be taken through the various concentration strategies, habit of reading outside the box at their leisure times and note-taking in class (Alimohamadi & Dehghani, 2018; Rabia et al., 2017; Rezaie et al., 2017). This can enhance their level of concentration in class for better understanding of whatever is taught. Through guidance and counselling, learners should not only be made to know the rationale behind assignments, but also be made to form the habits of attending to them promptly. Finally, since the study establishes that other factors are needed to be brought on board to boost study habits to influence academic performance, there should be consultations with parents to help them have interest in their children's education so that over burdening children with house chores, particularly the girl child, can be reduced to the beeriest minimum to pave way for private studies among children at home.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the key findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made to help shape theory, policy and practice:

1. Through the headteachers of the schools, management of Ghana Education Service (GES), should ensure that teachers constantly guide and direct learners to adopt and

- use appropriate study habit skills to help improve their academic performance.
2. Also, the headteachers should ensure that there is periodic guidance programme on study habit inventories that will be organised for both parents and learners. This will help learners manage their free period judiciously, and adopt meaningful concentration and note-taking skills to ensure good habits for learning.
  3. Again, we recommend to headteachers of the schools to ensure that at Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings efforts are made to help parents and guardians to see the need of guiding their children and wards to manage their time judiciously for their private studies at home, and desist from dysfunctional study habits or behaviours. This will help in curtailing the acts of watching certain television programmes or listening to music which have no bearings with their academic success.
  4. Lastly, the Director of GES should ensure that teachers are given in-service training periodically in the area of eufunctional study habits to enable them guide and direct learners in adopting appropriate study habits with regard to time management, concentration, and examination writing. Also, since the study habit inventories have been established and found reliable, teachers can use the instrument to assess learners' study habits. This can facilitate guidance and counselling activities of the schools with regard to study habits.

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