UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CAPITATION GRANT POLICY AT THE BASIC EDUCATION LEVEL IN ATWIMA NWABIAGYA DISTRICT: TEACHERS AND HEADTEACHERS' PERSPECTIVE

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A Dissertation in the Department of Educational Leadership, Faculty of Education and Communication Sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, University of Education, Winneba in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of Master of Philosophy (Educational Leadership) degree

JULY, 2016

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, NIMAKO OWUSU DORME, declare that this Thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE:……

DATE:…….

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR. STEPHEN BAAFI-FRIMPONG

SIGNATURE:……..

DATE:……...

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, my gratitude goes to the Almighty God for giving me wisdom, knowledge, understanding, healthy body and mind, mercies and direction to complete this study. Secondly, I would like to express the deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Stephen Baafi Frimpong, whose encouragement, guidance and support enabled me to come out successfully with this study. Without his frequent comments, feedback and encouragement to me throughout my studies this thesis would not have been possible.

Again, I am exceedingly grateful to all teaching staff of Nkawie Senior High School (Technical) especially those on the Examination Committee and in Economics Department who in diverse ways supported me throughout the duration of this study. Additionally, I express my profound appreciation and gratitude to my parents, siblings, nephews and nieces for their prayers and financial support during my academic journey.

Furthermore, I acknowledge the efforts of my wife, Madam Asamoah Comfort, my dear children, Yaw Amofa Nimako, Owusu Dorme Nimako and Adwoa Afriyie Nimako who have been the source of inspiration to me. Moreover, my heartfelt gratitude goes to all headteachers and teachers of the sampled basic schools in Atwima Nwabiagya District and staff of Atwima Nwabiagy District Education, whose contributions made this study a reality. Finally, I acknowledge and appreciate all authors whose scholarly works have referenced and cited in this thesis.

DEDICATION

To my parents, Nana Owusu Dorme and Madam Akua Afriyie and Madam Comfort Asamoah who is my wife. Also, I dedicate this research to my dear children, Yaw Amofa Nimako, Owusu Dorme Nimako and Adwoa Afriyie Nimako and all my family members.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AG - Auditor General

ANDE - Atwima Nwabiagya District Education

ASP- Autonomous School Programme

BECE- Basic Education Certificate Examination

BESIC – Basic Education Sector Improvement Credit

CCT - Conditional Cash Transfer

CG - Capitation Grant

CGP - Capitation Grant Policy

CR S- Class Size Reduction

CSSC – Community Secondary School Construction

DACF – District Assemblies Common Fund

DEO - District Education Office

DfID – Department for International Development

EFA – Education for All

EQI- Educational Quality Input

EQUIP2- Educational Quality Improvement Programme 2

ERP – Economic Recovery Programme

FCUBE - Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education

FTI - Fast Track Initiative

GER - Gross Enrolment Rate

GES – Ghana Education Service

GETFund – Ghana Education Trust Fund

GoG - Government of Ghana

GPRS – Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy

ICESCR - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

IDS - Internally Displaced Students

IGF – Internally Generated Fund

JHS - Junior High School

MDG - Millennium Development Goal

MOESS - Ministry of Education, Science and Sports

NER- Net Enrolment Rate

OECD – Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

PREP – Primary Education Project

PSD – Primary School Development

PTR- Pupil-Teacher Ratio

PTxtR- Pupil-Textbook Ratio

QUIPS – Quality Improvement in Primary Schools

SES- Socio-Economic Status

SFP- School Feeding Programme

SGP - Scholarship and Grant Programme

SIGP -School Improvement Grant Programme

SPIP - School Performance Improvement Plan

SPSS - Statistical Product and Service Solution

UDHR - Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UNICEF - United Nations Children‘s Fund

UPE - Universal Primary Education

USAID - United State Agency for International Development.

VAT – Value Added Tax

WSD – Whole School Development

ABSTRACT

The Capitation Grant Policy (CGP) is one of the interventions adopted by the Ghana government to motivate Ghana's drive to achieve universal basic education. The purpose of the study was to examine the implementation of CGP on basic education in Atwima Nwabiagya District with respect to teachers and headteachers' perspective. The research design employed in the study was a descriptive survey through a quantitative approach. The overall reliability estimates for the instrument had a coefficient alpha of 0.844 which was above 0.7. Data for the study were obtained by using questionnaire to solicit views of teachers and headteachers on the impact of CGP on basic education. Out of 328 teachers from the sampled schools 120 of them were selected using simple random technique to participate in the study. With respect to the headmasters all heads of selected schools were purposively selected to take part in the study. The data were analysed through descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. Again, one sample t-test was used to compare the average results of BECE results before and after the implementation of CGP. The following findings were made. Teachers perceived the CGP to be good for increasing enrolment, improving attendance, closing the gap between boys and girls in terms of enrolment but not improving quality education. One of the key challenges of CGP implementation faced by headteachers and teachers was irregular release of the grant. In conclusion, the CGP has worsened quality education indicators such as class size and pupil-textbook ratio. It is recommended that government should release the CG regularly so that the schools can prepare SPIP ahead of time so that the use of the grant would be maximized. Again, adequate textbooks should be provided for students.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The need to develop a country through education has taken a centre stage in discussing development issues. It is generally agreed that no country can develop without quality human resources. In view of this, many countries such as Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Nicaragua, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi and Ghana have instituted a number of educational policies which seek to improve school enrolment and quality of education. The policies include the Scholarship Grants Programme (SGP) and the School Improvement Grant Programme (SIGP) in Indonesia; the Free Primary Education (FPE) in Lesotho; the Autonomous Schools Programme (ASP) in Nicaragua; the Educational Quality Inputs (EQI) in Sri Lanka (Deffous, 2011), Universal Primary Education in Uganda (Bategeka & Okurut, 2006) and Capitation Grant in Ghana (Akyeampong, 2011) and other countries. These policies aim at making basic education affordable and accessible to all people of school going age. According to the 2007 Education for All Global Monitoring Report, out of 77 million children who were not enrolled in either primary or secondary school worldwide in 2004, 38 million (about 50%) were in Africa, 16 million in South and West Asia and 9.3 million in East Asia (UNESCO, 2007). Further, the data made available by UNESCO 2007 show that countries with the largest numbers of out of school children in 2004 were in Nigeria, Pakistan, India and Ethiopia. They were followed by Saudi Arabia, the Niger, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Ghana and Mozambique.

The Ghana Government introduced the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) policy in 1995 with the aim of achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2015. In spite of this policy, a persistent 40 percent of children between 6 and 11 years of age remained out of school as of 2003 (Adamu-Issah, Elden, Forson & Schrofer, 2007; UNICEF, 2007). One of the major reasons parents gave for not sending their children to school was their inability to pay levies imposed by the heads of schools. Studies carried out by Ghana Education Service (GES) in 2004 found that 76 different types of levies with the highest in the urban areas have been imposed on parents by heads of schools as found in 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 Auditor General's Report. This had the effect of preventing many parents, particularly the poorest, from sending their children to schools.

The Government of Ghana, determined to get more children into school, or to achieve Millennium Development Goal Two (MDG2), has taken a bold step forward by abolishing all fees charged by schools and also providing schools with a grant for each pupil enrolled at the basic level. This policy was first piloted (with World Bank Support) in Ghana's 40 most deprived districts in 2004. The success of this pilot led to the nationwide adoption of what is known as the "Capitation Grant" system in early 2005. Under this system every public kindergarten, primary school and junior high school was to receive a grant of GH₵3.00 per pupil per year (Auditor General, 2008/2009 & 2009/2010). However, this amount was increased to GH¢4.50 per pupil per year in 2011. Since then there has not been any upward adjustment of this amount. Under this policy, schools are not permitted to charge any fees to parents.

The utilization of the Capitation Grant is to cover enrolment drive, provision of teaching and learning materials, payment of sports and cultural levies, school management (including travelling and transport, sanitation and stationery), school and cluster based INSET, minor repairs and others. The use of this grant is based on School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP). SPIP is a plan that shows in detail, items to be bought with their prices that will help improve school performance. The SPIP is prepared by the heads together with the teachers to cover the whole academic year but broken down into terms. The School Management Committee (SMC) also approves and oversees the implementation of the SPIP.

In addition, the introduction of CG policy and other policies were in response to many documents and educational policy framework such as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Two and Three which aimed at achieving UPE and Gender Parity by 2015 respectively. The increase in enrolment after the introduction of Capitation Grant Policy (CGP) suggests that school fees were a major barrier to access of basic education (Akyeampong, 2011). Parents have been relieved of their burden from paying school fees. This has given them the urge to send their children to school. According to UNICEF (2007) report, the overall enrolment in basic schools in Ghana increased by 16.7 percent in the 2005/2006 school year compared to 2004/2005.

Again, Auditor General Report which covered 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 academic year indicated enrolment figure compiled by a Unit of Ministry of Education for Ghana Education Service after the introduction of the Capitation Grant shows that general enrolment levels have increased nationwide over the years. An average increase of 38.48 percent was recorded between 2005/2006 and 2009/2010 years. The

stakeholders in the education sector attribute this increase greatly to the introduction of CG. Undoubtedly, abolition of fees has motivated parents to send their wards to school.

However, Akyeampong (2011), and Osei-Fosu (2011) argue that the surge in enrolment amounts to a one-shot effect and it has not been effective in sustaining high demand, attendance and completion of basic education. The experience of Kenya suggests that abolishing school fees initially increases enrolment but with time participation pattern returns to the norm prior to the surge (Somerset, 2009). This makes it doubtful if government can accomplish her vision of making basic education accessible to all by 2015.

Other scholars believe that the surge in enrolment is going to compound already deplorable state of education in Ghana since pupil-teacher ratio still remains high. For instance, Akyeampong (2011) opines that CGP is not delivering improved internal efficiency in terms of the use of the grants to improve quality. Moreover, teaching and learning materials which should be acquired through the use of Capitation Grant (CG) are lacking in most of the schools. Nonetheless, there is an argument that school uniforms, footwear and food still serve as a barrier to poor parents who have the will to send their children to school. Therefore, abolishing school fees does not mean that government can achieve the Education for All.

Again, another school of thought claim that making basic education accessible to all people of school-going age goes beyond only the institution of CGP. The economic gains parents lose when their children are sent to school (opportunity cost) make them reluctant to send their wards to school. In the rural communities, children serve as a

source of labour to their parents and therefore enrolling them in schools means a loss of labour, a decreased in productivity and increased cost in hiring others.

Government has also been criticized for poor policy formulation, implementation and monitoring (Brookings Institute, 2009). This, it is said does not help in achieving the purpose for which the CGP was instituted. Further, it is noted that the amount involved in the policy is meagre (Akyeampong, Djangma, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007) and the release of CG is irregular and delayed (Auditor General Report, 2008/2009 and 2009/2010). This does not help the heads of basic schools to implement the SPIP. As indicated earlier, the use of Capitation Grant is based on SPIP for every term. Most of the times, two or three terms may elapse without the release of the Capitation Grant. This does not help the heads of schools to implement the SPIP. Daily Guide newspaper published on October 23, 2012, which had a caption –Schools Heads Demand Capitation Grant' revealed that almost 100 public basic schools in the Bolgatanga Municipality alone had not received their Capitation Grant since the last academic year being 2011/2012. The delay and irregular release of the grant leads to decline in the value of the money in inflationary period. For example, what GH¢4.50 could buy in the previous terms cannot be bought with the same amount in the current term when the money is released.

The above concerns as well as the literature gap cited has necessitated the need to conduct research on the impact of capitation grant policy on basic education especially as this year, 2015 is the end-point set for the achievement of MDG2 or UPE.

Statement of the Problem

Long before the 1992 Ghanaian Republican constitution, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana instituted fee-free education in the three northern regions of Ghana. It was aimed at getting more northerners to have formal education. The framers of the 1992 constitution saw the need to make education progressively free at all levels. Article 25, clause 1 provides that all persons shall have the right to equal educational opportunities and facilities, with a view to achieving the full realization of that right: (a) basic education shall be free, compulsory and available to all. In section (b) of the same article it continues by saying that –secondary education in its different forms including the technical and vocational education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education". The spirit of this article is to make education affordable and accessible to all people of school going age. Government of Ghana, in line with this article, introduced the Free Compulsory Basic Education (FCUBE) programme in 1996. However, this programme came with its challenges and therefore could not fully achieve the intended purpose. The programme brought a cost-sharing scheme to cover the non-tuition fees, under which the District Assemblies were allowed to charge levies as a means of raising funds for maintenance of schools under their authority. The parents perceived the levies as school fees and it became a barrier to some of them since students were sent away from school for non-payment of school levies (Bamora, 2010). This did not make basic education free and made some children of school going age still out of school. According to UNICEF (2007), a persistent 40 percent of children between 6 and 11 years of age remained out of school as of 2003.

The failure of FCUBE brought about the introduction of CGP in 2005 as a way of meeting the MDG Two. The overall enrolment in basic school increased by 16.7 percent in the 2005/2006 school year compared to 2004/2005 as a result of the policy (UNICEF 2007). The Auditor General Report which covered 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 academic year indicates enrolment figure compiled by a Unit of Ministry of Education for Ghana Education Service after the introduction of CGP shows that general enrolment levels have increased nationwide over the years. An average increase of 38.48 percent was recorded between 2005/2006 and 2009/2010 academic years.

The increase in enrolment contributed to large class sizes in many schools as complained bitterly by some teachers in the basic schools the researcher personally met in Atwima Nwabiagya District. Large class size affects quality education in the areas of teaching methods, pupil-textbook ratio, classroom control and many others. The persistence of these problems can also lead to dropout and non-attendance by students. From literature, it is observed that a handful of studies have specifically examined the impact of CGP on enrolment, retention, dropout and repetition. These studies are silent about the impact of CGP on the quality of education at the basic level (Hunt, 2008). It is for these reasons that the researcher conducted the study in selected basic schools to find out teachers and headteachers‘ perspectives on the problems associated with the implementation of CGP in their schools in the district.

Conceptual Framework

Capitation Grant Policy (CGP) is a policy intervention instituted to address issues of inequity by making sure that every child of school going age gets access to education.

Thus, it seeks to boost enrolment, increase attendance, reduce dropouts and increase completion rate at the basic education level. The achievement of these will also bring into focus for discussion the issue of class size (CS), pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) and pupil-textbook ratio (PTxtR). The CS, PTR and PTxtR affect the quality of instructional delivery, and classroom climate. It is believed that the introduction of CGP should lead to increase in CS, PTR and PTxtR unless other interventions like provision of more classrooms, teachers and textbooks are implemented concurrently.

I am of the view that should CGP lead to increase in enrolment without corresponding interventions to increase classrooms, textbooks, teachers and improvement in teachers' development, students' performance will be negatively affected. Akyeampong (2011) opined that without improvements in the quality and quantity of teachers as demand increased quality was bound to suffer even more. This really has been the tragedy of the CGP because it appears that the necessary preparation and investments were not made before the policy was implemented. The impact of CGP on students' performance should reflect on their B.E.C.E. results.

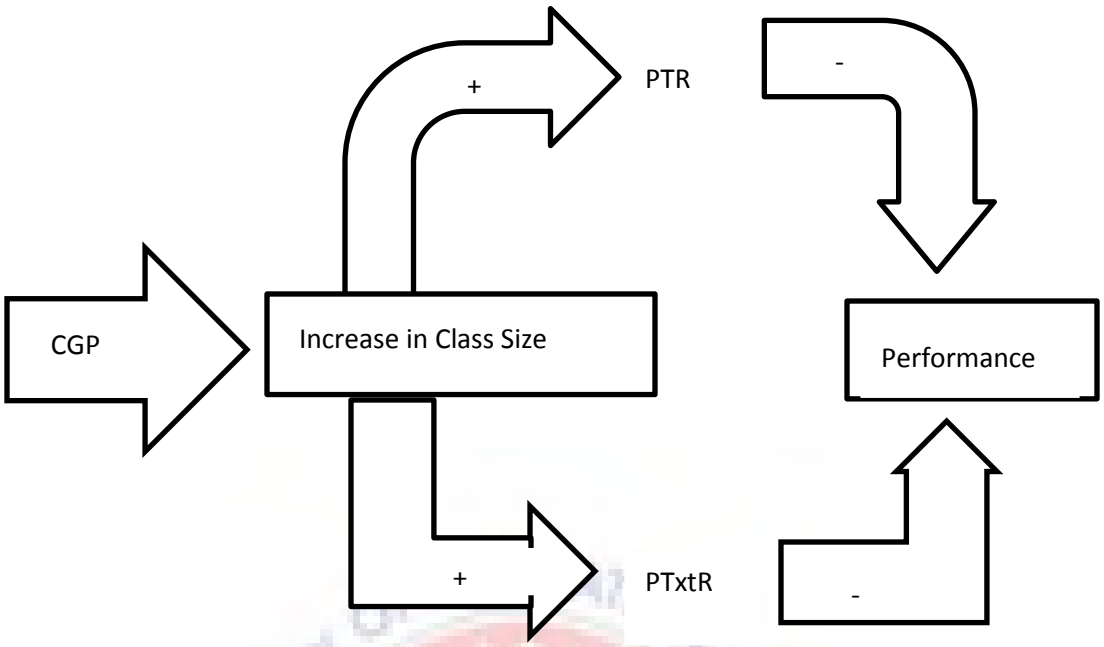

Figure. 1: Logical Model of Quality Education Indicators

This model considers three types of indicators which are described as input indicator, access indicator and output indicator. These indicators are linked together. Input indicator measures the means or resources that are used to achieve educational objectives. In this model, capitation grant is considered to be input indicator. The input indicator stimulates certain responses of beneficiaries and this leads to the second indicator which is _access'. Access indicator measures how people respond to the policy. In this model, enrolment and class size determine the responses to CGP. The access indicator influences PTR and PTextR and the states of these ratios also have impact on the performance of students. Students' performance is the output indicator. In the model, this indicator measures the impact of CGP on attendance, dropout and completion rate and the performance of students in B.E.C.E.

Purpose and Objective of the Study

The purpose of the study was to find out teachers and headteachers' perspectives on the implementation of Capitation Grant Policy on basic education. Specifically, the objectives were to:

1. Find out teachers and headteachers' perspectives on the impact of CGP on basic school's enrolment, attendance, dropout and completion rate and gender disparity in the Atwima Nwabiagya District.
2. Find out teachers' and headteachers' views on the contribution of CGP to increase in class size, pupil-teacher ratio and pupil-textbook ratio.
3. Find out how CG contributes to the acquisition of teaching-learning materials.
4. Find out teachers' and headteachers' views on how the CGP in Ghana has affected the performance of students in Basic Education Certificate Examination.
5. Identify challenges of CGP implementation faced by teachers and headteachers.

Research Questions

The study seeks to address the following questions:

1. What are the teachers and headteachers' perspectives on the impact of the CGP on enrolment, attendance, dropout and completion rate and gender disparity in the Atwima Nwabiagya?
2. In what ways does the introduction of CGP affect quality education indicators such as class size, pupil-teacher ratio and pupil-textbook ratio?
3. In what ways does CG contribute to the acquisition of teaching-learning materials?

4. In what ways has the introduction of CGP affected the performance of students/pupils in Basic Education Certificate Examination?
5. What are the challenges of CGP implementation faced by teachers and head teachers?

Significance of the Study

First and foremost, it is hoped that the findings of this study would provide basis for evaluating the implementation of the policy nationwide. Again, the study would bring to bear on the strengths and weaknesses in the programme which may call for more strengthening and correction. This will help policy makers and implementers to put in place strategies that would enable the programme achieve its full purpose. Furthermore, it will provide relevant information for future researchers who want to study implementation of the CGP as well as other governments which want to replicate the policy in their countries.

Last but not least, it will be useful to international organizations like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), United Nations International Children Fund (UNICEF) and other donors as the study will reveal the areas where they can offer assistance to make the policy a success.

Delimitation of the Study

The study covers the impact of Capitation Grant on enrolment, attendance, dropout, completion rate, gender disparity, class size, pupil-teacher ratio, pupil-textbook

ratio, performance of students in Basic Education Certificate Examination, and challenges facing the implementation of the CGP in Atwima Nwabiagya District.

Limitations of the Study

The study faced a number of problems. Notable among them were:

Firstly, some respondents failed to co-operate with me during the period of data collection. Some of the headmasters said the topic was too political and did not want to commit themselves. Others went to the extent of telling me that they did know my political affiliation. They thought that their personal profile and responses would not be protected. This would most likely affect the results since they would not be as frank as possible.

Secondly, several attempts to retrieve questionnaires from some respondents proved futile. They said that they did not know where they placed them. Out of 140 questionnaires administered to both teachers and headteachers 102 questionnaires were retrieved. This indicated that about 37% of the questionnaires were not retrieved and this would affect the results negatively. Thirdly, the study concentrated solely on Atwima Nwabiagya District. This makes it difficult to generalize the results.

Organization of the Study

The study is made up of five chapters. Chapter one, which is the introduction and includes the following: background to the study; statement of the problem; the purpose and objective of the study; research questions; significance of the study; delimitation of the study; limitation of the study; and organization of the study.

It is followed by chapter two, which deals with the review of related literature on the topic. It is a summary of the writings of recognized authorities and previous researches done on the problem under study. It seeks to identify the gaps in the previous researches to justify the conduct of the current study.

The third chapter focuses on the method used in the study. It discusses the research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis procedure and validity and reliability of instruments used in both data collection and analysis.

Chapter four deals with the presentation and analysis of the main data collected from the field as well as discussion of the findings. The presentation is done in the form tables, figures, graphs, percentages and others. The fifth chapter deals with summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations which includes areas for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter deals with the review of related literature on school grant; enrolment and access to basic education; class size and pupil-teacher ratio; performance of pupils in the Basic Education Certificate Examination; gender parity ratio, challenges of capitation grant policy implementation and quality education.

School Grant Policy

Many countries have adopted school grant policy within the last two decades as part of a broader educational decentralisation and in response to agitation for fee-free education and abolition of school fees. The school grant policy has been christened differently. The policy is called Scholarship and Grants Programme (SGP) and School Improvement Grants Programme (SIGP) in Indonesia, Free Primary Education (FPE) in Lesotho, Autonomous School Programme (ASP) in Nicaragua, Educational Quality Inputs (EQI) in Sri Lanka and Capitation Grant Scheme (CGS) in Ghana (Deffous, Grauwe, and Lugaz, 2011). The reasons for formulation of school grant policy and context in which they were implemented differ from one country to another. According to Deffous, in 1986/1987, Indonesia was hit by economic crisis which reduced gross enrolment rate from 62% to 52% between 1988 and 1992 at the Junior Secondary Schools. The introduction of SGP in 60% of schools was meant to anticipate and counter the consequences in the education sector of the radical 1997 Asian financial crises. This

policy was therefore meant to maintain enrolments in a context of financial and economic crisis. However, a second phase of the policy called School Improvement Grant Programme (SIGP) was introduced in 2001 in 133 districts in poor schools dealing with internally displaced students and schools affected by catastrophe. SIGP was thus specifically concerned with poverty reduction.

According to Deffous et al. (2011) ASP was implemented in Nicaragua in 1993 through a pilot programme and extended at the national level in 2006. This was much radical educational decentralisation reform meant mainly to improve the quality of education. It gave full autonomy to schools, transferring key management functions from the central level to the school councils, widening the mandate of the councils from greater local participation to greater local autonomy.

In Sri Lanka, the grant policy, Education Quality Inputs (EQI) scheme was meant to increase access and improve the quality of education especially in the least advantaged school. Under the decentralised system, some disparities continued to exist across schools in terms of access and quality in particular as enrolment and achievement rates, predominantly for post-primary grades, were worse for children from poorer households and less developed provinces in Sri Lanka. In order to overcome this problem, the EQI scheme was implemented in 2000 in all government schools over the country in order to improve the availability of resources at the school level (Deffous et al., 2011).

In countries like Lesotho, Uganda, Tanzania and Ghana, the goal of such a policy is to increase enrolment through the abolition of fees (Deffous et al., 2011). In Lesotho, the allocation of funds simply corresponds to an amount per pupil multiplied by total enrolment whereas in Ghana gender parity was stressed. According to Deffous et al.,

(2011) during the pilot of FCUBE programme in Ghana, the enrolment of girls was encouraged by allocating more funds to schools per girl than per boy (US$3.88/girls and US$ 2.70/boy). However, since the impact on girls enrolment was not obvious and in order to facilitate the implementation of the programme at the national level, after the introduction CGP in 2005/2006 there is no more distinction between boys and girls in terms of amount per pupil. Clearly, the reasons for school grant policy were varied from one country to another but they all aimed at improving educational outcomes.

Criteria of School Grant Disbursement

The grant disbursement criteria that are used by various countries to distribute grants to the schools differ from one country to another. Some countries consider only the total enrolment while others take into account certain characteristics of the schools and school environment. The criteria used to disburse the fund depend on the specific objective of the grant. The review of literature indicates that the two broad objectives for school grant policy are to improve quality of education and increase access to education (Deffous et al., 2011).

In Nicaragua, Tanzania and Sri Lanka, the grant policy was meant to improve the quality of education through a more complex formula. In Nicaragua, the ASP was based on the assumption that giving total authority to school actors would improve quality. The grant policy thus goes hand in hand with the parents‘ contribution in the form of school fees, as these fees were believed to be an incentive to strengthen the parents‘ involvement in the school life. However, in order to counteract the possible negative impact on equity of these fees, the formula considers, in addition to the number of students enrolled, the

number of students who come from poor homes were exempted from paying fees (Deffous et al., 2011). The next criterion was the school record for repetition and dropouts. Lower rates of repetition and dropout in a school indicate the possibility of receiving higher grant. In Tanzania, in order to improve quality of education, merit scholarships are offered to the best performing students, sometimes within a specific category, such as sex or socio-economic condition. Such scholarships seem to be one of the more cost-effective ways to improve test scores and teacher attendance (Kremer & Holla, 2009). In Kenya, scholarships were awarded to grade six girls who scored in the top 15% on district wide exams in two districts. The winning girls received two academic years' worth of school fees and supplies, in addition to a well-publicised awards ceremony. They found out that even after the incentives were removed, the test score gains remained large in the following year, which may reflect real learning (Kremer, Miguel & Thornton, 2009). Although the programme only rewarded girls, the spill over effects also benefited boys and weaker female students who had no chance of obtaining a scholarship (Kremer et al., 2009).

Another school grant policy which seeks to improve quality of education is Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) adopted by Tanzania. The CCT programmes, generally social welfare initiatives implemented by the government of Tanzania, transfer payments to families to support their livelihoods. The programme is in different forms: for example, school education vouchers, monthly family support payments, or health related transfers. While the initial recipients are awarded randomly, continuation of these payments are usually conditional on the family performing certain responsibilities, such as parents taking their children for vaccinations or the children passing school tests.

Studies on this policy indicated that the CCT programmes have slight to significant impacts on the test scores and learning of the children from participating families (Angrist, Bettinger & Kremer, 2006; Kremer & Holla, 2009).

In Sri Lanka, the formula used to disburse the school grant does not mainly depend on the number of pupils in the school. The formula used is called the Norm-Based Unit Cost Resource Allocation Mechanism (NBUCRAM). The formula gives schools the autonomy to spend funds on educational inputs they think most appropriate and is based on various factors such as student characteristics, availability of different school cycles, corrections for possible economies and diseconomies of scale, and site characteristics (Deffous et al., 2011). The small, rural and disadvantaged schools receive larger amount of per student funds.

In countries like Lesotho, Uganda and Ghana, the goal of such a policy is to increase enrolment through the abolition of fees. It appears less emphasis is laid on quality of education. The criterion for disbursement is simply based on total enrolment of the school. The allocation of funds simply corresponds to an amount per pupil multiplied by the total enrolment. In Indonesia, the formula developed targeted both access and quality. The first phase of the SGP was designed to maintain enrolment and the quality of education in the context of a financial and economic crisis. The formula was based on the enrolment of internally displaced students (IDS) as it was meant to assist schools meeting the needs of these IDS (Deffous et al., 2011). The second phase of the SIGP had objectives that were specifically concerned with poverty alleviation as it specifically targeted the neediest schools in the poorest districts (133 districts out of 300).

This was quite simple and similar to Lesotho and Ghana as it simply took into account the total student enrolment.

Uses of School Grant

The availability of funds at the school level does not automatically imply that these funds will be used for the benefit of the pupils and lead to better school quality and improved school functioning. A critical look at the actual use of the school grants will determine if these funds are used for inputs or activities which are known to have an impact on quality or if they are used more for the immediate benefit of teachers or students.

According to Deffous et al., (2011), the grant is strictly used for maintenance purposes and for water and electricity bills in Lesotho. It is called utility grant in Lesotho. In Indonesia, the use of funds is not strictly guided. He indicated that in many cases, funds were used for the physical improvement of school buildings rather than for pedagogical materials. In Sri Lanka, grants are used for both maintenance and school materials. The use of grant is strictly guided by the guidelines: school must allocate 60% for consumables and 40% for repairs and maintenance.

In Nicaragua, the grants finance the teachers‘ salaries and textbooks. Ghana has varied use of the grants. The guidelines allow schools to spend grants on the provision of teaching and learning materials, support to needy pupils, minor repairs and payment of sports and cultural levies, enrolment drive, school management (including travelling and transport, sanitation and stationery), school and cluster based INSET and others (Deffous et al., 2011; Akyeampong, 2011).

The use of this grant is based on School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP). SPIP is a plan that shows in detail items to be bought with their prices that will help improve school performance. The SPIP is prepared by the heads together with the teachers to cover the whole academic year but broken down into terms. The School Management Committee (SMC) approves and oversees the implementation of the SPIP.

Impact of School Grant on Equity, Access and Enrolment

The World Development Report (2006) argues for the pursuit of equity on both intrinsic and instrumental grounds. It defines equity in terms of a level playing field on which individuals have equal opportunity to freely pursue chosen life plans and are spared from extreme deprivation in outcomes. The equitable distribution of educational resources is one of the best ways to try to equalize opportunity across socio-economic groups. Observed inequality between the rich and the poor on the basis of circumstances beyond their control is one potential indicator school fees have not helped to achieve equality of opportunity. According to Deininger (2003) the surge in enrollment associated with the reduction in the cost of primary schooling in Uganda is evidence that this cost was a significant impediment to primary school enrollment by the poor. The implementation of CGP at the national level in 2005/2006 in Ghana brought about a general enrolment increase of 16.7% over 2004/2005 (Deffous et al.; 2011, Akyeampong, 2011). It should be noted enrolment increases should not be seen as an end in themselves. It should be juxtaposed with completion rates, transition rates, quality of teaching and learning and other relevant educational outcomes. The enrolment rates before the

introduction of the grant in both Ghana and Lesotho were much lower, thus facilitating the increase of such rate.

However, the impact was somewhat different in Indonesia in that it did not increase enrolment. The reason being that the SGP programme was not initially designed for poverty alleviation but to keep students currently enrolled from dropping out at a time when massive drop out was expected. It was successful because the anticipated increase in drop out from schools did not occur (Deffous et al., 2011). He stated further that the impact on equity was less evident as the enrolment rates before the implementation of the SGP in 1998 and after the implementation of the SIGP in 2001 were similar, indicating that access to education, probably for the most disadvantaged, was not improved.

From an equity point of view, there has been a positive impact in Ghana and Lesotho, where the unschooled are being schooled (Deffous et al., 2011). He indicated that In Sri Lanka, the complex model used to allocate EQI funds was theoretically pro-poor as schools sharing the same characteristics under the formula are treated equally and student characteristics, school site differences are considered when allocating funds, which implies that the poorest schools received the most funds. It is argued that allocating more funds to more disadvantaged schools alone is not sufficient. The funds need to be properly utilised so as to improve the quality of education.

Another equity issue is where after the grant some parents are asked to financially support community school. This is to increase community participation in helping to improve education quality. In Nicaragua the autonomy given under the ASP programme is based on the assumption that local community financial participation will positively contribute to parents‘ involvement in education issues and to education quality.

This is why fees were not abolished in Nicaragua, though exemptions are made for the poorest students (Deffous et al., 2011). This indicates that there is an equity issues in considering these fees. It is more appropriate to exempt the poorer communities from payment of school fees since there is a significant and negative correlation between poverty and the payment of school fees.

In 1997, the Government of Uganda introduced Universal Primary Education (UPE). Under this policy all tuition fees and Parents and Teachers Association charges were abolished. According to Bategeka and Okurut (2006), in the Policy Briefs organized by Economic Analysis and Financial Management Consulting Ltd and participated by African Development Bank (ADB), African Union Commission (AUC), Asian Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in 2006 indicate that following the introduction of UPE in Uganda in 1997, gross enrolment in primary schools increased from a total of 3.1 million in 1996 to 5.3 million in 1997, an increase of 73% in one year. This compares with an increase in gross primary school enrolment, in the decade preceding the introduction of UPE, of just 39% (from 2.2 million in1986). In their findings, pupils abandoned school for different reasons, but the most common included lack of interest (46%), family responsibilities (15%) and sickness (12%). Undoubtedly, the various policy interventions adopted by the governments of the various countries which sought to abolish school fees and other charges increased access to education. They conclude, however, that school dropout rate still remains a challenge.

Impact of School Grant on Quality

According to Deffous et al. (2011), the impact of school grant on the quality of education is much more difficult to assess, especially because there is often lack of useful data on the precise use of the grants and the educational outputs. In Sri Lanka and Nicaragua the main aim was to improve quality of education. The EQI Scheme in Sri Lanka was designed to improve the quality of education for all by giving school-level actors the responsibility of both the identification and the procurement of education quality inputs. Although this is a step towards better quality, studies revealed that small and rural schools benefit less from the programme. Indeed, various local factors such as poor training, lack of qualified principals or teacher shortages in these schools affect the efficient use of funds, thus reducing the schools ability to spend fund efficiently.

In Nicaragua, studies showed that since the implementation of the ASP there is a new focus on student progress and accountability. However, such improvement is probably more linked to fees than to the introduction of the grant (Deffous et al., 2011). It is nevertheless of interest to notice that in the case of Nicaragua, the parents‘ involvement might have led teachers to be more innovative, to assess pupil performance on a more regular basis, and in some cases to have contact with parents regarding their child‘s school work.

According to Deffous et al. (2011), in both Ghana and Indonesia, this impact was rather limited as it mainly improved school facilities but did not really focus on student progress. In Ghana for example, the condition of most of the facilities and the academic environment generally improved with the implementation of the capitation grant policy. Similarly in Indonesia, he stated that, the grant policy mostly played a role in the

improvement of the quality of school buildings and equipment by keeping schools in operation with at least minimal levels of resources. This was even more certain under the SIGP, which also successfully improved the learning environments of schools affected by giving them more important grants.

According to Deffous et al. (2011), in Lesotho, the grant is small and its main purpose is to pay for maintenance and utility bills. As a result, its impact on quality cannot be other than marginal. This indicates that the impact of capitation on educational outcomes depend on what the money is used for and how it is used.

The Policy Briefs organized and participated by ADB and other institutions in 2006 shows that the introduction of UPE in 1997 in Uganda was associated with a sudden drop in education quality indicators, such as the pupil-teacher ratio, the pupil-classroom ratio, and pupil-textbook ratio. However, since 1997 Government has constructed more classrooms, trained and deployed more teachers, and bought more textbooks. This has led to a gradual improvement in those indicators (Bategeka & Okurut, 2006). They added that the pupil-teacher ratio, which gives an indication of contact between pupils and teachers in classrooms, improved slightly from about 65:1 in 2000 to 54:1 in 2003 in government primary schools. They also found that the pupil-classroom ratio, which indicates the degree of congestion in a classroom, also improved slightly, from about 110 pupils per classroom in 2000 to 94 pupils per classroom in 2003.

Fee-Free Policy at Basic Education

Fee-free policy especially at the basic education level has been accepted and adopted by many countries as one of the key policy interventions for increasing access to

and improving quality of education (Akyeampong, 2011). Fees charged at schools especially public schools, have been identified as one of the main barriers to education access especially among the poor, orphaned, and vulnerable children within societies (USAID, 2007). The attempt to address this problem has focused mainly on eliminating the direct costs associated with participation in schooling (UNESCO, 2007). The consensus is that the state should bear that responsibility. There are two schools of thought on fee-free. There are those who are in support and those who are against the policy.

Proponents of Fee-free Policy

The main argument put forward by proponents of school fees' abolition is that, school fees and other direct education related costs to households represent a significant obstacle to enrolment especially among the poor and vulnerable households (USAID, 2007). UNESCO (2007) acknowledges that although the gender gap in educational participation has narrowed disadvantaged groups including those in rural areas, the poor, minorities and indigenous groups still lag behind. It is believed that to solve this problem is to eliminate the direct costs associated with participation in schooling. The consensus is that the state should bear that responsibility. By abolishing school fees, it will make it easier and cheaper for children with challenging backgrounds to attend schools and eventually help in achieving some of the education related goals within countries. They argue that the only way to achieve Education for All (EFA) is to implement fee-free policy.

They argue that the issue of rights to basic education dates as far back as the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) article 26 which declared that, everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Similarly, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), articles 13 and 14 reinforced these rights, stating that, primary education shall be compulsory and available free to all.

Records show that countries that implemented fee-free policy recorded enrolment surge. Malawi represents one of the first countries to adopt the policy of school fee-free. Other countries in Africa that have also abolished school fees in the 2000s include Lesotho, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia (Al-Samarrai & Zaman, 2006) and Ghana. As a result of abolishing school fees in Malawi, enrolment rates is reported to have increased dramatically at both the primary and the secondary levels and the impact of this increment was very skewed in favour of the poor (USAID, 2007; Akyeampong, 2011). According to Bategeka and Okurut (2006), following the introduction of fees-free in Uganda in 1997, gross enrolment in primary schools increased from a total of 3.1 million in 1996 to 5.3million in 1997, an increase of 73% in one year. Similar increases in enrolment rates following school fees abolition were also realized in Tanzania in 2001, Lesotho in 2000 and Cameroun in 1999 (USAID, 2007). The remarkable impact within these enrolment figures are enrolment rates among the disadvantaged children (girls, orphans, and children in rural areas) which experienced rapid increases and thereby widening access to education.

Opponents of Fee-Free Policy

The other school of thought which oppose school fees abolition states that abolishing school fees does contribute to reduction in the direct cost of education but does not necessarily reduce the costs to zero (USAID, 2007). This means that it does not remove the entire barrier to education. There are other costs, aside school fees that are still borne by households. These costs include those on transportation to and from school, contribution of households to construction of school buildings and other management costs, cost of textbooks and other support given to teachers by households. In line with this argument, any intervention should critically take into consideration the totality of all these costs borne by households and not only school fees.

Fee-free policy, although identified to have a positive effect on enrolment, may have a negative effect on the quality of education (USAID, 2007). The increase in enrolment figures following school fee-free policy are more likely to lead to large class size, high pupil-teacher ratio, and shortage of educational materials within schools. In Malawi for instance, after the abolition of school fees, the ratio of pupils to classroom increased to 119:1, the ratio of pupils to teachers also increased to 62:1 and the ratio of pupils to text books increased to 24:1. Similarly, expenditure per-pupil fell approximately by $12 per year for primary school students (USAID, 2007). In most instances, the rise in enrolment figures resulting from school fee-free policy is likely to increase the number of pupils per teacher or a phenomenal rise in the number of newly recruited and untrained or barely trained teachers. This is likely to affect the quality of teaching in the classroom.

Records from Malawi indicates that elimination of school fees reduces the willingness of communities to provide voluntary support for local schools as local leaders

interpret abolition of school fees as central government's assumption of full financial responsibility. Voluntary community support is a very important contribution to schools especially in the rural and deprived communities.

Besides, there is the question of whether fee-free policy can motivate access well above the social and environmental conditions that limited it in the first place, and to what extent it offsets the opportunity costs. Access to education can also be undermined by the negative effects of social and cultural practices which undervalue formal education.

There is also the important issue of over-age never enrolled. It is known fact that as children grow older, the opportunity costs of their time tend to increase due to labour demands in the community, which creates a disincentive to enroll or attend school regularly (Akyeampong, 2011). Whichever way one looks at fee-free policy, it helps to reduce burden on parents whose wards are in schools and motivate others to send their children to school.

Education Policy Framework in Ghana

The philosophy of education in Ghana is to create well-balanced (intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, physically) individuals with the requisite knowledge, skills, values and aptitude for self-actualisation and for socio-economic and political transformation of the nation (Government of Ghana, 2002a). Arising out of this philosophy of education, the development and design of curricula for the education system should be guided among other things by the principle of quality of education for all. It is said that the quality of citizens of any nation depends largely upon the quality of

education it offers. Funding is very critical to the provision of access and quality education.

Financing of education may be viewed as the provision of money and physical inputs such as school buildings, textbooks, teaching and learning materials, and in-service training for education personnel in order to ensure a proper functioning of the education sector. Human capital theory suggests that investment in education has a very high socio-economic return for a country such as Ghana which has limited resources (Anamuah-Mensah, 2002). The funding of education has been done principally by government. This practice has been reinforced by provisions in the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana under Article 25 (1) which guarantees the right of all persons to equal educational opportunities and facilities by ensuring free, compulsory and universal basic education. The provision under the Constitution also ensures that secondary and higher education shall be made available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular, by progressive introduction of free education; higher education shall be made equally accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means, and in particular, by the progressive introduction of free education. Functional literacy is also ensured under the constitution and provision is made for resourcing schools at all levels with adequate facilities. It is clear that no quality education can be sustained without adequate funding. Therefore, every effort should be made to provide the necessary funding.

In an attempt to address the problem of educational quality and other concerns such as persistent problems of access and retention, teacher training and financing, the government of Ghana launched the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education

(FCUBE) programme in 1995 (GoG, 1996). It was planned for implementation within a ten-year period, beginning in 1996 and running through 2005 and guaranteed free tuition for all children at the basic level in public schools across the country (GoG, 1996). With the FCUBE programme the government shifted emphasis from tertiary to basic education so as to increase the participation in primary school to as close to one hundred per cent of the population as possible (World Bank, 2004; Akyeampong, 2007). It must be noted however that between 1987 and 1996, there has been a lack of commitment on the part of government to strictly enforce the _free' aspect of the programme such that at the beginning of the FCUBE in 1996, about 700,000 children representing 30% of children of school going age were still not in school (Palmer, 2005). During the latter part of 1990s between 30%- 35% of the national recurrent budget was allocated to education, 60% of which went directly to improving primary education (Ministry of Education, 2002). Despite all these efforts, access to and participation in basic education in Ghana are far from the hundred per cent predicted (Ghana Statistical Service, 2000). Ministry of Education data indicates that of the 75% of school children who attend schools, 25% drop out before completing the first six years of basic education, and another 20% drop out after completing the nine years of basic education (Akyeampong, 2007). Though the FCUBE programme succeeded in increasing the general enrolment of pupils at the basic schools there are still problems of gender disparity, lack of teaching and learning materials and lack of teachers in some schools in the country.

According to Thompson and Casely-Hayford (2008), in the middle of 1990s, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank designated Ghana as one of the 41 Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) that required special assistance to bring

down –unsustainable" debt levels, foster faster growth and thus help bring down poverty. To qualify for assistance, however, a country had to prepare and implement a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), with the assistance and guidance of the IMF and the World Bank. In 2000, Ghana submitted an –Interim-Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper" to them and in 2001, following a change in government and amidst much controversy over the label HIPC – which some people deemed demeaning to Ghanaians – the country opted for HIPC debt relief and proceeded to prepare the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS I) which was implemented over the period 2003-2005. A key objective was to realign the distorted macroeconomic environment and improve the conditions for implementation of sectoral policies designed to promote sustainable economic growth and reduce the high incidence of poverty prevalent in the country. The strategy also focused on that component of human development which targeted measures designed to improve access of Ghana's population to basic needs and essential services. These programmes included basic education, safe water and improved health and environmental sanitation. One of the successes of GPRS I in the social sector has been the introduction of capitation grant for schools, school feeding programme, free bus ride for school children and the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), all aimed at mitigating the cost of living for the poor. However the GPRS I was not implemented without a challenge. According to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (2007) the main challenge of GPRS I was its over-reliance on macroeconomic stability as a mechanism for accelerated economic growth and poverty reduction, without the corresponding structural reforms and physical infrastructural development. The GPRS I was revised to GPRS II (2006-2009). Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) II

recognizes education as the key to moving the country towards a middle income status by 2015 and as a result, identifies the development of human capital as one of the goals. The main goal of human resource development in the GPRS II is to ensure that Ghana produces a knowledgeable, well-trained and healthy population with adequate capacity to support the accelerated economic growth and poverty reduction. The GPRS II also aims to strengthen the quality of education especially at the basic level, improve the quality and efficiency in the delivery of education services and bridge the gender gap in terms of education access in the country. The basic education sub sector is a major component of the education sector. Ghana subscribes to the Education for All (EFA) principles and process and has developed programmes that put into effect the six goals arising from the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar. The Dakar Goals are:

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes.

4. Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality

*6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills (*GoG, 2010, p20)

In recognition of this Ghana has been included in the Fast Track Initiative (FTI) programme of the World Bank (GoG, 2010). In addition, Ghana is a signatory to the international Millennium Development Goals (MDG), four of which have special significance for the education sector. These are:

MDG2: All children should complete a full course of primary schooling.

MDG3: Elimination of gender disparity at all levels of education.

MDG 6: Eradication of malaria and reversal of the spread of HIV & AIDS.

MDG 7: Environmental sustainability and access to safe water.

In 2003, the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) based on the Poverty Reduction Strategy came into force and it covered the period 2003-2005. Since 2003 ESP has been revised several times. The current ESP covers the period 2010 to 2020 (GoG, 2010). The ESP which provided the framework or roadmap for achieving the education related MDGs was based on four key areas: equitable access, education management and science and technology and vocational education and training (TVET).

There were ten policy goals to the previous ESP and this covered increasing access to and participation in education and training, improving the quality of teaching

and learning to enhance pupils‘ or students‘ achievement, extend and improve TVET, promoting good health and environmental sanitation in schools and institutions, improve planning and management, expand science and technology education, improve academic quality and research, expand pre-school education, promote programmes to prevent HIV & AIDS and provide equal opportunities . The strategic thrust of the ESP is to place education closer to the daily lives of people. .

The Government of Ghana in 2004 came out with a White Paper on Education Reforms which outlines reforms and objectives spanning the entire education sector. This catalogue of reforms and objectives were to be implemented from 2007 and the major targets identified were to be realized in 2015 and 2020. The White Paper on Education Reform has two key objectives. First it builds on the commitments of the ESP as well as ensures that high quality education is provided to children at the basic level. Secondly, it aims at ensuring that all second cycle education is made more inclusive and appropriate to the needs of young people and the demands of the Ghanaian economy (Ministry Of Education Science and Sports, 2005).

Under the Government of Ghana White Paper on Education Reform, basic education was expanded to include 2 years of kindergarten as well as the existing 6 years of primary education and 3 years of Junior High School education. The entire basic education will continue to be free and compulsory and will receive highest priority of all sub-sectors. The White Paper also pledges the government‘s full support for basic education funding. The central target is to reach 100 percent completion rates for both males and females at all basic levels by 2015.

Funding of Education

Funding of education may be described as the provision of money and physical inputs such as school buildings, textbooks, teaching and learning materials and in-service training for education personnel in order to ensure a proper function of the education sector (GoG, 2002a). Funding of education is very critical to the provision of access and quality education especially when statistics available in 2000 indicated that 39.5 % of people in Ghana were poor whilst 27% were declared as extremely poor (GoG, 2002b). No educational system can be sustained without adequate funding. In other words, investment in education has a very high socio-economic return for a country such as Ghana which has limited resource. Since independence in 1957 the funding of education has been done principally by the government. The practice has been reinforced by provisions in the 1992 Constitution, article 25 cause 1 (a), (b) and (c) which state among other things that basic education shall be free, compulsory and available to all; secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational education, should be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular, by the progressive introduction of free education; higher education shall be made equally accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means, and in particular, by the progressive introduction of free education. In view of this, it is important to look at the budgetary allocations made to the sector, the contributions from different partners, as well as strategies for the diversification of funding.

According to Ministry of Education (2012), in 2010, it spent 23.2% of its total budget on education. From 2004 to 2010 the education expenditures as a percentage of government total expenditures ranged between 18.3% and 26.5%. After a downward

trend from 2005 to 2007, it has been on the growing trend. In recent years, Ghana has been able to exceed the target set by the FTI in expenditure on education. According to the FTI member countries should be able to spend 20% of her budget on education. In 2010, Ghana was 2.3 percentage points beyond the FTI target. What Ghana needs to do is to improve upon the internal management of education in order to gain value for money through efficient use of resources and periodic monitoring and evaluation of social intervention policies like Capitation Grant.

As stated by the Ministry of Education (2012), between 2006 and 2008, among ten neighbouring countries in West Africa, Ghana was the second highest in terms of shares of government expenditure allocated to education after Cote d'Ivoire (24.6% in Cote d'Ivoire, 23.1% in Ghana, 22.2% in Mali, 21% in Burkina Faso, 19% in Senegal, 18% in Sierra Leone, 17.6% in Togo, 15.9% in Benin, 13.8% in Cape Verde & 12.1% in Liberia).

Although there are other ministries that help in providing educational services, the Ministry of Education (MoE) is by far the main educational service provider in Ghana. Government expenditure for MoE usually represents more than 90% of the total public education expenditure (GoG, 2010). The MoE's expenditure is categorized into current and capital expenditures. In 2010, the current expenditure represented 83.1% of the total educational expenditure as against 16.9% of the capital expenditure. Over the years, the current expenditure increased from 65.3% in 2005 to 83.1% in 2010. However, over the same period the capital expenditure dropped from 34.7% to 16.9%.

From 2006 to 2010, the primary education has been allocated with an average of 31.2% of the total government expenditure on education. In 2010, Ghana's resource

allocation to primary education was 27.9%. This was 22.1 percentage points less than the benchmark set by EFA-FTI (50%). In the same period, the government of Ghana expended 45.1% of her resources allocated to education on Basic Education (Pre-school to Junior High School). Between 2008 and 2010, there was a gradual decline of resources allocation to primary education in Ghana. Expenditure on primary education was highest between 2007 and 2008 which were 35% and 35.2% respectively. That may be partly due to mainstreaming of pre-school as part of primary education at the time. In 2008, most ECOWAS countries allocated more resources to primary education than Ghana. Ghana may have to increase substantially resources allocation to primary education in order to meet EFA-FTI benchmark and also catch up with sub-regional averages. Average allocation of resources to Special Education, Non-formal Education and TVET are 0.5%, 0.4% and 1.2% respectively over the same period. Expenditure on tertiary education ranked second to that of primary education. That was 20% of total resource allocation went to tertiary level of education (MoE, 2012).

Ghana is one of the highest recipients of education aid in sub Saharan Africa (World Bank, 2004). This aid, over the past two decades, has played a significant role in the implementation of the educational reforms that were launched in 1987 (Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008). Donors‘ involvement in the reforms coincided with the launching of the country‘s Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) in the mid-1980s, when the economy was on the brink of collapse and the government lacked the financial base to support the education sector. With the turnaround in the economy since 1984, however, and a corresponding increase in revenue, government‘s expenditure on Ghana‘s education sector has steadily risen. Between 2000 and 2005, education‘s share of total

discretionary expenditures, already the largest of any sector, increased from 19.4 per cent to about 27.5 per cent (Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008). Despite changes in the resource envelope, the main priority of the Government since 1987 has been to finance basic education. The total contribution of development partners to education in 2010 was 2.5% of total resources allocated to the education sector in that year. The role of donors in financing education in Ghana cannot be underestimated. For instance, before the 1987 Educational Reform a World Bank preparation mission in 1984 resulted in the provision of a ―project preparation facility" to sponsor ―some planning activities, such as a school mapping exercise as well as purchase of essential school materials such as pens and pencils." (Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008, p.12). Further support for basic education was later given by the Bank and other donors for Primary School Development (PSD, 1993-98) and the Basic Education Sector Improvement Credit (BESIC, 1996-2002). In anticipation of an increase in demand for secondary and post-secondary education as a result of the reforms in basic education, the Bank also financed two projects, namely: (1) Community Secondary School Construction (CSSC, 1991-1998), and (2) Tertiary Education Sector from 1992 to 1998 (World Bank, 2004). Overall, the Bank disbursed US$271 million, while other donors gave US$317.3 million, between 1987 and 2002 in support of the country's educational reforms. Of late donor financing has been on the erratic trend. The overall donor shares in GoG discretionary expenditures in the education sector decreased from 8.8 per cent in 1999 to 5.2 per cent in 2000 largely due to a suspension of aid in 2000 by major donors, including the country's largest external contributor to education financing, the World Bank (Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008). They add that this was due to the government's inability to meet certain policy

conditions that year. In 2002 the donors' share of total education expenditure was 7.7% but it decreased to 6.9% in 2003 (MoE, 2012). According to MoE (2012), donor financing to education over the years dropped from 8.9% in 2005 to 2.5% in relation to total education expenditure for 2010.This erratic trend of donor financing indicates that Ghana government can no longer rely on donors to finance its education. Notable among these donors, in terms of the scale of their financing, were the United States, the United Kingdom, and the European Union, which constructed basic schools in various districts under its micro-projects programme. Between 1988 and 2005, the UK's Department for International Development (DfID), for example, financed the UK£50 million Whole School Development (WSD) programme, which supported the construction of two pilot schools in each district for a total of 125 classroom blocks. In 1990, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) entered the reforms with a US$35 million facility for the Primary Education Project (PREP), which was completed in 1995. From 1997 to 2004, it financed another programme, the Quality Improvements in Primary Schools (QUIPS), at a total cost of US $53 million; US$39 million of the amount was spent on improvements in 330 schools (Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008).

Of late donor funding has not been reliable because of unfulfilled pledges. In 2006, for example, donor pledges amounted to US$80.3 million but only US$24.5 million was disbursed, causing the GES to state that this ~~"~~poor execution rate with respect to donor resources… has drastically affected the Ministry's execution rate of its budget" (Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008 p.19). This has necessitated the need to diversify the funding of education in Ghana. This is in line with the policy of cost-sharing where pupils/students, parents, government, district assemblies and all other stakeholders

make direct contributions to education in Ghana. The need for additional resources for the sector has caused the government to explore other sources of financing in more recent years. According to Thompson and Casely-Hayford, of the US$1.0 billion that was spent on the education sector in 2006, about 30.0 per cent (US$307 million) came from non-donor and non-GoG sources, such as the GET Fund, District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF) and Internally Generated Funds (IGF). This contrasts sharply with the situation in 1999, when GoG and donors accounted for all of the US$384.5 million spent on the sector. Worthy of note are the GET Fund and the DACF which are statutory funds from the Value Added Tax (VAT) and the central government‘s general revenue. The diversification of education funding sources was prompted in part by the erratic disbursement of donor commitments to the Ghana Education Service and the Education Ministry in general. The DACF, which came into being with the 1992 Constitution, is financed from a constitutionally mandated 5.0 per cent of central government revenue that is to be disbursed to district assemblies to supplement their development expenditures. The law establishing the Fund recommends that 20.0 per cent of the allocation (implying 1.0 per cent of total central government revenue) be invested in educational infrastructure, particularly for basic education, at the local level.

Despite the introduction of FCUBE programme embarked on by the MoE during the Educational Reform in 1987, households continue to contribute in one way or the other towards the education of children of school going age. The amount spent by the household increases as one moves higher on educational ladder. This is particularly so with the proportion of the total amount spent on school, registration fees as well as the amount spent on books and school supplies. As a way to reduce households‘ burden on

education, government of Ghana through MoE has initiated pro-poor interventions for pupils and students at the basic school. The interventions include CG, free uniform, free exercise books, school feeding programme and free laptops. However, with the exception of CG none of these interventions has achieved 100% coverage. Government needs to do more, probably to target the vulnerable to improve on the level of equity.

The unit cost per child increases as pupils move higher through educational ladder. For instance in 2010, it cost the government of Ghana GH¢213.75 to educate a child at a primary level. At the same time an amount of GH¢1988.62 was expended on the one at the tertiary level. The unit cost of primary education increased steadily from GH¢47.79 in 2006 to GH¢213.75 in 2010 which represents about 487% increase. Over the same period, unit cost at the Junior High School increased from GH¢83.69 to GH¢319.6 which constitutes 382% increase. At the Senior Secondary School level, the unit cost was oscillating due to 2007 educational reform. From a unit cost of GH¢134.65 in 2006, the cost increased to an all-time high of GH¢558.6 in 2009 and dropped to GH¢397.3 in 2010. This fluctuating unit cost was as a result of new educational reform introduced in 2007 which extended the duration of Senior High School to four years. That called for massive investment which was made in 2009 to accommodate the first cohort of fourth year in 2010 (MoE, 2012).

Class Size and Student Achievement

–Class size refers to the actual number of pupils or students taught by a teacher at a particular time" (Ehrenberg, Brewer, Gamoran & Willms, 2001 p.2). In contributing to the definition of class size, Finn, Gerber and Boyd-Zaharias (2005) say class size is the

number of students who are regularly in a classroom with a teacher and for whom that teacher is responsible. Studies done by many researchers indicate that CGP has contributed to increase in enrolment (Akyeampong, 2011; Osei, Owusu, Asem & Afotu-Kotey, 2009; Osei-Fosu, 2011) and hence increase in class size. The class size has the potential of affecting how much is learned in a number of different ways. For instance, it could affect how students interact and socialize with each other. Thus, class atmosphere is determined by the interactive activities between a teacher and students and among the students themselves. This may result, for example, in more or less noise and disruptive behavior, which in turn affect the kinds of activities the teacher is able to promote. It could affect how much time the teacher is able to focus on individual students and their specific needs rather than on the group as a whole. It is argued that it is easier for a teacher to focus on one individual in a smaller group, and therefore the smaller the class size, the more likely individual attention can be given. The class size could also affect the teacher‘s allocation of time and, hence, effectiveness, and how much material can be covered.

In large classes some of the problems that do not help students or pupils to have high achievement are that contributions in class are done by few students while other students tend to disturb; some students find it difficult to hear from their teachers; the use of teaching and learning materials (TLMs) becomes a problem, since teachers cannot have many TLMs for individual students; inability to organize class exercises and class tests regularly; difficulty in marking students‘ exercise books and providing feedback on time and difficulty in identifying truant students in class. On the other hand, teachers may choose methods of teaching which are child-centred and different methods of assessing

students when they have smaller classes. For example, they may assign more writing, or provide more feedback on students‘ written work, or use open-ended assessments, or encourage more discussions, all activities that maybe more feasible with a smaller number of students. Exposure to a particular learning environment may affect learning over the time period of exposure, or it may have longer term or delayed effects. This was supported by the study done by Fidler (2001). In the study he found that longer exposure to small class size resulted in higher achievement in reading and language and mathematics as well. For these reasons, changes to the class size are considered a potential means of changing how much students learn.

According to Fidler (2001), in July 1996, the California legislature enacted Senate Bill (SB) 1777, which made funds available to all school districts in California to reduce class sizes in kindergarten through 3rd grades to a twenty to one ratio of students to teachers. During the first year of the program, 1st and 2nd grade Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) classrooms were reduced in size to twenty or fewer students followed by kindergarten and 3rd grade classrooms in the 1997/98 academic year.

In 2002, the president of Ghana set up Anamuah-Mensah Committee to review educational reforms in Ghana (GoG, 2002a). The committee also proposed a class size of not exceeding thirty (30) at pre-school (kindergarten 1 and 2) and thirty-five (35) at the other levels of basic education. The committee took into consideration the importance of class size to quality education. Ehrenberg et al., (2001) opine that not only is class size potentially one of the key variables in the ―production" of learning or knowledge, it is one of the simplest variables for policy makers to manipulate. They, however, further stipulate that the amount of student learning is dependent on many different factors.

Some are related to the classroom and school environment in which the class takes place, but others are related to the student‘s own background and motivation and broader community influences. They add that class-size reductions aid achievement only when teachers modify instructional practices to take advantage of the smaller classes. Class size reduction (CSR) has been promoted as one of the ways to improve quality education and student achievement. Research supports that smaller class size to some extent improves learning. Empirical evidence on the relationship between small class and achievement is mixed. For instance, according to Sid (1995), the preference for small classes is, in fact, not an uncontested finding. Some students actually prefer large classes and teaching evaluations are found to be negatively related to class size only if the instructor is inexperienced. One could conclude that the experienced, full-time teacher is able to adapt their teaching such that class size has no independent impact on the favourability of their ratings (Sid, 1995). Instructor competency, concern for students, energy level, speaking ability, organization and clarity are what assist students in learning in large classes. In large classes students prefer experienced, qualified or very knowledgeable instructors. In the work of Sid (1995), students also indicate that learning is facilitated when teachers are interested in them and care about their progress. Teachers who are enthusiastic, dynamic, speak well, maintain attention and hold interest are regarded by students as effective. Comparisons of large classes with small classes suggested, then, that students perceived the teachers‘ effectiveness in teaching the subject matter, organization and clarity and use of examples and illustrations to be of significantly higher quality in the best large classes.

However, many studies indicate that reduced class size leads to improved student achievement (Fidler, 2001). Glass and Smith (1978) conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis of CSR studies and found when classes are comprised of twenty or fewer students, achievement scores increase. Ferguson (1991) reported results from a large-scale study in Texas. He found significant and positive relationships between class size and student achievement. In contributing to this argument, Krueger (as cited in OECD, 2011) adds that while there is some evidence that smaller classes may benefit specific groups of students, such as those from disadvantaged backgrounds, overall the evidence of the effects of differences in class size on student performance is weak. There is more evidence to support a positive relationship between smaller class size and aspects of teachers‘ working conditions and outcomes such as allowing for greater flexibility for innovation in the classroom, improved teacher morale and job satisfaction (Hattie as cited in OECD, 2011)

In a comprehensive analysis of CSR in California, Stecher, McCaffrey, Burroughs, Wiley and Bohrnstedt (2000) examined the effects of CSR among 3rd grade students who were in reduced class sizes in California for one year (1997-98) and compared them to 3rd grade students who participated in CSR for two years (1997-99). They also assessed the ―persistence" of CSR effects on achievement in 4th grade students no longer in CSR. They found that students in CSR for two years had significantly higher achievement scores than students in CSR for one year. While they concluded that there was some improvement in these students‘ achievement due to CSR, Stecher et al. (2000) in contrast to other findings, did not find any significant improvement in achievement for English Language Learners (ELL). Finally, they reported that 5th grade students, the

students with the least exposure to CSR, showed no appreciable increases in achievement. However, all other things being equal, smaller classes will generally be beneficial but analysis has shown that reductions in class size are generally expensive and are a less efficient spending choice for improving learning outcomes than, for example, investing in the quality of teachers. This indicates that without improvement in the quality of teachers and other interventions the CGP which brings a lot of students or pupils to the classrooms will not help students to have high achievement.

Pupil-Teacher Ratio

The pupil/teacher ratio is not the same thing as class size. Indeed, it is quite different. According to Ehrenberg et al. (2001), the calculation of a pupil/teacher ratio typically includes teachers who spend all or part of their day as administrators, librarians, special education support staff, itinerant teachers, or other roles outside the classroom. Thus, pupil/teacher ratio is a global measure of the human resources brought to bear, directly and indirectly, on children‘s learning. Class size, on the other hand, refers to the actual number of pupils taught by a teacher at a particular time as opine by Ehrenbrg et al. (2001). Thus, the pupil/teacher ratio is always lower than the average class size, and the discrepancy between the two can vary, depending on teachers‘ roles and the amount of time teachers spend in the classroom during the school day. From an administrative or economic viewpoint, pupil/teacher ratio is very important, because it is closely related to the amount of money spent per child.

According to OECD (2011) the ratio of students to teaching staff indicates how resources for education are allocated. Smaller student-teacher ratios often have to be

weighed against higher salaries for teachers, increased professional development and teacher training, greater investment in teaching technology, or more widespread use of assistant teachers and other paraprofessionals whose salaries are often considerably lower than those of qualified teachers. And as larger numbers of children with special needs are integrated into mainstream classes, more use of specialised personnel and support services may limit the resources available for reducing student-teacher ratios. However, from a psychological viewpoint— in terms of how students learn—what matters is the number of students who are physically present interacting among themselves and with the teacher.

Factors Affecting Enrolment, Attendance, Dropout and Completion Rates

Attendance, dropout and completion rate still remain issues particularly in the developing countries in spite of various interventions by the governments of various countries in the world. The government of Ghana, for example, has put in place several educational reforms and introduced new policy interventions in its effort to achieve Universal Primary Education as part of MDG Two by ensuring that by 2015, both boys and girls alike will have access to primary education. The policy interventions and initiatives which include FCUBE, CGP, School Feeding Programme (SFP) and Girls Education Unit have led to a considerable increase in enrolment (both gross enrolment rate and net enrolment rate) in basic education. The problem has been how to retain them to complete the full cycle of basic education. Research suggests that a range of interrelated demand and supply factors interact to influence how and why pupils or

students drop out from schools. The following are the factors that affect attendance, dropout and completion rates.

Household Income and Financial Circumstances (Poverty)

The income level of individual household is found to be one of the important factors that determine access to education as schooling potentially involves costs both upfront and hidden. Upfront costs include school fees while the hidden costs include the purchase of uniforms, equipment, travelling expenses to and from school and opportunity cost of sending a child to school (Hunt, 2008). A number of studies suggest that there is link between poverty and children dropping out from school (Birdsall, Levine & Ibrahim 2005) and (Bamora, 2010).The studies indicate that the most common primary and contributory reason for children to be out of school is poverty. Bamora (2010) interviewed a number of school dropouts in the northern region of Ghana and majority of them mentioned lack of financial support from parents or relatives as the main reason for dropping out of school. Most school dropouts reported that their parents were largely subsistence farmers who depended on crop cultivation and animal rearing for food production and income and therefore did not have enough money to pay their school expenses. This confirms the assertion made by Hunt (2008) that children from better off households are more likely to remain in school whilst those who are poorer are more likely never to attend or to drop out once they are enrolled. Colclough et al. (2000) had this to say: ―Poor households tend to have lower demand for schooling than richer households: whatever the benefits of schooling, the costs, for them, are more difficult to meet than is the case for richer households" (p.25)

In contributing to the factors that affect school attendance and dropout Bamora (2010) says that poor parents are particularly affected by the direct and indirect costs of education. She refers to direct costs as what parents are expected to spend directly on educating their children such as school fees, uniforms, food, transportation, pocket money, and learning materials while indirect costs are the opportunity costs which are defined in terms of loss of children's income or work contribution to households as result of attending school. The opportunity cost of schooling tends to be higher for girls than for boys due to their multiple roles within the household. In times of financial difficulties most parents tend to depend on their children's labour. Many children from poor households in developing countries usually combine schooling with income generating activities in order to contribute to family income. Students, who combined work with school, are likely to be regular latecomers and have irregular school attendance, leading to drop out. According to Bamora (2010), girls enrolled in school are therefore more likely than boys to be withdrawn from school to assist their mothers with general domestic tasks and income activities. This is supported by a study done by Brown and Park (2002) in rural China which indicates that an inability to pay school fees had led to the decision of dropping out 47% of girls but only 33% of boys in primary school. A study done by Amin, Quayes, and Rive (2006) in Bangladesh indicates that school children contribute as much as one third of household income through market work and household work and that work tends to be a deterrent to schooling. This shows that the CGP which came to remove only school fees may not have a significant impact in reducing school dropout if the issue of poverty is not addressed.

Educational Attainment of Household Members

Research shows that educational attainment of household members is influential determinant of whether and for how long children access schooling. Ersado (2005) argues that there is a widely accepted notion that parental education is the most consistent determinant of a child‘s education. Higher parental or household head level of education is associated with increased access to education, higher attendance rates and lower dropout rates (Hunt, 2008). They put forward a number of arguments to support their claim that there is link between parental education and retention of children in schools. Pryor and Ampiah (2003) indicate that non-educated parents cannot provide the needed support or do not often appreciate the benefit of schooling. Ainsworth, Beegle and Koda (2005) opine that, often, it is mothers‘ educational level in particular which is seen to have effect on access to education. Deininger (2003) finds that mother‘s education is the most important factor influencing timely enrollment (that is, enrollment between the ages of 6 and 8). It does not affect children who enroll between the ages of 9 and 12. In contributing to the debate, the work done by Al Samarrai and Peasgood (1998) in Tanzania suggests that the father‘s education has a greater influence on boys‘ primary schooling and mother‘s on girls.

Bereavement and Family Break Up

Bereavement among family members, especially parents, often makes children more vulnerable to drop out, non-enrolment, late enrolment and slow progress (Case & Ardington, 2004). The death of one parent places a heavy burden on the single parent alone to bear, particularly if the surviving parent is the mother. To single handedly pay

educational expenses of children is difficult to bear. This may compel the single parent to take the child out of school. For example, research from Malawi suggests that 9.1% of children were found to drop out of school the year following the death of one parent (Hunt, 2008). The situation becomes worse when both parents die as indicated by the same research that the number rose to 17.1% when both parents died (Hunt, 2008). The reason behind is that, in Ghana as in many African countries, widows and their daughters have no right to inherit property from their husband‘s estate even when the property was acquired during the marriage (Bamora, 2010). According to Bamora (2010) the customary law in Ghana allows the successor inherits most of the deceased‘s estate with a moral responsibility to maintain the widow and her children including their education, but in reality most of them do not and the widow and children, have no legal right under customary law to enforce these obligations, which are legally enforceable rights under the constitutional law. However, the PNDC Law 111 is intended to address this issue but unfortunately most women, particularly the uneducated rural poor, lack knowledge about the law or may have difficulties in using the services of lawyers to _fight‘ for them due to poverty or too much bureaucracy in the system. Similar studies on educational access in South Africa by Grant and Hallman (2006) also confirmed that children whose parents were dead were more likely to have dropped out of school than those whose parents were alive. It is argued that there are often gender dimensions to vulnerability of schooling after the parental bereavement. Girls mostly suffer the consequences of death of their parents since they often drop out of school to be caregivers to their siblings.

A study done by Bamora (2010) in the northern part of Ghana about school dropouts also revealed that some were living with one parent because the parent marriage

had broken up. Many children whose parents have separated or divorced can find themselves at risk and in danger of leaving school due to the uncooperative attitudes of the parents after divorce.

Poor Academic Performance and Dropout

One of the factors that helps learners to develop interest in schooling is academic performance. High achievers usually tend to develop more interest in attending school regularly than low achievers. It should be noted that irregular attendance or absenteeism is precursor to dropout. There is evidence to show that children with poor academic performance are more likely than those with better academic performance to drop out (Bamora,2010). The situation becomes worse when such students are asked to repeat the grade after failing to meet the minimum requirement of academic standard of the school. The lack of progression to the next grade might lead some parents, guardians and children to question whether they should remain in school. This problem usually confronts girls as indicated by the research conducted by Brock and Cammish (1997) in Sierra Leone and Vanuatu that girls who needed to repeat would be withdrawn from school instead, whereas boys might be more likely to repeat. This confirms the perception of some parents that when girls perform poorly in school, there is no incentive to continue to support them in education since their labour is needed more in the household. Such parents become disappointed and discouraged with the low returns of education and would prefer having their children trained as seamstresses, hairdressers or engaging them in agricultural production or petty trading to continuing with an education that has no

relevance to them. A study by Rose and Al Samarrai (as cited in Hunt, 2008) in two communitties in Ethiopia states:

> *Repetition may also be deterrent to completion. If children have to repeat a grade they will be older before they reach the last grade of primary school, which again increases the opportunity cost of their time and increases the chances of girls withrawing when they reach puberty. Furthermore, a large proportion of children repeat in early grades, which causes them to lose interest in school. Of the dropouts who had repeated the grade, two-thirds repeated the first grade (pp. 44-45).*

A life history interviews conducted by Bamora (2010) in the northern part of Ghana indicated that some of the school dropouts were asked to withdraw after they had repeatedly failed to meet the minimum required academic standards of their respective schools while others dropped out because they were made to repeat their class or grade for failure to master the curriculum for promotion to the next grade. Batbaatar, Bold, Marshall, Oyuntsetseg, Tamir and Tumennast (2006) interviewed some parents about their children dropping out of school in Mongolia. They suggest that in some schools some children were being encouraged to reach higher performance standards and children with poor academic results were being _allowed to drop out'. Similarly, children in this study indicated that they had been encouraged to leave because they had not reached basic literacy level.

Officially grade repetition or withdrawal is not a policy in the educational system of many countries including Ghana. However, it is quite common for teachers or parents in Ghana to request students to withdraw or repeat a class on grounds of poor academic

performance. It is also argued that poor academic performance is partly attributed to the problems of inadequate teachers, poor tuition, inadequate textbooks, lack of furniture and other teaching materials in their schools. These problems are common in the rural communities of Ghana and pose a considerable challenge to the country's commitment in making quality education available to children of school-going age. The question is, how is the CGP helping to address some of these problems in order to reduce dropout rate and increase attendance and completion rates?

Pregnancy, Poverty and School Dropout

The issue of teenage pregnancy has been cited as a significant cause of dropout for teenage girls from schools in many studies (Cardoso & Verner, 2007; Dunne & Leach, 2005; Kane, 2004). This is because pregnant teens often cannot handle the stress of simultaneous pregnancy and education. For instance, in Dunne & Leach's research on secondary schools in Botswana and Ghana in 2005, predominant reason for female dropout was cited as pregnancy. The Forum for African Women Educationists (FAWE) (2000) reports that about 21% of Kenyan adolescents have had at least one child by the age of 20 and that 8,000 to 13,000 girls dropped out of school due to pregnancy. The same report also reveals that in Ghana 1,068 students dropped out of school between the period 1990 and 1994. Of these 638 were girls and 172 representing 27% dropped out due to pregnancy, making pregnancy the highest cause of dropout among girls. Some studies suggest that girls with school poor performance, girls who have previously been temporarily withdrawn from school and low economic status of girls, family migratory life styles and the consequent vulnerability of girls are predictors of teenage pregnancy

and thus school dropout (Grant & Hallman, 2006; Dunne & Leach, 2005; Hunt, 2008). These also support the studies done by Bamora (2010) which indicates that all the pregnancy related schoolgirl dropouts said that their families were in economic difficulties and could not provide them with essential necessities such as learning materials, clothes and pocket money for school. Their survival strategy was to rely on men for support to allow them to continue their education. Studies by Ankomah (1999) in Ghana revealed that some parents who were unable to procure school materials for their daughters encouraged them to engage in sexual relationships with rich men in order to get money for their educational needs, which often resulted in pregnancy. Girls from poor economic backgrounds who are responsible for their own educational costs are often exposed to threats of sexual exploitation with high risk of pregnancy, early marriage and dropping out of school. These findings confirm that of Stephen (2000), who suggests that it is poverty that leads to the circumstances in which girls become pregnant and not some moral weakness on their part.

Some countries such as Ghana, South Africa, Malawi and Botswana have the policy that allows pregnant schoolgirls to temporarily withdraw from school and return to school to continue their education after weaning their babies (Bamora, 2010; Hunt, 2008). However, most of them do not return to classroom due to fear of ridicule, intimidation, social branding and harassment by school community (Dunne & Leach, 2005). There are other factors which also affect re-entry. Research by Meekers and Ahmed, (1999) in Botswana indicates that girls with good motivation and results before pregnancy are more likely to return to school. According to Grant and Hallman (2006), re-entry may depend to some extent on whether the girls become primary caregivers to

their children or whether they are able to relinquish or share childcare responsibility. They claim that young mothers who live with adult females are more likely to return to school following a pregnancy-related drop-out.

Other studies on schoolgirls' pregnancies found only a few successful cases of girl mothers who returned to school after delivery (Chilisa, 2002; Dunne, 2007; Hunt, 2008). For example, Chilisa (2002) observes that in Botswana and Ivory Coast where the new policy allows schoolgirl mothers to return to school there were less than 20% and 30% successful cases respectively. While evidence in Kenya also shows that less than 10% return to school (Bamora, 2010). The action of the educational institution to dismiss pregnant schoolgirls is a violation of their fundamental human rights since it restricts their access to education. Facilitating schoolgirls who get pregnant to continue their education is one of the strategies to give girls and boys equal opportunity to educational access and participation (Bamora, 2010). To encourage many schoolgirl mothers to return to school adequate support services such as baby-care facilities and financial support should be provided for them in the country.

Age, Marriage and Notion of Adulthood

Studies show that age, marriage and notion of adulthood have influence on schooling access and dropping out. Colclough, Rose and Tembon (2000) indicate that pressure on children to leave school tend to increase as they grow older and their opportunity costs rise. There are other age related factors underpinned by culture which can also influence student being dropped out from school. Some communities in many countries including Ghana initiate children from childhood to adulthood.

This passage of rite ceremony and preparation for it sometimes overlap with the school calendar which can increase absenteeism and potential dropout from school (Kane 2004; Nekatibeb, 2002; Hunt, 2008). For instance, boys in Guinea undertaking the initiation had their primary education disrupted because the ceremony sometimes took place during school session which resulted in a one month absenteeism and subsequent dropouts, while for girls it was often considered to be shameful for them to return to school (Colclough et al., 2000). Also, this move into adulthood make _new adults' think that they are too grown up to be in school (Kane, 2004). Another research indicates that when girls start to menstruate or reach puberty they might be withdrawn from school to ensure that their _reputations' are kept _intact' (Nekatibeb, 2002; Hunt, 2008). In other cases the girls are withdrawn from school to marry when they reach puberty or become sexually mature (Brock & Cammish, 1997).

Household Perceived Benefit of Schooling and Dropout

How households perceive the benefit of schooling is an important factor in determining whether children gain access to schooling and for how long such children will remain in school. Research indicates that perceived returns from education play important role in whether and for how long children receive education (Hunt, 2008). In some household children are seen as assets whose education, to a very large extent, benefit the household unit. This shows that the perception of how education affects future prospects is very crucial for attendance and retention. According to Al Samarrai and Peasgood (1998) the perceived benefits to the household from education will depend on a number of factors such as the likelihood of obtaining paid work; the way individual

children can translate education into improved productivity; and the time preferences of the household. Studies also indicate that many poor households see education as a way out of poverty (Hunt, 2008). A study by Chi and Rao (2003) in China states that an educated child is often expected to leave the household (moving from rural to urban area) to find work. This indicates that the poor is ever ready to educate his child if he is sure that the child will get job to do to bring returns on his investment. The poor also make rational decision in educating their children as demonstrated by the work of Boyle, Brock, Maece and Sibbons (2002) in Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Uganda and Zambia. They state that:

> *On the whole, the poorest parents and their children do indeed value education and usually have clear and rational reasons for not participating or participating infrequently… (Indeed)…one of the clearest threads running through (the country reports) is the strong sense that the poorest income groups, as much as the richest, are making very reasoned judgments about schooling children based on assessment of the quality of education available, value for money, and investment potential (p.9).*

Undoubtedly, parents develop interest in sending their children to school based on the benefits of schooling. If what they perceive to be the benefits of schooling are not manifested in the community in which they leave they may feel reluctant and lack interest to take their children to school. This lack of interest is cited as a major factor in dropping out or infrequent attendance in the work of Pryor and Ampiah (2003). In their research in a rural Ghanaian village, they describe how households make rational decision not to

invest in their child's education. For these villagers schooling is considered not worthwhile as they think it is irrelevant to future prospects (often as farmers). They question whether there are any returns to education for children who do not leave the village for post-basic education. They are also contemptuous of those who waste education by returning to engage in farming. Some people often see girls' education as poor investment because they will marry and leave home, bringing the benefit of education to the families of their husbands rather than to their own. This indicates the lack of motivation towards continued schooling of girls. Hunt (2008) states how some parents in Guinea mentioned that primary schooling was irrelevant to girls' future roles. In Ethiopia, some parents claimed that twelve years schooling would mean their daughters could not perform housework and as a result may not be able to find husband (Colclough et al., 2000). ILO/IPEC (2004) study also throws light on the tendency for girls to be excluded or withdrawn from school earlier than boys, in the belief that, as a girl, she does not need to be educated or should not be highly educated if it poses threat to her marriage potential. In short, perceived benefits affect educational access and dropout.

Supply of Schools and Proximity to School

Availability of schools in communities influences school access and participation. Colclough et al. (2000) assert that educational access can be restricted by an inadequate supply of schools or enough school places in many countries. Hunt (2008) also opines that the lack of schools is more likely to affect initial access rather than drop out but he is quick to add that limited supply of schools influences drop out. He continues by saying

that if schools are short in supply it is likely that they be located further away. Studies also point to distance to school as an important factor influencing educational access, particularly for rural population (Mfum-Mensah, 2002; Nekatibeb, 2002; Hunt, 2008). A study by Colclough et al. (2000) in Ethiopia and Guinea found that the greater the distance from home to school, the less likely it is that a child will attend. In terms of drop out this might affect the younger children who deem the distance to be too long. In the case of girls if parents or guardians are afraid of sexual harassment especially as they grow older they may be asked to stay home since they are also weaker than the boys (Nekatibeb, 2002; Hunt, 2008). Ainsworth et al. (2005) argue that where secondary schooling is not likely for the children, parents might be more likely to withdraw them earlier from primary school. In their study in Tanzania, it was found that the likelihood of children attending primary school decreased with distance to the nearest secondary school. Hence, availability of a secondary school in a community influences access to primary schools. Lloyd, Mete and Sathar (2005) also found in their research in Pakistan that girls‘ enrollment is very responsive to schools which are solely meant for girls.

Factors Affecting Quality Education and Students' Performance

According to UNICEF (2000), quality education is fundamental to gender equality, human security, community development and national progress. It further states that access to education of poor quality is tantamount to no education at all. It is inappropriate to provide the opportunity for a child to enrol in school if the quality of the education is so poor that the child will not become literate or numerate, or will fail to acquire critical life skills. Undoubtedly, defining and measuring the quality of education is not a simple

issue and the complexity of this process increases due to the changing values of quality attributes associated with the different stakeholders' view point (Blevins, 2009). Therefore, there is no commonly agreed upon definition of quality that is applied to education field. The definition of quality of education varies from culture to culture (Michael as cited in Farooq, Chaudry, Safiq & Berhanu, 2011). Defining quality education is very broad and should involve learners, content, processes, environments and outcomes (UNICEF, 2000). As defined by UNICEF (2000, p.4) quality education includes:

1. Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities;
2. Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities;
3. Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace;
4. Processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities;
5. Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

Quality education, which is essential to real learning and human development, is influenced by factors both inside and outside the classroom, from the availability of

proper supplies to the nature of a child‘s home environment. In addition to enabling the transfer of knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in a profession and break the cycle of poverty, quality plays a critical role in closing the gender gap in basic education. It provides individual children with the knowledge and skills necessary to advance themselves and their nation economically. It plays a vital role in the development of human capital and is linked with an individual‘s well-being and opportunities for better living (Battle & Lewis, 2002). It ensures the acquisition of knowledge and skills that enable individuals to increase their productivity and improve their quality of life. This increase in productivity also leads towards new sources of earning which enhances the economic growth of a country (Saxton, 2000). Researchers have long been interested in exploring variables that contribute effectively to quality of performance of learners. Identifying the most contributing variables in quality of academic performance is a very complex and challenging job in that no one can attribute quality education to a particular variable or factor. Examples of factors that affect quality education and performance of students are discussed below.

Family Income Level

A family's financial status affects a number of factors that can help or hinder a child in gaining an education. Wealthy families or families with high socio-economic status (SES) have the financial resources to send wards to high-quality schools, hire tutors and obtain supplementary reading materials for them. In some countries, students from low-income families may not even be able to attend school. For instance, the increase in enrolment after the introduction of Capitation Grant Policy (CGP) suggests

that school fees were a major barrier to access basic education (Akyeampong, 2011). In Ghana low-income families are limited mostly to public schools at the basic level while wealthier families can afford to send their children to private schools where facilities are up to the standard. Financial stress on the parents can cause a child to leave school early to work. Worries about financial hardship at home can negatively affect low-income children's ability to learn. The students who come from families of high level SES perform better than those who come from middle class families and those from the middle class families perform better than the students from low level SES (Garzon, 2006; Kahlenberg, 2006; Kirkup, 2008). The achievement of students is negatively correlated with low SES level of parents because it hinders the individual in gaining access to sources and resources of learning (Eamon, 2005). Low SES level strongly affects the achievement of students, dragging them down to a lower level (Sander, 2001). It is also observed that the economically disadvantaged parents are less able to afford the cost of education of their children at higher levels and consequently they do not work at their fullest potential (Rouse & Barrow, 2006). Above and beyond the other demographic factors, the effects of SES are still prevalent at the individual level (Capraro, M., Capraro, R., & Wiggins, 2000). The SES can be deliberated in a number of different ways; it is most often calculated by looking at parental education, occupation, income, and facilities used by individuals separately or collectively. Parental education and family SES level have positive correlations with the student‘s quality of achievement (Jeynes, 2002).

Parents' Level of Education

Parents may not always have the tools and background to support their children‘s cognitive and psychosocial development throughout their school years but their education at any level has influence on the performance of their children. Parents' education level directly correlates to the importance and influence of education in their children's lives. In one study, children whose parents had primary school education or less were more than three times as likely to have low test scores or grade repetition than children whose parents had at least some secondary schooling (Willms, 2000). This is supported by the work of Krashen (2005) which concluded that students whose parents are educated score higher on standardized tests than those whose parents were not educated. Parents‘ level of education, for example, has a multifaceted impact on children‘s ability to learn in school. For example, educated parents can assess their son‘s or daughter's academic strengths and weaknesses to help that child improve overall academic performance. Parental education also influences parent-child interactions related to learning. Parents with little formal education may also be less familiar with the language used in the school, limiting their ability to support learning and participate in school-related activities. In other words, educated parents can better communicate with their children regarding the school work, activities and the information being taught at school. They can better assist their children in their work and participate at school.

The educated parent also sets expectations of academic performance that propel students forward in their achievement levels. However, even if educated, parents who struggled academically and do not think highly of formalized education may have negative attitudes toward education that can still hinder the child academically. Although

many constraints exist, schools can play a role in helping parents to enhance the ‗home curriculum' and improve the quality of parental involvement in their children's education. Strategies include, for example, partnering with organizations that can affect parenting in the pre-school years such as public health providers and non-governmental organizations (NGOs); asking parents to participate in assessment of their child's progress, offering clear, regular, non-threatening communication; and including parents in decision-making groups at the school (Redding, 2000). In sum, the home curriculum seems to play a vital role in preparing quality learners for school

Environment and Personal Characteristics

The environment and the personal characteristics of learners play an important role in their academic success. The environment in this context is any external condition that has the capacity to result in learning on the part of the learner. The school personnel, members of the families and communities provide help and support to students for the quality of their academic performance. This social assistance has a crucial role for the accomplishment of performance goals of students at school (Goddard, 2003). Besides the social structure, parents' involvement in their child's education increases the rate of academic success of their child (Furstenberg & Hughes as cited in Farooq et al., 2011). It is also argued that the school authorities can provide counseling and guidance to parents for creating positive home environment for improvement in students' quality of work (Marzano as cited in Farooq et al, 2011). The academic performance of students heavily depends upon the parental involvement in their academic activities to attain the higher level of quality in academic success (Barnard, 2004). Usually, educated parents provide

an environment that suits best for academic success of their children.

With respect to the personal characteristics, the willingness and readiness of students to learn is contributory factor to academic performance. In considering the personal characteristics the following questions are very crucial. What do students bring to learning? What experiences do they bring to school, and what particular challenges do they face? Have they been affected by emergencies, abuse, or daily labour. How different is the language of their home from the language of their school? Have they been sufficiently oriented to the rhythm of schooling (UINCEF, 2010)? Answers to the following questions have influence on academic performance. It is Tyler (as cited in Adentwi & Sarfo, 2011) who stresses the need to emphasise learning experiences in the curriculum. He pointed out that learning takes place through the experiences which the learner has, and not through what the teacher does; and that the emphasis needs to be placed on the active interaction of the leaner with his learning environment in order for him to experience, and learn through his experience whatever there is to learn. In this case the teacher plays the role as a curriculum facilitator. The personal characteristics of the learner cannot be discussed without considering the quality of the learner. It is said that school systems work with the children who come into them. The quality of children's lives before beginning formal education greatly influences the kind of learners they can be. Many elements go into making a quality learner, including health, early childhood experiences and home support. Physically and psychosocially healthy children learn well. Healthy development in early childhood, especially during the first three years of life, plays an important role in providing the basis for a healthy life and a successful formal school experience (UNICEF, 2000). Adequate nutrition is critical for normal brain

development in the early years, and early detection and intervention for disabilities can give children the best chances for healthy development. Prevention of infection, disease and injury prior to school enrolment are also critical to the early development of a quality learner.

Educational Facilities

The places, in which formal learning occurs, range from relatively modern and well-equipped buildings to open-air gathering places. In a general sense, education refers to the formative process through which knowledge, skills, values and other sets of learning are passed or imparted from one person to another. This is usually done through a formal setting called school. Schools include but are not limited to primary schools, secondary schools, sixth form schools, vocational schools, colleges and universities. But for these educational institutions to function well so as to expedite the learning process, educational facilities are a necessity. These facilities refer to all the structures as well as equipment used to facilitate learning in schools. These facilities include buildings, classrooms, conference hall, libraries, gymnasiums, and other structures and equipment. Without these facilities, students have to endure holding classes under the scorching heat of the sun or risk getting wet by torrents of rain. Without these facilities, students would not have a decent place to learn the knowledge and skills they need.

The quality of school facilities seems to have an indirect effect on learning, an effect that is hard to measure. Some authors argue that empirical evidence is inconclusive as to whether the condition of school buildings is related to higher student achievement after taking into account student‘s background” (UNICEF, 2000). However, a study in

India by Carron and Chau (1996) which sampled 59 schools found that of these only 49 had buildings and of these, 25 had a toilet, 20 had electricity, 10 had a school library and four had a television. In this study, the quality of the learning environment was strongly correlated with pupils‘ achievement in Hindi and mathematics. In Latin America, a study that included 50,000 students in grades three and four found that children whose schools lacked classroom materials and had an inadequate library were significantly more likely to show lower test scores and higher grade repetition than those whose schools were well equipped (Willms, 2000). The quality of school buildings may be related to other school quality issues, such as the presence of adequate instructional materials and textbooks, working conditions for students and teachers, and the ability of teachers to undertake certain instructional approaches. Such factors as on-site availability of lavatories and a clean water supply, classroom maintenance, space and furniture availability all have an impact on the critical learning factor of time on task. When pupils have to leave school and walk significant distances for clean drinking water, for example, not all of them may always return to class.

Class Size

Many countries significantly expanded access to basic education through introduction of capitation grants, school feeding programme, and other interventions in recent time, but the building of new schools has often not kept pace with the increase in the student population. In these cases, schools have often had to expand class sizes, as well as the ratio of students to teachers, to accommodate large numbers of new students. The question is, does class size really make a difference to the quality of education? How

is quality education measured? What is the effect of class size on educational outcomes and student learning? If there are relationships between class size and student outcomes, how strong are they? What impact is suggested by the empirical research in this area? If the anticipated relationships do not exist or are weak, why is this, the case? Are there other factors which produce positive learning outcomes? Educators and researchers from diverse philosophical perspectives have debated the relationship between class size and student learning at length and had contradictory results.

Student-teacher ratios and class sizes have been suggested as indicators of instructional load or resources, with the student-teacher ratio considered as an output measure. In literature about indicators, small class sizes generally are treated as signifying a better learning experience for students, and hence, a better quality of education (Sid, 1995). Although many studies have found a strong relationship between class size and students‘ achievement (Willms, 2000 & Fidler, 2001), Krueger (as cited in OECD, 2011) found a weak relationship. Moreover, quantitative relationships between class sizes and academic achievement rarely take other key quality factors into account, such as teachers‘ perceptions of working conditions and their sense of efficacy. How class size and pupil-teacher ratio affect students‘ achievement are discussed extensively in the later part of this chapter.

Academic and Professional Competence of the Teacher

A well-trained teacher is needed to expedite the learning process in schools. The teacher must be trained academically and professionally enough to handle the rigors of the teaching job and to be able to impart knowledge using the most effective methods. Professional development can help overcome shortcomings that may have been part of teachers‘ pre-service education and keep teachers abreast of new knowledge and practices in the field. Professional development of teachers can have a direct impact on student achievement. Case studies from Bangladesh, Botswana, Guatemala, Namibia and Pakistan have provided evidence that ongoing professional development, especially in the early years after initial preparation and then continuing throughout a career, contribute significantly to student learning and retention (UNICEF, 2000).

Teacher education, both pre-service and in-service, should help teachers develop teaching methods and skills that take new understandings of how children learn into account. Just as curriculum should be child-centred and relevant, so should instructional methods. Teaching should not be viewed as presentation of knowledge only but should help students build on prior knowledge to develop attitudes, beliefs and cognitive skills; as well as expand their knowledge base. Teaching styles in many places, however, remain traditional, teacher-centred and fairly rigid or even authoritarian. Good teachers encourage contacts with students, stress active learning, have students reflect on their learning and try to relate it to their daily lives, provide prompt feedback on performance and respect diverse talents and ways of learning. When Ethiopian teachers were interviewed about the degree to which their teaching practices were learner-centred and relevant to student‘s lives, about half said they link lessons to the daily life of pupils at

least once a week. Almost two-thirds, however, said they never or rarely ask pupils what their interests are, or what they would like to learn (UNICEF, 2000). Teaching methods that facilitate active student learning rather than promote passivity and rote memorization represent a new and difficult paradigm for many teachers, but one that needs to be understood and put into practice if learner outcomes are to improve. Teaching and learning about life skills requires interactive, student-centred methods. Effective professional development may take many forms; it should not be limited to formal off-site kinds of programmes. Dialogue and reflections with colleagues, peer and supervisor observations and keeping journals are all effective ways for teachers to advance their knowledge (UNICEF, 2000). A programme in Kenya, the Mombassa School Improvement Project, built on this approach to professional development and showed that teachers supported with in-service as well as external workshop training improved significantly in their abilities to use child-centred teaching and learning behaviours (UNICEF, 2000). In Ghana, many teachers seek profession development through programmes like Sandwich and Distance Education which are organized by the various universities in the country.

Quality Content of Education

According to UNICEF (2000), quality content refers to the intended and taught curriculum of schools. National goals for education, and outcome statements that translate those goals into measurable objectives should provide the starting point for the development and implementation of curriculum. In a broader sense Nicholls and Nicholls (as cited in Adentwi & Sarfo, 2011 p.159) describe content in its broad sense as –the

knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to be learned". In other words, content refers to theoretical knowledge or information, values, attitudes and skills that are imparted to learners for the survival of and progress of society and for their effective participation in the life of society. In contributing to the definition of content, Adentwi and Sarfo opine that content consists of those aspects of the culture of a given people which are considered to be important enough to be passed on to the younger generation. In a limited sense, Taba (as cited in Adentwi & Sarfo, 2011) describe content as a related body of facts, gneralisation, or theories, or a description of events, as in history, or any other predetermine arrangement of a particular segment of knowledge or subject matter. It must be noted that the school cannot transmit the entire culture to the learner. Therefore, it must make a selection; a choice of priorities of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that can effectively pass on to the leaner. The selection of content is, therefore, a question of deciding what item of knowledge, skills, attitudes and value to include in the various subjects and lessons in order to realize the aims, purposes and objectives of education (Adentwi & Sarfo, 2011). Content is the heart of curriculum because it is the stock in trade in the school. It provides what is taught in the school and the means of organizing learners' activities and experiences. Content and learning experiences interact constantly in the teaching-learning process. An important content area may not bring about effective learning if it is not accompanied by the necessary activities used in teaching it.

In order to ensure quality content and education the criteria for selecting content must be critically looked at. Is the content valid? There must be a close connection between the subject matter and the aim, goal or objective that it is intended to serve. In other words curriculum should be structured in such a way that it enables the learner to

exhibit the desired outcome after he has gone through the instructional process. Is the content significant? This involves the extent to which content is logically central or important enough to apply to a wide range of issues in a discipline or area of study. Is the content relevant? Content must be based on the everyday life experiences of the learner. The utility nature of the content must be considered when selecting content of the curriculum. The content together with the learning experiences must be useful to the learner in solving current problems as well as the future problems when they crop up. Is the content learnable? This refers to how difficult the learner finds the content. Curriculum content must not be too easy for the learner otherwise it will not be challenging enough for the learner. On the other hand, it must not be too difficult to scare the learner. It is in the light of this that Glatthorn and Jailall (2000) opine that curriculum should provide for individual differences, closely coordinate and selectively integrate subject matter, and focus on results or standards and targets for student learning. Does the content meet the needs and interest of the learner? Content must be tailored to the specification of what the learner is supposed to learn. This means that in selecting curriculum the age of the learner, his stage of development, his level of maturation and factors that are believed to stimulate learning are to be considered. Is the content arranged in sequence? Sequential arrangement of content helps both the learner and teacher to use the previous knowledge as the background to the new knowledge and the new knowledge builds upon the old one. Another important aspect of selecting content is the scope. The subject matter selected should aid the learner to develop skills, attitudes and values that are considered desirable. Scope does not only refer to the variety of content area covered but also the depth to which each subject is to be taught. In all countries, however, quality

content should include several pivotal areas. These include literacy, numeracy, life skills and peace education — as well as science and social studies (UNICEF, 2000). It is clear that curriculum content and how it is selected influences quality education and the performance of the learner.

Regular Attendance for Learning

When children reach school going age, research demonstrates that in order to achieve academic excellent, children must attend school consistently. According to UNICEF (2000) a child's exposure to curriculum increases his or her opportunity to learn and significantly influences achievement and exposure to curriculum comes from being in school. A study of village-based schools in Malawi found that students with higher rates of attendance had greater learning gains and lower rates of repetition (UNICEF, 2000).

Teachers' Working Conditions

The working conditions of teachers affect their ability to provide quality education. Many aspects of school life and educational policy go into teachers' perceptions of their employment. As already stated, the state of infrastructure within which a teacher works, the availability of textbooks and learning materials the teacher has to work with and class sizes influence the teacher's experience and output as an educator. Teachers' remuneration also matters. In many countries, teachers, especially the newly recruited ones, have been struggling with how to get their salaries on time. In Ghana, a newly recruited teacher can work for 24 months or more before he is paid. In spite of this

long period of a newly recruited teacher working without a pay he is entitled to only three months‘ salary arrears. This policy is killing the spirit of teachers to give of their best. In Bangladesh, Nepal and Uganda, for example, the teachers of 27 per cent, 35 per cent and 60 per cent of all students, respectively, were paid a month or more late (UNICEF, 2000). Low and late remuneration may lead teachers to take on another job, which hurts student learning. A study in 12 Latin American countries found that children in schools where many teachers work in other jobs in addition to teaching are 1.2 times more likely to have lower test scores and/or higher grade repetition (Willms, 2000). Teachers therefore need supportive working conditions and high remuneration in order to reduce the rate at which they take additional jobs. Such a move will help teachers to have full concentration for the students they teach.

Administrative Support and Leadership

The quality of administrative support and leadership is another critical factor that influences quality education. At the national level, ensuring financial resources for education, especially for recurrent budgets is critical to the success of educational achievements. Teachers need governments who are supportive of education systems. Organizational support for teaching and learning takes many forms, including such measures as advocating for better conditions and professional development, respecting teachers‘ autonomy and professionalism and developing inclusive decision-making processes (UNICEF, 2000). Such support has been shown to have impact on student learning. In Malawi, for example, supervisors in the schools that showed the greatest learning gains regularly evaluated teachers, contributing to professional development and

improved teaching practice (UNICEF, 2000). Unfortunately, however, many head teachers and administrators in developing countries have not had any formal training in the leadership functions of schools, and promotions to such position may not be based on leadership or management skills.

Student Access to Languages Used at School

The languages schools use for instruction can have an impact on learning and academic achievement in general. Research suggests that many benefits can be gained by beginning primary education in the student‘s home language. Unfortunately, in Africa, especially West African countries, resistance to primary instruction in the local language persists for several reasons. For instance in Ghana obstacles to language policy implementation exist. Many parents and teachers believe that learning in the mother tongue can impair learning English later. In view of this, some parents prefer taking their children to private schools where the language policy is not strictly implemented. Parents want their children to master the national language early since they view it as critical to improving life chances for their children. There is an assertion that African languages are not equipped to deal with scientific and technical concepts; and many parents refuse to have their children learn a national language when they consider it to have been imposed for political rather than socio-linguistic or demographic considerations (UNICEF, 2000). A problem not often addressed is the transition the learner must make from using the home language to using the national language, and the lack of learning resources and teacher support which is available to bridge this important linguistic gap (Cazden, 2000). Other problems include lack of textbooks, learning materials and teacher skills in local

languages. The above factors of quality education indicate that it is very difficult to ascribe quality education to a particular factor.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter considers the research design used for the study, population, sample and sampling technique, research instrument, pilot testing, data collection and data analysis procedures.

Research Design

A descriptive survey was employed through a quantitative research approach for this study. Descriptive survey typically seeks to ascertain respondents‘ perspectives or experiences on a specified subjects in a predetermined structured manner.

According to Creswell (2009), a survey research provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population. It involves acquiring information about one or more groups of people about their characteristics, opinions, attitudes or previous experiences by asking them questions and tabulating their answers.

Descriptive survey is simple in design. The researchers poses a series of questions in the form of interview or questionnaire to willing participant, summarises their responses with percentages, frequencies, mean, chart and other sophisticated statistical indices and then draws inferences about a particular population from the response of the sample.

Descriptive survey was advantageous because it helped the researcher to rely on self-report data. Again, it reported what the respondents believed to be true. It also helped me to identify the perceptions of a large population from a small group of individuals as indicated by Babbie (1990). However, one challenge with this design is that peoples' memories for events are often distortion of realities. Thus, what they think happened is not always what did happen.

The purpose of this design is to generalize from a sample to a population so that inferences can be made about some characteristics, attitude, or behaviour of this population (Babbie, 1990). This approach was chosen because it afforded me the opportunity to ascertain the perspectives of teachers and headteachers on the impact of GCP in Atwima Nwabiagya District. This type of study is situated well in quantitative research.

Quantitative research is a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables (Creswell, 2009). He added that these variables, in turn, can be measured, typically on instruments, so that numbered data can be analysed using statistical procedures. According to Salmon (2007), traditionally, the assumption of determinism, which means that all events carefully determined by one or more cases, was made in quantitative research.. In other words, most quantitative researchers try to identify cause-and-effect relationship that enable them to make probabilistic predictions and generalization (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Quantitative researchers generally reduces measurement to numbers. In a descriptive survey, attitudes and perceptions are usually measured by using rating scale as suggested by Johnson and Christensen (2012).

The choice of quantitative paradigm is due to its usefulness for testing and validating already constructed theories about how and why phenomena occur. Again, quantitative research is good for generalizing research findings when the data are based on random samples of sufficient size. Moreover, it is useful for determining general scientific causal relationships or scientific law. Finally, data analysis is relatively less time consuming especially when SPSS is used. However, knowledge produced might be too abstract and general for direct application to specific local situation, contexts, and individuals..

The method a researcher uses is influenced by the philosophical ideas he espouses (Creswell, 2009, Johnson &Christensen, 2012). According to Creswell (2009), the postpositivist assumptions have represented the traditional form of research, and these assumptions hold true more for qualitative research than qualitative research. Postpositivists hold a deterministic philosophy in which causes probably determine effects or outcomes (Creswell, 2009). In other words, the problem researched into by postpositivists reflect the need to identify and assess the causes of that influence outcomes. The brains behind this philosophy are Comte, Mill, Durkheim, Newton and Locke (Smith as cited in Creswell, 2009) and it has been articulated by writers such as Philips and Burbules in recent years (Creswell, 2009).. This philosophy guided me to find out how CGP has had an impact on basic education in Atwima Nwabiagya District.

Population

The target population for this study included all headmasters/headmistresses and teachers in the public basic schools which were not beneficiaries of school feeding

programme but Capitation Grant Policy in Atwima Nwabiagya District. This selective approach was to take away the effect of school feeding programme on basic education. In Ghana, the basic school starts from Kindergarten one to Junior high school. The population is made up of both male and female teachers in all categories. The district consists of rural and urban communities. The people of the district, especially those in rural communities are predominantly peasant farmers and relatively poor due to the low level of socio-economic development of the area. The district has 89 Kindergarten (KG), 93 primary schools and 70 Junior high schools (Atwima Nwabiagya District Education, 2014). Integrating these levels of schools into one, the total numbers of public schools was 93. Thus, a school with K.G., primary and J.H.S was also taken as one basic school and a school without K.G. or JHS was also taken as one basic school in this study. Out of the 93 basic schools 37 were not beneficiaries of School Feeding Programmes but CGP. The study focused on primary and junior high schools.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Sarantakos (1998) indicates that the complete coverage may not offer substantial advantage over a sample survey. Sampling provides a better option since it addresses the survey population in a short period of time and produces comparable and equally valid results. Samples are thought to offer more detailed information and a high degree of accuracy because they deal with relatively small number of units. The total number of public basic schools which were not beneficiaries of school Feeding Programme (SFP) but CGP was 37. Out of these 37 schools, 20 were selected using simple random technique. This was done to ensure that each school had equal chance of being selected.

Twenty schools were selected to help address the subject of discussion at the shortest possible time and also produce comparable and equally valid outcomes. The list of all public basic schools which were not beneficiaries of SFP was obtained from Atwima Nwabiagya District Education Office.

Amedahe (1994) maintains that in the selection of sample for a study, a meaningful and representative sample should be selected with regards to the population characteristics such as size, and composition. He stated that in most quantitative studies; a sample size of five percent (5%) to twenty percent (20%) of the population size is sufficient for generalization purposes. A single-stage sampling procedure was used. A single-stage sampling procedure is one in which the researcher has access to names in the population and can sample the people or the elements directly. According to ANDE (2014), the teacher population (excluding headteachers) of the 20 schools was 328. One hundred and twenty of them were selected using simple random technique to participate in the study. This represented 37% of the teacher population of the selected schools. This was done by forming a sample frame where the entire 328 teachers‘ names were listed and assigned numbers. The total population was then divided by the sample size of 120 (Gordor & Howard, 2000). This gave approximately 3 as the sample point. The 120 teachers were then selected based on multiples of three. That is 3, 6, 9, 12, …… numbers of teachers were selected to participate in the study. With respect to the headmasters all heads of selected schools were purposively selected to take part in the study. The overall sample size of the study was 140.

Research Instruments

In obtaining the necessary data needed for the research, the researcher used a questionnaire made up of open and closed ended items. It was aimed at eliciting data on headteachers‘ and teachers‘ perspective on CGP. The study employed the use of two sets of questionnaire (headteachers‘ and teachers‘ questionnaire). Questionnaires are mostly used in quantitative research because it is highly structured and standardized.

Kerlinger (1973) observed that questionnaire is widely used for collecting data in educational research because it is effective for securing factual information about practices and conditions, and for enquiring into the opinions and attitudes of the subjects. Sarantakos (1998) said that if questionnaire is used, data offered by respondents are of limited interference on the part of the researcher. The questionnaire developed from the literature was designed as a research instrument to solicit teachers‘ views on CGP. The questionnaires were designed by the researcher himself.

The questionnaire for the headteachers had four main sections: Section A sought the personal information of headteachers; Section B sought information on school statistics of the sampled schools; Section C was on the class size and teaching methods applied by the teachers and Section D was on the perceptions of headteachers on CGP. On the other hand, the questionnaire for the teachers was also divided into four main sections. Section A sought personal information of the respondents; Section B focused on the school statistics; Section C sought information on class size and the teaching methodology used by the teachers and Section D focused on the perceptions of the CGP.

In a descriptive survey, attitudes and perceptions are usually measured by using rating scale (Johnson and Christensen, 2012). They suggested 5-point agreement scale.

The five points Likert rating scale of strongly agree=1, agree=2, uncertain=3, disagree=4 and strongly disagreed=5 was adopted for the Section D of both questionnaires (Likert, 1932). Sarantakos (1998) supported the use of Likert scale as he said that Likert scale provides single scores from a set of items. It allows the responses to be ranked and is easy to construct.

Data Collection Procedure

Fink (as cited in Creswell, 2009) identified self-administered questionnaire as one of the data collection procedure in a survey design. The questionnaire was administered by the researcher. The researcher explained the purpose of the study to the respondents. They were made to understand that all information being provided would be treated with confidentiality and for the purpose of research only. It was personally delivered to the respondents who were given up to a maximum of one week to complete. The researcher personally introduced himself to the heads of the various schools and teachers ahead of the scheduled time. An introductory letter seeking permission was delivered for prior approval, after which the questionnaires were distributed.

Adequate time was spent with respondents as they read through the questions and those who needed help in terms of clarifications and interpretation were assisted accordingly. Some of them were able to complete and handed the questionnaire to me instantly. At the end of the seventh day I made a follow–up and retrieved the remaining questionnaire.

Through an application letter secondary data was also obtained from the Atwima Nwabiagya District Education Directorate on the teachers and pupils‘ enrolment in the

district to help estimate the teacher-pupil ratio of the District. Data on BECE results from 2000-2014 was also sought from the education directorate to help assess the trend of the impact of the CGP on the results.

Data Analysis Procedure

In relation to the related research questions and the items displayed in the questionnaire, descriptive statistics was used to analyze the questions. The results were presented using mean scores, one sample t-test, percentages, tables, and charts. Data gathered on the questionnaire were edited and collated. The completed questionnaires were serially numbered for easy identification and the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) computer application software was used to process the data. For research question one the data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean. Research question two was analyzed using the independent sample t-test and descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean, standard deviation and percentages. In the case of research question three and four the data was analyzed using mean and the independent sample t-test respectively. For research question five the data was analyzed using mean.

The data was first coded. A 5 likert scale was employed in this study. The codes adopted were as follows: Strongly agreed = 1, Agreed = 2, Uncertain = 3, Disagreed = 4 and Strongly Disagreed = 5. The appropriate number for each datum was placed in the appropriate data file for the analysis. Mean of all responses under each item was then found. The mean scores were approximated to nearest whole numbers.

The personal information of the respondents were presented using frequencies and percentages as these helped to describe the respondents. The school statistics were also

presented using frequencies for the purposes of finding out whether the CGP had helped to improve on number of textbooks, enrolment of pupils and the number of teachers in the various sampled schools. For the class size and teaching method, charts, tables, one sample t-test were used to present the information. One sample t-test was chosen to help ascertain whether the class sizes proposed by teachers and headteachers were the same as the one by GES. For the perception of teachers and headteachers on CGP impact, mean scores were applied. This helped me to get a common measure to assess the perception of teachers and headteachers on CGP as mean score take into consideration all the responses of the respondents on the subject matter.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

The validity of the instrument was sought by consulting with experts in the Education Faculty. The instruments were subjected to criticisms by the supervisor. The need to determine the appropriateness of the instrument occasioned a pilot test that took place at basic schools at Mpasatia in the Atwima Mponua District. Mpasatia was selected for the pilot test because of proximity and that; it has some similarities and characteristics of interest as some towns and villages in the Atwima Nwabiagya District. There is a drift of young adults and other workers from the industrial cities to settle at both towns. The two districts absorb settlers from the core who migrate to the periphery. The literacy levels are quiet appreciating in both districts. Most of the inhabitants of both districts are self-employed. A simple random sampling method was employed for the selection of the teachers for the pilot test. The questionnaires were given to the respondents after which the researcher went for them after three (3) days.

The purpose of the pilot test was to ascertain the suitability of the items on the questionnaire and also to aid in refining it if found unsuitably. Berg (1989) asserts that the needed alteration also can be made in the data collection methods so that data in the main study may be analyzed more effectively.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used by the researcher to process the responses of the respondents. The most common index of reliability, namely Kuber Cronbach's coefficient alpha was employed. The reliability test was conducted to determine the reliability of the instrument for the main data. Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (1990) state that, Cronbach alpha is used when items have multiple scores. Since some items in the questionnaire were multiple scores and closed-ended, the Cronbach alpha was considered appropriate to use.

The overall reliability estimates for the instrument had a coefficient alpha of 0.844 which was above 0.7. This gives an indication that the items were satisfactory enough to form a composite. The researcher also was able to make necessary revisions and corrected identified ambiguities for the final form of the questionnaire for the field work and also helped standardize the questions and scores for analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter deals with presentation and analysis of the field data on teachers‘ and headteachers‘ perspective on the impact of CGP. The findings are then discussed. The analysis is done on the basis of the personal information of the respondents and research questions. The sample of the study was 140. This was made up 20 headteachers and 120 teachers. In all 102 questionnaires out of the 140 were retrieved, with 14 of them being headteachers questionnaires and 88 being the teachers questionnaires. This represent 73% response rate. Scores were assigned to responses to enable the researcher analyse the data. The interpretation of the data was done with the use of frequency tables, percentages, one sample t-test, chart and mean scores.

Personal information of Respondent

The personal information of respondents is solicited for the purposes of assessing the responses of the respondents. Table 1 presents the gender of the respondents.

Table 1: Gender Distribution

Sex	Headteachers Frequency (%)	Teachers Frequency (%)	Total Frequency (%)
Male	7 (50)	46 (52.3)	53 (52.0)
Female	7 (50)	42 (47.7)	49 (48.0)
Total	14 (13.7)	88 (86.3)	102 (100)

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 1 depicts that equal percentages of male and female headteachers responded to the questionnaires. However, there were more (52.3%) male teachers as compared to female teachers (47.7%) who responded to the questionnaires. This reflects the diverse nature of the respondents and it tells how male teachers dominate in the Atwima Nwabiagya District. It also depends on how the selection was done.

Table 2: Level of Education of Respondents

Highest Educational level	Headteachers Frequency (%)	Teachers Frequency (%)	Total Frequency (%)
Teacher Cert. _A‘	2 (14.3)	7 (8.0)	9 (8.8)
DBE	2 (14.3)	9 (10.2)	11 (10.8)
First Degree	9 (64.3)	69 (78.4)	78 (76.5)
Master‘s Degree	1 (7.1)	3 (3.4)	4 (3.9)
Total	14 (13.7)	88 (86.3)	102 (100)

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 2 indicates the various levels of education of respondents. It shows that most of teachers had had some level of higher education. As seen from the table, 8.8% had teacher‘s certificate _A‘ and 10.8% had diploma in basic education (DBE). First degree holders formed 76.5% with 3.9% being master‘s degree holders. This shows that the respondents had diverse educational qualifications. This also shows that most teachers had the minimum required certificate to teach in the basic schools. This reflects the high level of teachers‘ development in the district.

The Schools Statistics

This subtopic discusses the level at which the headteachers and teachers administered and taught respectively, the class at which the teachers taught, number of pupils enrolled in the various schools and the number of textbooks available. This helps to assess the impact of CGP on basic education in the Atwima Nwabiagya District. Table 3 displays responses regarding the level of basic schools at which respondents administered or taught. It could be observed from the table that equal percentages (35.7%) of the headteachers headed primary only and both primary and JHS. There were only 28.6% of them who headed only JHS. Even though basic school starts from kindergarten and ends at JHS, we can still have some basic schools which are KG and primary only. For this study where primary and JHS are headed by one person it was considered as one basic school.

Table 3: Teachers and Headteachers at Various Levels of Basic Education

Basic School level	Headteachers Frequency (%)	Teachers Frequency (%)	Total Frequency (%)
Primary	5 (35.7)	35 (39.8)	40 (39.2)
JHS	4 (28.6)	53 (60.2)	57 (55.9)
Both Primary & JHS	5 (37.7)		5 (4.9)
Total	14 (13.7)	88 (86.3)	102 (100)

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 3 shows that for the teachers, 39.2% taught at primary school whilst 55.9% taught at JHS. This shows that majority of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire teach at JHS.

Table 4 shows class distribution by teachers. It could be seen that the teachers were sampled from basic school one (BS1) to basic school nine (BS9, that is JHS3). Five each of the teachers taught at BS1 and BS2. Two teachers taught only BS7. However, majority of them (26) taught at either BS7, BS8 or BS9.

Table 4: Class Distribution by Teachers

Class	Number of Teachers
BS 1	5
BS 2	5
BS 3	4
BS 4	3
BS 5	8
BS 6	10
BS 7	2
BS 8	10
BS 9	4
BS 7,8	4
BS 7,9	3
BS 8,9	4
BS 7,8,9	26
Total	88

Source: Field Survey, 2015

According to OECD (2011), the ratio of students to teaching staff indicates how resources for education are allocated. For the purposes of this study, teacher to pupils' ratio is calculated based on the formula: teachers per 100 pupils (T per 100 p)

$$T\ per\ 100\ p = \frac{Number\ of\ teachers\ in\ a\ school}{total\ number\ of\ pupils\ in\ that\ school} \times 100$$

This helps me to find out the number of teachers per 100 pupils in a school. Hundred (100) is used as the bench mark since most of the schools in the district has pupils‘ population more than 100.

Table 5: Headteachers Response to Number of Teachers and Pupils in their Schools

Code of Schools	No. of Teachers	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	Total Pupils	T per100 p
1	18	223	226	449	4
2	11	78	68	146	8
3	30	314	308	622	5
4	12	74	76	150	8
5	14	78	89	167	8
6	22	149	168	317	7
7	22	298	354	652	3
8	28	223	231	454	6
9	8	94	91	185	4
10	17	113	137	250	7
11	28	314	313	627	4
12	10	78	82	160	6
13	11	150	130	180	6
14	13	137	142	279	5
Total	244	2323	2415	4738	5

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From Table 5, the headteachers‘ response to the number of teachers in their schools shows teacher population ranging from 8 being the least to 30 being the maximum. The results also show that there were more girls (2415) as compared to boys (2323). This indicates that the district had achieved gender parity rate as found in the MDG2. This is supported by ANDE (2014) document which shows the population of male and female as 22762 and 23637 respectively (see appendix 1). It could also be observed from Table 5 that the average number of teachers per 100 pupils was 5. This is an indication that teacher to pupils ratio is 1:20 (pupil-teacher ratio is 20:1). Comparing this to the district statistics which put the teacher population as of 2014 at 2184 and the

pupil population at 46399, it could be said that for every 100 pupils in the district there was approximately 5 teachers. This means that the teacher to pupils' ratio in the district is approximately 1:20.

Table 6: Primary Teachers Response to Class Size and Number of Textbooks

Serial No. of Primary Teachers	Class Size	No. of English textbooks	No. of Maths textbooks	No. of Inte. Science textbooks	No. of Social Studies textbook
1	42	16	14	12	24
2	37	12	10	8	0
3	29	30	27	40	15
4	34	40	40	40	40
5	30	30	27	40	15
6	39	28	30	29	0
7	37	20	20	20	20
8	35	45	50	49	0
9	39	20	25	30	0
10	90	50	48	50	0
11	35	13	17	13	0
12	45	21	26	16	0
13	43	30	25	20	0
14	50	32	28	36	0
15	47	45	45	45	0
16	40	40	40	0	0
17	45	60	55	0	0
18	52	0	0	0	0
19	48	30	25	20	0
20	31	12	13	15	0
21	35	38	36	40	0
22	50	50	50	50	0
23	40	45	45	45	0
24	33	30	32	30	0
25	35	20	15	25	0
26	36	42	48	40	0
27	40	48	50	0	0
28	30	34	34	34	17
29	71	42	38	53	60
30	42	37	40	40	38
31	40	20	22	15	0
32	39	22	30	25	0
33	39	30	20	15	0
34	40	40	40	40	0
35	27	25	19	15	0
Total	1445	1097	1084	950	229

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The analysis in Table 6 shows that there were 1445 pupils in all the primary schools sampled for the study. This indicates that the average class size of the primary schools sampled was 41 pupils per class which is more than what was proposed by

Anamuah-Mensah Committee in 2002. This study has shown that there was 1097, 1084, 950 and 229 English language, Mathematics, Integrated Science and Social studies or Citizen Education textbooks respectively, among the primary schools sampled.

It could be said that pupil to English Language textbook and Mathematics textbook ratios are the same, which is approximately 1:1. However, for Social Studies/Citizen Education, it is 6:1. This is inadequate. For effective teaching and learning every pupil should have a textbook.

Table 7: JHS Teachers' Response on Number of Textbooks

Subject	No. of Textbooks	No. of Students	PTxtR (Approx.)
English Language	450	872	2:1
Mathematics	262	744	3:1
Ghanaian Language	225	458	2:1
Basic Design and Technology (BDT)	200	940	5:1
Social Studies	205	397	2:1
Religious and Moral Education (RME)	31	182	6:1
Information Communication Technology	155	768	5:1
French	289	353	1:1
Integrated Science	408	647	2:1

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From Table 7, it could be seen that proportionately there were more French textbooks (1:1) than any of the textbooks; this was followed by Integrated Science, English Language, Ghanaian Language and Social Studies textbooks which have same

pupil-textbook ratio (2:1). There was high pupil-textbook ratio for Religious and Moral Education. This was followed by Information and Communication Technology and Basic Design and Technology (5:1). It could therefore be said that the number of textbooks in the various basic schools were insufficient.

Class Size and Teaching Method

According to Anamuah-Mensah (2002), a class size not exceeding 30 at pre-school (kindergarten 1 and 2) and 35 at the other levels of basic education are the ideal class size. When the headteachers were asked to indicate whether class size has effect on the number of exercise/homework/class tests teachers give to their students, they were divided in their response as 50% of them thought that the class size had no effect on the output of work whilst equal percentage thought otherwise.

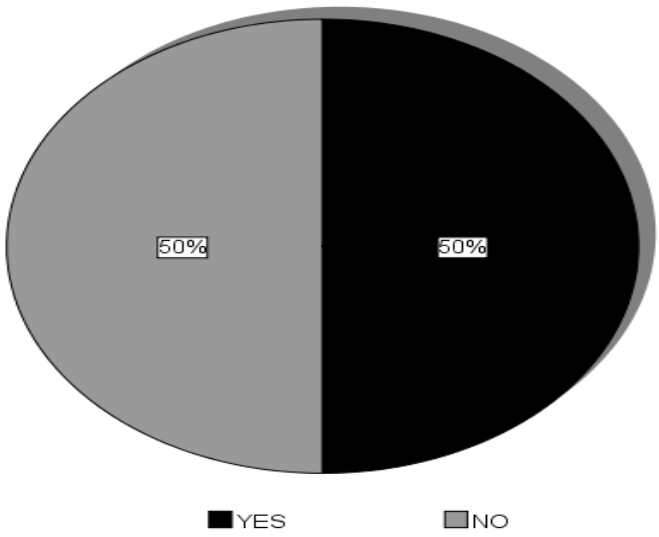

Figure 2: Headteachers response on effect of class size on work output
Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 8: One Sample Test Results of Class Size Proposed by Headteachers and G.E.S.

Mean	test value	Std. Deviation	t	P-value
37.14	40	8.018	-1.333	0.205

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The class size has the effect on how much is learned in many ways. For instance, it could affect how students interact and socialize with each other. Thus, class atmosphere is determined by the interactive activities between a teacher and students and among the students themselves. The Ghana Education Service (2009) policy stipulates an average class size of not more than 40 pupils for the JHS. Many studies have shown that enrollment at the basic level has increased as a result of the introduction of CGP and school feeding programme. This has led to large class size in basic schools. In view of this the researcher sought to find out from the headteachers the manageable class size that will help teachers give a lot of exercises/homework/class tests to fill students' assessment. The table 8 depicts that the average class size proposed by the headteachers was approximately 37. However, when one sampled test was conducted to find out whether there is a significant difference between the GES accepted class size and the proposed one by the headteachers, with a p-value of 0.205 which is greater than 0.05, it could be said that the headteachers average is not different from that of GES.

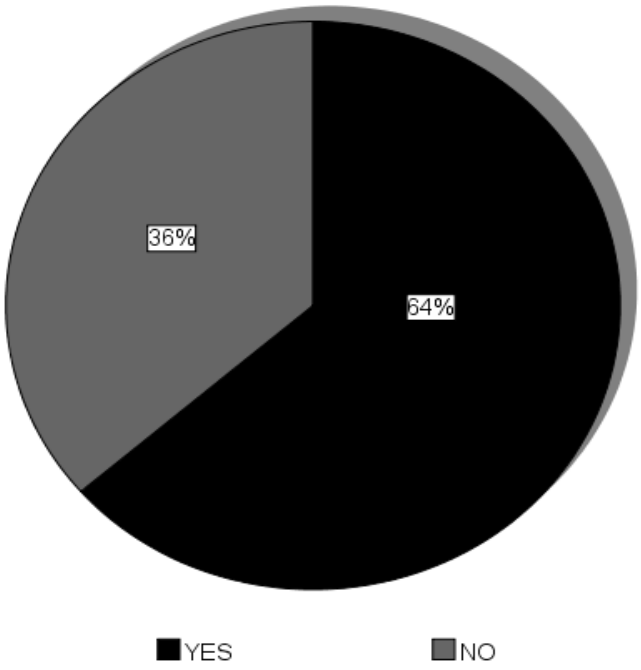

Figure 3: Teachers response to the effect of class size on work output
Source: Field Survey, 2015

When teachers were asked whether class size affects the number of exercises/homework/class test they give, 36% chose ―no" and 64% chose ―yes" as seen in Figure 2. This indicates that class size affects teaching output. This finding supports the work of Osei-Fosu (2011) that large class size affect how much time the teacher is able to focus on individual students and their specific needs rather than on the group as a whole. Since it is easier for a teacher to focus on one individual in a smaller group, and therefore the smaller the class size, the more likely individual attention can be given. The class size could also affect the teacher's allocation of time and, hence, effectiveness, and how much material can be covered.

The size of each class forms a critical determinant of pupils‘ academic improvement and performance (Cochran-Smith, 2006). For example, Kraft (1994) in his study of the ideal class size found that class sizes above 40 pupils have negative effects on pupils‘ academic achievement. This is because of the possible differences in interests and abilities of pupils, particularly in commanding attention in class (Asiedu-Akrofi, 1982). The researcher sought to test whether the average class size given by the teachers differed from that of GES. The teachers gave a class average of approximately 35 as the same as the one proposed by Anamuah-Mensah (2002). The p-value was 0.000 (Table 9). This is an indication that the teachers‘ average is significantly lower than that of GES.

Table 9: One Sample Test Results of Class Size Proposed by Teachers and G.E.S.

Mean	test value	Std. Deviation	t	P-value
34.66	40	12.570	-3.986	0.000

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The headteachers and the teachers were asked to indicate whether class size influence the method of teaching. The figure 3 and 4 below present the headteachers and teachers responses respectively.

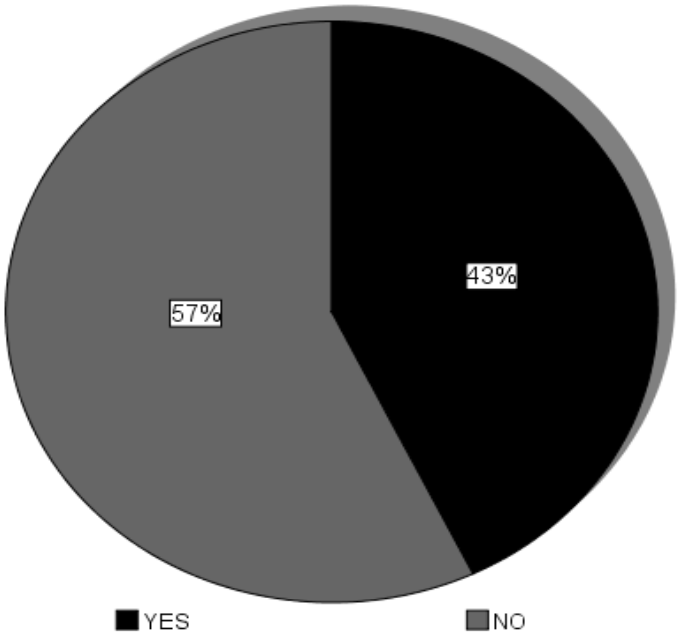

Figure 4 : Headteachers' responses to the influence of class size on method of teaching
Source: Field Survey, 2015

Figure 4 shows that 57% of the headteachers were of the view that class size did not influence the method of teaching whilst 43% said it affected the method of teaching.

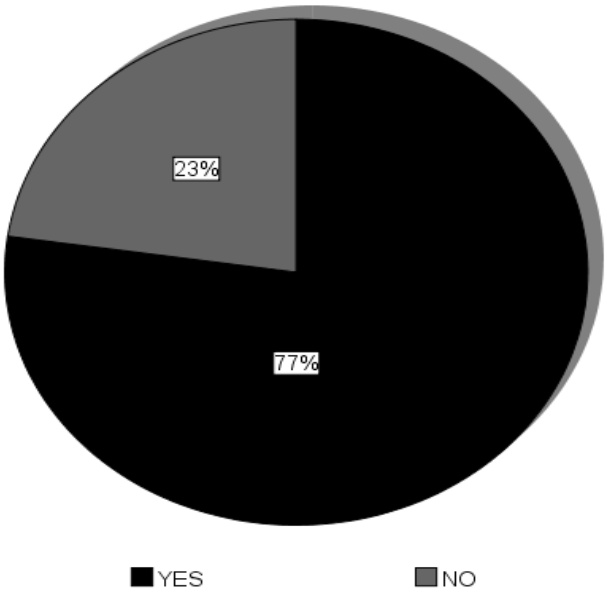

Figure 5: Teachers response to the influence of class size on method of teaching
Source: Field Survey, 2015

From Figure 5, it is observed that majority of the teachers (77%) indicated class size influenced methods of teaching. They were in agreement with Fidler (2001), Osei-Fosu (2011) and Akyeampong (2011). According to Fidler (2001), longer exposure to small class size results in higher achievement in reading and language and mathematics as well. For these reasons, changes to the class size are considered a potential means of changing how much students learn. Teachers may choose methods of teaching which is child-centred and different methods of assessing students when they have smaller classes (Akyeampong, 2011). Most of the teachers and headteachers chose child-centered teaching method as the common method they normally used.

Impact of Capitation Grant on Enrolment

Table 10 presents the results with regard to the impact of Capitation Grant on enrolment.

Table 10: Impact of CG on Enrollment

Impact on Enrollment	Headteachers Mean	Teachers Mean
Capitation Grant Policy (C.G.P) amounted to one short-effect on enrolment. That is, CGP initially produced an enrolment surge, but with time, participation patterns returned to status quo prior to the surge.	2.77	2.67
Capitation Grant Policy has not been effective in sustaining enrolment.	3.23	2.66
Capitation Grant Policy is helping to achieve education for all (EFA)	2.38	3.00
Capitation Grant Policy is good for increasing enrolment but not improving quality education.	3.54	2.42

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From table 10, it is observed that for the item ―CGP amounted to one short-effect on enrolment" the mean scores for both headteachers and teachers were2.77 and 2.67 respectively. This suggests that that both headteachers and teachers were uncertain as to whether CGP amounted to one short-effect on enrolment. For whether ―CGP has not been effective in sustaining enrolment", the mean scores for both headteachers and teachers were 3.23 and 2.66 respectively. This means they were uncertain about the statement. With a mean score of 2.38 the headteachers agreed that CGP is helping to achieve education for all, however, with a mean score of 3.0 the teachers were uncertain.

The headteachers scored the item –CGP is good for increasing enrolment but not improving quality education" 3.54 and the teachers scored it 2.42. This is an indication that both the headteachers and teachers have different views on CGP and enrolment increasing to improve quality of education. While the headteachers disagreed that CGP is good for increasing enrolment but not improving quality education, the teachers agreed. Generally, it could be said that both headteachers and teachers are uncertain about the impact of CGP on enrolment. This outcome is not different from the conclusion drawn by Osei-Fosu (2011). From his study it was found that capitation grant had a positive but not significant impact on enrolment.

It is a common understanding that to achieve progress in performance in educational outcomes, there is the need, among other things, for attendance at schools and retention in classrooms. A study by Osei-Fosu found that the capitation grant has no significant impact on attendance and retention.

Impact of Capitation Grant on Attendance

Table 11 presents the results regarding the impact of Capitation Grant on enrolment.

Table 11: Impact of CG on Attendance

Impact on Attendance	Headteachers Mean	Teachers Mean
As a result of Capitation Grant Policy children are punctual to class.	2.69	3.25
As a result of Capitation Grant children are not driven away to collect school fees.	2.08	2.36
Capitation Grant Policy has been effective in improving attendance	2.31	3.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From Table 11, with a mean score of 2.69 for headteachers and 3.25 for teachers it could be said that both of them were uncertain about the statement that as a result of CGP children are punctual to class. On the statement that ~~–as~~ a result of capitation grant children are not driven away to collect school fees", the mean score was 2.08 for headteachers and 2.36 for teachers. This means that no pupil is driven away as a result of school fees because of CGP. However, on whether it has improved attendance, whilst the headteachers agreed the teachers were uncertain. It could be said that headteachers and teachers had divided views when it comes to the impact of CGP on attendance. The uncertainty of teachers as to whether CGP has been in improving attendance may stem from the fact that it was difficult to trace improvement in attendance to CGP alone. There are other factors that affect enrolment. According to Hunt (2008), higher parental or household head level of education is associated with increased access to education, higher attendance rates and lower rate dropout rates.

Impact of CG on Dropout

Table 12 shows the results regarding the impact of Capitation Grant on dropout

Table 12: Impact of CG on Dropout

Impact on Dropout	Headteachers Mean	Teachers Mean
Those who drop out of school are students who are over aged.	4.08	3.74
With the introduction of Capitation Grant Policy those who usually drop out of school are those who perform poorly.	2.77	3.57
Dropout rate has declined because children or students do not have to leave school for economic activities to get money to pay school fees.	3.00	2.78

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Anytime schooling produces limited success in terms of improved learning and achievement, then chances that households and children will under-value education increases, and coupled with opportunity cost, is likely to increase non-attendance and eventual dropout (Akyeampong, 2009). From table 12, for the first statement, the mean score was 4.08 for headteachers and 3.74 for teachers' responses meaning they disagreed that those who drop out of school are students who are over aged. This is in contrast with the position espoused by Colclough et al. (2000) that pressure on children to leave school tend to increase as they grow older and their opportunity costs rise. The teachers also disagreed that with the introduction of CGP those who usually drop out of school are those who perform poorly, whilst, the headteachers were uncertain. Surprisingly, the views of teachers differ from that of Boyle et al. (2002) and Bamora, (2010). They believe that high achievers usually tend to develop more interest in attending school regularly than low achievers. They add that irregular attendance or absenteeism is precursor to dropout. There is evidence to show that children with poor academic performance are more likely than those with better academic performance to drop out. They conclude by saying that the situation becomes worse when such students are asked to repeat the grade after failing to meet the minimum requirement of academic standard of the school. Both headteachers and teachers were uncertain as to whether dropout rate declined because children or students do not have to leave school for economic activities to get money to pay school fees. It could therefore be said that CGP has no impact on dropout.

Impact of CG on Completion Rate

Table 13 presents the results with regard to the impact of Capitation Grant on completion rate.

Table 13: Impact of CG on Completion Rate

Impact on Completion rate	Headteachers Mean	Teachers Mean
Capitation Grant has been effective in sustaining completion rate of basic education by students.	2.77	2.78
Completion rate is high with Capitation Grant Policy because children or students are not expelled from school for non-payment of school fees.	2.46	2.45

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The analysis shows that with a mean value of 2.77 for headteachers and 2.78 for teachers both of them were uncertain as to whether capitation grant has been effective in sustaining completion rate of basic education by students. However, with a mean score of 2.46 for headteachers and 2.45 for teachers both of them agreed that completion rate is high with capitation grant policy because students are not expelled from school for non-payment of school fees. This indicates that CGP is helping to raise completion rate at the basic education level. This confirms the study by Bamora (2010) which indicated that school fees became a barrier to some parents since students were sent away from school for non-payment of school levies.

Impact of CG on Gender Disparity

Table 14 presents the results regarding the impact of Capitation Grant on gender disparity

Table 14: Impact of CG on Gender Disparity

Impact on Gender Disparity	Headteachers Mean	Teachers Mean
Capitation Grant Policy is helping to close the gap between boys and girls enrolment.	2.31	2.81
As a result of Capitation Grant girls are more regular in school than boys since they (girls) do not need to go out to sell in order to earn money for school fees.	2.77	3.22
As a result of Capitation Grant, completion rate among girls is equally higher as that of boys since they (girls) need not to go out to sell to pay school fees.	2.69	3.08
As a result of Capitation Grant Policy student girls have equal chance to learn after school hours as that of student boys since they (girls) need not to engage in economic ventures to get money for school fees.	2.54	2.98

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Schultz (2003) in his study found an increase in enrollment of all students in grades 1 through 8, especially, among girls who had completed grade 6. From table 14, with mean score of 2.31 and 2.81 for headteachers and teachers respectively, the headteachers agreed that CGP is helping to close the gap between boys and girls enrolment but the teachers were uncertain. The headteachers' conclusion can be seen in the data provided by them in table 5, which shows that there were more female pupils compared to male pupils. This can also be confirmed by the ANDE data of 2014, which put the enrolment of female pupils at the basic level at 23637 and that of male at 22762. On whether as a result of CG girls are more regular in school than boys, both headteachers and teachers were uncertain. They were also uncertain as to whether as a

result of CG; completion rate among girls is equally higher as that of boys. It could be said that CGP has no significant impact on gender. Osei et al., (2009) revealed that capitation had no significant effect on bridging the gap between BECE pass rates for males and females.

Impact of CGP on Quality Education and its Indicators such as Class Size, PTR and Pupil-Textbook ratio

According to Akyeampong (2011), the tragedy of CGP was that necessary preparation and investments were not made before the policy was implemented. In effect, quality inputs especially trained teacher levels and PTRs did not improve. Without improvements in the quality and quantity of teachers as demand increased quality was bound to suffer even more.

Impact of Capitation Grant on Class Size

Table 15 presents the results with regard to the impact of Capitation Grant on class size.

Table 15: Impact of CG on Class Size

Impact on Class Size	Headteachers Mean	Teachers Mean
Capitation Grant Policy has made the class size large.	2.23	2.11
Due to capitation Grant Policy, the class size is large and it is difficult to adopt child-centred methodology like discussion in teaching.	3.23	2.49
Due to Capitation Grant Policy, the class size is large and it is making it difficult to focus on individual students and their specific needs during instructional period.	3.00	2.60
Due to Capitation Grant Policy, the class size is large and it is difficult to give enough exercises and mark them.	2.85	2.26
Due to Capitation Grant Policy, the class size is large and it makes the classroom noisy and disruptive.	3.00	2.83
Introduction of Capitation Grant Policy was associated with a sudden drop in pupil-classroom ratio.	3.15	3.11
As a result of Capitation Grant Policy, there is much pressure in the classroom.	2.54	2.62
Government has not constructed enough classrooms in your school after introduction of Capitation Grant Policy to ease congestion in the school.	1.92	2.17

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From Table 15 the mean score for the statement, –capitation grant policy has made the class size large" was 2.23 and 2.11 for headteachers and teachers respectively. Also the mean score for the –statement government has not constructed

enough classrooms in your school after introduction of Capitation Grant Policy to ease congestion in the school" was 1.92 for headteachers and 2.17 for teachers. This shows that both headteachers and teachers agreed that CGP had made class size large; however, they had not seen improvement in the provision of classrooms. They were also uncertain on the following statements: Due to Capitation Grant Policy, the class size is large and it is making it difficult to focus on individual students and their specific needs during instructional period; Due to Capitation Grant Policy, the class size is large and it makes the classroom noisy and disruptive; Introduction of Capitation Grant Policy was associated with a sudden drop in pupil-classroom ratio; and As a result of Capitation Grant Policy, there is much pressure in the classroom.

Additionally, whilst the headteachers were uncertain on the following statements, the teachers agreed: Due to capitation Grant Policy, the class size is large and it is difficult to adopt child-centred methodology like discussion in teaching; and Due to Capitation Grant Policy, the class size is large and it is difficult to give enough exercises and mark them. This affirms the teachers' earlier assertion that large class size made marking of essay difficult and time consuming.

Impact of Capitation Grant on Pupil-Teacher Ratio

Table 16 presents the results regarding the impact of Capitation Grant on pupil-teacher ratio.

Table 16: Impact of CG on Pupil-Teacher Ratio

Impact on Pupil-Teacher Ratio	Headteachers Mean	Teachers Mean
Introduction of Capitation Grant Policy is associated with a sudden drop in pupil-teacher ratio.	2.85	3.17

Source: Field Survey, 2015

It could be said that CGP has impact on class size, however its effect on pupil-teacher ratio cannot be ascertained as the teachers and headteachers were uncertain as to whether the introduction of CGP was associated with a sudden drop in pupil-teacher ratio (see Table 16). However, the district data (see Appendix 3) put pupil to teacher ratio at 21:1 which is not different from what this study established. The study also found out that the average class size in the sampled primary schools was 41. The big gap between the average class size and pupil-teacher ratio can be attributed to the fact that in some of the sampled primary schools two teachers were allocated to one class due to inadequate classrooms. This confirms the assertion that government has not done enough to improve the provision of classrooms. It is said educational expansion especially through the introduction of CGP without serious attention to improvements in teacher supply, effective deployment and enhanced working conditions for teachers is a problem (Akyeampong, 2010).

Impact of Capitation Grant on Pupil-Textbook Ratio

Table 17 presents the results with regard to the impact of Capitation Grant on pupil-textbook ratio.

Table 17: Impact of CG on Pupil-Textbook Ratio

Impact on Pupil-Textbook Ratio	Headteachers Mean	Teachers Mean
Introduction of Capitation Grant Policy is associated with a sudden drop in pupil-textbook ratio.	2.77	2.51
Following the introduction of Capitation Grant Policy, government of Ghana has not provided enough textbooks for students such that every student has a textbook for each of the subjects offered.	2.23	2.03

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From Table 17 it could be observed that both headteachers and teachers were uncertain as to whether the introduction of CGP was associated with a sudden drop in pupil-textbook ratio. The headteachers and the teachers however, agreed that following the introduction of CGP, government of Ghana had not provided enough textbooks for students such that every student has a textbook for each of the subjects offered. It could mean that there were no textbooks before the introduction of CGP or there were some textbooks but because the class sizes were large the books were not sufficient. This confirms the school statistics on textbooks of sampled schools as indicated by Tables 6 and 7. For instance, with reference to Tables 6 and 7 it could be seen that apart from English Language and Mathematics at the primary school level and French textbooks at JHS level where the pupil-textbook ratios were 1:1, the other textbooks were woefully inadequate.

Acquisition of Teaching-Learning Materials

One of the provisions on the Capitation Grant Policy is about using the grant to provide teaching-learning materials. This was also reechoed by the both headteachers and teachers earlier.

Impact of Capitation Grant on Acquisition of Teaching-Learning Materials

Table 18 presents the results regarding the impact of Capitation Grant on teaching and learning materials.

Table 18: Impact of CG on TLMs

	Headteachers Mean	Teachers Mean
Capitation Grant helps in buying the needed teaching-learning materials.	2.15	2.42
As a result of Capitation Grant we now have all the teaching-learning materials.	3.38	3.58
As a result of Capitation Grant, improvising for teaching-learning has reduced.	2.92	3.36
As a result of Capitation Grant, teaching-learning materials are not a problem in the school.	3.46	3.84
A proportion of the Capitation Grant is always used to buy teaching-learning materials for the school.	2.38	2.57

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From table 18 it is observed both teachers and headteachers agreed that capitation grant help in buying the needed teaching-learning materials. The teachers however disagreed that as a result of the capitation grant they now have all the teaching-learning materials. To them getting the needed teaching and learning materials was a problem in the school. This means that the schools were not able to use the grants to acquire enough TLMs as expected.

Capitation Grant and B.E.C.E

Osei et al. (2009) did a study on the effects of the capitation grant on education outcome in Ghana. He found that capitation grant has not had significant impact on BECE pass rates in Ghana and capitation grant has not impacted on bridging the gap between the BECE pass rates for male and female.

Impact of Capitation Grant on BECE

Table 19 presents the results with regard to the impact of Capitation Grant on BECE.

Table 19: Impact of Capitation Grant on BECE

	Headteachers Mean	Teachers Mean
Capitation grant has not helped to improve the results of B.E.C.E over the years.	3.00	2.78
There is no difference between B.E.C.E results before and after the Capitation Grant Policy.	2.77	2.88
Capitation Grant has not helped to improve teaching and learning environment and B.E.C.E results due to large class size.	3.15	2.84
Capitation Grant has not helped much in providing teaching and learning resources to improve B.E.C.E results.	3.38	2.89
Capitation Grant Policy brought a lot of over aged people to school who could not do well at the B.E.C.E.	3.54	3.18

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 19 presents headteachers and teachers‘ perspective on the impact of CGP on BECE results. From the table, it could be found that both headteachers and teachers were uncertain about the following statements: Capitation Grant has not helped to

improve the results of B.E.C.E over the years; there is no difference between B.E.C.E results before and after the Capitation Grant Policy; Capitation Grant has not helped to improve teaching and learning environment and B.E.C.E results due to large class size; and Capitation Grant has not helped much in providing teaching and learning resources to improve B.E.C.E results. This means that both headteachers and teachers were not sure as to whether CGP has impact on BECE. The uncertainty on the part of headteachers and teachers may stem from the fact that B.E.C.E results cannot be attributed to CGP only. The literature reviewed indicates that students' academic performance is influenced by family income level of individuals (Garzon, 2006; Kahlenberg, 2006; Kirkup, 2008), parents' level of education (Krashen, 2005), educational facilities (Carron & Chau, 1996; Wilms, 2000), class size (Sid, 1995), professional competence of teachers (UNICEF, 2000), quality content of education (Glathorn & Jailla, 2000) many others. According to Osei et al. (2009), the capitation grant has not had any significant impact on the BECE pass rates in Ghana. They added that, in terms of the BECE pass rates, the proportion of trained teachers seemed to have impacted positively and significantly on the pass rates.

Figure 6 displays the BECE results of Atwima Nwabiagya District from 2000 up to 2014. It is a known fact that CGP started in 2005 and it was therefore 10 years old in 2015. This policy began with the 2014 batch when they were in BS1. It is therefore proper to look at the results and see if there was a significant impact of CGP on the results. From Figure 6 it could be seen that the BECE results from 2000 have been improving steadily with the worse results recorded in 2000 and best results recorded in 2012. It could also be seen that since 2012 the results of the BECE in the district has been on the decline. In 2000, there was a significant difference between the results of the boys

and that of the girls. The boy were ahead of the girls. However, one could hardly find any significant difference between the results of the boys and that of the girls after the introduction of CGP (Figure 6). The researcher sought to find out whether the results from 2000 up to 2005 were significantly different from the results from 2006 up to 2014. The outcome can be seen in Table 20.

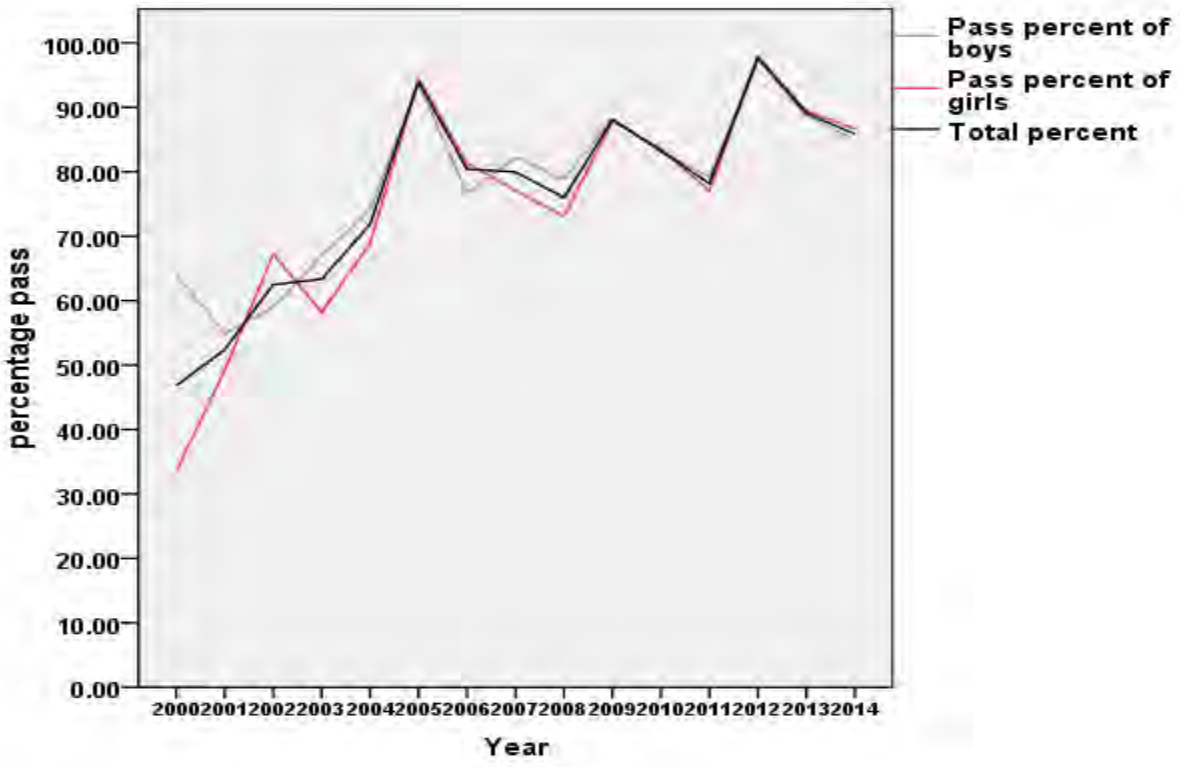

Figure 6: Trend analysis of BECE result from 2000-14
Source: Atwima Nwabiagya District Education, 2015.

One Sample Test Results of BECE of 2000-05 Average against that of 2006-14

Table 20 presents one sample test results of BECE from 2000 to 2005 average against that of 2006 to 2014

Table 20: One Sample Test Results of 2000-05 Average against 2006-14

Mean	test value	Std. Deviation	t	P-value
84.29%	65.16%	6.708	8.555	0.000

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The average results from 2000-05 was 65.16% and that from 2006-14 was 84.29%. The difference between the two averages was 19.13%. With t-value 8.555 and p-value 0.000 which is far less than 0.05, it can be said that there is statistically significant difference between the two averages. However, as to whether it was due to CGP, one cannot tell since a lot goes into pupils passing examination. What goes into passing examinations include teachers‘ attitude, teachers‘ competence, pupils‘ readiness, parental support and of course governmental support. This assertion is line with the findings of Osei et al. (2009), that the capitation grant has not had any significant impact on the BECE pass rates in Ghana. What impacted positively and significantly on the BECE pass rate was the proportion of trained teachers.

Challenges of CGP Implementation from the Perspective of Teachers and Headteachers

Table 20 presents the results with regard to the challenges facing the implementation of Capitation Grant Policy.

Table 21: Challenges Facing CGP Implementation

Challenges	Headteachers Mean	Teachers Mean
The current amount of GH¢4.50 per student/pupil per year is not adequate to buy the needed teaching and learning materials to improve quality education.	1.46	1.83
The Capitation Grant is not released regularly as expected.	1.23	1.51
The school does not receive the right amount of Capitation Grant that corresponds to total enrolment of the school.	2.38	2.24
The School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP) is not always prepared before Capitation Grant is used.	4.15	2.89
The head teacher/master does not always involve all teachers in the preparation of SPIP.	3.69	2.66
The School Management Committee does not always approve of and oversees the implementation of the School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP).	3.69	2.78
Government has not trained and deployed enough teachers to your school to reduce workload of teachers after introduction of Capitation Grant Policy.	3.23	3.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From Table 20 it could be said that both headteachers and teachers saw the following as some of the challenges facing the Capitation Grant Policy: The current amount of GH¢4.50 per student/pupil per year is not adequate to buy the needed teaching and learning materials to improve quality education; the Capitation Grant is not released

regularly as expected; and the school does not receive the right amount of Capitation Grant that corresponds to total enrolment of the school.

However, while headteachers disagreed to the following statements teachers were uncertain: The SPIP is not always prepared before CG is used; the headteacher does not involve all teachers in the preparation of SPIP and the School Management Committee does not always approve of and oversees the implementation of SPIP. This indicates that probably teachers were not consulted when the headmasters or headteachers were planning as to how the Capitation Grant should be used.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In this final chapter, the findings of the study are summarized, conclusions drawn and recommendations made to guide educational practitioners and stakeholders.

Summary

From the study a number of findings emerged. They include the following:

It was found that teachers perceived the CGP to be good for increasing enrolment but not improving quality education. The study also found that capitation grant policy was helping to achieve education for all (EFA).

The study found that headteachers perceived Capitation Grant Policy to be effective in improving attendance. However, both headteachers and teachers were uncertain as to whether the CGP has helped to reduce dropout rate at basic education level. It was also found that completion rate is high with the CGP because pupils or students were not expelled from school for non-payment of school fees. Again, the headteachers perceived that the CGP is helping to close the gap between boys and girls in terms of enrolment. This perception was confirmed by a document from ANDE (2014) (see appendix 3) which puts gender ratio at 1:1.

Furthermore, it was revealed that the average class size of the primary schools sampled was 41 pupils per class. It was revealed that teacher to pupils ratio was 1:20 in the district. The wide gap between the pupil-teacher ratio and the average class size was

due to the fact that in some of the sampled primary school two teachers were allocated to one class due to inadequate classrooms. Fifty percent of the headteachers were of the view that the class size had no effect on the output of work. However, most of the teachers (64%) were of the view that class size affected teaching output. On how enrolment and CGP has affected some indicators of quality education, it was revealed that CGP has impact on class size and has affected quality of education negatively as class size has increased making marking of exercises and other teaching activities difficult.

It was found that apart from English Language and Mathematics at the primary school level and French textbooks at JHS level where the pupil-textbook ratios were 1:1, the other textbooks were woefully inadequate. It is perceived that since the introduction of CGP, government of Ghana has not provided enough textbooks for students such that every student has a textbook for each of the subjects offered. It was perceived that the grants were not able to provide enough TLMs. Though, one sample test indicated that there is a significant difference between BECE results before and after implementation of CGP, headteachers and teachers were uncertain about the impact of CGP on BECE.

The study identified the following as the three key challenges of CGP implementation:

1. The current amount of GH¢4.50 per student/pupil per year is not adequate to buy the needed teaching and learning materials to improve quality education.
2. The Capitation Grant is not released regularly as expected.

3. The school does not receive the right amount of Capitation Grant that corresponds to total enrolment of the school.

Conclusions

This study was to explore teachers and headteachers' perspectives on the implementation of CGP in basic education in Atwima Nwabiagya District. The following conclusions are drawn. The CGP is a good educational intervention but it has not lived to expectation in addressing the issue of attendance, dropout and completion rate. The study illustrated teachers and headteachers' perspective on the impact of CGP on basic education in the area of enrolment, attendance, dropout and completion rate and gender disparity in Atwima Nwabiagya District. The policy succeeded in pulling a large group of out of school children back into education and bridging the gap between boys and girls enrolment. The challenges are how to improve attendance, eliminate dropout and achieve high completion rate.

Again, CGP has worsened quality education indicators such as class size and pupil-textbook ratio. With the exception of pupil-teacher ratio which has been improved after the introduction of CGP, large class size and inadequate textbooks still remain a challenge. The large class size is due to inadequate classrooms in the district. These situations do not create a good atmosphere for effective teaching and learning. This goes to confirm the Conceptual Framework analogy that should CGP lead to increase in enrolment without corresponding interventions to increase classrooms, textbooks, teachers and improvement in teachers' development, students' performance will be negatively affected.

Undoubtedly, how small it may be, CG also helps schools in the district to buy some of the needed teaching and learning materials. Moreover, after the introduction of CGP, the performance of students in B.E.C.E has been improved.

The amount of GH¢4.50 per student per year is inadequate to buy the needed teaching and learning materials to improve quality education. This amount was fixed since 2011 and it has not seen any upward adjustment up to date. What GH¢4.50 could buy five years ago cannot buy today due to inflation.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. Government should increase the CG of GH¢4.50 to reflect the current economic conditions. This figure has been in existence since 2011 and needs to be reviewed upward so that the schools would get enough money to buy the needed teaching and learning materials to improve upon quality education. Aside the capitation grants, there should be a special grant to support schools with low enrolment or considered as needy as done in Uganda. This is because in such needy schools the CG alone will not be enough to cater for teaching/learning materials and all other facilities needed. In Uganda there are two types grant which are CG and school facilities grants. The school facilities grant is designed to assist schools in the neediest communities. Schools that have low enrolment get small amount of CG and such schools are found in neediest communities. They lack basic needs like office furniture, classroom furniture and TLMs. Therefore the special grant should cater for such needs.

2. Again, provision of adequate textbooks to students is very critical for quality education. It is therefore recommended that government should provide adequate textbooks such that every student gets a textbook for every subject.
3. Additionally, government should release the CG regularly so that the schools can prepare SPIP ahead of time so that the use of the grant would be maximized.
4. Moreover, government should make sure that the grant released corresponds to the enrolment figure of the schools.
5. Capitation Grant Policy alone does not have significant impact on basic education unless it is accompanied by professional development of teachers and backed by an attractive incentive system to retain teachers. INSET of teachers should therefore be intensified. Besides, incentive packages such as teachers honorarium and marking allowance. This will motivate teachers to give students or pupils more exercises and assignments.
6. It is further recommended that even where there is an increase in enrolment, quality of education is very important. Therefore decline in education quality because of lack of adequate provision of additional facilities and logistics will negate gains that are made through other interventions to improve access to education such as through increase in enrolment. Accordingly, it is imperative for policy makers to simultaneously increase enrolment and improve quality by ensuring that learning outcomes are improved through provision of adequate educational infrastructure.

Suggestion for Future Research

The results of the BECE show that there has been steady improvement from 2000 up to 2014. The one sample t-test attested to the fact that there is significant difference between the average from 2000-5 and that of 2006-14. However, this study was not able to ascertain the impact of the CGP on the results as many contributing factors such as parental support, teachers attitude, pupils‘ readiness and the surrounding environment of the pupils determined whether they will pass or not. Government support can also be a contributing factor. It is therefore suggested that all these factors should be independently assessed as against the contribution of the CGP to examination outcome.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION WINNEBA – KUMASI CAMPUS

Headmasters'/ Head Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear Sir/Madam,

This questionnaire is part of a study designed to find out the teachers' and head teachers'/masters' perspective on the impact of Capitation Grant Policy (C.G.P) on basic education in Atwima Nwabiagya District. The researcher is a Master of Philosophy student of the University of Education who is undertaking a research into the impact of C.G.P.

You are kindly requested to read through the items and respond to them as candid as possible since it is just for academic purpose. I would be grateful to have you participate in the study.

Please, you are informed that your participation will help contribute to knowledge and your responses will be treated confidentially.

Thank you very much in anticipation of your involvement and co-operation.

Please respond to all the questions as candid as possible. Tick [√] the appropriate box for your answer.

Section A: Personal Data

1) Gender 1. Male [ ]

2. Female [ ]

2) What is your highest educational background?

1. S.S.C.E/ WASSCE [ ]
2. Teacher's Cert. _A' [ ]
3. Post-Secondary [ ]
4. First Degree [ ]
5. Master's Degree [ ]
6. Others: Please specify ……..

Section B: School Statistics

3) Which level do you head?

1. Primary [ ]
2. J.H.S [ ]
3. Both Primary & J.H.S [ ]

4) Indicate the total number of teachers in the school ……

5) Indicate the total number of pupils/students in the school into male and female

1. Male ……...
2. Female ……..

Section C: Class Size and Teaching Methods

6) Does the class size affect the number of exercise/homework/class test teachers give to their students in your school?
   1. Yes [ ]
   2. No [ ]

7) What is the manageable class size that will help teachers give a lot of exercises/homework/class tests to fill students' assessment forms in every column [ ]

8) Does the class size influence the method of teaching in the class? Yes [ ] No [ ]

Section D: Headmasters'/Head Teachers' Perspective on the Impact of C.G.P.

Please, tick [√] the appropriate box to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with following statement using the following likert scale:

Strongly agree = 1, Agree = 2, Uncertain = 3 Disagree = 4, Strongly Disagree = 5

	Impact of Capitation Grant Policy on enrolment, Attendance, Dropout, Completion Rate and Gender Disparity	Response				
		1	2	3	4	5
	Impact on Enrolment					
9)	Capitation Grant Policy (C.G.P) amounted to one short-effect on enrolment. That is, CGP initially produced an enrolment surge, but with time, participation patterns returned to status quo prior to the surge.					
10)	Capitation Grant Policy has not been effective in sustaining enrolment.					
11)	Capitation Grant Policy is helping to achieve education for all (EFA)					
12)	Capitation Grant Policy is good for increasing enrolment but not improving quality education.					

	Impact on Attendance					
13)	As a result of Capitation Grant Policy children are punctual to class.					
14)	As a result of Capitation Grant children are not driven away to collect school fees.					
15)	Capitation Grant Policy has been effective in improving attendance					
	Impact on Dropout					
16)	Those who drop out of school are students who are over aged.					
17)	With the introduction of Capitation Grant Policy those who usually drop out of school are those who perform poorly.					
18)	Dropout rate has declined because children or students do not have to leave school for economic activities to get money to pay school fees.					
	Completion Rate					
19)	Capitation Grant has been effective in sustaining completion rate of basic education by students					
20)	Completion rate is high with Capitation Grant Policy because children or students are not expelled from school for non-payment					

	of school fees.					
	Impact on Gender Disparity					
21)	Capitation Grant Policy is helping to close the gap between boys and girls enrolment.					
22)	As a result of Capitation Grant girls are more regular in school than boys since they (girls) do not need to go out to sell in order to earn money for school fees.					
23)	As a result of Capitation Grant, completion rate among girls is equally higher as that of boys since they (girls) need not to go out to sell to pay school fees.					
24)	As a result of Capitation Grant Policy student girls have equal chance to learn after school hours as that of student boys since they (girls) need not to engage in economic ventures to get money for school fees.					

	Impact of CGP on Quality Education & its Indicators such as Class Size, PTR & Pupil-Textbook ratio	Responses				
		1	2	3	4	5
	Impact on Class Size					
25)	Capitation Grant Policy has made the class size large.					
26)	Due to capitation Grant Policy, the class size is large and it is difficult to adopt child-centred methodology like discussion in teaching.					
27)	Due to Capitation Grant Policy, the class size is large and it is making it difficult to focus on individual students and their specific needs during instructional period.					
28)	Due to Capitation Grant Policy, the class size is large and it is difficult to give enough exercises and mark them.					
29)	Due to Capitation Grant Policy, the class size is large and it makes the classroom noisy and disruptive.					
30)	Introduction of Capitation Grant Policy was associated with a sudden drop in pupil-classroom ratio.					

31)	As a result of Capitation Grant Policy, there is much pressure in the classroom.					
32)	Government has not constructed enough classrooms in your school after introduction of Capitation Grant Policy to ease congestion in the school.					
	Impact on Pupil-Teacher Ratio					
33)	Introduction of Capitation Grant Policy is associated with a sudden drop in pupil-teacher ratio.					
	Impact on Pupil-Textbook Ratio					
34)	Introduction of Capitation Grant Policy is associated with a sudden drop in pupil-textbook ratio.					
35)	Following the introduction of Capitation Grant Policy, government of Ghana has not provided enough textbooks for students such that every student has a textbook for each of the subjects offered.					

	Acquisition of Teaching-Learning Materials	1	2	3	4	5
36)	Capitation Grant helps in buying the needed teaching-learning materials					
37)	As a result of Capitation Grant we now have all the teaching-learning materials					
38)	As a result of Capitation Grant, improvising for teaching-learning has reduced.					
39)	As a result of Capitation Grant, teaching-learning materials are not a problem in the school.					
40)	A proportion of the Capitation Grant is always used to buy teaching-learning materials for the school.					

	Capitation and B.E.C.E	Response				
		1	2	3	4	5
41)	Capitation grant has not helped to improve the results of B.E.C.E over the years.					
42)	There is no difference between B.E.C.E results before and after the Capitation Grant Policy.					
43)	Capitation Grant has not helped to improve teaching and learning environment and B.E.C.E results due to large class size.					
44)	Capitation Grant has not helped much in providing teaching and learning resources to improve B.E.C.E results					
45)	Capitation Grant Policy brought a lot of over aged people to school who could not do well at the B.E.C.E					

	Challenges of CGP Implementation by Teachers and Head Teacher/Master	Responses				
		1	2	3	4	5
46)	The current amount of GH¢4.50 per student/pupil per year is not adequate to buy the needed teaching and learning materials to improve quality education.					
47)	The Capitation Grant is not released regularly as expected					
48)	The school does not receive the right amount of Capitation Grant that corresponds to total enrolment of the school.					
49)	The School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP) is not always prepared before Capitation Grant is used.					
50)	The head teacher/master does not always involve all teachers in the preparation of SPIP.					
51)	The School Management Committee does not always approve of and oversees the implementation of the School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP).					
52)	Government has not trained and deployed enough teachers to your school to reduce workload of teachers after introduction of Capitation Grant Policy.					

Appendix 2

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION WINNEBA – KUMASI CAMPUS

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear Sir/Madam,

This questionnaire is part of a study designed to find out the teachers' and head teachers/masters' perspective on the impact of Capitation Grant Policy (C.G.P) on basic education in Atwima Nwabiagya District. The researcher is a Master of Philosophy student of the University of Education who is undertaking a research into the impact of C.G.P.

You are kindly requested to read through the items and respond to them as candid as possible since it is just for academic purpose. I would be grateful to have you participate in the study.

Please, you are informed that your participation will help contribute to knowledge and your responses will be treated confidentially.

Thank you very much in anticipation of your involvement and co-operation.

Please respond to all the questions as candid as possible. Tick [√] the appropriate box for your answer.

A. Personal Information

1) Gender 1. Male [ ]

2. Female [ ]

2) What is your highest educational background?

7. S.S.C.E/ WASSCE [ ]
8. Teacher‘s Cert. _A‘ [ ]
9. Post-Secondary [ ]
10. First Degree [ ]
11. Master‘s Degree [ ]
12. Others: Please specify ……..

Section B: School Statistics

3) At what level do you teach?

1. Primary School [ ]
2. Junior High School [ ]

4) As a class teacher indicate your class and class size (number of students). This question is for a primary teacher.

1. Class [ ]
2. Class size [ ]

5) How many government textbooks do you have for the following subjects? (This question is for a class teachers or a primary teacher).

English Language ……..

Mathematics ……

Integrated Science ……..

Social Studies ……..

6) As a subject master indicate the class or the classes that you teach and the class size (number of students) (This question is for JHS teachers)

(a) Class [ ] Class size [ ]

(b) Class [ ] Class size [ ]

(c) Class [ ] Class size [ ]

(d) Class [ ] Class size [ ]

7) Indicate the subject(s) you teach and the number of government textbooks for your subject(s). This question is for JHS teachers.

1. Subject(s)

……

2. Number of government textbooks

……..

Section C: Class Size and Teaching Method

8) Does the class size affect the number of exercise/homework/class test you give to students?

   3. Yes [ ]

   4. No [ ]

9) What is the manageable class size that will help you give a lot of exercises/homework/class tests to fill students' assessment forms in every column? [ ]

10) Does the class size influence the method of teaching in your class? Yes [ ] No[ ]

Section D: Teachers' Perspective on the Impact of C.G.P.

Please, tick [√] the appropriate box to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with following statement using the following likert scale:

Strongly agree = 1, Agree = 2, Uncertain = 3 Disagree = 4, Strongly Disagree = 5

	Impact of Capitation Grant Policy on enrolment, Attendance, Dropout, Completion Rate and Gender Disparity	Response				
		1	2	3	4	5
	Impact on Enrolment					
11)	Capitation Grant Policy (C.G.P) amounted to one short-effect on enrolment. That is, CGP initially produced an enrolment surge, but with time, participation patterns returned to status quo prior to the surge.					
12)	Capitation Grant Policy has not been effective in sustaining enrolment.					
13)	Capitation Grant Policy is helping to achieve education for all (EFA)					
14)	Capitation Grant Policy is good for increasing enrolment but not improving quality education.					

	Impact on Attendance					
15)	As a result of Capitation Grant Policy children are punctual to class.					
16)	As a result of Capitation Grant children are not driven away to collect school fees.					
17)	Capitation Grant Policy has been effective in improving attendance					
	Impact on Dropout					
18)	Those who drop out of school are students who are over aged.					
19)	With the introduction of Capitation Grant Policy those who usually drop out of school are those who perform poorly.					
20)	Dropout rate has declined because children or students do not have to leave school for economic activities to get money to pay school fees.					
	Completion Rate					
21)	Capitation Grant has been effective in sustaining completion rate of basic education by students					
22)	Completion rate is high with Capitation Grant Policy because children or students are not expelled from school for non-payment of school fees.					

	Impact on Gender Disparity					
23)	Capitation Grant Policy is helping to close the gap between boys and girls enrolment.					
24)	As a result of Capitation Grant girls are more regular in school than boys since they (girls) do not need to go out to sell in order to earn money for school fees.					
25)	As a result of Capitation Grant, completion rate among girls is equally higher as that of boys since they (girls) need not to go out to sell to pay school fees.					
26)	As a result of Capitation Grant Policy student girls have equal chance to learn after school hours as that of student boys since they (girls) need not to engage in economic ventures to get money for school fees.					

	Impact of CGP on Quality Education & its Indicators such as Class Size, PTR & Pupil-Textbook ratio	Responses				
		1	2	3	4	5
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27)	Capitation Grant Policy has made the class size large.					
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29)	Due to Capitation Grant Policy, the class size is large and it is making it difficult to focus on individual students and their specific needs during instructional period.					
30)	Due to Capitation Grant Policy, the class size is large and it is difficult to give enough exercises and mark them.					
31)	Due to Capitation Grant Policy, the class size is large and it makes the classroom noisy and disruptive.					
32)	Introduction of Capitation Grant Policy was associated with a sudden drop in pupil-classroom ratio.					
33)	As a result of Capitation Grant Policy, there is much pressure in the classroom.					

34)	Government has not constructed enough classrooms in your school after introduction of Capitation Grant Policy to ease congestion in the school.					
	Impact on Pupil-Teacher Ratio					
35)	Introduction of Capitation Grant Policy is associated with a sudden drop in pupil-teacher ratio.					
	Impact on Pupil-Textbook Ratio					
36)	Introduction of Capitation Grant Policy is associated with a sudden drop in pupil-textbook ratio.					
37)	Following the introduction of Capitation Grant Policy, government of Ghana has not provided enough textbooks for students such that every student has a textbook for each of the subjects offered.					

	Acquisition of Teaching-Learning Materials	1	2	3	4	5
38)	Capitation Grant helps in buying the needed teaching-learning materials					
39)	As a result of Capitation Grant we now have all the teaching-learning materials					
40)	As a result of Capitation Grant, improvising for teaching-learning has reduced.					
41)	As a result of Capitation Grant, teaching-learning materials are not a problem in the school.					
42)	A proportion of the Capitation Grant is always used to buy teaching-learning materials for the school.					

	Capitation and B.E.C.E	Response				
		1	2	3	4	5
43)	Capitation grant has not helped to improve the results of B.E.C.E over the years.					
44)	There is no difference between B.E.C.E results before and after the Capitation Grant Policy.					
45)	Capitation Grant has not helped to improve teaching and learning environment and B.E.C.E results due to large class size.					
46)	Capitation Grant has not helped much in providing teaching and learning resources to improve B.E.C.E results					
47)	Capitation Grant Policy brought a lot of over aged people to school who could not do well at the B.E.C.E					

	Challenges of CGP Implementation by Teachers and Head Teacher/Master	Responses				
		1	2	3	4	5
48)	The current amount of GH¢4.50 per student/pupil per year is not adequate to buy the needed teaching and learning materials to improve quality education.					
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50)	The school does not receive the right amount of Capitation Grant that corresponds to total enrolment of the school.					
51)	The School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP) is not always prepared before Capitation Grant is used.					
52)	The head teacher/master does not always involve all teachers in the preparation of SPIP.					
53)	The School Management Committee does not always approve of and oversees the implementation of the School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP).					
54)	Government has not trained and deployed enough teachers to your school to reduce workload of teachers after introduction of Capitation Grant Policy.					

Appendix 3

Pupil-Teacher Ratio of Atwima Nwabiagya Education District

	Pupils					
Level of School	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Teachers**	**PTR**	
KG	3715	3744	7459	323	23:1	
Primary	12532	13018	25550	894	29:1	
JHS	6515	6875	13390	967	14:1	
Total	22762	23637	46399	2184	21:1	

Source: Atwima Nwabiagya District Education, 2014

Appendix 4

Average Class Size of Atwima Nwabiagya Education District

Level of School	No. of Pupils	No. of Classes	Average Class Size (Approx.)
KG	7459	188	40
Primary	25550	615	42
JHS	13390	291	46
Total	46399	1094	42

Source: Atwima Nwabiagya District Education, 2014

Appendix 5

Gender Ratio of Atwima Nwabiagya Education District

	Pupils		
Level of School	**Male**	**Female**	**Gender Ratio (Approx.)**
KG	3715	3744	1:1
Primary	12532	13018	1:1
JHS	6515	6875	1:1
Total	22762	23637	1:1

Source: Atwima Nwabiagya District Education, 2014