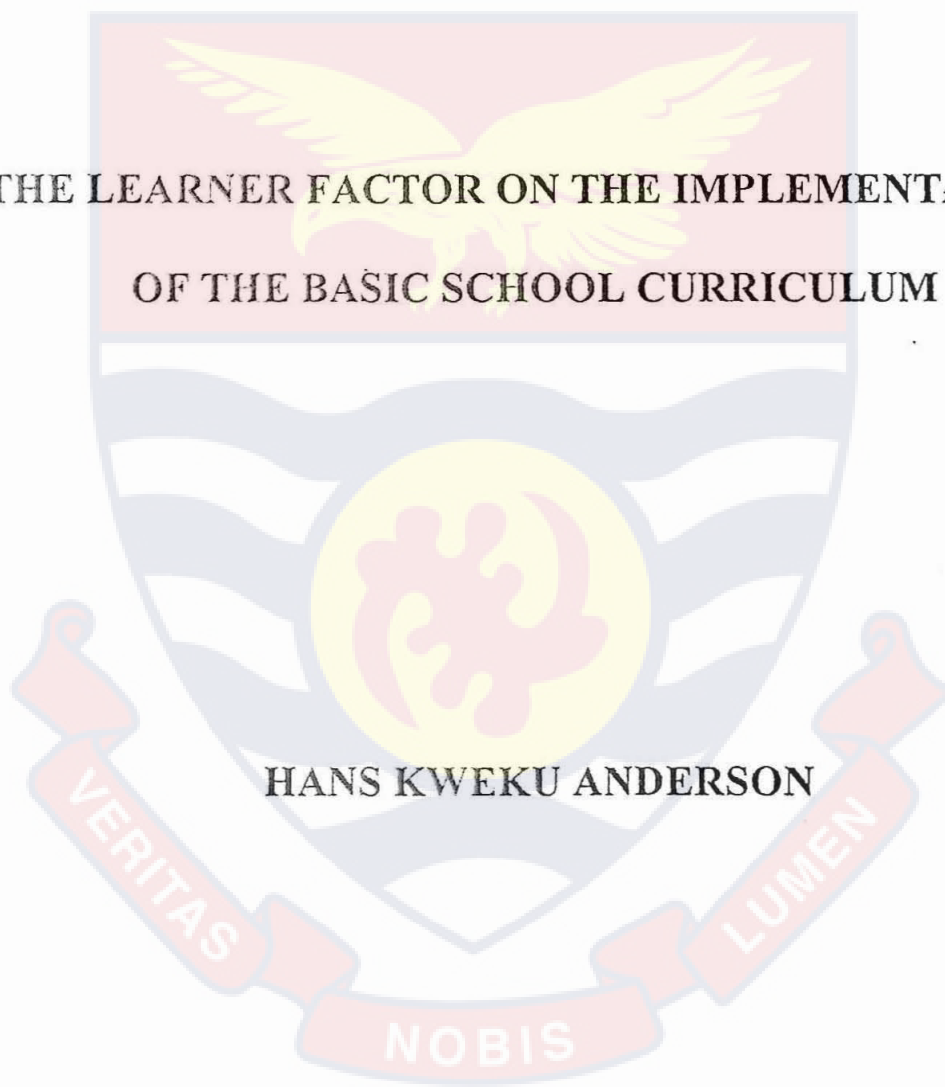


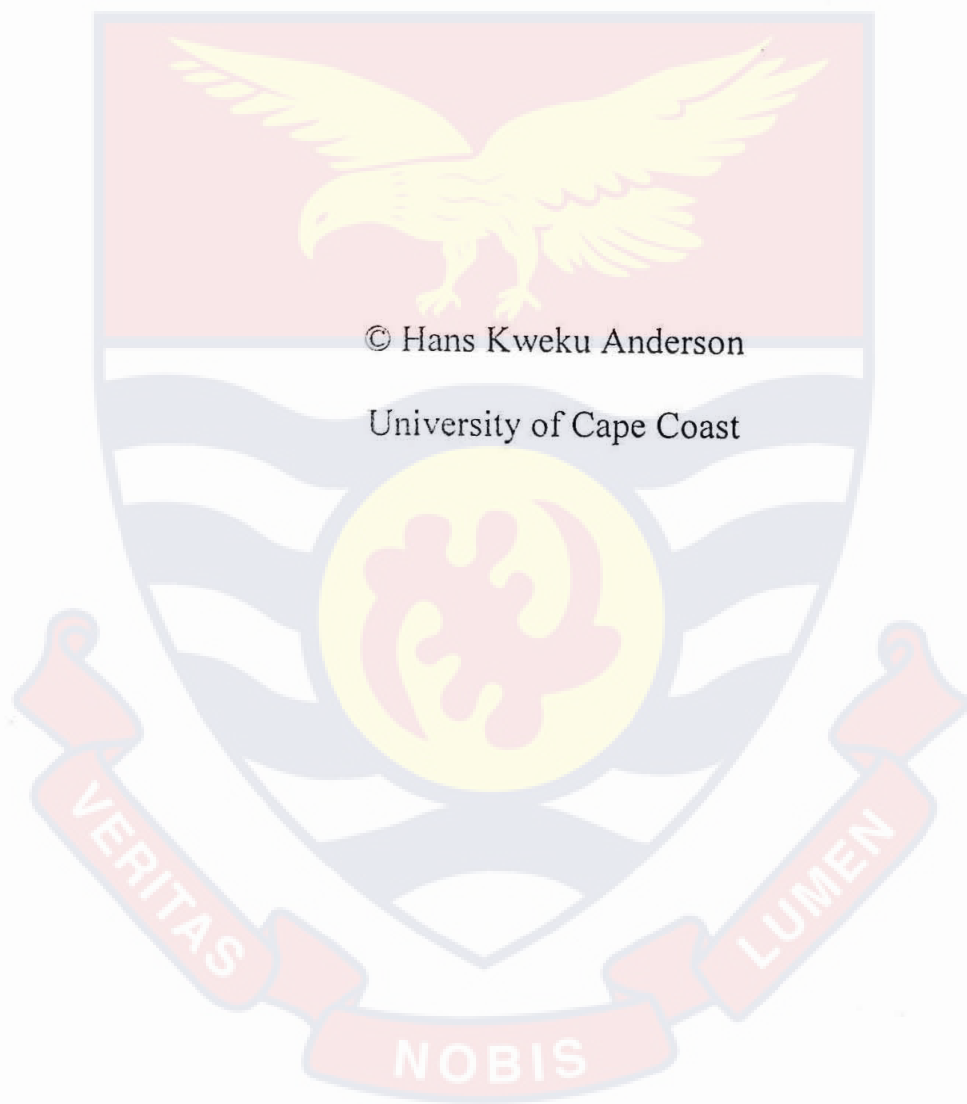
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

THE LEARNER FACTOR ON THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE BASIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM

HANS KWEKU ANDERSON

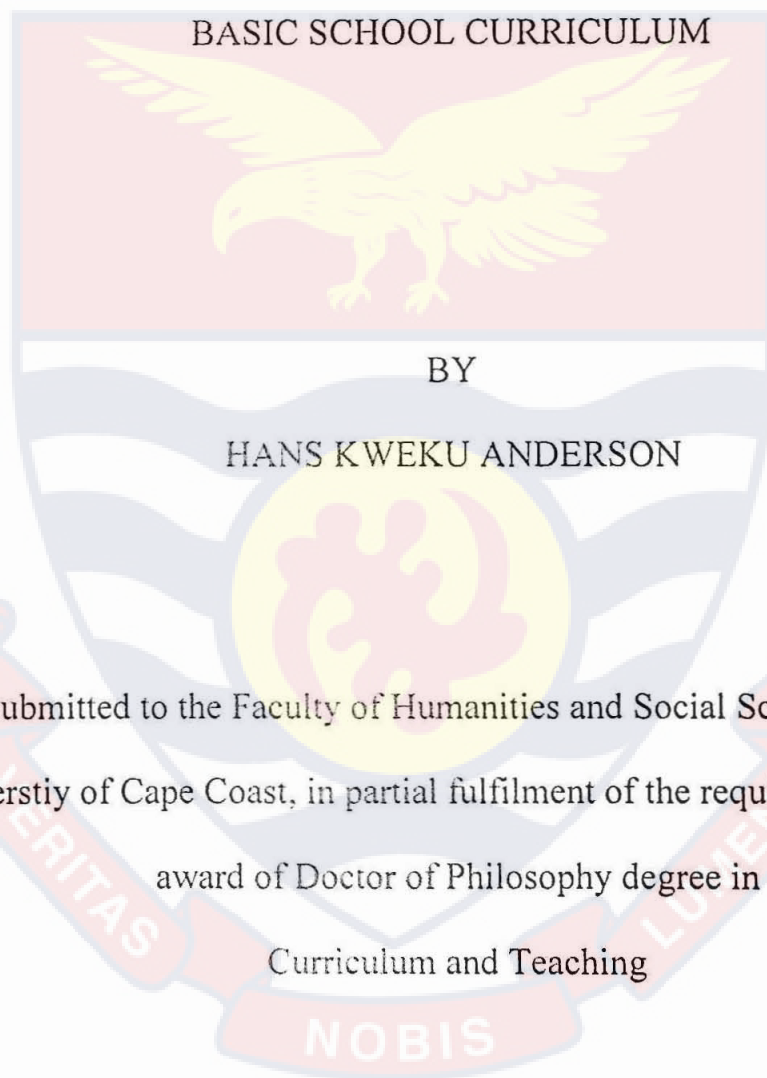


2017



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

THE LEARNER FACTOR ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE



This thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Education,
University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
award of Doctor of Philosophy degree in
Curriculum and Teaching

APRIL 2017

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candedatate's Signature:



Date:

27/10/2017

Name: Hans Kweku Anderson

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Prinicipal Supervisor's Signature:



Date

27/10/17

Name: Rev. Prof. Seth Asare-Danso

Co-Supervisor's Signature:



Date

27/10/2017

Name: Prof. Clement Agezo

ABSTRACT

Curriculum implementation is fraught with a lot of challenges. With the exception of the learner factor, several studies have been conducted to investigate how the factors that interplay at the implementation stage influence the implementation process. Using the descriptive research design, this study was accordingly conducted to examine the influence of the learner factor on the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. Simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were used to sample 1,079 basic school pupils from across the country to form the sample for the study. Descriptive statistics, Independent Samples T-Test, Multiple Linear Regression, Pattern matching and quasi-statistics were used to analyze the quantitative and qualitative data collected for the study. Among the findings from the study are that, the intellectual level of the basic school pupils is generally above average, the learner has good physical condition to undertake all the physical activities required by the academic situation, the learner has a high level of preference for certain curricular activities. In addition, some elements of peer influence on the learner affect curriculum implementation, the socio-economic status of the learners is having some influence on the implementation, gender is a factor in the academic performance of pupils, and that time management of the learner is the most important factor for determining the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. In view of these findings, it is recommended that the GES should consider introducing specialization of courses at the basic school level (preferably at basic 7) to meet the preferential demands of the pupils for certain subjects.

KEY WORDS

Curriculum

Implementation

Learner factor

Education

Basic school pupils

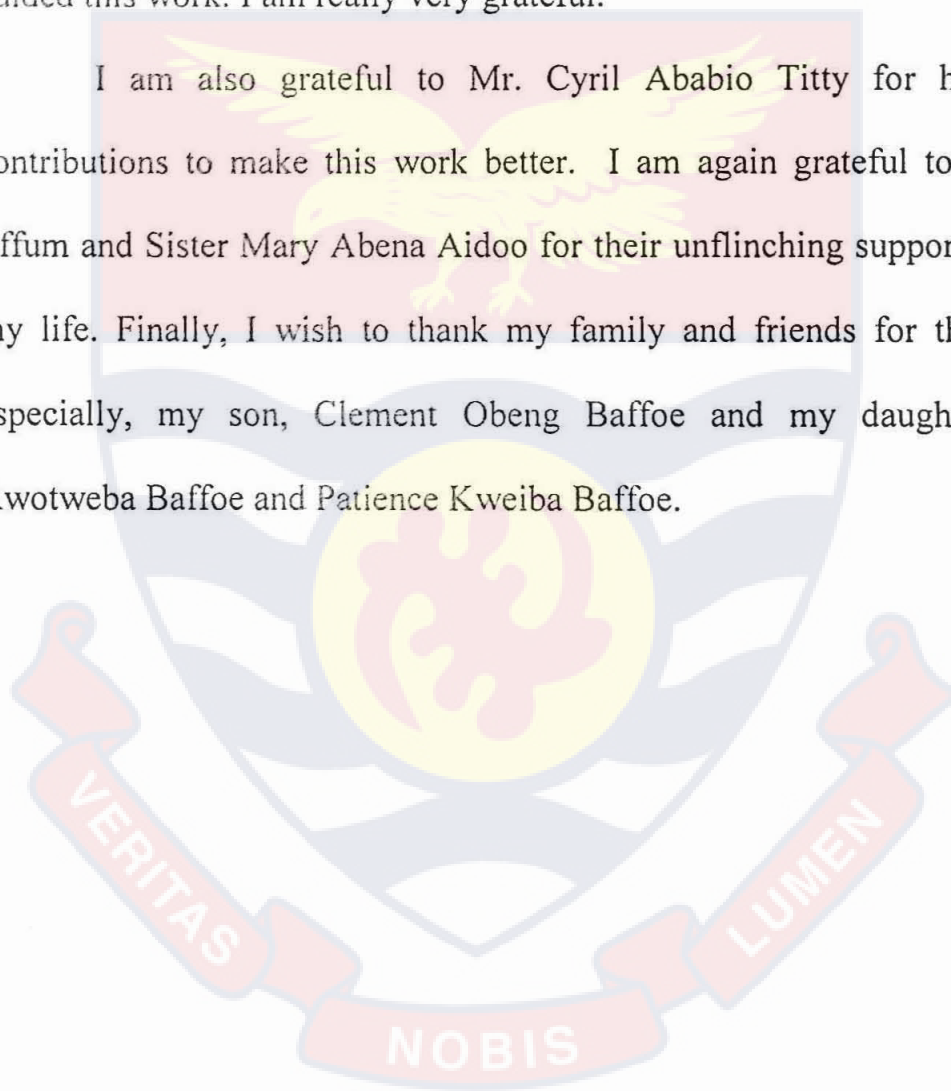
Academic performance



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DEDICATION

To my brother, Rev. Stephen Baffoe



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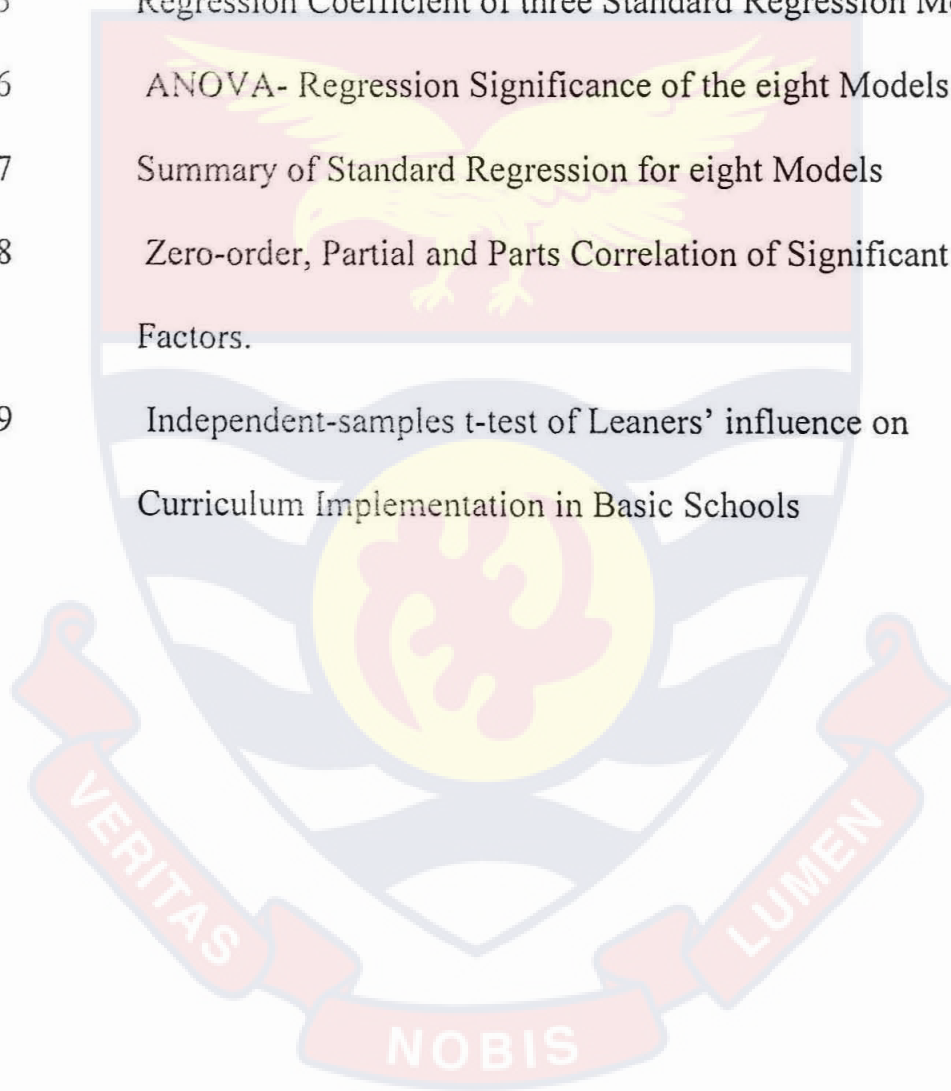
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The issue about problems of curriculum implementation is the major setback for attaining goals of education in Africa (Obanya, 2004). Among the factors that interplay at the curriculum implementation stage are the planned programme, the teacher, the learner and the school ecology (Rogan & Grayson, 2003). In an attempt to find solution to the problems of curriculum implementation, several studies have been conducted on the other factors that affect implementation with very little or no attention given to the learner factor. There is lack of empirical work on how the learner factor affects the implementation process (Wang, 2006), and this is a threat to successful implementation, as no implementation can go on without the learner (Adentwi, 2000). Consequently, learner related problems that affect the implementation process have ever been there. This study was, therefore, conducted to investigate how the learner factor affects curriculum implementation at the basic school level in Ghana. Recommendations from this study would inform parents/guardians, teachers, government and other stakeholders of education on steps they should take in connection with the learner to ensure effective curriculum implementation at the basic school level. This study would also contribute to the literature and serve as the basis for doing further studies on the learner factor on curriculum implementation.

Background to the Study

World Conference on Education for All (1990) held at Jomtien, Thailand, has stated that, basic education is the type of education that serves as basis for life-long learning for children, youth or adults. Thus, any type of educational activity that takes place in various settings (formal, non formal and informal) that aims at meeting basic learning needs of people of all age groups falls under basic education. Simbo (2012) perceived basic education as a benchmark of education, an unqualified human right which everyone is entitled to.

Basic education covers a nine-year formal education, the purpose of which is to give the pupils knowledge and skills needed for life, and to lay an equal foundation for everyone (UNESCO, 2007). However, Thailand uses twelve (12) years while Ethiopia uses eight (8) years (The free encyclopaedia, 2010, World data on education, 2010/11).

There are the following basic education programmes: Mott MacDonald Group Limited (2012) reported of the Gansu Basic Education Project as the first basic education project in China funded by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) as a flagship for future initiatives in the area. The West Lothian Council (2007-2013) manned an adult basic education which has the aim of assisting individuals from 16 years and above who can set goals to improve literacy and numeric skills, as well as those experiencing hearing loss and wish to learn lip reading. Fife Council (2013) provided free tuition for adults wanting to improve their basic skills in reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, basic mathematics, grammar and punctuation. There is also, the Basic Education Coalition (2013) which has

been releasing recommendations on global education goals. Again, there is Basic Education for Social Development (2012) which has been aiming at developing relationship with Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Mumbai (India) to establish a major research programme on gender equity. Highland Council (2006) is another basic education programme which has been offering education for people who want to improve reading, prepare for interviews or increase confidence in learning. The Basic Education Development Project of Yemen (2012) has been assisting the government in expanding the provision of quality basic education for all, with particular attention given to gender equity.

According to UNESCO (2007), Ghana's basic education programme lasts for nine (9) years and is divided into two cycles: Primary 1-6 comprises lower and Upper Primary and a three (3) year Junior Secondary education. Children start attending school at age six (6) leading to the award of Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE); and this provides essential blocks to continue to higher education (Oduro, 2007).

Baku, Asiegbor and Boakye-Yiadom (2012) intimated that the main concern about the education system in Ghana is how to make education at the basic level meaningful and useful to the basic school leavers who do not have the opportunity to benefit from further formal education. Baku et al.'s concern is shared by Acheampong (2009), who had opined that the universal primary education policies which have experienced short periods of rapid growth of education in Ghana have fallen below expectation. Thus, the expected outcome has not been achieved. Schaeffer (as cited in Ampiah, 2010) found that a large proportion of children who have gone through basic education

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after four years do not have basic functional skills to read, write and enumerate. This finding is confirmed by the UNESCO's (2005) report which shows that too many pupils are leaving school without mastering a minimum set of cognitive and non cognitive skills. The Basic Education Coalition (2013) has put it bluntly that there are many millions of youth who attend school but unfortunately are not learning. Agyeman (2012) has summarized the state of basic education in Ghana thus:

- (a) Evidence from the media report that 64% of pupils cannot read and write.
- (b) The GES has 60,000 teacher deficits at the basic level with 80,000 pupil teachers in the classrooms.
- (c) The colleges of education turn out 9,000 teachers annually with at least 20% of them not going to the classroom to take up appointment.
- (d) According to the ruling NDC party, over 4,000 pupils study under tress.
- (e) Over 80% of the basic schools have no internet facilities to teach ICT, one of the examinable subjects in the schools.
- (f) Large class size as a result of the capitation grant has increased enrolment in the schools.
- (g) Poor conditions of service and low wages have led to teacher demonstrations and strikes.
- (h) Most teachers' teaching methods have been centred on the teacher at the expense of the learner.
- (i) The curriculum is overloaded with nine subjects without their relevant textbooks.
- (j) Too much emphasis is placed on examinations to the detriment of the learner.
- (k) Parental control at home is absent with most families finding it difficult to provide the educational needs of their wards due to high poverty levels.

- (l) Pupils themselves do not take their studies serious as a result of very weak guidance and counselling service provided at the basic level.
- (m) The Parent–Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School Management Committees (SMCs) have turned into revenue collecting agents exploiting parents instead of providing effective collaboration partnership with schools to improve academic standards.

Agyeman (2012) contended that a combination of the above factors has resulted in the low standard of education at the basic level and might have accounted for the failure of over 180,000 pupils at the 2011 BECE. To this end, several studies have been conducted to ascertain the state of the basic education programme in Ghana. Konadu and Kakari – Ababio (as cited in Kadingdi, 2004) studied issues related to adequacy of teachers’ guide, textbooks and syllabuses; Awuku, Dramani, Gyasi and Nsowa (as cited in Kadingdi), Cobbold and Ani Boe (2011), Mensah and Acquah (2011) focused on the method of training and the academic knowledge of teachers handling the basic school programme; Pryor and Staurt, Dramani and Gyasi (as cited in Kadingdi) investigated the quality and nature of instructional delivery by basic school teachers; Asare (2011), Gadagbui (2007), and Ghanney (2007, 2011), concentrated on home related issues; World Bank (1996) and the Ministry of Education (1995) concentrated on resource-based issues, while Asemanyi and Wunko (2007) and Etsey (2007) incorporated child related issues in their studies.

A critical examination of the above studies would reveal that they were conducted on implementation related issues. Onyechu (2008) argued that irrespective of how well a curriculum of any subject is planned, designed and

documented, its implementation is important because the problem of most programmes arises at the implementation stage. Babalola and Mkpa (as cited in Onyeachu) lamented that many excellent curriculum plans and other educational policies are marred without any trace at the implementation stage. Aboagye (2003) has postulated that the learner is the direct recipient of curriculum experiences, the audience of any curriculum and the main figure who is affected by the curriculum (Yanik, 2007); and with Adentwi's (2000) assertion that successful curriculum implementation is largely dependent on the learner, and that no effective implementation occurs without the learner, there is the need to ascertain how the learner as a factor influences the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. As much of the studies on curriculum implementation concentrated on the other factors leaving the learner factor, this study was designed to fill that gap.

Statement of the Problem

The problem investigated is how the learner factor is contributing to the unsatisfactory curriculum outcome at the basic school level in Ghana. According to ACARA (2012), curriculum implementation is the third stage of the curriculum process; and that, that stage is where teachers and learners interact in the teaching and learning situation to bring the curriculum intentions to reality. Thus, the effective implementation of the formal curriculum (Chikumbu & Makamure, 2003) is very vital to the educational programme in a developing nation as Ghana.

However, despite Government and other donor and non-governmental support to the educational sector in Ghana (Oduro, 2007), the implementation of the Basic School curriculum in the country has not been without challenges.

Aboagye (2007) and Ogbinaka (2007) have intimated that Ghana has failed to achieve universal basic school enrolment despite the many educational acts passed by the various governments, past and present. These include the 1951 Accelerated Development Plan for education, the 1961 Education Act and the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) to improve education in the country. The problem here is that, majority of children of school going age were found out of school instead of being in school to learn. When the capitation grant was introduced in the country in 2005, Etsey (2007) in a study found that large class size makes the teachers' work difficult and retards their progress. Other challenges identified with the implementation of the Basic School Curriculum are teachers' attitude to work, management and administrative issues, as well as unconducive school environment and lack of parental support to education (Adanusa, 2012). Etsey (2007) added that, teacher qualification, motivation, non-availability of teaching/learning materials, supervision, lateness and absenteeism on the part of pupils are strong factors influencing the implementation of the Basic School Curriculum. In a study, Adeleke, Fabunmi and Ojeleye (2012) concluded that, the major implementation challenge of the 9- year Basic Education Curriculum is non-availability of qualified teachers for certain subjects. Other researchers of the same orientation are: Alade (2012) and Dare and Agbevanu (2012). Yakubu (2000) identified value conflict, power conflict, psychological conflict and practical conflict as factors serving as barriers to effective implementation of a given curriculum.

The result of the above implementation challenges confronting the Basic School system is that the learners perform below expectation at the

Basic Education Certificate Examinations organized by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC). Thus, there is unsatisfactory curriculum implementation outcome at the basic school level in Ghana. Kyriacou (1995) postulated that there is demand for school learners to possess the types of knowledge, skills and attitudes required to fit into industry and commerce. Oduro (2007) citing from the Government's 2004 White Paper on Anamuah-Mensah's report on the review of the 1987 Educational Reform Programme, has written that every year the system pours out hundreds of thousands of unskilled, unemployable and rather young Ghanaians into the after school world of work but the Ghana Education Service (GES) unfortunately has not been able to correct that defect for some time now. Igwe (2007) identified a similar problem in Nigeria. Adeyemi (as cited in Fehintola, 2011) added that there is growing loss of confidence in the basic education system because of the many crises that plague it and the appalling academic performance of students. Etsey (2007) and Ghanney's (2011) concern is that the poor academic performance of the Basic School pupils as a result of these implementation problems affect the transition rate from Junior High School to Senior High School. Adentwi (2000), giving a more critical look at the problem, argued that successful curriculum implementation is largely dependent on the learners as no effective implementation can take place without them. Hence, this study was proposed to examine how the learner influences the implementation outcome of the curriculum at the Basic School level.

The Gap

Studies on curriculum implementation in Ghana have revealed that much of the attention has been placed on the other factors that affect implementation with little attention given to the learner factor (Kadindgi, 2004). To address the implementation problems in Ghana, Little (2010) opined that five strategic and integrated elements, namely, infrastructure development, management reform, curriculum change, community participation and improvement of quality of personnel who support education at all levels, were designed to remedy the deficiencies, associated with the FCUBE programme. Unfortunately, the proposed strategic design did not include the learner. This study focused on investigating how the learner, the most important factor during curriculum implementation (Adentwi, 2000), influences that process.

The situation is no different elsewhere outside Ghana. Fullan (as cited in Oztürk, 2003) argued that there are four factors that are commonly found to influence change in practice on the basis of research since 1965 which Fullan has broadly categorized as:

- a) Characteristics pertaining to the curriculum change being attempted
- b) Local contextual conditions at the school district and school levels.
- c) Local strategies at the district and school levels used to foster implementation, and
- d) External (to local) factors affecting the likelihood of implementation.

Unfortunately, when explaining the local factors that influence curriculum implementation, Fullan listed the district, community, principal, the teacher, and left out the learner who is the key figure, without whom

implementation would not be possible (Adentwi, 2000). Oztürk (2003), therefore, did not include the learner in his study. This study examined how the learner who operates at the local level influences the implementation process at that level. Also, Wang's (2006) contention has been that the factors affecting curriculum implementation are resource support, teaching methods, teaching experiences, language proficiency and professional development needs of the teachers as predicator of teacher's implementation. And so Wang also did not include the learner as a factor that affects curriculum implementation in his study, even though the learner has been identified as the primary reason for developing the curriculum; and that everything in the curriculum is in the interest, skills, and attributes of the learner (Answers Corporation, 2013). This study examined how the learner as a factor affects the curriculum implementation process.

Yanik (2007) revealed that studies on curriculum implementation are restricted in their scope and purpose. There is, therefore, the need to widen this scope and purpose regarding the studies on curriculum implementation by investigating how the learner factor also impacts the implementation process. This study was, therefore, proposed to fill this gap created in the literature concerning curriculum implementation. Knowledge gained from this study would contribute to the general body of knowledge in the area of curriculum implementation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to examine the influence of the learner factor on the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

Research Objectives

The purpose of the study was to be achieved through the following specific objectives:

- A) To assess the intelligence level of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum
- B) To examine the state of the physical condition of the learner for curriculum implementation
- C) To investigate the learner preferences to certain curricular work that exist at the basic school level.
- D) To examine how basic school pupils manage their time in relation to the implementation of their curriculum.
- E) To assess what peer influence on the learner affects the implementation of the basic school curriculum
- F) To examine the cultural practices of the learner that influence curriculum implementation at the basic school level
- G) To investigate what socio-economic status of the learner influence curriculum implementation
- H) To examine what gender issues of the learner affect curriculum implementation
- I) To investigate which learner factors have significant influence on curriculum implementation at the basic school level

Research Questions

The general question this study attempted to answer is: In what ways is the learner factor affecting curriculum implementation in Ghanaian basic schools? This general question subsumes the following specific ones:

- 1) What is the intelligence level of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum?
- 2) What is the physical condition of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum?
- 3) What learner preferences to certain curricular work exist at the basic school level?
- 4) How do basic school pupils manage their time in relation to the implementation of the curriculum at that level?
- 5) What peer influence on the learner affects the implementation of the basic school curriculum?
- 6) Which cultural practices of the learner influence curriculum implementation at the basic school level?
- 7) What socio-economic status of the learner affects curriculum implementation?
- 8) What gender issues of the learner affect curriculum implementation in schools?

Hypothesis (1)

H_0 = Learner factors will not relate individually and in linear combination to the implementation of the basic school curriculum

H_1 = Learner factors will relate individually and in linear combination to the implementation of the basic school curriculum

Hypothesis (2)

H_0 = Female learners' influence on curriculum implementation in basic schools will not significantly differ from that of their male counterparts

Hi = Female learners' influence on curriculum implementation in basic schools will significantly differ from that of their male counterparts.

Assumption

My assumption was that the learner factor is having a sort of impact on the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

Significance of the Study

One of the most important stages in the curriculum process is the implementation stage (Adentwi, 2000). It is at the implementation stage that curriculum intensions are brought into reality. According to The University of Zimbabwe (1995), the implementation stage is one of the most important stages of the formal school system as it is at that stage that the learner acquires knowledge or experiences planned in order to function effectively in a society. Teachers and learners interact with materials and the official curriculum (Chikumbu & Makamure, 2003) at this stage. The success or failure of the planned programme depends on what goes on at the implementation stage. Often than not, many innovations have failed to attain the success mark, the blame of which has been put on one factor or the other. This means that studies into issues about curriculum implementation in modern times especially where there have been unsatisfactory curricular output in many African countries and elsewhere including Ghana, are deemed very important (Anderson, 2011; Cheung & Wong, 2012). Ampiah (2010), highlighting more on this issue, asserted that the factors that influence effective curricular work differ from country to country as the goals of education are not the same; and that in Ghana the factors include teacher qualification, pupil-teacher ratio, availability of textbooks, school facilities and equipment. The foregoing

discussions imply that concerns about factors that influence curriculum implementation should be given the necessary attention to ensure that planned programmes are effectively carried out in schools to help solve the problems in Ghana and the world at large.

In their study of factors that affect curriculum implementation, Hipkins, Cowie, Boyd, Keewn, and Mc Gee (2011) found that for effective curriculum implementation to take place, there is the need to inform parents about developments in the schools, as this would help involve them in a two-way exchange of information intended to better support student's learning. Chikumbu and Makamure (2003) added that in Ghana, there are other interest groups that concern themselves about what happens in the schools. And it is through empirical studies like this one, that the actual state of affairs in the schools is unearthed and disseminated to all stakeholders in education. Supporting this point; Treogust and Rennie (1993) argued that research on curriculum implementation brings to the fore the status of school curriculum at the various stage levels.

Chikumbu and Makamure (2003) intimated that, the learner is the central figure in the curriculum implementation, and that curriculum implementation cannot take place without the learner. But regrettably, studies on curriculum implementation have mainly been based on the other factors that affect curriculum implementation. Examples of such studies are: Asare (2011), Asemeyi and Wunku (2007), Burton and McDonald (2001), Cobbold (2011), Dare and Agbevanu (2012), Kimathi (2012), Kirkgoz (2008), Kwon (2009), Mireku (2003), Mitchell (2010), Ogbinaka (2007), Oztürk (2003),

Sebatian and Allensworth (2012), Wang (2006), Yunus (2001), and Zhao, et al. (2011).

There is limited research on the learner factor (Wang, 2006) and how it impacts curriculum implementation. Thus, relevant literature on the learner factor and its impact on curriculum implementation are sparse at both local and international levels. Also, conceptual framework for the study, the learner factor and its impact on curriculum implementation at the basic school level has little or no international literature. Considering the significance of the learner factor and how it affects curriculum implementation and to address the limited research in the field of curriculum implementation, this study was to investigate the learner factor and its effect on the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. It was to help identify the problems encountered in reaching the goals of the basic school curriculum from the perspective of the learner so that the educational authorities can have the chance to consider these issues in their attempt to improve basic education delivery in the country that this study was conducted.

This study would unveil the key problems that the learner poses towards the implementation of the basic school curriculum for the needed strategies to be put in place to help address the challenges identified. This was significant as the study was conducted at a time when utmost importance is being given to improvement of basic education delivery in Ghana. Being one of the few studies of learner influence on the implementation of the curriculum at the basic school level in Ghana, this study would also help to contribute to the literature.

Findings related to the problems in curriculum implementation at the basic school level, would also help teachers to improve their performance and instructional strategies; and they could also be used as reference study at the other levels of education in Ghana, namely; the secondary and the tertiary.

This study was also conducted in line with Wang's (2006) assertion that there is sparse literature on the learner factor. Thus, this study would serve as a reference point to future researchers from Ghana, Africa, and the non-African countries on how the learner characteristics influence curriculum implementation, most especially at the basic level of education which serves as the foundation stage in the formal education set-up (Agyeman, 2012).

The study would also benefit the Ghana Education Service by unveiling the other side of the problems that have bedevilled the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. This knowledge would help in putting up the necessary strategies to minimize or eradicate the poor implementation outcome in Ghanaian basic schools.

The outcome of the study would also help the Ghana Education Service to strengthen the counselling services in the Ghanaian Education system to counsel the learners on the need to struggle for academic success for their future wellbeing. Thus, the Ghana Education Service would have to train counsellors for all basic schools in Ghana; especially, the Junior High Schools.

Findings from the study may also serve as a frame work for the Ghana Education Service to plan courses on the characteristics of the learner, how they affect the implementation process and how to eradicate or control them. These courses should be offered as in-service training courses for teachers handling courses at basic level of education in Ghana.

The Curriculum Research and Development Division in Ghana could incorporate the findings in the pre-service training programmes of the Colleges of Education in Ghana. Finally, the outcome of the study would be of great benefit to individuals, students, institutions and organizations that would like to do further studies on similar or related topic in Ghana and elsewhere.

Delimitation of the Study

Delimitations refer to characteristics that limit the scope of a study by defining its boundaries (Simon & Goes, 2013). In the first place, the study is delimited to only final year pupils of selected public basic schools in Ghana. The reason is that learners who have passed through all the levels of the basic school would relatively have the needed information, skills and boldness to express themselves when responding to the questionnaire items and the interview. Again, the study is delimited to basic school pupils in only three out of the ten regions in Ghana. The regions included one from the southern belt, one from the middle belt and the other from the northern belt.

Also, the curriculum implementation models/theories reviewed (in chapter two) have pointed to the fact that factors that affect implementation are classified as being the need, clarity, complexity, and practicality of the programme, the roles of the school district, the principal, teachers, the government in power, political forces, interest groups, and government agencies (Fullan, as cited in Adentwi, 2000). I share the philosophical framework of Figueiredo and Afonso (2006) that a learning event (a situation where an individual learns) comprises the learner, content and context. So, as the earlier studies have focused on the content and context, the current study is delimited to all these areas confronting curriculum implementation that have

been investigated by earlier researchers; but focuses on filling the gap they have left unfilled - how the learner factor influences the implementation of the basic school curriculum. The current study also did not incorporate issues on curriculum evaluation.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations are matters and occurrences that are out of the researcher's control and limit the outcome of a study and conclusions drawn (Simon & Goes, 2013). These may include the instruments, the sample, the analysis, the nature of self-report, limited funding, choice of research design and other factors (Siddiqui, 2010). The limitations of this study included the following:

- 1) The sample. Private schools should have been included to reveal a general picture of how the learner influences curriculum implementation. This was not done as the study task would have been too enormous to be accomplished within the time frame. Thus, the private school learner's influence was not captured in this study.
- 2) The data: Teachers should have been included in the interview so as to get comprehensive information on the learner's behaviour at school. This was also not done for want of time.

Again, the variable on peer influence should have included investigation on the existence or otherwise of occultic practices in the basic school. This was also not captured in this study as a result of oversight during the designing of the instruments.

Definition of Terms

ACARA Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority

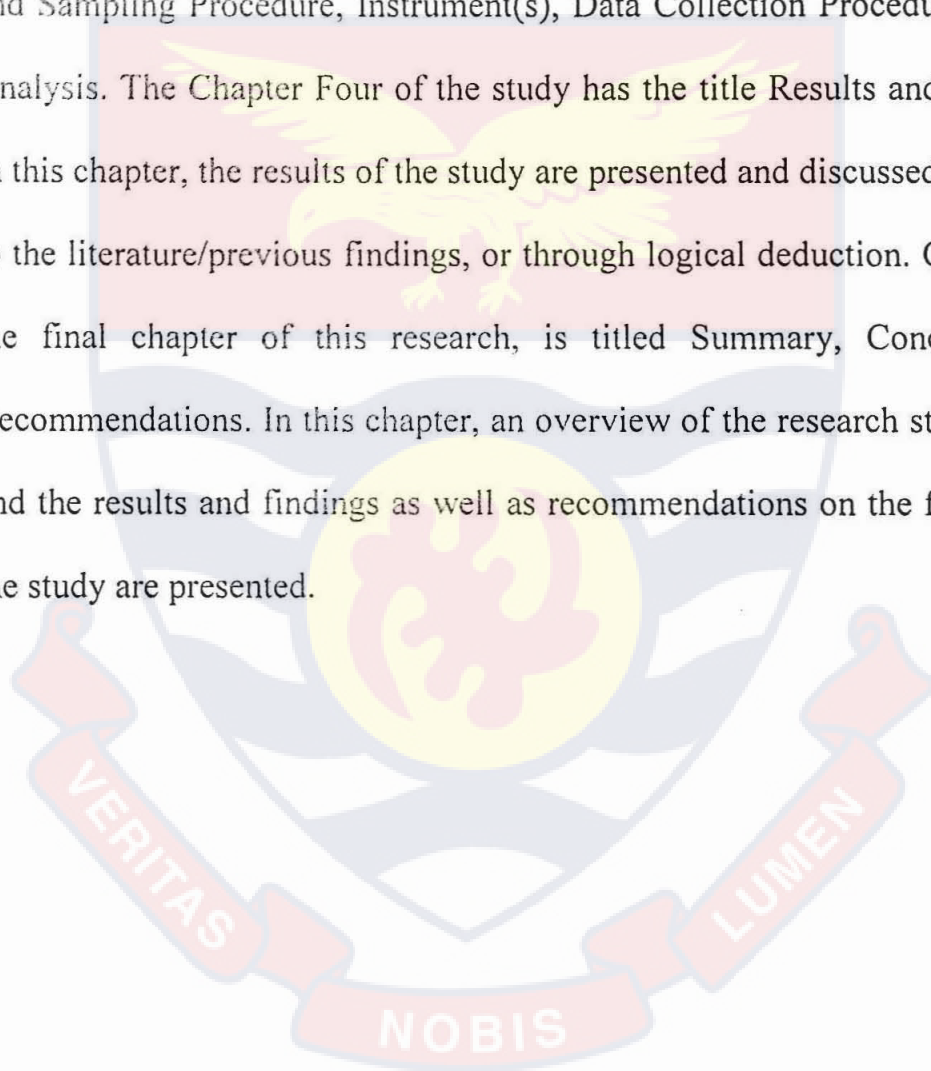
BECE Basic Education Certificate Examination

CRDD	Curriculum Research & Development Division
DFIP	Department for International Development
FCUBE	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
ESDS	Economical and Social Data Service
GES	Ghana Education Service
GPA	Grade Point Average
HECAT	Honeonership Education Counselling and Training
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IGE	Individually Guided Education
JHS	Junior High School
KBSM	Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah
MIS	Management Information System
NDC	National Democratic Congress
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
STAT	Short form for <i>Statim</i> , a Latin word for 'immediately' in the medical field
SMC	School Management Committee
TIMMS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
WAEC	West African Examinations Council

Organisation of the Study

This study has been organised into five chapters, and their contents are as follows: Chapter One comprises the Introduction of the study and consists of the following subheadings: Background to the study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the study, Research Objectives/Questions/Hypothesis, Significance of the study, Delimitations, Limitations, Definition of Terms,

and Organization of the study. Chapter Two has the heading Review of Related Literature. The review of the literature has been done on Conceptual, Theoretical and Empirical bases. Chapter Three of this study discusses the Methodology employed for the study. The chapter explained how the study was conducted. Subheadings used are: Research Design, Population, Sample and Sampling Procedure, Instrument(s), Data Collection Procedure, and Data Analysis. The Chapter Four of the study has the title Results and Discussion. In this chapter, the results of the study are presented and discussed in reference to the literature/previous findings, or through logical deduction. Chapter Five, the final chapter of this research, is titled Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations. In this chapter, an overview of the research study is given, and the results and findings as well as recommendations on the findings from the study are presented.



implementation of the music and dance programme in basic schools: The case of the Awutu, Effutu, Senya District”.

Conceptual Review

The concept of Curriculum

According Wang (2006), “Studies on curricula, from conceptual framework to actual practice, are not new” (p. 21). Researchers and educators, for a very long time dwelt on many aspects of curriculum. The definition of curriculum has been debated upon over the years. There is still no widely accepted or unanimously agreed–on definition for the term “curriculum”, and its concepts vary depending on the context of the discussion. Citing Connelly and Lantz and Egan, Wang (p. 22) postulated that the origin of the word “Curriculum” can be traced to Latin. Its first meaning was “a running”, “a race”, or “a course”, and its secondary meanings were “a race–course” or “a career” Following this, several definitions have emerged which have looked at the concept from different perspectives.

During the early years of the twentieth century, most educators held onto the traditional concept and referred to curriculum as “the body of subjects or subject matters set out by teachers for students to cover” (Tanner and Tanner, as quoted in Wang, 2006, p. 22). Good, Pratt, and Taba (as cited in Wang) opined that later, the definitions developed and expanded to mean either a “plan”, an “experience” (Bobbit, Dewey, Foshay, Smith et al. Tanner & Tanner, as cited in Wang) or a “methodological inquiry” (Westbury & Steimer, quoted in Connelly & Lantz, as cited in Wang).

In a narrow sense, curriculum is defined as a plan; for instance, a plan for learning (Taba, 1962), or a general over-all plan of the content or specific

materials of instruction that the school should offer the learner by way of qualifying him for graduation, certification or for entering into professional or vocational work (Connelly & Lantz, as cited in Wang, 2006). For Pratt (1994), curriculum refers to plans for instructional acts but not the acts of instruction themselves. Thus, curriculum here is portrayed as an outline for constructing a house. Doll (1996) intimated that teachers perceive curriculum as a statement of what the school authorities, the state government, or some group outside the classroom require them to teach.

In a broad sense, curriculum can be described as an “experience.” Pinar et al. (as cited in Wang, 2006) contended that it was Dewey who brought the concept of experience to the definition of curriculum, a concept which is still operative today. Expanding Dewey’s definition of curriculum, Bobbit (1918) asserted that curriculum is an educative experience. Bobbit, therefore, defined curriculum as the entire range of experiences, both directed and undirected concerned in unfolding the abilities of the individual, or a series of consciously directed training experiences that the schools use for completing and perfecting enfoldment (Jackson, as cited in Wang).

Twenty-first century educators such as Ali and Ajibola (2015), Ebert 11, Ebert and Bentley (2011), Hoxhaj (2010), Lunenburg (2011), Marsh and Willis (2003), Offorma (2005), Primrose and Alexander (2013), and Wiles and Bondi (2007) have also come out with several definitions of the concept curriculum looking at it from different perspectives.

Offorma (2005) defined curriculum from the traditional point of view by stating that curriculum is a planned learning experiences offered to a learner in a school. Thus, from Offorma’s perspective, curriculum is

specifically planned for learners in school setting. The planning takes into consideration the culture of the society in which the learner lives as well as certain characteristics of the learner that will facilitate the implementation of the curriculum. Expanding Offorma's definition, Ali and Ajibola (2015) stated that curriculum is an organized plan of a course outlined with the objectives and learning experiences to be used for achievement of the objectives. They added that curriculum is a written document with strategies for achieving expected goals or ends. Thus, in their definition, Ali and Ajibola have hinted that curriculum planning involves the setting of objectives or goals which serve as yardstick for the determination of the attainment of success or otherwise of the programme. Wiles and Bondi (2007), also sharing Offorma's view, reiterated that curriculum pertains to instruction that is planned with associated intended outcomes, recognizing that much more may occur in the classroom that is meaningful and relevant, even though it may be unintended. This definition recognizes the fact that the outcomes of the curriculum (both intended and unintended are catered for and anticipated at the planning stage of the curriculum. Wiles and Bondi explained that learning experiences with intended outcomes are planned while recognition is given to the importance of possible unintended outcomes. Offorma (2005) again explained curriculum as a programme of studies made up of three components: programme of studies, programme of activities and programme of guidance. The implication is that the curriculum takes into consideration the content to be studied, the activities to be carried out by the learner and the teacher as well as the role of the teacher as a facilitator and a guide in the learning process. Marsh and Willis

(2003) summing up the foregoing definitions, wrote that curriculum is all planned learning for which the school is responsible.

Hoxhaj (2010) explained curriculum as the aggregate of learning areas, subjects, and cross-cutting issues available in an education system. Hoxhaj intimated that in a broader sense, the curriculum also includes aspects of teaching methodologies, assessments and teaching/learning resources. This definition of curriculum, therefore, can be said to be the sum of all that is packaged for the learner in the school situation, subjects, extra curricular activities, methods of teaching and assessing learners as well as teaching/learning resources. The idea of the curriculum comprising subjects is shared by Marsh and Willis (2003). They defined curriculum as such “permanent” subjects as grammar, reading, logic, rhetoric, mathematics, and the greatest books of the Western World that best embody essential knowledge. Explaining the curriculum as a subject, Marsh and Willis stated that the subjects of the curriculum are areas of learning that are most useful for living in contemporary society. Thus, as Primrose and Alexander (2013) stated, curriculum is a three-dimensional document that takes into account the students’ needs, the content and the instructional methodology.

For Ebert et al. (2003), curriculum refers to the means and materials with which students will interact for the purpose of achieving identified educational outcomes. The emphasis placed on the curriculum here is the experiences the learners have to undergo for the achievement of curricular intentions. Marsh and Willis (2003) limiting the experiences to technology, contended that curriculum is what the student constructs from working with the computer and its various networks, such as the internet.

Lunenburg (2011), citing the following theorists, said that a wider conception of curriculum, non - technical and more philosophical, personal and interesting approaches include theories and ideas that are aesthetic (Eisner), feminist (Giligan), pluralistic and diverse (Banks), political/social (Giroux), moral/ethical (Reid), visionary and imaginative (Apple & Greene), and spiritual (Pinar). Lunenburg opined that these new theories and ideas represent a rejection of traditional curriculum planning, a rethinking of curriculum, but not necessarily a 'practical' interpretation that assists teachers and curriculum leaders (directors, supervisors, principals, etc) in the organisation and operation of classrooms and schools.

Introduction to the Concept of Curriculum Implementation

Planned educational programmes need to be implemented and that of schools is no exception. Hopkins et al. (2011) postulate that there is the need to engage students in learning what is planned; hence curriculum implementation is done to transmit the documented subject matter into the learners. Whereas Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) place implementation at the second level of the curriculum process, Lynn (2011) places it at the sixth stage.

The implementation of the school curriculum involves interaction between the teacher, the learner, the planned programme (the curriculum) and physical facilities of the school including the teaching and learning materials (Rogan & Grayson, 2003). Teachers are the key people who interpret the planned curriculum by giving life to it while the audience of any curriculum is the learners as they are the main figures affected by the curriculum (Yanik, 2007). Adentwi (2000) opined that as the teacher teaches, the learners' role in

the implementation process is to co-operate with the teacher for effective instructional work by providing the teacher with feedback about the instructional processes, taking good care of textbooks, other teaching/learning materials and equipment, sometimes taking part in deciding on how the teaching/learning should be done and finally taking active part in the instructional process.

Onyeachu (2008) intimated that irrespective of how well a curriculum of any subject is planned, designed and documented, its implementation is important because problems of most programmes arise at the implementation stage. Thus, the success or failure of a planned curriculum is dependent on how the implementation process succeeds. The success or otherwise of a curriculum depends on how the implementation problems are tackled. Cheung and Weng (2012) affirming Onyeachu's assertion, wrote that curriculum reform in Hong Kong is facing key obstacles and challenges that are common in many other countries at the implementation stage. They cited teachers' heavy workload, learning diversity in class and teachers' inadequate understanding of the curriculum as factors serving as challenges to effective curriculum implementation in Hong Kong. Fehintola (2011) and Ghanney (2007) have argued that implementation problems affect learners' academic performance. Problems of implementation, therefore, need to be studied so that appropriate recommendations are made for their solutions. Hence, the current study was conducted to ascertain how the learner factor influences the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

The Concept of Curriculum Implementation

Studies have shown that the success of any educational programme, to a large extent, depends on the process, which is the implementation part (Anderson as cited in Anderson, 2002). Implementation is key to the teachers and students who play a vital role in the success of any educational change. According to Anderson as cited in Anderson, there are the following levels of curriculum;

- a) Ideal curriculum
- b) Perceived curriculum
- c) Operational curriculum
- d) Experiential curriculum

Of the four levels, teachers and students in a learning situation are involved in the last three; therefore, the success of curriculum implementation is determined by the effective application of the three levels.

The meaning of Curriculum Implementation

Like the concept curriculum, curriculum implementation has been defined in different ways by different scholars. Lewy as quoted in Anderson (2002, p. 11) postulated that "implementation means the open use of a programme throughout an entire school system". This simply means a nationwide use of an educational programme. Fullan (1982) perceived implementation as being the process of putting into practice an idea, programme, or set of activities new to the people attempting or expected to change. Tamakloe (1992) explained Fullan's assertion that, in the area of curriculum, implementation is mainly concerned with the instructional programmes. *

Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman, and Wallace (2005) defined curriculum implementation as “a specific set of activities designed to put into practice an activity or programme” (p. 5). This definition portrays curriculum implementation as being static as the emphasis is on designed activities earmarked for the implementation and not the process of implementation itself. In contrast to Fixson et al.’s (2005) definition of curriculum implementation, Chikumbi and Makamure (2005), Eisner and Mkpá as cited in Onyeachu (2008), Ofaha et al. (2009), Olufu (2003), Rogan and Grayson (2003) and The University of Zimbabwe (1995), have considered curriculum implementation as on-going. For instance, Chikumbi and Makamure postulated that curriculum implementation entails putting into practice the officially prescribed courses of study, syllabuses and subjects. Gaba, as cited in Ali and Ajibola (2015) viewed implementation of curriculum as putting the curriculum into action for attainment of the goals for which the curriculum is designed. Mkpá explained curriculum implementation as the act of translating the curriculum document into the operational curriculum by the combined efforts of students, teachers and other educational workers. For Ofaha et al., curriculum implementation is putting the curriculum into operation for the attainment of the goals for which the curriculum is designed. Olufu described curriculum implementation as translating theory into practice with a view to yielding expected results. The University of Zimbabwe, Onyeachu, and Rogan and Grayson summarised the meaning of curriculum implementation as the process of putting all that have been planned as a curriculum document into practice in the classroom through the combined effort of teachers, learners, school administrators, parents as well as interaction with physical facilities,

instructional materials, psychological and the social environment. However, Ali and Ajibola have cautioned that, it is one thing to plan or design curriculum and it is another thing to implement it effectively.

Prerequisites for Curriculum Implementation

HECAT (2012) has stated that, to implement curriculum successfully, there should be four stages of analysis done at the initial stage; namely, Accuracy Analysis, Acceptability Analysis, Feasibility Analysis, and Affordability Analysis. HECTAT explained that Accuracy Analysis is done to gather comments on the accuracy of the curriculum to be implemented to ensure that the information is scientifically sound and current. Acceptability Analysis is done to organize comments on the acceptability of the content. Feasibility Analysis organizes comments from persons who know if the curriculum can be successfully implemented in the classroom. And lastly, Affordability Analysis is done to ascertain the cost and purchase information regarding how to purchase, implement, and revise the curriculum. This will bring to light how much it will cost to change the operating procedures of the school, and can identify available resources to cover the cost of the new curriculum to be implemented.

Kabeil (2005), commenting on the prerequisites of curriculum implementation of MIS curriculum in Bilingual Developing Countries, postulated that requirements for curriculum implementation should be considered from three perspectives: bilingualism technology for information system design, user bilingual communication for user involvement in system development, and student bilingual communication in the educational process.

Tamakloe (1992) stated that for a successful implementation to take place, there are certain requirements and conditions that should be fulfilled. He opined that in addition to the formative evaluation (Scriven, 1967) which was used to ensure that what has been designed meets the desired objectives, there is also the need for a tryout of the programme to ascertain whether there are flaws in it so that suggestions for programme modification could be made. Anderson (2002) commented that, this assertion of Tamakloe confirms Bloom's (1956) statement that the preliminary tryout is needed to provide information for evaluation feedback to help the curriculum planner revise the materials where necessary.

At the tryout stage, three major types of data are collected (Tamakloe, 1992). These are: Judgemental data, Observational data and data on Student Learning. In the judgemental data, opinions of teachers, students and other users of the programme are sought through questionnaire, interviews and ratings. Observational data are gathered in the classroom on teacher and pupil interaction as they use the instructional programme. Data on student learning are gathered by means of making students take tests on each unit of the instructional programme in question.

After the tryout, there is also the need for a field trial which Pratt (1980) refers to as "a dress rehearsal" (p. 416) of the programme. Here, the final version of the curriculum emerging from the tryout is implemented under conditions as close as possible to those that will prevail when it is installed on a regular basis. According to Bathory (as cited in Anderson, 2002), the purpose of the field-trial is to identify the conditions under which the programme can successfully be implemented. The type of data collected on

teachers and students during the field-trial are virtually the same as those of the tryout. The only difference is seen in terms of scale. Also, because of the large number of schools at the field-trial stage, data collection is based on sampling.

Dissemination

After the instructional programme has gone through the tryout and the field-trial stages there must be an effective dissemination strategy (Tamakloe, 1992). This should comprise translocation, communication, animation and re-education. Translocation refers to the planning and movement of people and materials required for implementing the new programme. Issues dealt with under communication include passing on information about the instructional programme from person to person through personal contacts or the media. Animation deals with the provision of incentives that will serve as motivation to the implementers. Re-education calls for the need for a deep cooperative experience among teachers in trying out the programme of instruction and the establishment of an intimate rapport between the designers and the teachers. These four components of dissemination are highly complementary to one another. One cannot adequately occur without the other three (Tamakloe, 1992).

Conditions that Ensure Effective Implementation

Teachers are the implementers of an instructional programme (Adentwi, 2000). Fullan (1982) affirmed this point when he stated that “educational change depends on what teachers do and think” (p. 107). Accordingly, Tamakloe (1992) opined that it is imperative to give adequate preparation to teachers who will handle the programme to ensure effective

implementation. There is the need to have a short-time measure to run an in-service training programme for incumbent teachers and also a long-term one to redesign the pre-service teacher programme in order that newly trained teachers are equipped with the requisite knowledge and skills for an effective implementation of the instructional programme. Glatthorn as cited in Anderson (2002) perceived this issue and asserted that some staff-development time should be devoted to an analysis of the effects of the new curriculum. In this wise, opportunities would be given to teachers to share their perceptions about student response to an achievement with the new curriculum. Also, part of the development session should be devoted to collaborative development of teaching and learning materials. Finally, staff development should provide opportunities for peer coaching to foster the acquisition of new skills. However, it is sad to note that an earlier research by Lortie as cited in Anderson revealed that teachers interacted with each other very infrequently.

Again, before the commencement of implementation, there should be a taskforce or project team that should be responsible for the curricular change effort. The duty of the team is to determine how rapidly and broadly the curricular change will be introduced into the schools; secure the needed resources for the successful accomplishment of the project; make specific provisions to secure continued input from teachers and to anticipate and make the necessary organizational change (Glatthorn as cited in Anderson, 2002).

The team, which should compose of one or more of district administrators, school department heads, teachers, parents and in some instance student representation, also has to provide the required staff

development for those who will initiate the project. They should also be sure that all materials and equipment are available and accessible. Also, they should secure the active support of district or municipal supervisors (as in the case of Ghana) and monitor the teachers' use of the new curriculum during its initiation (Glatthorn as cited in Anderson, 2002). However, Glatthorn cautioned that effective implementation can be expected only when teachers are provided with quality materials that will support the new curriculum. Tamakloe (1992) shared this view when he declared that after thorough dissemination is done, an investigation has to be made to ascertain if there is adequate input such as equipment, and materials such as tools, books and other instructional resources to sustain the implementation process.

Finally, Lewy as cited in Anderson (2002) suggested that the end of course examination should be redesigned to suit the tenets of the programme in order that objectives are achieved. This move will also provide the needed motivation for both teachers and students who use the programme to work harder as they endeavour to make the latter pass their end of course examination.

Components of Implementation

Fullan (1982) has referred to components of implementation as what is meant by change in practice. Many researchers have expressed that whenever something new is being implemented, a number of components of existing practices are altered. Citing Leithwood, Anderson (2002) outlined some of these affected components as: changes in global conceptions, objectives, content, instructional materials, and teaching strategies. A large scale study in the United States by Crandall et al. (as cited in Fullan) revealed that in a given

curriculum change, whether externally or locally developed, changes occur in terms of what teachers and others think and do. That is, they will alter aspects of their beliefs, use new curriculum materials and technologies, and employ teaching and learning diagnoses that are novel. The idea of components of implementation could also be applied to fidelity and adaptation perspectives where in the former, components contained in the developer's version are identified and measured while in the latter, what has changed in practice from what people were previously doing are also identified and assessed.

In sum, implementation involves teachers putting into practice in the classroom situation an educational programme that has been planned and tried out. Implementation calls for putting in place certain favourable conditions to ensure the success of the particular programme concerned. The absence of these conditions will render the programme ineffective. However, implementation can never go on without bringing about changes in existing practices. It is worth noting that even though the learner has been stated as the beneficiary of the curriculum implementation when the right conditions are set for curriculum implementation, how the learner influences the implementation process has been left out. This study addressed that issue.

Context of Curriculum Change: Conflict and Consonance

Paris (as cited in Anderson, 2002) in a study noted that, there is conflict and consonance resulting from a clash between the fidelity and enactment perspectives of curriculum implementation. This conflict and consonance stems from the fact that teachers share "the enactment assumptions that teaching requires context-specific knowledge acquired through deliberative practice, which by definition cannot be the same static

truth for all” (Snyder et al. 1992, p. 426). Teachers, therefore, consider the skills, talents, and knowledge necessary to enact a curriculum as context-specific that must be achieved repeatedly by individual exploration. To enact a quality curriculum then, the best way for teachers is to engage in classroom exploration, discussions and observations with their colleagues, and formal and informal instruction. The ideas derived are then subjected to the ongoing evaluation and revision in practice of the teachers in their respective classrooms.

But the teachers’ assumptions come into conflict with the policies of the planners of the curriculum programme. This happens because as the fidelity-oriented administrators with sincerity believe they are using the best known innovative methods to ensure that all teachers use the best instructional methods and materials for effective school work, teachers perceive the move as placing limits on their “exercise of professional judgement” (Snyder et al. 1992, p. 426).

Paris (as cited in Anderson, 2002) argued that the perspectival clash about the teacher’s role in the creation of curriculum results in destructive conflict. Time, energy, and resources are expended in ways that deviate from the mutually held goals of the fidelity-oriented administrators and the enactment-oriented teachers. The consequences of this conflict are that efforts are blocked, ideas sacrificed, and goals compromised to the detriment of the learner.

Snyder et al. (1992) in concluding the discussion on the conflict and consonance that crop up in context of curriculum change, intimated that enactment studies reveal that the effects of outside influences such as

curricular materials, programmed instructional strategies, local and state policies differ depending on their proposed function. When the aim of the outside influence is to exercise control by attempting to standardize classroom experiences of teachers and learners, a negative effect is experienced by teachers and students. But when the outside influences are employed as attempt to provide teachers with tools to collaboratively develop their skills, knowledge, attitudes in context-specific environments, they result in positive effects for teacher development, enriched curricular experiences and student outcomes.

The Concept Learner Factor

Even though the learner is the centre of curriculum implementation (Adentwi, 2000; Chikumbu and Makamure, 2003), empirical work on the learner factor on the implementation of curriculum in the literature is sparse (Wang, 2006). However, a number of educationists have expressed their views on the characteristics of the learner factor and their influence on the implementation process. Jenkins (2003), Koch (2013), and Proffitt (2008) have considered the intelligence of the learner; Marple (2011-2012), and Krzysztof (2013) have looked at physical preparedness of the learner; Barbara, Walker and Bigelow (1989), Bridgestock, (2013), Hasni, (2015), Irandoust and Karison (2002), Mcinerney, (2013), Quin (2012), Trinity College Dublin (2012), and Weber and Custer (2005), have written on learner preference; Bennett, Horan, Kellogy and Young (2010), Douglas (2012), Keeley (2011), Lynn (2008), Nellen (2000), Onuka (2012), Sheehy (2012) and Time management made easy (2013), have considered time management of the learner. Burke and Sass (2008), Carrell, Mahustrom and West (2007), Johnson

(2000), Majeed (2010) and Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2013) have written on peer influence whilst Arumugam, Rafale- Galea, de Mello and Dass (2013), Bastable (2007), Bishop, Berryman and Teddy (2007), Cong (2012), Lal (2003), Manikultty, Anuradha and Hanson (2007), Parrish and Linder=Vanberschot (2010), Purnell and Paulanka (2003) and Santamaria (2009), have dwelt on the cultural practices of the learner. Caro (2009), Devlin and O'Shea (2011), Huseynpur, Moghaddam, and Rezane (2015), Marmot (2004), and Okioga (2013) have written on the socio-economic status of the learner. And Abubakar and Adegbeyega (2012), Mutekwe, Modiba and Maphosa (2012), Salami (2013) and Zembor and Blume (2011), have written on gender issues of the learner.

The Learner's Intelligence:

Assemi and Sheikzade (2013) stated that intelligence is very important in motivating a student to learn a course he/she selects to learn; and that the student's capability, talent and interest facilitate curriculum implementation. Effective intelligence activity requires concentration (Koch, 2013). Koch explained that if students are to understand a text or solve a problem, it is required of them to be creative by putting themselves in the place of the characters in the text or in the sphere of life that most naturally relates to the problem to be solved. The thought process should be controlled and focused on the object of study (Jenkins, 2003).

Gadner (as cited in Koch, 2013), identified eight intelligences or ways that people learn which are connected with mental preparedness of the learner. They are as follows: Linguistic intelligence: With this type of intelligence, the learners are able to use words effectively and learn best by speaking, writing,

reading and listening. These students are likely to excel in course activities that involve telling or creating stories and enjoy crossword puzzle or conundrums. Subjects that cater for learners with Linguistic intelligence in the basic school curriculum in Ghana are English Language and Ghanaian Language.

Logical or mathematical intelligence: Here, the learners enjoy working with numbers, logic, problem solving, patterns, relationships and categories. These students excel in science courses. Mathematics and integrated science cater for Logical intelligence in the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

Spatial intelligence: These learners learn visually and by organizing things spatially. They think in images and pictures and understand best by seeing what they learn. They enjoy charts, graphs, maps, tables, illustration, art models, puzzles and costumes. Mathematics, integrated science, and basic design are the subjects that cater for learners with spatial intelligence in the Ghanaian basic school curriculum.

Body-kinaesthetic intelligence. These learners prefer physical activity, are generally co-ordinated and athletic and partial to assignment that require a certain level of active participation. They enjoy sporting activities and all types of school work that require bodily activity such as dancing and the like. Music and dance, social studies, physical education, and information and communication technology are the subjects in the basic school curriculum in Ghana that help develop body-kinaesthetic intelligence of the learners.

Musical intelligence: These students take pleasure in musical expression through songs, various rhythms and musical instruments. They are receptive to numerous types of sounds, memorize melodies easily and may

possibly enjoy activities such as drumming, humming and whistling. Music and dance provides avenues for the development of musical intelligence in Ghanaian basic school learners.

Interpersonal intelligence: These learners are very aware of their personal beliefs and values and are usually reserved, self-motivated and especially perceptive. These learners take pleasure in co-operative learning and are sensitive to the feelings and motivations of others. Religious and moral education is the subject that promotes interpersonal intelligence in the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

Natural intelligence: These learners enjoy nature and recognize details in plants, animals, rocks, clouds and other natural formations. They excel academically when observing fine distinctions among similar items. However, Kiggundu and Nayimuli (2009) cautioned that in a learning situation, students may be so entrenched in their thinking and behaviour that changes proposed in the curriculum may not be enthusiastically received and this may affect implementation negatively. Integrated science in the basic school curriculum promotes natural intelligence in the learners. In the Ghanaian basic school context, learners operating at the various intellectual levels are all made to learn standardized and varied curriculum content irrespective of their mental capabilities. Thus, learners learn what they are intellectually not prepared for. This study examined how learners' intelligence influences curriculum implementation.

The Learner's Physical Preparedness

The learning of certain curricular activities requires some amount of physical preparedness on the part of the learner. Wikipedia (n.d.) intimated

that physical preparedness consists primarily of general preparatory and some specialized conditioning exercise to work all the major muscles and joints.

Physical preparedness and functional state of boys differ from those of girls on the indexes of force. In terms of psycho-physiological possibilities and frequencies of heart-throbs, power capabilities for girls occupy middle position in the general structure of preparedness while for boys power capabilities occupy leading position. Doyle (n.d.) asserted that a child needs to develop physical skills (doing, playing and co-ordinating) in addition to growth of his/her intellectual and emotional capabilities. This type of development which applies to sports and games, also applies to many other activities such as learning to play musical instruments, using a computer keyboard and mouse, controlling a brush or a pencil in an art class, legible cursive handwriting, using all hand and power tools or riding a bicycle. Thus, a learner's physical preparedness or otherwise is likely to influence the implementation of the curriculum as most curricular activities require the use of some form of physical work. The Minimum Standard for education, preparedness, responses, recovery (n.d.) reiterated that curricula should be age appropriate and compatible with learners' developmental level, including their sensory, mental, cognitive, psychosocial and physical development. But Marple (2011-2012) cautioned that students' temporary medical disability prevents attentiveness in regular day class on alternative educational programme.

The Learner's Learning Preference

Mark, Abante, Almendral, and Manansala (2014) found that learner characteristics such as learning preferences, physical and mental capabilities,

and learning styles impact the nature of the instruction. Preference differ across subjects, across universities, and this depends on the student (Mcinerney, 2013), and students prefer subjects that are closely tied in with their daily lives (Hasni, 2015). Student survey results of 2012–2013 from graduate school applicants worldwide revealed that the most popular courses were business and its related subjects (Bridgestock, 2013). Irandoust and Karison (2002) also found that good performance by students depended on the subjects chosen at high school. There are preferences associated with female and male learners respectively for certain curricular activities (Weber & Custer, 2005). They explained that, females preferred topics on repairing products.

Barbara et al. (1989) identified four distinct learning preferences as: the symbols learner, the patterned learner, the patterned event learner, and the outlined events learner. These they briefly described as follows:

The symbols learner: These learners gain meaning from verbal or visual symbols presented in a logical way. They seem to gain new information by researching and reading textbooks as these sources organize information in precise, logical, categorical structures that are similar to their own thinking. They prefer a lecture that is logically and sequentially presented. They find group discussions tiresome.

The patterned learners seem to gain from personal association developed through patterns of communication that are verbal and non-verbal. They appear to attend to vocal intonation during discussions. They seem to be more comfortable when allowed to make personal interpretations of new information and to share this interpretation in a non-judgemental situation.

They find new information useful when it is followed by a discussion that relates this information to self.

The Patterned-Event Learner: For these learners, meaning seems to be gained from real-life experiences where experience is conceptually connected in patterns. They prefer to conduct an experiment to gain new information. Since they organize information around personal life events rather than precise categorical relationships, they find communication with words difficult and time consuming.

The outlined events Learner: For these learners, meaning seems to be gained from specific sequential events. They prefer that someone demonstrate in an outline the separate parts of information related to a previous concrete experience. They like to practice the discrete skills before putting them into a whole and their learning is greatly enhanced by direct experience.

Trinity College Dublin (2012) reported of Kolb's Experimental learning Model. This model has four types of learners having preference for concrete experience or abstract conceptualization and active experimentation or reflective observation. The learning model is briefly explained as follows:

Type 1: Concrete, reflective—the diverger. These learners like to relate course material to their experiences, interests, and future careers. Type 2, Abstract reflective—the assimilator. These learners like to reflect on organized, topical information. Type 3. Converger. Convergents like to work on well-defined tasks and to learn by trial-and-error in an environment that allows them to feel safe. Type 4. Concrete active the accommodator. Accommodators like to apply course material to new situation to solve real problems.

VARK (2006) looked at the way learners prefer to take-in and give-out information. VARK has five possible outcomes discussed below:

Visual learner: These learners learn best through visual experience and find diagrammes and graphs useful. They engage well with posters, video materials and photography, and are likely to use colours and high-lights and studying aids.

Aural learner: These learn best through listening; and find discussion, debate and audio materials useful. But they may have difficulty taking note, and so prefer to record lectures for future listening.

Read/Write learner: These learners learn best through written materials, with benefits from traditional teaching methods as their strength lies in reading, taking notes and writing essays. They benefit from hand-outs and effective reading list.

Kinesthetic learner: Kinesthetic learners learn best through practical application. They find laboratory work, practicals and field trips useful. But they may have difficulty with text based teaching methods and abstract and theoretical modules.

Multimodel learner: Multimodel learners have a preference for two or more of the above approaches. Quin (2012) found that some learners dislike writing activities such as writing essays in class individually and writing essays within a group and this affect curriculum implementation. This study assessed how the learning preferences of the Ghanaian basic school pupils affect curriculum implementation.

As a corollary to the learner's preference is the learner's interest. MacCarthy (2014) stated that there is much power in students' interest in a

topic; and that when a topic connects to what students have interest in doing, engagement deepens as they show willingness by spending time to think, dialogue, and create ideas in meaningful ways. Murphy (2013) reiterated that interest exerts powerful influence on students' academic and professional choices, and that passionate interest can allow people to overcome academic difficulties or perceptual disabilities.

The Learner's Time Management

How smart students are is less important to their success than how they manage their time (Hamzah, Lucky & Joarder, 2014). Being organized include listing study time (Nellen, 2000), using a study calendar (Lynn, 2008 & Sheehy, 2012), allotting time to listed priorities (Onuka, 2012), deciding on how to spend time and keeping a learning environment (Keeley, 2011). Onuka, observed that effective time management requires high level of self-discipline which results from sacrifice of certain not very essential things that economists would refer to as opportunity for the time management effectiveness. Bennet, Horan, Kellogg and Young (2010), and Douglas (2012) lamented that many learners waste a lot of time through watching television, playing video games and making endless phone calls, engaging in excessive computer games and internet surfing. These acts definitely influence pupils' academic work, and that is what this study set out to investigate.

Peer Influence on the Learner

Cambridge Advanced Learners' Dictionary (2013) explained peer influence as a strong influence of a group, especially, of children, on members of that group to behave as everyone else does. Most academics recognize that a child's peers can have an impact on his/her academic achievement (Johnson,

2000). Carrell, Malmstrom and West (2007), Lam (2012) and Majeed (2010) reiterated that the values of the peer group with whom the learner spends the most time are a stronger factor in the student's level of academic success; and that academic achievement is closely linked to peer influence. But Burke and Sass (2008) wrote that measurement of peer effects at the classroom level has been scarce as a result of data and methodological limitations. This study investigated the effect that peer influence has on the implementation of the Ghanaian basic school curriculum.

The Learner's Culture

Hofstede (as cited in Manikuly et al., 2007) intimated that culture is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another. Manikuly et al contended that the cultural context of education plays an important role in understanding how and why students react in particular manner to a learning environment. Both Bastable (2007) and Lal (2003) affirmed that the cultural background of students influence their willingness and ability to respond to and make use of the teaching/learning situation.

Purnell and Paulanka (as cited in Bastable, 2007) identified dominant language, language barriers, religious beliefs and practices and social status of the learner as factors in curriculum implementation. Cong's (2012) worry was that students from non-mainstream cultural backgrounds have to learn a different set of conventions of literacy practices and often experience difficulties with schooling.

Arumugam et al. (2013) found that students' learning is embedded in rich culture and attributes as they demonstrate positive values such as unity,

tolerance, obedience and respectfulness. Arumugam et al. found also that practising and appreciating their culture and customs reflected in how students interacted in the classroom. The school's task, therefore, is to recognize the minority cultures and assist students to function more effectively within those cultures (Barnhardt, 2006). To this end, Bishop et al. (2007), Manikuly et al. (2007), Parrish and Linder-Jamberchat (2010) and Santamaria (2009) perceived the teacher's role in relation to students' culture as very important. While Santamaria suggested that teachers use their students' culture as a foundation for learning, Parris and Linder-Jamberchat and Manikuly et al. said teachers should consider students' differences so as to handle their courses with greater sensitivity to cater for divers needs. Also, competent teachers should use their learners' culture(s) as a building block (Bishop et al.), and be more knowledgeable about the cultural differences of their students (Parrish & Linder-Jamberchat).

The Socio-Economic Status of the Learner

Mueller & Parcel (as cited by Caro, 2009, p. 559) defined a family's socio-economic status as "the relative position of individuals or families within a hierarchical social structure based on their access to, or control over, wealth, prestige, and power" Thus, the individuals' or families' social standing in relation to what they possess or do not possess determines their socio-economic status. Marmot (2004) added that a family's socio-economic status includes the household income, their education and occupation. Caro found that there is a positive relationship between family socio-economic status and academic achievement of students. This relationship is referred to in the literature as socio-economic gradient as it is gradual and increases across

the range of socio-economic status. It is also referred to as socio-economic gap to refer to a gap in academic achievement between students of high or low socio-economic status families. As low socio-economic status children get older, their situation tends to worsen and this makes them leave school earlier as a result of their relatively poor skills (Rumberger, & Shargel, as cited in Caro). In the final analysis, they are likely not to enter the labour market successfully or pursue post-secondary education (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001).

Okioga (2013) intimated that middle class families engage actively in their wards' education and development by using controlled organized activities and foster a sense of entitlement through encouraged discussion. Devlin & O'Shea (2011) have suggested that in teaching learners from low socio-economic status, teachers should be approachable and available to guide the learners to learn. They should be enthusiastic, dedicated and have good rapport with the learners. Huseynpur et al. (2015), therefore, suggested that researchers should consider socio-economic factors when dealing with researches in educational fields. Hence the inclusion of this variable in this study.

Gender Issues of the Learner

The literature reveals that gender issues of learners have influence on their academic status. Zembor and Blume (2011), and Salami (2013) postulated that there is a significant effect of gender on the variables of academic ethics. They explained that on the average, girls perform better in school than boys. Comparatively, girls get higher grades and complete high school at a higher rate than boys. Girls exhibit higher verbal ability throughout high school. However, they lose ground to boys after fourth grade on tests of

both mathematical and science ability. Abubakar and Adegbeyega (2012) reiterated that there is a positive correlation between age-academic achievement and gender-academic achievement. Mutekwe, et al. (2012) found that the perception of girls is that the treatment they receive in school, at home and in society led to under-achievement in their academic work. A large scale study in South Carolina Department of Education involving roughly 7,000 students, 1,120 parents and 760 teachers from 119 different elementary schools revealed that single gender class increased the students' academic success and attitude towards learning (The Huff Post, 2015). The current study set out to investigate how gender issues of the learner also influence curriculum implementation at the basic school level in Ghana.

Conceptual Framework

The foregoing discussions on the concept of the learner factor have explained how the implementation process is influenced by the learner. This study examined the characteristics of the learner discussed as the main variables. I, therefore, conceptualized that the learner factor influences curriculum implementation. Thus, the learner as a factor, and the characteristics that emanate from the learner, influence curriculum implementation. This conceptual framework is illustrated in my construct as follows:

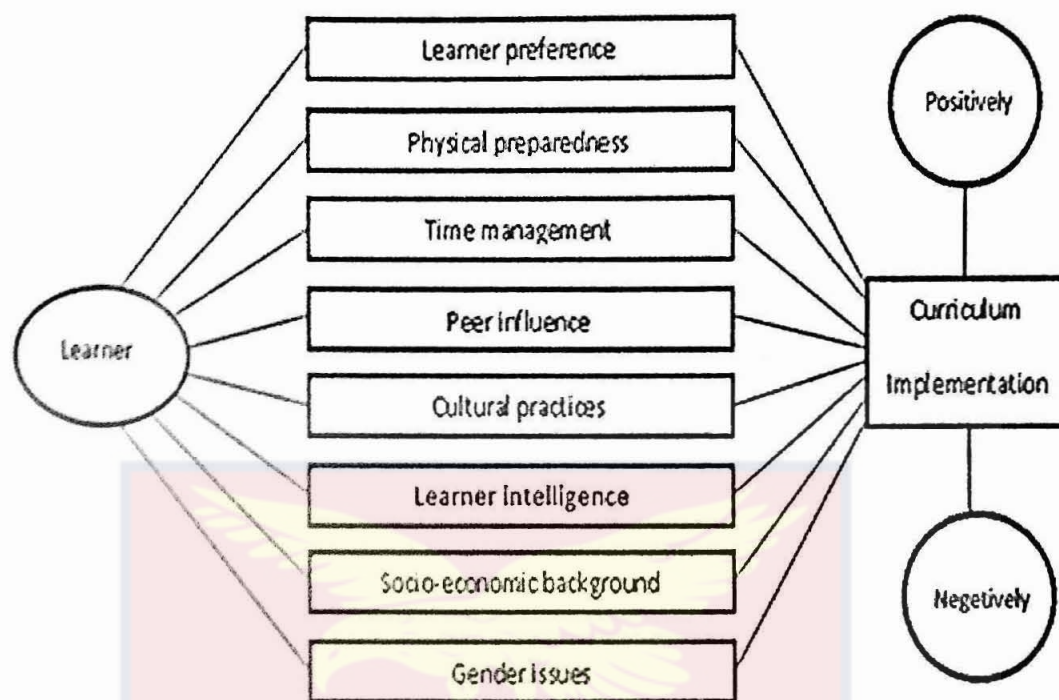


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for Learner Factor on Curriculum Implementation

In my conceptual construct, the learner with all his/her characteristics is the independent variable influencing curriculum implementation, the dependent variable. However, it is when the model is applied in a study that it would be ascertained whether the influence is positive or negative. It should be noted that the order of the arrangement in which the learner characteristics appear in the conceptual model does not mean that is how they influence the implementation process, Also, how these characteristics influence curriculum implementation differ from one learner to another. Thus, while a given characteristic of one learner influences curriculum implementation positively, the same characteristic of another learner would influence curriculum implementation negatively. For instance, if learner A's peer influence is academically positive, then the influence learner A exerts on the implementation process will be positive; and if learner B's peer influence is negative, then learner B will influence curriculum implementation negatively.

Theoretical review

Approaches to Implementation

The approaches to curriculum implementation describe how a proposed educational programme is put into action. There are three approaches to curriculum implementation; namely: Fidelity Perspective, Mutual Adaptation, and Curriculum Enactment (Anderson, 2002).

Curriculum Change under Fidelity Perspective

Fidelity concerns matters of centralization, homogeneity and authority (Fullan, 1982). The idea of fidelity maximizes consistent or faithful implementation. Rutz-Primo (2005) contended that even the best programme in education will fail to have the intended impact if its essential elements are not implemented properly. Citing Huse, Rutz-Primo, therefore, explained Fidelity as the determination of how close the programme is implemented according to its original design or as intended. Thus, under fidelity perspective, it is assumed that intended outcome of the curricular change corresponds to what has been planned originally. Certain assumptions related to curriculum knowledge, change and the role of the teacher underlie this perspective. The assumption of researchers with this orientation is that a curriculum product is something that is developed externally by experts who planned the innovation. Change is perceived as a linear process with the assumption that the more the factors that facilitate or hinder the process of change have been identified, the better the change (Arthur, 1999). It is also assumed that the role of the teacher is paramount to the success of the innovation as he or she is the transmitter of curriculum knowledge to students (Adentwi, 2000). It, therefore, follows that successful implementation cannot

be achieved unless the teacher implements the curriculum as faithfully as the way it was intended to be implemented. Thus, the teacher is expected to follow the indications and implement the curriculum packages as intended by the designers (Snyder et al., 1992).

In implementing the basic school curriculum in Ghana under the fidelity perspective, teachers are encouraged to study the content specified in the various syllabi and impart it to their pupils. Also, methods and strategies of teaching, exercises for evaluation are specified by the curriculum planning body (The Curriculum Research and Development Division) which basic school teachers are to comply with to the letter (Ministry of Education, 2012).

Studies on Curriculum Implementation under Fidelity Perspective

According to Gross, Giacquinta, and Bernstein as cited in Anderson (2002), innovations introduced into schools are proposals for change and to achieve their intended effects, they must be implemented. Gross et al. have however, observed that one major reason accounting for failure of educational change to achieve its intended effects is inadequate implementation. To explain this assertion, they indicated that the answer to why an innovation was unsuccessful “may even reduce to the simple fact that it was not in reality operative, it existed only on paper... when the stimulus is not there, there is no process that it can operate” (p. 20).

Rutz-Primo (2005) lamented that empirical evidence on the effect of Fidelity of Curriculum Implementation on programme success is limited. Thomas, cited in Anderson (2002) argued that most studies of educational change in the past have been concerned primarily with the adoption of innovations in school systems. The conclusion was that innovation that was

merely adopted did not necessarily lead to the expected change at the school level. Consequently, since one cannot assume that an adopted innovation automatically becomes a reality, researchers realized that it would be better if the issue as to the extent to which the innovation is in fact in operation in the adopting organization is addressed before attempting to make judgements about its effectiveness. Fullan and Pomfret (as cited in Anderson), observed that unless an attempt is made to conceptualise and measure what has happened, one would simply not know whether a change has taken place.

In view of this statement, Arthur (1999) reported that most researchers in the past concerned themselves with measuring the degree of implementation from the fidelity perspective when dealing with results of intervention programmes that were seemingly disappointing. For instance, 12 of the 15 studies reviewed by Fullan and Pomfret (1977) were carried out using the fidelity perspective. Researches conducted by Gross et al., Hall and Loucks and Huberman are all examples of studies undertaken from fidelity approach (Arthur). Rutz-Primo (2005) identified five aspects that have been measured across studies on Fidelity of Implementation as follows:

(1) Adherence—extent to which specified program components are delivered as the program prescribes; (2) Exposure—amount of program content received by participants (i.e., number or length of sessions or frequency with which program techniques are implemented); (3) Quality of program delivery—extent to which providers approach a theoretical ideal in terms of delivering program content and processes; (4) Participant responsiveness—extent to which participants are engaged; and

(5) Program differentiation—uniqueness of the features of the program or treatment components that can be reliably distinguished from others (p. 3).

However, studies conducted under fidelity approach seeking to find out the degree of implementation of an innovation revealed that great variability exist among implementers. The conclusion was that it should not be assumed that just because an innovation has been adopted, it was being implemented as planned in the various classrooms. Rivelin and Timpane's Project-Follow-Through Evaluation as cited in Arthur (1999) showed that there was variation within sites using different models. Arthur reported that, a study conducted by Gross et al. (1971) to determine the extent to which organisational members altered their behaviour so that it corresponded to behaviour patterns required by the innovation revealed that there was variability in teachers attempting to implement the innovation. Citing Hall and Loucks, Anderson (2002) reported that great variability in concerns existed among teachers and that the individual's perceptions, feelings, motivation, frustrations and satisfactions are factors responsible for such variability. Hall and Loucks identify eight levels of using an innovation as non-use, orientation, preparation, mechanical use, routine, refinement, integration and renewal. They proposed that to assess the extent to which an innovated programme has been put to actual use, teachers should be operating in a routine manner before one can intimate that the change has been implemented.

Curriculum Change under Mutual Adaptation Perspective

Mutual Adaptation might be viewed as representing a midpoint along a line that moves from complete fidelity in implementation of an educational

programme to curriculum enactment. Mutual adaptation is a collaborative approach in which curriculum developers and those who actually use it in the school or classroom situation make adjustments in a curriculum during its implementation (Snyder et al., 1992); and the goal is to engender better understanding and stronger commitment to the spirit of the reforms (Reiser, et al. 2000). Mutual-Adaptation tends to be the exception rather than the norm in educational reforms that seek substantial transformations of extant practice (Fullan, as cited in Raiser et al.). Rather, local adaptation is typically a one-sided affair in which reforms are adapted to fit local practice, with minimal changes to local practice.

The assumptions underlying this perspective are that “rather than being passive recipients of products developed by experts”, teachers should be active shapers of curriculum change to meet local needs. “Rather than a linear sequence from researcher and developer to teacher”, curriculum innovation should be influenced by schools and classrooms (Posner, 1992, p. 218). It is also assumed under this implementation perspective that a curriculum product is a material jointly developed by both the curriculum designer and the teachers using it in the classroom to make room for the solution of problems peculiar to their respective localities. While researchers holding the fidelity view interest themselves in measuring the degree to which a particular innovation is implemented as planned, mutual adaptation researchers appear to be committed to employing “new strategies and theories from the social sciences to uncover what intensive, descriptive data will yield about the various educational problems of education” (Snyder et al. 1992, p. 411) and identifying the factors that promote or hamper implementation as planned.

Whereas the fidelity perspective considers curriculum knowledge as something created outside the school, mutual adaptation research tends to perceive knowledge as one facet of a larger complex social system that cannot be taken for granted. Under mutual adaptation perspective, who initiates curriculum knowledge is of secondary importance to understanding the factors that affect innovation or change whether in or outside the school. Unlike fidelity research in which evaluation is tied to the degree of match between an implemented curriculum and an original design, in mutual adaptation studies, evaluation is based more on reporting what has happened in the context that was studied and conclusions are drawn in line with the perspectives that motivated the research. In the fidelity perspective, developers attempt to be highly specific, while in the adaptive approach there is much open-endedness allowing for decisions to be made along the way (Anderson, 2002). The curriculum for basic education in Ghana allows for the mutual adaptation perspective to be practiced in Ghanaian basic schools as teachers are encouraged to use their own examples and also add information gained from other sources apart from the contents outlined in the various syllabi to foster teaching and learning in the schools (Ministry of Education, 2012).

Studies on Curriculum Implementation under Mutual Adaptation Perspective

Fullan (1982) opined that curriculum implementation is intended to effect a change in an educational programme. However, the process of implementation is said to have been fraught with a number of problems that tend to militate against the success of the change to be effected (Babalola, & Mkpa, as cited in Onyeachu, 2008). Arthur (1999) noted that, studies

conducted by Bentzen, Bredo and Bredo and Sarason among others have revealed that implementation problems are the cause of failed change efforts. The studies indicated that the most outstanding of these problems was the lack of opportunity on the part of implementers to shape the curriculum in ways that were suitable to their local purposes. Accordingly, the mutual adaptation approach to curriculum implementation was introduced.

As curriculum implementers began using the mutual adaptation approach, research conducted on its efficacy came out with several findings. Fullan and Pomfret as cited in Arthur (1999) reported of a multi-year study from 1973 to 1977 which was conducted to examine four federally funded programmes designed to promote change in the structures or practices of schools and a variety of innovative practices as well as classroom organisation, reading programmes, bilingual and career development programmes. The study brought to light the fact that when programme organizers do not deal adequately with local organizational circumstances the programme is bound to fail. It was, therefore, concluded that successful implementation is characterized by a process of mutual adaptation.

However, Lehming and Kane (as cited in Arthur, 1999) observed that there are problems associated with what might be referred to as pure mutual adaptation perspective. To verify this assertion, Arthur postulated that, a study was conducted by Popkewitz, Tabachnick and Wehlage (1981) on the processes of adaptation and response of six schools implementing Individually Guided Education (I G E). The outcome of the study revealed a host of shortcomings some of which are discussed briefly below.

Instead of merely adapting the programme by making modifications to reach the same goals, schools rather revised both the technology and its espoused goals. The result was the production of individuals who would only function in their communities but not in other communities as later confirmed by Armstrong, Hanson and Savage (1985), Musgrave (1985) and Sadker and Sadker (1979).

Knowledge was seen as something to be imparted to the student. This issue contravenes the idea of child-centred education, which advocates that knowledge should be acquired by the learner through experience (Smith, Stanley, and Shores as cited in Arthur, 1999). Doll (1982) argued that learners should be guided to discover things for themselves as they study and must not be made passive participants in the learning situation.

Evaluation was based on objective measurement of outcomes. Atkin and Stake (as cited in Anderson, 2002), had contended that evaluation, when based on objective measurement of outcomes, restricts both the teacher and the learner in what they can achieve in the teaching/learning process and, therefore, stifles creativity.

Lastly, some illusory schools were characterized by discontinuity. That is, each grade learnt something different from what they did at the previous grade. Oliva (1992) condemned this practice by intimating that it is contrary to the principle of spiralling and continuity which states that concepts, skills and knowledge should be introduced and re-introduced to ensure reinforcement of what is learnt.

Notwithstanding the above shortcomings associated with mutual adaptation perspective, Posner (1992) wrote that for an appropriate means of

effecting educational reform, there needs to be negotiation and compromise between programme planners and implementers.

Curriculum Change under Curriculum Enactment Perspective

Compared to research using the fidelity and mutual adaptation perspectives, curriculum enactment is sparse (Anderson, 2002). From the enactment perspective, curriculum is viewed as the educational experiences that are jointly created by students and teacher. Students and teachers see the curricular materials and programmed instructional strategies at the heart of fidelity and mutual adaptation as tools which they use as they construct the enacted experiences of the classroom. Snyder et al. (1992) wrote that major research questions in curriculum enactment revolve around such issues as:

1. What are the enacted experiences and how do students and teacher create them?
2. What effect do outside factors (e.g., curricular materials, programmed instructional strategies, school/district/state/ federal policies, student and teacher characteristics) have on the curriculum as enacted?
3. What are the effects on students of the curriculum as actually enacted? (p. 418)

The underlying assumption of this perspective is about curriculum knowledge perceived to be a personal construct, which must be responsive to both personal and external standards. Another assumption is that instead of change being merely observable alterations in behaviour, it is rather a personal developmental process, both for the teacher and student. It is also assumed that the teacher's role is that of a curriculum developer who in collaboration with

his or her students, grows ever more competent constructing positive education experiences. Ramillard and Heck (2010) asserted that teachers make revisions in their plans when enacting the curriculum and that their intentions influence the implementation process. Regarding the basic school curricula in Ghana, teachers are encouraged to create their own content and teach where necessary in subjects like the creative arts (Ministry of Education, 2012).

Studies on Curriculum Implementation under Curriculum Enactment Perspective

Snyder et al. (1992) intimated that an early example of the enactment in practice was the Denver Curriculum Project carried out in 1922. In the programme, committees of teachers, cooperating with administrative and supervisory staff were appointed to undertake the task of reconstructing courses of study in some subject areas at pre-university school levels. The courses of study were shaped by teachers and students who used them. Among the findings was that teachers become more functional when they engage themselves in thinking from which policies eventuate. It was also found that problems related with cooperation within the schools provided opportunities for individuals to learn more about problem solving.

Snyder et al. (1992) reported that a more significant research focus on implementation as enactment was an Eight-Year-Study which was carried out by the Denver high schools in 1933. The study was to correct a situation in which the solution of an educational problem “diagnosed as an overemphasis on externally prescribed input in the form of standardized and regulated courses of study” (p. 419) had been unsuccessful.

In the study, thirty secondary schools were invited to offer to their students what the local school people, students and community considered as best for their students. The idea was to eliminate externally prescribed courses of study and see the outcome. Students from the experimental high schools were followed through their college careers. One thousand, four hundred and seventy-five students from the experimental schools were paired with a graduate of another secondary school matched as closely as possible with respect to age, sex, race, scholastic aptitude scores, home and community background, and vocational and avocational interests. Among the categories measured were intellectual competence, cultural development and social fitness (Snyder et al., 1992).

Apart from the above listings, some other descriptive categories were created into which each of the students understudied was placed. Findings from the study were that graduates of the experimental schools equalled or exceeded their counterparts from the non-experimental schools in all the assessment areas. Snyder et al. (1992) remarked that the 30 schools graduates as a group did somewhat better job than their counterparts in the other schools from whatever standard success was judged. It was also found that schools and their personnel also benefited immensely from participating in the experiment as the personal and professional lives of many teachers were immeasurably enriched. Another finding from the study was that teachers as well as their students are capable of continuous development and as teachers become mindful of their roles as learners, they become better teachers measured by positive student outcomes. Thus, participation in the project brought renewed vitality to each school.

Conclusions drawn from the analysis of the study were that, for effective implementation to go on, schools must be willing to undertake valid objectives, organize curricula and techniques and set them in motion for the realization of the objectives. Also, the effectiveness of curricula and techniques must be measured by appropriate evaluation devices.

Theories /Models of Curriculum Implementation

Theories/Models of curriculum implementation abound in the literature. The following selected theories / models have been discussed because of their relevance to the current study.

The Paradigm Shift Theory

Jacobs and Farrell (2001) intimated that the term paradigm is synonymous to the word pattern. Pattern formation is the way we attempt to make meaning from our experiences. When a paradigm shift takes place, the focus of our perception changes and makes us see things from different perspectives. Twentieth century paradigm shift across a wide variety of fields can be seen as part of a larger shift from positivism to post positivism (Berman, Carpra, & Merchant, as cited in Jacobs & Farrell). Knowledge of this broader shift helps make clearer the shift that occurs in any particular field.

Jacobs and Farrell (2001) postulated that there was a paradigm shift in second language education which flowed from the positivism to post-positivism shift which involved a move away from the tenets of behaviourist psychology and structural linguistic and toward cognitive, and later, socio-cognitive psychology and more contextualized meaning based views of language. This was part of a larger shift that affected other fields such as

paradigm shift in foreign language education at US Universities (Voght, 2006) and paradigm shift in education programmes, business and other professions. Operandi (as cited in Jacobs & Farrell, 2001) described the new paradigm shift in education as behaviourism's top-down, one-size-fits-all approach to a paradigm shift that arose in city planning which was a bottom-up one that sought to zone for diversity and describes it as communication approach that requires a complexity in terms of planning and a tolerance for messiness and ambiguity as teachers analyze students' needs and design meaningful tasks to meet these needs.

The paradigm shift in second language education led to the following eight changes that could have potential impact if they were used in more integrated fashion; namely: Learner autonomy, Cooperative learning, and Curricular integration. Focus on meaning, Diversity, Thinking skills, Alternative assessment, and Teachers as co-learners.

Learner autonomy: This emphasizes the role of the learner rather than that of the teacher. It focuses on the process rather than the product and encourages students to develop their own purposes for learning and to see learning as a life-long process. Cooperative learning: This is also known as collaborative learning and consists of a range of concepts and techniques for enhancing the value of student-student interaction. It offers teachers ideas for helping group activities among students. Curricular integration: In curricular integration, various subjects are taught jointly to provide learners more opportunity to see the links between subject areas. This helps them appreciate and develop a stronger grasp of subject matter, a deeper purpose for learning

and a greater ability to analyze situations in a holistic manner (Brinton, Snow & Welch as cited in Jacobs & Farrell, 2001).

Focus on meaning: While rote and memorization might be beneficial for short term learning, long term learning and extension of that learning requires that students focus on the meaning of the language they are using. 'Meaning' should be understood in terms of the meaning of individual words and whole texts, as well as the meaning that particular topics and events have in students' lives. Diversity. Citing Brown, Jacobs and Farrell (2001) stated that one meaning of diversity lies in the fact that different students attach different connotations to the same event or information. They explain that another aspect of diversity involves the mix of students we have in our classroom in terms of backgrounds. For instance, ethnic, religious, social class and first language, sex, achievement levels, learning styles, intelligences and learning strategies. A key tenet of learner-centred instruction is that each learner is different and each effective teaching should take these differences into account.

Thinking skills. According to Paul (as cited in Jacobs & Farrell, 2001), among the strategies that learners need to acquire and use are those that involve going beyond the information given and utilizing and building their higher order thinking skills, also referred to as critical and creative thinking skills. One well known list of such typologies focus on applying information to other context, analyzing the features of a given phenomenon, synthesizing something new and evaluating information. Nowadays, these thinking skills are seen as an essential part of education because information is easily obtained, so the essential task now is to use the information wisely.

Alternative Assessment. Jacobs and Farrell (2001) noted that new assessment instruments that mirror real-life conditions and involve thinking skills are being developed to replace or complement the traditional instruments that use multiple choice-true/false and fill-in-the blank items. Even though the evolving alternative assessment instruments are more costly, time-consuming as well as less reliable in terms of consistency of scoring, they are gaining prominence due to dissatisfaction with traditional modes of assessment, which are faulted for not capturing valid information about students' competence in their second language.

Teachers as co-learners. The concept of teachers as co-learners, according to Jacobs and Farrell (2001), involves teachers learning along with students. The complexity of the world, with its constantly changing nature requires for life-long learning on the part of teachers. Teachers must, therefore, take part in this never-ending quest for knowledge, by learning more about their subject areas as well as learning about how to teach (Freeman & Richard, 1996) and model it for their students.

Jacobs and Farrell (2001), citing Fullan, Bennett and Rotheiser-Bennet, lamented that there is lack of implementation of this paradigm shift because changing beliefs and behaviours take time in education and else-where. Other hindrances to this paradigm shift are difficulty of translating theory into practical application and the piece meal fashion in which it has often been presented, rather than as a whole. Even though the Paradigm Shift covers learners as co-learning with their teacher, assessment of how the learner impacts the learning situation is not captured. This study was designed to investigate that.

Theory of Curriculum Implementation for Developing Countries

Rogan and Grayson (2003) propounded the theory of curriculum implementation for developing countries with reference to science education. They stated that policy makers and politicians all too often focus on the 'what' of desired educational change, neglecting the 'how'. Porter (1980:75) intimated that in developing countries, 'large scale programmes tend to emphasize adoption and neglect implementation; in nearly all instances, low outcomes resulted from poor implementation of what was essentially a good idea'.

Rogan and Grayson's (2003) model is contextualized to the Curriculum 2005 (C2005) in South Africa and the learning area of the natural sciences. The theory takes into account the diversity of schools in a given educational system. However, it does not at any rate endorse a deficit approach to curriculum change—to identify weaknesses and remediation nor does it imply a linear view of curriculum change, moving from one stage to the next highest, which tends to obscure the complex and idiosyncratic nature of the process (Verspoor, as cited in Rogan & Grayson, 2003). In this theory, there is the need to recognize current reality and build on the strengths of various components of the educational system- teachers, pupils and school environment.

The constructs of the theory of curriculum implementation, according to Rogan and Grayson (2003), are Profile implementation, Capacity to support innovation, and Support from outside agencies. These constructs share three important characteristics: (i) They can be measured by means of indicators (ii) They are narrow enough to encompass a number of related factors and (iii)

They are narrow enough to include one main idea. The unit of analysis for the theory of curriculum implementation is the learning environment

Profile of Implementation. This construct is an attempt to express the extent to which the ideals of a set of curriculum proposals are being put into practice. It assumes that there is at least a vaguely defined notion of what constitutes 'good practice' and what this looks like in the classroom. It recognizes that there will be many ways of putting a curriculum into action as there are teachers teaching it. A profile of implementation of a new curriculum recognizes that the implementation of a new curriculum is not an all or nothing proposition; hence it conceptualizes levels of implementation of Curriculum 2005. The profile of implementation is designed to offer a 'map' of learning area, and to offer a number of possible routes that could be taken to a number of destinations. This enables curriculum planners at the school level identify their current strengths, take into account the contextual setting and capacity of their school and select a route to follow in working towards a meaningful implementation of their curriculum phase in over a number of years (Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

The dimensions of the Profile of Implementation are the nature of the classroom interaction (what the teacher does and what the pupils do), use and nature of science practical work, incorporation of science in society, elements, and assessment practices. The dimensions classroom interaction and 'assessment' are generic because with minor changes they could apply to any learning area (subject). The dimension 'science practical work' is peculiar to science. Here, the levels progress from teacher-centred demonstrations (level 1) to open-ended learner-centred investigations (level 4). Learners are engaged

to some degree, mostly in question and answer mode where assessment is of the pencil and paper type test only.

Capacity to support innovation: Rogan and Grayson (2003) opined that this construct is an attempt to understand and elaborate on the factors that are able to support, or hinder, the implementation of new ideas and practices in a system such as a school. It should be recognized that not all schools have the capacity to implement a given innovation to the same extent. Possible indications of the Capacity to Support construct are: physical resources, teacher factors, learner factors and the school ecology and management.

Physical resources are certainly one major factor that influences capacity. Poor resources and conditions can negatively affect both teacher and learner output. Teachers' own background, training and level of confidence is another factor that affects their commitment to teaching. Their lack of subject matter knowledge and the extent to which they will embrace innovation are also major problems of successful implementation. A third factor of this construct is the background of the learners and the kind of strengths and constraints that they might bring to the learning situation. Learners may for instance, come from a home environment where there is no place for them to do home work, and no one to support and assist them in their studies. Family and culture related commitments might cause them to be absent from school for significant period of time. Finally, for many learners in developing countries the language of instruction may not be the first or even second language of theirs. Hence, proficiency in the language of instruction is likely to be a major determinant of the learners' success. A fourth factor, according to Rogan and Grayson (2003), pertains to the general ecology and management

of the school. In developing countries especially, these two factors are different but intertwined. Schools in developing countries are more dependent on quality of leadership. Hence, general ecology and management are considered together here. If a school is in disarray and dysfunctional, it is obvious that no innovation can or will be implemented. In such cases, the first step is to restore order and discipline. However, over and beyond the obvious requirement of a functioning school, research has shown that leadership role of the principal is crucial when it comes to implementation (Berman & McLaughlin, Hall & Hord, & Fullan, as cited in Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

Rogan and Grayson (2003) intimated that the teacher and learner factors have the most direct bearing on the classroom as a unit of analysis; and physical resources such as what is in the classroom (or whether there is a classroom at all) and aspects of the school ecology such as whether classes take place, also influence what will take place at the classroom level. The relative contribution of these four factors to the construct Capacity to Support innovation is likely to be dynamic, changing over time depending both on the level of the school and stage of implementation.

Support from outside agencies. Rogan and Grayson (2003) stated that these agencies include organizations outside the school such as departments of education that interact with a school in order to facilitate innovation (the implementation of a new curriculum). In developing countries, educational innovation is often sponsored and funded by countries in the developed world. There are two forms of support to schools, according to this construct: namely, material and non-material. Material support is divided into two categories, the provision of physical resources such as buildings, books or apparatus on the

one hand, and direct support to learners on the other hand, which might include school lunch programmes and safe, quiet places to study outside of classroom time. Non-material support is most commonly provided in the form of professional development: and obvious way in which outside agencies try to bring about changes in schools. This dimension has two sub-themes. The first is the underlying purpose or focus of the professional development while the second is to do with extent and duration of the support.

Rogan and Grayson (2003) argued that implementation proposition will be most likely to succeed when there is alignment between the three constructs and the primary level of the system. They, however, lamented that the developing world is replete with examples of well-intentioned, well-designed curriculum reform programmes that have failed to take root. They blamed this situation on lack of clearly thought-out implementation strategies that consider the local context including diversity that may exist within that context, and psychological factors that influence learning and change. Much as Rogan and Grayson's theory considers the learner as an important factor in curriculum implementation; how the learner impacts the implementation process is not fully captured. My study was designed to investigate that.

Living Practical Theory

The Living Practical Theory was propounded by Harste, Leland, Schmidt, Vasques and Ociekpa (2004). It was used in a magnetic school, the Centre For Inquiry (CFI), Indiana, USA, opened in 1993 with a curriculum dedicated to holistic, inquiry-based education within a multiple ways of knowing framework. The CFI curriculum has three conceptual models that underpin it and the teacher education programme. The first posess the whole

Theory, the hypothetical statement made for the CFI was that if pre-service teachers were provided with seamless curriculum of theory and practice, both in their field experiences and their college coursework, they would be more able to articulate and implement a coherent theory of education. Thus, the model considers the successful implementation of a curriculum as depending on the teacher factor, losing sight of the learner factor which according to Rogan and Grayson (2003) forms the unit of analysis for the classroom. This study considered the learner factor and its influence on the implementation of the basic school curriculum.

The Strategic Design Theory

Burkhardt (2011) intimated that the strategic design theory is the design implications of the products, and the processes for their use, with the whole user system of aims to serve. The theory is the overall structure of the product set and how it will relate to the user-system; and applies in different forms to most of the products and processes that educational designers tackle such as curriculum specifications, assessment, teaching materials, professional development processes and materials. Among what strategic design theory focuses on are identifying a specific opportunity for improvement and selecting a set of improvement goals.

According to Burkhardt (2011), the Strategic Design Theory involves all those who affect decisions on the framework within which the users work; namely, school leadership, politicians, parents and various professions such as assessment designers, researchers, teachers and their students. Poor strategic design is the most common cause of failure, while excellence in technical design is the main source of factors that characterize outstanding products.

designed professional development designs, observation of the fidelity of their implementation and detailed observational feedback on teacher classroom behaviour. But many who have compared teachers' behaviour in their classroom, before and after specific programmes, commonly find no observable change. This can be attributed to the fact that the programmes are designed to be enjoyed by the participants but there is a mismatch between the main goals and the evaluation criteria; and this exemplifies poor strategic design.

Features of poor strategic design. According to Burkhardt (2011), poor strategic design includes the following: Unintended consequences. These are universal features of poor strategic design. Policy makers assume that their initiatives will achieve their goals without negative side effects. However, the reverse has always been the case. Faith in "expert" advice is another common feature of poor strategic design. Policy makers believe that with the gathering of the best individuals in the field, the advice they receive will enable them to achieve their policy goals. Thus, tests, standards, and professional development have traditionally been delivered in this way; but it does not work.

Burkhardt (2011) suggested that to address these problems, there should be systematic empirical development through trials before implementation known as the standard methodology of systematic development which would reveal the sources of failure to suggest improvement in the design. Strategic design principles include System awareness, Realism, Targeting, Alignment, Robust flexibility, Consensus building, Communication and marketing, Space for excellence in tactical and

technical design. We must know our masters and big challenges need big teams (Burkhardt). Even though the Strategic Design Theory acknowledges the learner as being one of those who affect decision within its users, assessing how the learner impacts teaching/learning process is not touched on. The current study focused on that.

The Learning Systems Design Model

Stevens and Levi (2005) propounded this model as an assessment tool to save grading time. The model is a useful context for thinking about assessment. It connects instructional planning, implementation and assessment for purposes of improving student learning. The model presents the following four stages in designing/redesigning instruction. Stage A is the goal or objective specification where faculty specifies what they expect students to learn in their course. In Stage B, instructional strategies for accomplishing the goals (e.g. course-assignments, examinations specifically designed to foster critical thinking) are developed. Stage C specifies how the accomplishment of the goals in Stage A will be assessed. Stage D is redesign, where faculty determines how the assessment information gathered will be used to improve instruction and student learning. Course-goals and instructional strategies are re-examined and changed, based on the assessment information gathered.

Stevens and Levi's (2005) model helps in thinking about the entire instructional enterprise, beginning from setting course goals and objectives to selecting instructional methods, to assessing student learning and accomplishment of the goals. The most outstanding feature of the model is that, during its last phase, assessment information is used to rethink the design and implementation of the course to improve student learning. The focus of

the model, therefore, is how to use assessment to facilitate learning; but how the learner will influence the learning process is missing, and that was what the current study sought to investigate.

The Curriculum Implementation Model of Carless

Wang (2006) cited the curriculum implementation model of Carless as follows: Carless developed a conceptual model of factors affecting implementation of curriculum innovation based on literature reviewed in both general and language education. He identified three categorizations of teacher-related, innovation-related, and change agent-related factors which resonated, to a large extent with Fullan and Stiegelbauer's (1991) model. Wang (2006) noted that in Carless' model, each category matched the local characteristics of change, and the external factors. The distinctive factor in Carless' model is his further elaboration of sub variables and what was considered as the appropriateness of those sub variables in China. This enabled him to investigate in depth what those factors were in each category.

According to Wang (2006), Carless expanded Fullan and Stiegelbauer's, (1991) model with regard to local characteristics by detailing teacher related factors into sub variables such as teachers' attitudes, teacher education, and teachers' understanding of change or innovation. Carless also points out that communication strategies, change strategies, and availability of sufficient resources in terms of human, material, and financial are important change-related factors.

Wang (2006) detected one flaw in Carless' model lies in the category under the confusing label of 'change-related factors' which the latter explained as individuals who initiate or facilitate change but failed to specify who these

individuals were. Wang contended that the concept 'change agent' is a controversial term in the literature as it can be interpreted from many different perspectives and so needed specification when used. Wang quoted Carless as recognizing that his own divisions or groupings of factors risked 'artificiality and over simplification' (p. 46).

Wang (2006) categorized the factors affecting implementation into two groups: external and internal factors. The External factors comprise factors that stem from outside the classroom, such as cultural, organizational, or administrative characteristics that teachers and students have little or no control over. The Internal factors relate to teachers and learners in the classroom. Wang intimates that because teachers are ultimately held responsible for the implementation, his review of literature focused on teachers only, specifically, teacher-related factors such as their beliefs, attitudes, and their understanding and ownership of curriculum innovation.

Wang (2006) stated further that, since learners are recipients of curriculum innovation, student-related factors are thus important in the change and innovation literature, but they are not touched upon in his review as they are outside the scope of his study. The current study was designed to fill that gap.

The Interactive Software Model

According to MacKinnon (n.d.), with the Interactive Software Model, students enter data into the computer as it prompts them for information. The information can consist of anything from numerical data for calculations to multiple choice questions to test content knowledge. Students are given a problem that draws on the process skills and content knowledge which will be

developed throughout the unit. The problem, called the unit challenge, is usually given to students in paper copy at the beginning of the study. Progressing through the learning cycle periodically, students reflect back (at the prompt of the computer) to the unit challenge as they construct new meaning throughout. None of the functions of the computer in this model represents a stand-alone approach. This important aspect of the model addresses the lack of computer resources in many classrooms (Dockterman, 1997). Students can enter the unit learning cycle at a variety of modes and thus, two or three computers in a classroom can be quite sufficient to direct the learning of several groups of students. The computer then acts as a director of classroom learning activities. This model features technology as a successful tool for curriculum implementation.

The introduction of computer studies into Ghanaian basic schools makes the Interactive Software model relevant to the current study. However, no mention is made of how the learner factor impacts computer work in the model; but that was the key issue investigated in the current study.

The K.12 STEM Curriculum Model

Locke (2009) proposed this model for a streamlined, cohesive, and optimized K.12 Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Curriculum with a focus on engineering. The model was proposed to replace the K-12 Engineering Education Curriculum in the United States. It could also be used as a general model for STEM, including Mathematics and Science. The model has two components: a Regular Curriculum for all students enrolled in K-12 Engineering Curriculum, "Career Pathways" and an Extra Curricular Enrichment Programme for selected groups of students.

The Regular Curriculum is designed for all students who have interest in STEM Career Pathways and could be adequately trained in basic mathematics skills. Locke (2009) intimated that the model is aimed at implementing engineering design process step-by-step, progressing from simple to complex, easy to difficult, broad to deep, and from generic to special, in an incremental, logical, systematic, and cohesive sequence. The regular curriculum is based on age appropriateness, logical, time-proven traditional pedagogy while incorporating the positive achievements of the recent decade in instructional technology, especially in terms of digital modelling and simulation technology. This curriculum is divided into a period of K-12 education made up of a) Kindergarten and Elementary Schools, b) Middle Schools, c) High Schools and d) Graduate year.

Locke (2009) explained that at the Kindergarten to Elementary schools, all students are introduced to science, engineering, and technology; and are required to build foundation in Mathematics. At the Middle School level, courses involved are made available to all students and taken by all STEM-oriented students. All students are required to consolidate their Mathematics and Science foundation and explore the basics of traditional and modern technology with more specialized and stand-alone courses. At the High School level, selective courses included should be taken by students enrolled in separate STEM Career Pathways. This could be any branches of science (biology, chemistry, physics, etc), technology (CAD, manufacturing, product design, etc) depending on changing national and local needs. During this stage, students would be branched out to different STEM "Career

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Pathways” of their choice, take sequence of pre-calculus based, well-connected, and specialized courses.

Locke (2009) has said, at Grade 12 (The High School, graduating year), the mathematics and science portions of this part of the proposed model would still be similar to what most US schools have practiced during the past decade, leading to graduation from High School and entry into college education. In the last year of K-12 education, students enrolled in stem “Career Pathways” would spend two semesters in a research or design “Capstone” project to demonstrate their ability to synthesize the knowledge content from various courses taken previously and to solve an open-ended real-world problem with reasonable complexity in a System Thinking’ mode.

Locke (2009) argued that if the proposed model were adequately implemented, then all students enrolled in K-12 STEM “Career Pathways” (all types of achievers) could be better prepared for a science or engineering major at the college level. The relevance of the implementation of the K-12 Curriculum to the current study is that, it is a national curriculum designed for all basic school learners like that of Ghana. It is also an innovation designed to replace an earlier curriculum like that of the 2007 Educational Reform in Ghana. However, here again, there is no indication of assessing how the learner will impact the implementation of both curricula. Hence, this study was proposed to investigate how the learner impacts the implementation of the curriculum at the basic school level.

The Modified Koehler and Grouws’ Model

Sarama, Clements and Henry (1998) presented a modified version of the Level 4 Model of Koeler and Grouws of 1992. According to this model,

research. The focus of this study was learners and their impact on curriculum implementation at the basic school level.

Theoretical Framework

Curricular innovations are planned for the solution of problems within the nations for whom they are planned (Taba, 1962). However, Babalola and Mkpka (as cited in Onyeachu, 2008) noted these excellent curriculum plans and policies are marred at the implementation stage. Therefore, many theories/models have over the years been propounded to promote effective curriculum implementation. Among these theories are The paradigm shift theory (Jacobs & Farrell, 2001), Living practical theory (Harste et al. 2004), Strategic design theory (Burkhardt, 2011), and Theory of curriculum implementation for developing countries (Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

Each of the four theorists stated above identifies the role of the learner in one way or the other during the implementation process. Harste et al.'s (2004) theory states that education is more effective when curriculum is built upon the questions of learners. Learners, therefore, need to be supported to take a stance in speaking their mind while at the same time questioning how societies and literacies have positioned them. The goal of education, therefore, is the creation of learners who know how to enquire. Burkhardt's (2011) theory does not concern only the role of learners but all those who affect decisions on the framework within which the users work; namely, school leadership, politicians, parents and designers, researchers, and teachers. And Jacobs and Farrell's (2001) theory emphasized on (a) learner autonomy where the role of the learner rather than that of the teacher is emphasized, (b) cooperative learning which consists of a range of concepts and techniques for enhancing

the value of student-student interaction and (c) thinking skills which highlights on how learners could apply information to other contexts, analyze the features of a given phenomenon, synthesize something new and evaluate information. Even though these theorists incorporated learner issues, they did not actually consider the learner as a factor that impacts the implementation process. I, therefore, adopt Rogan and Grayson's (2003) theory of curriculum implementation for developing countries as the theoretical framework for my study given the fact that its constructs include factors that enhance or impede curriculum implementation. It also takes into consideration the conditions in Ghana as a developing country in which the implementation is taking place. Unlike the other theories discussed, Rogan & Grayson's theory also discusses majority of the learner characteristics that were investigated in the current study.

The constructs of the theory of curriculum implementation, according to Rogan and Grayson (2003), are Profile implementation, Capacity to support innovation, and Support from outside agencies. These constructs share three important characteristics: (i) They can be measured by means of indicators, (ii) They are narrow enough to encompass a number of related factors and (iii) They are narrow enough to include one main idea. The unit of analysis for the theory of curriculum implementation is the learning environment.

Profile of Implementation. This construct is an attempt to express the extent to which the ideals of a set of curriculum proposals are being put into practice. It assumes that there is at least a vaguely defined notion of what constitutes 'good practice' and what this looks like in the classroom. It recognizes that there will be many ways of putting a curriculum into action as

there are teachers teaching it. A profile of implementation of a new curriculum recognizes that the implementation of a new curriculum is not an all or nothing proposition; hence it conceptualizes levels of implementation of the particular curriculum in question. The profile of implementation is designed to offer a 'map' of learning area, and to offer a number of possible routes that could be taken to a number of destinations. This enables curriculum planners at the school level identify their current strengths, take into account the contextual setting and capacity of their school and select a route to follow in working towards a meaningful implementation of their curriculum phased in over a number of years (Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

The dimensions of the Profile of Implementation are the nature of the classroom interaction (what the teacher does and what the pupils do), use and nature of practical work concerned, incorporation of the subject of study in society, elements, and assessment practices. The dimensions classroom interaction and 'assessment' are generic because with minor changes they could apply to any learning area (subject). The dimension 'practical work' is peculiar to the subject area in question. Here, the levels progress from teacher-centred demonstrations (level 1) to open-ended learner-centred investigations (level 4). Learners are engaged to some degree, mostly in question and answer mode where assessment is of the pencil and paper type test only. In the Ghanaian situation teachers are encouraged to implement the planned programme to the letter (Fidelity Approach), add to the planned programme (Mutual Adaptation) and in certain subjects like the creative arts, teach their own content in some instances (Curriculum Enactment) [Anderson, 2002]. Thus, the implementation perspectives proposed by Rogan and Grayson's

(2003) theory are exactly what is practiced in Ghana. Hence, the need to adopt the theory to investigate how the basic school curriculum is being implemented with respect to the impact the learner factor exerts on it.

Capacity to support innovation: Rogan and Grayson (2003) opined that this construct is an attempt to understand and elaborate on the factors that are able to support, or hinder, the implementation of new ideas and practices in a system such as a school. It should be recognized that not all schools have the capacity to implement a given innovation to the same extent. Possible indications of the Capacity to Support construct are: physical resources, teacher factors, learner factors and the school ecology and management. Physical resources are certainly one major factor that influences capacity. Poor resources and conditions can negatively affect both teacher and learner output.

Teachers' own background, training and level of confidence is another factor that affects their commitment to teaching. Their lack of subject matter knowledge and the extent to which they will embrace innovation are also major problems of successful implementation. A third factor of this construct is the background of the learners and the kind of strengths and constraints that they might bring to the learning situation. Learners may for instance, come from a home environment where there is no place for them to do home work, and no one to support and assist them in their studies. Family and culture related commitments might cause them to be absent from school for significant period of time. Finally, for many learners in developing countries the language of instruction may not be the first or even second language of theirs. Hence, proficiency in the language of instruction is likely to be a major determinant of the learners' success. A fourth factor, according to Rogan and

Grayson (2003), pertains to the general ecology and management of the school. In developing countries especially, these two factors are different but intertwined. Schools in developing countries are more dependent on quality of leadership. Hence, general ecology and management are considered together here. If a school is in disarray and dysfunctional, it is obvious that no innovation can or will be implemented. In such cases, the first step is to restore order and discipline. However, over and beyond the obvious requirement of a functioning school, research has shown that leadership role of the principal is crucial when it comes to implementation (Berman & McLaughlin, & Fullan, cited in Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

Rogan and Grayson (2003) intimate that the teacher and learner factors have the most direct bearing on the classroom as a unit of analysis; and physical resources such as what is in the classroom (or whether there is a classroom at all) and aspects of the school ecology such as whether classes take place, also influence what will take place at the classroom level. The relative contribution of these four factors to the construct Capacity to Support innovation is likely to be dynamic, changing over time depending both on the level of the school and stage of implementation. The capacity to support innovation construct is relevant to the current study as schools in Ghana differ in their capacity to implement an innovation. Physical resources in schools, teacher quality and pupil-teacher ratio, learner characteristics, leadership and managerial roles of school heads across the country are not the same; and therefore, would influence the implementation of the centralized curriculum being used in the country.

Support from outside agencies. Rogan and Grayson (2003) stated that these agencies include organizations outside the school such as departments of education that interact with a school in order to facilitate innovation (the implementation of a new curriculum). In developing countries, educational innovation is often sponsored and funded by countries in the developed world. There are two forms of support to schools, according to this construct: namely, material and nonmaterial. Material support is divided into two categories, the provision of physical resources such as buildings, books or apparatus on the one hand, and direct support to learners on the other hand, which might include school lunch programmes and safe, quiet places to study outside of classroom time. Non-material support is most commonly provided in the form of professional development: and obvious way in which outside agencies try to bring about changes in schools. This dimension has two sub-themes. The first is the underlying purpose or focus of the professional development while the second is to do with extent and duration of the support. The support from outside agencies construct is also relevant to the current study as public basic schools in Ghana are ran from resources from the community, the missions, Non Governmental Organizations, the government, and the donor agencies. As these resources are almost always inadequate for all the schools, implementation, therefore, suffers.

Rogan and Grayson (2003) argued that implementation proposition will be most likely to succeed when there is alignment between the three constructs and the primary level of the system. They, however, lament that the developing world is replete with examples of well-intentioned, well-designed curriculum reform programmes that have failed to take root. They blame this

situation on lack of clearly thought-out implementation strategies that consider the local context including diversity that may exist within that contest, and psychological factors that influence learning and change.

Much as Rogan and Grayson's (2003) theory considers the learner as an important factor in curriculum implementation among other factors that influence the implementation process, how the learner impacts the implementation process is not fully captured. as to whether the effect is positive or negative. My study was designed to investigate that. The following diagramme illustrates Rogan and Grayson's theory; and the current study is grounded in it

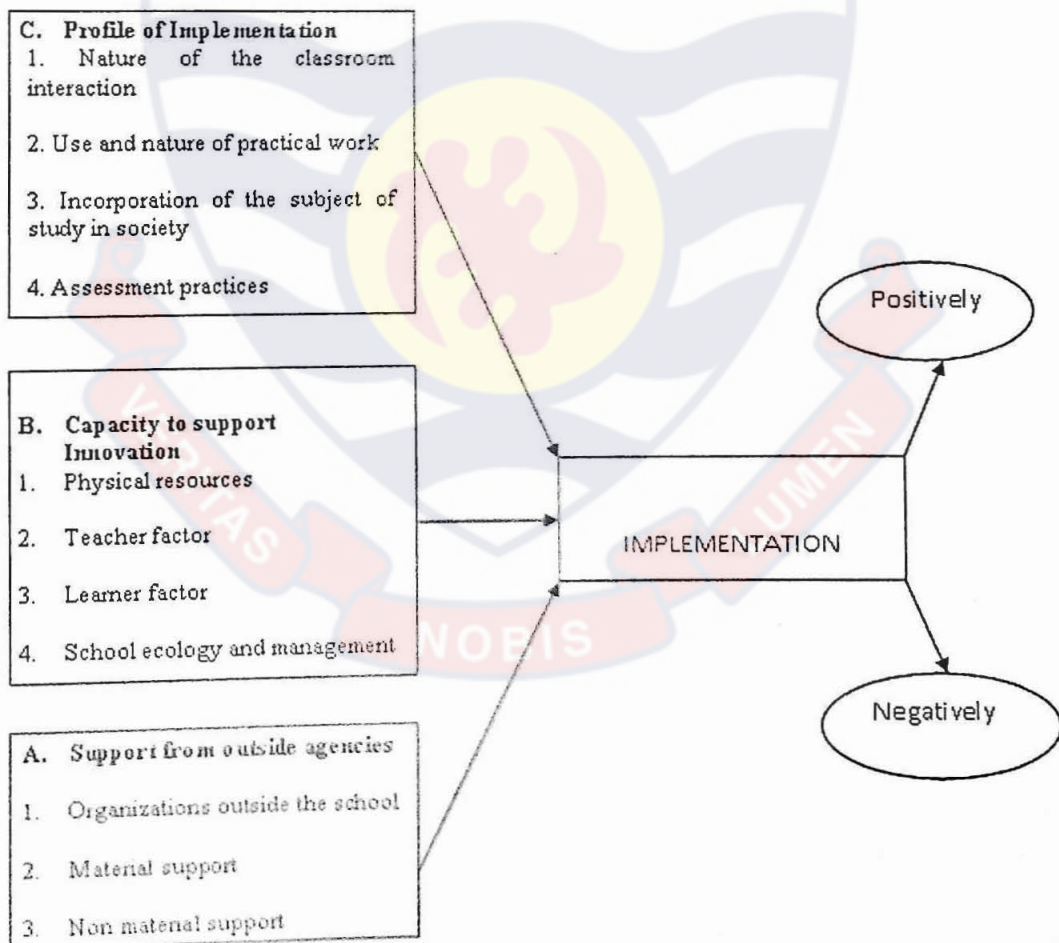


Figure 2: Construct developed from Rogan and Grayson's (2003) theory of curriculum implementation theory

Empirical Review

Factors Affecting Curriculum Implementation 1

Based on my review of factors affecting implementation in relation to the context of the current study, I have categorised the factors into five groups: Teacher factor, programme factor, Administrative factor, Resource factor and Learner factor. By teacher factor I refer to all kinds of teacher characteristics that influence curriculum implementation. Administrative factor covers all kinds of support from the institutional head, the central administration, the community as well as the monitoring system. The programme factor here refers to issues in connection with the curriculum itself as well as conditions of the implementation including testing (Wang, 2006). Resource factor covers teaching and learning materials including textbooks; and the learner factor covers learner characteristics that influence the process of implementation (The learner factor has been discussed under the conceptual frame work. See pages 37 - 49).

Teacher Factor

Hopkins, Huberman, and Mckibbin (as cited in Arthur, 1999), have observed that the psychological state of the teacher can have either positive or negative effect on the implementation process. Bishop (1995) noted that the task of curriculum innovation involves changing attitudes of people, especially, the implementers to ensure the success of the curricular change. For Gross et al. (1971), the success or failure of planned organizational change rests on the problems of overcoming members' initial resistance to change. They wrote:

In the first place, there is usually resistance to change of any sort ...In social organization, patterns of behaviour become established and are of great stability because individuals work out drive reducing ways to adopting, and fear that any change will be to their disadvantage in some way (p. 36).

Gross et al. (1971), therefore, contended that it is impossible to bring about change under such circumstances unless the new scheme can be shown to be advantageous. Corwin (as cited in Anderson, 2002) said that the extent to which an innovation affects the status of users tends to influence the degree of implementation.

Snyder et al. (1992) added that for effective implementation to take place, relevance should be added to need; and that it refers to the need as perceived by implementers. Thompson (1990) indicated that teachers may view an innovation with suspicion especially when it is perceived as a criticism of what they have been doing. Citing Ornstein and Hunkins, Arthur (1999) noted that the introduction of an innovation is frequently perceived by teachers as signalling more work and requiring extra effort by them in matters of learning new skills, managing new resources and acquiring novel techniques in inter-personal relationships without extra remuneration. Arthur observed that innovations which demand approaches and attitudes quite at variance with those held by the teachers constitute a factor for weaknesses in implementation.

Fullan (1991) opined that teachers often do not see the importance for an advocated change. Thus, the extent to which innovations address what are perceived to be priority needs, the greater the success of implementation.

Miles (as cited in Anderson, 2002) argued that the readiness to adopt an innovation is determined largely by the extent to which the innovation is seen to meet a perceived need of the teachers. Rosenblum and Louis (as cited in Arthur, 1999), in their study discovered that the degree to which there was a formal recognition within the school system of unmet needs was one of the four readiness factors associated with subsequent implementation. In another study they found out that implementation is effective when it is relatively focused or specific needs are identified.

However, McLaughlin (as cited in Anderson, 2002), was of the opinion that a fit between a new programme and school needs is important but not sufficient for implementation to occur satisfactorily. Citing this argument, Arthur (1999) wrote that policy makers think what teachers need and perceive to be their needs are not always congruent. Some teachers may dismiss new or revised curriculum guidelines on the grounds that they are already doing that. Thus, the extent to which policy makers are able to identify what are perceived to be priority needs can be an inhibitor for maximum implementation to occur. Fullan (1982) perceived this issue as a conflict between the policy makers and the implementers and suggested that it must be resolved for implementation to thrive.

Another factor identified by researchers as militating against effective implementation of an innovation is the quality of skills and knowledge of the teacher. Wang (2006) contended that teachers' beliefs and decision-making in innovation affect curriculum implementation. These beliefs, according to Kagan (1992) are assumptions about students, classrooms, and the academic materials that are unconsciously held by teachers. Fang and Pafares (as cited

in Wang, 2006) emphasized that there is a strong relationship between teachers' educational beliefs and their planning, instructional decisions, and classroom practices, and that educational beliefs of pre-service teachers play a central role in their acquisition and interpretation of knowledge and subsequent teaching behaviour. Alade (2012), citing Ike, postulated that the basic factor in effective curriculum implementation include teachers' planning and presentation, classroom discipline and management, teacher participation in extra curricular activities and resourcefulness. Fullan (1982) stated that the greater the sense of teacher efficacy, the greater the degree of implementation. Arthur (1999) explaining Fullan's assertion stated that the teacher's own past and present experience, his knowledge of the subject matter, teaching skills and his ability to conceptualise alternative procedures can influence his interpretation of the curriculum intentions. Fullan (1991) observed that some teachers relying on their personality and influenced by their former experiences are more self-actualized and have a greater efficacy which leads them to take action and persist in the effort required to bring about successful implementation. Berman and McLaughlin (1977) in a research found that there is a strong relationship between teacher sense of efficacy and positive impact of change on various measures of success in an implementation process.

As a corollary to the above point, it has been noted that good rapport is needed among teachers in order for effective implementation to be realized. Snyder et al. (1992) suggested that there should be more collegiality, trust, support, interaction and open communication between and among teachers for effective implementation of an innovation. Fullan (1982) added that "change

involves resocialization” (p. 72); and that the primary basis for social learning is interaction among teachers. A research conducted by Rosenblum and Louis (as cited by Fullan, 1982) provided direct confirmation that the quality of working relationships among teachers is strongly related to implementation of an innovation.

Wang (2006), citing White and De Lano et al, wrote that to ensure successful implementation and continuity of any curriculum innovation in the classroom, in-service training and provision of on-going support and professional development are inevitable. Brindley and Hood (1990) argued that on-going in-service training and professional development are paramount components of any projected implementation. In-service training focuses on teachers’ responsibilities and is aimed toward short-term and immediate goals, whereas professional development seeks to facilitate growth of teachers’ understanding of teaching and of themselves as teachers (Richards & Farrell, 2005). The analysis of studies conducted in the 1970s by Fullan and Pomfret cited in Wang (2006) revealed that in-service training influenced teacher performance as those who received in-service training had a higher degree of implementation than those who did not.

Teachers’ beliefs and decision-making in innovation affect curriculum implementation (Wang, 2006). These beliefs, according to Kagan (1992) are assumptions about students, classrooms, and the academic materials that are unconsciously held by teachers. Fang and Pajares (as cited in Wang, 2006) emphasized that there is a strong relationship between teachers’ educational beliefs and their planning, instructional decisions, and classroom practices, and that educational beliefs of pre-service teachers play a central role in their

acquisition and interpretation of knowledge and subsequent teaching behaviour.

Changes in teachers' attitude towards innovation have been considered crucial in promoting successful curriculum implementation in the classroom. Even though teachers' attitudes are essential in ensuring successful innovation, they are very often resistant to change (Wang, 2006). Waugh and Punch (as cited in Wang) argued that resistance to change is likely to take place if teachers' existing attitudes are incompatible with the innovation. Even though teachers' attitudes are essential in ensuring successful innovation, they are often resistant to change. However, changes in teachers' attitude towards innovation have been considered crucial in promoting successful curriculum implementation in the classroom (Wang).

Teachers having enough time to cope with all that is involved in the implementation process has been found to be a factor for successful implementation (Schagen, 2011). In the MECI survey conducted on the implementation of the New Zealand curriculum, time for planning and implementation was found to be a serious problem as the study indicated that the teachers' greatest need was for more time, the lack of which impeded their progress towards fully giving effect to the innovation (Schagen).

Lack of commitment to a curriculum material on the part of teachers tends to influence the type of transformation of the curriculum that may occur in the classroom (Arthur, 1999). Clark (1987) intimated that curriculum materials externally developed and perceived by teachers as being imposed on them can result in lack of commitment to it. He points out that this teacher behaviour is reflected in the classroom. Clark contended that it is not

uncommon to find teachers removing the innovatory parts of an imposed curriculum to conform to their existing practices rather than attempting to work within the spirit of the whole. Dare and Agbevanu (2012) affirmed that teacher commitment affects curriculum implementation.

Resource Support Factor

For successful curriculum implementation, resource support in terms of human, material and financial is indispensable (Carless as cited in Wang, 2006). Fullan and Miles (1992) intimated that additional resources for training, for substitutes, for new materials and for new space are paramount for curriculum change. For Carless, teaching materials are a crucial resource in the promotion of innovations as they help minimize the extra workload associated with change by providing vital support for untrained and inexperienced teachers who have weak subject knowledge. Wang (2006), commenting on Berman and McLaughlin's (1977) finding on the importance of resource to curriculum implementation, asserted that a significant level of human resource support is important, and that innovation attempts would not be possible without proper financial support. Wang reiterated that the problems of resource insufficiency are not likely to be solved by providing only more money but human support in terms of personnel training and administrator and peer support are believed to maximise the smooth implementation of innovations. To affirm this assertion, Eshun (2012) and Gadagbui (2007) have found that lack of materials in majority of the basic school classrooms in Ghana that would enhance the development of the pupils' reading habits hindered the building up of their field of education.

Administrator Factor

The head of an institution's role in the implementation process cannot be de-emphasized (Arthur, 1999). Confirming this assertion, Hipkins, et al. (2011) found that processes of practices including forms of leadership affect implementation. Berman and McLaughlin (1977) noted that projects which have the support of the principal are more likely to fare well. The principal's action indicates whether a change should be taken seriously and to support teachers psychologically and with resources. Other studies about the principal's role in the implementation process include those of Emrick and Peterson, Fullan, Galender, and Hord and Huling–Austin (as cited in Anderson, 2002).

Individual teachers and single schools can bring about change without the support of central administrators, but district-wide change will not happen. Fullan (1982) indicated that for change in district to be effected successfully, research findings by Emrick and Peterson (1978) showed that the support of central administrators is inevitable. This support could be in diverse ways including supervision (Mankoe, 1997). Snyder *et al* (1992) confirmed this assertion by stating that, “the greater the real district-level support, the greater the degree of implementation” (p. 417). Thus, when there is a district leadership from central office administration, it serves as a supporting factor to effective implementation. Schagen (2011) identified availability of high quality support as a factor to the implementation of the New Zealand curriculum.

Monitoring is also crucial for the achievement of maximum implementation. The success of implementation is highly dependent on the

establishment of effective means of acquiring information on how well or poorly a change is going in the classroom and school. Fullan (1991) and Louis and Miles (1990) stressed that all serious improvement programmes are not without problems. In their study they observed that unsuccessful sites used shallow coping strategies such as avoidance, denial, and people shuffling while successful sites busied themselves with deep problem solving such as redesign, creating new roles, providing additional assistance and time, etc.

As corollary to the administrative factor is community support to curriculum change. Arthur (1999) citing Corwin wrote that community support of a school programme is correlated positively with innovativeness. Arthur explained that when communities give support to planned change, implementation is successful and vice versa. There is the need to settle certain adoption decisions with the community before embarking on implementation in order to avoid the conflicts that sometimes erupt to inhibit district implementation programmes. Pratt (1980) in lending support to Corwin, wrote that when parents (which he used to represent the community) are confused about the new programme, they will resist any innovation. Smith and Keith (as cited in Anderson, 2002) noted that if initial support from the board and community is withdrawn, implementation stifles.

Programme Factor

A major problem in achieving maximum implementation of an innovation is clarity about goals and means (Fullan, 1982). Problems related to clarity have been found in virtually every study of the implementation of an innovation. These include studies conducted by Charters and Pellegrin, Gross et al. Mortimore et al. and Weatherly (as cited in Anderson, 2002). Gross et al.

mentioned teachers' lack of clarity about an innovation as one of the inhibiting factors of an implementation. Gross et al. and Charters & Pellegrin are of the view that when innovation is described in global terms, it results in ambiguity making it difficult for teachers to identify the essential features to allow effective implementation to take place.

Wang (2006) asserted that teachers' understanding of an innovation is essential in curriculum policy and implementation. Also, implementation problems occur because designers and policy makers have not considered implementation of their policies in an operational sense (Hall & Loucks, 1982). Wang (2006) perceived this as a discrepancy between policy makers' intentions and teachers' implementation. Downey and associates, Elmore and Simms (as cited in Arthur, 1999) mentioned vagueness of goals and means of implementation as factors impeding effective implementation. Fullan (1991) also believed that false clarity can inhibit the success of implementation. He asserted that false clarity occurs when teachers interpret curriculum materials in an over simplified way. For instance, an approved textbook may easily become the curriculum in the classroom; yet fail to incorporate significant features of the policy on goals that it is intended to address (Arthur, 1999). Rogan and Grayson (2003) added that details of how curriculum should be implemented at school level are often neglected by policy makers. Reliance on textbooks may easily distract attention from behaviours and educational beliefs critical to the achievement of desired outcomes. Anderson (2002), citing Hawes, identified lack of clarity about the degree of adaptation as one of the problems contributing to weakness in implementation. Hall and Loucks suggested that since research has proved that the degree of adaptation is

associated with successful implementation, it will be important for curriculum designers to clarify how much adaptation can be permitted. For instance, what essential components must be implemented, how much and in what way teachers are free to vary the use of the programme must be identified and communicated earlier in in-service programmes. Pratt (1980) reiterated that lack of clarity about curricular innovation, uncertainty about impending change combined with personal insecurity, greatly hinder effective implementation of an innovation.

Fullan (1982) has been of the view that the greater the complexity of change, the greater the degree of implementation. Berman (1980) stated that little ventured, nothing gained. And Crandall and associates (as cited in Fullan, 1982) found that those attempting major changes accomplish more. They opined that the larger the scope and personal demandingness of change, the greater the chance of success. Other researchers with similar views include Gersten, Carnine, Zuref and Gronin, Mortimore et al., Weatherly, and Wilson and Corcoran (as cited in Arthur, 1999).

However, other researchers holding contrary view have asserted that trying to achieve too much too fast can have negative results. Citing Huberman, Anderson (2002) notes that attempting too much beyond the ability of the implementer results in massive failure. Berman and McLaughlin (1977) found that ambitious projects were less successful in absolute terms of the percentage of the project goals achieved. Hawes (as cited in Arthur, 1999) mentioned the following characteristics of curriculum as inhibitors to successful implementation:

1. Heavily overloaded content.

2. The schemes may be exceptionally ambitious in language, skills and concepts for the target group.
3. The scheme may represent experiences alien to the target group.
4. The scheme may make unrealistic demands on teachers both in preparation time and materials to be collected.
5. The syllabus may pre-suppose background knowledge which teachers do not possess (p. 22).

Fullan (1982) (1991) pointed out that the success or failure of an innovation will by and large depend on the quality and practicality of the programme. This refers to the quality and availability of materials. Fullan contended that users must perceive that materials are going to meet important needs as well as be practical and usable. A study conducted by Kormos (as cited in Anderson, 2002) confirmed that lack of quality and usable classroom materials are a frequent problem in dealing with curriculum implementation. Cobbold and Ani-boi (2011), Etsey (2007), and Gadagbui (2007) stated that unavailability of required materials is an obstacle to implementation.

Factors Affecting Curriculum Implementation 2

Several educational researchers have contended that if inadequate implementation is a major reason why innovations introduced into schools do not yield their intended outcomes, then it is important that conditions that facilitate or hinder implementation be identified (Arthur, 1999). Accordingly, other different views have been presented about factors affecting implementation of educational programmes. Corwin, Fullan, Gross et al. Holly and Hopkins, and Watson (as cited in Arthur) have had the notion that there is a combination of inhibiting forces at work in an educational environment and

the more these factors are known and effectively managed, the better the innovation could be managed.

Another factor which tends to influence implementation either positively or negatively is motivation. Motivation has to do with teachers getting results and job satisfaction that can result in boosting their morale (Arthur, 1999). For Gross et al. (as cited in Anderson, 2002), lack of teachers' motivation is one of the factors militating against implementation of an innovation. Berman and McLaughlin (1977) also indicate that without motivation by professional concern instead of tangible rewards, teachers will not indulge in the extra effort required. Other researchers with the same orientation are Cohen, and Little (as cited in Anderson). They observed that a set of frustrations and disappointments confront teachers as they attempt an implementation. But Pratt (1980), begging to differ, argued that tangible rewards are also necessary to urge teachers on to implement a change. He stated that workers would adopt the appearance without the reality of change if the incentives attached to implementation are not in accord with their own priorities.

Fullan (1982) declared that more often than not, impatience arising from the desire to bring about much-needed educational reform results in hasty decisions, unrealistic time-lines, and inadequate logistical support during implementation as due dates arrive more quickly than problems can be resolved. He added that unrealistic time-lines add to the burdens of implementation as materials fail to arrive on schedule, orientation and training are neglected or carried out perfunctorily, communication is hurried and frequently overlooked or misinterpreted. Sharing the same view, Snyder et al.

(1992) argued that apart from adequate time to get the programme started, there should also be enough time to run the programme, and to collect evaluation data that will serve as feedback for implementers to ascertain how they are progressing.

Lewy (as cited in Anderson, 2002) also noted that the conditions under which the curriculum is being implemented are relevant to the success of an innovation. He contended that not all new curricula would be effective under a particular condition. This calls for an examination of both teacher variables as well as external variables such as geographical location of schools, urban, rural, size of classroom, availability of various facilities and teaching equipment and school climate. In addition to this, inadequate planning, that is, failing to take into account the nature of the system into which an innovation is being introduced also poses as one of the barriers to successful implementation (Havelock & Huberman as cited in Arthur, 1999). They pointed out that schools as agents tend to lag behind social change largely because of the difficulty of responding to the divergent demands and often because the demands may be inappropriate to the organisational milieu of the school. Arthur wrote that incompatibility of existing organisational arrangement such as rigid scheduling of school time undermines the success of implementation. Clark (1987) argued that more often than not curriculum designers assume that curriculum package designed and imposed externally would be appropriate to all classrooms. However, he pointed out that such constraints as time-table, class size, insufficient resources may render it ineffective. Thus, Clark unfortunately did not recognize the influence the

learner has on the implementation process; but that was the issue of focus in this study.

The results of previous attempts at innovation can also influence implementation either positively or negatively. Fullan (1982) wrote that the more positive the previous history with innovation, the greater the degree of implementation. Fullan (1991) noted that most attempts on educational innovations tend to fail and failure means frustrations, wasted time, feelings of incompetence and lack of support and disillusionment. The more teachers have had negative experience with previous implementation attempts the more sceptical or apathetic they will be towards the next change presented regardless of the merit of the new idea or programme. Furthermore, the extent to which previous attempts have benefited students can influence the way an innovated programme is implemented. Rosenblum and Louis (as cited in Arthur, 1999), in their study observed that the degree to which environmental changes external to the school are impinging on it to change, is one of four readiness factors related to subsequent implementation. Other researchers supporting this view are Berman and McLaughlin and Sarason (as cited in Anderson, 2002).

In sum, the success or otherwise of planned curriculum implementation is dependent on several factors including: teacher factor, resource support factor, learner factor, programme factor, conditions that facilitate or hinder implementation, motivation, the desire to effect educational change within a short time, and the result of previous attempt at innovation. Many studies have been conducted into how each of these factors affects the implementation of

an innovation except the learner factor that has received very little attention (Wang, 2006). The current study filled that gap.

Studies on Curriculum Implementation

Several studies have been conducted on the implementation of educational programmes. While some of these studies investigated entire school curricula, others focused on individual subjects with particular reference to selected grade levels. This portion of my literature review discusses examples of these studies that are available.

Yunus (2001) investigated the implementation of the science curriculum in Malaysian Primary Schools. The main concern of the study was to ascertain teachers' pedagogical content knowledge as a crucial determinant of teaching performance in implementation of the new curriculum. The research design used was case study involving seven states in Malaysia. Probability and non probability sampling techniques were employed to select 578 teachers. The instrument for data collection included questionnaire, interviews and classroom observations. The methodology used for the study was both qualitative and quantitative (Mixed Methods). The questionnaire was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) with frequency counts and cross-tab as the statistical procedure. The interviews and classroom observation were analyzed using qualitative analysis. Findings from the study were that, the teachers lacked science pedagogical content knowledge and this posed problem for implementing the curriculum. Other factors found militating against the successful implementation of the curriculum were: science instructional needs, lack of resources and support.

The relevance of the Malaysian study to the current study is that both aimed at investigating the state of a national curriculum implementation. Also, the current study sought to use both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection as was the case of the Malaysian study. However, Yunus' (2001) study focused on only the Primary Science curriculum and teachers' pedagogical context knowledge in implementing the curriculum. How the curriculum for other subjects are being implemented and the learner factor were not included. The gap to be filled, therefore, was an investigation on how the entire basic school curriculum is being implemented and the effect that the learner factor has on the implementation as the teacher and the learner interact at the implementation stage (Adentwi, 2000); and that was what the current study sought to do.

Oztürk (2003) conducted a study to investigate and assess the implementation process of the new High School biology curriculum in Turkey. The major areas in the study comprised teaching methods and techniques, instructional materials, physical structure and facilities, local and school level factors that influence the process of curriculum implementation. Random sampling technique was used to sample 600 biology teachers working in public, Anatolian and Private/Foundation schools in fifteen cities. Survey design was used for the study. Questionnaire and interview guide were the instruments used to collect data for the study. The qualitative data were coded under thematic categories and converted to frequencies for analysis, and the quantitative data collected were analysed with descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings were that (a) Teachers' beliefs and perceptions are major factors influencing the process of curriculum implementation, (b) The

student, instruction, curriculum, school and family related factors influence the learning environment and the process of curriculum implementation, and (c) Students' interest in the subject matter motivates them to learn.

Oztürk's (2003) study is relevant to the current study as it incorporated student related issues. However, the focus was only on students' interest in studying biology (a single subject), but there is the need to ascertain how the other learner characteristics affect implementation of a new curriculum from the point of view of the entire school curriculum. Also, Oztürk's study concentrated on only 15 cities. Thus, conditions in the village and town schools were not captured; and these were the gaps in that study that the current study sought to fill.

Abdul-Karim (2006) conducted a study to investigate the degree of implementation of the KBSM (Rural English Language Curriculum) introduced in the year 2003 in Malaysia. The study also set out to highlight the factors that impeded teachers' implementation of the skills specification or activities suggested. The sample comprised 75 schools who offered form four classes as the focus of the study was on the implementation of the new English Language curriculum in form four only. Stratified random sampling method was used to select 203 teachers for the study. Questionnaire and interview were the instruments used for the data collection. The questionnaire data were analysed using SPSS Windows 10.0 software to generate frequencies and percentages. The interview data were qualitatively analyzed through personal transcription by the researcher.

According to Abdul-Karim (2006), findings from the study were that:
(a) there was relatively medium degree of implementation among the teachers

as a result of their efforts and commitments in overcoming some of the problems that militated against their implementation of the new English Language curriculum in their schools, and (b) the problems that militated against the implementation of the said curriculum were: lack of information about the new curriculum, inadequate in-service training, inadequate and irrelevant teaching materials, and time constraints.

The relevance of Abdul-Karim's (2006) study to my study is that both studies investigated the implementation of an innovated curriculum. Also, both studies used the uppermost class of the basic school- Abdkul-Karim used Form 4 while the current study used JSS 3 (In the Ghanaian situation, JSS 3 is the seniormost class of the Basic school as Basic Education in Ghana takes six years primary education and three years JSS education). Finally, both studies used quantitative and qualitative method of data collection and analysis. However, Karim focused on the implementation of only English Language curriculum while the current study focused on the implementation of the entire basic school curriculum. Secondly, even though Abdkul-Karim used both quantitative and qualitative data in his study, no observation data was used. Thus, what the teachers said and wrote were taken as the final truth without engaging in any form of observation to cross-check the verity of the responses made. Denzin (2006) referred to Karim's data collection method as within-method triangulation; and lamented that this type of triangulation has narrow scope. Also, curriculum implementation involves interaction between teachers and pupils and the learning environment (Gamira, Ndamba & Mswazi, 2010), yet the factors studied in Abdul-Karim's research did not involve the learners

without whom there would be no implementation (Adentwi, 2000). The current study was designed to fill those gaps.

Yanik's (2007) study was on English language curriculum implementation in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades of Public Primary Schools in Turkey through teachers' and students' perceptions. The major areas of investigation included teachers' and students' perception of the curriculum goals and content, instructional strategies, evaluation and assessment procedures, learner attitudes and curriculum implementation problems. Questionnaire was the main instrument used to collect data from a student and teacher sample of 1,235 and 368 respectively, selected from 21 cities and 42 towns of the seven regions in Turkey through the "maximum variation sampling techniques" (p. 64). The overall research design was survey.

The results showed that (a) Majority of the curriculum goals were attained at a moderate level but there were some problems with the selection and ordering of the content. Some aspects of the instructional strategies were implemented based on language skills used in the teaching/learning situation, (b) Lack of materials and resources, classroom practices and the assessment procedures, the course-book, the learners, the classroom environment and the curriculum were problems that influenced the attainment of goals, and. (3) Students were found to show negative attitude towards the implementation of the English language curriculum.

Even though Yanik (2007) incorporated learner issues in his study, which is relevant to my study, Yanik's study was conducted on only one subject taught at the basic school, but the current study focused on the entire basic school curriculum. Also, Yanik dwelt on the teacher and pupil

perception of how the implementation of the English language curriculum was being done. But the current study does not focus on the learners' perception of the implementation process but rather how certain characteristics of the learner affect the implementation process. Thirdly, Yanik used only questionnaire to collect his data. Thus, only quantitative data was collected for the study. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) contended that using quantitative method alone for a study has some deficiency as it does not enable the researcher understand the context in which people talk. The current study sought to fill that gap.

Bulut (2007) conducted a study on curriculum reform in Turkey. The study was to analyse the newly developed elementary school mathematics curriculum by considering 5th grade students' and classroom teachers' views. The sample was made up of three elementary school teachers and forty-three students. Quantitative methodology was used as the study aimed at eliciting from the participants insights, understandings and deep information about the issue investigated. One semi-structured interview guide consisting of six open-ended and three demographic questions was designed for the teachers while the students were given one open-ended question instrument.

According to Bulut (2007), the findings on the participating teachers were that (a) Abstractness and hardness of topics (subjects in the curriculum) and impracticability of the curriculum were a problem to effective implementation, (b) A shift of active role from the teacher to the learner facilitates curriculum implementation, (c) The new curriculum made the learner more active in the teaching/learning process and that had a positive influence on the implementation process, and. (4) The newly developed

curriculum had fewer topics to cover and also enabled students to construct their own knowledge by having, doing, searching, sharing, and experiencing.

From the students' point of view, Bulut (2007) stated that (a) The loaded nature of the curriculum made them bored as it took plenty of time to cover, (b) They had difficulty understanding and learning some of the subjects, (c) Teachers were more active in classroom rather than students, and that the students lacked self-confidence since the teachers dominated in class, and (d) The activities done in the classroom were not student-centred. Even though the findings from the study from the two points of view seem to be contradictory, the study is relevant to the current study as it focused on the implementation of a basic school curriculum. Also, the fact that Bulut (2007) incorporated seeking the views of the learner on the new elementary mathematics curriculum makes it relevant to the current study. However, the purpose of Bulut's study was on analysis of the new programme and not how the learner impacts its implementation. The current study sought to take it up from that angle.

Mucavele (2008) conducted a study on the new basic education programme in Mozambique. The purpose was to trace the first year of progress made towards the implementation of the new curriculum for basic education in Mozambique and to gain clarification concerning the process with a view to formulating important recommendations for its successful implementation. The sample population comprised 124 principals, 221 teachers and 2,705 learners, totalling 3,050 participants. The participating teachers were all Grade 6 teachers of the schools. Quantitative analysis (descriptive statistical analysis and factor analyses) having as research

instrument a survey questionnaire designed to elicit the opinion of the respondents regarding the implementation of the new basic education curriculum in Mozambican schools was used for the study.

The findings showed that (a) School leadership is an essential factor in ensuring the presence and maintenance of all the necessary conditions for successful implementation of the new curriculum, (b) A friendly and supportive environment is a key factor for successful implementation as that made the students “like their schools” (p. 256). (c) Innovative classroom practices and capacity building were also found to be strong factors for successful implementation of the new curriculum, and (d) Association of students’ expectations, learning opportunities and outcomes, students’ preferences were strong factors for successful curriculum implementation (Mucavele, 2008).

The learner information studied covered student beliefs and attitudes about school and learning, student/teacher relationships, students’ expectations, their learning resources and outcomes achieved by students. Even though Mucavele’s (2008) study is relevant to the current study as certain characteristics of the learner measured were included, the learner factor studied was limited as the study did not touch on their mental preparedness, socio-economic status, their peer influence, etc. Also, the methodology was quantitative which has its own limitations. The mixed methods approach should have been used so that the deficiency of the quantitative method is filled by the qualitative method (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). These gaps were what the current study sought to fill.

Ofoha, Uchegbu, Anyikwa and Nkemdirim (2009) investigated the Nigerian Secondary School Curriculum. The broad aim of the study was to assess how the Secondary School Curriculum was being implemented with a view to identifying the root cause of the problem confronting the educational system at that level. The objectives of the study included (a) determining the appropriateness of the curriculum, (b) finding out type of teaching method used in implementing the curriculum, (c) determining the number of skill-based subjects taught in school, (d) identifying practical skills students have learnt in school with which they can create self employment, and (e) identifying products and services students have produced.

Ofoha et al. (2009) adopted the descriptive survey research design to collect data that is nationally representative, out of six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. The participants comprised 380 Junior and Senior Secondary School students and 120 teachers. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the student sample from 12 secondary schools, while the teacher-sample was drawn from variety of disciplines including humanities, sciences, commercial, technical and vocational. The method employed for the study was Mixed Methods; thus, quantitative and qualitative techniques. The instruments employed for data collection were Practical test, Observation guide, Teacher Assessment Questionnaire (TAQ), Student Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Data collected were analyzed using basic descriptive statistics including frequency counts and percentages as well as Chi-Square test.

According to Ofoha et al. (2009), findings from the study were that (a) The curriculum was appropriate in terms of goals and content in meeting the

philosophy of Nigerian Secondary Educational System but the method of implementation was weak, (b) The method of teaching was mainly theoretical (c) There was lack of infrastructural facilities needed for practical work and that facilities found in government schools were in bad state (d) There were lack of teachers for certain technical-based subjects such as computer science, art and craft, and woodwork, (e) Students' entrepreneurial capability was significantly low and that teachers and students had no products or service to show for their practical knowledge, in all school categories, (f) School location had significant effect on the mode of curriculum implementation, and (g) There was no significant difference in the mode of curriculum implementation at the different categories of schools used.

The Ofaha et al.'s (2009) study is relevant to the current study, in that, both aimed at investigating how a national curriculum was being implemented with emphasis on the entire curriculum. However, in studying the implementation of the Secondary School Curriculum to identify factors that cause problems to the implementation, no attempt was made to find out how the learner influences the implementation process; and that was the gap that the current study sought to fill. Moreover, the former study was conducted on the Senior Secondary School Curriculum and there was the need to investigate what was going on with the implementation of the Basic School Curriculum also, hence this study.

Kwon (2009) conducted a study to identify the key factors affecting the implementation of biotechnology interaction in Secondary level Technology Education (TE) classrooms and establish predictive values for the identified factors. The participants of the study were 395 respondents drawn

from technology education teachers currently practicing at the Secondary School level in five states in the Eastern Seaboard Region of the United States of America. Survey design was used; and the instrument used was The Technology Teachers' Belief To Teach Biotechnology (TTBTTB) in the form of questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, mean comparison tests, correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis were used to analyze the data. Findings from the study, according to Kwon (2009), showed that there was insufficient implementation and preparation toward teaching biotechnology, and that there was low level of implementation. Teacher motivation was found to be a strong factor affecting curriculum implementation.

The relevance of Kwon's (2009) study to the current study is that it set out to identify factors that affect curriculum implementation as the current study also focused on identifying how a particular factor affects the implementation of a given curriculum. However, Kwon (2009) studied only how the teacher factor affects the implementation and excluded the learner even though the two human factors interplay during curriculum implementation (Adentwi, 2000). This study focused on the gap Kwon left to be filled.

Erden (2010) investigated the challenges pre-school teachers encounter in implementing the curriculum in Ankara, and whether these challenges differ in relation to teacher' level of education, department they graduated from, the type of school they are working in, their teaching experience and level of in-service training. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected. The quantitative data were gathered through questionnaire from 223 Pre-School Teachers teaching in public and private Kindergartens in Ankara while the

qualitative data were gathered through interviews with a group of participants drawn from the 223 teachers. The quantitative data was analyzed using One-way repeated measure of ANOVA and multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA); and the qualitative data was subjected to content analysis.

Erden's (2010) findings were that (a) There were problems related to physical facilities such as small classroom environment, crowded classrooms and lack of resting time which makes teachers exhausted during the implementation, (b) There was also the problem of daily evaluation as that created too much work load for the teachers, (c) There was the problem of inadequate resources in the mathematics activities and lack of science centres for scientific experiments, (d) There was the problem of getting necessary permission for making field trips as there were bureaucratic obstacles as well as parents' negative attitudes toward field trips and that discouraged pre-school teachers in implementing the curriculum, (e) There was lack of parental involvement in the implementation of the curriculum as they exhibited negative attitude toward early childhood education, and (f) There was the problem of inclusion as the parents refrained from informing the teachers about their children's capabilities to enable teachers know where to begin.

Erden's (2010) study is relevant to the current study as the pre-school is part of the basic school (Eshun, 2012) in Ghana, and also that whatever happens at the pre-school level greatly determines the success or otherwise of the implementation of the entire basic school curriculum. However, Edern's study has a limited scope in terms of representativeness of the population as the researcher concentrated only on pre-school teachers in Ankara to the neglect of the other urban and rural areas. Moreover, even though the sixth

finding was child-related, the study mainly concentrated on the teacher and the other factors that affect implementation. There is, therefore, the need for a nationwide study of the problem and a more emphasis placed on the learner factor as the learner plays an outstanding role in the implementation of curriculum (Adentwi, 2000); hence this study was proposed to fill that gap.

Okobia (2011) conducted a study aimed at evaluating Social Studies teachers' perception of the essential features of the JSS Social Studies curriculum in Edo State of Nigeria. The sample was composed of 173 Social Studies teachers who were randomly selected from 150 Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) in Edo State using multi-stage stratified sampling technique. The instrument was a likert-scale questionnaire designed to find out social studies teachers' perception of the National JSS Social Studies curriculum with respect to its philosophy, aims, content, teaching strategies, instructional materials for teaching and student evaluation. The data was analyzed at 0.05 level of significance using Z-test of proportion and t-test. SPSS Version 17 was used to analyse the data.

Okobia's (2011) findings were that: (a) Majority of Social Studies teachers had positive perception of the Social Studies curriculum, and (b) Qualification of teachers had no significant influence on teachers' perception of the Social Studies curriculum.

Okobia's (2011) study is relevant to the current study as the educational level of emphasis (JSS) is part of the Basic School structure (Anderson, 2011). However, Okobia's study focused only on teacher perception of only one of the subjects taught at that level of education. Okobia

did not consider the learner in any way. The current study sought to fill the gap left by Okobia's study.

Schagen (2011) synthesized the report on the revised New Zealand Curriculum launched in November, 2007. Schools were required to give full effect to the curriculum by February, 2010. The Education Review Office and research teams commissioned by the Ministry of Education monitored the progress made towards the implementation of the innovation.

According to Schagen (2011), findings from the report were both positive and negative. The positive factors were as follows: (a) Effective leadership - committed professional leadership with capacity for change management is a crucial factor to effective implementation, (b) Availability of high quality support is a key factor, and (c) Students' knowledge of the importance of the programme, consulting them about teaching and learning also affect implementation positively. The negative factors were (a) High staff turnover threatens the lengthy process of developing and planning programme implementation, (b) New or inexperienced teachers find difficulty about what they should teach, (c) There was resistance from staff who are used to a certain way of teaching, (d) There was insufficient time on the part of teachers to plan and implement the curriculum, (e) Organizational structures and systems hindered effective implementation, and (f) Competing demands of assessment and qualifications were barriers to implementation.

The relevance of the current study to Schagen's (2011) report on the implementation of the New Zealand curriculum innovation is that both focused on the implementation of a national curriculum innovation. However, Schagen's (2011) report focused on general factors that were influencing the

implementation and identified student focus (which is only one characteristic of the learner) as a factor. The current study dwelt on how the general characteristics of the learner impact on the implementation of curriculum innovation in Ghana.

Morojele (2012) conducted a study on the implementation of the free primary education in Lesotho. The purpose of the study was to identify the challenges facing the implementation of the new programme and what could be done to enhance its effective implementation. The population was teachers, and the sample size was 12 teachers selected through the random sampling technique. Qualitative method involving three rural primary schools was used. Semi-structured interview guide and observation checklist were used as data collection tools. Respondents were to discuss both formal and informal aspects of the schools related to the implementation of the said curriculum and what they taught could be done to address some of the concerns they had. The data was analyzed qualitatively.

Findings from the study, according to Morojele (2012) were that (a) The implementation of the Free Primary Education in Lesotho unlocked the doors of access to formal learning which resulted in the increased influx of learners' enrolment in the primary schools. However, the increase was not matched by the infrastructural and human resources required in ensuring smooth implementation, (b) The commitment by the government to pay for school fees resulted in local accountability emanating from jurisdictional tensions between parents and the government's responsibility over the children's education, (c) There was also lack of infrastructure and insufficient teaching resources as a result of the increase in enrolment, and (d) There was

increase in centralization regarding the management of schools in terms of monetary supply to the schools and that resulted in frustration caused by bureaucracy. Basic resources around which the daily activities of teaching and learning pivoted were, therefore, not attained.

The significance of Morojele's (2012) study to my study is that both targeted investigating the implementation of a new national basic education curriculum. But while Morojele focused on infrastructural and monetary issues, the current study aimed at ascertaining how the learner factor influences the implementation of the new basic education curriculum in Ghana. Also, Morojele's sample was only 12 teachers from three rural schools which cannot be said to be representative of the entire teacher population of Lesotho; but the current study sought to sample over a thousand students from across the country. Also, Morojele used only qualitative method to conduct the study; but the current study employed the mixed methods approach which according to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) provides a better understanding of research problems and strengths that offset the weaknesses of either the quantitative or qualitative method. Finally, Morojele's study concentrated on rural schools; but the findings cannot be generalized across the entire nation as conditions in the three rural schools may not be the same as what pertains in the urban schools (Hamaimbo, Chakulimba, & Ng'andu, 2015). The current study filled that gap created in Morojele's study.

Awofala, Ola-Oluwa and Fatade (2012) investigated the perception of Primary and Junior Secondary mathematics teachers on the new mathematics curriculum in Nigeria. The subjects for the study numbered 200 mathematics teachers drawn from 42 public schools and 20 Junior Secondary Schools in

Calabar North Local Government Areas of Cross River State, Nigeria. The schools were randomly selected. One instrument tagged 'Perception of teachers of the basic education curriculum' was used for data collection. The data was analysed using means, standard deviation, t-test, analysis of variance and factor analysis. Alpha was set at 0.05.

The results of the study showed that teachers' perception of the new nine-year basic education mathematics curriculum was high and their perceptions were neither gender sensitive nor academic qualification specific. Teachers, however, showed a high degree of ownership of the content of the new basic education mathematics curriculum even though they lacked necessary training in the principles underpinning the curriculum.

Awofala et al.'s (2012) study is relevant to the current research in the sense that both aimed at investigating how a new national basic education curriculum was being implemented. However, as no curriculum implementation takes place without a learner, the former study should have at least incorporated an aspect about the learner, and should have covered a wider area to give it a national flavour as its title indicates. The current study aimed at investigating how the learner factor affects curriculum implementation at the basic school level with a focus on not only a single subject but the entire basic school curriculum nationwide.

Kimathy (2012) investigated the factors affecting the implementation of 8-4-4 curriculum in the Primary Schools in Egoj Division Meru District, Kenya. Three inspectors of school, 16 head teachers and 94 class teachers formed the subjects for the study. The instruments used for the study were

Questionnaire, Observation schedule and oral Interview guide. The data obtained was analyzed using percentages and frequency tables.

According to Kimathy (2012), the findings from the study were that (a) Majority of the teachers and the other curriculum implementers in the study area had adequate academic and professional qualifications required for the implementation of the 8-4-4 curriculum at Primary School level; but lacked adequate involvement in in-service programmes to prepare them for the implementation of the said curriculum. The consequence was their lack of knowledge to teach the new subjects introduced in the 8-4-4 Primary School Curriculum, (b) Majority of the primary schools studied lacked physical facilities such as workshops, home science rooms and libraries to implement the new curriculum, and (c) There was inadequate inspection of schools and supervision of teachers and lack of financial support from parents and the community.

Kimathy's (2012) study is relevant to the current study for the fact that both aimed at investigating factors affecting the implementation of a new basic school curriculum. However, Kimathy did not include the learner factor in his study; and also the study was limited to the primary school instead of the entire basic school curriculum. The current study was designed to fill those two gaps in Kimathy's study.

Salahuddin, Khan and Rahman (2013) studied the challenges of implementing English curriculum at rural primary schools of Bangladesh. The main purpose of the study was to find out the challenges of implementing English curriculum at primary level in rural schools of Bangladesh. Teachers and students formed the sample for the study. Two sets of questionnaire,

interview guide and observation checklist were the instruments used to collect data for the study. Findings from the study, according to Salahuddin et al. were that most of the rural schools students are poor in English Language due to lack of skilled teachers, proper teaching methods and materials, and physical facilities among others. The general conclusion was that the implementation of the Primary school English Curriculum was becoming unsuccessful. The relevance of the study to the current research is that both focused on the implementation of curriculum at the basic school level. However, Salahuddin et al. concentrated their study on the other factors that impact on curriculum implementation leaving out the learner in whose absence the curriculum can never be implemented. The current study aimed at filling the gap left by Salahuddin et al.

Kobia and Ndiga (2013) studied how teachers influence the implementation of Kiswahili curriculum in Igembe District in Kenya. Two research questions guided the study, and the descriptive survey design was used. The sample population comprised 24 headteachers and 24 heads of Kiswahili department who were also Kiswahili teachers. The instruments used to collect data consisted of questionnaires, document verification guide and interview schedule. The quantitative data were coded and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software, and the qualitative data were edited and analyzed qualitatively. Among the findings from the study were that (a) Teachers' characteristics like age and gender do not influence the implementation of the public secondary schools' curriculum in Kenya, and (b) Kiswahili teachers are given opportunities to attend in-service courses and this contributes to effective curriculum implementation. It was

Headteachers of 8 Basic Education Schools in one Local Government Area of the three Senatorial Districts/Zones in Benue State. The instruments used for the study were different sets of questionnaire for the three stratified groups. The analyses of the data collected were done through frequency counts and percentages. Among the findings from the study were that (a) Lack of effective synergy and proper communication between the State Ministry of Education and the State Universal Basic Education Board affected distribution and implementation of the Revised 9-Year BEC, (b) Copies of curriculum supplied to the state are for subjects that are not taught in the State, c) Most of the primary schools in the State do not have copies of the revised 9-Year BEC, d) The Federal Government College did not have even a single copy of the revised 9-Year BEC even though they had a complete set of the Teachers' Guide.

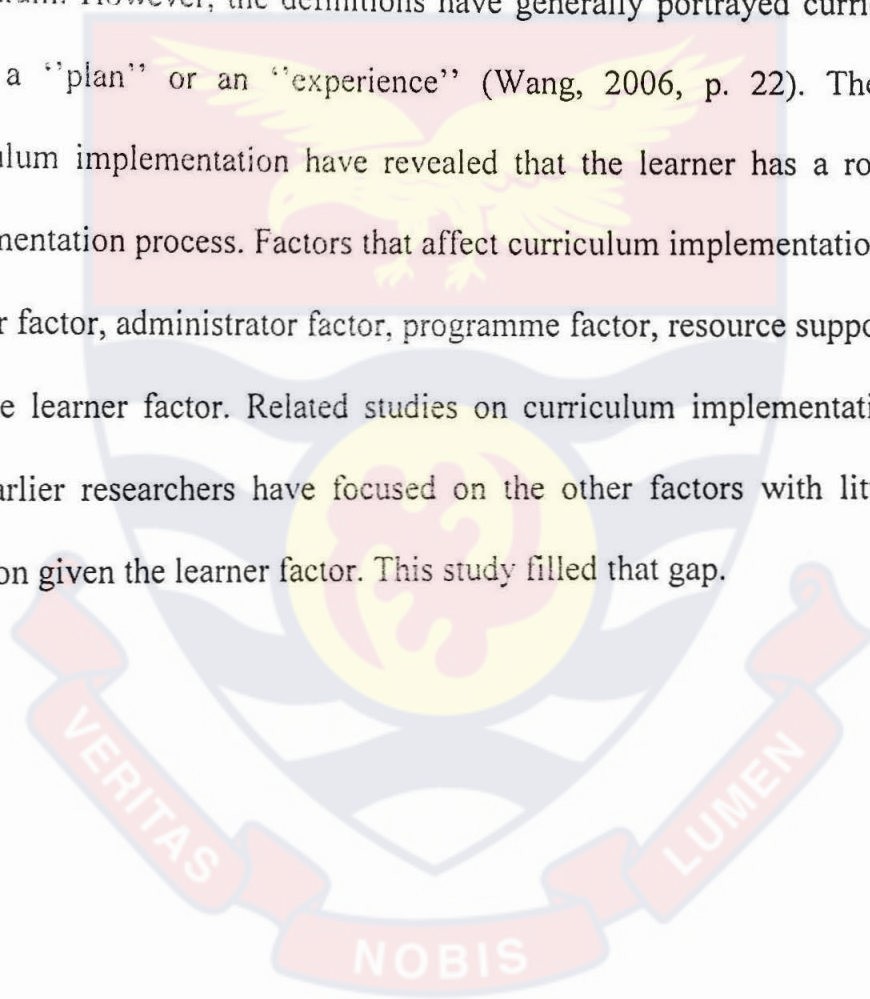
The relevance of Moyinoluwa's (2015) study to the current study is that both focused on factors affecting the implementation of a Basic Education Curriculum. Both studies also employed the descriptive survey design and the use of questionnaire as instrument for data collection. Nevertheless, Moyinoluwa's study concentrated on only one State and did not include interview or observation in the data collection, neither was any aspect of the learner characteristics investigated. The current study was designed to fill those gaps.

Okoth (2016) studied the challenges Form III English language teachers face in their implementation of the revised integrated English language curriculum in Endoret East Sub-County, Kenya. Mixed-methods descriptive design and a sample of 90 teachers were used for the study.

implementation. The current study was designed to fill these gaps in Okoth's study.

Summary of the Literature Review

The literature reviewed on the topic, the learner factor on the implementation of the basic school curriculum, has revealed that there is still no widely accepted or unanimously agreed-on definition of the concept curriculum. However, the definitions have generally portrayed curriculum as either a "plan" or an "experience" (Wang, 2006, p. 22). Theories of curriculum implementation have revealed that the learner has a role in the implementation process. Factors that affect curriculum implementation include teacher factor, administrator factor, programme factor, resource support factor, and the learner factor. Related studies on curriculum implementation show that earlier researchers have focused on the other factors with little or no attention given the learner factor. This study filled that gap.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

The main feature of research is the use of scientific method to prove a hypothesis or answer a specific question (Shuttleworth, 2008). Thus, in research, a careful, systematic and patient approach is employed to investigate a phenomenon through pre-determined procedures. The investigative procedure is informed by the type of issue to be studied and the expected outcome. There have been concerns raised about the unsatisfactory curriculum outcome at the basics education level in Ghana. Many studies have been conducted on the other factors that influence curriculum implementation with very little attention given the learner factor. This study was, therefore, conducted to ascertain how the learner factor influences the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. This chapter of the study discusses the methodology and research design which portrays the focus and approach of the study. It also looks at the population, sample and sampling procedure, and instrument(s). Furthermore, the chapter discusses the data collection procedure, and data analysis.

Research Design

For the current study, Descriptive Survey Research Design was used for the following reasons: Glasow (2005) wrote that surveys are capable of obtaining information from large sample of the population. Since this study sought to assess how the learner influences the basic school curriculum nationwide, it was feasible to get a large sample for the study, and survey is the most suitable research design for that purpose. Again, survey methods lend themselves to probability sampling from large populations. Thus, survey

research is very appealing when sample generalization is the central goal. Since it was impossible to include all the schools in the country, there was the need for doing probability sampling to select schools for the study. Survey research is often the only means available for developing a representative picture of the attitudes and characteristics of a large population.

Also, survey design provided the means of measuring all the variables identified with the learner factor without substantially increasing the time or cost. Thus, data could be collected from many people at a relatively low cost and relatively quickly. Glasow (2005) contended that, surveys can elicit information about attitudes that are otherwise difficult to measure and enhance our understanding of just about any educational issue. Rose (2015) reiterated that variables like respondents' attitudes and opinions which may be difficult to investigate by other research designs can be measured through survey, and that sample surveys that use self-complete questionnaire are very efficient at gathering large amount of information. This design, therefore, provided the means of measuring the general attitude of the learner in the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. Also, the statistical analysis supported inference to a larger population from the smaller sample.

Again, the descriptive survey research design was used for this study for the reason that it ensured adequate response rate. This is important because the precision of any claim based on a survey is strongly affected by sample size (Chambers & Licari, 2009). And the larger the sample, the more representative it will be to the population and the more the results of the study could be generalized. As many respondents were reached with the research instrument, a proportional number of them responded to the instrument which

provided adequate data for analysis. For Nikolava (2011), survey design promotes standardization as all respondents react to the same questions presented in the same order using the same response scales options.

Notwithstanding the merits of survey design, Rose (2015) argued that surveys involving questionnaire may have problem with response rates and the probability of non-response bias that crops up when the non respondents differ in some systematic ways from the respondents. Also, when respondents respond on behalf of a larger group as it was in the case of this study, lack of knowledge on the part of the respondents, lack of consensus on the issue or the sheer complexity of the topic may lead to unreliable data. Lastly, attempt at standardizing the questions before administering them to the subjects may render some of the questions inappropriate to some of the respondents and this could affect the responses made (Zein, 2012).

Research Method

In order to develop a coherent research design, Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) suggested that when making methodological decisions, a researcher needs to know the questions that could best be answered by which method or combination of methods. To investigate the influence of the learner factor on the implementation of the basic school curriculum, a multi-pronged approach commonly referred to as embedded mixed methods (Caruth, 2013) was used. Caruth explained that, in this type of mixed methods, data is collected with different types of instruments on the same day. According to Creswell & Plano Clark (2007), mixed methods research is a research method with philosophical assumptions that fluid the direction of the collection and analysis of data through the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches

in many places of the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination, provides a better understanding of research problems than using only one approach.

Mixed methods approach was used for the following reasons. Mixed methods provide strengths that offset the weakness of both quantitative and qualitative researches. Quantitative research is said to be deficient in understanding the context in which people talk and also the voices of participants are not directly heard in quantitative research. While qualitative research makes up for these weaknesses, it is seen as deficient because of the personal interpretations made by the researcher, the ensuring of less or no bias created by this method, and difficulty in generalizing findings to a large group because of limited number of subjects studied. Thus, strength of one approach makes for the weakness of the other approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Again, mixed methods approach, according to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) provides more evidence for studying a research problem than either quantitative or qualitative study alone. With mixed methods, researchers are able to use all of the tools of data collection available rather than being restricted to the type of data collection typically associated with quantitative or qualitative research. Thus, mixed methods helped in using questionnaire, interview respondents, and observe some of the characteristics investigated. Mixed methods research also, helped in answering questions that could not be answered by quantitative or qualitative approach alone.

Also, mixed methods provided a bridge across the sometimes adversarial divide between quantitative and qualitative designs. This study falls under behavioural and social sciences and only quantitative or qualitative research would be too narrow an approach and so mixed methods approach offered opportunity for collaboration (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Lastly, mixed methods research encourages the use of multiple worldviews, or paradigms (i.e. beliefs and values) rather than the typical association of certain paradigms with quantitative and qualitative researchers. Mixed methods study is “practical” in the sense that the researcher is free to use all methods possible to address a research problem; and also that individuals tend to solve problems using both numbers and words, combine inductive and deductive thinking and employ skills in observing people as well as recording behaviour (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

But using mixed methods can be difficult for a single researcher when quantitative and qualitative designs are used concurrently as each of the two methods has its own demand on the researcher. Using mixed methods can be more time consuming and expensive when the two methods are used concurrently; that is, when the researcher has to administer questionnaire, conduct interviews and observe subjects, events and situations at the same time. Mixed methods also require the researcher(s) to have in-depth knowledge of multiple methods, utilize them knowledgeably, be able to defend the use of multiple methods, and utilize them professionally. The researcher lacking any of these competences would end up in a mess when using mixed methods (Caruth, 2013).

Population

The population for this study comprised all Basic 9 (JHS 3) School Pupils in the Central, Ashanti, and Northern regions of Ghana who were in school at the time of the study. There were 2,387 Junior High Schools with 95,838 JHS 3 pupils in the three regions sampled for the study. This population Individuals, objects, events, etc. who/which have certain characteristics and are of interest to a researcher in conducting a study for generalization to be made. Johnson & Christensen (2012) asserted that accessible population is the research participants who are available for participation in a given research. According to Agyedu, Donkor & Obeng (2011), population in research is the complete set of individuals (subjects), objects or events with common observable features for which a researcher is interested in studying. It is also regarded as the larger group from which individuals are selected to participate in a study. Borg & Borg (as cited in Philips, 2009) defined research population as "all people, objects or events found in a particular group a researcher is planning to generalize" (p. 83). For Neuman (2006), "research population is an abstract idea of a large group of many cases from which a researcher draws a sample and to which results from a sample are generalized" (p. 224). From these definitions, a research population could be seen as the sum of all the But was made up of 51,049 boys and 44,789 girls. Their ages ranged between 15 and 20 years.

Pupils in these schools had the same characteristics of those in the other regions in terms of the number of years spent at the basic school level before reaching the final year. They used the same textbooks and other study materials approved by the Ministry of Education through the Ghana Education

Service. Ghana practices the centralized education system and so posting of trained teachers to the schools is centrally done to ensure equity in the distribution of qualified teachers to the 10 regions of Ghana. All JHS 3 pupils in the country spent the same number of weeks in each academic year. However, certain adverse cultural and socio-economic conditions in the areas where some of these selected schools were situated negatively affected academic work in those schools.

Central region was selected for the reason that it is in the middle of the regions that make up the southern part of the country and has the characteristics of the remaining three regions of southern Ghana; namely, Western, Greater Accra, and Volta in terms of their nearness to the sea with beautiful beaches which sometimes attract pupils to stay away from school (Asemanyi & Wunko, 2007). Socio-economic activities like fishing, fish processing and selling along the Ghanaian coastal strip, agriculture in the inland areas, which also affected pupils' schooling, are more prevalent in the Central region. Also, Central region was chosen for the reason that formal education began in that region in the castle school (Eyia, 2004). It has two Universities (University of Cape Coast and the University of Education, Winneba), Komenda, Our Lady of Apostles (OLA) Cape Coast, and Assin Fosu Colleges of Education all of which influence primary education in the region and in Ghana as a whole.

Ashanti region was selected to represent the regions in the middle belt of Ghana for the reason that it occupies the middle position of the geographical layout of the three regions that form the middle belt of Ghana; namely, Brong Ahafo, Ashanti and Eastern. Ashanti region has the socio-

economic, cultural and educational characteristics of the other two regions and so its position as the middle of these regions made it naturally more feasible to select it to represent the regions of the middle belt in this study.

Northern region was selected to represent the regions of the northern belt of Ghana. These were: Upper West region, Upper East region, and Northern region. These three regions had the same dry climatic and predominantly grassland vegetation conditions as a result of their proximity to the Sahel and the Sahara. Cultural and socio-economic factors that affected schooling were the same in these regions of the northern belt. Of the three regions, Northern region was selected as it covers the largest geographical area than the others and, therefore, would allow for a larger number of schools to be sampled for the study.

Sample

In research work, sometimes the entire population will be sufficiently small, and the researcher can include the entire population in the study. This is called a census study as data is gathered on every member of the population (Bradford, 2009). But usually, the population is too large for the researcher to attempt to survey all of its members; and in such cases a small, but carefully chosen sample is used to represent the population. The sample reflects the characteristics of the population from which it is drawn.

Crossman (2013) perceived a sample as a subset of the population being studied. It represents the larger population and is used to draw inferences about that population. Sample is a research terminology widely used in the social sciences to gather information about a population without having to measure the entire population. Neuman (2006) reiterated that a

sample is a smaller set of cases a researcher selects from a larger pool and generalizes to the population. For Agyedu et al. (2011), a sample consists of individuals, objects or events that form part of the population. Thus, a sample is a collection of a part or subset of the objects or individuals of a given population which is selected for the purpose of representing the population of interest.

The sample for this research comprised all basic 9 pupils of the selected schools for the reason that they had gone through all the levels of the basic school and had the needed knowledge and experiences to respond to the instruments as expected. The Raosoft sample size calculator (2004) with 5% Margin error, 95% Confidence level, 50% Response distribution used to calculate the sample size on the population of 95,838 gave 383. However, the sample size used for this study was 1,079 basic school pupils. Fraenkel & Wallen (2009) have recommended that a sample size of 100 could be suitable for a descriptive study.

Sampling Procedure

There are many types of sampling procedures used in educational research. Examples include random sampling, stratified sampling, convenience sampling, and purposive/judgemental sampling (Maheshwari, 2011). The sampling procedure used for this study included purposive/judgemental sampling and random sampling techniques. Purposive/Judgemental sampling is the technique where the selection of the sample is based on the researcher's knowledge of the population and the purpose of the study (Crossman, 2013). Monsrur (2012) added that purposive or judgemental sampling technique is the process whereby the researcher selects a sample

based on experience or knowledge of the group to be sampled. This technique was used to select three regions out of the ten regions in Ghana as the numbers of their locations are well known to me. Thus, one region was selected from the southern part of the country (Central region), one from the middle belt (Ashanti region), and one from the northern part of the country (Northern region). There were 17 districts/municipalities in the Central region, 38 in Ashanti region and 20 in the Northern region, making a total of 75 districts/municipalities.

Thirty per cent (30%) of the 75 districts/municipalities of the three regions were sampled. This gave 23 districts/municipalities. According to STAT 482 (2017), to select a subset from a larger population, 30% is recommended. Random sampling was used to proportionally select the districts/municipalities with Central region having 5, Ashanti region 12 and Northern region 6. One school was randomly selected (through the lottery method) in each district/municipality, giving a total of 23 schools. Crossman (2013) stated that simple random sampling technique is the basic sampling technique assumed in statistical methods and computations. The simple random sampling technique is where sample units are drawn directly from the population by some procedure. Mostly, a random sample table or a mathematical random process such as lottery method designed to meet the essential criterion of randomness, thereby, giving all elements in the population an equal chance of being selected from the population is used (Crossman, 2013 & Monsrur, 2012).

In each school, all JHS 3 pupils available were used for the study. Thus, census study (Berends, 2006) was used at the school level sampling.

The sample comprised school boys and girls, approximately between the ages of 15 and 20 years. The unit of analysis used for the study was the school pupils.

Table 1- *The Sampled Regions with the Districts/Municipalities used in this Study*

CENTRAL REGION	ASHANTI REGION	NORTHERN REGION
Abura – Asebu Kwaman Kese District	Kwabre District	Bunkpurugu Yunyoo District
Agona West Municipality	Ahafo Ano North District	East Gonja District
Assin North Municipality	Ashanti Akim North Municipality	Karaga District
Cape Coast Metropolis	Atwima Mponua District	Nanumba South District
Gomoa West District	Bosome Freho District	Sawla -Tuna – Kaliba District
	Ejura Sekyeredumase District	West Mamprusi District
	Nhyiaeso Sub- Metro	
	Oforikrom Sub – Metro	
	Old Tafo District	
	Amansie Central District	
	Offinso Municipality	
	Sekyere Central District	

Source: (Wikipedia, n. d.)

Instrument(s)

The data collection methods employed were both quantitative and qualitative in nature. Questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, as well as structured observation were used for the data collection. Thus, methodological triangulation was used (Denzin, 2006). Denzin has intimated that in this triangulation, a phenomenon is studied using several different data collection instruments like the questionnaire, interview or observation guide. A questionnaire is a data collection tool in which written questions are presented that are to be administered by mail with clear instructions on how to answer the questions and asking for mailed responses. The researcher may also gather

all or part of the respondents at one place at one time and give oral or written instructions and let the respondents fill out the questionnaires or hand-deliver the questionnaires to the respondents and collect them later (Chaleunvong, 2009). For Agyedu et al. (2011), a questionnaire simply means a written instrument that contains a series of questions or statements called items that attempt to collect information on a particular topic.

As Wang (2006) has lamented, studies on the learner as the main factor and how it affects curriculum implementation is rare in the literature; and so, available sample questionnaire are on the other factors that affect the implementation process. Therefore, self constructed questionnaire, interview guide and observation guide based on the existing instruments in the literature by TIMSS Advanced Context Questionnaires (2015), SCIQ. Science Curriculum Implementation Questionnaire, and guidelines for constructing survey design instruments outlined by Brace (2004), Kalt (2009), Lee (2005), Menorca (2006) and Peterson (2000) were used to develop a 27 item questionnaire for this study (This was later reduced to 25 after some experts have validated it). Some of the questionnaire items on learner intelligence, the learning style and socio-economic variables were borrowed from Kosmiclnctests (n.d.), DeCapua & Wintergerst (2005), Hanes (2008), Ojimba (2013) and Pettigrew (2009). The objectives of the study informed the content of the instrument (Arsham, 2015). The objectives were derived from the learner characteristics which were the variables measured (Korb, 2012) as spelt out by the literature. The items were grouped by content in relation to the variables measured. Thus, the items were placed with the same format together (Arsham). The questionnaire was developed to measure the

respondents' knowledge and opinion in relation to how the learner factor influences the implementation of the curriculum at the basic school level. The item format was developed by a) deciding the information required for answering my research questions, b) defining the target population, and 3) deciding on the questions (Agriculture and consumer protection, n.d.).

The questionnaire items were closed ended questions. Agriculture and consumer protection (n.d.) has argued that closed ended items provide respondents with an easy method of indicating their answer, prompt the respondents to rely less on memory in answering the questions, and helps classify the responses easily to make analyses straightforward. However, closed ended questionnaire does not permit the respondents the opportunity to give different responses to the suggested ones. Also, with closed ended questionnaire, respondents choose an answer which would not portray the reality on the ground if their choice responses are not included in the researcher's responses.

The questionnaire consisted of nine sections. Section A covered the demographic information of the respondents. Section B has objective type questions followed by a 3-point likert scale on learner intelligence. Section C has 3-point likert scale on the learner's physical condition. Section D has a 5-point likert scale on learner's preference. Section E has four objective type items followed by a dichotomous scale on learner's time management. Section F contains 3-point likert scale and objective type questions on peer influence of the learner. Section G has 5-point likert scale questions on the cultural practices of the learner. Section H consists of 5-point likert scale questions on the learner's socio-economic status, and Section I comprises 3-point likert

scale questions followed by a dichotomous scale and an objective type question on the gender issue of the learner (See Appendix A). There were in all 24 items on the questionnaire with the following components presented in tabular form:

Table 2- *Components of the Questionnaire*

QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM	LEARNER CHARACTERISTICS MEASURED
Section A (Questions 1-3)	Learner's demographics
Section B (Questions 4 – 10)	Learner's intelligence
Section C (Question 11)	Learner's physical condition
Section D (Question 12)	Learner preference
Section E (Questions 13-16)	Learner's time management
Section F (Questions 17 – 19)	Learner's peer influence
Section G (Question 20)	Learner's cultural practices
Section H (Question 21)	Learner's socio-economic status
Section I (Questions 22-24)	Learner's gender issues

In Table 2, Learner's intelligence is in line with research question 1, Learner's physical condition is in line with research question 2, Learner's preference is in line with research question 3, Learner's time management is in line with research question 4, Learner's peer influence is in line with research question 5, Learner's cultural practices is in line with research question 6, Learner's socio-economic status is in line with research question 7, and Learner's gender issues is in line with research question 8.

Questionnaire was used for this study because it ensured uniformity as each respondent received the same set of questions phrased in exactly the same way. This made the data collected more comparable than information obtained through the interview. Questionnaire was also used because it ensured confidentiality of responses, helped reach many respondents at a time and thus, saved time and prevented the bias of the interviewer (Chaleunvong, 2009 & Kothari, 2004). Again, the questionnaire was used as it ensured the

standardization of the data elicited from the respondents. The questionnaire also helped in the quantitative analysis of the data obtained. Despite these merits, using the questionnaire alone does not give the opportunity to probe or prompt respondents or their answers, and there is a greater risk of missing data and a lower response rate (Bryman, 2008).

Since the research method used for this study was both quantitative and qualitative, interview and observation were used to collect the qualitative data. Cohen et al. (2000) said that two key methods of collecting data in qualitative research are interview and observation. An interview is a data-collection technique that involves oral questioning of respondents, either individually or as a group. An interview may also be explained as a direct face-to-face attempt to obtain reliable and valid measures in the form of verbal responses from one or more respondents (Chaleunvong, 2009). Answers to the questions posed during interview are obtained by writing them down (either during the interview itself or immediately after the interview) or by tape-recording the responses, or by a combination of both. There are structured and semi-structured interviews. ESDS Qualidata (2011) stated that structured interview involves asking each interviewee the same set of standardized questions. The order of questioning is fixed and wording is usually specific. There is little scope for probing or deviating from the specified agenda. The questions and responses given tend to fit into predetermined categories, confirming or disconfirming the hypothesis the interviewer is pursuing.

Arthur and Nazroo (as cited in ESDS Qualidata, 2011) said that structured interview is used in studies where the interviewer needs to make comparisons between responses from different interviewees. Also, structured

interviews are used where the testing process in a particular study is continuous and lasts for a long time. In such instance, a structured interview is used to ensure consistency of the questions asked and also to control the responses given. Again, structured interview is used as a powerful form of formative assessment. That is, it can be used to explore how a respondent feels about a particular topic before using a second method (such as observation or in-depth interviewing) to gather a greater depth of information. Sociological research skills (n.d) said structured interview is also used when the researcher wants to gather quantitative data as that will gather standardized data from the respondents. Structured interview is also used when the researcher aims at contacting large numbers of people quickly, easily and efficiently. Furthermore, when the research aims at gathering data that can relatively be created, coded and interpreted quickly and easily, then structured interview is used. Finally, structured interview is used when the researcher does not want to worry about biases. This is possible as the responses being given are standardized by the nature of the questions.

Semi-Structured Interview: Sociological Research Skills (n.d.) described semi-structured interview as a technique used to collect data by setting up a situation (the interview) that allows respondents the time and the scope to talk about their opinions on a particular subject. The focus of the interview is decided by the researcher and there may be areas the researcher is interested in exploring. The objective is to understand the respondents' point of view rather than make generalizations about behaviour. Semi-structured interview is used when the researcher wants to collect data about things that cannot be easily observed (feelings and emotions). This becomes possible as

the interviewee is able to talk about the object of discussion in detail and depth and the meanings behind actions are revealed. Semi-structured interview is also used when the researcher intends asking complex questions and issues for discussion/classification. This enables the interviewer probe areas suggested by the respondents' answers by picking-up information that had either not occurred to the interviewer or of which the interviewer had no prior knowledge.

According to Bernard (1988), semi-structured interview is best used when the researcher won't get more than one chance to interview someone and when the interviewer will be sending several interviewers out into the field to collect data, as the semi-structured interview guide provides a clear set of instructions for interviewers and can provide reliable comparable qualitative data. Finally, Santiago (2009) intimated that semi-structured interview is most used in qualitative studies and when one is investigating a topic that is very personal to the participants.

Semi-structured interview was another instrument used to collect data from the subjects of this study. The interview guide comprised six items on the general preparedness of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana (See Appendix B). Thus, it focused on pupils' attitude towards school work. This helped to clarify questions and thereby assisted the interviewees understand issues raised for discussion during the interview and do away with ambiguity in questions which in most cases lead to provision of irrelevant answers to the topic. The semi-structured interview also helped the learners respond to the questions in any manner they deemed fit unlike with

the questionnaire where in most instances responses were restricted thereby preventing the respondents from exercising free expression (Santiago, 2009).

Lankshear and Knobel (2004) asserted that semi-structured interviews enable researchers to dig deep into the phenomenon being studied, implying that with semi-structured interview, it provided the opportunity of probing further to know all that the basic school pupils know about their contribution to the implementation of their curriculum. Chaleunvong (2009) posited that semi-structured interview would help to obtain personal information about the learners' attitudes, perceptions and beliefs – all of which helped in the provision of quality primary data.

Interviews, according to Opie (2004) are used as a data collection tool to compliment questionnaire as the open-ended questions in the questionnaire cannot effectively achieve the details as compared to what could be achieved through interviews. The reason is that some respondents find it more convenient expressing themselves verbally than writing.

Observation was also used to collect part of the data for this study. The observation guide contained issues of punctuality, response to the bell and participation in lesson (See Appendix C). Observation, according to Randolph (2007) is when a researcher observes the phenomenon under study and records what is seen for analysis. Observation may be direct or indirect where the researcher directly observes the behaviour of participants by using an observation schedule or checklist as a guide. Observation was used in this study to reinforce the responses from the questionnaire and the interview; for, as pointed out by Kothari (2004), the accurate use of observation as method of data collection eliminates subjective biases. This is because, the data obtained

through observation relates to current phenomenon and so it is not complicated by past behaviour or future intentions or attitudes. To enable me observe all potentially relevant phenomenon carefully and take notes for obtaining primary data, qualitative observation was used (Johnson & Christensen, 2012).

Pre-testing of instruments

Pre-testing is a small scale trial employing series of activities designed purposely to evaluate the capacity of a survey instrument to gather the desired data, the capabilities of the selected mode of data collection, and the overall adequacy of the field procedures. Again, pre-testing 'refers to pre-testing procedures that employ all the procedures and materials involved in data collection (regardless of how small of a scale) before the actual data collection begins' (Casper & Peytcheva, 2011, p. 1). Pilot studies, as pre-testing is commonly called, are also referred to as 'dress rehearsals', or 'field tests' in the survey literature (Pratt, 1980, p. 416). For Schade (2015), pilot testing refers to a small-scale trial run of a particular study and is important for larger scale studies so that statistical significant results can be calculated. These definitions point out to the fact that pre-testing of research instrument is done to ascertain the outcome of the instrument when it is used to gather the main data for the study.

Field tests are evaluation efforts undertaken to draw upon the specialized knowledge and skills of individuals and groups of individuals to optimize the design of a given research instrument to enable the researcher(s) gather high-quality data about a particular domain of interest. Also, field tests are conducted to identify principal sources of measurement error in a given

research instrument and to inform subsequent design or redesign decisions or reduce those sources of error (Esposito, 2009)

The instruments for this study were pre-tested in two different schools outside the target population for the study. The schools used were Aiyinase Anglican JHS and Awulae Aghefi Kwame JHS, Axim in the Western region. I personally visited the schools with an introductory letter from my Head of Department for permission to administer the instruments. All Junior High School 3 pupils in the pilot testing schools were made to respond to the instruments. After responding to the questionnaire, the school prefects were interviewed. Observation was made of the general preparedness of the pupils towards teaching and learning in the pilot schools. The result of the pilot-testing revealed that some of the questionnaire items needed to be modified to ease understanding of the respondents. A few words and some expressions were replaced and some questionnaire items, especially, those on learner intelligence were completely deleted.

Validity and Reliability

In every research work, it is paramount to ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument used to collect the data. And in order for the results from a study to be considered valid, the measuring procedure must first of all be reliable. According to Golafshani (2003), validity and reliability are very important in a triangulated study where multiple methods of data collection and data analysis are employed to investigate a phenomenon.

Joppe (2000), defined validity as “when a research measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are” (p.1). Thus, validity is portrayed here as the outcome of the research reflecting

exactly what the study set out to investigate. Similarly, Key (1995), and Lankshear and Knobel (2004) reiterated that validity refers to the degree to which a test or other measuring device truly measures what it is purported to measure. For Frankel and Wallen (2009), validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of the specific reference made based on the data obtained and that validation is the process of gathering evidence to support such inference. Validity, therefore, means determining the accuracy of a data collection instrument in order for the results to be accurately applied and interpreted (Friberg & McNamara, 2010).

In order to ensure face validity, the extent to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure and content validity and format of the instrument, the self-developed instruments were subjected to expert validation (Lafaille & Wildeboer, 1995) by professors and senior researchers in the University of Cape Coast and the University of Education, Winneba. After their constructive criticisms the instruments were revised based on the suggestions made. Again, opinion of experts in the field was sought about the relevance of the items in the various instruments to ensure their content validity. The result of their indications was analyzed to establish the percentage representation using the Content Validity Index (CVI) formula given by Polit & Beck (2006): $CVI = K \left(\frac{\text{Number of valid items declared by judges}}{\text{total number of items}} \right)$. The questionnaire items were rated by three experts. The number of items rated relevant by all the experts combined was $26+25+25=76$. This was divided by the total number of ratings ($27+27+27= 81$). Thus, $76 \div 81$. This gave a Content Validity Index of 0.94, implying that the instruments would elicit the right data for the study.

On the other hand, “reliability is explained as the extent to which results are consistent overtime and are accurate representation of the total population under study” (Joppe, 2000, p. 1). Joppe explained that if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable.

For Wang (2006), reliability provides information on whether the instrument is collecting data in a consistent way. Lankshear and Knobel (2004) have seen reliability as the stability of a data collection tool in spite of the number of times the data is administered to the same respondents. The common element in these definitions is that consistency in results provided by the same instrument administered at different times makes the data to be reliable.

Kirk and Miller (as cited in Golafshani, 2003) identified three types of reliability referred to in quantitative research, which relate to (1) the degree to which a measurement, given repeatedly, remains the same, (2) the stability of measurement over time, and (3) the similarity of measurement within a given time period.

To determine the reliability of my research instruments, therefore, the questionnaire, interview and observation guides were pre-tested at different times in two of the basic schools in the southern sector that were not sampled for the study. The choice of the schools in the southern sector for the pre-test was as a result of proximity in order to save time in collecting data for the pilot and field testing. The necessity of the pre-test was that, it helped establish the validity and reliability of the instruments and also improved the question format.

In analyzing the reliability of the data from the pre-test, the data were coded and scored before entering them into the computer. The Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) Version 20 was used to calculate the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient.

There are several ways to measure a reliability of an instrument. For the present study, the researcher assessed the students questionnaire instrument's test-retest reliability, and its internal consistency using Correlation and Cronbach's α . Test-retest reliability is an estimate of reliability that involves comparing two administrations of the same test for the same subjects (Mitchell, 1979). Because the same test is administered twice to the same participants, the true score should be relatively constant. Therefore, any variance must be due to measurement error, and any systematic variance must be due to systematic error. Test-retest is the simplest method for measuring reliability, but is vulnerable to reactivity (e.g., reactions to taking the test such as changes to test-taking strategy, fatigue, etc.) and memory effects (e.g., if the subjects remember their responses from the previous administration). Thus, a second measure, Cronbach's α , is also used to represent the test's internal consistency and unidimensionality.

There are two necessary conditions in test-retest reliability. The first is that the true score does not change between administrations and the second one refers to the time period being long enough to prevent learning, carry over effects or recall (Allen & Yen, 2001). To meet the time period condition, the test and retest administration were separated with a two weeks time interval. Test-retest reliability was obtained by allowing participants to take and retake the "Learner Intelligence Test", and comparing the retest performance to the

original test performance. Both scores came from the same individuals, so barring, practice effects and strategy changes should be identical. And, because influences on measurement error are assumed to be mostly random between first and second administrations (i.e., with a null mean influence), any remaining variance should be the result of systematic error. Correlation coefficient was calculated on both tests ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 1.26$) and retest ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 1.38$) results ($r = .78$, $n = 52$, $p < .001$). The stronger the correlation between first test and second test the higher the test-retest reliability.

However, because the two scores are necessarily confounded by time, test-retest reliability is subject to fatigue and practice effects. Therefore, an additional method of measuring reliability independent of time should be used to compliment test-retest reliability. Cronbach's α was measured for the first administration of the "Learner Intelligence Test" only. Because it is only necessary to administer the test once to allow computation of α , this method avoids the theoretical problems associated with test-retest reliability as the subjects have no prior experience to react to or remember (Murphy & Davidshofer, 2005). The reliability measure for the "Learner Intelligence Test" was $\alpha = 0.798$.

A reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha statistics was performed to determine the internal consistency of the items on the other sub-scale of the student questionnaire instrument. Reliability of the questionnaires was determined through the use of the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 20. The reliability measurements for each section of the piloted instrument were calculated. For "Learner Preference" (Section D) $\alpha = 0.822$, "Learner's Time Management" (Section E) had an $\alpha = 0.714$, "Physical

Condition of the Learner” (Section C) $\alpha = 0.869$, “Peer Influence on the Learner” (Section F) $\alpha = 0.713$, and that of “Gender Issues of the Learner” (Section I) $\alpha = 0.726$. Again, “Cultural Practices of the Learner” (Section G) had α value of 0.950 and finally, “Socio-economic Status of the Learner” (Section H) $\alpha = .847$. The total scale/instrument’s internal constituency was also assessed. The result shows that the students questionnaire instrument’s $\alpha = 0.821$. According to Creswell (2007) Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient values of 0.70 and above are considered reliable. The reliability measurements for the questionnaire indicate that the respondents consistently responded to most of the items in the questionnaire for the final draft. (See Appendix A).

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Instruments used

Questionnaire: Chaleunvong (2009) wrote that a written questionnaire is a data collection tool in which written questions are presented that are to be answered by the respondents in written form. Questionnaire was used in this study for the following reasons: (a) Economical. With questionnaire, expense and time involved in training interviewers and sending them to interview are reduced. (b) Uniformity of questions. Each respondent receives the same set of questions phrased in exactly the same way. This makes questionnaire yield data more comparable than information obtained through an interview. (c) Standardization. If the questions are highly structured and the conditions under which they are answered are controlled, then the questionnaire could become standardized and so would the data be. Cook (2011) added that questionnaire allows comparisons to be made with other sets of data and provides easy replication of the research. However, Cook cautions that when respondents do

not understand the questions, they give different answers than those required by the researcher. Also, with questionnaire as data collection instrument, the researcher cannot follow up with probing questions to gain richer data. Again, as questionnaire cannot be explained to participants, it could be confusing to respond to when participants do not understand the content. Finally, when closed questions are used, they limit the response rate of the participants' view and opinions.

According to Cohen et al (2000), Interviews are used to collect information about knowledge of the people as well as their opinion; for example likes or dislikes of what the respondents are thinking about, their attitudes and motivations. There are open-ended interviews, closed or structured interview and focused group interview. Among the merits of interviews are that participants are able to share a lot of information as the researcher gets the chance to ask the questions in person. Interviews also provide the means of asking follow-up questions to get richer information concerning what the interviewees are saying. Interview also provides the means for the interviewees and the interviewer to directly react on what the other says or does (Opdenakker, 2006). Rashid and Bappi (2013) have added that any mistake and misunderstanding can be corrected easily in an interview as the interviewer and the interviewee are physically present at one place. Interviews also help in the collection of fresh, new and primary data. One major advantage of interview is that depending on the situation, questions can be framed differently.

Among the problems associated with using interview to collect data are the following: It is time consuming and expensive to conduct interviews. The

problem here is that, the researcher sometimes has to repeat and explain questions several times for clarification, probe when responses given are not accurate and sometimes have to pay informants fee, all of which are not done with the use of questionnaire. Another problem is that interviewees may give answers that in their opinion the interviewer wants to hear as they may feel uncomfortable to speak openly and to unknown interviewer and this affects the credibility of the data. There is also a communication problem: Mis-interpretation of questions and answers. This happens when either the questions are not properly asked by the interviewer or when an answer is not properly said by the interviewee. In focus group interviews, how to get the "correct" people and how to motivate the experts to participate in the interview is a problem. Interviews can also generate bias into the data.

Observation: Randolph (2007) stated that observation is when a researcher observes the phenomenon, understudy and records what is seen for analysis. Observation may be direct where the researcher directly observes the behaviour of participants by using an observation schedule or checklist as a guide. Included in the merits of observation as data collection instrument are that, it allows for rich and detailed description of the object of study in relation to behaviour, intension, situation, and event. Observation also enriches the quality of data collection and interpretation and enhances the development of new research questions or hypotheses. The researcher directly sees what the participants do instead of relying on what they claim they do (Kawulich, 2005).

The problem with observation as data collection method is that people might behave differently when they are conscious of being observed; and this

will not paint the true picture about the issue under investigation. Also, when observation is too much structured, it might limit the unexpected findings. The researcher might get too much involved into the research settings and when this happens, certain behaviours may go unnoticed for recording. Another problem with observation method is that the researcher can misinterpret some of the behaviour and this will affect the creditability of the data collected. Lastly, observation requires resources and time both for organization and analysis. And so lack of resources and time will render the exercise perfunctorily done which would in the final analysis affect the creditability of the data collected (Holmes & Bloxham, 2007; Evaluation Briefs, 2008).

Ethical considerations

There are laid down principles and guidelines for conducting studies in an ethically appropriate manner which require researchers to obtain approval from ethics committee or equivalent and from the participants (Halai, 2006). Based on this premise, the following ethical considerations suggested by Creswell (2012) for conducting mixed methods research were adopted for this study.

Clearance was sought from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), UCC. With an introductory letter from my Head of Department, I took a letter of permission each from the Central, Ashanti, and Northern Regional Directors of Education which introduced me to the sampled schools under their jurisdiction. In each school visited, the purpose of the study was communicated to the respondents after taking pleasantries with the school head. They were also, assured of the protection of their anonymity and the

keeping of their responses confidential. Due respect was given the study population.

Data Collection Procedure

Pilot study of the instruments was done in two schools from the target population in two districts outside those that were sampled for the study. I personally visited the schools to administer the instruments. All Junior High School 3 pupils in the pilot testing schools were made to respond to the instrument. After responding to the questionnaire, the school prefect was interviewed. Observation was made of the general preparedness of the pupils towards teaching and learning; and the overall continuous assessment mark of each respondent was collected.

The study involved collecting both quantitative and qualitative data on basic school learners from three regions in Ghana. Patton (as cited in Wang, 2006) recommended that "multiple sources of information be used to collect data as no single source of information can be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective" (p. 306).

To reach the respondents for the main data collection, introductory letters were collected from the Head of Department of the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education of the University of Cape Coast and the Regional and Municipal/District Directors of Ghana Education Service in whose jurisdiction the study was undertaken. I personally conducted the observation and the interview. The interview was conducted on the school prefect in each school sampled for the study. In each school, pupils' punctuality to school and their general contribution to the teaching and learning situation were observed. Thus, the observer-participant stance was

taken to collect the observation data (Kawulich, 2005). With the administration of the questionnaire, the paper and pencil method (Boynton, 2004) was used. All the respondents were grouped in one classroom and the questionnaire distributed to them after informing them about the aim of the study, explaining the means of completing the questionnaire, assuring them of confidentiality and the need for them to respond to the questions as best as they could. The data collection began on 5th October, 2016 and ended on 18th November, 2016. Thus, a total of six weeks were used to collect the data.

The data were collected during school hours when the class has been prepared for the exercise. In each school, all the three instruments were administered before the next school was taken. Respondents were each given a copy of the questionnaire. Instructions were given on how to respond to the items. A teacher of the class assisted in supervising the filling of the questionnaire. Pupils were given enough time to respond to the questionnaire items. On completion, the overall continuous assessment result of each pupil was written on his/her questionnaire by the teacher. After collection, a lesson was observed to ascertain pupils' contribution towards teaching and learning in our schools. The subjects that were being taught at the time of the study were English language, Ghanaian languages, Mathematics, Social Studies, Religious and Moral Education, Integrated Science, and Information and Communication Technology. The school prefect was then interviewed and the data collection ended in that school.

One problem encountered during the data collection was that some of the Municipal/District Directors of Education hesitated in granting permission for conducting the study in their jurisdiction even though they were shown the

permission letter from their Regional Director. This resulted in waste of time as I had to wait for their consent before I could conduct the study in their schools. Movement from one Municipality or District to another with a large quantity of questionnaire posed another problem as public means of transport was used and the luggage had to be transferred from one vehicle to another. As a student-lecturer, conducting the data collection in addition to my official duties posed another problem as I had to come back to campus one day within the week to teach before I could go back and continue with the data collection.

Data Processing and Analysis

According to Todd (2011), mixed methods research involves collecting both quantitative and qualitative data using different instruments. And that mixed methods data is treated both quantitatively and qualitatively. Before the data was analysed, they were edited. With the quantitative data, few of the respondents shaded the boxes intended for ticking. Moreover, some of the shadings were faint. These anomalies were corrected. Again, some respondents ticked one box twice and left the next box following it vertically for the next question, empty. These corrections were also made. Finally, with the qualitative data even though the interviewees could express themselves well in the English language, a few of the responses had to be re-phrased as the interviewees did not properly state them. After the editing, the quantitative data were coded. With all categorical data, the first response item was coded 1 and the other response was coded 2. For instance, 1 for male and 2 for female. Questions that have three or more responses were coded 1 for the first response, 2 for the second response and 3 for the third response and so on. The likert scale responses were coded 1 for Strongly Disagree, 2 for Disagree, 3

for Undecided, 4 for Agree, and 5 for Strongly Agree. The coding for the Learner Intelligence questions was 0 for wrong response made and 1 for correct answer chosen.

In entering the data, all the 1,079 questionnaires were numbered. The corresponding figures of the responses made by each participant were written against the questions on the questionnaire. When each questionnaire was picked, all the figures were entered horizontally in the Data View of the Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) software. Occasional cross-checking was done to ascertain whether all the figures entered were correct. Wrong entries found were quickly corrected. Before the data was analyzed, a final data cleaning was done. The unit of analysis for this study were the school pupils. SPSS Windows version 20 was used to analyze the responses from the questionnaire to generate a descriptive picture of data obtained on the various themes (Johnson and Christensen, 2012).

Research Question one states, "What is the intelligence level of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum?" The type of data collected for this question were both quantitative and qualitative. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentages, standard deviation and means were used to analyze the data to give quick visual impressions on values and assist in the discussion and interpretation of the data. The qualitative data were derived through observation and analyzed using quasi-statistics (Becker, as cited in Ratcliff, n.d.). Becker explains that with quasi-statistics, the researcher counts the number of times something is mentioned in the field notes as very rough estimate of frequency.

Research Question 2 is, "What is the physical condition of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum?" The type of data collected for this research question were both quantitative and qualitative. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentages, standard deviation and means were used to analyze the data to give quick visual impressions on values and assist in the discussion and interpretation of the data for the quantitative data. The qualitative data were derived through interview and observation and analyzed through descriptive explanatory method (pattern marching-descriptive/explanatory, Yin, 1994) and quasi-statistics (Becker, as cited in Ratcliff, n.d.).

The third research question is, "What learner preferences to certain curricular work exist at the basic school level? Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected for this research question. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics as in research questions 1 and 2. The qualitative data was collected through interview and analyzed using the descriptive explanatory method by Yin.

Research Question 4 is, "How do basic school pupils manage their time in relation to the implementation of the curriculum at that level?" Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected for this research question. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics as in research questions 1 and 2. The qualitative data were collected through interview and observation. Quasi-statistics (Becker, as cited in Ratcliff, n.d.) and Yin's (1994) pattern marching-descriptive/explanatory methods were used to analyze the data.

The fifth research question is “What peer influence on the learner affects the implementation of the basic school curriculum?” Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected for this research question. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the quantitative data as in research questions 1 and 2. The qualitative data were derived through interview and analyzed using Yin’s pattern matching-descriptive/explanatory method.

Research Question 6 reads, “Which cultural practices of the learner influence curriculum implementation at the basic school level? Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected for this research question. As in research questions 1 and 2, the quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The qualitative data were collected through interview and analyzed using Yin’s (1994) pattern matching-descriptive/explanatory method.

Research Question 7 is, “What socio-economic status of the learner affects curriculum implementation? Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected for this research question. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics as stated in research questions 1 and 2 while the qualitative data were derived through interview and was analyzed using Yin’s (1994) pattern matching-descriptive/explanatory method.

The eighth research question is, “What gender issues of the learner affect curriculum implementation in schools?” Only quantitative data were collected for this research question. The analysis was done using descriptive statistics as in research questions 1 and 2.

Hypothesis 1: H_0 = Learner factors will not relate individually and in linear combination to the implementation of the basic school curriculum.

Quantitative data was collected for this hypothesis and analyzed through Multiple Linear Regression.

H_i = Learner factors will relate individually and in linear combination to the implementation of the basic school curriculum. Quantitative data was collected for this hypothesis and analyzed through Multiple Linear Regression.

Hypothesis 2: H_o = Female learners' influence on curriculum implementation in basic schools will not significantly differ from that of their male counterparts. Quantitative data was collected for this hypothesis and analyzed using Independent Samples T-Test

H_i = Female learners' influence on curriculum implementation in basic schools will significantly differ from that of their male counterparts. Quantitative data was collected for this hypothesis and analyzed using Independent Samples T-Test

Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentages, standard deviation and means were used to analyze the data to give quick visual impressions on values and assist in the discussion and interpretation of the data. The mean, according to Statsoft (2011), is the most often used descriptive statistic. These central tendencies were used because of their relevance to the answering of the research questions. The mean and the standard deviation were, therefore, calculated for each of the learner factors. In drawing the conclusion, any learner factor with a mean score which is more than the overall mean implied that the learner factor is influencing on the implementation (Hu and Fyfe, 2010) of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

Jaggi (n.d.) has argued that descriptive statistics give numerical and graphic procedures for summarizing data collected in a clear and

understandable way. They help to simplify large amounts of data in a sensible way and reduce lots of data into a simpler summary. Thus, descriptive statistics enables us to present data in a more meaningful way which allows for simpler interpretation of the data. Jaggi added that inferential statistics provides procedures for drawing inferences about a population from a sample. Therefore, the Independent Samples T-Test used for analyzing the hypothesis helped to compare whether the male learners (boys) and female learners (girls) have different average values and so influenced curriculum implementation differently at the basic school level. Multiple Linear Regression used to analyze Hypothesis 1 helped to identify the strength of the effect that the independent variable (Learner factor) has on the dependent variable (Implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana) [Statistics Solutions, n.d.].

The statistical analysis for the study thus, focused on the relationship between dependent and independent variables and the differences in the views of the male and female pupils. Thus, in answering the research questions, the Multiple Linear Regression and Independent Samples T-Test were used to statistically determine how the learner characteristics affect curriculum implementation at the basic school level in Ghana.

Inferential statistics were used to analyze the research hypothesis in the study. In specific terms, multiple linear regression analysis and independent-samples T-Test were the statistical tools employed to analyze research hypothesis 1 and 2 respectively. The Independent-Samples T-Test statistics which was measured at 95% confidence interval level was used to compare how the female pupils as a factor influence curriculum

implementation in basic schools in Ghana as against how their male counterparts as a factor influence curriculum implementation in basic schools in Ghana. Finally, the regression analysis used to address research hypothesis 1 helped the study to predict whether the learner factor individually or in linear combination influences the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

Onwuegbuzie and Combs' (2011) mixed methods data analysis guideline and pattern matching-descriptive/explanatory (Yin, 1994) were used to analyze the interview aspect of the qualitative data. Content analysis based on the emerging themes from the responses from the interviews and the observed behaviours was done and used to buttress the findings from the questionnaire data. Thus, the concurrent triangulation method of data analysis was used through quantification of the qualitative data. That is, the qualitative data were coded, numbers assigned to the codes, and the number of times the codes appear recorded as numeric data. Comparison of the quantitative and qualitative data sets was made (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003). Verbatim quotations from respondents were also used to support the findings. The observation data was analysed using quasi-statistics (Becker, as cited in Ratcliff, n.d.).

It was expected that findings from the study would reveal how mentally prepared the learners are for the implementation of the curriculum in Ghana. It was also expected that the study would reveal how the physical condition of the learner, the part of the learner, peer influence on the learner, and the socio-economic and gender

implementation in basic schools in Ghana as against how their male counterparts as a factor influence curriculum implementation in basic schools in Ghana. Finally, the regression analysis used to address research hypothesis 1 helped the study to predict whether the learner factor individually or in linear combination influences the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

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It was expected that findings from the study would reveal how mentally prepared the learners are for the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. It was also expected that the findings from the study would reveal how the physical condition of the learner, time management on the part of the learner, peer influence on the learner, the cultural practices of the learner, and the socio-economic and gender issues of the learner affect the

implementation of the curriculum at the basic school level in Ghana. It was also expected that the findings from the study would reveal the sort of learner preferences to curricular work that exist at the basic school level and how these affect the implementation process in the schools.

Chapter Summary

To investigate the issue of the Learner factor on the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana, a multi-pronged approach commonly referred to as embedded mixed methods approach (Caruth, 2013) was used. This approach provided the means of using both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data on the same day. Thus, the embedded mixed methods approach helped save a lot of travelling time and reduced travelling cost. Also, data provided by these methods served as a means of triangulating information provided when either of the two methods were used alone (Caruth).

The limitations of the mixed methods approach on this study are that tiredness on my part may have affected the observation session of the study resulting in loss of some important data; especially, in instances where the data was collected getting to or after midday. Caruth (2013) has cautioned that using the embedded mixed methods approach can be difficult for a single researcher. A research team should have been employed but due to circumstances beyond my control, this was not done.

Secondly, lack of indepth knowledge in both quantitative and qualitative methods to combine them knowledgeably and to use them professionally (Caruth, 2013) makes the use of the embedded mixed methods approach by a single researcher questionable.

Thirdly, Atlas or NVivo (qualitative data analyzing softwares) used to count the number of times a qualitative code occurs (Discol, Appia-Yeboah, Salib, & Rupert, 2007) were not used to analyze the interview data as the interview guide was semi-structured and the number of interviewees was small.

Fourthly, quasi-statistics used to analyze the qualitative data might have resulted in loss of depth and flexibility (Discol et al, 2007). Quantizing qualitative data for statistical measurement renders the data vulnerable to the problem of collinearity in which categories are themselves linked as a consequence of the coding strategy. It was for this problem that only 23 pupils were interviewed.

Finally, even though both quantitative and qualitative data were used, the volume of data collected through the quantitative approach was far greater than that of the qualitative approach. Thus, the qualitative questions were designed to elicit data to triangulate the quantitative data. Creswell et al. (2003) have argued that in such instance, there is unequal evidence within the study, as the two methods are unequal in their priority.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Curriculum implementational outcome is of great importance to all stake- holders of education the world over and the case of Ghana is no exception. As curriculum implementational outcome has not been favourable to the expectation of stakeholders in education, several studies have been conducted on the factors that influence implementation with very little attention given to the learner (Wang, 2006). This study was conducted to examine the influence of the learner factor on the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. Descriptive Survey Research Design was used as the study falls under the pragmatist paradigm. The research method comprised a multi-pronged approach commonly referred to as embedded mixed methods approach (Caruth, 2013). Thus, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) on the same day from the pupil respondents to triangulate the data (Denzin, 2006). While the questionnaire focused on the knowledge and opinions (Radhakrishna, 2007) of the respondents in relation to the variables studied, the observation and interview dwelt on their behaviour in an actual learning situation and a few related issues. The instruments which were pre-tested had a content validity of 0.94 and reliability coefficient of 0.821 on the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient scale.

Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages, standard deviations and means were used to analyze the quantitative data (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Multiple Linear Regression and Independent Samples T-Test were used to statistically determine how the learner characteristics affect curriculum implementation at the basic school level in Ghana. Inferential

statistics were used to analyze the research hypothesis in the study. Onwuegbuzie and Combs' (2011) mixed methods data analysis guideline and Yin's (1994) pattern matching descriptive/explanatory were used to analyze the qualitative data.

The sample for this study consisted of all the basic 9 pupils of the selected 23 schools drawn from the Central, Ashanti, and the Northern Regions of Ghana through the purposive and random sampling techniques. The sample size was 1,079 pupils who have passed through all the levels of the basic school and, therefore, have the requisite experience and knowledge to participate in the study. They could all read and write the English Language. They were used to answering objective type test questions and this facilitated their responding to the questionnaire items. All the school prefects interviewed could express themselves fluently in the English Language.

The Results

Learners' Demographics

The demographic data on the respondents were taken on their sex, age range and type of school they were studying in. Table 3 presents the learners' demographics.

Table 3- *Learners' Demographics*

Characteristic	% of	% of	% of
Sex	Boys	Girls	Total
	501 (46.4%)	578 (53.6%)	1,079 (100%)
Age range	15-17	18-20	Total
	965 (89.4%)	109 (10.1%)	1,074 (99.5%)
Type of school	Mixed	Girls school	Total
	1,048 (97.1%)	31 (2.9%)	1,079 (100.0%)

Source: Field Survey, (2016)

From Table 3 the data show that out of the 1,079 pupils, 501 (46.4%) were boys and 578 (53.6%) were girls. Nine hundred and sixty-five, representing 89.4% fell within the age range of 15-17 while 109 (10.1%) fell within the 18-20 age range. Again, 1,048 (97.1%) of the sample were studying in mixed schools and 31 (2.9%) studying in a girls school.

Results on Research Question

Research Question 1: What is the intelligence level of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum?

Data collected in answer to this research question have been presented in Table 4.

Table 4- *Learners' Intellectual levels*

Problem solved	% of Correct	% of Wrong	% of Total	Mean	Std
Subtraction	762(70.6)	317(29.4)	1079(100)	1.71	.456
Finding a number in a series	742(68.8)	337(31.2)	1079(100)	1.69	.464
Marching	687(63.7)	392(36.3)	1079(100)	1.64	.481
Finding the odd item	581(53.8)	496(46.0)	1077(99.8)	1.54	.499
Rearrangement of 3-letter word	687(63.7)	392(36.3)	1079 (100)	1.64	.481
Finding the next number	444(41.1)	635(58.9)	1079 (100)	1.41	.492

Source: Field Survey, (2016)

From the data in Table 4, the result of a story problem on subtraction reveal that 762 (70.6%) of the respondents had the answer correct and the remaining 317 (29.4%) had it wrong. Thus, the majority of the pupils performed well on that item. The item difficulty level for that question was 0.68. The data also reveal that when the respondents were tested in an addition problem involving finding a number that comes next in a given series, 742 (68.8%) had the answer correct while 337 (31.2%) had the answer wrong.

Pupils once again performed well on that item also. The item difficulty level of that question was 0.43.

Data in Table 4 also show that when pupils were asked to match two vehicles with what they move on, 687 (63.7%) had the answer correct while 392 (36.3%) had it wrong. The item difficulty level of that question was 0.65 and they performed well in that question also. Pupils were made to find the odd item among some given places. From the data, 581 (52.8%) had the answer correct but 496 (46.0%) got it wrong. Their performance was above average. The item difficulty level was 0.53. Pupils were then asked to choose from a number of options the one that can be arranged to form a 3-letter word in English and the data show that 687 (63.7%) of the respondents had the answer correct while the remaining 392 (36.3%) got their answers wrong. The item difficulty level of that question was 0.65. The respondents here again did well. Lastly, the respondents were asked to find the three values of a given grid and the data in Table 4 show that whereas 444 (41.1%) had the answer correct, 635 (58.9%) of the respondents had the answer wrong. Thus, this question posed a greater challenge to the respondents. The item difficulty level of that question was 0.53. The finding is that the pupils are generally intellectually above average on objective answer tests for the implementation of the basic school curriculum.

To further ascertain the intellectual preparedness of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana, a likert scale item was constructed to elicit the pupils' opinion on three more issues relating to their intelligence. Table 5 presents data collected to that effect. In the Table, VD = Very Difficult and was coded 1, D = Difficult and was coded 2, E =

Easy and was coded 3, T = Total,, M = Mean, and SD = Standard Deviation. Mean rating of 1.0 – 1.4 represents the indication that the item was very difficult for the pupils; mean rating of 1.5 – 2. 4 represents the indication that the item was difficult for the pupils, and mean rating of 2.5 – 3.0 represents the indication that the item was easy for the pupils.

Table 5- *Learners' Difficulty in Performing some Intellectual Tasks*

Learning task	% of	% of	% of	% of	M	SD
	VD	D	E	T		
Understanding the content of my text book	51 (4.7)	362 (33.5)	664 (61.5)	1077 (99.5)	2.6	.583
Telling or creating stories	91 (8.4)	361 (33.5)	622 (57.6)	1074 (99.5)	2.5	.648
Working with numbers, logic, solving problems	189 (17.5)	475 (44.0)	407 (37.7)	1071 (99.2)	2.2	.718

Source: Field Survey, (2016)

From Table 5 the data show that 413 (38.2%) of the respondents either find it difficult or very difficult to understand the content of their textbooks while 664 (61.5%) find it easy to understand the content of their textbooks. The total valid entries made were 1,077 (99.8%) with a mean score of 2.6 and a standard deviation of .583. The data suggest that the respondents have average understanding of their textbooks. Thus, whereas some of them understand the content of their textbooks, others do not.

In a related investigation, data in Table 16 (p. 202) show that 818 (65.8%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the

statement that they understand all the words in their reading materials but 251 (23.2%) of them either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement that they understand all the words in their reading materials. The total valid entries were 1,077 (99.8%) with a mean score of 3.6 and a standard deviation of 1.17. The finding is that the basic school pupils have difficulty in understanding some aspects of their reading materials. This finding confirms the other finding that some of the basic school pupils have problem understanding the content of their textbooks.

Back to Table 5, the data show that a total of 664 (61.5%) of the respondents either find it difficult or very difficult working with numbers, logic, and solving problems while 407 (37.7%) of them find it easy to do those educational activities. The total valid entries were 1,071 (99.2%) with a mean score of 2.2 and standard deviation of .718. The data suggest that on the average, the basic school pupils can work with numbers, logic and solve problems. The implication is that some of the basic school pupils in Ghana have problem learning mathematically oriented subjects.

The data in Table 5 also reveal that 452 (41.9%) of the respondents either find it difficult or very difficult to tell or create stories, but 622 (57.6%) of them find it easy to perform the same learning tasks. The total valid entries were 1,074 (99.5%) with a mean score of 2.5 and a standard deviation of .648. The data suggest that on the average, the respondents can create or tell stories. The implication is that some of the basic school pupils cannot create or tell stories.

The qualitative data used to validate the quantitative data on the learner intelligence showed that the pupils generally answered oral questions

correctly in accordance with the tenets of the topics being treated. The few incorrect answers were corrected by the teachers. None of the learners asked a critical question or contributed through discussion. Questions posed by the teachers were all of the recall type and so the pupils gave straightforward answers. The finding here is that, the pupils' intellectual capabilities are in consonance with the demands of the basic school curriculum. Thus, the observation result confirmed the general finding from the quantitative data on the variable, learner intelligence. The main finding on the learner intelligence is that the intellectual level of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum is generally above average.

The learners' part in the curriculum implementation process requires the exercising of some psychomotor activities involving the use of certain organs and/or parts of their bodies. Research Question 2 was accordingly designed to ascertain the physical preparedness of the learner for the effective implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

Research Question 2: What is the physical condition of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum?

Table 6 presents data collected in answer to this research question. In the Table, VD = Very Difficult, D = Difficult, E = Easy, T = Total, M = Mean, and SD = Standard Deviation. (See introduction to Table 5 for the coding and mean ratings).

Table 6- *Physical Condition of the Learner*

Competency	% of VD	% of D	% of E	% of T	M	SD
Music & dance work	237(22.0)	416(38.6)	426(39.4)	1079(100)	2.2	.76
Computer work	68 (6.3)	279(25.9)	732(67.8)	1079(100)	2.6	.60
Concentrating academically	38(3.5)	292(27.1)	745(69.0)	1075(99.6)	2.7	.54
Hearing my teacher	26(2.4)	211(19.6)	839(77.8)	1076(99.8)	2.8	.48
Reading ability	32(3.0)	168(15.6)	873(80.9)	1073(99.5)	2.8	.48
Writing legibly	26(2.4)	193(17.9)	839(77.8)	1058(98.1)	2.8	.48
Physical education work	52(4.8)	245(22.7)	779(72.2)	1076(99.7)	2.7	.56

Source: Field Survey, (2016)

From Table 6 the data reveal that 653 (60.6%) of the respondents either find it difficult or very difficult to take part in music and dance. The number of respondents who find it easy taking part in music and dance is 426 (39.4%). The total valid entries were 1,079 (100%) with mean score of 2.2 and standard deviation of .764. The finding is that the basic school pupils in Ghana have difficulty taking part in music and dance.

The data in Table 6 also reveal that 415 (38%) of the respondents either find it difficult or very difficult using computer keyboard and mouse but 732 (67.8%) of them find it easy using computer keyboard and mouse. The total valid entries were 1,079 (100%) with a mean score of 2.6 and standard deviation of .603. The data suggest that the competency level of the learners in using computer keyboard and mouse is above average. However, a significant number of them have difficulty working with computer accessories.

like their teachers. The total valid entries were 1,076 (99.7%). The missing values may be related to the respondents' uncertainty about the choice of response to make. Twelve (1.1%) of them were undecided. The mean score is 4.4 and the standard deviation .878. The finding is that the pupils have a higher degree of liking for the teachers teaching them at the basic school level.

As a follow up question to ascertain why the preference for their teachers, the respondents expressed their views on how their teachers relate with them. Data in Table 7 show that 66 (6.1%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that their teachers relate well with them while 997 (92.3%) of them either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 1,073 (99.4%) with a mean score of 4.8 and the standard deviation of .873. Ten (0.9%) of them were undecided on the issue. The data suggest that the teachers at the basic school level relate well with the learners and that has created a liking in the learners for their teachers.

Learners in general have problem studying one subject or the other (Felder & Brent, 2005). When the respondents expressed their views on their preference for the subjects taught at the basic school level, the data in Table 7 show that 241 (22.3%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that they like all the subjects they study at school while 831 (77.0%) either agreed or strongly agreed to that statement. Seven (0.6%) were undecided. The valid entries were 1,079 (100%) with a mean score of 3.8 and a standard deviation of 1.2. The finding is that as majority of the learners do not see anything wrong with the subjects they study at school, a significant number of them wish they are given the option to choose the subjects they want to study.

valid entries were 1,072 (99.4%) with mean score of 4.2 and standard deviation 1.1. The finding is that the learner at the basic school level has preference for using discussion as method of acquiring knowledge in the teaching and learning situation.

From Table 7 the data finally reveal that 132 (12.2%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that they want to learn business related subjects while 926 (85.8%) of them either agreed or strongly agreed to that statement. Sixteen (1.5%) of them were undecided. The total valid entries were 1,074 (99.5%) with a mean score of 4.2 and standard deviation of 1.1. The finding is that the basic school pupils in Ghana want to learn subjects that would make them employable in the near future.

The qualitative data used to validate the quantitative data on the learners' preference was in connection with the pupils' engagement and willingness (MacCarthy, 2014). In describing the behaviour of their classmates towards teachers during lessons, the field data revealed two conflicting situations in the classrooms.

In the first instance, the interviewees said their classmates put up good behaviour towards their teachers during instruction time by keeping quiet and listening to them. The second position of the interviewees on how their classmates behave towards their teachers is that the pupils misbehave during instructional time as they do not pay attention and sometimes tease their teachers. The general finding on this variable is that the basic school pupils have a high level of preference for certain curricular activities for the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

There is a common saying in Ghana in relation to punctuality, "African time" which has created the problem of lack of punctuality among the Ghanaian populace. Many people attend functions later than the scheduled starting time. The problem has affected other areas of life of the average Ghanaian and Research Question 4 was designed to investigate the time management practices of the learner in relation to the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

Research Question 4: How do basic school pupils manage their time in relation to the implementation of the curriculum at that level?

The pupils expressed their views on whether or not they engage themselves in some activities that are likely to waste their time if they engage in them. Data collected in response to that effect have been presented in Table 8.

Table 8- *Learners' Time Management Practices*

Activity	% of Don't do	% of Do	% of Total	Mean	Standard Deviation
I watch movies	463 (42.9)	611 (56.6)	1074(99.5)	1.6	.495
Computer games	699 (64.8)	374 (34.7)	1073(99.5)	1.4	.477
Television news	208 (19.3)	867 (80.4)	1075(99.7)	1.8	.395
Religious activities	118 (10.9)	954 (88.4)	1072(99.3)	1.9	.313
Study practices	251 (23.3)	823 (76.3)	1074(99.6)	1.8	.423

Source: Field Survey, (2016)

The African is religious and the Ghanaian is no exception (Mbiti, 2010). When the respondents expressed their views on their religious commitment, the data in Table 8 show that 118 (10.9%) of them do not engage in religious activities while 954 (88.4%) of them do engage themselves in religious activities. The total valid entries were 1,072 (99.3%) with mean score of 1.9 and a standard deviation of .31. The finding is that the respondents spend their learning time at home on religious activities.

There are 10 subjects studied at the basic school level in Ghana with each of them requiring some degree of attention. When the respondents expressed their views about their study habits in relation to all the subjects they study at school, data in Table 8 show that 251 (23.3%) of them do not study to meet the demands of the various subjects. Eight hundred and twenty-three (76.3%) of them indicated that they study to meet the demands of each subject. The total valid entries were 1,074 (99.6%) with a mean score of 1.8 and standard deviation of .42. The finding is that the learners apportion their learning time based on the demands of each subject.

Further on the learners' time management, the respondents expressed their views on the kind of activities they engage themselves in after school. Table 9 presents data elicited on that issue.

Table 9- *Learners' after School Activities*

Activity	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Assist parents/guardians with their work	608	56.3
Continue with my studies	417	38.6
Play with colleagues to release tension	47	4.4
Total	1072	99.4

Mean = 1.35, Standard Dev. = .477. Source: Field Survey, (2016)

From the data in Table 9, 608 (56.3%) of the respondents assist their parents/guardians with their work, 417 (38.6%) of them continue with their studies, while 47 (4.4%) of them play with their colleagues to release tension. The total valid entries were 1,072 (99.4%) with a mean of 1.4 and standard deviation .48. The data suggest that after school hours the basic school pupils spend their time on other activities rather than on their academic work.

To further ascertain how the respondents manage their time after school, they were asked to express their views on the kind of time schedule they have. Their responses are presented in Table 10.

Table 10- *Pupils' Personal Time Management Schedules*

Type of schedule guide	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Personal time table	924	85.6
TV programme guide	75	7.0
Leisure schedule	49	4.5
Social activity schedule	29	2.7
Total	1077	99.8

Mean = 1.24, Standard Dev. = .660. Source: Field Survey, (2016)

From Table 10 the data reveal that 924 (85.6%) of the respondents have personal time table which guides them on which subject to study at what time, and how long they should spend on the various personal study sessions. The data also show that 75 (7.0%) of the respondents have TV programme guide that enable them know the times for watching movies, 49 (4.5%) of them have leisure schedules that they use to take rest while 29 (2.7%) of them have social activity schedules that enable them take part in social activities happening in the community. The total valid scores were 1,077 (99.8%) with mean of 1.2 and standard deviation of .66. The finding is that the pupils at the basic school level keep personal time tables to regulate their studies.

Whatsapp is a social media software that enables people to interact with one another through instant messaging on the phone (Rouse, n.d.). When the respondents indicated whether they are on whatsapp or not, the data gathered are presented in Table 11.

Table 11- Pupils' Involvement in Whatsapp Activities

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	167	15.5
No	910	84.5
Total	1077	99.8

Mean=1.84, Standard Dev. = .362. Source: Field Survey, (2016)

The data in Table 11 show that 167 (15.5%) of the respondents are on whatsapp while 910 (84.5%) of them are not on whatsapp. The total valid scores were 1,077 (99.8%) with a mean score of 1.8 and standard deviation .36. The finding is that the basic school pupils do not waste their time on whatsapping at the expense of their academic work. However, the 15.5% who answered "Yes" can not be overlooked as their number is significant. Thus,

these pupils waste their precious learning time on interacting with their friends on social media.

Finally on pupils' time management, the respondents expressed their views on how much time they use on their chosen schedule in Table 11. The data elicited from them is presented in Table 12.

Table 12- *Duration for Pupils' Time Management Schedule*

Duration	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Thirty minutes	285	26.4
One hour	445	41.2
One and a half hours	92	8.5
No specific time allotted	88	8.2
Time given according to my interest in the activity	165	15.3
Total	1075	99.6

Mean=2.44, Standard Dev. =1.365. Source: Field Survey, (2016)

Apportioning time to activities to be performed is a way of training oneself or others to be time conscious. In Table 12 the data reveal that 285 (26.4%) of the respondents allot 30 minutes to their time management schedule, 445 (41.2%) of them allot 1 hour, 92 (8.5%) of them allot 1 hour 30 minutes, 88 (8.2%) of them do not allot any specific time, and 165 (15.3%) of them do the allocation of time according to their interest in the activity. The total valid scores were 1,075 (99.6%) with a mean of 2.4 and standard deviation 1.4. The finding is that the basic school pupils apportion time to themselves to regulate their activities.

The qualitative data collected to validate the responses from the quantitative data on the learner's time management were in connection with the pupils' punctuality and regularity at school as well as their response to the bell. On the issue of the pupils' punctuality, the field data show that they are very punctual. The reason assigned to their punctuality was that they usually have early morning classes, and that roll call is conducted at 6:30 am. The finding is that the pupils manage their time well to enable them arrive early at school. The observation guide confirmed that the pupils are generally punctual at school.

The field data on the pupils' being regular at school gave two conflicting reports as one group of the interviewees submitted that their classmates are very regular at school while the other group of interviewees responded that their classmates are not regular at school as some play truancy. As regarding the pupils' response to the bell, the interviewees described the basic school pupils as being responsive to the bell as their mates either 'rush' or 'run' to wherever the bell calls them to assemble. Results from the observation schedule confirmed that the basic school pupils are generally responsive to the bell. The finding is that the basic school pupils make themselves physically ready for the implementation of the basic school curriculum.

When the interviewees commented on how their class behave during exercises, two situations emerged from the field data. One group of the interviewees answered that their mates do independent work, while the other group said their mates do not do independent work. When the interviewees described how their classmates behave during submission of exercises, the

field data revealed that they were divided along two lines. One group said their mates submit their exercises promptly. The other group painted a different picture as according to them their friends delay in submitting their exercises. When the classes were observed for attentiveness, the field data showed that the pupils were generally attentive. However, certain behaviours displayed by the pupils rendered their attentiveness artificial. Some were seen playing with either their exercise book, pen, ruler, flipping the pages of books, sleeping on the desk, or copying notes as teaching was ongoing. Some were seen looking outside instead of focusing on what was going on in the classroom. Engaging in these activities during instructional hours results in time wasting on the part of the learner and affect curriculum implementation (Douglas, 2012). The general finding on the learners' time management practices in relation to the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana is that they do not waste their time on non academic issues.

Human beings are gregarious animals and, therefore, live and act together (Clayton, 2008). Individuals affiliate themselves to others of their age group to take certain decisions and actions that affect them either positively or negatively. Research Question five was posed to ascertain the peer influence of the learner that affect curriculum implementation at the basic school level.

Research Question 5: What peer influence on the learner affects the implementation of the basic school curriculum?

Tables 13 – 15 present data collected in answer to this research question. The kind of friends one moves along with has a great influence on one's life. Table 13 presents data gathered from the respondents on this issue.

Table 14- *Learners' Involvement in Facebook Activities*

Number of friends	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 50	77	7.1
51 - 100	42	3.9
101 - 150	31	2.9
151 - 200	28	2.6
Above 200	122	11.3
I don't have facebook	778	72.1
Total	1078	99.9

Mean-5.24, Standard Dev. = 1.518. Source: Field Survey, (2016)

From Table 14 the data show that 178 (16.5%) of the respondents have below 200 friends in facebook, 122 (11.3%) of them have above 200 friends in facebook while 778 (72.1%) of the rest do not have facebook at all. The total valid entries were 1,078 (99.9%) with a mean score of 5.2 and standard deviation of 1.5. The finding is that whereas majority of the pupils do not have facebook, a significant number of them have many friends in facebook.

Finally, on the issue of the learners' peer influence on their academic performance, the respondents were asked to indicate how they and their friends engage in some stated activities. The respondents expressed their views on a 3-point likert scale: Never, Sometimes, Always. The data elicited have been presented in Table 15. In the Table, SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 15- *Learners' Involvement with their Friends in Selected Activities.*

Activity	%of Never	%of Sometimes	% of Always	% of Total	Mean	SD
Smoking	1052(97.5)	16 (1.5)	11 (1.0)	1079(100)	1.04	.23
Learning together	29 (2.7%)	675(62.5)	372(34.5)	1076(99.7)	2.32	.52
Sharing ideas about academic work	44 (4.1)	650(60.2)	381(35.3)	1075(99.6)	2.35	.55
Drinking alcoholic beverages	988(91.6)	69 (6.4)	17 (1.6)	1074(99.5)	1.10	.34
Going to game centres	834(77.3)	206(19.1)	39 (3.6)	1079 (100)	1.26	.52

Source: Field Survey, (2016)

It is reported that some youth of Ghana engage themselves in smoking which sometimes results in some of them losing their senses. When this study investigated the issue of smoking among the youth, the data in Table 15 show that 1,052 (97.5%) of the respondents have never engaged in smoking before, but 27 (2.5%) of them either sometimes or always smoke with their friends. The valid total entries were 1,079 (100%) with a mean score of 1.0 and standard deviation .23. The data suggest that even though a large number of the basic school pupils in Ghana have never engaged themselves in smoking before, there are some of them who smoke with their friends.

The data from Table 15 also reveal that 29 (2.7%) of the respondents have never learnt together with their friends, 675 ((62.6%) sometimes learn together with their friends, and 372 (34.5%) of them always learn together with their friends. The total valid entries were 1,076 (99.7%) with a mean

score of 2.3 and standard deviation .52. The finding is that majority of the basic school pupils and their friends learn together to enhance their academic performance.

Again, from Table 15 the data reveal that 44 (4.1%) of the respondents have never engaged in sharing ideas about their academic work with their friends, 1,031 (95.5%) of them either sometimes or always share ideas about their academic work with their friends. The total valid entries were 1,075 (99.6%) with a mean score of 2.4 and standard deviation .55. The finding is that the basic school pupils almost always share ideas about their academic work with their friends.

The data in Table 15 also show that 988 (91.6%) of the respondents and their friends have never engaged in drinking alcoholic drinks before, but 86 (8.0%) of them either sometimes or always drink alcoholic drinks with their friends. The total valid entries were 1,074 (99.5%) with a mean score of 1.10 and standard deviation of .52. The finding is that, whereas the majority of the basic school pupils and their friends have never engaged in drinking alcoholic drinks, some of them and their friends indulge in drinking alcoholic substances.

There are game centres established by some individuals where the youth resort to and play some games using electronic devices for a fee. When this study investigated this issue among the respondents, data in Table 15 show that 834 (77.3%) of the respondents and their friends have never gone to game centres before but 245 (22.7%) of them either sometimes or always go to game centres with their friends. The total valid entries were 1,079 (100%) with a mean score of 1.3 and standard deviation of .52. The finding is that, even

though the majority of the basic school pupils do not go to game centres, a sizeable number of them go to game centres with their friends either to watch others play or play games themselves at the expense of their academic work.

The qualitative data gathered to validate the quantitative data on the state of peer influence among basic school pupils in Ghana was in connection with the pupils' staying up till closing time. The field data show that two conflicting situations exist in the basic schools in relation to this issue. One group of the interviewees responded that their colleagues stay up to the closing time while the other group answered 'No'. Thus, as some of the basic school learners stay up till closing time, others go home before the closing time. The general finding on peer influence in relation to the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana is that there are some elements of peer influence on the learner that can affect curriculum implementation at that level.

Every individual is born into a given culture which shapes that individual's way of life (Hofstede, 2001). Ghanaian school pupils come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Research Question 6 was designed to find out the pupils' cultural practices that influence the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

Research Question 6: Which cultural practices of the learner influence curriculum implementation at the basic school level?

Table 16 presents data collected in response to this research question. The respondents expressed their views on whether they agree or disagree to statements on how their cultural practices influence the implementation of the basic school curriculum on a 5-point likert scale. In the Table, SD = Strongly

Disagree, D = Disagree, U = Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree, T = Total, M = Mean & SDv = Standard Deviation.

Table 16-*Influence of Learners' Cultural Practices on Curriculum Implementation*

Cultural practice	% of SD	% of D	% of U	% of A	% of SA	% of T	M	SDv
Religion and music and dance	183 (17.0)	221 (20.5)	8 (0.7)	395 (36.6)	272 (25.2)	1079 (100)	2.56	1.55
Influence of community taboo	409 (37.9)	315 (29.2)	19 (1.8)	229 (21.2)	105 (9.5)	1077 (99.8)	2.36	1.41
Self expression in English	88 (8.2)	350 (32.4)	14 (1.3)	355 (32.9)	271 (25.1)	1078 (99.9)	2.66	1.37
Teachers' use of English	256 (23.7)	104 (9.7)	13 (1.2)	342 (31.7)	364 (33.7)	1079 (100)	2.45	1.39
Interference of local dialect	299 (27.7)	370 (34.3)	18 (1.7)	293 (27.2)	98 (9.1)	1078 (99.9)	2.56	1.38
Understanding of words in their reading materials	654 (60.6)	164 (15.2)	8 (0.7)	158 (14.6)	93 (8.6)	1077 (99.8)	3.59	1.17

Source: Field Survey, (2016)

Anderson (2007) found that some basic school pupils do not take part in music and dance on religious background. From the data in Table 16, 404 (37.5%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that their cultural background permits them to take part in music and dance lessons at school. Whereas 8 (0.7%) of them were undecided, 667 (61.4%) of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed to that statement. The total valid entries were 1,079 (100%) with a mean score of 2.6 and standard deviation of 1.6. The finding is that whereas the cultural practices of majority of the learners do not prevent them from participating in music and

dance lessons, for some of them their cultural practices interfere with their music and dance work at school.

A community's influence on school work cannot be overemphasized. In Table 16 the data reveal that 724 (67.1%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that some of the taboos in their community affect their school work. Nineteen (1.8%) of them were undecided but 334 (30.7%) of them either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 1,077 (99.8%) with a mean score of 2.4 and standard deviation of 1.4. The data suggests that some of the taboos in the learners' community have some effect on their school work.

Language is one of the major components of a peoples' culture (Hofstede, 2001). English language is the official language in Ghana. It is used in every facet of our collective life as a people including the teaching and learning of the various subjects and for writing examinations, except in the case of Ghanaian languages. The data in Table 16 show that 438 (40.6%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that they can express themselves well both in written and spoken English. Whiles 14 (1.3%) of the respondents were undecided on the issue, 626 (58.0%) of them either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement that they can express themselves well both in the written and spoken English. The total valid entries were 1,078 (99.9%) with a mean score of 2.7 and standard deviation of 1.4. The finding is that, whereas some of the basic school pupils can express themselves well in English both orally and in written form, a significant number of them do not have mastery over the English language for their academic work.

Still on the issue of using English language in the teaching and learning situation, data in Table 16 show that 360 (33.2%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that they are comfortable when their teachers use English language to teach them. Thirteen (1.2%) of them were undecided but for 706 (65.4%) of them, the statement is true that they are comfortable when their teachers use English language to teach them. The total valid entries were 1,079 (100%) with a mean score of 2.5 and standard deviation of 1.4. The finding is that some of the basic school pupils are not comfortable with their teachers' use of English language in instructing them.

Some basic school pupils in Ghana speak a different mother tongue than the Ghanaian language they study at school. When this study investigated whether this issue in a way causes them any problem, the data in Table 16 show that 669 (62.0%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that their local dialect interferes with their school work. Eighteen (1.7%) of the respondents were undecided on the issue while 391 (36.3%) of them either agreed or strongly agreed to that statement. The total valid entries were 1,078 (99.8%) with a mean score of 2.6 and standard deviation of 1.4. The data suggest that the learners' local dialect does not interfere all that much with their school work.

The qualitative data used to validate the quantitative data collected on the cultural practices of the learner was in connection with the type of economic activity that takes place in the pupils' locality. The field data collected on this issue show that the main economic activity in the pupils' locality is farming, followed by fishing and trading; and that these activities

make the learners lose part of their school contact hours as a result of the assistance they give to their parents at their work places. The general finding on this variable is that there is some amount of cultural interference with the learners' school work at the basic school level.

The socio-economic status of a people affects the lives of both old and young and the basic school pupils are no exception. Research Question 7 was designed to investigate the socio-economic status of the learners in connection with the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

Research Question 7:

Which socio-economic status of the learner affects curriculum implementation?

Data collected in answer to this research question have been presented in Tables 17 and 18. The respondents expressed their views on how their socio-economic status influences the implementation of the basic school curriculum on a 5-point likert scale. In the Tables, SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, U = Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree, T = Total, M = Mean & SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 17- Learners' Socio-economic Status I

Socio-economic status	% of SD	%of D	% of U	% of A	% of SA	% of T	M	SD
I work to support my schooling	277 (25.7)	235 (21.6)	7 (0.6)	322 (29.8)	237 (22.2%)	1078 (99.9)	3.0	1.6
Parents' support	38 (3.5)	29 (2.7)	1 (0.1)	337 (31.2)	672 (62.3)	1077 (99.8)	4.5	0.9
Parents' encouragement	37 (3.5)	51 (4.7)	3 (0.3)	324 (30.0)	664 (61.5)	1079 (100)	4.4	0.9
Parents' income	100 (9.3)	278 (25.8)	9 (0.8)	395 (36.6)	294 (27.2)	1076 (99.7)	3.5	1.4
Parents' education	125 (11.6)	342 (31.7)	9 (0.8)	355 (32.9)	246 (22.8)	1077 (99.8)	3.2	1.4
Parents help with homework	137 (12.7)	276 (25.6)	17 (1.6)	392 (36.3)	249 (23.1)	1071 (99.3)	3.3	1.4

Source: Field Survey, (2016)

The harsh economic condition in Ghana has resulted in many parents and guardians involving their wards in one economic activity or the other to support the family budget. When this issue was investigated by this study, data in Table 17 reveal that 512 (47.3%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that sometimes they do some work to support their schooling as the family income is not large enough to cater for all their educational needs. Seven (0.6%) of the respondents were undecided on the issue while 559 (52%) of them either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 1,078 (99.9%) with a mean score of 3.0

and a standard deviation of 1.6. The finding is that the basic school pupils sometimes engage in some form of child labour to support their schooling.

Parents'/Guardians' influence on their wards' education cannot be overemphasized. When this study investigated parents'/guardians' support to their pupils' education, the data in Table 17 reveal that 67 (6.2%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that their parents/guardians support their education. One (0.1%) of them was undecided while 1,009 (93.5%) of them either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 1,077 (99.8%) with a mean score of 4.5 and standard deviation .91. The finding is that the pupils' parents/guardians support their education.

Parents'/Guardians' interest in their wards' education influences the latter's education. From Table 17 the data show that 88 (8.2%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that their parents/guardians encourage them to study hard. Three (0.3%) of them were undecided, while 988 (91.5%) of them either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 1,079 (100%) with a mean score of 4.4 and standard deviation of .97. The finding is that basic school pupils in Ghana receive encouragement from their parents/guardians to study hard.

Parents'/Guardians' income determines how supportive they would be to their wards' education (Donkor, 2010). The data in Table 17 reveal that 378 (45.1%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that their parents'/guardians' income influence their education. Nine (0.8%) of them were undecided on the issue but 689 (63.8%) of them either agreed or strongly agreed to that statement. The total valid entries were 1,076

(99.7%) with a mean score of 3.5 and standard deviation 1.4. The finding is that the income levels of the parents/guardians of the basic school pupils have effect on the kind of educational support they receive from their parents/guardians for their schooling.

Parents'/Guardians' education has been found to correlate with their wards' academic performances (Affreh, 2012 & Ametefe, 2012). Data in Table 17 show that 467 (43.3%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that their parents'/guardians' education influence their school work. Nine (0.8%) of them were undecided, but 601 (55.7%) of them either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 1,077 (99.8%) with a mean score of 3.2 and standard deviation of 1.4. The finding is that the education of the parents/guardians of the basic school pupils influences the latter's school work.

Giving homework to pupils serves as extension of school work to the home of the learner (Paulu, Lehr & Walne, 2005). In Table 17 the data show that 413 (38.3%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that their parents/guardians assist them with their homework. Seventeen (1.6%) of them were undecided on the issue; but 641 (59.4%) of them either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 1,071 (99.3%) with a mean score of 3.3 and standard deviation of 1.4. The data suggest that in general, the parents/guardians of the basic school pupils influence the pupils' school work by assisting them do their home work.

Table 18- *Learners' Socio-economic Status II*

Socio-economic status	% of SD	% of D	% of U	% of A	% of SA	% of T	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Our family is large	151 (14.0)	272 (25.2)	8 (0.7)	432 (40.0)	213 (19.7)	1076 (99.6)	3.26	1.4
I come from a poor family	256 (23.7)	407 (37.7)	10 (0.9)	289 (26.8)	115 (10.7)	1077 (99.8)	2.63	1.4
I have good bedding items	134 (12.4)	250 (23.2)	9 (0.8)	409 (37.9)	277 (25.7)	1079 (100)	3.41	1.4
Household duties and academic work	148 (13.7)	277 (25.7)	5 (0.5)	423 (39.2)	226 (20.9)	1079 (100)	3.28	1.4

Source: Field Survey, (2016)

Family size has been found to be a factor influencing pupils' school work (Ella, Oluk, & Ella, 2015). The data in Table 18 reveal that 423 (39.2%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that their family is large. Eight (0.7%) were undecided while 645 (59.7%) of them either agreed or strongly agreed to that statement. The total valid entries were 1,076 (99.6%) with a mean score of 3.3 and standard deviation of 1.4. The finding is that the basic school pupils come from large families.

The economic background of learners influences their performance at school (Caro, 2009). When this study investigated the economic status of the respondents, the data in Table 18 reveal that 663 (61.4%) of them either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that they come from economically disadvantaged homes. Ten (0.9%) were undecided on the issue, but 404 (37.5%) agreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 1,077

(99.8%) with a mean score of 2.6 and a standard deviation of 1.4. The finding is that the economic background of the basic school pupils is good enough to support their school work. However, it is also true from this data that a significant number of the basic school pupils have poor economic background which can adversely impact on their school work.

Having good sleep is a factor to pupils' overall development including that of their cognitive skills. This study inquired from the respondents whether they have good bedding items that enable them sleep well. In response to this enquiry, the data in Table 18 show that 384 (35.6%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that they have good bedding items that make them sleep well. Nine (0.8%) of them were silent on the issue while 686 (63.6%) either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 1,079 (100%) with a mean score of 3.4 and standard deviation, 1.4. The finding is that some of the basic school pupils do not sleep well because they lack good bedding items.

Many Ghanaian children, for one reason or the other, perform some household duties in addition to their schooling. The data in Table 18 show that 425 (39.4%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that performance of household duties take much of their learning time at home. Five (0.5) of them were undecided while 649 (60.1%) of them either agreed or strongly agreed to that statement. The total valid entries were 1,079 (100%) with a mean score of 3.3 and standard deviation of 1.4. The finding is that performance of household duties is affecting the implementation of the basic school curriculum as it takes much of the learners' learning time at home.

The qualitative data gathered on the respondents' socio-economic status were on the issue of working with their parents either on the farm, at the river or sea or in trading. The field data on this issue, which was collected through interview guide, show that the main economic activity in the pupils' locality is farming, followed by fishing and trading; and that these activities make the learners lose part of their school contact hours as a result of the assistance they give to their parents at their work places. The general finding on this variable is that the socio-economic status of the learner is affecting the implementation of the basic school curriculum.

Gender issues are of much concern to gender activists and since the basic school comprises boys and girls, Research Question 8 was designed to find out the gender issues that affect curriculum implementation at that level.

Research Question 8: What gender issues of the learner affect curriculum implementation in basic schools?

Data collected in answer to this research question have been presented in Tables 19 – 21. The respondents expressed their views on a 3-point likert scale on some gender issues that influence their school work. In Table 19, N = Not at all, S = Sometimes, O = Often, M = Mean, and SDv = Standard Deviation.

Table 19- *Gender Issues of the Basic School Pupils*

Gender issue	% of N	% of S	% of O	% of T	M	SDv
Male teachers inviting girls	794 (73.6)	234 (21.7)	47 (4.4)	1075 (99.7)	1.31	.547
Female teachers inviting boys	760 (70.4)	250 (23.2)	36 (3.2)	1046 (96.8)	1.31	.529
Male teachers sending girls	167 (15.5)	687 (63.7)	221 (20.5)	1075 (99.7)	2.05	.589
Female teachers sending boys	207 (19.2)	698 (64.7)	136 (12.5)	1041 (96.4)	1.93	.570
Male teachers playing romance with girls	876 (81.2)	154 (14.3)	41 (3.8)	1071 (99.3)	1.22	.499
Female teachers playing romance with boys	905 (83.9)	112 (10.4)	30 (2.8)	1047 (97.1)	1.16	.441

Source: Field Survey, (2016)

It is commonly alleged that some teachers in Ghanaian schools at the secondary and tertiary levels award marks for sexual favours. This study investigated that issue to ascertain whether there are traces of sexual harassment in the basic schools in Ghana. Data in Table 19 show that 794 (73.6%) of the respondents responded that they have never experienced the situation of male teachers inviting girls to their homes; 234 (21.7%) of them indicated that sometimes male teachers invite girls to their homes; and 47 (4.4%) of them responded that male teachers always invite girls to their

homes. The valid total entries were 1,075 (99.7%). The mean score is 1.31 with a standard deviation of .58. The finding is that some basic school male teachers do invite girls to their homes.

On the same issue of teachers inviting pupils to their homes, the data in Table 19 show that 760 (70.4%) of the respondents indicated that female teachers never invite boys to their home; 250 (23.3%) of them responded that sometimes female teachers invite boys to their homes; and 36 (3.2%) of them responded that female teachers always invite boys to their homes. The total valid entries were 1,046 (96.8%) with a mean score of 1.3 and standard deviation, .53. The finding is that some female teachers at the basic school level in Ghana do invite boys to their homes.

As a corollary to the issue of teachers inviting pupils of the opposite sex to their homes, the data in Table 19 reveal that 876 (81.2%) of the respondents indicated that male teachers never play romance with girls in their school; 154 (14.3%) of them responded that male teachers sometimes play romance with girls in their school; and 41 (3.8%) of them responded that male teachers in their school often play romance with the girls. The total valid entries were 1,071 (99.3%) with a mean score of 1.2 and standard deviation, .5. The finding is that some male teachers at the basic school level in Ghana play romance with the girls in their school.

The data in Table 19 also reveal that 905 ((83.9%) of the respondents indicated that female teachers in their school never play romance with the boys; 112 (10.4%) of them responded that female teachers in their school sometimes play romance with the boys; and 30 (2.8%) of them responded that female teachers in their school always play romance with the boys. The total

valid entries were 1,047 (97.1%) with a mean score of 1.2 and a standard deviation of .44. The finding is that some female teachers at the basic school level play romance with the boys in their school.

In a related investigation, the data in Table 19 show that 167 (15.5%) of the respondents indicated that male teachers of their school never send the girls on errands; 687 (63.7%) of them responded that male teachers in their school sometimes send the girls on errands; and 221 (20.5%) of them responded that male teachers in their school often send the girls on errands. The total valid entries were 1,075 (99.7%) with a mean score of 2.05 and standard deviation, .59. The finding is that male teachers of the basic schools in Ghana send the girls in their school on errands.

The data finally show that 207 (19.2%) of the respondents indicated that female teachers in their school never send the boys on errands; 698 (64.7%) of them responded that female teachers of their school sometimes send the boys on errands; and 136 (12.5%) of them responded that female teachers of their school often send the boys on errands. The total valid scores were 1,041 (96.4%) with a mean score of 1.9 and a standard deviation of .57. The finding is that female teachers of the basic schools in Ghana send the boys in their school on errands

Another allegation in relation to gender issues in Ghanaian schools is that there is gender favouritism on the part of teachers during instruction and marking of scripts. When this study investigated the allegation, responses obtained from the respondents have been presented in Table 20. In the Table, UT = Unequal Treatment, ET = Equal Treatment, T = Total, M = Mean, and SDv = Standard Deviation.

Table 20- Gender Favouritism by Ghanaian Basic School Teachers

Area of treatment	% of UT	% of ET	% of T	M	SDv
In learning certain subjects	220 (20.4)	859 (79.6)	1079 (100)	1.80	.403
In learning all subjects	187 (17.3)	892 (82.7)	1079 (100)	1.83	.379
In marking of exercises and exam scripts	358 (33.2)	721 (66.8)	1079 (100)	1.67	.471

Source: Field Survey, (2016)

From the data in Table 20, 220 (20.4%) of the respondents expressed the view that in learning certain subjects, boys and girls are not treated equally; 859 (79.6%) of them responded that in learning certain subjects boys and girls are treated equally. There were 100% valid entries made with a mean score of 1.8 and standard deviation of .40. The finding is that there is gender parity in the treatment given to the basic school pupils by their teachers in learning certain subjects. However, some of them are discriminated against on gender basis when learning certain subjects.

The data in Table 20 also show that 187 (17.3%) of the respondents indicated that in learning all subjects their teachers discriminate between the sexes; and 892 (82.7%) of the respondents indicated that their teachers treat them equally on gender basis when it comes to learning all subjects. There were 100% valid entries made with a mean score of 1.8 and a standard deviation of .38. The data suggest that the basic school teachers give equal treatment to the pupils on gender basis when teaching all subjects. Another revelation is that, there is some amount of gender disparity in the treatment of the pupils when learning all subjects.

1,070 (99.2%) with a mean score of 2.0 and standard deviation, .87. The finding is that there is some effect from the type of treatment basic school teachers met out to their pupils on gender basis on their academic work. The general finding on research question 8 is that gender is a factor in the academic performance of pupils in the basic schools in Ghana.

Testing of Hypotheses

H_0 = Learner factors will not influence individually or in linear combination to the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

In order to determine which learner factor (individually or in linear combination) had a statistically significant effects on learner achievement, I used a simultaneous multiple regression model to test hypothesis one. This strategy is used when the researcher has no logical or theoretical structure to the data (Field, 2009). This method is typically used to explore and maximize prediction (Pedhazur, 1997).

Scatter diagrams of residuals, partial plots, and normal probability plots of residuals were constructed and inspected to test assumptions underlining multiple linear regression. Results are presented both as brief discussions and in tabular form. An important step in a multiple regression analysis is to ensure that the assumption of no multicollinearity has been met. Multicollinearity is a statistical phenomenon in which two or more predictor variables in a multiple regression model are highly correlated (Wikipedia, 2011). Multicollinearity was checked using a correlation matrix of all the factors, collinearity diagnostic output from SPSS which is the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance statistic ($1/VIF$) as suggested by

literature (Bowerman & O'Connell, 1990; Field, 2009). Results from the correlation analysis are presented in Table 22

Table 22- *Bivariate Correlation of Regression Factors*

No		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Students' Overall performance	1.00								
2	Factor 1: Learner intelligence	0.35	1.00							
3	Factor 2: Learner preference	0.25	0.27	1.00						
4	Factor 3: Learner's time management	0.14	0.18	-0.02	1.00					
5	Factor 4: Learner's physical condition	0.13	0.28	0.25	0.08	1.00				
6	Factor 5: Learner's peer influence	0.10	-0.10	0.18	0.01	0.01	1.00			
7	Factor 6: Learner's gender issues	0.06	-0.01	-0.05	0.07	0.08	0.10	1.00		
8	Factor 7: Learner's cultural practices	0.29	-0.23	-0.18	-0.16	-0.19	0.63	-0.2	1.00	
9	Factor 8: Learner's socio-economic status	0.03	0.05	0.15	0.04	0.10	0.10	0.02	0.05	1.00

As displayed in Table 22, Pearson Correlations were calculated among the eight predictive variables. The findings indicate that, learner intelligence factor (factor 1) has a considerable high moderate positive relationship ($r = 0.35$) with the pupil's overall performance. Additionally, a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.25$) of learner's preferences to certain curriculum works (Factor 2) was recorded against pupil's overall performance. Moreover, time management (Factor 3), physical condition (Factor 4), peer influence (Factor 5), and gender issues (Factor 6) of the learner all recorded a correlational coefficient of $r = 0.14$, $r = 0.13$, $r = 0.10$, $r = 0.06$, with pupil's overall performance respectively. Finally, cultural practices ($r = 0.29$) and socio-economic status ($r = 0.03$) of the learner both correlated positively with pupil's overall performance respectively. As none of the correlations reached the .80 threshold, the analysis shows that no two variables are closely related.

The subsequent two methods for checking multicollinearity of the predictive variables were assessed-The tolerance levels and the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). According to Myers (1990) if the VIF is greater than 10 then multicollinearity may be biasing the regression model and a Tolerance statistic below 0.1 indicate serious problems with the regression model. Findings from the multicollinearity are presented in Table 23.

Table 23- *Collinearity Statistics for Predictor Factors*

Factor	Tolerance	VIF
Factor 1: Learner intelligence	.824	1.214
Factor 2: Learner preference	.858	1.165
Factor 3: Learner's time management	.940	1.064
Factor 4: Learner's physical condition	.861	1.162
Factor 5: Learner's peer influence	.974	1.027
Factor 6: Learner's gender issues	.984	1.016
Factor 7: Learner's cultural practices	.893	1.120
Factor 8: Learner's socio-economic status	.953	1.049

a. Dependent Variable: Learners' overall performance

From Table 23, the Tolerance ranges from 0.824 to 0.984 which are all substantially greater than 0.1 and the VIF values which range from 1.016 to 1.214 are significantly less than 10. Therefore, since the predictor factors correlated weakly, VIF values are less than 10 and Tolerance values are all greater than 0.1 there is no perfect multicollinearity among the predictor factors and hence there is no violation of the no perfect multicollinearity assumption.

Test of the Significance of Combined Factors

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the influence of a linear combination of predictor variables (Factors 1 - 8) with the implementation of curriculum (pupil's overall performance) in Ghana using the research hypothesis:

physical condition, Learner's peer influence, Learner's gender issues, Learner's cultural practices, and Learner's socio-economic status are displayed in this model. The *R* Square in a multiple regression represents explained variance that can be contributed to all the predictors in a progression. The *R* Squared gives explanatory power. In Table 24 the Model Summary shows the *R* Squared of .200 (.200 x 100 = 20.0%) or 20.0 of the variance in the dependent variable (Pupil's Overall Performance), the percentage of pupils who scored "Proficient" or better on the continuous assessment marks was accounted for by the predictive variables in the model. ($F = 30.585$; $df = 8, 978$; $p = .000$ or $p < .05$).

The purpose of the study was to discover the influence of each individual predictive variable on the dependent variable. Using the backward method of simultaneous multiple regression the following predictive variables were examined: Total Learner intelligence, Learner preference, Learner's time management, Learner's physical condition, Learner's peer influence, Learner's gender issues, Learner's cultural practices, and Learner's socio-economic status. Analysis was conducted to test the unique contribution between the predictive variables and the dependent variable by assigning coefficients to each predictive variable. The results of the coefficient test are displayed in Table 25.

Table 25- Regression Coefficient of three Standard Regression Models

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	3.385	.860			3.937	.000	1.698	5.072
T_Intelligence	.190	.024	.251		7.957	.000	.143	.237
T_Preference	.056	.011	.156		5.061	.000	.034	.077
T_TimeM	.058	.023	.074		2.523	.012	.013	.103
T_Physical	-.008	.026	-.009		-.305	.761	-.059	.043
T_Peer_In	-.044	.023	-.055		-1.915	.056	-.089	.001
T_Gender_Issue	-.044	.021	-.060		-2.079	.038	-.086	-.002
T_Cultural_Prac	-.060	.010	-.187		-6.193	.000	-.079	-.041
T_Socio_Eco	-.018	.010	-.056		-1.895	.058	-.037	.001

As displayed in Table 25, the beta weight and statistical significance were analyzed and examined. Based on the results of the beta weights, only three of the eight predictive variables showed no significance effect. They are: Physical condition of the learner = $-.305$ ($p = .761$), Peer influence on the learner $B = -1.915$ ($p = .056$) and Socio-Economic status of the learner = -1.895 ($p = 0.058$).

Test of significance of the reduced model.

To test this hypothesis, the stepwise method was used in the regression model to select the best possible model. The factors were entered in the following order: Factor 1, Factor 2, Factor 3, Factor 4, Factor 5, Factor 6, Factor 7, and Factor 8. This was based on the preliminary standard regression results. The stepwise method generated eight (8) regression models. To test the significance of the various models, the ANOVA table (Table 26) was inspected.

Table 26 shows the ANOVA of regression significance of the eight models. The statistics for the models are: Model 1: $F(1, 985) = 137.33$, $p = 0.000$; Model 2: $F(2, 984) = 85.12$, $p = 0.000$; Model 3: $F(3, 983) = 60.27$, $p = 0.000$.

However, the summary of the standard regression of the eight models have the following statistics as presented in Table 27.

Table 27- Summary of Standard Regression for eight Models.

Model	Change Statistics									
	R	R ²	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	Durbin-Watson
1	.350 ^a	.122	.121	1.464	.122	137.331	1	985	.000	
2	.384 ^b	.147	.146	1.444	.025	29.001	1	984	.000	
3	.394 ^c	.155	.153	1.438	.008	9.157	1	983	.003	
4	.394 ^d	.155	.152	1.438	.000	.003	1	982	.960	1.46
5	.400 ^e	.160	.156	1.435	.005	5.848	1	981	.016	
6	.405 ^f	.164	.159	1.433	.003	3.960	1	980	.047	
7	.444 ^g	.197	.191	1.405	.033	40.776	1	979	.000	
8	.447 ^h	.200	.194	1.403	.003	3.591	1	978	.058	

a. Predictors: (Constant), T_Intelligence

b. Predictors: (Constant), T_Intelligence, T_Preference

c. Predictors: (Constant), T_Intelligence, T_Preference, T_TimeM

d. Predictors: (Constant), T_Intelligence, T_Preference, T_TimeM, T_Physical

e. Predictors: (Constant), T_Intelligence, T_Preference, T_TimeM, T_Physical, T_Peer_In

f. Predictors: (Constant), T_Intelligence, T_Preference, T_TimeM, T_Physical, T_Peer_In, T_Gender_Issues

g. Predictors: (Constant), T_Intelligence, T_Preference, T_TimeM, T_Physical, T_Peer_In, T_Gender_Issues, T_Cultural_Prac

h. Predictors: (Constant), T_Intelligence, T_Preference, T_TimeM, T_Physical, T_Peer_In, T_Gender_Issues, T_Cultural_Prac, T_Socio_Eco

i. Dependent Variable: Students'overallperformance

Model 1 ($R = .350$, $R^2 = .122$), Model 2 ($R = .384$, $R^2 = .147$), Model 3 ($R = .394$, $R^2 = .155$), Model 4 ($R = .394$, $R^2 = .155$), Model 5 ($R = .400$, $R^2 = .160$), Model 6 ($R = .405$, $R^2 = .164$), Model 7 ($R = .444$, $R^2 = .197$), Model 8 ($R = .447$, $R^2 = .200$). Since the multiple correlations of the full model (Model 8) is the highest ($R^2 = .200$) of the eight models, we fail to reject the null hypothesis (H_0) that there is not any other significant combination of factors better than the full-model.

Table 27 shows the regression coefficient Model 1, Model 2, Model 3, Model 4, Model 5, Model 6, Model 7 and Model 8. Since there is not any other significant combination of factors better than the full-model (Model 8), it

was the one used for the main analysis. Therefore, the final regression equation for the unstandardized β - coefficients was:

$$Y_i = (b_0 + b_1 X_{i1} + b_2 X_{i2} + b_3 X_{i3} + b_4 X_{i4} + b_5 X_{i5} + b_6 X_{i6} + b_7 X_{i7} + b_8 X_{i8}) + \varepsilon_i$$

Pupil overall performance $_i = b_0 + b_1$ Learner intelligence + b_2 Learner preference + b_3 Learner's time management + b_4 Learner's physical condition + b_5 Learner's peer influence + b_6 Learner's gender issues + b_7 Learner's cultural practices + b_8 Learner's socio-economic status + ε_i

Comparative importance of the factors

Table 28 shows the zero-order, parts and partial correlation of significant factors.

Table 28- Zero-order, Partial and Parts Correlation of Significant Factors

Correlations				
Factors	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Part-Square
T_Intelligence	.350	.247	.228	.048
T_Preference	.246	.160	.145	.021
T_TimeMgt	.139	.080	.224	.052
T_PhysicalCon	.133	-.010	-.009	.00
T_Peer_Influ	-.095	-.061	-.055	.00
T_Gender_Issues	-.063	-.066	-.059	.00
T_Cultural_Prac	-.288	-.194	-.177	0.03
T_Socio_Eco	-.033	-.060	-.054	0.00

a. Dependent Variable: students' overall performance

Zero-order correlation (Pearson's correlation) is the correlation coefficients of the individual factors with the dependent factor (Pupil_overall_performance). The Part-squared values indicate the contribution of individual factors to the total R^2 (overall fit of the regression model). Time management of learners (Factor 3) is the most important factor for determining the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana with 5.2% (Part-Square = 0.052) to the value of R^2 . This was followed by

learners' intelligence (Factor 1) which contributed 4.8% (Part-Square = .048) to the value of R^2 . This was followed by the cultural practices of the learner (Factor 7) which contributed 3.0% (Part-Square = .03.) to the value of R^2 . Learner preference (Factor 2) contributed 2.1% (Part-Square = .021) to the value of R^2 . This was finally followed by the contribution of the rest of the variables to the value of R^2 .

H_0 = Female learners' influence on curriculum implementation in basic schools will not significantly differ from their male counterparts.

In order to answer research hypothesis two, descriptive statistics and an Independent Samples T-Test were employed to determine the differences between male and female learners' influence on curriculum implementation in basic schools. Before the analysis was carried out, Independent Samples T-Test assumptions were assessed. Assumption of homogeneity of variance across the independent variables (Learner Factor) was also assessed. The findings indicated that the assumption was not violated because Levene's test for equality of Variances for each of the eight learner factors was non-significant $\{p = 0.44$ (learner intelligence), $p = 0.48$ (learner preference), $p = 0.78$ (time management), $p = 0.29$ (physical condition), $p = 0.52$ (peer influence), $p = 0.69$ (gender issues), $p = 0.76$ (cultural practices), and $p = 0.14$ (socio-economic)}. It can, therefore, be assumed that the variances are roughly equal and the assumption is tenable. The result underlying the assumptions of Independent Samples T-Test indicates that the analysis was tenable. Therefore, Table 29 presents the results of the t-test analysis.

Table 29- Independent-samples t-test of Learners' influence on Curriculum Implementation in Basic Schools

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. D	df	T	Sig.
T_Intelligence	Male	497	16.94	2.079	1063	-.060	.952
	Female	568	16.95	2.038			
T_Preference	Male	484	29.18	4.956	1048	-1.758	.079
	Female	566	29.65	3.807			
T_TimeMgt	Male	492	15.59	2.114	1049	2.317	.021
	Female	559	15.30	1.903			
T_PhysicalCon	Male	486	18.53	1.815	1042	1.386	.166
	Female	558	18.37	1.853			
T_Peer_Influ	Male	496	14.83	2.164	1063	-2.907	.004
	Female	569	15.18	1.774			
T_Gender_Issues	Male	484	16.52	2.196	1017	2.076	.038
	Female	535	16.25	2.050			
T_Cultural_Prac	Male	499	19.44	4.887	1070	1.604	.109
	Female	573	18.96	4.904			
T_Socio_Eco	Male	493	31.26	4.515	1057	-1.541	.124
	Female	566	31.71	4.973			

The results as presented in Table 29 indicate that female basic school learners' opinion on the influence of their intelligence is having more impact on the performance slightly above ($M = 16.95$, $SD = 2.038$) their male ($M = 16.94$, $SD = 2.079$) counterparts in the country. From Table 29, the result of the analysis indicates that there was no statistical significant difference between the two groups ($t = -0.06$, $df = 1063$, $p = 0.95$). For the magnitude of the effect size, Mean differences and Cohen's d (effect sizes) were computed between male basic school and female basic school learners' assessment of intelligence level of the learner. Cohen's d was computed to compare the magnitude of differences between basic school learner using, $d = \frac{2t}{\sqrt{df}}$ (Cohen, 1969; Thalheimer & Cook, 2002). Cohen's guidelines for effect size are as follows: Cohen's $d = 0.20$ or less is considered small, Cohen's $d = 0.50$ is moderate, and Cohen's $d = 0.80$ is considered large (Cohen, 1969). Even though the magnitude of this difference was very small based on Cohen's

effect size (0.004 or 0.4%), results showed a non-significant discrepancy between male and female learners' perception of learner intelligence.

The *t*-test analysis presented in Table 29 further reveals that majority of the female learners asserted that their preference for certain curricular work ($M = 29.65$, $SD = 3.8$) had an impact on their performance than their male colleagues ($M = 29.18$, $SD = 4.9$). The difference between the perceptions of the two participants (male and female) in the study was not statistically significant ($t = -1.76$, $df = 1048$, $p = 0.79$). Mean differences and Cohen's *d* (effect sizes) were computed between male basic school learners and female basic school learners' assessment of their preference in terms of certain academic work. Cohen's *d* was computed to compare the magnitude of differences between basic school learners using, $d = \frac{2t}{\sqrt{df}}$ (Cohen, 1969; Thalheimer & Cook, 2002). Even though the magnitude of this difference was very small based on Cohen's effect size (0.11 or 11%), results showed a non-significant discrepancy between male and female learners' assessment and their preference in terms of certain curricular work.

Analysis as presented in Table 29, more so, suggests that most of the male learners asserted that their style of time management with regards to academic work ($M = 15.59$, $SD = 2.11$) had an impact on their performance than their female colleagues assertion ($M = 15.30$, $SD = 1.9$). The difference between the perceptions of the two participants (male and female) in the study was statistically significant ($t(1049) = 2.31$, $p = 0.21$). The magnitude of the differences in the means was very small. Cohen's *d* was computed to compare the magnitude of differences between basic school learners using, $d = \frac{2t}{\sqrt{df}}$ (Cohen, 1969; Thalheimer & Cook, 2002). Even though the magnitude of this

difference was small based on Cohen's effect size (0.14 or 14%), results showed a significant discrepancy between male and female learners' assessment of their style of time management with regards to academic work.

Again, the results of the Independent Samples T-Test conducted to compare the physical condition of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum mean scores for males and females show there was a difference in the mean scores. However, the difference was not statistically significant for scores for males ($M = 18.53$, $SD = 1.82$) and females [$M = 18.37$, $SD = 1.85$; $t(1042) = 1.39$, $p = .166$]. The magnitude of the differences in the mean scores was very small (Cohen's effect size = 0.086 or 8.6%).

On the average, female participants' perception of the influence of peer on the learner in the curriculum implementation process was greater ($M = 15.18$, $SD = 1.8$) than male participants' perception ($M = 14.83$, $SD = 2.16$). This difference was statistically significant $t(1063) = -2.91$, $p = 0.004$; however, it did represent a small effect size (Cohen's effect size = 0.18 or 18%).

Furthermore, findings from the Independent-Samples T-Test conducted to match the gender issues of the learner that affect the implementation of the basic school curriculum mean scores for males and females show there was a difference in the mean scores. The difference, according to the SPSS output, was statistically significant for scores for males ($M = 16.52$, $SD = 2.19$) and females [$M = 16.25$, $SD = 2.05$; $t(1017) = 2.07$, $p = 0.038$]. The magnitude of the differences in the mean scores was small (Cohen's effect size = 0.13 or 13%).

Findings as indicated on Table 29 reveal that on average, male learners' view of the cultural practices of the pupil that influence curriculum implementation differ ($M = 19.44$, $SD = 4.88$) from their female ($M = 18.96$, $SD = 4.90$) counterparts in the country. From Table 29, the result of the analysis indicates that there was no statistical significant difference between the two groups ($t = 1.60$, $df = 1070$, $p = 0.109$). For the magnitude of the effect size, Mean differences and Cohen's d (effect sizes) were computed between male basic school and female basic school learners' assessment of the cultural practices of the learner. The magnitude of the differences in the mean scores was small (Cohen's effect size = 0.098 or 9.8%).

Finally, the results in Table 29 indicate that there was a slight difference in the observations of the participants when it came to socio-economic status of the learner. The results indicated that female learners ($M = 31.71$, $SD = 4.97$) were of the view that basic school learners' socio-economic status did influence curriculum implementation than their male ($M = 31.26$, $SD = 4.51$) counterparts. The differences between their views about the socio-economic status was not statistically significant ($t(1057) = -1.54$, $p = 0.12$; however, it did also not represent a small-sized effect Cohen's $d = 0.095$ (9.5%).

Discussion of Results

This section of the chapter presents the discussion of the results and the interpretation of the findings in relation to the research questions designed to guide the study.

Characteristics of the Respondents

The results on the gender of the respondents show that there were more girls in the basic schools in Ghana than boys. This confirms the Ministry of Education's (2015) report that the ratio of girls is higher to that of boys in Ghanaian basic schools. However, girls have been known to stop schooling for some reasons as they go through formal education. The problem is how to maintain this ratio as both sexes climb higher the academic ladder (Kuwonu, 2015).

On the gender basis of the respondents' schools, the results reveal that very few of the respondents were studying in a girls school. The majority of the respondents were in a mixed school. This means there are more mixed schools than single-sex schools with mixed classes at the basic school level. This does not augur well for effective implementation of the basic school curriculum; for, a large scale study in South Carolina Department of Education by The Huff Post (2015) found that single-sex class increased the academic success and attitude towards learning.

When the participants ticked the age range appropriate to them, the result showed that the bulk of the sample was within the age range of 15-17. The finding here is that the majority of the basic school pupils in Ghana enrol in the primary school either a year before age six, at age six, or a year after age six. This finding is in consonance with the official starting age proposed by the Ministry of Education (2013). The implication is that these pupils have the required developmental capabilities for the implementation of the basic school curriculum. The results also reveal that there are over-aged pupils studying at the basic school level in Ghana. These are those who for one reason or the

other could not start school on time. This finding confirms Akyeampong, Djangma, Oduro, Seidu, and Hunt's (2007) assertion that there are over-aged pupils in Ghanaian basic schools. These pupils need counselling in order to cope with the academic environment and to complete school.

The first variable on the learner factor for the implementation of the basic school curriculum investigated in this study was the learners' intelligence. Research Question 1: "What is the intelligence level of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum?" was designed to help ascertain the intelligence level of the learners for the implementation of the basic school curriculum. The results from the data collected on this research question are as follows: The respondents' performance in a story problem on subtraction show that 29.4% of them have problem with mathematics as they failed to get the answer correct. When the respondents were also tested on addition problem to find the number that comes next in a given series, the results show that 31.2% of them had the answer wrong. A third mathematical question asked the respondents to find the three values of a given grid. The result showed that 58.9% of them could not solve the problem. The difficulty levels of the questions were 0.68, 0.43, and 0.53 respectively. These three questions were all based on mathematics and the other side of the results show a generally good performance of pupils in mathematics at the basic school level in Ghana. According to Gardner (as cited in Koch, 2013) these learners have mathematical intelligence which is a good recipe for successful academic work. However, the results also reveal that the study of mathematics remains a problem to many learners at the basic school level in Ghana. This finding confirms Ntim's (2014) finding that basic school pupils in

Ghana have problem with mathematics achievement. The finding suggests that the basic school pupils also have problem with the mathematics related subjects. Their performances in these subjects would, therefore, be below expectation.

Again, respondents were asked to match two vehicles (a boat and a train) with what they move on, and the result show that 63.7% of them had the answer correct. Another question asked them to choose from a number of options the one that can be arranged to form a 3-letter word in English. The result show that 63.7% had the answer correct. The respondents were also asked to find the odd one among a given set of names of some regions in Ghana. The result was that 53.8% of them had the answer correct. The item difficulty levels were 0.65, 0.65 and 0.53 respectively. The finding is that the basic school pupils in Ghana generally perform well in English, Social Studies and the related subjects. This finding contradicts finding from a study conducted by Etsey, Smith, Gyamera, Koka, deBoer and Havi (2009) which indicated that the quality of basic education in Ghana is at a cross roads. The current finding shows that all is not lost with basic school instruction in Ghana. This augurs well with the effective implementation of the basic school curriculum.

However, as the results show, there is also the finding that many basic school pupils in Ghana have problem with studying English language and Social Studies. This finding corroborates Poku's (2008) assertion that performance of students in English language in most institutions in Ghana continues to deteriorate as the students have problem studying these subjects. This finding is worrying as English language and Social Studies are two of the

core subjects that help basic school pupils gain admission to the Senior High School (Anyan, n.d.). Oduro (2007) has argued that pupils' poor performance at the basic school level provides essential blocks to continue to higher education.

A further investigation into the learners' intellectual preparedness for the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana on three other issues yielded the following results: 61.5% of the respondents have it easy understanding the content of their text book while the rest find it either difficult or very difficult to do that. Textbooks contain the content of the curriculum. They serve as the main source of subject matter both to the teacher and the learner at the implementation stage. The learners' understanding of the content of their textbook, therefore, is a very important factor for effective curriculum implementation. But the finding here is that whereas majority of the basic school pupils have it easy understanding the content of their textbooks, a significant number of them have some degrees of difficulty understanding the content of their textbooks. Mlambo (2011) has argued that a learner's level of understanding affects his academic performance, and hence the implementation of the curriculum. If learners do not understand the content of their textbooks, then what do they learn? The finding suggests that the basic school pupils have reading problems as these textbooks have been standardized to suit their academic abilities.

Still on the learners' intelligence, the result shows that 57.6% of the respondents find it easy to create stories. The finding is that, whereas the basic school pupils in Ghana are able to create their own stories, and to tell them, some do not have that linguistic intelligence (Gadner, as cited in Koch, 2013).

The skill of creativity is a very important element of essay writing; and pupils' assessment both internally and at the BECE level involves essay writing. Pupils' deficiency in creating stories is a setback to effective curriculum implementation. The finding is worrying because if pupils cannot create stories then they cannot write good essays which they are required to do at each stage of their formal education. Naglieri and Bosntein (as cited in Candrasekaran, 2013) have contended that creativity and academic achievement contribute immensely to effective implementation of the curriculum.

Finally, on the learner intelligence, when the respondents were examined on the issue of mathematical intelligence, the result shows that 61.5% of them have difficulty working with numbers, logic, and solving problems. The finding is that the respondents lack logical intelligence (Gadner, as cited in Koch, 2013). Gadner, posited that learners with logical or mathematical intelligence excel in science subjects. Thus, the reverse occurs at the basic school level in Ghana since logical intelligence is lacking among the pupils. This finding confirms an earlier finding on the practical mathematics questions the respondents answered on their intelligence level. But generally, the intellectual level of the learner for implementing the basic school curriculum in Ghana is above average.

The qualitative data used to validate the quantitative data on the learner intelligence yielded the following results: In all the 23 lessons observed, the pupils generally answered oral questions correctly in accordance with the tenets of the topics being treated. The few incorrect answers were corrected by the teachers. In none of the lessons did any of the learners ask a critical

question or contributed through discussion. They gave only straightforward answers, probably as the questions asked by their teachers were mostly recall questions. The finding here is that, the pupils' intellectual capabilities are in consonance with the demands of the basic school curriculum. Thus, the observation result confirmed the general finding from the quantitative data on the variable, learner intelligence.

The second variable on the learner factor for the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana investigated in this study was the learners' physical condition. Research Question 2: "What is the physical condition of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum?" was designed to ascertain the state of the learners' physical condition for the implementation of their curriculum. The results are discussed as follows:

When the respondents expressed their views on how they feel taking part in Music and Dance, the result show that 60.6% of them find it either difficult or very difficult taking part in Music and Dance. The finding is that the pupils have problem when taking part in Music and Dance. The benefits of participating in Music and Dance cannot be overemphasized as it has physical, mental, emotional, and social implications (Crowe, 2007; Kwan, 2013, & Wirth, n.d.) among other benefits. As pupils take part in Music and Dance, they exercise the body and become strong and healthy for academic work. Music correlates with the other subjects (Manford, 1996). Therefore, having difficulty taking part in Music and Dance undermines effective curriculum implementation at the basic school level.

The results on the learners' physical condition also show that 67.8% of the respondents find it easy when using computer keyboard and mouse. The

implication is that, whereas many of the pupils can use computer keyboard and mouse to do computer work, the others cannot. Doyle (n.d.) has asserted that pupils who can use computer keyboard and mouse have developed their physical skills for academic work. It, therefore, implies that pupils who cannot use computer keyboard and mouse lack physical development skills. As the computer is now used greatly in education for multi purpose (Barrera-Osorio & Linden, 2009; Suppes, n.d.), some of the pupils' inability to use computer keyboard and mouse paints an unpleasant picture for curriculum implementation at the basic school level since they would not be able to access information from the internet or type their own work on the computer.

Another issue in connection with the learners' physical condition investigated by this study is the state of their concentration. The result shows that 69.0% of the respondents find it easy concentrating on their academic work. The finding is that the learners' level of concentration for the implementation of the basic school curriculum is above average. Cags (2012) has argued that stress affects concentration and eventually students' academic performance. Thus, the absence of stress increases a student's performance. This finding is a factor for effective curriculum implementation at the basic school level.

In a mainstream classroom, hearing what the teacher says is very necessary for effective academic work. When the respondents expressed their views in relation to the state of their auditory function, the result shows that 77.8% of them do not have any hearing impairment as they find it easy hearing what their teachers say. The finding is that the auditory functioning of the respondents is good enough to let them hear what their teachers say clearly

during lesson delivery. This is likely to exert some influence on the implementation process. But the 22.0% of the respondents who indicated having difficulty hearing what their teachers say cannot be ignored as these pupils are studying in mainstream schools where no special attention is given to those with hearing problems. Khan et al (2010) and Kevin, Meagan, and Adele (2013) found that students with hearing loss performed poorly academically. Khan et al. concluded that hearing loss can affect the academic performance of primary school pupils. Thus, in this study, the learners' auditory sense is having mixed effect on the academic performance of the pupils.

Reading is an essential element of formal education. When the reading capabilities of the respondents were investigated by this study, the result shows that 80.9% of them find it easy reading any written material. The finding is that the respondents generally do not have reading problem. This means they are well sighted and can read whatever is written on the black or white board and in their exercise or note books as well as their textbooks and story books. This development augurs well for effective implementation; for, Glewwe, Park, and Zhao (2016) found that improvement in pupils' sight through the wearing of glasses enhanced their academic performance. And so those who do not even wear glasses and have good sight would equally perform well academically. But the 18.6% of the respondents with various degrees of reading difficulty cannot pass without comment. The problem is that no special attention is being given to these pupils as their plight is even not known by their teachers. The problem will, therefore, persist and be compounded. This would affect their academic performance negatively as

according to Glewwe et al, low vision pupils perform below the level of their academic capacity.

Futhermore, the results show that 77.8% of the respondents find it easy writing legibly. The finding is that, the respondents can write so legibly that their handwriting can be read by their teachers, their friends as well as they themselves without any difficulty. Doyle (n.d.) has asserted that a child's ability to write legibly is as a result of the development of the child's physical skills which eventually affect the implementation process as much writing is done by the pupil for personal reference and assessment. The rest of the respondents who cannot write legibly pose a threat to effective instructional work. Teachers and examiners would find it difficult to make meaning out of what these pupils write for assessment. Sheffield (as cited in Scanlon-Dise (2008) found that students with illegible handwriting are very likely to get lower grades than students who write legibly.

Finally, on the physical condition of the learner, the result shows that 72.2% of the respondents find it easy taking part in physical education lessons. Finding it easy taking part in physical education lessons is good, as such lessons among other things, develop pupils' psychomotor skills, serve as recreation from theoretical academic work, releave stress, and refresh the individual (Schwarzenegger, Chrisman, & Coleman, 2005). With sound and healthy body, pupils can participate well in the implementation process. Marple (2011–2012) has cautioned that students' temporary medical disability prevents attentiveness in regular day class or alternative educational programme. Therefore, the finding that majority of the respondents find it easy

in taking part in physical education lessons is welcome news for curriculum implementation

The general finding on this variable is that the learner has good physical condition for the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. This finding portrays the current state of the physical condition of the learner as Research Question 2 of this study was designed to investigate.

The qualitative data used to confirm the quantitative data on the learners' physical condition were based on the pupils' responsiveness to the bell and their attentiveness. From the interviews made, the interviewees described how responsive their classmates are to the bell. The field data show that the basic school pupils are responsive to the bell. This is evident in the descriptions used by the interviewees to describe how responsive their classmates are. For instance, one interviewee's response to the question, How responsive are your classmates to the bell? was, *They are very responsive. They run at the sound of the bell to the classroom or the assembly ground as the case may be.* Another interviewee said, *They are responsive. They rush to the assembly ground.* And one of them simply said, *They rush to class.* When these responses were examined together with the observation schedule, the results show that the basic school pupils are generally responsive to the bell. The finding is that the basic school pupils make themselves physically ready for the implementation of the basic school curriculum. The expressions such as "they rush", and "they run" show the seriousness these pupils attach to their academic work during school hours. Thus, their responsiveness to the bell helps in preventing loss of instructional time (Ohize, Onwuka & Ibrahim, 2011).

The third variable on the learner factor for the implementation of the basic school curriculum investigated in this study was the learners' preference for certain curricular work. Research Question 3 was designed to elicit data on this variable and the results are as follows:

Teachers play a major role in the teaching and learning situation. When this study ascertained whether the respondents like their teachers or not, the result shows that 89.9% of them indicated that they like the teachers teaching them. The finding is that, the learners have a high level of liking for the teachers who teach them. This suggests that there is a pupil/teacher rapport in the basic schools in Ghana. Pupil/Teacher rapport creates an enabling environment for fruitful academic work. Pupils liking their teachers mean they feel at home approaching and learning from their teachers. This creates conducive atmosphere for the implementation of the curriculum at their level. Moltalvo, Mansfield and Miller (2007) found that when students like a teacher, they experience motivational and achievement benefits.

A follow up question to find out why the pupils like their teachers revealed that 92.3% of the respondents indicated that their teachers relate well with them. The finding is that the basic school teachers have good relationship with their pupils. This kind of relationship may be what has created in the pupils the liking for their teachers. Moltavo et al. (2007) found that this kind of relationship augurs well for effective academic work. This finding confirms the previous finding that there is good relationship between teachers and pupils at the basic school level in Ghana.

Meinerney (2013) has stated that students' preferences differ across subjects, and Hasni (2015) has added that students' prefer subjects that are

closely tied in with their daily lives. When this study investigated these statements in connection with the implementation of the basic school curriculum, the result shows that 77.0% of the respondents indicated that they like all the subjects taught at the basic school level. The finding is that majority of the respondents do not have preference for studying different subjects aside those that have been prescribed for them by the G.E.S. This means they wholeheartedly accept whatever content they are presented with. This finding is at variance with what the literature holds as Barbara et al. (1989), Bridgstock (2013), Hasni (2015), Mark et al. (2014), Mcinerney (2013), Quin (2012), VARK (2006), and Weber and Custer (2005) have all affirmed that there is learner preference for certain curricular activities among students. A possible explanation to the current finding is that the basic school pupils in Ghana are not given any options to choose from as the subjects are prescribed for them at that level by the Ministry of Education.

However, the 22.3% of the respondents who disclosed that they do not like all the subjects they study at school are the significant few who cannot be overlooked. These pupils do not have interest in some of the subjects they learn at school and yet they are being forced to learn them. MacCarthy (2014) and Murphy (2013) have argued that there is much power in students' interest in a topic and that this interest exerts powerful influence on students' academic and professional choices which can also allow people to overcome academic difficulties or perceptual disabilities. Thus, these pupils' dislike for certain subjects is a threat to curriculum implementation under a centralized curriculum implementation as what is practiced in Ghana.

A teacher's method of teaching is a factor for curriculum implementation. Appropriate teaching method used yields the desired results and vice versa. When the issue of teaching method was investigated, the result shows that 89.4% of the respondents like their teachers' way of teaching. The finding is that the basic school pupils have a stronger liking for the way their teachers teach them. The finding suggests that the teachers employ variety of approaches to satisfy a) the visual learners who learn best through visual experience and find diagrammes and graphs useful, b) the aural learners who learn best through listening and find discussion, debate and audio materials useful, c) the read/write learners who learn best through written materials, d) the kinaesthetic learners who learn best through practical application, and e) the multimodel learners who have preference for a combination of the above (VARK, 2006). The pupils' liking for their teachers' way of teaching is likely to exert some influence on the implementation of the basic school curriculum.

Still on learner preference, this study investigated the issue of essay writing among basic school pupils in Ghana. This was to find out whether Reiner et al.'s (2002) assertion that answering essay type questions is a challenge to some students is relevant to the Ghanaian situation. The results reveal that 85.3% of the respondents indicated that they like answering essay type questions. The finding is that the basic school pupils in Ghana like answering essay type questions. The finding confirms an earlier finding in this study that the pupils have a liking for creating stories which also relates to essay writing. Good essay writing skills by learners is a recipe for effective curriculum implementation (Fava-Verde, Manning & Harvey, 2007). However, the results also show that 13.1% of the respondents have difficulty

writing essays. Quin (2012) found that some learners dislike writing activities such as writing essays and this affect their academic output. Thus, Reiner et al's assertion is some how confirmed in this study.

VARK (2006) has indicated that one of the ways that learners prefer to take-in and give out information is through discussion, and that such learners are aural learners. Discussion enables the aural learner to gain new knowledge from fellow learners and also foster the understanding of concepts taught. It promotes the acquisition of new vocabulary and eloquence in the aural learner. When this study investigated this issue about the aural learner, the result shows that 85.8% of the respondents learn better through discussions. The finding is that the respondents have preference for using discussion as a means of acquiring knowledge. Thus, majority of the basic school pupils are aural learners. Barbara et al. (1989) described them as patterned learners who seem to be more comfortable when allowed to make personal interpretation of new information and to show this interpretation in a non-judgemental situation.

VARK (2006) has cautioned that those aural learners may have difficulty taking notes and so prefer to record lectures for future learning. Now the fact is that the basic school pupils hardly carry out this exercise of recording lessons for future learning. This development is likely to have some influence on the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

Finally, with reference to Hasni's (2015) assertion that students prefer subjects that are closely related to their daily lives, this study investigated the issues of the respondents' preference for business related subjects. The result shows that 85.8% of the respondents want to learn business related subjects. The finding is that the respondents have preference for subjects that would

equip them with skills for earning a living. The finding confirms the student survey report of 2012-2013 from grid school applicants worldwide which revealed that the most popular courses were business and its related subjects (Bridgestock, 2013). The implication is that non-business related subjects like Ghanaian language and culture and Religious and Moral Education would not receive the expected attention from the pupils. However, this finding contradicts an earlier finding in this study that the pupils like all the subjects they learn at school; for not all these subjects are business oriented. The general finding on the learner preference is that, the learner has a high level of preference for certain curricular activities for the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

The qualitative data used to confirm the quantitative data on the learners' preference were in connection with the pupils' engagement and willingness (MacCarthy, 2014). When the interviewees described how their classmates behave towards teachers during lessons, the field data revealed two conflicting situations in the classrooms.

In the first instance, the interviewees described their classmates as putting up good behaviour towards their teachers during instruction time. Expressions used to describe how the pupils behave towards their teachers during instructional time included the following: 1) *They behave well and pay attention*, 2) *They keep quiet and listen to them*, 3) *They pay attention when teachers are teaching and ask questions*, 4) *They concentrate and take part in answering questions*.

Showing good behaviour towards their teachers during instructional time suggests that these pupils like their teachers and, therefore, do not want to

do anything to offend them. This finding confirms another finding in the quantitative data of the learner preference that the basic school pupils in Ghana like their teachers. Pupils liking their teachers is a factor for curriculum implementation.

The second finding from the interviewees on how their classmates behave towards their teachers is that the pupils misbehave during instructional time. Statements used to describe the situation included the following: 1) *Sometimes they misbehave, and do not pay attention.* 2) *They do not behave well. They tease some of the teachers.* 3) *Sometimes they shout at teachers when the teachers disgrace them.* Misbehaving towards their teachers means disrespecting them, and this suggests that those pupils do not like their teachers. This finding conflicts with the finding in this study that the basic school pupils like their teachers.

The fourth variable on the learner factor for the implementation of the basic school curriculum investigated in this study was the learners' time management practices. Research Question 4: How do basic school pupils manage their time in relation to the implementation of the curriculum at that level? This was designed to ascertain how the learners at the basic school level in Ghana manage their time in relation to the implementation of their curriculum. The results elicited on this research question are discussed as follows:

The availability of electricity and television sets in most parts of the country has provided a means of entertainment for the average Ghanaian. People have access to several television channels to watch one programme or the other. These programmes are dominated by both local and foreign movies.

At the time of this study, an Indian movie titled ‘Kumkumbagya’ was shown almost daily by some of the television stations. This study investigated whether the learners watch movies. The result shows that 56.6% of the respondents watch movies on television. Some of these movies last for several hours as they are in series. The finding is that the learners waste their time on watching movies at the expense of their academic work. The finding confirms Bennet et al. (2010) and Douglas’ (2012) assertion that many learners waste their time through watching television. When learners do not decide on how to spend their time and keep a learning environment, their academic work suffers (Keeley, 2011).

Again, on the issue of watching television, respondents expressed their views on whether or not they watch television news. The result shows that 80.4% of them watch television news. The finding is that, here again, the respondents spend at least one hour a day watching television news as watching television news is now done at certain times in a day and also in the evening and it mostly lasts for an hour. They do this at the expense of their academic work as in many instances the news items are not academic oriented. Thus, Bennet et al. (2010) and Douglas’ (2012) worry that many learners waste their time through watching television news is here again confirmed.

Also on the learners’ time management, this study examined how the respondents spend their time on computer games. The result reveals that 34.7% of the respondents play computer games. This amounts to time wasting as playing these games lasts for several hours and sometimes extends deep into the night. These are those who, according to Keeley (2011), do not make decision on how to spend their time and keep learning environment. Onuka

(2012) has described such learners as lacking high level of self-discipline which results from sacrifice of certain not very essential things that economists would refer to as opportunity for the time management effectiveness.

Following Mbiti's (2010) assertion that the African is religious and given the fact that the basic school pupils in Ghana are also religious, the respondents were made to express their religious commitment. The result shows that 88.4% of them engage in religious activity of some sort. The finding is that the learners spend part of their learning time at home on religious activities such as attending church service or going to the mosque to pray, and attending choir rehearsals among others. As these activities usually take some time, engaging in them reduces the learners' study time outside school hours and that can influence their academic performance especially, if they do not list their study time (Nellen, 2000).

This study investigated whether the respondents study to meet the demands of the various subjects that they learn at school. The result shows that 76.3% of them do study to meet the demands of each subject. The finding is that, the learners apportion their learning time based on the demands of each subject. Some of the subjects studied at the basic school level such as English language have several components. For instance, English language has Grammar, Comprehension, and Composition. To do well in this subject, therefore, requires giving attention to each of these components of the subject. Also, a subject like Mathematics which many pupils have problem with needs more attention from the individual learner. Therefore, the finding is in consonance with Onuka's (2012) assertion that effective time management

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entails allotting time to listed priorities for the attainment of the desired outcome.

After school hours, pupils engage themselves in diverse activities some of which are not academic oriented. When the respondents expressed their views on the kind of activities they engage in after school, the result was that only 4.4% of them continue with their academic work after school. All the others engage in activities such as assisting their parents/guardians with their work or playing with their friends to release tension. The results suggest that after school, pupils spend their time on other activities rather than on their academic work. Pupils who assist their parents/guardians with their work after school hours are mostly those who come from economically disadvantaged homes. They mostly assist their parents/guardians with their economic activities to raise money to support the family income. A significant number of the respondents also spend their after school hours just playing with their friends to release tension. All these unplanned activities sometimes last for several hours and render the pupils very tired for effective academic work in the evening. The issue of contention here is that these pupils sacrifice most of their learning time at home for nonacademic activities and that leads to time loss. The finding confirms Rogers and Mirra's (2014) finding that economic and social stressors outside of school contribute to time loss which eventually influence academic work.

A further investigation made on how the basic school pupils manage their time reveals that 85.6% of the respondents have personal time table to guide their private studies. The rest have time schedules for television programmes on what would be telecast and at what time, leisure schedule to

enable them know when to relax, and social activity schedule which directs them on what would be happening in town and at what time. The finding is that the respondents apportion time to regulate their personal studies and other non academic activities. The finding relates to Hamzah, Lucky and Joarder's (2014) finding that students' management of their time is very important to their academic success. Thus, the basic school pupils aiming at becoming successful in their academic work have prepared personal time tables to guide their studies.

A follow up question on the issue of using personal time table yielded the result that 41.2% of the respondents allot one hour for the various activities on their personal time table. The others either allot 30 minutes or 1½ hours, while others do not allot specific time but stay on a schedule according to their interest in the activity. The finding is that the basic school pupils apportion time to themselves to regulate their activities. This finding suggests that the basic school pupils are in a way organized. This augurs well for effective curriculum implementation; for, Lynn (2008), Nellen (2010), Onuka (2012), and Sheehy (2012) have posited that when learners list study time, use study calendar, and allot time to listed priorities, it makes them organized for their studies.

Finally, on the learners' time management practices, the respondents expressed their views on their use of whatsapp. Whatsapp is social media software by which people interact with one another through instant messaging on the phone (Rouse, n.d.). Those who use the software many a time spend a lot of time exchanging messages on the phone. When this study elicited information from the respondents on their use of whatsapp, the result shows

that 84.5% of them are not on whatsapp. The finding is that the basic school pupils do not waste their time on whatsapp activities at the expense of their books. On the contrary, a number of them (15.5%) are on whatsapp. This finding confirms Yeboah and Ewur's (2014) finding that some students in Ghana are on whatsapp. Yeboah and Ewur's study among other things revealed that "whatsapp takes much of students' time, results in procrastination related problems, destroys students' spellings and grammatical construction of sentences" (p. 157). They explained that whatsapp results in difficulty in balancing online activities and that whatsapp distracts students from completing their assignments and adhering to their private studies time table. Whatsapp among the basic school pupils might be one of the reasons accounting for the problem they have with studying and using English language. The general finding on the learners' time management practices in relation to the implementation of the basic school curriculum is that, they do not waste their time on nonacademic issues.

The qualitative data collected to validate the responses from the quantitative data on the learner's time management were in connection with the pupils' punctuality and regularity at school as well as their response to the bell. When the interviewees responded to the issue of the pupils' punctuality, the field data show that they are very punctual. The reason assigned to their punctuality was that they usually have early morning classes, and that roll call is conducted at 6:30 am. To the question, "How punctual are your mates to school?", most of the interviewees simply answered, *Very punctual*. The few who responded, *Not punctual* gave the reason that, *Some come from far places*. The finding is that the pupils manage their time well to enable them

them revealed that, *Sometimes they communicate when teachers are not around.* Thus, it is the presence of the teachers that makes them do independent work. Those whose classmates do not do independent work explained that some of their mates make noise and misbehave while doing exercises. One interviewee retorted, *They copy from friends when teachers are not around.* The finding here is that the absence of teachers from the classroom during exercises causes the basic school pupils to copy from their friends. Thus, lack of supervision during class exercises is militating against the effective implementation of the basic school curriculum. Esia-Donkor and Ofosu-Dwamena (2014) have found that supervision is a factor for effective curriculum implementation.

When the interviewees described how their classmates behave during submission of exercises, the field data revealed that they were divided along two lines. One group said their mates submit their exercises promptly. The other group painted a different picture as according to them their friends delay in submitting their exercises. Statements such as, *Some sometimes keep their exercises, Some hide their exercises for fear of being caned, Some hide their exercises because if the answer is wrong, they will be punished, and Sometimes some don't submit their exercises on time* emerged. The finding is that some basic school learners do not submit their exercises. Delayance in the submission of exercises or refusal to submit exercises do not allow for prompt feedback to be given to the learner. Teachers would also not know how their teaching is impacting on their learners. These developments would definitely impact negatively on curriculum implementation.

When the classes were observed for attentiveness, the field data showed that the pupils were generally attentive. However, certain behaviours displayed by the pupils rendered their attentiveness artificial. Some were seen playing with either their exercise book, pen, ruler, flipping the pages of books, sleeping on the desk, or copying notes as teaching was ongoing. Some were seen looking outside instead of focusing on what was going on in the classroom. Engaging in these activities during instructional hours results in time wasting on the part of the learner and affect curriculum implementation (Douglas, 2012).

The fifth variable on the learner factor for the implementation of the basic school curriculum investigated in this study was the state of peer influence on the learner in relation to the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. Research Question 5: What peer influence on the learner affects the implementation of the basic school curriculum? was designed to ascertain the state of peer influence among the basic school pupils. The results are as follows:

To begin with, when the respondents expressed their views on the kind of friends they spend most of their time with, the result shows that 53.7% of them spend most of their time with their school mates. The rest spend their time mostly with their siblings, those in their religion or friends who are neither their siblings nor their classmates. The finding is that the learners mostly move with peers who would positively influence their academic work. Thus, the realization is that moving with school/classmates would provide them the opportunity to discuss matters of academic interest. The finding relates with Johnson's (2000) statement that a child's peers can have an impact

on his/her academic achievement. However, another revelation from this result is that a significant number of the learners mostly move with friends other than their school/classmates. These friends may exert negative influence on the learners as they draw the learners' attention away from academic issues (Ryan, 2013) thereby impacting negatively on the implementation of the curriculum.

Facebook is a social networking website and service where users post comments, share photographs and links to news or other interesting content on the Web, play games, chat live, and even stream live video (Nations, 2016). The respondents' involvement in Facebook activities was investigated in this study and the result shows that 27.9% of them have Facebook with many friends that they engage in divers communicative acts with. The result suggests that some of the basic school learners engage in interactive activities with friends in Facebook that are likely to negatively affect their academic work. Rouis, Limayem, and Salehi-Sangar (2011) found that extensive use of Facebook by students with extraverted personalities leads to poor academic performance. However, "students who are more self regulated control their presence on these platforms more effectively" (p. 962).

There are verbal reports that some youth of Ghana engage themselves in smoking which sometimes results in some of them losing their senses. This study investigated that issue of smoking among pupils and the result shows that 2.5% of the respondents and their friends either sometimes or always smoke some substance. The finding is that there is some amount of smoking among the basic school pupils in Ghana even though the majority of them do not smoke. This finding confirms an earlier finding by Jamil, Khan, and Atta

(2012) that some adolescents between the ages of 12 and 19 engage in smoking for various reasons including access to smoking materials, lack of proper education, prevailing environment and some socio-cultural as well as psychological factors and peer group influence. Owusu-Dabo, Lewis, Mitcheil, Gilmore and Brifton (2009) have reiterated that smokers have friends who smoke. Owusu-Dabo et al.'s finding is confirmed by the current finding as the respondents indicated that they engage in the smoking activities with their friends. Thus, the number of teenage smokers can be countless and may account for some of the indiscipline behaviours towards some teachers reported on in this study.

Owusu-Dabo et al. (2009) found that smokers are more likely to drink alcohol. This study accordingly enquired from the respondents whether they and their friends engage in drinking alcoholic beverages. The result shows that 8.0% of them either sometimes or always drink alcoholic beverages with their friends. The finding is that some basic school pupils in Ghana engage in drinking alcoholic beverages. Alcohol intake by learners damages the parts of the brain used for learning and memorizing, the verbal skills as well as the visual-spatial cognition (Onyebuchukwu, Sholarin & Emerruwa, 2015). Onyebuchukwu et al. found that there is a significant relationship between alcohol consumption and academic performance and that there is a significant effect of alcohol consumption on academic performance. The finding confirms Owusu-Dabo et al.'s finding that there is alcohol intake among the Ghanaian youth.

Still on peer influence, the respondents gave their responses on how often they and their friends learn together. The result reveals that 97.1% of

them and their friends either sometimes or always learn together. The finding is that the basic school pupils and their friends learn together. Learning together with their peers is likely to impact positively on the implementation of the curriculum as it has a lot of benefits such as asking one another questions, discussing ideas, learning to listen and to make constructive criticism and providing social benefit such as preparing them to work in teams as required in various employment settings, in the home, and in the community (Doymus & NCTM, as cited in Gokkurt, Dun dar, Soyilm, & Akgun, 2012).

The respondents also expressed their views on whether they and their peers engage in sharing ideas about their academic work. The result shows that 95.5% of them either sometimes or always share ideas about their academic work with their friends. The finding is that the basic school pupils do share ideas about their academic work with their friends. This act of the respondents' sharing ideas about their academic work with their friends is likely to have positive influence on the implementation of the curriculum as it gives them the opportunity to learn from one another (Gokkurt et al., 2012).

Finally on the influence of peers on the learners' academic work, an issue about the respondents going to game centers was investigated. The result shows that 22.7% of them either sometimes or always go to game centres. The finding is that some basic school pupils go to game centres either to watch others play or to play games themselves at the expense of their academic work. Game centres are established by some individuals where the youth resort to either individually or with their friends and play some games using electronic devices for a fee. Thus, it is peer influence that drives these learners

proficiency in English language is a factor for effective curriculum implementation.

Some basic school pupils in Ghana speak different mother tongue than the Ghanaian language they write at school. This study inquired from the respondents whether their local dialect in any way interferes with their school work. The result shows that 36.3% of the respondents indicated that their local dialect interferes with their school work. The finding is that the local dialect of some of the basic school pupils in Ghana interferes with their school work. Thus, there is both positive and negative influence of the local dialect on the pupils' academic work. Those who indicated that their local dialect interferes with their school work are those whose local dialect is not what they write in school. These pupils have the problem of translating from their local dialect to the Ghanaian language they write at school and that always poses problem to them. The finding agrees to Noemi's (2008) assertion that the local dialect exerts either positive or negative influence on the learning situation. The general finding on the pupils' cultural practices in relation to the implementation of the basic school curriculum is that there is some amount of cultural interference with the learners' school work at the basic school level.

The qualitative data used to validate the quantitative data collected on the cultural practices of the learner was in connection with the type of economic activity that takes place in the pupils' locality. The field data collected on this issue show that the main economic activity in the pupils' locality was farming, followed by fishing and trading. Asked as to how these cultural practices influence their school work, the interviewees stated that the economic activities cause absenteeism among their classmates. The

interviewees from the farming areas reported that their friends lose part of their school contact hours as a result of the assistance they give to their parents on the farm. One of them answered, *Sometimes our parents take some of us to their farms to assist them, thereby absenting ourselves from school.* Another interviewee said, *Sometimes some of our mates are sent to the farm by their parents. They, therefore, absent themselves from school that day.* Another one said, *They take us to help them on their farms or we ourselves decide to go and help them as some of us have single parents.* The data imply that some of the basic school pupils in Ghana assist their parents with their farming work during school hours and this affect their academic work. But one of the interviewees throwing more light on the situation said that, *They help their parents on the farm after school or sometimes early in the morning.* The implication is that some of the assistance given by the pupils to their parents/guardians on the farm does not affect the pupils' academic work all that much as the assistance is given outside school hours. But, such pupils who go to the farm before coming to school are likely to be late for school and thereby lose some of the contact hours.

The field data from the interviewees living near water bodies painted a similar picture. One of them said, *It affects school work negatively as some of my colleagues go to the beach before coming to school.* The implication is that these pupils engage in this economic activity to support their schooling. Another interviewee had this to say, *Sometimes they assist their parents at the beach and this makes them be late at school.* Thus, this cultural practice encourages lateness among the basic school pupils. This statement suggests that the assistance offered by the basic school pupils to their parents does not

affect their academic work as it is done outside school hours. But the argument is that it reduces their individual study time.

Those interviewees who responded that trading is the main economic activity in their locality said trading affect their studies. For instance, to the question as to how their cultural activity affect learning in their school, one of them responded, *Negatively, because some of us help our parents to trade.* Another one retorted, *Sometime we leave the classroom and go and sell.* Leaving the classroom to go and sell confirms the earlier finding in this study that some of the basic school pupils do not stay up to the closing time before they go home. This cultural practice of the learner affects curriculum implementation.

The seventh variable on the learner factor for the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana investigated in this study was the socio-economic statuses that are likely to affect curriculum implementation. Research Question 7: Which socio-economic status of the learner affects curriculum implementation? was designed to elicit the respondents' views on this variable. The results obtained are discussed as follows:

Parents'/Guardians' influence on their wards' education cannot be overemphasized (Sreekanth, 2011). This study inquired into parents'/guardians' support to their pupils' education and the result shows that 91.5% of the respondents indicated that their parents support their education. The finding is that the parents/guardians of the basic school pupils support their wards' education. This support may include the supply of their daily meals and buying of school related items. When pupils get these basic necessities from their parents/guardians, the former get more focused on their academic

work. The absence of this parental support results in forcing some of the pupils to absent themselves from school. The finding, therefore, suggests a positive influence on the implementation of the curriculum (Sreekanth).

Parents'/Guardians' interest in their wards' education influence the latter's education (Donkor, 2010). One way of parents/guardians showing this interest is by encouraging their wards. When this study investigated parents'/guardians' encouragement to their wards' education, the result shows that 91.5% of the respondents indicated that their parents/guardians encourage them to study hard. The finding is that parents/guardians of the basic school pupils in Ghana show interest in their wards' education. This encouragement serves as motivation to the learners to aim at achieving higher academic laurels. The finding relates to Donkor's assertion that parental interest motivates learners to study hard. This development is good for curriculum implementation.

Donkor (2010) has alluded to the fact that parents'/guardians' income determines how supportive they would be to their wards' education. This study, therefore, enquired from the respondents whether their parents'/guardians' income in anyway influence their education. The result shows that 63.8% of the respondents' parents' income influences their education. The finding is that the Ghanaian parents/guardians provide the educational needs of their wards as it is within their means to do so. This finding may be as a result of the fact that this study was conducted in only public schools where parents/guardians only partner other stakeholders in the provision of education unlike the private schools where parents/guardians bear the full cost of their wards' education. The finding confirms Huseynpur,

Moghaddam, and Rezaire's (2015) finding that a family's socio-economic status influences the children's education.

Parental education has been found to correlate with their children's academic performance (Chevalier, 2004). Investigation made by this study into this issue of parental education and their pupils' academic work yielded the result that 55.7% of the respondents' parents'/guardians' education influences their wards' school work. The finding is that the educational background of the parents/guardians of the basic school pupils influences their wards' education. This finding confirms earlier finding by Dubow, Boxer, and Huesmann (2009) and Ermisch and Pronzato (2010) that parental educational level influences their children's educational outcomes. The finding suggests that pupils with parents/guardians with low or no educational attainment are likely to perform below their level of academic ability. Thus, the 44.3% of the respondents who indicated that their parents'/guardians' education does not influence their school work are performing below their academic abilities. These developments are having mixed influence on the implementation of the basic school curriculum.

Paulu et al. (2005) have posited that giving homework to pupils serves as extension of school work to the home of the learner. And parents have some special role to play to ensure that their wards do their home work. This study, therefore, enquired from the respondents whether their parents/guardians assist them in doing their homework. The result shows that 59.4% of them indicated that their parents/guardians assist them with their homework. The finding is that whereas some parents/guardians of the basic school pupils in Ghana assist their wards with their homework, others do not. The finding is likely to exert

mixed influence on the implementation of the basic school curriculum for the reason that those whose parents/guardians do not assist them with their homework stand to lose all the benefits associated with that act. Paulu et al. and Cooper, Robinson and Patall (2006) have argued that parental assistance to their wards' homework among other things provides avenue for families to be involved in their children's education, create greater understanding between families and teachers and to inform families about what their children are studying. These enable such parents/guardians to take informed decisions about their wards' education.

It has been alleged that children from large families get little attention from their parents/guardians and that this affects their upbringing. The investigation of this study on this allegation revealed that 59.7% of the respondents come from a large family. The finding is that many of the basic school pupils in Ghana come from large families. This development is likely to have uncertain effect on the implementation of the basic school curriculum as there are conflicting findings on the issue in the literature. Whereas Ella, Oduk, and Ella (2015) found that family size and family type have significant influence on students' academic performance, Black, Devereux and Salvanes (2005) found a negative correlation between family size and children's education and Cooper et al. (2006) found a negative impact of having more than one sibling. Thus, the influence of pupils' family size on their academic work needs further investigation.

Caro (2009) has intimated that the economic background of learners influences their performance at school. Result from an inquiry made on this issue in this study shows that 61.4% of the respondents come from

economically advantaged homes. The finding is that the economic background of the basic school pupils is good enough to support their education. This finding supports an earlier finding in this study that the parents/guardians of the learners supply their school needs. The finding suggests that these learners come from middle income families who according to Okioga (2013) engage actively in their wards' education and development by using controlled organized activities and foster a sense of entitlement through encouraged discussion. However, it is also evident from the result that a significant number of the respondents come from poor economic background which can adversely impact on their school work and life after school (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001; Forouk, 2013).

Having good sleep refreshes the entire physical being of pupils for their daily activities including their academic work. Parents/Guardians have the responsibility of providing bedding items to enable their wards sleep well. When respondents expressed their views on this issue, the result shows that 35.6% of them do not have good bedding items to make them sleep well. The finding is that some basic school pupils in Ghana do not sleep well as they lack good bedding items. Having quality and quantity sleep are closely related to pupils' learning capacity and academic performance (Curcio, Ferrara & De Gennaro, 2006). When learners sleep well and have enough of it, it increases their learning capacity and improves their academic performance. On the contrary, insufficient sleep adversely affects the academic performance of learners. Gikunda, Abura, Kiriungi and Muchiri (2014) found a correlation between sleep quantity and academic performance and warned that lack of adequate sleep negatively affect the performance of learners. But earlier on,

Eliason, Eliason, Gould, and Eliason (2002) had found no correlation of total sleep time with academic performance. Nevertheless, the issue of sleep can be said to be having some effect on the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

Many Ghanaian children, for one reason or the other, perform some household duties in addition to their schooling (Feigben, 2010). When the respondents expressed their views on this issue, the result reveals that 60.1% of them indicated that performance of household duties take much of their learning time at home. The finding is that performance of household duties is affecting the implementation of the basic school curriculum as it takes much of the learners' learning time at home. The finding confirms an earlier finding by Emmanuel (2015) and Golart and Bedi (2008) that performance of household chores results in lack of time for doing school activities such as homework. Majority of pupils who have this problem are girls who do household chores as traditional roles assigned to girls at home. Goulart and Bedi found that domestic work impacts educational outcomes for pupils.

Lastly on the socio-economic status of the learner, this study investigated the issue of child labour among the basic school pupils in Ghana. The result shows that 51.8% of the respondents indicated that they work to support their schooling as the family income is not large enough to cater for all their educational needs. The finding is that, the basic school pupils sometimes engage in some form of child labour to support their schooling. This finding confirms the earlier findings of Afenyadu (2010) and the Inter-Agency Country Report (2016) that there is child labour among teenagers in Ghana. Both studies underscored the negative effect of child labour on school

performance. For instance, while Afenedu has warned that child labour affects children's education and, therefore, their future, the Inter-Agency Country Report has posited that child labour interferes with pupils' schooling as it makes such pupils shoulder the burden of studying and working at the same time. Other studies reiterating the negative effects of child labour on pupils' academic work include those of Bezerra, Kassouf, and Arends-Kuenning (2009) and Orazem and Gunnarsson (2003). The findings suggest that the issue of child labour is impacting negatively on the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. However, the other side of the argument is that, but for the engagement in child labour, the affected pupils would not come to school at all for want of their basic necessities for their schooling. The general finding on this variable is that the socio-economic status of the learner is having some influence on the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

The qualitative data gathered on the respondents' socio-economic status centred on the issue of working with their parents either on the farm, at the river or sea or in trading (Refer to qualitative data on pupils' cultural practices on pages 256 – 257).

The eighth variable on the learner factor for the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana investigated in this study was the gender issues of the learner that are likely to affect curriculum implementation. Research Question 8: What gender issues of the learner affect curriculum implementation in Ghanaian basic schools? was designed to investigate this issue. The results obtained are discussed as follows:

Abradu (2013) has stated that sexual harassment is rife in first cycle schools; and Agyepong (2010) had intimated that sexual harassment includes inviting the opposite sex for outing. When this study enquired from the respondents whether male teachers in anyway invite the female pupils to their homes, the result shows that 26.1% of them indicated that male teachers in their school either sometimes or always invite female pupils to their homes. The finding is that there is some amount of sexual harassment at the basic school level with male teachers being the perpetrators. The finding confirms earlier findings of Leach, Fiscian, Kadzaniva, Limani and Mashakanja (2003) and that of Lambert, Perrino, and Barreras (2012) that female pupils often undergo uncomfortable harassment from their male teachers. Leach et al. explained that there are several cases of teachers having affairs with girls in their school. This development does not augur well for effective implementation of the curriculum as in such instances the true academic performances of the girls are shadowed by either victimization for noncompliance or awarding of undeserved grades for compliance.

Apparently, those respondents who responded that male teachers sometimes invite girls to their homes are girls who might have fallen victims to this practice of such teachers. Abradu (2013) has warned that sexual harassment can seriously interfere with the victim's ability to concentrate or enjoy her studies and school experience.

On the same issue, the result shows that 26.4% of the respondents indicated that female teachers in their school either sometimes or always invite boys to their homes. The finding is that some female teachers in the basic schools perpetrate sexual harassment on the boys. Rape Crisis Network (2010)

found sexual violence against boys in Ireland. Benatar (2012) confirming Rape Crisis Network's finding, wrote that men are also victims of sexual assault. And lately, Berdahl, Magley and Waldo (2017) in confirmation have added that men as well as women sexually harass men. The finding is worrying as the pupils in the basic schools are too young for their teachers to be engaging in sexual activities with them. As it is in the case of the girls suffering similar fate from their male teachers, the actual academic performances of these boys would be overshadowed by either victimization for noncompliance or awarding of undeserved grades for compliance. Curriculum implementation suffers under both instances.

As a corollary to the issue of teachers inviting pupils of the opposite sex to their homes, the result shows that 18.1% of the respondents indicated that male teachers either sometimes or always play romance with girls in their school. The finding is that some male teachers in the basic schools in Ghana play romance with the girls in their school. This finding confirms the previous findings on the presence of sexual harassment against girls in Ghanaian basic schools. Lambert et al. (2012) and Leach et al. (2003) have all condemned sexual harassment perpetrated by male teachers against their school girls as it impacts negatively on the latter's academic performance and consequently on curriculum implementation.

On the same issue of playing romance, the result shows that 13.2% of the respondents indicated that female teachers in their school either sometimes or always play romance with the boys in their school. Thus, some of the female teachers in Ghanaian basic schools play romance with the boys in their school. This finding confirms the earlier finding in this study that there is

sexual harassment perpetrated by female teachers against boys in their school. Abradu (2013) has warned that sexual harassment can seriously affect the victims' ability to concentrate or enjoy their studies and school experiences. Curriculum implementation suffers under such circumstances.

The result also shows that 84.4% of the respondents indicated that male teachers in their school either sometimes or always send the girls on errands. The result reveals that male teachers in Ghanaian basic schools send the girls in their schools on errands. The purpose of the errands, the duration, and the location vary. The problem is that, many times girls sent on errands by their teacher miss part of a lesson taught or activity performed in their absence since these errands are mostly done during school hours. Studies conducted by Aden, Yahye, and Dahir (2013), Foy (2005), Guleker and Keci (2014), Schmulian and Coetzee (2005), and Teixeira (2013) all found that lose of instructional time affects students' academic performance; and hence curriculum implementation.

In a related investigation, the result shows that 77.2% of the respondents indicated that female teachers either sometimes or always send the boys on errands. The result reveals that female teachers in Ghanaian basic schools send the boys on errands. As in the case of the girls, these boys who are sent on errands by their female teachers miss some of the instructional time and that affects their academic performance (Aden et al., 2013; Dolton, Marcenaro, & Navarro, 2003; Foy, 2005; Kirby & McElroy, 2003).

One other allegation in relation to gender issue investigated in this study was gender favouritism on the part of teachers during instruction and marking of scripts. The result shows that 79.6% of the respondents indicated

that in learning certain subjects boys and girls are treated equally. The finding is that there is gender parity in the treatment given to basic school pupils by their teachers in learning certain subjects. However, some of them are discriminated against on gender basis when learning certain subjects. Sadker and Sadker (as cited in D'lasnow, 2011) found that there is gender bias in the classroom in favour of boys. For instance, boys get more learning instructional attention from the teacher than girls. Walker (2005) reiterated that males are typically called out in class more than females and that this impacts on the females' performance. Studies by Delaware State Education Association (2010) and that of MacNell, Driscoll, and Hunt (2014) have confirmed the presence of gender disparity in how boys and girls are treated in the instructional situation. This does not augur well for effective curriculum implementation.

The results also show that 66.6% of the respondents indicated that boys and girls receive equal treatment in relation to the marking of their exercises and examination scripts. The finding is that basic school teachers in Ghana do not mark their pupils' scripts by favouring one gender or the other. This is a good factor for effective curriculum implementation; for, Walker (2005) has stated that gender discrimination between boys and girls in academic cycles impacts on the performance of those discriminated against.

The results also show that a significant number (33.4%) of the respondents feel boys and girls are not treated equally in marking of exercises and examination scripts. This finding confirms an earlier finding of studies conducted by de Moira (n.d.), Farrell and Gilbert (1997-2017), Nott (2016), and Tisi, Whitehouse, Maughan and Burdett (2013) that there is evidence of

the existence of bias in examiners' awarding of marks. Some of the reasons cited for such bias are individual marker behaviour, the element of subjectivity in the decision making process of the examiners, and unfairness on the part of the examiners. Allegations on giving undeserved marks for sexual favour or as punishment for noncompliance has been confirmed by studies conducted by Morgan (2010), and Ongong and Akaranga (2013). Unequal treatment of pupils in the marking of their exercises and examination scripts casts a shadow on how curriculum implementation is faring as the falsified evaluation results would not let educational authorities and other stakeholders know the actual performances of the learners for effective decision making.

Discussion on Hypothesis 1

The findings in the regression model revealed that Time management of learners (Factor 3) is the most important factor for determining the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana and it contributed 5.2% (Part-Square = .052) to the total variance in the basic school curriculum implementation process. The finding relates to Time management for online learners' (n.d.) assertion that students' management of their time is very important to their academic success. Thus, the basic school pupils' aiming at becoming successful in their academic work, have prepared personal time tables to guide their studies. Time management of the learner includes: being organized, listing study time (Nellen, 2000), using a study calendar (Lynn, 2008 & Sheehy, 2012), allotting time to listed priorities (Onuka, 2012), deciding on how to spend time and keeping a learning environment (Keeley, 2011).

Also, it was found that basic school learners' intelligence (Factor 1) in the curriculum implementation process contributed about 4.8% (Part-Square = .048) to the total variance explained in the learners' contribution to the curriculum implementation process at the basic school level. On learner intelligence, Assemi and Sheikzade (2013) asserted that intelligence is very important in motivating a student to learn a course he/she selects to learn; and that the student's capability, talent and interest facilitate curriculum implementation. Effective intelligence activity requires concentration (Koch, 2013). Koch explained that if students are to understand a text or solve a problem, it is required of them to be creative by putting themselves in the place of the characters in the text or in the sphere of life that most naturally relates to the problem to be solved. This finding also is in line with what Mlabo (2011) argued on, that a learner's level of understanding affects his academic performance, and hence the implementation of the curriculum.

It was also found in the multiple linear regression that cultural practices of the learner (Factor 7) influence the basic school curriculum implementation process and it contributed about 3.0% to the total variance explained in the curriculum implementation process. This research result is in consonance with Noemi's (2008) assertion that a people's local dialect exerts either positive or negative influence on the learning situation.

Furthermore, it was also evident from the multiple linear regression that Learner preference (Factor 2) contributed about 2.1% of the total variance explained in the curriculum implementation process or learners' overall performance. Mark, Abante, Almendral, and Manansala (2014) found that learner characteristics such as learning preferences, physical and mental

capabilities, and learning styles impact the nature of the instruction. Mcinerney (2013) has stated that students' preferences differ across subjects, and Hasni (2015) has added that students' prefer subjects that are closely tied in with their daily lives.

Finally, even though the other factors (physical condition, peer influence, gender issues and socio-economic background of the learner) did not influence basic school curriculum implementation process significantly in this study, their impact in the total curriculum implementation process cannot be ruled out.

Discussion on Hypothesis 2

When the background characteristic (gender) of the learners is examined, their gender was found to be differentiating their influence on curriculum implementation in basic schools. However, only time management, peer influence and gender issues are the factors that are significantly differentiating their influence on the basic school curriculum implementation process. Specifically, more male learners seem to manage their time in the curriculum implementation process than female learners. In addition, the study results reveal that little more female learners tend to be influenced by their peers in the curriculum implementation process in contrast to male learners. Finally, the findings show that gender issues are also a great differentiator in the curriculum implementation process. The analysis shows that gender issues influence more male learners than female learners. These findings seem to be consistent with the related literature about the effect of certain background characteristics of learner's influence on the curriculum implementation process. Salami (2013) and Zembor and Blume (2011) postulated that there is

a significant effect of gender on the variables of academic ethics. On peer influence, most academics recognize that a child's peers can have an impact on his/her academic achievement (Johnson, 2000). Carrell, Malmstrom and West (2007), Lam (2012) and Majeed (2010) reiterated that the values of the peer group with whom the learner spends the most time are a stronger factor in the student's level of academic success; and that academic achievement is closely linked to peer influence.

Chapter Summary

The intellectual level of the basic school pupils for the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana is generally above average. However, some of the pupils have problem with studying English language, Mathematics and Social Studies. This confirms findings from earlier studies conducted by Etsey et al. (2009) and Poku (2008). On the physical condition of the learner for the implementation of the curriculum, the general finding is that the learner has good physical condition to undertake all the physical activities required by the academic situation. The general finding on the learner preference is that the learner has a high level of preference for certain curricular activities for the implementation of the basic school curriculum (Mcinerney, 2013; Quin, 2012; & VARK, 2006). On the learners' time management practices, the main finding is that they do not waste their time on nonacademic work, and this augurs well for curriculum implementation (Lynn, 2008; Nelson, 2000; Onuka, 2012; & Sheehy, 2012). The general finding on peer influence in relation to the implementation of the basic school curriculum is that there are some elements of peer influence on the learner that can affect curriculum implementation at that level. On the pupils' cultural practices, the general

finding is that there is cultural interference with the learners' school work at the basic school level. Furthermore, the study found that the socio-economic status of the learners is having some influence on the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. Moreover, this study found that gender is a factor in the academic performance of pupils in the basic schools in Ghana. Time management of the learner is the most important factor for the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the study

The purpose of this research was to examine the influence of the learner factor on the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. This became necessary for two reasons: 1) There is unsatisfactory curriculum implementational outcome at the basic school level in Ghana (Aboagye, 2007; Acheampong, 2009; Agyeman, 2012; Baku et al. 2012; Etsey, 2007; Ghanney, 2011; & Oduro, 2007), and 2) There is lack of empirical work on how the learner factor affects the implementation process the world over (Wang, 2006) of which Ghana is no exception. This is a threat to successful curriculum implementation, as no implementation can go on without the learner (Adentwi, 2000).

Accordingly, the following research questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- 1) What is the intelligence level of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum?
- 2) What is the physical condition of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum?
- 3) What learner preferences to certain curricular work exist at the basic school level?
- 4) How do basic school pupils manage their time in relation to the implementation of the curriculum at that level?
- 5) What peer influence on the learner affects the implementation of the basic school curriculum?

- 6) Which cultural practices of the learner influence curriculum implementation at the basic school level?
- 7) What socio-economic status of the learner affects curriculum implementation?
- 8) What gender issues of the learner affect curriculum implementation in Ghanaian basic schools?

Hypothesis (1)

H_0 = Learner factors will not relate individually and in linear combination to the implementation of the basic school curriculum

H_1 = Learner factors will relate individually and in linear combination to the implementation of the basic school curriculum

Hypothesis (2)

H_0 = Female learners' influence on curriculum implementation in basic schools will not significantly differ from that of their male counterparts H_1 = Female learners' influence on curriculum implementation in basic schools will significantly differ from that of their male counterparts.

To investigate the influence of the learner factor on the implementation of the basic school curriculum, a multi-pronged approach commonly referred to as embedded mixed methods (Caruth, 2013) was used. This method enabled me to collect, analyze and mix both quantitative and qualitative data in this study (Plano Clark, 2007). The population for this study comprised all Basic 9 (JHS 3) school pupils in the Central, Ashanti, and Northern regions of Ghana who were in school at the time of the study. The sample size used for this study was 1,079 basic school pupils drawn from the population through the simple random sampling and the convenient sampling techniques.

Questionnaire, semi-structured interview guide, as well as structured observation checklist were the instruments used for the data collection. The instruments for this study were pre-tested in two different schools outside the target population for the study. The Content Validity Index of the instruments was 0.94 with internal consistency of $\alpha = 0.821$ on the questionnaire instrument. The data collection lasted for six weeks. In each of the sampled schools, the questionnaire was administered to all the basic 9 pupils present, the school prefect was interviewed, an observation of a lesson was made, and the overall continuous assessment mark of each participant was collected. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages, standard deviation and means were used to analyze the data. Multiple Linear Regression and Independent Samples T-Test were used to statistically determine how the learner characteristics affect curriculum implementation at the basic school level in Ghana.

The results of the study are as follows: On the learner demographics, the results on the gender of the respondents showed that there are more girls in the basic schools in Ghana than boys and that the majority of the respondents were in a mixed school than single-sex schools with mixed classes at the basic school level. The results also revealed that there are over-aged pupils studying at the basic school level in Ghana.

Key Findings

The following are the key findings of the study based on the research questions and hypotheses:

Research Question 1: "What is the intelligence level of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum?" was designed to help

ascertain the intelligence level of the learners for the implementation of the basic school curriculum. The results show a generally good performance of pupils in mathematics at the basic school level in Ghana. There is also the finding that many basic school pupils in Ghana have problem with studying English language and Social Studies. The results also show that whereas majority of the basic school pupils have it easy understanding the content of their textbooks, a significant number of them have some degrees of difficulty understanding the content of their textbooks. But generally, the intellectual level of the learner for implementing the basic school curriculum in Ghana is above average. The qualitative data show that the learner's intellectual capabilities are in consonance with the demands of the basic school curriculum.

Research Question 2: "What is the physical condition of the learner for the implementation of the basic school curriculum?" was designed to ascertain the state of the learners' physical condition for the implementation of their curriculum. The results show that the pupils have problem when taking part in Music and Dance and that some of them are unable to use computer keyboard and mouse. The results also show that the learners' auditory functioning is good enough to let them hear what their teachers say clearly during lesson delivery. However, some of them have hearing loss. Lastly, the results show that majority of the respondents find it easy in taking part in physical education lessons. The qualitative data show that the basic school pupils make themselves physically ready for the implementation of the basic school curriculum. The general finding on this variable is that the learner has

good physical condition for the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

Research Question 3: What learner preferences to certain curricular work exist at the basic school level? was designed to investigate the kind of learner preferences that exist at the basic school level which are likely to affect curriculum implementation. The results show that the learners have a high level of liking for their teachers, and that there is pupil/teacher rapport in the basic schools in Ghana as a result of the good relationship existing between the teachers and the pupils. Lastly, the results show that apart from business related subjects, majority of the respondents do not have preference for studying different subjects aside those that have been prescribed for them by the G.E.S. The general finding on the learner preference is that, the learner has a high level of preference for certain curricular activities for the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. The qualitative data on the learner preference show that the learners behave well towards their teachers during instructional time because of their liking for the teachers. However, some of the pupils misbehave towards their teachers during instructional time.

Research Question 4: How do basic school pupils manage their time in relation to the implementation of the curriculum at that level? was designed to ascertain how the learners at the basic school level in Ghana manage their time in relation to the implementation of their curriculum. The results for this research question show that the learners apportion their learning time based on the demands of each subject; and that they have personal time tables which regulate their studies. Thus, the basic school pupils in Ghana are in a way

organized. The general finding on the learners' time management practices in relation to the implementation of the basic school curriculum is that, they do not waste their time on nonacademic issues. The qualitative data confirmed that the pupils manage their time well as they were found to be regular and punctual at school; but some of them play truancy. They also do independent work when their teachers are present during class exercises; but some of them either delay or do not submit their exercises for marking.

Research Question 5: What peer influence on the learner affects the implementation of the basic school curriculum? was designed to ascertain the state of peer influence among the basic school pupils. The results for this research question show that the learners mostly move with peers who would positively influence their academic work; but a significant number of them mostly move with friends other than their school/classmates. Some of the basic school learners engage in interactive activities with friends in Facebook that are likely to negatively affect their academic work. Lastly, the result shows that there are some amount of smoking and alcoholic drinking among the basic school pupils in Ghana. The general finding on peer influence in relation to the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana is that, there are some elements of peer influence on the learner that can affect curriculum implementation at the basic school level. The result from the qualitative data on the issue of peer influence shows that some of the basic school pupils and their friends run away from school before the closing time.

Research Question 6: Which cultural practices of the learner influence curriculum implementation at the basic school level? The results for this research question show that some of the basic school pupils do not take part in

Research Question 8: What gender issues of the learner affect curriculum implementation in Ghanaian basic schools? The results show that there is some amount of sexual harassment at the basic school level with both male and female teachers being the perpetrators. Also, some male teachers as well as female teachers in the basic schools in Ghana play romance with the pupils of the opposite sex in their school. There is also the evidence of the existence of bias in examiners' awarding of marks at the basic school level in Ghana. The general finding on research question 8 is that gender is a factor in the academic performance of pupils in the basic schools in Ghana.

On Hypothesis 1, the findings in the regression model revealed that Time management of learners (Factor 3) is the most important factor for determining the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. On Hypothesis 2, the findings show that gender issues are also a great differentiator in the curriculum implementation process.

Conclusions

The learner is one of the factors that affect the implementation of the basic school curriculum. The intellectual level of the learner, physical condition of the learner, the learner's preferences to certain curricular work, the learner's time management practices, peer influence on the learner, cultural practices of the learner, socio-economic status of the learner as well as gender issues of the learner all affect the implementation of the basic school curriculum. Time management of the learner is the most important factor for determining the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana with gender as a great differentiator in the curriculum implementation process.

The unexpected findings from this study include the following: (a) Questions asked by basic school teachers during instructional time are mostly recall questions. This makes the pupils give only straightforward answers that do not test their comprehension neither require any application. Thus, both teachers and pupils operate at only the first level of Bloom's Taxonomy (1956). The finding suggests that the teachers lack knowledge about how to set questions on the other levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, (b) Some pupils still walk long hours to school. These pupils may be those who come from very remote areas where there are no schools. The reason may also be that they do not like the schools around where they live, (c) Some basic school pupils do not submit their exercises for marking. This act may stem from the fact that their answers to the exercises given are wrong and, therefore, they fear to be punished by their teachers, and (d) Single parenthood is the cause of absenteeism among some basic school pupils. Most of the single parents are unemployed mothers who engage in petty trading which does not fetch them enough income to cater for their wards' school needs. In their bid to help increase the family income, pupils from these single parents help the parents to earn money; and this makes them absent themselves from school.

My overall opinion regarding this study is that, it has made bare the state of the learner factor and its influence on the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. Thus, it has achieved its purpose, attained its objectives and answered the research questions designed for it.

The insights revealed by this study are that: (a) Apart from the teacher factor, government and nongovernmental support system to education, the school factor, and issues relating to the planned programme itself (which

earlier researchers have studied), the learner factor exerts some influence on the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana, (b) the learner is more mentally, socially, and psychologically prepared for the implementation of the basic school curriculum than it has been speculated among the Ghanaian populace, (c) The quality of basic education in Ghana is not as bad as Etsey et al. (2009) have earlier on found, (d) The poor performance of some basic school pupils in certain subjects is the result of lack of options given with regards to choice of subjects to study at that level. They are made to study some subjects that they do not like, (e) Pupils' academic activities are mostly the lessons they have at school as they hardly continue with their studies at home, (f) Some of the indiscipline behaviour of the pupils towards their teachers is as a result of smoking and taking alcoholic drinks, (g) The dominance of mixed schools at the basic school level militates against the effective implementation of the curriculum at that level, (h) Pupils who perform poorly in essay writing have that problem because they simply do not like answering essay type questions and not that it is as a result of other factors.

The study has revealed the state of the various variables of the learner (intellectual level of the learner, physical condition of the learner, the learner's preferences to certain curricular work, the learner's time management practices, peer influence on the learner, cultural practices of the learner, socio-economic status of the learner as well as gender issues of the learner) and how each of them influences the implementation of the basic school curriculum. It has also showed the amount of influence each of these characteristics of the learner exerts on the implementation of the basic school curriculum in Ghana.

Recommendations:

Based on the outcome of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The teaching and learning of Mathematics, English and Social Studies should be given a boost at the basic school level by the stakeholders of education in Ghana.
2. The Ministry of Education in conjunction with the Ministry of Health should conduct periodic medical examination on the auditory and sight of the basic school pupils to identify those with problems for attention.
3. The GES should consider introducing specialization of courses at the basic school level (preferably at basic 7) to meet the preferential demands of the pupils for certain subjects.
4. Basic school teachers should adhere to the principles of supervision during evaluation periods to ensure independent work among their pupils. They should keep a checking list to ensure that all pupils submit their exercises for marking.
5. The Government should enact a law banning smoking and drinking of alcoholic beverages among basic school pupils. Parents, guardians, teachers, and the entire community should help enforce this law.
6. The CRDD and the religious bodies should meet on the issue of pupils' abstinence from certain curricular work on religious grounds and look for amicable solution.
7. The Government's school feeding programme should be extended to cover more schools, and governmental and donor support to education should be increased to help alleviate the plight of pupils from economically disadvantaged homes.

8. The GES should enforce its laws on sexual harassment at the basic school level to deter the perpetrators from that act.
9. Teachers and parents/guardians should teach pupils proper time management practices both at home and in school as it is the most important factor for curriculum implementation at the basic school level of education.
10. Stakeholders should give equal attention to both male and female pupils in the implementation of the basic school curriculum.

Suggestions for further research

This study was conducted in only public basic schools in Ghana. It is suggested that future researchers consider conducting it in private schools in the country to find out whether the same outcome would emerge.

Also, in a future research like this, it should be investigated whether there are occultic practices at the basic school level and how they influence curriculum implementation.

I also suggest that a future study be conducted to investigate the learner factor on the implementation of the Senior High School curriculum.

With the qualitative data, future researchers should consider including teachers in the interview.

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APPENDICE

A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

This questionnaire is about research being conducted to investigate how learners influence the teaching and learning process in their schools. You are requested to answer the questions as best as you can. The results are for academic purpose only, and confidentiality of your responses is highly assured.

Tick (✓) in one of the boxes provided your answer to each question posed.

SECTION A (Learner's Demographic Information)

1. What is your sex?
 - A Male
 - B Female
2. Which of the following age groups do you belong to?
 - A 15 – 17
 - B 18 – 20
 - C 21 – 23
3. Indicate the gender base of your school.
 - A. Boys school
 - B. Girls school
 - C. Mixed school

SECTION B (Learner Intelligence)

4. There are 10 people in a room. Three (3) leave, 2 fall asleep, and one dies from heart attack. How many people are left?
 - A 3
 - B 4
 - C 5
 - D 6
5. Which number comes next in the following pattern: 2, 6, 10, and 14?
 - A 16
 - B 18
 - C 20
 - D 22
6. Boat is to water as train is to.....
 - A Engine
 - B Road
 - C Rail
 - D Air
7. Which is the odd one among the following?
 - A Ashanti
 - B Volta
 - C Central
 - D Takoradi

8. Which of the following can be arranged into a 3-letter English word?

A tho

B gra

C kmt

D rso

9. 1, 2, 3; 2, 3, 1; What will the 3 values of the next grid be?

A 3, 1, 2

B 3, 2, 1

C 3, 2, 2

D 3, 1, 1

10. Indicate your difficulty level when performing each of the following tasks

Activity	Very Difficult	Difficult	Easy
Understanding the content of my textbook			
Telling or creating stories			
Working with numbers, logic, solving problems			

SECTION C (Learner's Physical Condition)

11. Indicate how you feel when performing each of the following tasks.

Activity	Very Difficult	Difficult	Easy
Taking part in music and dance			
Using computer keyboard & mouse			
Concentrating on my academic work			
Hearing what my teacher says			
Reading any written material			
Writing legibly			
Taking part in physical education lessons			

SECTION D (Learner Preference)

12. Indicate your level of agreement to each of the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
I like my teachers					
My teachers relate well with me					
As a boy, I like all the subjects I study at school (for boys only)					
As a girl, I like all the subjects I study at school (for girls only)					
I like my teachers' way of teaching					
I like answering essay type questions					
I learn better through discussions					
I want to learn business related subjects					

SECTION E (Learner's Time Management)

- 13 (a). What activities do you engage in after school?
- A. Assist my parents/guardians with their work
- B. Continue with my studies
- C. Play with colleagues to release tension

13 (b). Are you on whatsapp?

- A. Yes
- B. No

14. Which of the following do you have?

- A. Personal time table
- B. TV programme guide
- C. Leisure schedule
- D. Social activity schedule

15. How much time do you spend on your chosen schedule in 14 (a)?

- A. 30 minutes
- B. 1 hour
- C. 1½ hours
- D. No specific time allotted
- E. Time given according to my interest in the subject

16. Indicate whether you do or don't do the following.

Activity	Don't do	Do
I watch movies on television		
I play computer games		
I watch television news		
I engage in religious activities		
I study to meet the demands of each subject		

SECTION F (Learner's Peer Influence)

17. Indicate how often you and your friends engage in the following activities:

Activity	Never	Sometimes	Always
Smoking			
Learning together			
Sharing ideas about your academic work			
Drinking alcoholic drinks			
Going to game centres			

18. What kind of friends do you spend the most time with?
- A. School/Classmates
 - B. Siblings
 - C. Friends beside school/classmates
 - D. Peer interest groups (e.g. religious groups)
19. How many friends do you have in Facebook?
- A Below 50
 - B 51 – 100
 - C 101 – 150
 - D 151 – 200
 - E Above 200
 - F I don't have Facebook

SECTION G (Learner's Cultural Practices)

20. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree to each of the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
My religious background permits me to take part in music and dance					
Some of the taboos in my community affect my school work					
I can express myself well in English both orally and in written form					
I am comfortable when my teachers use English language to teach us					
My local dialect interferes with my school work					
I understand all the words in our reading materials					
Sometimes I do some work to earn money to support my schooling					

SECTION H (Learner's Socio-economic Status)

21. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree to each of the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
My parents/guardians support my education					
My parents/guardians encourage me to study hard					
My parents/guardians help me with my home work					
My parents/guardians' income influence my education					
My parents/guardians' education influence my school work					
My parents have many children					
I come from a poor family					
I have good bedding items that make me sleep well					
Performance of household duties take much of my learning time at home					

SECTION I (Learner's Gender Issues)

22. How often do the following types of harassments occur in your school?

Type of harassment	Not at all	Sometimes	Often
Male teachers inviting girls to their homes			
Female teachers inviting boys to their homes			
Male teachers sending girls on errands			
Female teachers sending boys on errands			
Male teachers playing romance with girls			
Female teachers playing romance with boys			

23. Indicate the areas you feel boys and girls are treated equally or otherwise in your school.

Area of Learning	Boys and girls are not treated equally	Boys and girls are treated equally
In learning certain subjects		
In learning all subjects		
Marking of exercises and exam scripts		

24. In your view how does the treatment affect academic work in your school?

- A. Negatively
- B. Has no effect
- C. Positively

B

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. How does your class behave towards teachers during lessons?

.....
.....

2. How does the class behave

(a) during exercises?.....

(b) submission of exercises?

.....
.....

3. (a) How punctual are your mates to school?

.....

(c) How regular are they?

4. What is their response to the bell?

.....

5. Do they stay up to the closing time?

.....

6. (a) What economic activity takes place in this locality?

.....
.....

(b) How does it affect learning in your school?

.....

C

OBSERVATION GUIDE

1. Punctuality

- A Generally punctual
- B Punctual
- C Less punctual
- D Not punctual

2. Response to the bell

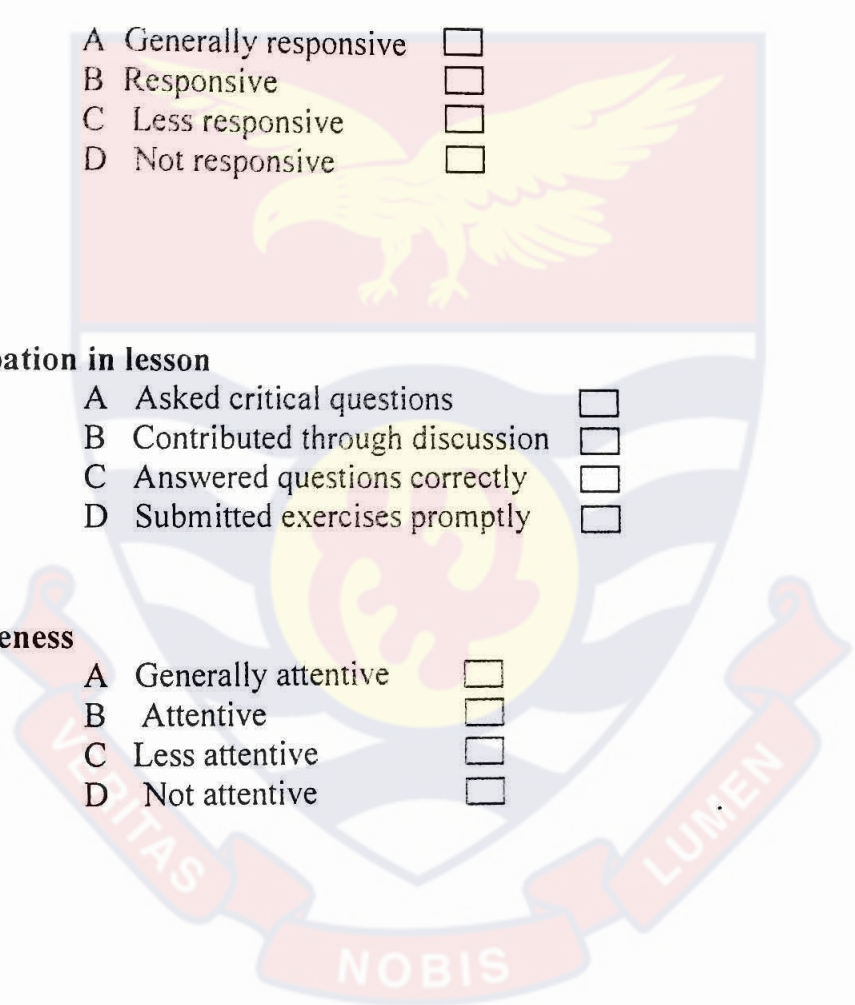
- A Generally responsive
- B Responsive
- C Less responsive
- D Not responsive

3. Participation in lesson

- A Asked critical questions
- B Contributed through discussion
- C Answered questions correctly
- D Submitted exercises promptly

4. Attentiveness

- A Generally attentive
- B Attentive
- C Less attentive
- D Not attentive



D

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UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref: DASSE/ED/ECT/14/005
Your Ref:

Date: 24th March, 2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

The bearer of this letter Mr. Hans Kweku Anderson is a graduate student of the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education of the University of Cape Coast, Ghana.

I would be grateful if you would kindly allow him to collect the information from your institution.

He requires some information from your institution for the purpose of writing a thesis as a requirement for the pursuit of PhD Degree Programme. His topic is "The learner factor on the implementation of the Basic School Curriculum in Ghana".

Kindly give the necessary assistance that Mr. Hans Kweku Anderson requires from you.

I will appreciate any help that you may be able to give.

PROF. KOFI TSIVANYO YIBOE
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

E

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD SECRETARIAT

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C/O Directorate of Research, Innovation and Consultancy

E-MAIL: irb@ucc.edu.gh

OUR REF: UCCIRBA/26

YOUR REF:

10TH AUGUST, 2016

Mr. Hans Kweku Anderson
Department of Art and Social Science
University of Cape Coast

Dear Mr. Anderson,

ETHICAL CLEARANCE – ID NO: (UCCIRB/CES/2016/07)

The University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board (UCCIRB) has granted **Provisional Approval** for implementation of your research protocol titled: “: The learner factor on the implementation of the basic school curriculum.”

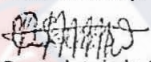
This approval requires that you submit periodic review of the protocol to the Board and a final full review to the UCCIRB on completion of the research. The UCCIRB may observe or cause to be observed procedures and records of the research during and after implementation.

Please note that any modification of the project must be submitted to the UCCIRB for review and approval before its implementation.

You are also required to report all serious adverse events related to this study to the UCCIRB within seven days verbally and fourteen days in writing.

Always quote the protocol identification number in all future correspondence with us in relation to this protocol.

Yours faithfully,


(Samuel Asiedu Owusu)
ADMINISTRATOR

ADMINISTRATOR
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
Date:

F

GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE

In case of reply the number and date
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Your Ref: _____



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

Regional Education Office

P O Box 1906
Kumasi.

25th October, 2016

ILANS KWEKU ANDERSON
DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION
WINNEBA


RE- APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE A STUDY

With reference to your letter dated 14th October 2016, I am happy to inform you that permission has been granted to your request of conducting a study in Junior High Schools in Ashanti Region. This is to enable you write your research on "The Learner Factor on the Implementation of Basic School Curriculum"

In the course of your research, kindly adhere to rules and principles governing the schools.

Accept my best wishes.

Thank you.


MARY OWUSU ACHIAW (MRS.)

REGIONAL DIRECTOR/ASHI

Cc: All MMDDEs, Ashanti

G

GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE

*In case of reply the
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Republic of Ghana

Regional Education Office
P.O. Box 111
Cape Coast.
1st April, 2016

Tel.: 03321-32333
Fax: 03321-32333
Email: gescentral@educa.gov.gh
My Ref. No. GES/CR/49 VOL. 38

Your Ref. No.....

INTRODUCTORY LETTER: HANS KWENU ANDERSON

The above stated name is a PHD student of the University of Cape Coast taking a course in Curriculum and Teaching. He is conducting a research on the Topic; "The learner factor on the Implementation of the Basic School curriculum in Ghana" and Central Region is one of the three regions that forms his population.

The University of Cape Coast wrote to the Management of the Ghana Education Service, Regional Education Directorate, Central, for permission to enable him access the Basic schools in the Region for the said exercise. Permission had been granted to him and the Directorate is by this letter introducing him and also informing all Metro, Municipal and District Directors of Education officially for your support and maximum co-operation for the exercise.

The department assured the Directorate that, the information collected would be treated with utmost confidentiality. It is our hope that your outfit will inform all Heads of Basic schools within your jurisdiction to offer him any assistance he may need.

Counting on your usual support and co-operation.

Thank you.

B.K. OFORI

AG. REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

CENTRAL

Distribution:

All Metro, Municipal and District Directors of Education, Central

CC: The Head

Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education
University of Cape Coast.

H

GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE

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My Ref. No.: SB.158/GES/NR/VOL.8



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

Regional Education Office
P.O. Box 4, E.R.
Tamale.
Tel. No.: 03720-23165
Fax No.: 03720-24716

Your Ref. No.

9th August, 2016

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

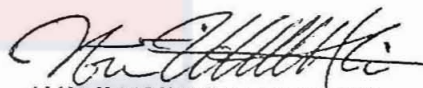
I am writing to introduce to you Mr. Hans Kweku Anderson a PhD. student of University of Cape Coast.

He is conducting a research titled "**The Learner Factor on the Implementation of the Basic School Curriculum**".

The applicant is seeking information from Teachers of Secondary and Basic Schools in the Northern Region to enable him complete the research.

Kindly give him the necessary information and assistance regarding his research theme.

Thanks for your usual cooperation.


ALHAJI MOHAMMED HAROON
REGIONAL DIRECTOR (NR)

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