

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**THE EFFECT OF FREE SHS POLICY ON PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN VOLTA
REGION, GHANA**



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REGION, GHANA**



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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, **HALLO EMMANUEL KOFI**, hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and all secondary data employed in the study are acknowledged accordingly. Hence, no portion of this research has been submitted in any form to any institution for the award of any other degree.

Signature:

Date:



Supervisor's Declaration

I certify that, the preparation and presentation of this thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis as laid down by the School of Graduate Studies, University of Education, Winneba.

Name of Supervisor: DR. E.T AMANOR-LARTEY

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Snr. Apostle V. Dartey, Apostle Joseph K. Gatoror, and Pastor Joshua Dartey of Christian Assembly Church for making me understand the spiritual realities of life and prayers throughout my studies.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Page
DECLARATION	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xi
ABSTRACT	xii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Background of the Study	1
1.1 Statement of the Problem	2
1.2 Study Objectives	5
1.3 Research Questions	6
1.4 Significance of the study	6
1.5 Scope and delimitation of the study	7
1.6 Organization of the study	7
1.7 Justification for the choice of research design (Case Study)	7
1.8 Conclusion	8
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	9
2.0 Introduction	9
2.1 Issues Underpinning Perspective of Fee Free Education	9
2.2 Origins and development of free education	9
2.3 Rationale for Free Education	10
2.4 The concept of free education	11
2.5 Theoretical framework	12
2.6 The need for collaboration (inclusion of private SHSs)	17

2.7 Advocacy for more investment in secondary education	18
2.8 Global Funding and Management of Secondary schools	19
2.9 Country based experience of free education	20
2.10 Universal free Secondary Education in India	21
2.11 Free secondary education in sub-Saharan Africa	22
2.12 Free secondary education Policy in Ghana	25
2.13 Motivation for Free SHS policy in Ghana	27
2.14 The version of free secondary education in Ghana	29
2.15 The Free SHS Policy: Origin Objectives, principles and benefits	29
2.16 The policy's implementation and matters arising	31
2.17 Free SHS Policy on Socio-Economic Life Parents	31
2.18 History of Ghana's Educational System	32
2.19 The Nature and Value of Secondary Education	39
2.20 Admission of Students	46
2.21 The effect of Free SHS policy on Funding of Private Senior High Schools	47
2.22 Gap in the Literature	53
2.23 Conclusion	54
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	55
3.0 Introduction	55
3.1 Philosophical position of the study	55
3.2 Research Design	56
3.3 Scope and delimitation of the study	57
3.4 Population of the Study	57
3.4.1 Sample size	58
3.4.2 Sampling and Sampling Technique	59
3.5 Sources of Data	59
3.6 Research Instrument	60
3.7 Data Collection Methods	60
3.8 Data analysis	61
3.9 Validity and Reliability	61
3.9.2 Ethical Consideration	62

3.10 Conclusion	62
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA	64
4.0 Introduction	64
4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents	65
4.2 Background analysis of the respondents	68
4.3 Research Questions (1): How has the free senior high school policy influenced the enrolment of the private senior high schools in the Volta region?	70
4.4 Research Question Two (2): What effect has the policy on the income of the private Senior High Schools in the region?	89
4.5 Research Question three (3): How has the policy affected the administration of private Senior High Schools within the region?	97
4.6 Conclusion	107
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS	108
5.0 Introduction	108
5.1 Main findings of the study	108
5.3 Recommendations	113
5.4 Suggestions for further Research or study	114
REFERENCES	116
APPENDIX	130



LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
2.1: Region by region number of public and private SHSs in Ghana	27
3.1: Sample of Informants in the study Area	58
4.1: Shows the Gender of the participants	65
4.2: Shows the age category of respondents	66
4.3: Shows duration of stay at current working place of the participants	66



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
4.1: A bar graph on the policy and the enrolment of private SHSs	74
4.2: Bar graph showing the effect of the policy on the income of the private SHSs	94



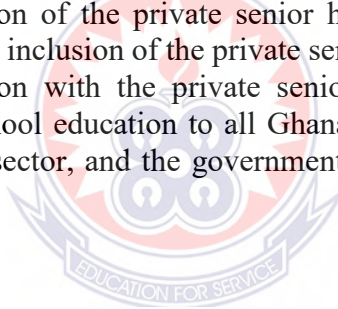
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

LES	:	Less Endowed Schools
WES	:	Well Endowed Schools



ABSTRACT

Education remains one of the most important tools for unlocking and nurturing the potential of a people. It is widely valued across the world as a central factor in the economic, political, and social development of any country. Following the widespread adoption of free basic education as a result of global and international conditions and support, African policymakers are now considering making secondary education free. To humanists, education is a human right, and so its denial is an abuse of human rights. Its impacts permeate every aspect of the social fabric and can be felt in all parts of human life. It is therefore prudent to treat its provision with care and passion. Educational policies need to be treated apolitically. Collaboration and consensus with all the industry players is one way to guarantee its quality, availability, accessibility, and sustainability. As sacred as it is, its policy formulations must be circumspect of the environment factors, either internal or external: prevailing socio-economic conditions, value and interest, affordability, and the future of education. This study sought to find the effect of the FSHS policy on the enrolment, income, and administration of the private schools in the Volta region. The study employs of a qualitative method with a case study design. The free senior high school policy in Ghana was rolled out in 2017 across the nation. It is a departure from the progressive implementation of this directive principle of state policy on education as captured in Article 25(1) (b) of the 1992 Constitution. The study revealed that the policy has negatively affected the enrolment, income, and administration of the private senior high schools in the study area. It therefore recommends the inclusion of the private senior high schools in the policy, the government's collaboration with the private senior high schools in the region in providing senior high school education to all Ghanaians, a level playing field for all players in the education sector, and the government's assistance to the private senior high schools.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

The development and implementation of educational policies in many developing countries are usually exclusive to the government. Many countries have been launching national and international education policies and plans to promote the improvement and growth of the education sector and human capital. In Ghana, from the pre-independent era to date, many efforts and commitments have been made to develop national policies to widen the education opportunities for her people. Past governments made efforts to increase access and equity in secondary education by introducing free secondary education for students from the North. However, these opportunities are available for students in public senior high schools. In accordance with the directive principles of state policy on education of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, the government started implementing the progressively free senior high school (SHS) policy in fulfilment of the requirement of Article 25(1) (b) of the 1992 Constitution by absorbing the expenses of day-students in public SHSs, which was later expanded to include some 120,000 boarding students by the 2015/16 academic year.

A vigorous attempt to expand senior high school (previously senior secondary school) education by the central government started in the early 1950's. Nkrumah's administration placed great emphasis on secondary education since the government regarded it as the nucleus for educational, human resource and national development (Quist, 2003). A 'national' secondary schools project was consequently implemented through the Ghana Educational Trust (GET), 1957–1964, which aimed to accelerate access to secondary education throughout the country, particularly in rural and deprived

areas by creating and increasing access and participation. By 1960, GET had established nineteen (19) secondary schools throughout the country (Quist, 2003).

To achieve the aim of using education as an instrument for national development and modernisation, government extended the GET funding to cover promising private secondary schools and granted them financial assistance for infrastructure development. By 1963 GET had built about 46 secondary schools. After the overthrow of Nkrumah's government in 1966, the National Liberation Council (NLC) government made major changes in the sector by reviewing the entire formal educational system including cost distribution (parents to pay part of their wards' education). The Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) government also from 1981–1991 implemented the Dzobo Committee's Report (1987) and restructured the educational system to provide nine years of basic education, three years of secondary education and four years of tertiary education (Antwi, 1992).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The need for education as a veritable tool for national development cannot be over-emphasized. It is a tool for social development, bridging the gap between the rich and the poor, poverty alleviation, mental liberation, change, social transformation, economic progression, and political emancipation. Free education has been an international concern and has been employed in many countries based on several education policies and human rights declarations. It is one strategy to eliminate the problem of exclusion and marginalisation of children, youths, and adults to have access to education (UNESCO, 2009).

However, the problem for educational development, both at the national and institutional levels, is poor educational policy implementation. Governments are not

able to initiate and implement prudent educational policies which will help to ensure the full realization or benefits of education to society. Recently, a growing interest in improving school quality, choice and outcome for students has challenged the notion of government's primacy in education (OECD, 2006; Brewer and Hentschke, 2009). The demand for education is highest if the cost-benefit analysis for the enrolment of their children leads to positive results (Akyeampong, 2009).

Kosack (2009) argues that the main defining variables of free education are the political will and the power structures in a society. Political will influences not only the implementation of education policies, but also the role of the local community, which needs to be taken into consideration. Compulsory legislation is not a pre-condition for achieving Education for All (EFA), especially in the absence of political will to enforce such legislation and the practical difficulties of implementation (Mehrotra, 1998). On the global front, the focus of free education is on universal access, with particular attention to public schools (UNESCO, 2018).

That is, the focus is on the public schools and ignores the relevance of the private schools in that regard. Unlike the free primary education that was necessitated and supported by international organizations, the free secondary school programme is not so; there is a need for both state and non-state collaborative efforts to succeed (UNESCO, 2018). In Europe and Asia, there is specific provision for private sector participation in the provision of secondary education. For instance, in Ireland, according to a study by Coolahan (1981), all secondary schools, whether public or privately owned and managed, receive public funding provided they comply with certain regulations. In Chile and the Netherlands, the state collaborates with the private sector in providing education by funding the cost of children's education in both public

and private secondary schools. In the Netherlands, a study by the OECD (2010) concluded that the majority of students who attend privately owned and managed schools receive over 90% or more of their funding from government agencies. In fact, only a few (less than 1%) privately managed schools have chosen not to receive public funding (Waslander, 2010). In Chile, the government adopted demand-side subsidies to finance both government and private schools to promote effectiveness by competing for students and to improve social mobility for children from low-income families (Carnoy, 1998; Hsieh and Urquiola, 2006; Cox, 2003; Beyer, 2008).

However, in Uganda, Kenya and Ghana, the policy takes different dimension. It is somehow politically motivated. In Kenya and Ghana, for instance, the policy originated through political campaign and promise and that it is implemented as a way of fulfilling the promise. In Kenya for example, a study by Ohba (2011) cited by Ministry of Education-Kenya (2012) reveals that the main objective of providing free secondary education is to ensure that children from poor households acquire a quality education that enables them to access opportunities for self-advancement and become productive members of society. It was a partial response to political promise made during the 2007 general elections. Private secondary schools are not involved in the policy. The focus is mainly on access, enrolment and equity.

In Uganda, a study by Wener (2011) reveals that free secondary education is also geared toward sustaining the gains of universal primary education. This was at a time when enrolment in free universal primary education had resulted in a 136% increase from 1997 to 2006. There was a huge deficit in terms of the transition rate to secondary schools, as only 20% of primary children made it to secondary education by 1997. It was also part of Yoweri Museveni's re-election promises during the 2006 elections.

Private secondary schools were not included in the policy. Many studies were conducted on the policy, but on access, success, implementation challenges, and how the policy affected the economic lives of the people (Pallegedara and Yakashi, 2011; Mpata, 2017). There was, however, not much work conducted on how this policy affected private secondary schools.

In Ghana, most educational support policies by the government, including the recent ones such as the FCUBE introduced in 1996, the Capitation Grant (2005), and the free senior high school policy (2017), have all excluded private schools. In spite of the litany of scholarly works that exist on the policy, such as Nurudeen A. et al. (2018) on the effectiveness of the free senior high school policy (Addo, 2019); Amissah, 2019; and Asumadu, 2019 cited by the public interest and accountability committee (2020) on challenges regarding implementation of the policy, Matey (2020) conducted a study on the effect of the policy on the lives of parents and their wards in Ghana.

Adu-Gyamfi et al. (2020) also carried out a study on the policy and quality of university education in Ghana and Salifu (2020) on the policy and its implications for private school management in Ghana, but there is no scholarly study on how the policy influenced the enrolment and income of the private senior high schools in Ghana. The objective of this study is to fill this gap by using the Volta region as a case study. That is, to investigate how the free SHS policy has affected the enrolment and income of the private SHSs using the Volta region as a case study.

1.2 Study Objectives

1. To assess the influence of the FSHS policy on the enrolment of the Private Senior High Schools in the Volta region
2. To ascertain the effect of the policy on the income of Private SHSs in the region

3. To assess the policy's effect on the administration of Private SHSs in the region

1.3 Research Questions

1. How has the free senior high school policy influenced the enrolment of the private senior high schools in the Volta region?
2. How has the policy affected the income of the private SHSs in the region?
3. How has the policy affected the administration of private SHSs within the region?

1.4 Significance of the study

Meaningful growth and development across the globe today, depend largely on research. Research helps to generate novel ideas, build credibility, develop understanding and analytical skills among other things. This study will provide reliable information on how the Free SHS Policy in Ghana has influenced the enrolment and income of Private Senior High Schools in the Volta. It also helps to understand how these effects redefined the administrative narratives and traditions of the private senior high schools in the study area.

It provides information for policy makers to consider when making policy decisions regarding educational provisions in Ghana. Other researchers on similar issues in the field can also use the knowledge or findings from this study to research and provide knowledge for the sector. It serves as a source of information for Non-Governmental Organisations, (NGOs) Donor Agencies, individuals and corporate bodies that would want to invest or support Private Secondary Education in Ghana to make informed decisions as the study unfolds the influence of the Free Senior High School (FSHS) policy on the enrolment, income and administration of the Private Senior High Schools using the Volta region as case study.

1.5 Scope and delimitation of the study

The study focuses on the effects of the free Senior High School policy on the enrolment and income of private senior high schools in the Volta region. The policy is a distributive one because it influences many aspects of the economy. This area was chosen because it possesses features that fairly represent the case for other areas nationally as far as the situation under investigation is concerned. For example, some of the schools in the study area fall under category 'A', others fall under categories 'B' and 'C' based on the Ghana Education Service's (G.E.S.) classification of senior high schools in Ghana. This makes the setting ideal for the study, as findings within the setting can speak for the case in other parts of the country.

1.6 Organization of the study

The study is structured into five (5) chapters. Chapter one deals with the introduction, which is sub-headed as follows: background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, organization of the research work, and the delimitation of the study. Chapter two reviews related literature. Chapter three dwells on the methodology used in conducting the study. Chapter four presents and interprets the findings of the study. Chapter five (the last) looks at the summary, conclusion, and recommendation of the research work.

1.7 Justification for the choice of research design (Case Study)

The researcher employed a case study design because it allows for detailed study of specific subject. It allows for describing, comparing, evaluating and understanding different aspects of a research problem.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the background and the research problem. It laid the foundation for arguments. It started by looking at the subject under discussion from a global perspective, narrowing it down to a local perspective, and situating the crux of the study accordingly, which helped identify the gap to be addressed.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature related to the free secondary education in Ghana. It starts by reviewing fee free secondary education from the broader to a narrower perspective, the theoretical perspectives, as well as the challenges, experience among others globally. It provides an important link between existing knowledge and the problem under investigation. It involves relevant written documents containing information related to the research problem. Published articles in journals, abstracts, reviews, books and research reports will be explored (Creswell, 2003).

2.1 Issues Underpinning Perspective of Fee Free Education

Fee free education has gained international attention and is employed in many countries in different forms based on several education policies and human rights declarations. This section examines the justification for advancing the free education policy, benefits and challenges.

2.2 Origins and development of free education

The idea of free education mainly concentrates on primary education. Already in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966, in Article 13 section (2a) states; Primary education shall be compulsory and available free to all (United Nations General Assembly 1966). Other legal documents such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 highlighted under article 28 (1a) the idea to make Primary Education Compulsory and available free to all (United Nations General Assembly 1989). The Education For All (EFA) initiative launched in 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand, follows a similar trend. In 2000, the Dakar Framework for Action

re-affirmed the 1990s EFA declaration. Furthermore, it also returned to their pre 1990 overarching common aim of free primary education as highlighted in the documents above (Bray and Kwo 2013). Enrolment rates increased globally and more significantly since the 1990s (UNESCO 2015). Between 2000 and 2006, fourteen (14) developing countries including Benin, Lesotho, Madagascar, Cambodia, and Yemen abolish school fees at the primary school level (UNESCO 2007).

Nevertheless, sub-Saharan Africa remains the region which is lagging the most on a global scale with only 22% offering of free primary and secondary education, whereas in nearly all other geographical regions in the world, such figures are around 40% to 60%, (UNESCO 2014). The Ghanaian government's Free Senior High School (Free SHS) education scheme started in September 2017. The policy's core themes of access, equity, and equality correspond with the United Nations revised Sustainable Development Goals, which require member countries to include those concepts into their educational systems in order to ensure that children have adequate learning opportunities (Armah. 2021).

2.3 Rationale for Free Education

Fee free education is a one strategy to eliminate the problem of exclusion and marginalisation of the children, youths and adults to have access in education (UNESCO, 2009). The strategy responds to the global declaration of human rights and opportunities to have access in education. The best way to fight poverty in the country is through education (Ghanaian Times, Monday, August 2, 2021 pg. 16).The emphasis is on inclusive education which responds to different learning needs and eliminating exclusion to ensure equity and equality for children from the poor and disadvantaged communities for quality education. Equity in education is when every student receives

the resources needed to acquire the basic work skills of reading, writing, and simple arithmetic. It measures educational success in society by its outcome, not the resources poured into it, and speeds up economic growth. Educational inequity slows economic growth of every country (Amadeo & Boyle, 2021).

Without opportunities for secondary education, children have little chance to improve their livelihoods, and the progress the world has made could be jeopardized. In September, speaking at the Clinton Global Initiative, former US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton recognized that “lack of secondary education holds back the aspirations of so many girls and their families. It undermines prosperity and stability around the world (Cohen, 2014). Clinton announced a major initiative in cooperation with more than thirty (30) organizations, including the MasterCard Foundation, Intel, and Microsoft. This group has pledged more than \$600 million over five years to enable fourteen (14) million girls to “attend and complete primary and secondary school.” In addition to the obvious benefits that education can deliver, increased enrolment in secondary schools offers advantages to all levels of society (Ahmad & Cohen, 2017). Girls attending secondary school, by contrast, are much less likely to marry and bear children before reaching adulthood (Ahonsi et al., 2019). Providing secondary education need not cost a fortune. Poor countries can move swiftly to expand opportunities for education at a much lower cost than is commonly imagined (The World Bank, 2021).

2.4 The concept of free education

Free education is defined as the abolishment of school fees (Kretzer, 2017) as cited in (Kretzer, 2020). Although free secondary education and sponsored secondary education have the same intent to finance education, the extent of coverage of the finance

differentiates vary (Oketch & Rolleston, 2007). Free secondary education is offered en masse but sponsored secondary education targets individual students who normally meet eligibility criteria (Bano, 2008; Duflo et al., 2017). Many countries offer sponsored instead of free secondary education to citizens and sometimes other nationals depending on their foreign policies (Darling-Hammond et al., 2014; Lubienski & Lubienski, 2013). Examples of such states include Argentina, Uruguay (South America) France, Finland, United Kingdom (Europe).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, Kenya, Uganda, South Africa and recently, Ghana offers free secondary education. Globally, education is seen as a right. Its denial is therefore a violation of human right so governments as much as possible make it accessible and affordable to its citizenry. A policy is a purposive course of action followed by an actor or a set of actors in dealing with a problem or a matter of concern (Anderson, 2001). Public policy is a decision and measures aimed at solving social problems. The free senior high school policy is a typical example of a public policy which is aimed at addressing the cost factors that deny most BECE graduates especially those from poor home access to senior high education in Ghana.

2.5 Theoretical framework

This study is premised on collaborative governance theory as defined by Ansell and Gash (2008, p.544) “as a governing arrangement where one or more public agencies directly engage non-state stakeholders in a collective decision-making process that is formal, consensus-oriented, and deliberative and that aims to make or implement public policy or manage public programs or assert”. It is the process and structures of public policy decision making and management that engage people constructively across all boundaries of public agencies, public and private spheres to carry out public purpose

that otherwise could not have been accomplished, (Emerson, et.al 2012). This study adopts Stoker's claim that governance is about collective decision making and implementation specifically collectively including both public and private actors. Collaborative governance is therefore a type of governance system in which public and private actors work collectively in distinctive ways, using particular processes, to establish laws and rules for the provision of public goods.

The researcher chooses collaborative governance to avoid the high costs of adversarial policy making, expand democratic participation, and even restores rationality to public management. It helps to engage in productive discussions and develop more fruitful relationships with stakeholders. Sophisticated forms of collective learning and problem solving can be developed. Studies revealed that, recent rise in economic, environmental and social crisis make states to face complex and interrelated societal issues (Baccarne et al., 2016; Govigli et al., 2020). As such it is difficult for a single societal actor to come up with the adequate solutions to problems as solving them often implies negotiations between different actors (Mulgan et al., 2007).

While the traditional representative democratic system has originally based its decision-making process on public institutions, experts and representatives of people's socio-economic interests (Cossetta and Palumbo, 2014), the new era has emphasised the need for innovative solutions in the governance domain (Chen, 2017; Wagner and Wilhelmer, 2017). To satisfactorily implement and address these challenges, states demand new governance models and tools that recognise and include external sources of knowledge (Baccarne et al., 2016). This calls for a shift from the current top-down paradigm where professionals and experts are seen as superiors in making and implementing decision(s) regarding public policy to a more inclusive model where

citizens are engaged in the decisions and their implementation that directly affect their everyday life (Anttiroiko, 2016).

Collaborative Governance allows for diversity. It is an important prerequisite for collaborative governance theory. In the era of network information, many social problems have been not solved by a single organization alone, but need to be incorporated into the wisdom of pluralistic social subjects. The main body of collaborative governance is broad, in addition to the government, including non-governmental organizations, enterprises and the public and other subjects, these subjects can participate in social management activities. Therefore, collaborative governance covers a variety of forms of network organization. It can be seen in the longitudinal levels of government, but also can occur in the lateral body. The diversity of the main body of collaborative governance is conducive to play the collective decision-making advantage, the formation of situation, so that the overall function is greater than the individual system performance alone.

Order is another essential feature of collaborative governance theory. The connotation "collaborative" means that the system is orderly, and it mainly refers to the order of the mechanism under the collaborative governance theory. On the one hand, the main body status is equal. Although the actual power of the main body of different sizes, but this is not equivalent to the main control between the control and control of the relationship, but to maintain the autonomy of the subject itself, so as to be able to mobilize the enthusiasm of the main body. On the other hand, the subsystem functions in collaboration.

Purpose is also a key feature of collaborative governance results, is the basic characteristics of collaborative governance theory. The purpose is to set the starting

point and motive of the co-governance of the plural subject, either in order to achieve common interests or to solve common problems. At present, the mainstream thinking of academic circles believes that collaborative governance is initiated by the government. Therefore, the purpose of collaborative governance is to better achieve and maintain the social public interests. In addition, unlike the previous public administration model in the pursuit of continuous conversion between efficiency and fairness, collaborative governance model, although it is difficult to balance efficiency and fairness, but more is to achieve the purpose of transcendence.

Collaborative governance is conducive to the use of collective wisdom, to promote the concept of democracy, to solve the complex problems. It is the innovation of traditional public administration model, breaking the concept of value between the fair and efficient shift. At this stage, the localized colour is more serious, the response to global problems is less, and the negotiation process is equal to a certain stage of collaborative governance. But with the social progress, academic attention and public recognition, collaborative governance research will be greater development.

From the broader point, Emerson and Nabatchi et al (2012) said “collaborative governance is the processes and structures of public policy decision making and management that engage people constructively across the boundaries of public agencies, levels of government, and/or the public, private and civic spheres in order to carry out a public purpose that could not otherwise be accomplished”. Therefore, collaborative governance is not limited to public actors initiated by one-way participation, but can also provide public goods and services through formal or informal relationships between the public and private sectors. This governance strategy (Calanni, Leach et al. 2010) breaks down the single way of government management,

emphasizing that a group of interdependent stakeholders can solve a complex, multi-faceted problem or situation through joint development or implementation of policies, and the negotiation has gradually embedded into the local governance work (Cooper, Bryer et al. 2006). It is worth noting that this does not mean that the government does not act, and to return to standard in the formulation and implementation of public policies, and actively guide and create a good environment for the operation of cooperative governance.

However, a study by Vihma and Toikka (2021) shows some limitations of collaborative governance theory. Although there is a cumulative measurements or assessment of generalized trust in a collaborative process may be high, collaboration can nevertheless fail to achieve its goals (Klijnet al., 2010; Leach & Sabatier, 2005). Growing demands for finite resources highlight the limits and possibilities of deliberative democracy. When inter-organizational trust is lacking, cooperation may be impossible because it renders trusting different knowledge sources difficult. Therefore, we suggest that relational trust should be closely monitored. Collaborative governance is premised on the hope that collaborative governance strategies will help integrate knowledge from different stakeholders, diffuse best practices, and balance different interests, resulting in adaptive and flourishing socio-ecological systems (Bodin, 2017; Koppenjan et al., 2004; Moseley & Winkel, 2014; Sorensen & Torfing, 2005, 2007).

Also, participation in the process of deliberation is seen as an integral part of democratic governance (Butler, 2017). On the other hand, co-governance does not automatically increase the legitimacy and compliance of non-state actors but should be assessed against wider ideals of equal citizenship and public reason (Birnbbaum, 2016). Participatory ideals are often not implemented successfully (Nordberg & Salmi, 2019),

and when they are, participatory governance is fragile and failure-prone, requiring careful and skilful design and management (Rowe & Watermeyer, 2018; Sorensen & Torfing, 2007). We argue that collaborative governance can manage competing goals and provide win-win outcomes when the demand for resources is low but when demands increase and the resource becomes more contested collaboration is challenged and requires strong institutions for successful functioning.

The issue under investigation in this study is a public policy (free SHS policy), therefore “Collaboration”, “Participation” matters, (Ansell and Gash, 2008; Houtzager and Lavallo, 2009; Scholl and Scholl, 2014; Sørensen et al., 2020). Stakeholders are engaged in the decision-making processes on operations, policies or actions regarding public services (Harrison et al., 2012) and shared the implied responsibilities and resources (Davies and White, 2012). It requires appropriate sets of practices and methods within the domain, (Ansell and Gash, 2018; Millard et al, 2013; Nambisan, 2009), They are “open environment and ecosystem with clear frameworks, guidelines, resources and supports which invites all actors to collaborate in producing public value as well as value which directly benefits the actors themselves” (Millard et al, 2013, p. 79).

2.6 The need for collaboration (inclusion of private SHSs)

The increasing number of students admitted as result of the removal of cost barrier by the fee free policy necessitated the introduction of the double-track system due to the infrastructure challenges faced in the countries where the policy is implemented. One reliable way by which government can ease the pressure is to include the private SHSs in the policy (collaboration, the theory on which this study is grounded). In the case of Ghana, in spite of the efforts by government to provide infrastructural facilities in the

various schools ahead of the 2019/2020 academic year, the inclusion of the private senior high schools will be highly commendable and will provide more room for curbing the temporal double –track system. According to Ghana Education Service (G.E.S) second cycle schools register, 2020 there are over five hundred (500) private senior high schools in Ghana with programmes as in the public schools. Most of these schools have adequate infrastructural facilities like classroom blocks, boarding houses to accommodate students as well as excellent teaching and learning materials.

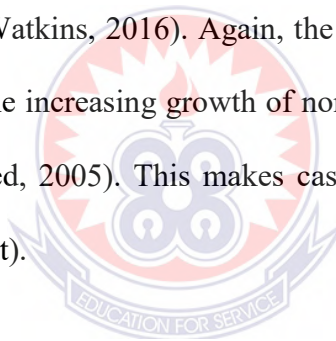
It will help to ease the pressure in dealing with the infrastructural challenges in the public schools and the urgency required. Government will ensure fiscal discipline, have ample time to make effective decisions to improve education. The inclusion of the private senior high schools in the policy will help prevent their collapse and enhance growth and development. According to Ghana statistical service, 2021 report on poverty rate, the number of people living in extreme poverty in Ghana is 2.4 million as at 2017 and the poverty rate standing at 23.4% mainly due to high unemployment rate and lack of sustained sources of livelihood. Therefore, any policy that can provide employment opportunity is highly commendable. So, the inclusion of the private senior high schools in the policy will be of great help in eradicating unemployment in Ghana since this will induce the employment of more teachers and other staffs.

2.7 Advocacy for more investment in secondary education

Expanding access to secondary education has now become an increasingly urgent issue, mainly due to the implementation of basic education policies. However, in many African countries including Ghana, governments are faced with limited capacity in secondary schools to accommodate all primary school leavers. The reason is that much public investment have been devoted to primary education, leaving the efforts of

expanding secondary education to the private sector or local communities. For example, in Ghana many practical steps such as the FCUBE in 1996 and the capitation grant in 2005 were taken to ensure quality, sustainability, access and participation, (MoE, 2002).

Many African countries are not unable to meet the increasing demand for secondary education due to their inability to build on the successes of the universal primary education system some time ago. For decades, the sub-sector of secondary education has been neglected in Africa both by the governments and donor agencies (Watkins, 2016). The neglect of has resulted in limited access, especially for young women and rural communities, poor quality of curriculum and lack of qualified teachers and essential infrastructure (Watkins, 2016). Again, the funding capacity of most African governments has led to the increasing growth of non-governmental or private schools in Africa (Lewin & Sayed, 2005). This makes case for external sources of funding (private and donor support).



2.8 Global Funding and Management of Secondary schools

The call for expansion, equity, quality and access to secondary education has received international support since 1990s. In 2000, the Dakar Framework for Action re-affirmed the Education for All (EFA) declaration which was launched in Jomtien-Thailand in 1990. Sustainable development goal (SDG4) also stresses the need to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all among member states (UNESCO, 2018). Accordingly, governments have also started pursuing educational policies in line with these new global educational policies. The benefits of secondary education have prompted governments to assume the primary role in managing and funding schools. The levels of public funding for privately managed

schools also differ greatly across countries, (OECD, 2012). In Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, the Slovak Republic and the partner economy Hong Kong-China, over 90% of school (private or public) funding comes from the government. This means that in these countries the governments have virtually taken charge of funding the cost of education of the citizenry including those in privately managed schools.

2.9 Country based experience of free education

A study conducted by Alawttegama, (2020) showed that Sri Lankan education system, prior to colonization, has been centralized to the Buddhist temples some of which later became Pirivenas. According to David and Sethunga (2011) most Sri Lankan children did not proceed beyond elementary education and started learning some trades in the arts or crafts to prepare for life. According the census report, as cited by David and Sethunga (2011), out of 867,103 children; 650,000 did not attend any schools due to lack of facilities. Free education policy came to force in 1944 and was a paradigm shift in the history of the education system in Sri Lanka. The policy has been relayed and sustained by the successive governments with some innovative experiments. The government policies on the provision of the free text book programme, free uniform programme, and school development programme, like free midday meal programme, transportation subsidy programme progressively contributed towards ensuring quality of education. Mahindodaya programme that aimed at developing thousand secondary schools was launched in 2012 to eliminate the discriminations between the urban and rural schools.

In spite of the successes chalked in the South Asian region, it has been criticized for not being progressively improved and developed for a long time to cope with the changing global conditions. While some policy analysts criticize the policies and policy makers

others criticised poor implementation. The absence of strong and clear-cut policy framework of state education which is consistently implemented irrespective of which ruling party govern the country has been a critical issue that need a close attention. According to Jayewardene (2013) the government has failed to create an effective regulatory framework in a timely manner, thus leaving room in adding another layer to the existing “well known” hierarchical schooling system. There was however no study on how the policy affected private secondary schools in terms enrolment and income. The focus is on how the policy will help ensure access to secondary education using state owned schools.

2.10 Universal free Secondary Education in India

In India the state collaborates with the private sector in the implementation of the free universal secondary education (Sankar, 2011). Lewin (2011) touts the credentials of India’s phenomenal transformation in terms of its social, economic and political spheres that has seen the old Asian giant rising to become a major player in global affairs among other countries of the south like Brazil, China etc. The Indian government in 2001 launched a programme to universalize access to elementary education. In 2007, the goal shifted to universalizing secondary education. Unlike elementary education, the Indian constitution does not guarantee commitment to making secondary and post-secondary education free. Prior to the implementation of the Universalization program in 2007, the highest advisory body on education in India set up a subcommittee in 2004 to prepare a blue print for the programme. The committee advised government on the forward (CABE 2005). These recommendations were captured in the policy document that was to guide the implementation of the programme. The Prime Minister at the launch of the Universalization of Secondary education succinctly posited: “We are setting out the goal of universalizing secondary education. This is clearly the next step after

universalizing elementary education. While the goal is laudable much work needs to be done before we can be in a position to launch the Scheme for Universalization of Access for Secondary Education. We must not underestimate the complexity of this task as the principles for universalizing elementary education cannot be easily transferred to secondary education. The physical, financial, pedagogical and human resource needs are quite different” Lewin (2011).

In India, there is a 20%-point gap among urban and rural dwellers in terms of secondary school enrolment (ibid). It states further that in order to achieve the target of making secondary education universal by 2020, it is necessary for policy to bridge the 20% gap among the urban and rural dwellers in terms of secondary education enrolment. The then Indian government launched The Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan in April 2009 which was aimed at universal access of Secondary level education to all students. Under this scheme 6,000 model schools were to be built with over 2,500 of these schools to be built through Private Public Partnerships (PPP). Many states are now adopting the private sector provision of infrastructure approach (Sankar, 2011). In India the state collaborates with the private sector in the implementation of the free universal secondary education.

2.11 Free secondary education in sub-Saharan Africa

A study conducted by O’Donoghue et. al, (2018) reveals that, universally free secondary school education started in Uganda in 2007, the first of its kind in the sub-Saharan region. Although tagged as free, government paid only the tuition while students paid boarding and other related fees unlike the case in Ghana where everything is free. It aimed at increasing access into secondary schools and sustaining the gains of the universal primary education, (136% increase from 1997 to 2006), (Wener, 2011).

Universal Secondary Education (USE) in 2007, was in line the ruling National Resistance Movement's manifesto of 2006 which promised all children would be able to attend secondary school.

Prior to its introduction, there was a huge deficit in terms of transition rate to secondary schools as result of the free universal primary education leading to 136% increase from 1997 to 2006 with only 20% of primary school leavers making it to secondary school by 1997 (Werner, 2011). Uganda's net enrolment rate at secondary level stood at between just 19.8% and 21.3%. To address this, and with funding support from the World Bank, Uganda launched the Universal Secondary Education programme which had the following objectives; assuring achievement of the Millennium Development Goal of gender parity in education delivery by 2015, enhancing sustainability of the Universal Primary Education (UPE). Three modalities were used including, double-shifting in Government-aided secondary schools, construction of Government-aided 'seed' secondary schools in sub-counties without secondary schools and inclusion of some existing private secondary schools to provide greater access to secondary schooling.

A study conducted by Jacob and Lehner (2011) which was cited in Huylebroeck and Kristof (2015) shows that, with the introduction of USE, enrolment rose from 412,367 in 2007 to 1,194,000 in 2010. This indicates that when cost elements of secondary education are removed more children can benefit especially those from low income earning homes. It also means that, children who otherwise would not have had the taste of secondary education can now have it as cost elements are removed. By implication, when cost elements of education are removed enrolment increases. These increments however come with attendant issues. The authors highlight congested classrooms, lack

of teaching and learning materials, inadequate educational infrastructure and reduced teacher compensation as key-elements negatively affecting motivation of the key-actors involved, and ultimately influencing educational performance, (Huylebroeck and Kristof, 2015).

They argued further that although the USE programme was designed with co-responsibility of parents, schools and government in mind, it was implemented without sufficient attention to local school realities. This is an indication that local realities need to be considered in the implementation of public policies. This will help improve efficiency, strengthen partnerships with the private sector, improve targeting of resources to schools that are in particular need of support, and mobilize external resources. Since 2007, a Public Private Partnership (PPP), thus collaboration with existing private schools has been a part of the Government of Uganda's plans to expand access to secondary education and achieve Universal Secondary Education (USE).

The PPP was launched in 2007 just after the USE and three hundred and sixty-three (363) private providers of secondary education in 314 sub-counties without a government-aided school joined the programme and enrolled some 40, 5957 students. Since then, the PPP programme has grown to about 800 schools which have signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Education and Sports. In 2016 these schools enrolled over 460,000 students, which represented 46.2% of those students enrolled under the USE programme, and 32% of all students enrolled in secondary school in Uganda. Though the policy was born out of politics, there was collaboration between the public and private sector in sustaining the gains of free primary education. However, there was no evidence of study on the policy's effect on

the enrolment and income of the private secondary schools that were part of the programme.

2.12 Free secondary education Policy in Ghana

History shows that, there have been certain measures to improve quality of education in the country since independence. The instrumental role played by basic education in developing human resources for both personal fulfilment and social advancement has been recognized in the world over (Mensah, et al., 2020). Just like elsewhere in Africa, the free senior high school policy in Ghana was born out political campaign and in line with the article 25(1) (b) of the 1992 Constitution. This legal mandate made the Government of Ghana to come out with this policy in addition to goals like the United nation's sustainable development goals (SDGs) goal four (4) target one of the SDGs which says "by 2030, all boys and girl complete free equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes" (Free SHS Ghana, 2018). The Free Senior High School (Free SHS) education scheme started in September 2017. The policy's core themes are access, equity, and equality which correspond with the United Nations revised Sustainable Development Goals, which require member countries to include those concepts into their educational systems in order to ensure that children have adequate learning opportunities (Armah. 2021). The policy is also line with article 25(1) of Ghana's 1992 constitution which hails the right to equal education opportunities and facilities. Over 420,000 eligible students would enjoy the program when it kicks-off (citifmonline.com, www.voanews.com, www.graphic.com.gh Tuesday September 12th, 2017).

According to Babah et al., (2020), prior to the introduction of free SHS, heads of very good and endowed schools capriciously and independently set high personal cut- off

grade points and admission standards to attract only the exceptionally good and talented students to the detriment of the less brilliant and rural setting students. Some parents have to travel from far places just to secure placement in a school for their wards. In other instances too some wards secure placement to secondary schools but due to financial challenges in payment of school fees, their wards are unable to access secondary school education. This in a way limits access to the average Ghanaian child in terms of equity to access secondary school to improve the human capital development of the nation.

Ghana currently has one thousand and sixty (1,060) Senior High Schools out of which three hundred and thirty (330) (making 31.1%) are private with twenty-seven of these schools being in the Volta region while seven hundred and thirty (730) (making 68.9%) are public schools as of 2020, recognized by the Ghana Education Service (G.E.S) as captured in the 2020 GES 2nd Cycle School Register. These schools are in good standing in terms of infrastructure and staff. For the purpose of this study, private SHS is the one owned and managed by individuals, groups, religious institutions/ churches and organizations. The table below shows public and private SHSs in Ghana which are in good standing with the private senior high schools constituting 31% and public schools being 69% of the total senior high schools in the country during the period.

Table 2.1: Region by region number of public and private SHSs in Ghana

Region	No. of Public SHSs	No. of Private SHS	Total
GREATER ACCRA	59	99	158
ASHANTI	134	62	196
CENTRAL	76	41	117
EASTERN	99	23	122
WESTERN	37	9	46
NORTHERN	31	18	49
BONO EAST	29	29	58
BONO	37	-	37
AHAFO	16	-	16
UPPER EAST	37	9	46
UPPER WEST	33	4	37
VOLTA	77	27	104
WESTERN NORTH	17	9	26
SAVANNAH	13	-	13
OTI	23	-	23
NORTH EAST	12	-	12
16	730	330	1,060

Source: G.E.S 2nd cycle schools register, 2020

NB: Regions with no Private Senior High School is a newly created one in which carving them out have not included where private schools exist.

2.13 Motivation for Free SHS policy in Ghana

The increasing disparity between B.E.C.E. graduates and those who make it to SHS is an issue to discuss in Ghana's pre-tertiary education sector. For years, equity of access in education has referred to the ability of all students to receive an education from qualified teachers in buildings that are safe and conducive to learning in a district with sufficient resources that are reasonably equal among other schools in the same state (SETDA, 2021). Equity in education is when every student receives the resources needed to acquire the basic work skills of reading, writing, and simple arithmetic. It measures educational success in society by its outcome, not the resources poured into it, and speeds up economic growth. Educational inequity slows economic growth of every country (Amadeo and Boyle, 2021). The proliferation of private second cycle

institutions and the establishment of satellite campuses of most private secondary schools in the urban centres of Ghana have led to the struggle for students at the expense of quality (Kwegyiriba et al., 2021). Access to education is the equal opportunity for individual to participate in education irrespective of location, gender and status (UNESCO, 2017). The poorest students from the most deprived districts, or from rural areas, were five to six times less likely to access secondary education.

According to a work done by Babah, Frimpong, Mensah and Sakyi-Darko (2020), it is reported that BECE report from 1998-2009 faced a lot of issues of imbalances in the enrolment and quality of students admitted. The report noted that whereas a few well-endowed schools were over enrolled, the community-based schools were unable to attract students. According to the Education Review Report, over seventy-five (75) Senior Secondary Schools had enrolment less than hundred (100) students as at 2002 and the well-endowed schools succeeded in admitting only the cream of candidates thereby widening the gap between them and the least endowed schools.

The increasing completion rates at the basic education level had led to increased demand for secondary education but supply had not kept pace (The World Bank, 2021). In some instances also some wards secure placement to secondary schools but due to financial challenges in payment of school fees, their wards are unable to access secondary school education. This in a way limits access to the average Ghanaian child in terms of equity to access secondary school to improve the human capital development of the nation. In view of all these challenges associated with the access to secondary education, the government of Ghana in the year 2017 implemented a free SHS policy on a free access to secondary education for all.

2.14 The version of free secondary education in Ghana

Just as few countries across the globe, Ghana introduced free secondary education as a policy in September, 2017, with the name tag “free Senior High School (SHS) policy” to replace the sponsored progressively free type. As a flagship policy, it was meant to fulfil a major campaign promise of the government to fund public secondary education (Partey, 2017). The “free” package in the implementation of the policy has come with a number of interesting reliefs: apart from cost-less tuition, boarding fees are also absorbed by the government. In addition, textbooks and school uniforms are absolutely the burden of the government (Duflo et al., 2017; Partey, 2017).

Not only, the government has also taken the responsibility of providing three-square meals for boarding students and lunch for day students, other levies like entertainment dues, library fees, science center fees, computer lab fees, examination fees and utility fees that were hitherto charged by senior high schools have been abolished because the government pays for them. Again, the money collected at the beginning of each school term to supplement teachers’ salaries commonly called teacher motivation has now been taken over by the government (Partey, 2017).

2.15 The Free SHS Policy: Origin Objectives, principles and benefits

The Ghanaian government made free, mandatory, basic education a constitutional necessity to bridge the achievement gap between the wealthy and the deprived. The Free and Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) initiative, which was first implemented in 1995, set a deadline of 2005 for achieving education for all. Abdul-Rahaman *et.al* (2018) add that this policy covers eleven years of universal basic education, which are divided into two years of kindergarten, six years of elementary school and three years of Junior High School. Such measures resulted in a long-term,

unprecedented increase in the number of students enrolled because parents were no longer required to pay for their children's education. As a result, there is a greater demand for senior high school education in the nation, which puts more strain on family finances because parents have to cover their children's school fees at this level.

The free SHS policy in Ghana is being implemented based on three themes of access, equity, and quality. According to the policy initiators, secondary education is to be free to all Ghanaian B.E.C.E graduates who are placed into public second cycle institutions by the Computerised School Selection and Placement System (CSSPS) starting from the 2017/18 academic year. The duration of the FSHS scholarship is three (3) years. The government absorbs all fees of students in senior high schools boarding students including lunch for day students (Duflo et al., 2017; Partey, 2017). To ensure equity, 30% of places in elite schools are reserved for applicants from public Junior High Schools. To enable the programme run effectively, the Computer Selection and School Placement System (CSSPS) was to be strictly adhered to. Aggregates that could qualify students to senior high schools were adjusted from thirty-six (36) to provide the candidate passes in all the core subjects including mathematics, Science and English Language at the basic level. Admission was highly centralized. Apart from the GES Headquarters, no other level of the administrative ladder could admit, dismiss or change a programme for any student.

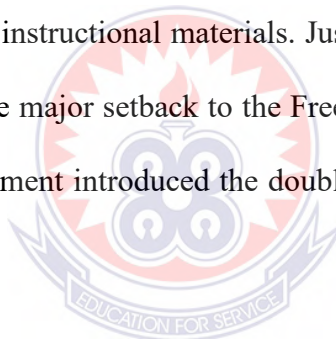
The introduction of the FSHS has led to substantial increase in enrolment since the main barrier has been absorbed by the government. Available data from Ministry of Education, Ghana shows an increase of 17% in 2017 and by 31% in 2018 to 472,730 due to the implementation of the free SHS policy. The policy has led to an increase in

enrolment by about 90,000 students. This means that cost of education (especially SHS) in Ghana is a barrier to its access for many children.

2.16 The policy's implementation and matters arising

2.16.1 Challenges of the Policy

In the first-two years (2017 and 2018) of its introduction, the Free Senior High School policy has increased enrolment by 17% and 31% in 2017 and 2018 respectively. However, these increases have come with their own challenges. Retention is still threatened by many socio-economic factors that lead to dropping of students out of school. Also, the nature of increased student enrolment has consequently caused other problems like heavy teaching loads, movement of students in and out of schools, teacher shortages and inadequate instructional materials. Just as the case of Kenya, in Ghana, infrastructure has been the major setback to the Free Senior High School programme. Consequently, the government introduced the double-track system in 2018 to contain the increased enrolment.



2.17 Free SHS Policy on Socio-Economic Life Parents

A study by Nurudeen Abdul-Rahaman *et.al.* (2018) shows that the free senior high school policy proved to put more butts seats in helping to reduce financial burden on parent and has reduced poverty among parents and guardians. The policy has helped the needy families to enrol their wards in senior high schools. It has been perceived as a positive step for Ghanaians. Governments across the globe have improved their educational systems by establishing sponsoring initiatives meant to lessen the economic burden on families and increase accessibility and excellence in education Nurudeen Abdul-Rahaman *et.al.* (2018). The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has named the

Free Senior High School policy to be among the outstanding social and economic reform programs that directly impact senior high school families and pupils.

2.18 History of Ghana's Educational System

2.18.1 Castle and Mission Schools

The History of formal education in Ghana dates far back to 1592. European merchants presented formal education in Gold Drift in 1471 with the goal of instructing the Gold Coasters how to peruse, compose and guzzle in them the guideline and estimations of Christianity. Their schools were limited to Elmina Castle. The Dutch who in 1637 caught the Elimina castle sustained the castle education. The British and the Danes joined the race of building up the castle schools in 1694 and 1772 individually. The base of the British was the Cape Drift castle and that of the Danes was Christiansborg Castle. The merchants opened numerous schools in Accra, Anomabu and Dixcove in 1822 (Eyiah, 2004). The emphasis on religious examinations in the school curriculum was to instil morality in the general public in view of Christian qualities.

However, the main problem of the education had system had been its limited access. Just offspring of the European dealers and that of the compelling identities in the general public were considered for confirmation. The contribution of the teachers in the arrangement of schools for the Gold Drift expanded the extent of affirmation for some Ghanaians (Graham, 1976). According to Graham (Eyiah, 2004), Wesleyans (Methodists) and Basel mission were the leaders in the race for arrangement of mission schools in Gold Coast to supplement government exertion toward that path. The arrival of Wesleyan and Basel preachers in Gold Coast in 1835 emphatically added to the improvement of education by the Christians. The principal school of the Wesleyans was built up in Cape Coast Castle where they settled. Nine Wesleyan mission schools had

been opened to all. Their push to open extra schools in Ashanti district faced many challenges.

These challenges were premised on the ground that, doing so would negatively affect the cultural convictions and estimations of the people (Asantes). This development restricted Wesleyan effort to extend schools to the costal zones all through the nineteenth century (Graham 1976). By the 1850s, they had schools at Christiansborg and schools on the Akuapim Edge. At their school in Akropong, the Basel preachers prepared educators, utilized the schools as agency for the spread of Christianity, and distributed a rudimentary syntax book and word reference in the nearby Akan language (U.S College Catalog, 2010).

2.18.2 Education in the Gold coast from 1840-1901

Government attempts to increase educational activities on the Gold Coast began with the signing of the Bond of 1844 between the British and the Fantis. It was in accordance with the spirit of the bond that Governor Hill proposed his 1852 Ordinance in which recommendation was made that a poll tax be imposed to finance the general improvement of the territories, including the provision of education that could lead to the establishment of a better educated class of African (U.S University Directory, 2010).

Having gained their dominance over Gold Coast administration, the British became more aggressive in the pursuit of its educational policy. The Wesleyan and Basel missions in 1874 and passed two more Educational Statutes in 1882 and 1887 to promote education. The first statute (1882) stated that government grants to denominational schools ought to be made reliant on an appraisal of the level of effectiveness. The second ordinance (1887) stressed government's call for changes in

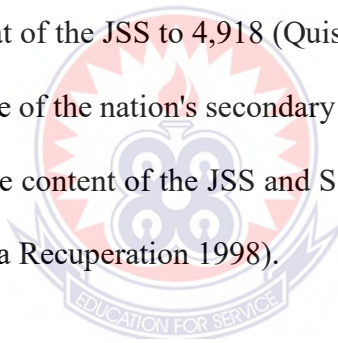
the school curriculum, instructor confirmation, and pragmatic education for students. Government assistance to preachers encouraged them to open extra schools in the nation. By 1901, the aggregate number of mission schools in the Gold Coast was 132, (U.S College Catalog, 2010).

2.18.3 Education in the Twentieth Century

Arrangement of education in the Gold Coast was done essentially by Christian denominations. For the most part, the mission schools gave simple instructing at the primary level. Students looking for advanced education went to either Europe or the Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone. The arrangement of General Gordon Guggisberg as the governor of Gold Coast from 1919 to 1927 brought a considerable measure of advantages. The governor started a few formative projects to recreate Gold Coast as a modern country. He was of the conviction that the present system couldn't maintain future developments. Despite the fact that the administration proposed a technical school for Accra, Prince of Wales College (now Achimota School) was the genuine accomplishment of the administration's educational program. This school catered for students of pre-university education including those at kindergarten.

A few secondary schools were built by secular as well as the various Christian denominations. These schools included Adisadel College, Aggrey Memorial College, Mfamtsipim School, Wesley Girls School, St. Augustine School, Prempeh School, Ghana National, and a few Presbyterian institutions in the Akuapem and Kwahu districts (Quist 2003; Graham 1976). The schools were more in the southern part of the country. The Catholic Church began missionary activities in the northern region in 1910. However, there were few primary and middle schools, teaching colleges and about sixty (60) secondary schools at independence to meet the demands of the nation.

Educational extension and improvement proceeded even after decolonization. Prior to the overthrow of Nkrumah's government in 1966, the quantity of open and government assisted secondary schools expanded to 105 with an aggregate enrolment of 42,628 (GOG 1966). After 1966, the new government (NLC) appointed an Education Review Committee to undertake a comprehensive review of the entire formal educational system. The government scrapped off the Seven-Year Development Plan initiated by Nkrumah and modified the free textbook scheme to allow parents to pay part of the cost of the distribution of textbooks to students. Under the administration of PNDC, a number of Senior Secondary Schools (SSS) and Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) were opened. Toward the end of 2000, the legislature expanded the number of SSS across the country to 500 and that of the JSS to 4,918 (Quist 2003). The new system changed the structure and substance of the nation's secondary education. The span of SSS was 3 years and JSS 3 years. The content of the JSS and SSS were modernized to reflect the national yearnings, (Africa Recuperation 1998).



2.18.4 Pre-independent educational reforms in Ghana;

The Mercantile Era, the main goal of education was to make civilization more hand-in-hand with evangelisation. This gives a clear description of how education in Ghana was implemented. The Christian Missionaries realized that to spread the word of God they needed well-educated local assistants. That is education was seen as a tool to facilitate the teaching and the spread of the gospel between the colonial masters and the colonies. At colonial era, education was to facilitate communication for smooth administration and trade. This prompted the government to draw up its first educational plans in the 1882 to guide the development of education. Hugh Clifford. They include Primary education for every African boy and girl, a Training College for teachers in every

province, better salaries for teachers and a Royal College. Ultimately, the proposed targets and recommendations from several committees such as the Phelps-Stokes Fund from America and the 1922 Committee led to the opening of the Prince of Wales College in 1927.

2.18.5 Post- Independence major educational reforms in Ghana;

Education at post-colonial era was meant to drive development. Various educational reforms and policies have been pursued by successive governments after independence with the aim of providing good and workable educational system. These reforms include; The Accelerated Development Plan of 1951 and Education Act of 1961, Reforms of the National Liberation Council, The New Structure and Content of Education of 1974, The 1987 education reforms, New Educational Reform of 2007.

2.18.6 The Accelerated Development Plan of 1951 and Education Act of 1961

The first educational reform plan was approved in August 1951 immediately Nkrumah assumed office. The aim was to expand the educational system, and also recognize the importance of teacher training colleges to have good trained teachers to educate in schools. It did not abandon the service of “pupil” teachers to help staff the classroom until trained teachers were produced. Again, Nkrumah’s reforms introduced subjects pertaining to African Cultural identity, values and practices with the local vernacular was used as a medium of instruction in the lower primary. The plan provided assistance for the expansion of both secondary and Technical/vocational. The second phase of the developments in educational sector begun in 1962 with the seven-year plan which laid emphasis on the expansion of secondary education and postsecondary technological and managerial training to meet the needs of expanding industry, agriculture and other sector of the economy.

2.18.7 Reforms of the National Liberation Council

A new regime emerged after the overthrow of Nkrumah's government, the National Liberation Council which comprised of both military and civilian officers. On March 7, 1966, the government appointed a new Education Review Committee to undertake a comprehensive review of the entire formal educational system. The government scrap off the Seven-Year Development Plan initiated by Nkrumah. The NLC also modified the free textbook scheme to allow parents to pay part of the cost of the distribution of textbooks to students.

2.18.8 The New Structure and Content of Education of 1974

Succeeding governments have revealed their recognition of the significance of education to national growth. However, the education system had been critiqued as being elitist in nature as well as structured similarly to the British grammar schools. The National Redemption Council (NRC) led by Col. Acheampong succeeded the Busia government. The new government carried out a review of the educational system, and formed the Dzobo Committee to recommend appropriate measures to recover the situation. The Dzobo Report of 1973 led to the publication of the New Structure and Content of Education (NSCE) in 1974, which introduced the concept of the Junior Secondary School (JSS) and the Senior Secondary School (SSS). The 'NSCE' reduced the duration of years an individual should spend in the pre-tertiary education from seventeen (17) years to thirteen (13) years.

2.18.9 The 1987 Education Reforms

The Jerry John Rawlings led government which overthrew President Limann and his government set up the Evans Anform committee in 1987 to review the structure of the current educational system. The objective was to expand and improve and make basic

education free and compulsory. It reduced the duration of pre-tertiary education from seventeen (17) years to twelve (12) years. The academic year comprised of three terms for both JSS OR SSS with terminal examinations at the end of each term. Junior Secondary School three (3) pupils were mandated to write the B.E.C.E and S.S.C.E for Senior Secondary School finalists, replacing the G.C.E. However, this reform made no provision for private sector players within the educational sector.

2.18.10 Educational Reforms of 2007 and other previous educational policies: (The FCUBE and capitation grant)

Two years after winning power in the 2000 general elections, the New Patriotic Party (N.P.P.), John Agyekum Kuffour led administration inaugurated a presidential committee to review the existing education system in Ghana under the chairmanship of Professor Jophus Anamuah-Mensah. The key principles underlying the introduction of this reform includes: formation of human capital for industrial growth, preservation of culture and improvements in science and technology. The government also extended the duration of SHS from three (3) years to four (4) years to help teachers finish the syllabus and also give students adequate time to prepare for the West African Secondary School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). After winning the 2008 general elections, Democratic Congress (NDC) reverts to the three (3) years in Senior High School. Governments' prioritization of education led to several changes in its reforms. However, the focus of these reforms (from 1961 to date) is on the structure and content and mainly on the public senior secondary school with no attention to private sector players in the educational sector.

Ghana's Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE), was introduced in 1996 after the World Education Conference in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 recommended

the increased focus on primary education. With this policy, there is no provision for the private schools. The FCUBE was aimed to achieve universal primary education by 2005 and in partial fulfilment of Ghana's 1992 Constitution, to help improve the quality of teaching and learning; efficiency and sustainability; increase access and participation, (MOE, 2002). This intervention led to a rise in enrolment. Private schools were not included. Studies on the policy were on its success and challenges and not how it affected private schools. The Capitation Grant Scheme was introduced in 2004/2005 on a pilot scheme to enhance the FCUBE programme. It was aimed at making education at the basic level free by eliminating all fees and levies. It was scaled up nationally in the 2005/2006 academic year. The pilot scheme led to 14.5% increase in enrolment in the 53 pilot districts. The net enrolment was further increased from 59.1% in 2004/5 to 81.1% in 2006/7 (MOE, 2008). It is clear that, when cost elements of education are removed, enrolment increases. However, private schools were not included.

2.19 The Nature and Value of Secondary Education

Report of Committee on Review of Education Reforms, (2002) reveals that secondary education is the intermediary between basic and tertiary education in every country. It further asserts that secondary education is very crucial because it is at this stage of education that specialisation starts. By implication, care must be given to policies regarding its provision. Collaboration with the private sector will be crucial in meeting this demand. Secondary education is crucial in the development of individuals and nations as it helps students to develop the capacity to reason effectively. This is confirmed by Meier (2011) that secondary education exposes students to complex issues and skills which are key ingredients for stimulating productivity and greater personal development.

Ankomah (2009) contends that although basic education introduces pupils to general and basic skills and predisposes them to rudimentary practical and vocational skills. It is the secondary education that makes them understand them better. In an apparent support of this view, (Quist, 2003) opined that secondary education is the “tool” for cultivating the “cream” that secure tertiary education to become a professional. According to Antwi (2005), secondary education does not only train people for entry into the professions to provide middle-level manpower necessary for economic development, but also to prepare those who can proceed to universities and other forms of higher education.

2.19.1 The Historical Context of Private Schools in Ghana

The very beginning of formal education in Ghana was a private enterprise. The colonial government’s attempt to provide formal education in the Gold Coast colony came in the mid-1850s more than two hundred years after its introduction into the country. The development of private education in Ghana can be grouped into two main categories. The Castle Schools (proprietary) and Mission schools. The establishment of castle schools was the earliest attempt at introducing formal education in Ghana by the Portuguese at the Elmina Castle in the late sixteenth century. Formal education actually started around 1752, (Graham, 1976). The school was partly financed from fines imposed on the employees of the Merchant Government who refused to attend church service on Sundays.

The missionaries were the second group of people to provide formal education in the country. Their arrival into the scene brought zeal into the system. Their purpose and methods vary. The mission schools reflected the models of the educational systems

from which the various missions came as well as the missions and philosophies of these Christian bodies. According to Quist (2003), the first Methodist church secondary school, Mfantshipim School was modelled on English Wesleyan schools. Among these missions were Wesleyans, Basel, Bremen, German and Catholic. Each mission made efforts to broaden the scope of their curriculum and train teachers for their schools. The missions had the right bodies and money to manage the schools than the government could do (Eyiah, 2004).

The Colonial government took an active part in the provision and management of education only after 1880 (Graham, 1976). The initial attempt by the government to participate in the provision of education was in the form of the introduction of various education ordinances first to guide the operations of the already existing private schools and later to guide the organisation of its own schools. The first was the Education Ordinance of 1852, which provided that the Gold Coast schools were to be financed by an annual sum of £1,000, which was mainly to be derived from the proceeds from the Poll Tax, (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). Whereas the government's efforts in the provision of schools declined, the missions progressed steadily leading to government schools and assisted schools. Consequently, the 1882 Education Ordinance established a Board of Education for both the Gold Coast and Lagos to control and supervise the system. The introduction of the Accelerated Development Plan for Education in 1951 brought with it a rapid expansion of primary education.

Over 132,000 children began their primary school in 1952, and more than twice the previous year. By 1957, there were over 450,000 children in the primary schools and they were taught by about 15,000 teachers (McWilliam and Kwamena-Poh, 1975). In order to ensure equal access to education for all Ghanaian children, attempts were made

by the government to monopolise the management of education. Consequently, missions were asked to hand over their schools to the Local Authorities. No mission or private individual was to open a new school except otherwise permitted by the Local Authorities. This trend started changing from the 1950s. For instance, between 1951 and 1957 and between 1957 and 1966, there was almost 300% increase in the number of public secondary schools. Likewise, enrolment in public secondary schools rose by approximately 300% the same periods (Quist, 2003). This implies that public secondary education expanded steadily at the expense of the private schools and this was as a result of the then government's "policy of using the private sector to augment the public domain" (Quist, 2003, p.45).

2.19.2 The roles of Private schools in the Development of Ghana

The limited vacancies in the public senior high schools cannot absorb all the qualified Junior High School graduates. Appiah, (2009) in a study affirms that in the 2009/2010 academic year, there were 178,000 vacancies for the 206,642 candidates who passed the 2009 BECE and qualify to enter SHS in the country. This means that some 28,642 BECE graduates will not enter SHS due to limited vacancies in the public SHSs. They have no option than to look for vacancies in the private sector. By implication, private senior high schools help to expand access to SHS education. Powell et al, (2008) posited that private schools have environments that are particularly conducive to the improvement of even average students. Sernua (2007) also contends that private schooling provides excellent instruction that guarantee high levels of academic performance. The active involvement of private schools reduces the burden on the government in fulfilling the aspirations of its citizens. No one agency-government, missions and individuals can adequately provide secondary education to meet the ever-increasing junior high school student-population. It takes a shared effort to achieve that.

This is confirmed by Atchoarena and Esquieu (2002) that, private education is increasingly seen as a means of assuaging the deficiencies of public education in terms of access, internal efficiencies, curricula and quality of teaching. The growing number of private institutions in African countries reflects not only families' loss of confidence in the public-school systems, but also the inability of governments to meet the growing demand for education. Atchoarena and Esquieu's view is in line with LaRocque and Jacobsen (2000) as they emphatically state that private education is underpinned by a number of crucial drivers which include the sheer inability of public sector to absorb the increasing numbers of high school graduates.

Again, Lin (1994) contended that, private schools have a positive impact on a country's economic development in that they try hard to respond to the needs in the economic system. Supporting the view of Lin, Preprah, (2004) writes that in terms of coverage, quality academic performance, high enrolment and employment creation, private schools are playing a major role in the development of education. It is in view of this vital role by the private sector that Mr Michael Ambrose Appiah, the chairman of the Ashanti Regional Association of Private Schools, in an inclusive interview with the Daily Graphic called on the Government to consider private schools in the country in the allocation of resources to schools. He indicated that government should include private schools in the distribution of school buses, textbooks, etc. since parents of students enrolled there are also tax payers (Daily Graphic, March, 3rd, 2009). The proprietors of Eagle International School, Ms Grace Obayaa Daneke, has also requested government to assist the private sector to enable it complement the efforts of government at improving the education sector. She particularly requested the

government to help the private schools in building the capacity of their teachers to enable them perform very well (Salia, 2009).

2.19.3 The effect free SHS policy on Administration of Private SHS in Ghana

Many administration and management challenges exist in private SHSs in Ghana. These challenges centre on admission of students, staffing, financing, infrastructure development, among others. Quist (2003) identified two main challenges of the development of secondary education in Ghana; namely, the issue of inadequate funding and “questions and problems surrounding reform with particular emphasis on the curriculum”. Lack of qualified teachers, equipment for teaching and learning etc. hamper effective implementation of school programme. According to (Alani, 2000), lack of these basic necessary facilities has caused the high failure rate in the secondary school certificate examinations.

Many problems have been ascribed to the management of private schools globally including free education policies, rising costs of management, inadequate of financial reserves among others. Competition from state schools happens because in some countries state schools are able to provide quality instruction to students comparable to that which is provided in private schools. According to Arum, (1996) as cited by Benveniste et al., (2013), in such a situation, parents are likely to send their wards to the state schools because of the additional privilege of paying lesser or no fees. In countries where free education policy is implemented, citizens do not pay fees to attend public schools, and such schools become the choice of many parents leaving private schools to grapple with dwindling enrolments (Härmä & Adefisayo, 2013; Ohara, 2012).

The rising cost of management is one of the major issues hampering private schools management in recent times (Noddings, 2015). The costs of foodstuff to feed the students in the boarding keep increasing which negatively affect the budget of these school owners. In countries where inflation rates increase rapidly, the costs of goods and services become unstable. If the level of prices increases of goods and services become unbearable, the school managers pass the financial burden to parents. Parents who are unable to afford this withdraw their wards thereby leading to reductions in school enrolments (Härmä and Adefisayo, 2013; Konadu, 2010). The current high inflations, cedi, depreciation and the resultant doubling of the cost of goods and services is practical case in point in Ghana for all private SHSs leading to the increase in tuition and feeding fees. As such, most parents cannot afford leading to the folding up of some private SHSs. A study by (Nsiah-Peprah, 2004) in the Kumasi metropolis to assess the role of private schools in the development of education in Ghana revealed that most of the private schools in the metropolis had poor infrastructure due to weak financial standing.

Another issue related to running cost is the ability to pay competitive salaries to attract and retain qualified teachers and supporting staff who otherwise may prefer government schools where pay structures are comparably more favourable and opportunities exist for professional development (Härmä and Adefisayo, 2013; Srivastava, 2013). Inadequate or the lack of financial reserves happens because of rising costs of running the schools and also delay in the payments of fees by parents (Härmä, 2011a, 2011b; Härmä and Adefisayo, 2013; Noddings, 2015). These largely affect the growth and development of the private schools as, it makes very difficult to undertake developmental projects aimed at expanding physical facilities (Härmä, 2011a, 2011b; Härmä and Adefisayo, 2013; Noddings, 2015). Most financial institutions are unwilling

to due to the fear of delay or none repayment. In the long run some of the private schools become less attractive to parents and candidates to patronise. Also, where the status of a private school management changes and it is being run as a charity, it becomes difficult to sustain its existence without donations from external sources (Arum, 1996; Noddings, 2015; Yongdong, 2004).

2.20 Admission of Students

The growth, development and the sustainability of any private school largely depends on its ability to continually admit students. Admission to secondary school in the public system was based on selective examination organised on behalf of the Ministry of Education by WAEC (Antwi, 2005). Those who were successful were admitted into the public secondary schools. A study on district performance report in Ghana indicates that children, especially those from rural areas, who perform below standard compelling parents to look for places in private schools (Appiah, 2009). This suggests that the private schools do not enrol qualified students since the good ones are taken on by the public schools. In fact, the free SHS policy in Ghana places all BECE graduates into Public SHSs leaving the private schools in a state of desperation. This confirms Foondun (2002), studies in Cambodia that revealed that private schools may be attended by pupils who are weak and have not obtained a place in the public system. In the view of Varghese (2006), the academic profile of the participants of private education may be lower as compared to their counterparts in the public institutions. Meanwhile performance is key to the sustainability of private schools as it is the main way to attract students.

2.20.1 Staffing the Senior High School

Teachers remain one of the key players in the educational sector. This is confirmed by Hallak (2012) that the quality of educational system depends on the quality of teaching staff. Teachers are responsible for helping students to acquire relevant knowledge and development of abilities and skills and so the quality of a teacher matters in the delivery of quality tuition.

Adequate number and quality of teachers are necessary for guaranteeing quality of education in the schools. Anthony et. al, (1999) explains that, every organisation needs to recruit in order to grow and to replace those who leave. This affirms Stoner and Freeman (1989) indication that limited financial base of private schools makes it very difficult to recruit and maintain good quality or calibre of teachers (staff) for the schools. They rather rely on part time teachers in view of the fact that salaries form dominant part of expenditure of secondary schools. This indicates that private providers of education rely mostly on the public sector of education for teachers at all levels.

2.21 The effect of Free SHS policy on Funding of Private Senior High Schools

Funding is the main challenge to most private schools. Private schools depend on the tuition fees paid by the students. The payment of these fees most at times makes it difficult for these schools to get the needed students enrolment. No educational institution can run smoothly without adequate financial resources (fund) especially. Enough funds are needed to establish and run private senior high schools. Asiedu-Akrofi (2002) states that even though money is not everything it is a matter of fact that it is ninety-nine per cent an important factor that can promise excellence in educational pursuit. School management bodies need enough resources to ensure that their students perform sufficiently well in their final examinations. Good academic performance by

students and their schools enhances their funding, reorganisation and patronage by stakeholders of education (Olorundare, 1999). This helps the schools to attract more students or parents which will eventually translate into the income of the schools.

The private secondary schools in Ghana appear to have limited sources of funds unlike the public or state-owned secondary schools. It is observed that the central government does not financially help privately-owned secondary institutions. The funding and provision of teaching and learning resources for private institutions remain the sole responsibility of the founders or proprietors and parents. The owners of private schools provide the large chunk of the money the institutions need for effective implementation of their programmes. This makes the schools resource constraint and thus finds it very difficult to procure teaching and learning materials and better infrastructure which are pre-requisite for provision of quality education. It also renders them incapable of attracting and retaining qualified teachers in their schools. Observations reveal that a good number of private senior high schools in the country are grossly underfunded. Inability of school authorities to acquire ample funds to run their schools results in abysmally poor teaching and learning (Onifade, 1998). Inadequate funding of schools aggravates the poor conditions of schools. Some of the sources of funds available to private senior high schools include:

2.21.1 Tuition Fees

Tuition fees are the main source of fund for almost all private secondary school in Ghana. It varies from one school to another sometimes depending on the location of the school. It is very important and can influence the way the institution functions. Even though some of these schools do have PTA levies, project levies among others, tuition fees help in providing a number of facilities in the schools. Varghese (2006) adds that

school fees form the main source of income for many private schools. Tuition fees are paid by parents for the education of their wards and children. Students are therefore required to pay for the teaching they receive in the school (Aseidu Akrofi, 2002).

In countries where there is a free system of education, tuition fees are paid by the government. These monies from the government come in the form of grants based on certain conditions. In Ghana, the first attempt by the colonial administration to extend financial assistance to the Missions schools that met the government's requirements to develop their schools was in 1874. The government extended \$ 425 to the Wesleyan, Basel and Bremen missions in the early 1880's to supplement what the home missions gave (Graham, 1976). In the 1960's, the government extended the GET funding to private secondary schools that were doing well in the country (Quist, 2003). The schools were assisted based on their academic excellence as their public counterparts did. Tuition fees may differ from school to school depending on the resources and facilities available. For instance, in schools where there are boarding facilities, fees are levied on parents and guardians to take care. Low fees are often set in order to increase enrolment. This may detract from the quality from if classes are overcrowded Atchoarena and Esquieu (2002).

Conversely, high tuition fees usually mean that the institution is targeting a particular social category, a strategy that entails wealth –based selectiveness and small class size. This is particularly true if the private institution is positioned on a niche market where demand is low. However, institutions that charge high tuition fees generally have a good reputation, which keeps demand relatively high. Atchoarena and Esquieu (2002), say that in sub-Saharan Africa, as elsewhere, the tuition fees charged by private

institutions vary widely. They are determined by a number of factors which may be internal or external.

2.21.2 Internally Generated Funds

Most secondary schools being public or private find other means of generate funds to supplement tuition fees to provide quality education to students. Education institutions consider the possibility of diversifying sources of funding. Karikari-Ababio (1999) identifies internally generated fund as one of the major sources of secondary schools' budget in Ghana. Nathan (2000) supports schools generating funds internally and charges them to be responsible to their needs and new financing. Nathan is of the view that school authorities can find innovative ways of raising ample funds for their institutions. In Ghana currently, private schools do generate funds through the sale of school's clothes, uniform, printed exercise books among others to cater for other expenses.

It is against this background that the report of the Committee for Review of Education Reforms (2002) charges boards of secondary schools to find innovative ways of securing funds to support their schools. Adesina (2010) cited a study that found that in Lagos some schools generate funds from the sale of school uniforms and stationery etc. Forojalla (2003) also confirms the idea of Adesina (2010) that some schools find innovative ways of generating income to supplement what they get from other sources. The Commonwealth Secretariat (1993) identifies variety of ways of mobilising financial resources, which are commonly employed in some schools. Some are, Fundraising functions contributions or donations by private companies, Sales of school products and borrowing from financial institutions after they have provided security or guarantee.

2.21.3 Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) Contributions

The role of parent-teacher associations at the educational sector is dated far back in history. In recent times the practice is that, aside school fees paid by parents, the association helps in many other ways for the schools to deliver quality education for their wards and children. Parents contribute to the development of schools that their wards attend. They provide financial support for the schools to acquire facilities and materials to improve learning situation in the schools. According to the Commonwealth Secretariat (1993), parents contribute money for the provision of more resources such as transport, building, computers and pay for educational visits. Their contributions usually include: paying official tuition fees, paying PTA dues for specific projects among others. In areas where the association is well organised, they even donate bus to the school to facilitate students' movements, power plants or standby generators, drill boreholes and other facilities that will aid teaching and learning in the school. Also, Owusu (1998) affirms that, the contributions of Parent-teacher association (PTA) have become the norm in many developing countries.

2.21.4 Supports from the community

The roles of our communities in the educational sector cannot be overemphasized especially in the developing countries. Community supports come both in cash and in kind. In Ghana, some communities and philanthropists raise funds for their schools and at times offer communal labour at the schools. Owusu (1998) observes that chiefs and people of some communities in which the schools are situated have made and continue to make significant financial contributions either directly or indirectly to the schools. These aids help the schools to meet the cost of improving teaching and learning and afford the schools the opportunity to offer quality school service. These supports however, mostly go to the public or state owned senior high schools which are already

supported by the state. The private counterparts are seen as someone's property and so community supports are not readily there.

Other educational support funds like the GETFund is solely spent on public schools that already have the full supports of the state. In Ghana, development partners and non-Governmental organizations (NGO) like JICA, DANIDA, DfID among others have been assisting schools to implement their programmes but these helps mostly go to public schools that are already well to do. Their reasons are usually based on the erroneous impressions that pupils who are enrolled in the private schools are from rich homes. Meanwhile, these private schools complement government's efforts by bringing education to the door step of the public. A study conducted by Donostia-San (1999) in Tanzania, on community support of schools revealed that community financing occurs through monetary contributions or through non-monetary support in the form of land, labour, materials among others.

2.21.5 Donation by Old Students Associations or Alumna

Old Students' Associations play significant roles in the educational sector. In recent times they have become very influential in the educational sector. OMSU, MOBA POJOBABA among others are some of these notable Old Students' Associations. To some extent, old students and or association influence who should even head most the public senior high schools in areas where they are well organised. They support their Alma Matter in diverse ways. They provide supports such as building of classroom blocks, donation of books to the school's library, provision of furniture, sports wares, and power plants, boreholes for regular water supply among others. However, these supports are common in the public senior high schools than their private counterpart. In the private senior high schools old students associations are not as vibrant as in the

public senior high schools. For this reason, the supports of these associations do not fully meet the needs of these private senior high schools.

2.21.6 Loans

Most private schools in Ghana do depend on loans from both private and state-owned financial institutions to finance their operations during their establishment and in the course of their operation. Many of these schools depend on loan facilities as a source of funds for effective operation. Since almost all private schools depend on the tuition fees at the beginning of every term, some of these schools owners do depend on loans to start running the school before fees are paid by students. However, most banks and financial institutions are losing interest in lending to most of these schools due to myriad of factors among which include; delays in repayment, unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of the school and even failure to pay service these loans. This confirms (Akangbou, 2015) position that the financial institutions are unwilling to give loans to schools due to repayment challenges with the state-owned banks becoming very selective in providing these financial services. A clear testament to this was seen when covi-19 broke out and all schools have to close to contain the spread of the virus. More than appreciable number of private schools could not pay salaries to staff. This is because students were not in school to pay fees for the schools to generate or get income to the salaries; banks were not ready or willing to grant any loan facility to school at the time due to the uncertain nature of the period.

2.22 Gap in the Literature

Literature from the researchers discussed the free education concept, prospects and challenges. Country based studies were focussed on the policy's success regarding access to secondary education by basic school graduates at both national and

international levels. The focus was on whether or not the policy has succeeded in increasing enrolments in the various public secondary schools and in some cases meeting political objectives. In spite of these studies, there was no published or documented study on how the free senior high school policy in Ghana has influenced the enrolment and income of the private senior high schools in the Volta region. For this reason, the findings from this study will cover this gap.

2.23 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the related literature, identify the gaps in the existing scholarly works. This helped the researcher to know the actual gap to fill as it provides the link between the existing works and the problem to solve.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the approach employed to gather and analyse data for the study. It entails research design, sampling techniques data source and collection methods, research instruments, ethical consideration among others.

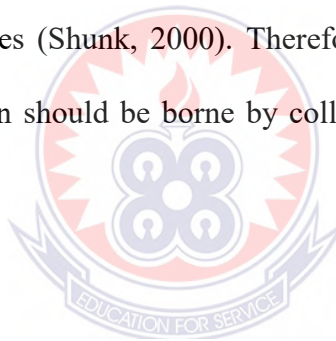
3.1 Philosophical position of the study

This study is grounded on the social constructivist world-view of research. Social constructivism emphasizes the importance of culture and context in understanding what occurs in society and constructing knowledge based on this understanding (Derry, 1999). Social constructivists believe that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work, and develop subjective meanings of their experiences (Creswell, 2014). Social constructivism is based on specific assumptions about reality, knowledge, and learning. Social constructivists hold that reality is constructed through human activity. For the social constructivist, reality cannot be discovered. It does not exist prior to its social invention. To them, knowledge is a human product, and is socially and culturally constructed (Ernest, 1999; Gredler, 1997). Individuals create meaning through their interactions with each other and with the environment they live in.

Relating it to the study, the researcher chooses this philosophy because the target population better appreciate the prospects and challenges of the free senior high school policy on the private schools than the speculations of the general public. As such the approach helps the researcher to get first-hand information from the participants directly regarding the policy. That is getting the true reflection of the situation on

ground with their respective suggestions. It helps provide experience with knowledge construction process and as qualitative research, it enables the researcher to understand realities prevailing directly from the participant on the subject under investigation. It also provides the researcher with experience and appreciation for multiple perspectives i.e. evaluation of alternative solutions and embeds learning in realistic context.

Any personal meanings shaped through these experiences are affected by the inter-subjectivity of the community to which the people belong. Inter-subjectivity not only provides the grounds for communication but also supports people to extend their understanding of new information and activities among the group members (Rogoff, 1990). Knowledge is derived from interactions between people and their environments and resides within cultures (Shunk, 2000). Therefore, free education policy and its successful implementation should be borne by collective efforts of the state and the private individuals.



3.2 Research Design

The study makes use of qualitative case study design for data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Qualitative research explores the meanings individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem and focus on the use of words rather than numbers in interpreting results from a study (Creswell, 2014). According to O'Leary (2017), qualitative research method emphasises depth over quantity; and focuses on delving into an event and its complexities to explore and provide an intimate understanding. A case study is a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in-depth a programme event, activity, process, or one or more individuals (Creswell, 2009). It is useful when a researcher wants to understand an event that occurred to a particular person or group at a particular point in time (Terrell, 2016). According to Creswell

(2009), cases are bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time. This method is appropriate for this study because it helps the researcher obtain enough quality data that reflect the views of participants, which help address the research issues.

3.3 Scope and delimitation of the study

The study focuses on the effects of the free Senior High School policy on the enrolment and income of Private Senior High Schools in the Volta region. The policy is a distributive one which seems to influence many aspects of the economy. This area was chosen because it possesses features that fairly represent the case for other areas nationally as far as situation under investigation is concerned.

3.4 Population of the Study

Population is the set or group of all the units on which findings of a research are to be applied. It is a set of all units which possesses variable characteristic under study and for which findings of research can be generalised. Akinad and Owolabi (2009) defined population as a total set of observations from which a sample is drawn. According to Hu (2014) “study population is a subset of the target population from which the sample is actually selected”. For the purpose of this study, heads or proprietors, teachers of the Private Senior High Schools and experts or educationists will be considered as target population. The schools were grouped into urban and rural clusters. The researcher believes that this population is in a better position to provide the relevant information to achieve the purpose of the study.

3.4.1 Sample size

Sample size is the number of observations used for determining the estimations of a given population. As a qualitative research, quality is chosen over quantity. A total of twelve (12) respondents or participants were considered. This number is chosen to ensure fair and balanced responses (data) from information-rich respondents that reflects the views of the majority and addresses the subject matter under investigation. With regard to the subject under discussion and being a qualitative method and the way the schools are categorised, responses from twelve (12) respondents (who are information-rich) are ideal to achieve the purpose of the study.

Beyond this researcher is likely to be receiving same information signalling a point of saturation is reached. The private senior high schools in the region are divided into two categories, thus well-endowed urban (W.E) ones and the less endowed (L.E) rural ones. Within each category six (6) schools are randomly selected making a total of twelve (12) schools. Three (3) proprietors/headmasters each are randomly selected from each category making a total of six (6), two (2) staff each randomly selected from each category making four (4). One (1) representative of the Conference of Heads of Private Senior High Schools (CHOPSS). One (1) P.T.A. Chairman one (1).

Table 3.1: Sample of Informants in the study Area

Informants	Number	Percentage (%)
Proprietor/Headmasters	6	50
Staff Representative	4	33.3
PTA Executive	1	8.3
CHOPSS Executive	1	8.3
Total	12	100

Source; field data, 2022

3.4.2 Sampling and Sampling Technique

Sampling, according to Panneerselvam (2004), is a process of selecting a subset of randomised number of members of the population of a study. Sample size is therefore the number of members of a population selected to take part in a study. The purposive sampling technique is chosen because the researcher has a clear idea of specific attributes to study and wants to select a sample that accurately represents those characteristics. The study employed the purposive sampling method because it offers the opportunity to recruit respondents with in-depth and detailed information on the subject under investigation from twelve (12) out of twenty-seven (27) purposively selected schools based on how well endowed and less endowed they are.

According to (Alvi, 2016), “participants who meet the selection criteria are used in purposive sampling.” The study then relied on selected proprietors/heads of private SHSs, staff, Parent and Teacher Association (P.T.A) executive representative, representative(s) CHOPSS’ executives, educationists and representative of Ministry of education and G.E.S all within the study area. As a result of the number, Private SHSs in the region are categorized into two groups (less endowed and well endowed) and participants randomly selected.

3.5 Sources of Data

Both primary and secondary data were used for the study. Primary data provides first-hand information on any subject matter. The Primary data was collected from respondents through the use of semi-structured interview. Secondary data on the other hand consisted of relevant information relating to the subject matter of this study. Text books, magazines, articles, journals, newspapers among others were obtained from authoritative sources.

3.6 Research Instrument

Semi-structured interview guide was used to obtain qualitative data from respondents. Interview in qualitative research occurs when researchers ask one or more participants general, open-ended questions and record answers and later record their answers (Creswell, 2012). Interviews provide useful information when you cannot directly observe participants and they permit participants to describe personal information. It also gives the interviewer control over the type of information received, because the interviewer can ask specific questions to elicit information (Creswell, 2012). One-on-one interviews were conducted in the data collection process and open-ended questions were used to solicit the views of the participants.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods involve the process of collecting information based on variables of interest to reflect the direction that helps the researcher to respond to the study questions and/or objectives (Kothari, 2004; Sapsford and Jupp, 2005). This study employed semi-structured interviews guide. An interview is a technique that involves the use of oral or written questions in collecting information from the interviewee (Mzezele, et al., 2013).

Data was collected by recording the responses of the interviewee, using phones, taking notes in the notebook during interview, in one-on-one interview session with all the participants. The data was related to the subject under investigation (understanding of free senior high education and its effects on enrolment, income and administration of private senior high schools in the Volta region). The researcher chose semi-structured interview because of its ability to provide first-hand information from the participants' natural setting.

3.8 Data analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcript, observation, notes or other non-textual materials that the researcher accumulates to increase understanding of a phenomenon. In the context of this study, data gathered was organized manually to identify patterns and themes in the responses.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are important component for improving the quality of research process and results. Validity is the degree of a measure that represents adequately the construct it was expected to measure according to Bhattacharjee (2012). In this study, validity was ensured through member checking of transcripts, interviews. Also, the researcher collected data from different sources including heads of schools, P.T.A, Educationist etc. A careful selection of the sample from the target population and consideration of ethical issues by the researcher helped to ensure validity. David and Sutton, (2004) defined reliability of the study as the extent to which the research instrument or procedures are consistently bringing same information given the variation of time and respondent David & Sutton, (2004). To achieve this, the researcher tested the research instrument to similar respondents or setting and modified them accordingly.

3.9.1 Limitations of the study

The researcher was faced with the problems of cooperation from the respondents. Most of the participants were reluctant in availing themselves and to volunteer information as it is a study on a national policy. Another limitation was time and cost. It is a regional based study which involves a lot of travelling cost especially where the researcher had

to visit each respondent twice to seek their acceptance and onward interview respectively.

3.9.2 Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations in research are set of principles that guide research designs and practices. It helps to protect the rights of the research participants, enhance research validity and maintain scientific integrity. In all the stages of the research process one needs to be circumspect of ethical processes and practices. Practicing ethics is a complex matter that involves much more than merely following a set of static guidelines such as those from professional associations (Creswell, 2012). In this study, the researcher has followed the ethical rules that regulate the conduct of research by graduate students in the University of Education, Winneba by obtaining permission from all levels to ensure that the research is conducted ethically.

First of all, the researcher secured an introductory or approval letter from the Political Science Department allowing him to go the field to conduct the study. On the field, respondents were informed of the purpose of the study and information sought used solely for academic purposes. The anonymity of respondents was also ensured and protected. Credit was also given to all materials that were used in the study to avoid issues of plagiarism.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the general approach and the specific techniques that were employed to address subject matter of the study. It included the research setting, the reason for its choice and how the study was carried out. Data was collected from twelve (12) respondents who were purposively selected including proprietors/ headmasters, teachers, a representative of P.T.A, and a representative of CHOPSS. Ethical issues

regarding research and challenges encountered in the course of the study were all considered in the chapter.



CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.0 Introduction

The preceding chapter presented the methodology for the study. This chapter presents and discusses the findings in response to the research questions. The study investigated the influence of the free senior high school policy on the enrolment and income of the private senior high school, using the Volta region as a case study. The findings addressed three (3) study objectives, which are to:

1. Assess the influence of the Free Senior High School policy on the enrolment of the Private Senior High Schools in the Volta region.
2. Ascertain the effect of the policy on the income of the Private Senior High Schools in the region.
3. Assess the effect of the policy on the administration of Private Senior High Schools in the region.

In addressing these objectives, the study gathered information using interviews, document reviews, and discussions. Findings were presented and discussed in relation to five themes, including the participants' understanding of free senior high school policy, participants' involvement, the policy's influence on enrolment in private secondary schools, how it affects the income of private secondary schools, the management and administration of private secondary schools, and some proposals using the Volta region as an example. The data collected from the participants was transcribed after careful comparative study of the responses. It was expedient to understand the data in order to successfully manage data, merge related data, and identify patterns and relationships. The recurring themes were enrolment drops, falling incomes, administrative challenges as a result of falling enrolment and income, and a

lack of consultation and collaboration between the government and private school owners.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Even though the demographic data of respondents did not form part of the research objectives, it became expedient that such data be obtained. This is because the demographic data, to a large extent, helps the researcher to appreciate how relevant the characteristics of the participants were to the target population and the depth or richness of the information they provided. Being a study on a new national policy, there is a need to solicit information from participants who have knowledge on both “pre and during the policy”. This can help carry out a comparative analysis for better understanding. At the start of the interview, participants in the study area were asked to provide their basic demographic information, such as sex, age, and the number of years they have spent at their current workplace.

4.1.1 Gender of Respondents

Two (2) were females, and ten (10) were males. The researcher sets a range for the ages of the respondents, which is presented in the table below.

Table 4.1: Shows the Gender of the participants

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	10	83
Female	2	17
Total	12	100

Source: fieldwork, 2022

The study made use of twelve (12) participants that were purposively sampled from two categories of private senior high schools (less endowed and well endowed) in the

study area. As shown by the table above, ten (10) of the respondents are males while two (2) are females.

4.1.2 Age of respondents

Table 4.2: Shows the age category of respondents

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
20 – 39	8	67
40 – 59	3	25
60 and above	1	8
Total	12	100

Source: fieldwork, 2022

The researcher considers the age of the participants important as it is likely to influence their experience and the responses to the issues in addressing the purpose of the study. The researcher puts the ages in range, as shown in the table above, from 20–39, 40–59, and 60 and above. Eight (8) participants fall in the age bracket of 20 to 39 years. Three (3) fall between 40 and 59 years, and one (1) falls within the bracket of sixty (60) years and above.

4.1.3 Years spent at current place of work by respondents

Table 4.3: Shows duration of stay at current working place of the participants

Duration of Stay (Years)	Respondents (Frequency)	Percentage
1 – 5	1	8
6 – 10	2	17
11 – 15	8	67
16 and above	1	8
Total	12	100

Source: fieldwork, 2022

Participants are purposefully chosen, and their duration of stay in their present workplace is crucial to providing credible information for reliable findings. The researcher categorized the durations as 1–5 years, 6–10 years, 11–15 years, and 16 years and above, as depicted in Table 3 (3) above. Based on the findings from the field, only one (1) participant was at the present station at the time the policy was underway. Two (2) of the respondents were at their current place of work between the duration bracket of six (6) and ten (10) years, as shown in Table 3 above.

The majority of the respondents fall in the duration bracket of eleven (11) to fifteen (15) years. That is eight (8) out of the twelve (12) respondents, constituting 67% of the respondents. This implies that the majority of the participants have been in their current work place well enough and have rich knowledge of the situations in the sector and can critically compare pre-policy issues with the present circumstances or situations. One (1) of the respondents has been at the current place of work for over sixteen (16) years. It is clear that the majority of the respondents had been at their various places of work for years before the introduction of the policy. However, one respondent came to the present place of work after the policy was rolled out as shown in the table above.

It implies that the participants have deep knowledge of the situations before the policy and that they can do a good comparative analysis of the two periods. That is the “before and during” stages of the free senior high school policy regarding their places of work. The policy was introduced in 2017. The researcher falls more on those who experience the "pre- and during-stage of the policy” to be able to compare and draw a good and reliable conclusion. However, one (1) participant got to the current place of work at the “during stage of the policy”. The majority of the participants, thus, eleven (11) have knowledge and experience on both the “pre and during stages” of the policy, which

makes the information rich (6–10, 11–15, and 16 and above), as demonstrated in Table 4.3 above.

4.2 Background analysis of the respondents

4.2.1 Knowledge on the policy

The first question was to test the participants' awareness and knowledge of the free senior high school policy. The responses show that all respondents are aware of the free senior high school policy in Ghana. This is demonstrated by their responses. This means that all the respondents are in the best position to provide credible data for reliable findings regarding how the policy is impacting their various schools' enrolment, income, and administration.

On their understanding of the policy, all the participants demonstrated a good understanding of the policy. All the respondents were able to satisfactorily explain or define the intent of the policy.

One participant, (a headmaster-LES) during an interview with the researcher said;

the free senior high school policy is about government funding the cost of senior high school education for Ghanaian Junior high school graduates, and it is aimed at ensuring access, quality, and inclusiveness of senior high school education in Ghana.

To confirm this, another respondent in a similar vein (proprietor-WES) from another school who has been in the sector for over fourteen (14) years during an interview maintained that;

the free senior high school policy means cost-free senior high education for all Ghanaian B.E.C.E. graduates, thus the government removing the cost elements and ensuring inclusiveness by narrowing the poverty gap.

The response was not different when the researcher called on another respondent (a teacher-LES) in another school in the study area who has been teaching there for the

past eight years. In the course of the interview, this respondent was also of the view that;

the free senior high school policy is one of the government flagship programmes which is aimed at providing cost free senior high education and nutrition to all Ghanaian B.E.C.E. graduates who are placed in the public senior high schools.

By way of ascertaining the fact, the researcher visited the representative of the Conference of Heads of Private Senior High Schools (CHOPSS) to seek his knowledge on the policy. This respondent explained the concept during an interview saying;

the free senior high school policy is one of the government's educational policies or initiatives aimed at making senior high school education free for Ghanaian children. The respondent furthered that the parents of all B.E.C.E. graduates who will be successfully placed will not pay anything for the cost of their wards' education. That is, the government has absorbed their tuition fees and related charges.

This is in line with a study by Duflo et al., (2017), whose findings reveal that, the 'free' package in the implementation of the policy comes with interesting reliefs. Apart from cost-free tuition, boarding fees are also absorbed by the government. Textbooks and school uniforms also became a burden for the government. Another respondent (a Proprietor-LES) from another school in the study area, in a similar manner during the interview, said the free senior high education policy by the government means;

All Ghanaian children (BECE graduates) will access senior high school education in Ghana free of charge. The respondent further stated that the policy is meant to remove all cost elements of senior high school education in Ghana.

Another respondent (HOD-WES), in the study area, when interviewed avowed that;

the free senior high school policy is one of the social intervention policies of the government aimed at removing the cost elements of senior high school education for all qualified Ghanaian B.E.C.E. graduates who have been successfully placed in any of the government senior high schools. The respondent maintained that the policy is meant to ensure access, equity, and quality senior high school education for all B.E.C.E. graduates in Ghana, irrespective of social or economic status.

This confirms Anderson's (2011) distributive policy, which seeks to allocate the benefits of society to all or most members of society. To ascertain the validity of the above positions regarding the respondents' knowledge of the policy, the researcher called on the PTA chairman of one of the schools in the study area. When interviewed, the respondent said the free senior high school policy;

is a policy by the government to give senior high school education free to all Ghanaian children who have successfully completed BECE and are placed in any public senior high schools. That is, the state has taken over the cost of senior high school education for all successful BECE graduates.

It is clear that the respondents understand the intent of the free senior high school policy. Even though different expressions were used to explain the concept, they were all able to state what the policy intends to achieve and also differentiate between free education and sponsored education as practiced in some countries. Their positions are also in line with the core objective of the policy, which is to remove the cost barriers to senior high school education, improve access, improve quality educational infrastructure, and foster equity and employable skills development by all JHS graduates, as contained in the launching ceremony speech of the President of Ghana (www.graphic.com.gh, Tuesday, September 12th, 2017).

4.3 Research Questions (1): How has the free senior high school policy influenced the enrolment of the private senior high schools in the Volta region?

4.3.1 The policy on enrolment

The growth and development of every school depend on its ability to continually attract and/or admit students at the beginning of each academic year. The majority of the respondents, thus seven (7), said the free Senior High School policy has negatively affected the enrolment of their schools. According to them, upon the take-off of the

policy, the number of admissions kept falling each academic year. Aside from the decrease in enrolment, admission into Form One (SHS1) also delays a lot. This is because, upon the release of the BECE result by WAEC, parents wait to see or know the placement of their wards before making any alternative decisions. Most often, parents only opt for private schools if their wards are not placed in a school they do not like. One respondent (a proprietor-LES), when interviewed about the effect of the policy on the enrolment of the private senior high schools in the study area, said:

I have been in this sector for the past twelve years, admissions had been smooth, students' population was growing (increasing) year by year but upon the introduction and take-off of the free senior high school policy, we are not getting the numbers again as was the case. Our enrolment is reducing each academic year.

Another respondent, a representative of Conference of Heads of Private Secondary School (CHOPSS) during the interrogation also said;

comparing the 'pre policy and during policy' eras, some private Senior High Schools in the region have their enrolment dropping each academic year. This is based on the complains I receive from the Association's member schools. It therefore suggests that most private senior high schools are feeling the bite of the policy in terms of enrolment.

The researcher called on another respondent (a proprietor-LES) from another school in the study area. When interviewed, this respondent made it known that;

before the policy came to effect, we were getting a lot of students and usually at the beginning of the term and our teaching and learning calendar (that is our academic calendar) was never affected or distorted but upon the introduction of the policy our enrolment is seriously negatively affected. The number is reducing each year.

The case was not different when the researcher wanted to ascertain these claims from other participants. This confirms the above position on the subject under investigation.

The researcher again interviewed another respondent (a teacher-LES) in the study area to see if the response will be different. This respondent during an interview said;

Our students' intake (admission) as a school is steadily falling each year and the future of my investment is not safe. The future of the gains made so far with our investment cannot be guaranteed.

This is a confirmation of the positions of the earlier respondents that the implementation of the policy has affected the enrolment of their schools. By implication, one can suggest that costs (tuition fees and related charges) are barriers to senior high education for most Ghanaian children. This is so because literature proves that enrolment increased in the public senior high schools, where it is free, as opposed to the private senior high schools, where one needs to pay for the cost of the education. For instance, available data in the Ministry of Education shows that upon the rollout of the policy in 2017, enrolment increased in the public SHSs by 17% and 18% in 2017 and 2018, respectively. Meanwhile, during the same period, enrolments in private senior high schools was falling. This affirms the above positions.

However, according to two (2) other respondents, the free senior high school policy has negatively impacted enrolment in their schools, but at the early or initial stages when it was rolled out. They further stated that, with time, the situation started getting normalized.

A thirty-five (35) year old Government teacher, who has been teaching in one of the schools in the study area for over seven (7) years when interviewed, said;

We were frustrated at the initial stages, but we started getting the numbers (admission) after a few years when parents or the public started losing faith in the quality of education in the government or the public Senior High Schools. In fact, we nearly folded up. My proprietor was contemplating selling the school's assets, but no one was willing to buy them at that moment, but when the double track system was introduced in the public schools, things started turning around for good, so the policy affected my school but only at the initial stage.

This was confirmed by another respondent, (a headmaster-LES) from another school. When interviewed, he said;

I was much disturbed at the early stages of the policy's implementation. Admission was very bad and even delayed as parents were waiting to know the placement status of their wards before deciding whether to bring them to private school or not. This has delayed the admission in the school. However, things started changing the following year and now we are getting numbers as used to be.

However, three (3) respondents said the free Senior High School policy implementation has not affected the enrolment of their schools in any way. There is no change in the number of students' populations. According to them, the free senior high school policy is more of a wake-up call for all private senior high school owners and managers to work hard, maintain standards, and deliver quality tuition for better output in order to remain in business.

One respondent a (headmaster-WES) made it known during one-on-one interview that; even though the public senior high schools have become free of charge to the public, we still get the numbers and that we remain a force to reckon with and an option for the public. Our hard work which usually translates into our enviable academic outputs always speak on our behalf to parents and the general public.

This confirms Varghese's (2006) position that private schools need to work hard to maintain high academic standards in order to attract students and parents because when a private school's candidate flops in final examinations, the school's image would be dented and would not be appealing enough to the public for selection. Olorundare (1999) also affirms this position that good academic performance by students and their schools enhances their funding, reorganisation and patronage by stakeholders in education.

This ascertain this claim the researcher visited another participant (a headmaster-WES) in another who has been in the school for nine (9) years. During the interview, respondent made it clear that;

our academic track records over the years and state of infrastructure remain a force and made us an obvious choice to parents and the general public and competitive among all other senior high schools. The policy has not affected or influenced the enrolment of my school in anyway, we still get the students as was the case, things are still normal.

To check the validity of these positions, the researcher went further to a respondent from another school, a head of department (HOD-WES). When interviewed, this respondent (interviewee) also maintained that;

we have positioned ourselves as a school in a way in terms of performance, service delivery and facility that, the policy has not negatively affected us at all. Everything you need for better results at the end of your studies are available and we are taking full advantage of them to give quality tuition to our students.

This is an affirmation of what others have said on the issue: that the implementation of the free senior high school policy had no adverse effect on the enrolment of their schools. This confirms their position that the free senior high school policy has not affected their schools' enrolment. It can be deduced from their positions that academic output and infrastructure are very important for the survival of the private school, as evident in the responses of these participants. However, in general, the enrolment of the majority of senior high schools, or about 70%, is adversely affected by the implementation of the free senior high school policy. The above analysis is shown in the bar graph shown below.

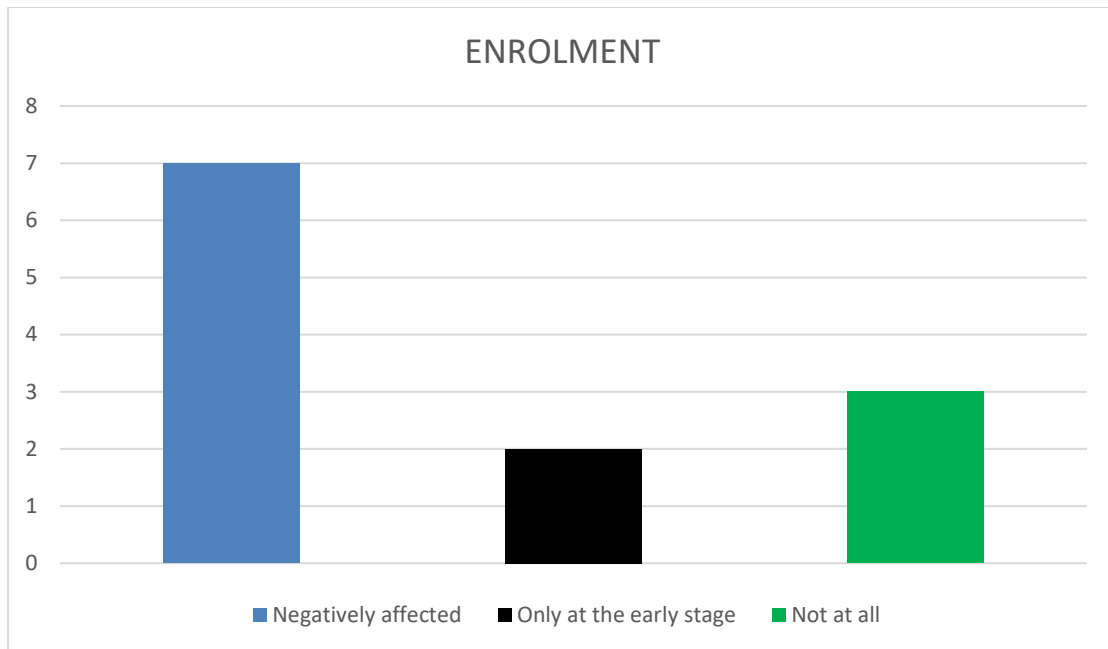


Fig 4.1: A bar graph on the policy and the enrolment of private SHSs

As shown above in figure 4.1, the bars represent the influence of the policy on the enrolment of private schools. The blue colour represents the proportion of schools negatively affected by the free senior high school policy. They are seven (7) out of the total number (12). It is the tallest bar, showing that the majority of the schools' enrolments are affected by the policy and attested to by the participants, as portrayed by the bar chart above. The black colour as shown by the bar graph above, represents those private senior high schools that were negatively affected by the policy, but only at the initial stages of the implementation, and they are two (2) out of twelve (12). The green colour represents the proportion of schools that are not affected at all by the implementation of the free senior high school policy. As shown by the graph above, it constitutes three (3) participants (field data 2022).

4.3.2 The policy and sustainability of private Senior High Schools

The sustainability of a school depends on its ability to continually receive or admit students. That is the enrolment of the school. Since the sustainability of a school

depends on its enrolment, the researcher wants to find out whether the implementation of the policy has jeopardized the sustainability of the private schools. Internal factors such as school's academic performances and external factors such as government's educational policy can determine that. Seven (7) respondents said the implementation of the policy poses a threat to their sustainability. According to them if nothing is done about the policy by the government in supporting the private schools, they are likely to fold up in the near future.

A respondent, (headmistress-LES) said the free senior high school policy makes the future of her school unsafe. When interviewed, the respondent said;

the year-by-year reduction in the students' enrolment poses financial challenges. This is because apart from affecting the income level of the school through enrolment falls, it also narrows our chances of getting loans to run the school especially during vacations. The respondent continued that, the day all BECE graduate will be placed all private schools will close down. This does not make the future safe as a school.

Another respondent a (proprietor-LES), from another school in the study area during an interview contended that;

the enrolment of the school keeps reducing each academic year upon the inception of the free Senior High School policy signalling that the future of the school is threatened as long as the policy is being implemented. The growth, development and sustainability of any school especially private schools depend largely on their ability admit students, so the year-by-year enrolment drops are posing sustainability challenge.

A study by Ohara (2012) cited in Härmä and Adefisayo, (2013) reiterates these claims that, in countries where free and sometimes compulsory education policy is being implemented, citizens do not pay fees to attend public schools, and such schools

become the choice of many parents leaving private schools to grapple with dwindling enrolments.

This establishes the fact that, the implementation of the policy poses sustainability threat to their schools.

Another respondent, a representative of Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A) also during an interview averred that;

the policy poses sustainability challenge to my school because the enrolment keeps dwindling each academic year which is also negatively affecting the income or its sources for school administration since our only source of income is the fee paid by the students''. That is, the continuous drops in the enrolment or numbers of the schools mean the future is not safe. This position proves the earlier assertions on the free senior high school policy and sustainability of some of the private schools in the study area.

The representative of the Conference of the Heads of Private Schools (CHOPSS) within the study area validated the earlier claims when interviewed that;

the policy poses sustainability threats to most of our schools. Looking at the heavy investments we have made, yet the enrolment is a problem. Information from some of our members have shown that, some of the private schools could not admit even up to twenty (20) students in the first year in the 2018/2019 academic year. How can you survive as school with this number, how can you pay your staffs and run administration smoothly amidst this situation? In some cases, the classrooms are virtually empty with tables and chairs lying down.

Two (2) respondents said the policy's threat to their schools was experienced only at the early stages of the policy. Things started changing few years after the policy was rollout. One on these respondents, (a proprietor-LES) from one of the schools in the study area when interviewed on the issue said;

we felt threatened as a school but at the initial stages of the policy's implementation. The early stages of the policy have shown signs of threat and we were scared but with time everything got restored and I can say that, things will be better.

To substantiate above position, the moved to another respondent, (a headmaster-WES) in the study area from another school. This respondent claim that;

when the policy was rolled out, some people were saying that, they will not pay for their wards' education at the private schools when government is providing it free of charge. This indeed affected our numbers in first year of the policy's implementation and I felt scared as a school but with time everything became normal.

However, three (3) respondents said the implementation of the free senior high school policy has not threatened their sustainability. According to them they remain stable, resilient and are bent on providing quality senior high school education to Ghanaians.

This claim is underscored by a respondent (headmaster-WES) during interview that;

the introduction of the free senior high school policy does not pose any danger to their sustainability as a school, we still get numbers as we used to get and everything is still in place. There was a general 'noise' after the rollout of the policy that, private senior high schools were going to collapse and all other scurry comments but almost five (5) years since the inception of the policy, we still exist as a school and doing well in all aspects of academic life.

Another respondent (proprietor-WES) from another in the study in similar way when interviewed also affirmed this position that;

We are in no way disturbed by the free senior high school policy as a school. We still maintain our standards regarding admission, academic performance, facilities among others things, so free Senior High School or not, we are safe and secured as school. We are in this system for over a decade, we understand the nature and dynamics of the system. Challenging moments may come from both the internal or external sources but as an institution, we remain focused and resilient in the pursuit of our goals as a school. Our sustainability as a school is not threaten.

This is in consonant with Olorundare, (1999) position that, good academic performance by students and their schools enhances their patronage by students, parents and other educational stakeholders. By implication, private schools that have good and consistent academic standing and attractive school environment in terms of infrastructure will stand test or threat from both internal and external environments.

By way of confirmation, the researcher interviewed a representative of the Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A) of one of the schools in the study area. In the process of the interview, the respondent emphatically stated that;

the policy has not affected us as a school because everything that we were doing as a school before the implementation of the policy are what we are still doing and I can say the future of the school is safe. He also said during the interview that, once the core objectives of the school which are good academic output and churning out socially fit generation in an academically friendly environment are being met, we will survive as a school.

4.3.3 The policy and the grade of admission into private senior high schools

To a very large extent, the grade or aggregate of a student from the B.E.C.E determines his or her academic success in the secondary and tertiary levels. For this reason, most heads of institutions want to admit the best grades of students in order to facilitate teaching and learning and to produce better grades thereafter. This position is confirmed by study by Babah et al., (2020), that, prior to the introduction of free SHS, heads of very good and endowed schools capriciously and independently set high personal cut-off grade points and admission standards to attract only the exceptionally good and talented students to the detriment of the less brilliant and rural setting students.

However, in the case of private senior high schools many factors influence this. The free senior high school policy is one of such factors. It turned out that the implementation of the Free Senior High School policy has affected the grades or aggregate they admit. Eight (8) respondents supported the claim that, the implementation of the policy has negatively affected the grades they used to admit. They stated further that this is affecting academic work and increasing administrative cost since they have to make extra investment by bringing students with weak grades to a level where they can make impact in their final examinations.

One respondent, (a headmaster-LES) averred during an interview when the researcher called on him to substantiate this claim that;

I have been here for seven years now; previously (before the implementation of the policy) we were admitting good grades or aggregates. We even had a cut-off point for the grades we admit for the various courses we offer in the school which in the long run facilitates classroom works but upon the implementation of the free senior high school policy we cannot maintain these standards of admission. We now admit any grade or aggregate as the situation demands.

Another respondent, (teacher) who also double as an assistant headmaster affirmed this claim. When interviewed, this respondent maintained that;

the grades we admit upon the implementation of the policy are so weak that is affecting our work in the classroom. Some of the first-year students we are admitting now cannot even write well for you to see, read and mark. Can you imagine that, I have to recommend *my first copy book* for S.H.S one (1) students to practice in order to enhance their handwriting? All these things are delaying works in the classroom, (field interview 2022).

This is underscored by Foondun (2002) in Cambodia in his study which reveals that, private schools may be attended by pupil who have weak grades and have not obtained placement in the public system. Again, a study by (Appiah, (2009) on district performance report in Ghana indicates that children especially from the rural areas perform below standard compelling parents to look for places for them in private schools. These studies prove respondents' position on the kind of grades that are usually admitted in most private schools.

The researcher called on another respondent from another school in the study area, (teacher) during an interview the respondent said;

the policy is really biting hard as a school. Now as a school we admit very weak grades, in fact we are just like 'beggars' who have no choice. It is a fact that the grades we used to admit have been affected. So, you can just imagine the kind of work we do to turn these 'weak' grades around for good results in their final W.A.S.S.C.E examinations.

This respondent's submission in a way confirms the position of the earlier respondents on the matter.

A head of department-WES (another respondent) from the study area when interviewed also said;

the policy has presented to us a situation where we have no choice than to admit weak grades knowing well that admitting weak grades have its own attendant implications. However, we turn them around for good result at the end.

The position remains same when the researcher called on the representative of CHOPSS in the study area to ascertain the validity of the earlier positions. According to this respondent,

the policy has left us (the private schools) in a corner where we have no option but to admit any grade which was not the case during the pre-policy eras. The respondent maintained that most of the private schools cannot maintain their cut off point for admission as used to be the case. Meanwhile, academic performance is very crucial for our survival, the respondent lamented.

Another respondent a (head of department) in the study area during an interview with the researcher said;

the free senior high school policy, is a 'barrier breaker' i.e. removing the burdens of educational costs on the parent and guardians, so that have shifted attention from the private schools where you have to pay for the cost of education.

This is confirmed by a study on district performance report in Ghana which indicates that children, especially those from rural areas, perform below standard compelling parents to look for places in private schools (Appiah, 2009). This development tends to suggest that the private schools do not enrol qualified students since the good ones are taken on by the public schools. In the view of Varghese (2006), the academic profile of the participants of private education may be lower as compared to their counterparts in the public institutions. This and other related factors pose a lot of challenges to the

private senior high schools and their operators in attracting and retaining qualified students.

However, four (4) of the respondents said the implementation of the policy has not affected the grades or aggregate that they admit.

A respondent (proprietor) is quoted as

we still maintain our standards i.e. admission into the school is on merit with a cut-off point for the courses we offer. Our track records have made us an obvious choice and internal or external factors do not affect us anyhow.

Another respondent a (headmaster) from another school in the study area substantiates this position during a one-on-one discussion on the said issue. This respondent stated that;

we have policy concerning our admissions and it is purely on merit. Since we are doing well as a school in our final examinations, the results over the years have carved a niche which is working or speaking for us.

This affirms the position of the earlier respondent with regards to as whether the policy has affected grades of admission or not.

One participant (a proprietor) when interviewed on the said issue asserted that;

being a private school, we are careful with our standards no matter the changing external factors. This has positioned us in a way that we get good grades to admit even as the policy is being implemented.

A head of department-WES, one of the respondents when interviewed on the matter under consideration points out that;

the impact of the policy on the grades we admit is negligible and that, it cannot have any meaningful influence on our output owing to the kind of work do with our students. As a school we know how to handle academically 'weak' students to come to the level of good ones for better results.

From the above positions one state that, private schools that have good academic track record and the required facilities are not so badly affected by the policy. This implies

that, there is a close relation between academic output and enrolment in the private schools

4.3.4 Teaching and Learning

About teaching and learning amidst the policy, eight (8) respondents said, teaching and learning have been affected by the implementation of the free senior high school policy. According to them, it is due to wholesome nature of admission into the public senior high schools. This leaves them in a situation where they have to change their admission traditions such as cut-off points as a requirement for some programmes, more contact hours, innovations among others in order to remain balanced.

One respondent, (a headmaster-LES) in the study area when interviewed said;

the aggregates that we start to admit upon the introduction of the policy affect the pace of the teaching and learning. Before the policy we admit up to aggregate twenty (20) for general science but now even up to aggregate thirty (30) we are not getting the numbers. For other programmes we admit even forty and above. This takes much time and energy to turn them around for better result at the final examinations.

A study by Foondun (2002) in Cambodia also reveals that, private schools may be attended by pupil have weak grades and have not obtained placement in the public system. By implication, one can deduce or suggest that, private schools do not enrol or admit qualified students since the good ones are taken on by the public schools.

Another respondent (a proprietor-LES) from another school in the study during the interview session asserts that;

with the introduction of the policy, parents wait to see if their wards are placed in the public senior high school of their choice or not before deciding to send them to the private schools. This delays our admission, teaching and learning (academic calendar). The semester system in the public schools and the trimester system in the private sector are creating problems as it affects admission processes especially in the private schools.

From another school in study area, the researcher called on another respondent a (teacher-LES) to ascertain the validity of the earlier positions. This respondent said;

the implementation of the free senior high school policy has affected teaching and learning in my school. Prior to the introduction of this policy admission into first year is regular and at the beginning of the term but upon the inception of the policy, admissions delay and we do not do any good academic work before the first term ends. The workload is then shifted to second and third terms.

This supports the earlier positions that the policy has affected them. In another school in the study area another respondent (head of department-WES) during interview said;

before the implementation of the policy, we do admissions in the first term but the trend has changed upon the rollout of the policy, now we still do admissions in the second term so classroom works usually suffer in the first terms. This happens because deep in the first term and even in the second term we still admit new students. Being result oriented we have to give equal and special attention to these latecomers in order to achieve our target. This has to do with a lot of commitment, resources among others unlike the issue during the pre-policy eras.

Again, another respondent, (proprietor-LES) in same vein from another school in the study area during interrogation on the said issue also endorsed this stance that;

apart from the delayed admissions the 'materials' (the grades of students) we admit are weak and it negatively affecting the pace at which teaching and learning flows, in the class teachers have to be as slow as possible in order to carry the weak ones along to understand and appreciate the concepts and be able to make meanings.

Four (4) respondents however said the implementation of the policy has no impact on the teaching and learning in their schools. According to them, teaching and learning practices of their schools are still maintained.

One respondent, (a proprietor-WES) in the study area confirmed this position when interviewed. According to this respondent;

nothing has changed in my school concerning teaching and learning. This is because our admission standards still hold and working even though the policy is being implemented. We believe in quality as against quantity.

This claim was confirmed one-on-one discussion on how the policy has affected teaching and learning in the private senior high schools by another respondent, (headmaster-WES) from another school also within the study area. He said during the interview that;

our long-standing academic track record has made it that admissions and its related issues are not affected and so once the inputs are good the outputs are also usually good.

One can infer from these positions that; performance is important to private senior high schools to guarantee their sustainability.

Again, another respondent (teacher-WES) affirmed the claim. When he was interviewed, he said;

as a school we still stand, and everything remain same and effective.

Yet another participant, (a teacher-LES) when interviewed on whether the free senior high school policy has affected teaching and learning in his, he said during the interview that;

the implementation of the free senior high school policy has no serious effect on the teaching and learning in her school. She again said, everything is almost the same as was the case in the pre-policy eras.

This underscored the position that the free senior high school policy has not affected the teaching and learning in their schools.

4.3.5 The policy and academic performance in private SHSs

Academic performance is one key factor that sustains and determines the growth rate of private schools. This research question seeks to investigate and come out with finding(s) whether the policy has affected the academic performance of the private Senior High Schools. It is found out from the field that seven (7) respondents still

maintain or even improve their academic performance and that policy has no effect on the academic output of the school in spite of changing factors.

One participant (a proprietor-WES) when interviewed said;

as private school, we are keen on standards no matter changing government policies. Even though we do not admit very good grades with the introduction of the free senior high school policy, as the case is for some public schools we work hard to turn these grades around to equally good and even in most cases better than their counterparts in the public schools.

Another respondent, (a headmaster-WES) from another school in the study area also during interview on same issue confirmed the position by saying that;

as private sector players, we never play with academic performance as it is the surest way to remain in business, even if we admit weak grades, we work very hard on them to produce good results which is our trademark.

The emerging trend here is that private schools see output, i.e. academic performance as the core pillar that can keep them in business. So, no matter the material (the grade) admitted, they try to work hard on them for better output to make them attractive and appealing to the public. This again shows the importance of academic work to private schools as reaffirmed by Varghese (2006) that, when private school students perform poorly in their final examinations, the patronage of the school is negatively affected. Meanwhile, failure to attract and retain more students would lead to its collapse.

Again, another respondent, a (teacher-LES) in the study area points out that;

the policy has not affected the academic performance, as a private school the main thing that keeps you going is academic performance, here, we are passionate about teaching. We give special attention to ‘weak’ ones for them also to follow lessons in the classroom very well, so right from the first year we groom our students for better results.

This position affirms the earlier submissions on the subject.

Powell et al, (2008) confirm this position that private schools have environments that are particularly conducive to the improvement of even average students. Sernua (2007)

also contends that private schooling provides excellent instruction that guarantees high levels of academic performance.

One respondent from another school in the study area (head of department-WES) during an interview to test the validity of the earlier position, contended that;

the implementation of the free senior high school policy has no effect on the academic performance of my school. He said as a school we are still producing good results at the end of each academic year at the W.A.S.S.C.E. level even though there are some changes in the crop of grades we admit upon the introduction of the policy.

This assertion is confirmed by another respondent, (a proprietor-LES) from another school in the study area. He said during an interview that,

the policy has not changed anything as far as our academic outputs are concerned. We are still producing excellent grades as used to be the case. It is all about hard work and passion for the work.

Another respondent, a representative parent teacher association (P.T.A) who is one of the respondents opined during the interview that;

as for my school (where I serve in the capacity of PTA chairman) and to the best of my knowledge, our students still come out with flying colours in all West African Secondary School Certificate Examinations (W.A.S.S.C.E.). This is due to the kind of training teachers give them''. That is, we still maintain our standards as far as the academic out puts are concerned

However, five (5) respondents said the policy has affected the academic performance of the schools. According to them, the policy has left them in a situation where they have no choice but to admit any kind of grade or aggregate since, "garbage-in" goes with "garbage-out" (GIGO).

One respondent a headmaster-LES when asked said;

the crop of grades we started admitting upon the introduction of the policy makes it very difficult if not impossible to maintain our academic standards. We work on them very well but most often we could not meet our target as a private school considering the competitive nature of the environment.

This is affirmed by another respondent from another school in the study area (a proprietor-LES) who during an interview maintained that;

some of the B.E.C.E graduates we admit of late cannot even write well. It takes time and difficulty to prepare them for better grades at the West African Secondary School Certificate Examinations (W.A.S.S.C.E) level unlike before the policy where we even have criteria or standards for the admission (i.e. course specific cut-off point)

By way of ensuring reliability, the researcher called on another respondent (an assistant headmaster-LES) in another school in the study who is also a teacher. In the course of the interview, the respondent said;

the policy has affected our enrolment so we admit students with very weak aggregate or grades from B.E.C.E., this requires a lot of time and efforts to prepare them for better results at the W.A.S.S.C.E. level. This eventually somehow affects our performance as against the case at the pre policy eras

To have a clearer understanding of the issue and by confirming the aforementioned positions, the researcher called one respondent, a representative of Conference of Heads of Private Senior High Schools (CHOPSS). In the course of the interview, this respondent states that;

most of our members have been complaining about the academic performance of their schools upon the introduction of the policy. It is due to the fact that policy has affected the grades or aggregates that the private schools used to admit. The policy has cornered the private schools in a way that they have to admit very weak grades to augment the enrolment in order to get necessary funds to run the school which in the end affect outputs of these schools.

This submission has endorsed the positions of the earlier respondent interviewed on the matter. With regards to academic performance, even though most of the schools have been negatively affected, they seem to have a way to handle the situation. They all stressed hard work or extra commitment to turn around the 'weak' ones for better results

4.4 Research Question Two (2): What effect has the policy on the income of the private Senior High Schools in the region?

4.4.1 The policy and income of private SHSs

Private schools depend mainly on fees collected from students as income to pay salaries for the staff, provide infrastructure, and carry out general administrative and management functions. This is so because in many developing countries like Ghana, most private institutions depend solely on their internally generated funds for physical structural provision and administrative expenses, so anything that affects this income source usually has a toll on their general growth and development. On income of the private senior high schools, the introduction of the free senior high school policy, four developments have emerged.

Eight (8) respondents said the policy has negatively affected their income or sources of income. According to them, tuition fees and related charges paid by the students are their main source of income. For that matter, as students' population start to reduce as a result of the implementation of the free senior high school policy, their income level and or its source also reduces.

One respondent, a Head of Department (HOD-LES) who has been in the school for over ten (10) years when interviewed said;

Our only source of funding for the running of the school is the tuition fees and related charges which are relative to the enrolment, so as enrolment reduces the sources and the income also reduce. That is, anything that affects the enrolment negatively automatically affects the income of their schools.

This is confirmed by Varghese, (2006), that, school fees (tuition fees) form the main source of income of many private schools. They are paid by parents for the education of their ward.

Another respondent in the study area (a headmaster-LES) from another school, during an interview note that;

before the introduction of the policy, our source of income was not limited to fees we collect from the students, we easily accessed loan facilities from the banks and other financial institutions as they were sure of repayment but upon the introduction of the policy and our enrolment started going down, these banks and financial institutions are no more willing to help us with these loan facilities. Meanwhile we need them so much especially at the beginning of the term to run the school before fees are collected. That is apart from reducing our income through enrolment reduction, it also limited our ability to borrow from external sources.

Noddings, (2015), confirms that most financial institutions who otherwise would have granted loan facilities to private schools to support their existence are usually unwilling to grant such services. The reason being that most of these schools may not be able to pay back the said loan facilities or do so on time. That is the fear of non-payment. Some of these schools subsequently collapsed in the process. This in the long run makes some of the private schools less attractive to parents and candidates to patronise.

Again, most private schools have limited avenues for alternative revenue mobilization because they rely primarily on school fees to offset running cost. However, there are few that get some income from people who rent their infrastructure for social activities but the income is often not enough to be considered financial salvage Yongdong, (2004), as cited in Akangbou, (2015) also confirms that the financial institutions are usually unwilling to give loans and other credit facilities to schools due to long periods of repayment, high administrative costs and low recovery rate. That is most of these banks, especially the state-owned ones, have become very selective in providing these financial services. This confirms (Akangbou, 2015) position that the financial institutions are unwilling to give loans to schools due to repayment challenges with the state-owned banks becoming very selective in providing these financial services.

In similar vein another participant (a proprietor-LES) also underscored this position when interviewed saying;

I have been in this as the proprietor since 2008, I run the school solely with funds I generate internally i.e. fees charged for tuition and related ones. When the enrolment increases, income generated also increases and when enrolment falls the income generated also falls.

It is clear from the narration that these schools have their survival depending on their ability to admit students. Onifade, (1999) in a similar study confirmed this position that, the inability of school authorities to acquire ample funds to run their schools results in abysmally poor teaching and learning.

Another respondent from another school in the study (teacher-LES), when interviewed on the subject averred that;

As a school, we depend on our numbers for income to run the school. So as enrolment comes down, income level also comes down proportionately.

This underscores the responses that earlier respondent have put forward on the matter under investigation.

Again, the researcher visited another respondent, a head of department (HOD-WES) to see if the response will differ from that earlier respondent with regards to the subject matter. This respondent said;

yes, our income is affected negatively, and it because, the source of it is also negatively affected

Two (2) respondents said the free senior high school policy has affected their income but at the initial stage of its implementation.

One (1) of the participants (headmaster-WES) said the income of the school was affected at initial stage of the policy. The respondent furthered that;

every government policy or issue always draws public attention at the initial stages, so when the policy was rolled out everybody wants experience it and so many parents send their wards to public senior high school where it is free. But with time they started losing faith in the quality due to litany of challenges as

result of the policy. I experienced a fall in income as result of reduction in the enrolment in the first-two years of the policy's implementation. After that, the situation became normal

Another respondent (a teacher-WES) from one of the schools during an interview on the policy's effect on the income of the school said;

I have been teaching here for eight (8) years now and my salary and other allowances come on time. Just that at the initial stage of the implementation of the free senior high school policy, enrolment was partly negatively affected and that influenced our income but things got restored the following year. and even during Covid19, we still received my salaries in full.

However, two (2) other respondents said the implementation of the free senior high school policy has not affected the income level of their schools (institutions) even though they do not have any external financial support. They said their long-standing academic track record and the state of existing facilities for better teaching and learning are what is keeping them going all this while.

A respondent (proprietor-WES) from one of the schools during interrogation on the said topic said;

as private school, we are bent on maintaining high standards regardless of changing government policies and this is what is sustaining us since establishment of this school. Even though as a school there is no external source of income, we are financially stable, we have the numbers from which we generate the income and we are always fiscally disciplined.

This is underscored in a study by Olorundare (1999) who asserts that good academic performance by students and their schools enhances their funding, reorganisation and patronage by stakeholders of education.

The response on the position were not different when the researcher called on another respondent (proprietor-LES) from one of the schools in the study area. In the course of the interview the respondent said;

as a school, we do not have any financial support apart from what we generate from the school internally, but the results we chain out each year makes it possible for us to have a lot of students. We also always work within our income, so I can say we are financially independent as a school.

This underscores the earlier claims of financial stability although there is no external financial support. This means that internally generated funds which are relative to the enrolment are very important to these schools. This affirms Karikari-Ababio (1999) position which identifies internally generated funds (IGF) as one of the major sources of secondary schools' budget in Ghana. A study by Nathan, (2000) also realised the relevance of the internally generated funds to schools and charges the private school management to be responsible to their needs and new financing. Against this background Committee for Review of Education Reform (2002) charges boards of secondary schools to find innovative ways of securing funds to support their schools.

The summary of data above on the policy and income of the private senior high schools is represented by the bar chart below.

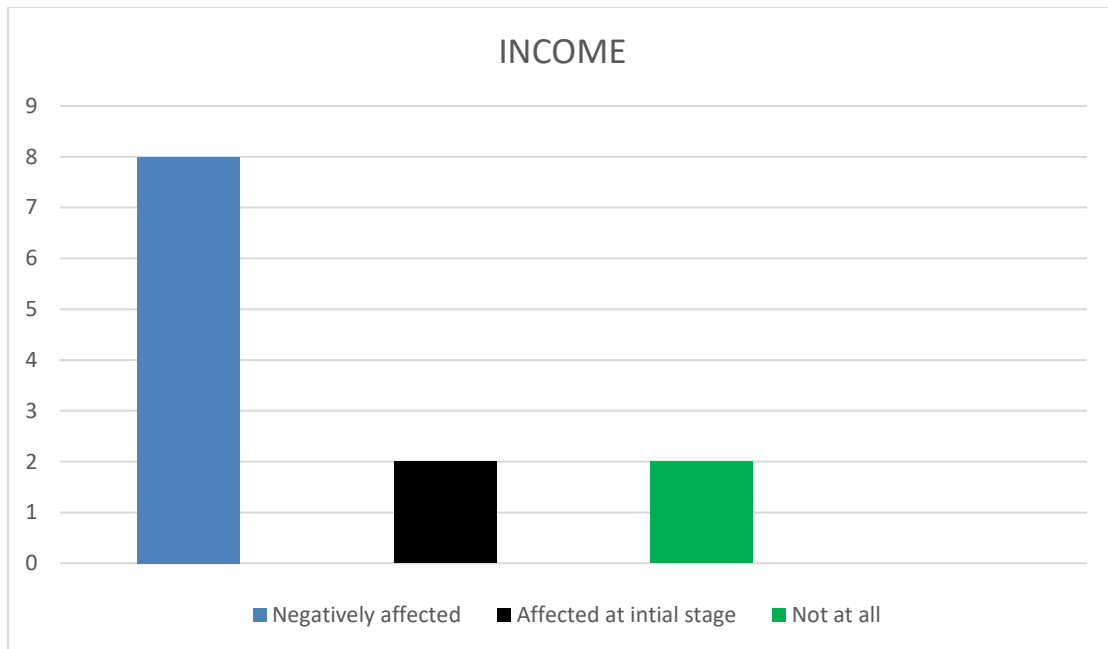


Figure 4.2: Bar graph showing the effect of the policy on the income of the private SHSs

The blue bar (colour) represent the respondents affected by the free senior high school policy which is eight (8) out of twelve (12). They form majority, that is eight (8) out of the twelve (12) respondents. The green colour represents those whose incomes have not been affected at all by the policy in anyway. They are two (2) out of the twelve (12) participants. The black colour represents those whose incomes are affected but only at initial stage. They are two (2) out of the twelve (12) respondent.

4.4.2 External source of fund

On external source(s) of funding the private schools, ten (10) respondents said they do not have any external source of funding their schools. They depend solely on the income generated from the tuition fees and related charges internally. This means that anything that affect the enrolment of the school which is the determinant of the income of the school greatly affect these schools. It means the survival of these schools depend on the external environmental factors such as government policy on education, inflation, cost of living among others.

One respondent, a teacher said;

we do not have any external source of income; we depend only on the tuition fees and related charges for running the school.

Another respondent, (a headmaster-LES) when interviewed said that;

as a school we do not have any external source of income or support, we do everything as a school within the income we generate internally thus from the tuition and related charges.

In another school within the study area when the researcher interviewed another participant, (a proprietor-LES) on the issue the response was the same as what the earlier respondents said. This respondent said;

no, as a school we depend solely on the income we generate from the school through the school fees paid by the students.

This stressed the position of earlier respondents on the matter, that external support services being from the government or any other sources are not available for most private schools in the study area.

Again, another respondent (head of department-LES) from another school in the study area during an interview to ascertain the authenticity of earlier claims with researcher posits that;

we do not have any other source of income apart from what we generate from the tuition and other minor charges. This comes mainly from the students we have.

In yet another school, a respondent Parent Teacher Association (PTA) representative when interviewed mentioned that;

to the best of my knowledge my school has no external source of income apart from the fees and related charges that students pay. That is why we are as a school, interested in issues that concern our enrolment.

When the researcher called on the CHOPSS' representative in the study area on the external supports for the schools, the respond was that;

almost all private schools here depend on the incomes they generate locally (i.e. the tuition fees and related charges). Even my school depends solely on what we are able to generate from the tuition and related charges. I am aware one or two private schools have some forms support but that will be less than ten per cent (10%) of the number. Even most of the private schools do not have vibrant old students' association as the case maybe in the public schools with regards to their supports. So, most of us are in a situation which I describe as 'operation feed yourself.'

Inferring from the responses from participants with regards to external financial support for the private senior high schools in the study area, it can be suggested that most of the schools do depend on what they are able to generate within. There is no external support from either the government or any other source(s). These positions are confirmed by a study by (Akrofi, 2002) which indicates that, in Ghana, government does not support private schools financially. He furthered that; private school owners provide a large chunk of the money the institution needs for effective implementation of their programmes. This mostly creates a situation for these private schools to become financially constrained.

However, two (2) respondents said, they have external sources of funding their schools. They said these supports do not come from the government. They however said, although these opportunities are there for them, donors are very passionate about value. So, as a school your ability to continue getting the support depends on your performance. The donors monitor the usage of the funds or donations.

One respondent, (a headmaster-WES) said;

we have NGOs from USA that support the school financially. Such assistance helps in paying extra duty allowances, motivation for outstanding performance, building of infrastructure like the classroom blocks, supporting students out

programmes, sports among others. In furtherance, the respondent said these supports have been very helpful especially during the covid19 period.

Another respondent (a teacher-WES), during an interview session affirmed the earlier position that;

during Covid19 we still received our salaries in full and on the time due to the financial support from the external sources (philanthropists from Canada). Some of our students also benefit from these external supports in form of full or bursary scholarships usually the needy but brilliant ones. The respondent again said had it not the support from these philanthropists the school would have been facing a lot of challenges.

These supports have been since 2003 before I got my appointment eight (8) years ago as my employer briefed me upon my arrival. This makes it possible for us to pay our staffs very well from the tuition fees and do other things.

4.5 Research Question three (3): How has the policy affected the administration of private Senior High Schools within the region?

4.5.1 The policy and Management and Administration

School management or administration is very crucial to the overall performance of the school. On the free senior high school policy and private senior high schools, ten (10) respondents said the implementation of the free Senior High School policy has affected the administration of their schools. They said the introduction of the policy has necessitated the need to step up our administrative efforts amidst rising administrative cost to keep afloat. The policy has called for dynamism, a new way of doing things with its related issues to keep afloat on the market.

One respondent, (Proprietor-LES) during an interview on the said issue said;

the free senior high school policy has changed the administrative narratives, administrative costs and related issues have increased upon the introduction of the policy. We have to introduce a lot of new things, rebrand our products very

well to catch public attention in order to keep hopes alive all at costs unlike before the policy amidst rising cost of living and inflation. He said school management or administration is very important to the growth and development of the school because that is where major decisions are taken which influence the general school activities. We are therefore forced to over stretch our limited resources to get things done well.

Nodding (2015) confirms this position in his study which reveals that rising cost of management is one of the major issues hampering private school's management in recent times. In cases where the level of administrative cost increases, these increments are usually transferred to parents through the increment of fees and parents who cannot afford this may withdraw their wards which also affect enrolment and for that matter the income of the school.

Another respondent a (teacher-LES) from another school in the study area when the researcher called on him on the subject matter, said;

the policy has affected our alternative sources of income in running the school especially at the beginning of term and vacation when fees are not collected. The policy's effect on our enrolment means our repayment on time is not certain when indeed we need these supports for effective running of the school during these periods

This position supports the position of the earlier respondents on the subject under investigation. A testament to this is a study by (Akangbou, 2015) which reveals that, due to delays in payment and unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of the schools (i.e. private schools) financial institutions are unwilling to give loan and other facilities to these schools.

In order to corroborate the earlier claims, the researcher went to another respondent from another school also in the study area a (head of department). This respondent the states that;

the free senior high school policy has taken a toll on the management and administration of my school because it affects our source of income and is

making it difficult to adequately provide the necessary logistics for effective academic activities. Meanwhile these things are required for a meaningful academic activity and output especially as a private school.

Again, the researcher went on to the representative of Conference of Heads of Private Secondary Schools (CHOPSS) (respondent) to solicit and also to ascertain the claims.

In the course of the interview on the said issue the respondent said;

majority of our members are complaining that it has become difficult to maintain quality and standard school management and administrative practices upon the implementation of the free senior high school policy since it affects the income source of the schools by reducing the enrolment of the schools. Most of our members depend solely on the tuition fees to manage their schools. So, anything that limits the enrolment opportunities will automatically affect their income and for that matter the administration of the school. The enrolment, income and administration are interconnected and depend on each other.

In similar manner, another respondent (a headmaster-LES) from another school during an interview on the topic maintained that;

the policy has changed the administrative practices in his school, because before the policy there were things we were not doing, but upon the introduction of the policy, we have to introduce a lot of new strategies including publicity in order to survive which all come at a cost.

A government teacher from one of the less-endowed schools in similar way averred during the interrogation on the said subject that;

unlike the pre-policy era, now we have to work extra hard as a school to continue producing very good results amidst the falling income level to remain an option for the public alongside the free system in the public system.

We need to maintain our staff, motivate them well for maximum output and to do a lot of publicity at high cost to keep operating.

Two (2) respondents said the implementation of the free SHS policy has not changed or affected the management or administration of their schools.

One respondent (proprietor-WES) during an interview said,

I have been in this system for the past sixteen (16) years. We have been very resilient and have not been shaken by the free Senior High School policy. Even before the free SHS policy, there was the introduction of Computerised School Selection and Placement System (CSSPS), which excluded the private schools, but we continue to manage till now. We still maintain effective administrative practices. It is all about hard work and delivering the expected results.

In another school from the study area, a respondent (head of department-WES) during an interview to corroborate the above positions, the respondent mentioned that;

as a school the policy has not affected our school management and administration, our management and administrative processes and practices remain same and effective as it had been even before the policy. As a representative of the parent-teacher association, I keep close relation with the school authority, monitor happenings in the school regularly and offer help where necessary. So, too I can tell you that, we are alright as school.

4.5.2 Staff retention and calibre

Teachers remain key players in the educational sector. The calibre and duration of their stay in school greatly influence academic work. The ability of a school to employ and maintain or retain the staff for a reasonably long period helps produce good results. Hallak (2012) confirms this that the quality of any educational system depends on the quality of teaching staff. They are responsible for helping students to acquire relevant knowledge and development of abilities and skills.

Eight (8) respondents said the implementation of the policy has not affected staff retention of their school. All staff remains with us. On the rank of the staff, respondent said all our teaching staff hold a minimum of a first degree in the various fields related to subjects they teach. A good number of them have also have education background. One participant, (a proprietor-WES) contended at the time the researcher visited the school that;

we pay our staff very well just like those in the public sectors, we pay SNIT and other taxes for them, we give study leave with support, so our staffs are comfortable.

Another respondent (Headmaster-LES) from another school when interviewed, said;

my staff work hard and the school also pays them well and motivate them so they are okay with the system. He said, all the teaching staffs are also holding a minimum of first degree and some with education background.

The claim was underscored the response of the first respondent on the issue under consideration.

In another school, a respondent, (headmaster-WES) during interrogation on the matter, was of the view that;

our long-standing academic track records make it possible for us to attract and retain qualified teachers for better output. Aside their wages we also give on the job training to make them more efficient, so the policy has not affected the calibre and retention of my staffs as a school.

Also, another respondent (head of department-WES) in her submissions on the subject during interview states that;

we are paid well here, in fact, our wages are almost the same as those in the government sector. Salaries come on time and regularly, SNIT is paid for us, so we satisfied, of course all of us teaching here graduates just like those at the public sector. Our extra-duty allowances also come regularly

This means that when a school retains its staff for a reasonably long time period, it aids in yielding good academic output. This is so because every teacher has his or her own approach to delivery in the classroom usually depending on the grade of students available. Students also take time to adjust and adapt to teacher. That is both the students and the teachers try to understand each-others' style, strength and weaknesses for maximum output.

However, four (4) respondents said the policy has affected staff retention in their schools.

In one of the schools, one respondent (headmaster-LES) said during an interview when the researcher called on him that;

when the policy was rolled out, more teachers were needed at the public senior high schools. Most of our staff took advantage of it and left. This created a temporal of vacuum in the classroom for some time before we filled them. This even happens because we need the best for our students implying that time is needed to select the best for the desired output.

This supports the view of Kacmar et al, (1999) who indicated that every organization needs to recruit in order to grow and replace those who leave.

Another respondent, (a proprietor1-LES) from another school also confirms this position an interview said;

even though as a school we employ a minimum of first degree especially the teaching staff, we still spend money and the time to train them on the job because we always want the best for our students. But after giving them these on-the-job training which prepares them for quality service delivery and maximum output, they leave for greener pastures with the least opportunity. The situation becomes more pronounced when the free senior high school policy was rollout.

This is a confirmation by Lassibille, et al (2000) that private providers of secondary education need to organize initial lengthy training for their teachers. This stems from the fact that most private secondary school owners do not necessarily employ professional teacher due to their financial constraints.

In same vein, another respondent (head of department-LES) who doubles as a teacher from another school in the study area emphasized this position when he was interviewed. The respondent maintained that;

the free senior high school policy has changed the administrative narratives, administrative costs and related issues have increased upon the introduction of the policy. He said as result of the falling income, retaining staff for a long time is challenged. The increasing cost of living in the country now means salaries needs to be increased and in cases where this has not happened, retaining a staff for long time is affected.

Odedeyi and Onifade (1998) in their studies affirmed that, heads of private institutions need to give administrative support to their staff members to enhance their professional development.

The representative of Conference of Heads of Private Secondary Schools (CHOPSS) also confirms to the researcher during an interview that;

upon the rollout of the free senior high school education programme, some of my colleagues are complaining of high staff attrition. When asked of the reason, he said, it is the sustainability challenges posed to the private schools by the policy. Everybody needs a secured job, so teachers started running to where they feel the job is secured just over the smallest opportunity, he said, (field data, 2022)

4.5.3 Private Schools engagement and suggestion on the policy

Adequate and quality secondary schools for Ghanaian children cannot be borne by government alone. There is the need for government to collaborate with the private sector players to make it a reality. This can happen by engaging the private sector in the decision-making stage of the provision of the education or implementation of government's educational policies. That is collaboration. On whether they were ready to accept government engagement on the policy, all respondents said they are ready to collaborate with the government and allow for their inclusion in the policy.

They said they are ready to meet government, to discuss and agree on terms and conditions to be included in the policy as partners. According to them, they have the facilities and, in some areas, more than that of some public senior high schools to accommodate students.

One respondent, (a proprietor-LES) said during an interview that;

government should not see us (the private sector providers of secondary education) as competitors but as partners and help create a levelled playing field for the benefit all Ghanaian children. He further said education is the only product that affects every aspect of human life and society and quality should

not be sacrificed on the altar of quantity in its production hence the need for public private partnership or collaboration in its provision and on merit.

Another respondent (headmaster-LES) from another school in the study area during an interview said;

government engagement with the private school owners will help to understand realities there and ways to ensure collective efforts to providing education to Ghanaians. There was no engagement between the government and private school owners with regards to their inclusion in the policy.

Again, another respondent (proprietor-WES) in the process of interview by the researcher note that;

engagement of private schools would have been of help to the education sector as a country because, if the quality of education is tampered with, it puts the future of the nation on a time bomb, since education affects all other sectors of the country. As a school we have been engaged in anyway by the government.

When the researcher called on another respondent (headmaster-WES) from another school the respondent's the position during the interview was that;

if government had solicited our views before the implementation of the policy, we would have reached an agreement because we are all just working to help government achieve its educational objectives.

This also affirms the responses by other respondents on government's engagement of the private schools prior to the introduction of the policy.

When the researcher called another respondent representative of Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A) from one of the schools in the study area, the response during the interview was that;

if government had engaged us I would have called for a cut-off point grade or aggregate that will qualify someone to benefit, i.e. it should be on merit to ensure an equal playing field for all.

Again, another respondent (head of department-WES) in the study area when the researcher visited the school with the aim of ascertaining the facts regarding the issue said;

government did not consult us as a school before the implementation. If there was responds by the government, we would have reached a positive agreement, after all it is about the education of our own children.

This respondent's view also reiterated the points stated by earlier respondents on the matter. The above positions of the other participants on whether government consulted the private school owners as partners in the sector prior to the implementation of the policy, were substantiated by a representative of the researcher interviewed the representative of representative of Conference of Heads of Private Secondary Schools (CHOPSS). The respondent noted that;

government has not engaged us as partners in the sector. We were not involved in this policy in any way. We know the policy has a good intention for Ghanaian children and so we are ready to listen and assist government to meet that goal but we were not consulted. We rather wrote to government through ministry of Education, through our association, Conference of Heads of Private Secondary School (CHOPSS) to meet government and discuss the ways forward as private schools but all these efforts yield no positive result, (field data, 2022).

It can be inferred based on the responses from the field that, there was no consult did not the private schools prior to the implementation of the policy.

4.5.4 Absorption of the Private schools:

All respondents said government and its agencies did not consult them for the discussions on including or absorbing their school in the policy. On whether they would agree or not, all respondents said if they had been consulted, they would have discussed and agreed on their inclusion or absorption in the policy.

One respondent a (headmaster-WES) said,

Even though the implementation of the policy did not affect us in any way we would have agreed if the government had made the move to engage or include us in the policy. We are partners in the sector and we are not in competition with the government. We are even expecting government support us as the case is in countries such as Chile, Netherlands, Sri Lanka among others where the state even pay tuition fees for students in privately owned schools.

Another respondent, (a proprietor-LES) from another school affirmed this claim when he was interviewed. The respondent said,

we are even ready to come to terms with government; if our fees charge is not same as what government is paying for each student in the public schools, we can meet each other in a way. He said it is all about the education of our own children.

This position was supported by another respondent, a proprietor from another school within the study area during interview that;

if government had consulted me on the inclusion of my school in the policy, I would have agreed after coming to terms, after all I have a lot of facilities such as classrooms, dormitories, library among others that can accommodate many students. I am ready for such calls from the government.

Again, another respondent, an (assistant headmaster) who doubles as a teacher also stressed this stance during an interview. According to him;

if government had engaged me on the absorption or inclusion of my school in the policy, I would have agreed. Yes, of course I know what government is paying for each student in the public senior high schools. Available information shows that, government's expenditure per student in the public senior high schools is even more than what most us (the private school owners) charge per student as a school.

To ascertain the above positions by the respondents, the researcher called on the representative Conference of Heads of Private Secondary Schools (CHOPSS) to know whether there was any engagement by government on absorbing their schools. The respondent said;

I have not been consulted by any government official or any of its agencies to that effect. I have also not received any information from my colleagues in that regard. In fact, as an association we (CHOPSS executives) made the attempt but we were not given the attention.

In same way, when the researcher visited another respondent (a teacher-WES) in the study area to know whether there was any consultation by any government or any of its

agencies in connection with the absorption of the private senior high schools, the response was that;

to the best of my knowledge, there was no such move or action and even if it will maybe in the coming years. For now, I think the focus is on public senior high schools.

This confirms the position of other respondents interviewed earlier on the issues of absorption and inclusion of the private schools in the policy. It can be deduced that majority of the private schools are ready to partner government meet its educational objective.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented the analysis of the data collected from the field. It was carried out considering the objectives of the study. The data have been well analysed and discussed by the researcher to find answers to the questions under investigation. It revealed that when enrolment of the private schools reduces their income also reduces. This reduction in enrolment and income of the Private SHSs negatively affect or influence the administration of the schools. This is because administration entails a lot of thing all of which have to with finance. The summary of the findings, conclusions of the study and recommendations are discussed in the next (last) chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the research findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Chapter one (1) lays the foundations of the arguments of the study, presenting the issues (problems) from global, continental, national, and local fronts. It identifies the écart in the existing scholarly works on the topic. It also discussed the objectives, research questions, significance, and organization of the study. Chapter two (2) reviews related literature and the theory underpinning the study. Chapter three (3) focused on the methodology. Chapter four (4) focused on the presentation of data, analysis, and their discussions. The fourth chapter puts the entire study in a way that reflects the realities or happenings in the setting. Chapter five (5) dealt with a summary of the research findings, a conclusion, and recommendations.

5.1 Main findings of the study

The study sought to investigate three (3) specific objectives. They include; assessing the influence of the policy on the enrolment of the private senior high schools in the Volta Region, ascertaining the policy's effect on the income of the private senior high schools in the Volta Region, and assessing how the policy has affected the administration of the private senior high schools in the Volta Region. The findings of the research are as follows;

5.1.2 Question one (1): How has the free Senior High School policy influenced the enrolment of the private Senior High Schools in the Volta region?

- i. It is revealed that the policy negatively affected the enrolment of majority of the private Senior High Schools in the study area. This is confirmed by the

responses of the respondents from the data collected from the field. It is shown from the responses that seven (7) respondents said the policy has negatively affected the enrolment of their schools. Two (2) other respondents also said the rollout of the policy negatively affected them at the early stages of the policy, while three (3) said they have not been affected by the policy.

- ii. The study also revealed that due to the impact of the policy on the enrolments of the private schools, the grade of admission of the majority of the private schools is negatively affected. This happened because the schools need the numbers to survive and so they end up admitting students with any kind of grades. Eight (8) respondents out of the twelve (12) said the implementation of the policy has negatively affected the grades they used to admit. They said it is affecting academic work and increasing administrative cost bringing students with weak grades to a level where they can successfully write their final examinations.
- iii. About teaching and learning in the private SHSs with the introduction of the policy, eight (8) respondents stated that teaching and learning have been affected by the implementation of the free senior high school policy. They said wholesome nature of admission into the public senior high schools has negatively affected the number, quality and timing of their admission.
- iv. Concerning the policy and academic performance, the study revealed that majority of the private schools, i.e. eight (8) out of the twelve (12) respondents said the implementation of the free senior high school policy has negatively affected the academic output of the schools. They said this was as a result of the kind of grades they started to admit upon the rollout of the policy. This was based on the responses from the field.

- v. Again, as a trickle-down effect, the study finds out that the policy imperilled (i.e. sustainability) the future of most of the private Senior High Schools, i.e. seven (7) out of the twelve (12) in the Volta Region. For this reason, all respondents called for their inclusion in the policy and or the government introducing a merit system (cut-off point) to its access. The wholesale admission, they said, apart from leading to the collapse of most private Senior High Schools was also affecting the results of most private schools since all B.E.C.E. graduates are placed. This position was confirmed by the respondents based on the data collected.

5.1.3 Question Two (2): Has the policy affected the income of the private SHSs in the Volta region?

- i. On income, the study revealed that the policy has negatively affected the income levels of the schools. Eight (8) respondents confirmed that the policy has negatively affected their income for school management. Two (2) respondents said policy has not affected the income of their school while two (2) said the policy affected their income but only at the initial stage.
- ii. The study again revealed that majority of the private senior high schools in the study area, ten (10) out of the twelve (12), do not have any financial support apart from what they generate internally through the tuition fees and related charges. Field data confirmed this position.

5.1.4 Question three (3): How has the policy affected the administration of private SHSs in the Volta region?

- i. On the administration and management, it was made known by the study that majority of the Private Senior High Schools are negatively affected by the

policy in terms of administration and overall school management. This was revealed by the respondents during data collection. They agreed that the policy has changed the administrative cost, processes among others since extra commitment has to be done in order to survive as a private school.

- ii. On staff calibre and retention, the study revealed that majority i.e. ten (10) out of twelve (12) of the private schools are not negatively affected. This was made known during the data collection process in the field.
- iii. Again, the study revealed that government has not consulted the private school owners in the study area on whether or not government should absorb them or include them in the free senior high school policy. Responses from the field point to the fact that there was no engagement between government and the private school owners in the study area to that effect as all respondents said there were no such discussions with the government.
- iv. The study revealed that, the government has not factored in the private sector players in the rollout of the free Senior High School policy. That is there was no collaboration (discussion) between the government and private Senior High School (private sector players or stakeholders) owners regarding the processes and implementation of the policy. This was corroborated using the responses of interview where all the respondents said they were not consulted or engaged on issue of absorption by the government prior to the implementation of the policy.
- v. It is also revealed from the study that, most of the Private Senior High Schools that are affected by the free SHS policy include those that are less-endowed per the classification and those that do not have any financial support. This is based on the responses from the field

- vi. Finally, it is revealed from the study that, the private senior high school that have external financial support did not feel the effect of the free senior high school policy comparing to those that do not have the supports. This suggests that, supports (be it from government, donor agencies, individuals, non-governmental organisations (N.G.O)) among others can be of help to private schools.

5.2 Conclusion

The study draws the following conclusions: Since independence, several efforts have been made to make education free and accessible to all citizens. The Northern scholarship and free primary education by Nkrumah, the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) program of 1995, which aims at achieving universal education by 2005 (Acheampong, 2009), became necessary as it makes access to basic education in Ghana a right for all citizens irrespective of gender, geography, religion, or ethnic background. It has a legal backing enshrined in the constitution, which states that all persons shall have the right to equal educational opportunities and facilities, and with a view to achieving the full realization of that right, basic education shall be free, compulsory, and available to all according to Chapter 6, Article 25, Clause 1(a) of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana.

The School Feeding Program launched in 2005 by President John Agyekum Kufour in line with the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP)-pillar three (3), which seeks to enhance food security and reduce hunger in line with the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on poverty, hunger, and primary education; the progressively free secondary education implementation by successive governments from Prof. J.E.A. Mills to John D. Mahama; and the nationwide take-off

of the Free Senior High School policy by President Akufo- Addo have all focused on the public schools.

None of these seem to consider private-sector players in education (private schools). The researcher believes that if there is a deliberate effort by the government to collaborate with the private sector players in education, the concerns of the private senior high schools will be met, and both the government and private sector players will be seen partnering with each other to make quality education available, accessible, and affordable to Ghanaian children.

5.3 Recommendations

The study investigated the way free Senior High School policy has influenced the enrolment of the private Senior High Schools in the Volta Region. It highlighted how it affected the income of the private Senior High Schools in the Volta Region. The study also explores the effect of the policy on the administration of the private senior high schools in the Volta region. In the light of these revelations or findings, the following recommendations are put forward:

First and foremost, government should collaborate with the private Senior High Schools in the region in providing senior high school education to all Ghanaians. Private sector players in education need to be engaged in the process of making decision(s) on the provision of education in the Volta region since the state alone cannot adequately provide the needed education.

Furthermore, the study recommends that government should include the private schools in the free senior high school policy. This is based on facts or responses from the field that all respondents were willing and ready to be included in the policy. It is also shown

from the respondents that some of the private schools are likely to collapse if nothing is done by the government about their situation.

Additionally, the study recommends a level playing field for all players in the education sector. This can be done by soliciting the views and support of all stakeholders (private school owners). This will help ensure their sustainability. It will also help the government ensure value for money, reduce some implementation challenges, and ensure fiscal discipline and prudence.

Finally, the study recommends that the government should assist the private senior high schools, as they also assist the state in the provision of necessary education for all Ghanaian children. The state should not consider the private sector players in education as competitors but rather as partners in the provision of education.

5.4 Suggestions for further Research or study

On the basis of the findings and the conclusion of the study, the researcher hereby puts forward the following suggestions for further research:

First, this research is carried out in the Volta Region, one of the sixteen (16) regions in Ghana. The researcher suggests that similar studies be carried out in other regions of Ghana to ascertain the reliability of this study and to make the findings more generalizable.

Furthermore, the free senior high school policy started as a campaign promise in Ghana, even though it is a public policy. Being considered “clothed with politics” it has not received enough stakeholder discussions in order to weigh and analyse the policy environment and its tolls on its implementation. The researcher suggests that a study be conducted on public policies “clothed with politics” and their implication(s) for private

sector players in education since the government alone cannot adequately meet the educational needs of the citizens.

Again, there should be a study on how well collaboration between the state (government) and the private sector (in education) can be realized in Ghana. This will be of help because it is one system of governance that, when properly carried out, will bring much benefit to the state by promoting growth and development. It will help the government save resources and attention for other projects, reduce the urgency of providing infrastructure to accommodate the growing numbers, and ensure effectiveness.

Additionally, a study should be conducted on how private sector resources (human or capital) could be well harmonized into the mainstream or state system for maximum benefit in the education sector. This will help relieve the government of the pressure and urgency of providing for and dealing with some challenges within the sector.

Finally, the researcher recommends that a study be conducted on how the policy has affected teaching and learning in private senior high schools. This is because the policy has affected their enrolment and this has made private senior high school owners admit any kind of grade or aggregate in order to get numbers or fill in empty classrooms and also generate the needed income for the administration of their schools.

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APPENDIX

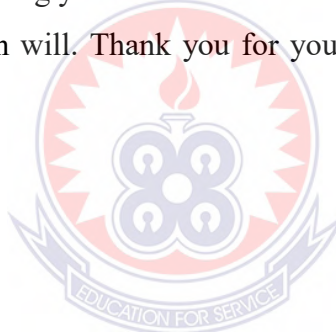
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY AREA

INTRODUCTION

I am Emmanuel K. Hallo an **M.Phil** student of University of Education, Winneba. As part of the requirement to complete my programme, I am undertaking research into Free SHS policy in Ghana. It is an academic exercise. The study will learn about how the Free Senior High School policy influences the enrolment and income of the Private Senior High Schools in Volta region as a case study. In the process I will ask about your perceptions, experience and thoughts about the policy.

Please remember, that any information given will be treated with much confidentiality and will **NOT** be used in anyway against you at any time. Note also that, you are not obliged to talk about anything you do not want to and as such, you may withdraw from the interview at your own will. Thank you for your acceptance to participate in this research.

Yours sincerely,



.....
Emmanuel K. Hallo

Participant's Statement of Acceptance

I have read/the content of this letter has been read to me in a language that I understand and that I agree to participate willingly in the study and agree to have the interview recorded.

Participant's Signature.....

Date.....

Section A. On Social and demographic characteristics of respondents

i. Gender:

- 1. Male []
- 2. Female []

ii. Age:

- 1. 20-39 []
- 2. 40-59 []
- 3. 60 and above []

iii. Level of education:

- 1. Basic []
- 2. Secondary []
- 3 Tertiary []



iv. Your Position:

- 1. Proprietor or Headmaster []
- 2. H.O.D/ Teacher []
- 3. Other []

v. Duration of stay at current working place:

- 1. 1-5 years []
- 2. 6-10 years []
- 3. 11-15 years []
- 4. 16 and above []

vi. Name of Institution or place of work:

- 1. School []
- 2. G.E.S []
- 3. MoE []
- 4. Other []

Section B. On participants' knowledge on the policy:

1. Are you aware of the Free Senior High School Policy?
2. What is the policy about?

Section C. On the policy and enrolment and income of private SHSs:

3. Has the policy affected the enrolment of your school? if yes how?
4. Has the policy any effect on the income level of your school? How if yes?
5. Do you have any external financial support for your school?

If yes, state the source(s)

Section D. On the policy versus school management and administration

6. Has the policy affected the management or administration of your school? 7. How has the policy affected the management or administration of your school if yes?
8. Has the policy affected staff retention of your school?
9. How is the policy affecting staff retention in your school if yes?
10. Has the policy affected the quality or calibre of your teaching staff?
11. Has the policy threatened the sustainability of your school (investments) in any way? How if yes?
12. Has the policy affected the quality of students (grade) you admit? How if yes

Section E. On the policy and academic performance in Private SHSs

13. Has the policy any effect on teaching and learning in your school?
14. How is it affecting teaching and learning if yes?
15. Have you noticed any change in academic performance of your school as a result of the policy? Which kind of change if yes and why?
16. Has the policy threatened the sustainability of your school (investments) in any way? How if yes?

Section F. On stakeholder consultation or consultation

17. Has government or its agencies ever made an attempt to absorb your school in the policy?

18. Why is it not successful if yes?

19. What are you doing differently which is keeping you in business?

20. What two (2) measures do you think the policy initiators should have adopted to help promote your school?

