

**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

**CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF THE GHANA FREE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

**(SHS) POLICY: THE CASE OF SHS IN DENKYEMBOUR DISTRICT.**

**ELIZABETH ASUMADU**

**(10636550)**

**THIS LONG ESSAY IS SUBMITTED TO UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN**

**PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF**

**MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION DEGREE**

**MAY 2019**

**DECLARATION**

I declare that this long essay is the result of my own work and no part of this work has been submitted in this University for any degree.

.....

**ELIZABETH ASUMADU**

**(10636550)**

.....

**DATE**

**CERTIFICATION**

I certify that this research work was supervised in accordance with the rules and regulations of this University.

.....

**DR. THOMAS BUABENG**

**(SUPERVISOR)**

.....

**DATE**

**DEDICATION**

This academic work is dedicated to the Almighty God whose Grace has been my source of strength and to my three sons; Leslie, Lewis, and David.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I thank my supervisor Dr Thomas Buabeng, a Senior Lecturer at the University of Ghana Business School (Department of Public Administration and Health Service Management).

Thank you, Dr Buabeng for your time, guidance, encouragement, and support throughout my studies. A special thanks to all officials and students at the Denkyemba District who participated in this and to all respondents from the education directorate at the Denkyemba District.

God bless you all in your endeavours.

## Table of Contents

DECLARATION .....	i
CERTIFICATION .....	ii
DEDICATION .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	iv
LIST OF TABLE .....	viii
LIST OF ACRONYMS .....	x
ABSTRACT .....	xi
CHAPTER ONE .....	1
INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Background to the study .....	1
1.3 Problem Statement .....	4
1.4 Objectives of the Study .....	5
1.5 Research Questions .....	5
1.7 Significance of the Study .....	6
1.8 Limitation of the Study .....	6
1.9 Chapter Outline. ....	6
CHAPTER TWO .....	8
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	8
2.1 Introduction .....	8
2.2 An overview of Public Policy Implementation .....	8
2.3 The Concept of Educational Reform.....	9
2.4 Secondary Education Reform in Developed Countries.....	10
2.5 Secondary Education Reform in Developing Countries .....	11
2.6 Challenges of Implementing Free Secondary Education .....	13
2.7 Education Reforms in Ghana .....	14
2.7.1 The Educational Structure under the First Republic .....	14
2.7.2 Dzobo Education Reforms of 1974 .....	15
2.7.3 Evans-Anfom Report of 1986.....	16

2.7.4 Anamuah-Mensah Reforms of 2007.....	17
2.7.5 Post Anamuah-Mensah Reforms of 2007.....	18
2.7.6 Free Senior High School Policy (FSHSP).....	19
2.8 Theoretical Framework .....	20
2.8.1 The Capital Theory of School Effectiveness and Improvement.....	20
CHAPTER THREE .....	24
METHODOLOGY .....	24
3.1 Introduction .....	24
3.2 Research Approach .....	24
3.3 Research Design.....	25
3.4 Study Area .....	26
3.5 Sources of Data.....	27
3.6 Target Population .....	29
3.7 Sample Size.....	29
3.8 Sampling Technique.....	30
3.9 Instruments and procedure for Collecting Data .....	31
3.9 Data Management and Analysis.....	32
3.12 Ethical Considerations.....	32
CHAPTER FOUR.....	33
DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	33
4.1 Introduction .....	33
4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.....	33
4.3 Prospects of the Free SHS Programme .....	34
4.3.1 Increased enrolment.....	34
4.3.2 Equitable access to education .....	35
4.3.3 Reduction of Financial burden on Parents.....	36
4.3.4 Recruitment of Teachers.....	36
4.4 The Challenges of the Free SHS Programme.....	37
4.4.1 Inadequate infrastructure .....	37
4.4.2 Inadequate supply of teaching and learning materials.....	39

4.4.3 Inadequate Human Resources .....	39
4.4.4 Delay in the payment of grants by government.....	40
4.5 Factors to enhance effective implementation.....	40
CHAPTER FIVE .....	42
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION .....	42
5.1 Introduction .....	42
5.2 Summary of Key Findings .....	43
5.3 Recommendations .....	44
5.4 Conclusion.....	45
REFERENCES .....	46
Appendix.....	49

**LIST OF TABLE**

Table 3.1 List of respondents for the study..... 28

**LIST OF FIGURE**

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework of the study..... 22

**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

CP	Capitation Grant
DEO	District Education Office
ESP	Education Strategic Plan
ESR	Education Sector Review
FCUBE	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
FSHS	Free Senior High School
HoS	Heads of Schools
HPC	Housing and Population Census
MoE	Ministry of Education
SHEP	School Health Education Programme
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



## **ABSTRACT**

This research was undertaken to examine the prospects and challenges hindering the implementation of “Free Senior High School Policy (FSHSP)” in the Denkyemba District in Ghana. The main rationale for this study comes about as an intervention by the government of Ghana in 2016 to increase enrolment of students in secondary school to ensure “equal access to secondary education” by all students in the country. Denkyemba was selected as the location of the study because it is one of the Districts in Ghana implementing the educational policy. To achieve its objective, the study adopted the qualitative research approach to obtain data from officials and students with practical experience, knowledge and understanding of the policy on FSHS with the use of purposeful sampling technique. The study made use of interviews as primary data collection instruments together with documents and online articles as the secondary data for the study. The study revealed that although the policy has come as a means to ensure increased enrolment in secondary schools. Its implementation is hindered by factors such as inadequate infrastructure, teachers and learning materials. Other factors hindering the implementation of the policy are the delay in the disbursements of funds to schools for development and the lack of adequate teaching facilities. The study recommends that to ensure effective implementation of the FSHS policy, the government needs to collaborate with other stakeholders to provide adequate and timely disbursements of fund, materials as well as adequate teachers to ensure the achievement of the policy goal.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter of the study examines the study background, problem statement, research objectives, and specific research objectives, research question, and significance of the study. The chapter also presents the organization of the entire research work.

#### **1.2 Background to the study**

The process of education has been termed as a critical process necessary for the individual people for the growth and development of societies, the world all over. Education is regarded as a necessary tool and prerequisite in the quest to reducing and/or eliminating economic hardship and poverty, improving the nutrition of children and the elderly, improving income, empowering the disadvantaged in society and improving the health conditions of people (Hopkins, 2001; Epke, 2012).

In estimating the importance of education, various researchers from different fields of study have come out with varying areas at which the importance of education can be examined. For instance, economist indicates that, education creates the conducive atmosphere for economic advancement (OECD, 1989; Ross et al., 2006) and that society cannot progress steadily without due influence and recognition of the important roles played by education. On the part of human rights activities, educational attainment is regarded as fundamental human right considering the facts that, education creates the congenial atmosphere for the development and advancement of the individual being (Bruns et al, 2003).

Considering the significance of education as mentioned above, it is imperative to state that, education plays much more than a significant role in society's development as well as the advancement and growth of individual people largely. Following the importance of education to mankind and national economic development agenda, several international organizations and conventions as well as countries have affirmed to this right of mankind and its overwhelming contributions to the national development effort. For instance, the "UN Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the child, the 1966 International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights of the child amongst other international development organizations have declared education as, indispensable human rights and the role of education in the development process of countries" (Rosensweig, 2002; UNESCO-UIS,2000).

Similarly, countries around the world have witnessed the significant contribution of educated human resource to their national development process and have thus instituted measures to "reduce the rate of out-of-school children with the aim to achieve the human rights aspect of education and to tap into the importance of an educated population for their national development drive." Sub-Saharan African (ADEA) countries are no exception to this, (ADEA, 2007). Specifically, Sub-Saharan African has been witnessing increased enrolment in education from the basic to the second cycle and tertiary levels of schooling due to the numerous policy interventions of government Like the "Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE)" amongst others. ADEA (2012), indicated that Sub-Saharan African has averagely attained 25% enrolment increase partly due to the vast majority of government policies in the Ghanaian education system.

In Ghana, in particular, recognizing the importance of education and being a signatory to most International Declarations on education has instituted several policy interventions to create the congenial atmosphere for families and children who have attained the age of attending school from the basic to the tertiary levels of education. Also, among the list of interventions by government of Ghana are the” Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) in 1995, Education Sector Review (ESR, October 2002), Government’s White Paper on the Report (2004)”, Education for All Policy (UNESCO, 2000) and Education Strategic Plan (ESP), the Capitation grant (CP), and Free School Uniform, Exercise Books and Computers distribution programme 2010-2016 at all level across the country’s educational system.

The objectives of such policy interventions were to make education accessible and less costly for children of school going age especially among poor families in the country. The programme introduced at the second cycle level to achieve such a nationwide agenda is the Free Senior High School Programme introduced in September 2017. The Free SHS programme is in line with governments’ aim of achieving free and accessible education for its citizens as enshrined in the 1992 constitution. The 1992 constitution, chapter six (6) Directive Principles of State Policy, Article 38 (2) posits that the states shall draw up programs for “Free, Compulsory Universal Basic Education” and with the needed resources available provide an equal and balanced access to tertiary education.

The free Senior High School (hereafter known as SHS) programme, as an initiative of the New Patriotic Party (hereafter known as NPP) under the government, was introduced in the 2017-18 academic year for all new entrant Senior High Schools nationwide. The aim of the programme is

to guarantee all children who have attained the level of attending Senior High School who have successfully passed their Basic Education Certification Examination (hereafter known as BECE) have cost-free access to senior high education without any financial hindrance.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

As prescribed by the Directive Principles of State Policy, Chapter Six (6) “Article 38:2 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana,” “the states shall with the resources available provide an equal and balanced access to Secondary and other Pre-University Education”. Similarly, other international declarations like “UN Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child and the 1966 International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights” and as contained in the recently introduced Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs- 4; quality education) with the target to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all”. Thus far, countries who have agreed to these international declarations must institute programmes and interventions towards the attainment of such a global vision.

Following this, and as part of attaining “equal access and quality secondary education in Ghana,” the government in 2017 introduced the free SHS programme with the aim to exclude financial requirements of any kind in the attainment of “secondary education in Ghana”. The overall aim is to make secondary education free and accessible to all irrespective of one’s financial situation. The introduction of the free SHS in the country, believe will contribute to the vision of the government in making “Secondary Education” the basic form of education in Ghana and that the programme should contribute to the access and equity in all secondary education in government schools during its implementation. Nevertheless, after one year of the policy implementation,

there are reports that several challenges impeded the policy implementation and for that matter, its effectiveness sustainability has become the issue of public debate. Based on the reported challenges and success of enrolling more students into the Free SHS programme. This study sort to delve deeper into the subject of the free SHS programme and to examine its prospects and challenges associated with its implementation over the past year.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The overall objective of this research work is to assess the prospects and implementation challenges of the “Free Senior High School Program” in the Denkyembaour district of the Eastern region. Specifically, the study is guided by three objectives namely;

1. To examine the prospects of the Free SHS program in the Denkyembaour district.
2. Identify the challenges affecting the smooth implementation of the Free SHS programme in the Denkyembaour district.
3. Explore how to achieve effectiveness of the implementation of the Free SHS programme in the Denkyembaour district.”

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

The main questions the study seeks to answer is” what are the prospects and challenges of the Free Senior High School programme in Denkyembaour District in Ghana”? Specially the study seeks to answer three question

1. What are the prospects of the Free SHS program at Denkyembaour District?
2. What are the implementation challenges confronting the Free SHS program in the Denkyembaour District?

3. How can the implemented of the FSHS be implemented more efficiently and effectively.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

This study will help contribute to policy development at the Free SHS Secretariat by providing insight and restructuring into the management and administration of the Programme, which will inure to the benefit of quality education in Ghana by examining the impediments bedevilling the effective implementation of the programme both at the district and national level. The findings will then help to inform Policy Makers on the hindrances of the programme and possible ways of addressing it. The findings of this research will further reveal the achievements chalked concerning enrolment, and attendance as well as poverty reduction on the part of parents whose wards are benefiting from the policy, since the programme implementation, which will further help strengthen the policy implementation.

### **1.8 Limitation of the Study**

This study on the successes and challenges of the implementation of the Free Senior High School policy in the Denkyembaour district is limited by two major constraints. Firstly, the researcher could not obtain the total number of estimated respondents for the study due to the busy schedule of respondents and secondly the researcher was limited by the finance in conducting the study.

### **1.9 Chapter Outline.**

Chapter one discusses the study background, problem statement, research goal, objective and research question, theoretical perspective and finally the organization of the study. Again, chapter two embodies the literature review which is organized under; definition of the concept, on the implementation of free Senior High School in Denkyembaour District in Ghana. Chapter three discusses the research methodology which entails the research design, research instrument,

target population, study area, sampling and sampling procedures, data collection and data analysis procedure as well as limitations to the study. Chapter four of the study presents data analysis with chapter five discussing the summary, conclusion, and recommendation of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents literature review of the subject matter of the study. It begins with conceptualization of policy implementation and educational reform. It is followed by empirical review of literature on secondary level education across the globe with particular focus on developing countries. Subsequently a discussion on educational reforms in Ghana is presented. The chapter finally presents the theoretical underpinning of the study as well as the conceptual framework employed by the study.

#### **2.2 An overview of Public Policy Implementation**

The concept of implementation has attracted several definitions and perspectives from various scholars. Mazmanian and Sabatier (1989:5) define implementation as “the carrying out of a basic policy decision, usually incorporated in a statute but can be in the form of important executive orders or court decisions”. Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) also define implementation as “those actions by people that are directed at achievement of objectives set forth in the policy decision”. According to Pressman and Wildavsky (1973:3) implementation means “to carry out, accomplish, fulfil, produce and complete.” This definition focuses on the public servants’ role to provide efficient and equitable service to the public. Berman (1978:1) stated that “policy implementation can be considered as the process of carrying out a government decision.”

Furthermore, O Toole (2000:263) regards policy implementation as “what develops between an intention of government to do something and its ultimate impact following action”. Winter (2003:4) in his writing defined implementation as “carrying out of policy or authoritative actions in support of policy goals”. He further stated that “implementation is closely affiliated with the classic political function of executing laws, but implementation research focuses on the execution of authoritative policies other than laws, such as administrative rules issued by government and policies made by local government”. Implementation is said to begin with the development of goals and objectives by policy decisions and commitment of funds (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975).

### **2.3 The Concept of Educational Reform**

Education has been deemed to provide a strong foundation upon any country can experience economic, social and political development (UNESCO, 2005; World Bank, 1998). According to the World Bank (1998) education investment has significant effect on economic growth, can promote productivity, enhance social and national development as well reduce inequality in the society. As a result, education has been regarded as one of the primary indicators to indicate a country’s growth of development (UNESCO, 2005). Education today is globally considered as a basic human right. According to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26) “everyone has the right to education and that education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages.”

Education has been defined as “the act of transferring knowledge in the form of experiences, ideas, skills, customs, and values, from one person to another or from one generation to

generations” (Adu-Gyamfi, Donkoh & Addo, 2016). Reform describes policy changes, or changes in organizational practices. Reforms therefore imply intended or enacted attempts to correct an identified problem. According to Psacharopoulos (1989), educational reforms also known as educational policy refers to intention or decisions made to affect some or all aspect of schooling in society. This study conceptualizes Educational Reforms as “changes and policies initiated to better educational structure or systems in a country” (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016:158).

#### **2.4 Secondary Education Reform in Developed Countries**

Today countries across the globe’s main challenge is equipping their youth to become active citizens, secure employment in a fast-changing work environment, and be able to survive and adapt to change (World Bank, 1998). In an attempt to address this problem various countries in the developed world has adopted appropriate interventions that have sought to enhance the capacity and long-term development of their youth. A key area has been secondary education. The World Bank (2005) notes that “secondary education in developed countries has been a subsidiary of higher education and has influenced policy, choice of providers, curriculum decisions, teacher recruitment and training, evaluation, accreditation, and certification.”

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, countries such as United States and Russia introduced educational policies which led to secondary education models which aimed at the establishing massive systems that focused on open access and universal coverage. According to Goldin (2001) “massive expansion of secondary education in the U.S. took place 40 to 50 years before there was corresponding expansion in Europe”. The U.S model comprised of “public funding and provision, open and forgiving system (selective, with no early specialization or academic segregation); an academic

yet practical curriculum; numerous small, fiscally independent school districts; and secular control of schools and school funds” (Goldin, 2001).

In developed countries, the state mostly finance partly or wholly education at the secondary or compulsory level. In Britain, Moon and Mayes (1994) established that the government fully finance education up to secondary school level. Here, parents are only expected to ensure their children go to school. In Britain Section 7 of the 1944 Act mandates the Education Authority and Central Government to ensure educational facilities are made available.

In Japan, the government fiscal policies make provisions for free education up to secondary school level. People of school going age “have no option other than attend school to acquire education that is fully funded by the government” (Nyaga, 2005). Similarly, in the United States (US), public education is supported by the Federal Government. The Constitution Welfare Clause, Article 1 Section 8 empowers the government “to levy taxes and collect revenues for the support of education, with Congress deciding the extent of such support” (Nyaga, 2005).

## **2.5 Secondary Education Reform in Developing Countries**

Secondary education has received much attention and reforms in most developing countries due to international trends (World Bank, 2005). International trend is causing a change in African countries to a drift towards compulsory secondary level education. According to the World Bank (2008) “international commitment to basic education for all and free universal primary education has necessitated the need for secondary education reforms in Africa and other developing countries.”

The need for secondary education is increasingly rising in almost all Sub-Saharan African countries. Verspoor (2008b:12) notes that “between 1999 and 2005 primary school intake

increased by almost 40%; adding that even though survival rates have remained stable so far, this still implies a very large increase in the number of primary school graduates that are seeking a place in secondary school.” Ledoux and Mingat (2007) as cited in Verspoor (2008b) indicate that “with increasing completion rates the number of primary school leavers could even triple by 2020 in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.” This presents a major constraint for secondary education policy which has to be “developed not only to respond to inevitable rapid increase in demand for access but also to provide the quality of instruction necessary to ensure the supply of personnel with higher levels of education and training demanded by a growing and modernizing economy” (Verspoor, 2008b).

Lewin (2008) clearly establishes that the level or extent of financing needed to expand access to secondary level education indicates that it is difficult for enrolment be increased at present cost level per unit. However, in the midst of the limited public resources African countries in responding to the increased demand for secondary education by distributing the same resources across a large number of students (Verspoor, 2008a). In effect, essential resources like instructional materials tend to be mostly in short supply resulting into large class size, text books shortages, poor library and double or triple shift when using school facilities.

In states where public education is primarily free, private contributions are also important. In Uganda, Zambia and Tanzania, Lewin (2008) notes that over half of total cost per student is financed by fees and contributions by parents. In Kenya, when government teachers are not assigned to fill teaching positions, the Board of Governors recruit additional teachers who are paid from the incomes from fees. In Zambia, the establishment of the 1996 Educational Production Unit ensures that students who fail to get enrolment in the fee-paying afternoon sessions which are run by teachers gain enrolment in such sessions. In Rwanda, “it is estimated

that about 80% of the students are enrolled in private schools of which almost 40% receive no public subsidy and have to rely on fee income” (Verspoor, 2008a).

In Benin, paid fee incomes from parents are used to pay the majority of secondary school teachers who are local contract teachers. In both public and private schools in the Democratic Republic of Congo, over 80% of the costs are borne by the parents (World Bank, 2005). In Burkina Faso, in every newly established higher secondary school, two paid teachers are provided by the government whilst it is the responsibility of communities and other stakeholders to provide additional local contract teachers as and when necessary. In Chad “half of the teachers in junior secondary schools are community teachers mostly paid by parents” (World Bank, 2007).

## **2.6 Challenges of Implementing Free Secondary Education**

Studies have shown that a number of challenges confront the provision of free secondary education affecting quality of education. In Kenya Aluko and Adan (2015) identified that the provision of free education at the secondary level led to many parents being reluctant to make any other payments to schools. Kalunda and Otanga (2015) found that the free secondary education in Kenya resulted in increased enrolment of students which created problems such as heavy teaching workload on teachers, inadequate number of teachers to meet rising number of students and lack of adequate instructional materials. Morojole (2012) also identified in Lesotho that the implementation of free education led to “increased centralization which has subsequently resulted in the loss of local accountability in the development of schools.” The central government thus controls both funding and administrative decisions and programmes of schools. Okumbe (2001) also found that the implementation of free secondary education in Kenya resulted in school principals encountering a number of administrative challenges such as

“inadequate and badly constructed school buildings, shortage of books and equipment; lack of proper school furniture particularly desks; poor or sometimes non-existent maintenance and repairs; untrained and half trained teachers who seldom stay long; over-crowded classrooms; poor communications and few supporting services especially health services.”

## **2.7 Education Reforms in Ghana**

Education sector reforms in Ghana over the past three decades have, on paper at least, focused on the twin imperatives of improving the quality and quantity of education. “However, the focus on quality appears to have been outweighed by the political imperatives of providing more tangible goods via the access agenda”. Ghana has performed very low in relation to achieving outcomes: “75% of those leaving school after five to six years could not read and the youth literacy gap between rich and poor is 50%” (UNESCO, 2014). The frequency of reforms has increased under heightened electoral competition, at the expense of both coherence and technocratic control (Ampramtwum et al, 2016).

### **2.7.1 The Educational Structure under the First Republic**

The 1961 Act, (Act 87) initiated by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was aimed at achieving Free Universal Primary Education. The Act made Education compulsory and free.

Section 2 (1): “Every child who has attained the school-going age (six-years) as determined by the Minister shall attend a course of instruction as laid down by the Minister in a school recognized for the purpose by the Minister.”

Section 20 (2): “No fee, other than the payment for the provision of essential books or stationary or materials required by pupils for use in practical work, shall be charged in respect of tuition at a public primary, middle or special school.”

The Ghanaian Education System “at this point (end of the 1960s) consisted of six years of primary education, followed by four-years of secondary education”. At the end of the four years “suitable students went on to do a two-year sixth form course that could lead to a three-year University course. “Students, who were not suitable to continue, completed two-years of pre-vocational classes.”

### **2.7.2 Dzobo Education Reforms of 1974**

The educational system under Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was soon regarded as too long and too academic. Thus 1974 saw a reform of the system under the National Redemption Council (NRC), instating the Junior Secondary School on an experimental basis. The “Junior Secondary School introduced practical subjects and activities allowing students to acquire occupational skills, which after an apprenticeship lead to the qualification for self-employment.” Due to a wide range of factors such as “the economic decline, bureaucracy and sheer lack of interest, the JSS-system never went beyond the experimental phase.” By 1983, the education system was in a state of crisis. It faced drastic reductions in Government financing, lack of educational materials, and deterioration of school structures, low enrolment levels and high dropout rates.

The main features of the 1974 Reforms included “a Two-Year Kindergarten Education for children between the ages of four (4) and six (6) years which will be followed by a Nine-Year Basic First Cycle Education: six (6) years Primary for children between the ages of six (6) and twelve (12); and three (3) years Junior Secondary School (JSS) for children between twelve (12)

and fifteen (15) years.” From the Junior Secondary School, “there would be selection into the following terminal courses, namely Two-Years Senior Secondary (Lower) course leading to the GCE ‘O’ Level, Three-Years Technical, Vocational and Commercial courses.” Students from “Senior Secondary (Lower) would then pursue another Two-Years Senior Secondary (Upper) course to obtain the GCE ‘A’ Level or enter the Teacher Training Colleges and the Polytechnics.” Also, those from the “Technical, Vocational and Commercial schools will enter the Polytechnics or Technical Teacher Training Colleges. Students from the Senior Secondary (Upper) will proceed to the University to pursue a three (3) year programme. Those from the other streams would eventually end up at the University level.”

### **2.7.3 Evans-Anfom Report of 1986**

With the educational reform of the 1970’s in a state crisis, the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) led government “with the assistance of several development partners (World Bank, Department for International Development and international grants) constituted the Evans-Anfom Committee.” The education system was subjected to review and implementation of recommendations by the committee took place in 1987.

Some of the key objectives included the following: “increase access to basic education; shorten; the pre-university education structure from 17 years to 12 years; make education cost-effective; and improve quality of education by making it more effective to socio-economic conditions.”

The Junior Secondary School structure was put in place on a nation-wide basis. “Now 6 years of primary education and 3 years of junior secondary school were standard of 9 years of free and compulsory basic education.” “The reforms saw further changes from hours spend at school to educational resources such as infrastructure of class blocks and libraries, school supplies and

technical skills equipment.” “Although the reforms helped to solve some of the problems, the results achieved by students at the primary school level were low.” “The government then embarked on the Basic Education Sector Improvement or more popular the Free Compulsory, Universal Basic Education Program (BESIP/FCUBE), which was aimed at providing every child of school-going age with good basic education.” Objectives of the FCUBE program were to “improving the quality of learning and teaching and improving access to basic education facilities.”

#### **2.7.4 Anamuah-Mensah Reforms of 2007**

The educational structure under the New Patriotic Party (NPP) government (2001-2008) was also considered for restructuring. The committee to make recommendations on the restructure “was tasked to review the entire educational system in the country with the view to making it responsive to challenges at the time.” “The underlying factors for the introduction of the Junior High and Senior High School reforms were to address the inadequacies and shortcomings in the previous reforms as discussed above.” “The reform was also introduced for the following reasons: formation of human capital for industrial growth and for ensuring competitiveness in the global economy; ability to make use of developments in Science and Technology, especially Information and Communication Technology (ICT); radical transformation in the field of work and employment; and the preservation of cultural identity and traditional indigenous knowledge and creativity.”

The reform was intended to “ensuring 100 percent access to basic education, placing high premium on technical/vocational education and training and improving the quality of instruction and making it flexible enough to accommodate diverse student abilities.” The Anamuah-Mensah

Report recommended similar structure of education just like the Evans-Anfom Report of 1986. The difference was the “inclusion of two (2) years of Kindergarten education as part of Basic Education and Apprenticeship training for leavers of the Junior Secondary School who are unable to or do not want to continue in the formal sector.” “Kindergarten was not an integral part of Basic Education and the reform incorporated it to prepare children between the ages of four (4) and six (6) years before they enter primary school. The Apprenticeship training was to formalize the training of school leavers in the various trades. The committee maintained the three (3) years Senior Secondary School but the government decided to increase it to four (4) years and rename the educational system Junior High School and Senior High School to replace the existing Junior Secondary and Senior Secondary Schools.”

#### **2.7.5 Post Anamuah-Mensah Reforms of 2007**

Upon assumption to power in 2009, the NDC government decided to make some changes to some of the reforms of the Anamuah-Mensah committee. Key among them was the reversal of the 4-years SHS programme to previous 3-years duration. “Even though members of the review committee settled for the maintenance of the three-year SHS programme after deliberations, it was nonetheless pushed to four years by the NPP government”. The NDC government “decided to reverse the duration to three years upon assumption of power in January 2009, which brought its attendants debate in which the National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT) and the Conference of Heads of Assisted Senior High Schools (CHASS) took opposing stands on the future duration of the SHS programme.” However, till date the 3years SHS programme is still in implementation even though the NPP is in power.

### **2.7.6 Free Senior High School Policy (FSHSP)**

In their 2012 and 2016 election campaign, education remained central to the manifesto of the NPP. The NPP declared “Education to be a major priority and commits itself to a bold, creative, visionary and all-embracing programme for the transformation of education in Ghana.” According to the NPP “if elected to form the next Government from 2017 to 2021, it would implement a policy of free education for all Ghanaian children up to Senior High School, and raise the quality of education at the primary and senior high school levels.” Thus, the NPP will “redefine basic education to include Senior High School (SHS), covering vocational, agricultural and technical schools, and make it available for free on a universal basis to all Ghanaians.”

After being successful in the 2016 elections the FSHSP which is the flagship education programme of the New Patriot Party (NPP) government, has finally been implemented and it has resulted in public debate with respect to its benefits and sustainability. Under the FSHSP, government will be required to foot all bills - including feeding fees, tuition fees and all other charges - with regard to first-year students admitted in the 2017/2018 academic year.

This means that the “burden of paying fees will be removed from parents, especially those who cannot afford to pay their wards' school fees.” In effect, “the disposal income of parents will increase to enable them to save funds for the next three years that their children will be in Senior High School.” Those funds could be saved by parents and use it to finance their children’s fees at the tertiary level.

## **2.8 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.8.1 The Capital Theory of School Effectiveness and Improvement**

This study is underpinned by the Capital Theory of School Effectiveness and Improvement propounded by Hargreaves (2001). Hargreaves propounded the theory based on four key concepts: “outcomes, both cognitive and moral; leverage, which emphasizes the relation between teacher input and education output; intellectual capital, which implies the sum of the school’s knowledge and experience; and social capital, that is, networks of trust and collaboration between the school and the wider community.”

The theory emphasizes on the need to “focus on improving the relationship between teacher input and educational output, or changes in students’ intellectual and moral state resulting from the teacher’s effort.” Hargreaves argues that instead of teachers putting in more effort yet without growing results, effective schools focus on effective strategies which yield great impact from little effort. Outstanding and high performing schools use combination of a range of leverage strategies. Understanding school effectiveness therefore involves “how high leverage works”.

This model defines an effective and improving schools as one that “mobilises its intellectual capital (especially its capacity to create and transfer knowledge) and its social capital (especially its capacity to generate trust and sustained networks) to achieve the desired educational outcomes of intellectual and moral excellences, through the successful use of high leverage strategies grounded in evidence-informed and innovative professional practice.”

From the theory’s perspective, to achieve the intended impact of the free secondary school education, the three main conditions highlighted by the model must prevail. The leverage in

which knowledge is transferred is of great significance in the achievement of significant results. In the end the main objective is that knowledge is transferred. The quality of knowledge transferred is determined by the teacher's qualification and the resources available to ensure that knowledge is transferred. Subsequently quality of output is influenced by the structure and environment through which knowledge is transferred.

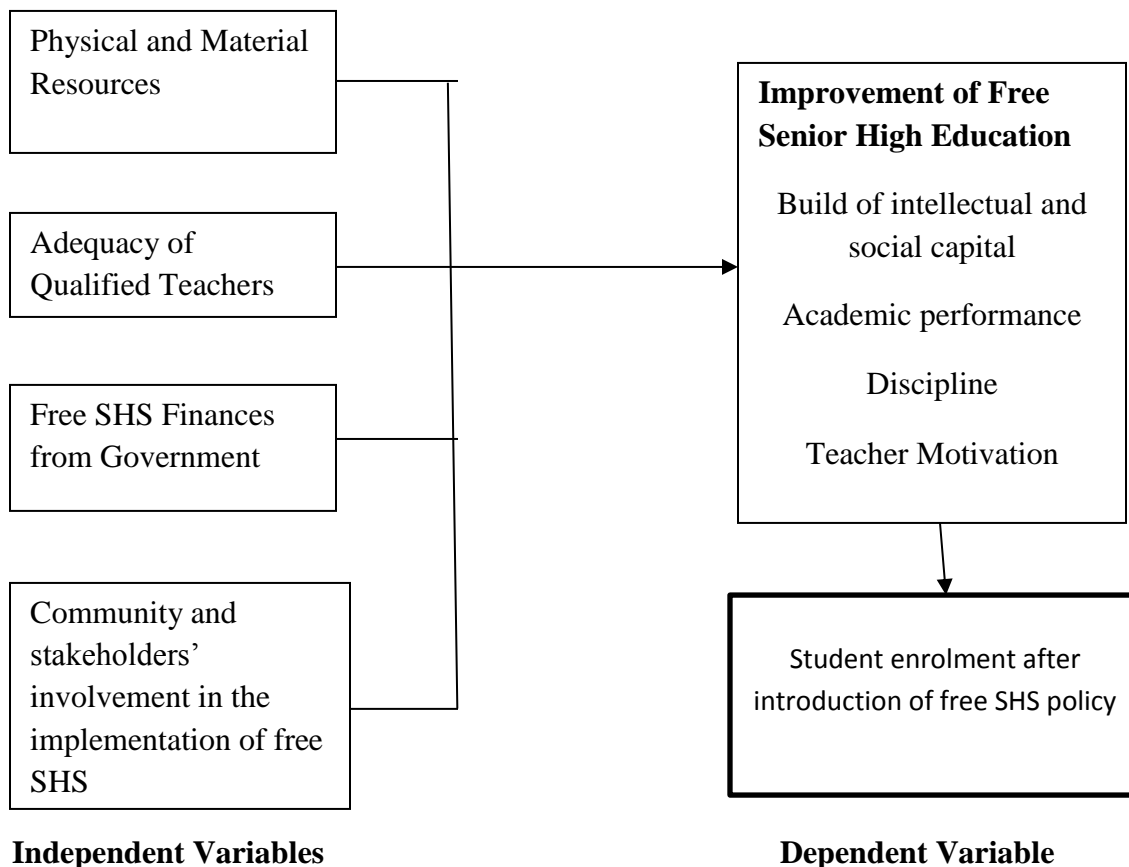
For the desired outcome to be attained, social capital must be established. The government of Ghana introduced the free Senior High education as a capital to enhance citizen's education. This capital affects people irrespective of their ethnic background, gender, and socioeconomic status. There is the need for the investment to be accepted as to address the economic burden amongst poor people in Ghana. To achieve the fruits of the free education policy, there is the need for schools to have a convincing justification to raise financial resources and also the assurance that stakeholders would support with their resources.

The main focus of the theory is concerning the results achieved by the programme. After the government and stakeholders' support (social input), intended results would be achieved. According to Hargreaves "the country will have a large number of learned personnel hence building of an intellectual capital for social-economic development of the nation". Other results such as improved academic performance will be realized as far as resources are available. With youth's commitment to education, a high discipline among students would be achieved hence lowering crime in the country. Lastly, where the right resources and structures are established, teachers would be motivated to give off their best to achieve desired results.

Drawing from the Capital theory of school effectiveness, this study argues that establishes that implementing the free senior high school policy in Ghana would be successful based on the

following factors: availability of school finances from the government; students' enrolment, availability of trained teachers, availability of physical facilities and, community involvement in the implementation of the policy. The study argues to achieve quality of education is hinged on these factors which are the independent variables. This is shown by the conceptual framework for the study in Figure 2.1 below.

**Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework of the study**



From the above framework, free senior high policy could bring about increased enrolment of students and without corresponding increase in resources, teachers would be stressed which would affect the level of knowledge transfer to every student. On the other hand, where more resources are made available by government and community and other stakeholders, motivation of teachers would be greatly enhanced to achieve the expected level of knowledge transfer and as a result promote effective education.

Furthermore, the implementation of free senior high school policy can result in imbalance in the availability of physical and material resources as a result of the unexpected increase in student enrolment. The availability of few resources demotivates and put psychological strain on students' concentration which affects academic performance. With social capital provided by the government through mobilizing and make required funds available can enhance motivation needed by the students and also address indiscipline case that results in strikes as a result of inadequate resources. As free secondary education is expected to increase student's enrolment there is a corresponding demand for more qualified teachers.

Where there are few qualified teachers matching high number of students will affect academic performance. With government's intervention increase the number of teachers would enhance sufficient supply of information to students. In the nutshell, the determinants of quality education include the extent to which a school builds intellectual and social capital to promote national development, academic performance, discipline among staff members and students, and motivation of teachers.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the framework and methods used in carrying out the study. The study seeks to examine the challenges and prospects of the Ghana Free Senior High School (SHS) policy: the case of SHS in Denkyembour District based on which the chapter outlined the research approach chosen for the study, the research approach, research design, data sources, target population, sampling technique, sample size, data collection method, analysis of data, and presentation.

#### **3.2 Research Approach**

There are three main approaches in carrying out research – quantitative approach, qualitative and mixed method approaches. The quantitative method is about the processes of gathering and analyzing sophisticated data using large numbers or sample size. It largely has to do with counting and the use of statistical techniques (Porta & Keating, 2008; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Bryman, 2008). On the other hand, a qualitative research approach, involves studying “things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret, a phenomenon in terms of the meaning people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p:3), while the mixed method

approach to conducting a study has to do with the combination of the processes involved in carrying out both the quantitative and qualitative research (Creswell, 2013).

The research objective and questions for this study, the qualitative research approach was adopted for the study. This is because the qualitative approach would help in obtaining varied sources of data from respondents to enrich the findings of the study. Also, the qualitative approach would help the researcher to collect and analyze data on the challenges and prospects of the Ghana “Free Senior High School (FSHS) policy” in Denkyemba District. Further, the qualitative approach will enable the researcher to obtain an in-depth data to understand the topic and also obtain credible and evidence-based data through the use of some qualitative tool for collecting data such as interviews, focused group discussion and from documents from the educational directorates database and documents in the filed in the Denkyemba District. Also. The qualitative approach would enable the researcher to obtain secondary data from published and online journals to support the study (Creswell, 2013). Also, the qualitative method will help provide in-depth information on the research topic under discussion.

### **3.3 Research Design**

The design adopted for the study is the case study design of conducting research. The case study design was used for this study because the Denkyemba District is one of the Districts in Ghana where the FSHS policy is being implemented and studying Denkyemba District as a single case would enable the researcher focus attention on the prospects and challenges the implementers of the FSHS policy faces in implementing the policy. Yin (2003), mentioned that a case study enables the researcher to obtain an in-depth view of the problem being study and its context. Based on Yin (2003) definition of a case study, the researcher focuses attention on Denkyemba

as the context of the study where the views of individual respondents will be analyzed as the empirical views for the study. A case study is seen in this research as an appropriate design to help realize the study objectives.

### **3.4 Study Area**

Denkyembaour in the Eastern Region is the area chosen for the study. This area is chosen because it is one of the District in the Eastern Region where the Free Senior High School policy is been implemented and also it is an area where the researcher resides for easy and timely data collection. Denkyembaour District “is one of the 254 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in Ghana and forms part of the thirty-three 33 Municipalities and Districts in the Eastern Region of Ghana. With its Administrative capital, Akwatia was carved from Kwaebibirem and forms part of the new districts and municipalities created in the year 2012 and were inaugurated at their various locations simultaneously on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2012.

The district was established by a Legislative Instrument (LI) 2042, the Denkyembaour District is located at the South-Western corner of the Eastern Region. The District shares boundaries with Kwaebibirem Municipal and Akyemansa District to the north, West Akim Municipality to the south and Birim Central Municipality to the south-west. The population of the District according to 2010 population and housing census stands at 78,841 with 38,814 males and 40,027 females (Housing and Population Census (HPC), 2010).

“The population of Denkyembaour District, according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, is 78,841 representing 3.0 percent of the region’s total population. Males constitute 49.2 percent and females represent 50.8 percent. More than half (57.7%) of the population lives in

the urban area, and has a sex ratio of 97 males to a hundred females. About two-fifth (39.5%) of the population of the District is youthful (0-14 years) depicting a broad base population pyramid which tapers off with a small number of elderly persons (4.5%). The total age dependency ratio for the District is 78.8, and males have a higher dependency ratio of 81.3 compared to females who has a dependency ratio of 76.4” (HPC, 2010)

“Out of the employed population, 32.3 percent are engaged as skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers, 19.9 percent as service and sales workers, 15.6 percent in craft and related trade, and 9.6 percent are engaged as managers, professionals, and technicians.” (HPC, 2010).

“Denkyembaour has a population of 11 years and above, 84.5 percent are literate and 15.5 percent are not literate. The proportion of literate males (51.5%) is slightly higher than that of females (48.5%). Almost seven out of ten people (65.3%) indicated they could read and write both English and Ghanaian language. Of the population 3 years and above in the District, 13.4 percent has never attended school, 43.0 percent are currently attending and 45.3 percent have attended in the past. Economic.” (HPC, 2010).

### **3.5 Sources of Data**

Two main data sources were employed for these are the primary and secondary data sources.

The primary data instruments enabled the researcher to obtain credible information and interpretation about the challenges and prospects of the Ghana “Free Senior High School (FSHS) policy” in Denkyembaour District (Creswell, 2013; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Also, the researcher employed the primary data as a means to obtain and examine first-hand data about the execution of the FSHS programme in the Denkyembaour District in Ghana. Primary sources of data was

obtained from the use of unstructured interview guides to obtained data from respondents through open or direct interviews, face to face interviews and group discussions.

Secondary data sources such as the use of documents and reports from the educational directorate within the Denkyembaour District. Further, secondary data sources such as online research materials, documents, and reports from the Ministry of Education and the District Educational Directorate within the district as well as books. The inclusion of these secondary data sources is to complement the data obtained from the primary sources to provide satisfactory findings and also provide more insight into the study.

**Table 3.1 List of respondents for the study**

<b>Description of Respondents</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>
Ministry of Education (Directors)	2
Ghana Education Service (Directors)	2
District Education Directorate (Directors)	2
Heads of schools	2
Teachers from two implementing schools	6
Students from two implementing schools	6
Other stakeholders (two chiefs and 3 opinion leaders).	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>25</b>

### **3.6 Target Population**

The targeted population “refers to the entire group of individuals or objects to which researchers are interested in gathering data for the study (Creswell, 2016).” The research targeted all public Senior High Schools implementing the FSHS policy in the Denkyemba Districts located in the Eastern region of Ghana. Also, these targeted schools comprised only public schools because private Senior High and Technical schools within the district are not beneficiaries of the policy. The target population also includes staffs in the “District Education Management Office”, “Ministry of Education, “Ghana Education Service,” Heads and Teachers of the policy implementing schools’ in the District, students from the implementing schools. However, attention will be focused more on staffs whose duty falls in line with the District Management and Supervision Office with regard to the FSHS policy implementation in the District. This target is chosen for the study because the researcher wants to source data from various institutions and stakeholders who are directly involved in implementing the policy. This target will help evaluate the prospects and challenges involved in implementing the policy in the Denkyemba District in Ghana.

### **3.7 Sample Size**

In order to obtain ample data on the prospects and implementation challenges of the “free S.H.S programme in Denkyemba District, two schools benefiting from the program have been chosen for the study, as well as other stakeholders such as two officials from the “Ministry of Education”, two officials from the Ghana Education Service, two officials from the District Educational Office, heads of two implementing SHS schools, three teachers from each of the two schools, three students from each of the implementing schools and five community leaders

including chiefs in the District. In all, a total of twenty-five (25) respondents was sampled for the study.

The samples respondents of the study were made up of two officials from the Ministry of Education who are in the position of in the position of deputy Minister for Education and Deputy Director General (Human Resource). Also, two officials from the District who are the District Director of Education and Deputy Director of Supervision in the District and the Regional Coordinator for FSHS and Regional School Health Education Programme (SHEP) Coordinator. Two heads of schools which are the ST. Roses High School and Takrasi Day School.

### **3.8 Sampling Technique**

Purposive sampling techniques were employed to sample two schools out of the total number of schools implementing the FSHS policy in Denkyembaour District as well as the other respondents of the study list in table 3.1. the purposeful sampling was employed because according to Boateng (2016) purposeful sampling is conducted to sample respondents who have ideas, knowledge and expertise and experience about the phenomenon under study. Based on this explanation the researcher sampled two schools implementing the study and other stakeholders who work and also are beneficiaries of the FSHS programme. Also, snowballing was employed as the researcher was directed by initial respondents to also contact other individuals implementing the policy to contribute their views and opinions about the policy implementation. However, convenience sampling was also employed to sample students who were around and available during the data collection.

### **3.9 Instruments and procedure for Collecting Data**

The foremost instrument for collecting data was an open-ended interview guide which was used by the researcher to obtain primary data from respondents. The interviews were recorded using electronic audio recorder which was later transcribed. The interviews organized on a one-on-one base and focused group discussion with respondents. The observation was also used as another instrument to collect data since the researcher lives and resides in Denkyembour where the FSHS policy is being implemented.

The study adopted unstructured interviews. This interview method was employed due to the following advantages it offers; structured interviews offer an opportunity for a one and one discussion between the researcher and the respondents. Moreover, it provided room for formal and focused research as well as an interview process, as questions will be prepared in accordance with the objectives of the study (Creswell 2016:21). Again, structured interview method was adopted since it will allow respondents to express themselves and also elaborates more on the various issues relating to the policy implementation.

The consideration for the adoption of the interview method for this research work was informed by the nature of the study as it will seek to delve deeper into the subject of the free SHS program in Denkyembour District. That notwithstanding, the interview was chosen due to information gathered from the literature review and the goal and objectives of the study. For the purpose of the structured interview, an interview guide was written based on the study objectives.

### **3.9 Data Management and Analysis**

Data management “includes all aspects of data planning, handling, analysis, documentation, and storage, and takes place during all stages of a study. The objective is to create a reliable database containing high-quality data” (Bennett et al., 2001). The data management includes the process involved in post data collection activities which includes validating and checking of data manipulation, and data documentation. taking this study into consideration, the data gathered during the study was well planned to avoid any damages, the data was gathered and saved in files and on a tape recorder. The recorded data was later transcribed, coded and organized into themes for analysis. The analyzed data was further stored in files and also in the researcher's mail to avoid misplacement. The emerging information was grouped categorized into themes and discussed based on the study objectives (Braun & Clarke, 2014). In addition to the above data management practices, information abstained from the study served as the findings in analyzing the prospects and challenges of implementing the FSHS programme in Denkyembour District in Ghana. research objectives.

### **3.12 Ethical Considerations**

The research was undertaken in line with qualitative research ethics outlined by Creswell (2013). He argued that ethical consideration is an important component of writing qualitative research since individual respondents will like to expand exactly what causes or effect a phenomenon has. Based on this argument by Creswell (2016), Care was taken to seek the consent and approval of all participants before involving them in the study. Participants were given explaining the purpose and impact of the study as well as the benefits of their contribution to the study. The researcher avoided the inclusion of the names of the participant in the write up to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of their views.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents data analysis and discussion of the findings. The chapter also discuss the data analysis based on the research objectives. The chapter discusses demographic characteristics of respondents and prospects of the free SHS programme. It also discusses the hinderances of implementing the free S.H.S programme as well as the factors enhancing the effective implementation of the free SHS programme.

#### **4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

The sample size of the study was twenty-five (25) respondents. Among the respondents were the staffs from the “Ministry of Education,” officials at “District Educational Office,” Heads and Teachers of selected schools, stakeholders and some selected students were sampled for the

study. The ages of the officials were between twenty-five and fifty years. While three males and three females' students who partook in the study were between the ages of eighteen to twenty-four were beneficiary of the "Free S.H.S policy in the Denkyemba District in Ghana.

#### **4.3 Prospects of the Free SHS Programme**

The main objective of the Free SHS programme is to make secondary education free and accessible to all irrespective of one's financial situation. The introduction of the free SHS in the country has been noted to contribute to the vision of the government in making secondary education the basic form of education in Ghana. The study, therefore, sought to examine the prospects of the programme in the Denkyemba District (Hargreaves,2001).

Responses from respondents interviewed reveal that all the respondents believed that over a year of implementation of the programme, there are signs of positive prospects in terms of enrolment, equitable access to education, reduction of a financial burden on parents, and recruitment of new teachers. (Head of School)

##### **4.3.1 Increased enrolment**

All the respondents interviewed admitted the fact that the free SHS programme has led to an increase in enrolment of students from Junior Senior High into the Senior High level in the district. This according to a District Director of Education:

*"The programme has enabled more JHS graduates to pursue SHS education since tuition and boarding fees are all borne by the government. Prior to the introduction of the policy, it was projected for an increase in enrolment of students into Senior high schools."*

This result of the field work is in line with the work Ngeno and Simatwa (2015) who studied the “influence of Free Secondary Education policy on dropout rates in Kenya”. Ngeno and Simatwa (2015) identified an increase in the transition from the junior secondary level to the senior secondary level. Thus, from the capital theory of school effectiveness, the government can promote quality of education and development if there is increase enrolment in education as a result of equitable access. The non-payment of tuition fees and boarding fees by parents has now encouraged them to ensure their wards continue education after successful completion of the basic education.

#### **4.3.2 Equitable access to education**

Another prospect of the free SHS programme is provision of equitable access to secondary education. Twenty-five of the respondents highlighted that a key benefit of the free SHS programme has been equitable.

*“access to senior high school education which prior to the introduction of the policy was non-existence. The free SHS programme does not discriminate against rich or poor parents. Children of rich families, as well as that of poor families all, have equal access to senior high school education. Abolishing the tuition and boarding fees paid by students have been deemed as a measure by governments in “Sub-Saharan Africa” (Field Data)*

To achieve the targets of Education as far as the Sustainable Development Goals are concerned. This is because preceding to the execution of the policy fees charged at the senior secondary level have been a major constraint for some children to access senior secondary level education (Ohba, 2009).

#### **4.3.3 Reduction of Financial burden on Parents**

The study further found that the free SHS programme has helped reduce the financial burden on parents. Prior to the introduction of the policy, many parents complained bitterly about the rising cost of tuition and boarding fees they had to pay for their wards especially those entering the senior high schools for the first time.

*“As a result, some children were denied access to senior high education because their parents could not afford especially those in rural areas”.*

However, with the government now bearing both the tuition and boarding fees, it has relieved the financial burden on parents so their wards can receive senior high education freely having completed the basic education. According to an Assistant headmaster interviewed observed that without the free SHS programme

*“a high number of students who would have stayed at home for lack of money are in school”.*

It is therefore evident that with this financial burden being taken from parents it has enhanced equitable access to education. Parents can now use the money they would have used for tuition and boarding in other productive ways.

#### **4.3.4 Recruitment of Teachers**

Recruitment of teachers has also deemed a key prospect of the free SHS programme by the respondents involved in the study. With the expected increase in enrolment into SHS, there is a need for more teachers to be recruited in order to ensure the high number of students if quality education is to be enhanced. Respondents highlighted that besides:

*“there are a lot of trained teachers who are yet to be posted so they deemed the implementation of the policy a great opportunity for these teachers to be posted to schools were their services would be needed”.*

From the capital theory of school effectiveness perspective, with an increased number of students and no addition increase in the number, the teachers may be overwhelmed and be unable to transfer knowledge to every student at an expected level which would not only affect the academic performance of students but also intellectual capital which the free SHS seeks to achieve.

#### **4.4 The Challenges of the Free SHS Programme**

Some challenges associated with the implementation of the FSHS programme in African has been considered not feasible considering the myriad challenges facing the continent. A key objective of the study was therefore to assess some of the challenges in the implementation of the free SHS programme in the Denkyembour district. Respondents interviewed highlighted a number of challenges of the programme. These challenges are

*“lack of adequate infrastructure, inadequate distribution of teaching and learning materials, inadequate teachers, delay in payment of grants from the government”.*

##### **4.4.1 Inadequate infrastructure**

The main hindrances to the effective execution of the free SHS programme admitted by all respondents have to do with the inadequate infrastructure in the senior high schools in the district. It was indicated by respondents that the free SHS policy was introduced at a time that senior high schools were facing infrastructure problems. As a result, the free SHS policy did not

come with corresponding infrastructural development to meet the increasing level of student's enrollment. This has brought pressure on existing limited facilities in senior high schools in the district.

Teachers and Assistant headmasters involved in the study highlighted how the limited infrastructure have brought overcrowding in classrooms, dormitories, dining halls, libraries and laboratories.

A teacher, for instance, recounted that *"because enrolment has increased, some studies don't get places to sit in class"*. Another teacher also remarked that

*"the increase in enrolment has led to overcrowding in some classrooms numbering more than 60 which affect effective monitoring"*.

An assistant headmaster also indicated that the increased enrolment coupled with limited facilities have resulted in the *"lack of space for boarders in boarding schools and that some schools even run shift during meals time"*.

The foregoing finding complements the previous study by Apeanti and Asiedu-Addo (2008) examining teachers' perception of educational reforms raised the issue of inadequate infrastructure as inhibiting the success of educational reforms. From the theoretical point of view, adequate infrastructure is very critical for quality education to be achieved. Therefore, without a corresponding development in infrastructure in senior schools, the objectives of the free SHS policy will be difficult to be achieved.

#### **4.4.2 Inadequate supply of teaching and learning materials**

The study further identified the inadequate supply of teaching and learning materials as one of the core hinderances impeding the senior high schools in the Denkyembour district. Respondents hinted on the lack of learning and teaching materials which is really affecting teaching and learning activities in senior schools in the district.

A teacher retorted that since the inception of the programme *“there has not been any supply of teaching aids. The capital theory of school effectiveness clearly highlights the need for adequate teaching and learning materials for quality education to be achieved.”*

This is because the lack of teaching and learning materials such as laboratory equipment can have a negative effect on curriculum delivery and therefore affect the performance of students.

#### **4.4.3 Inadequate Human Resources**

Inadequate availability of teachers in senior high schools was also advanced to be another challenge arising as a result of the free SHS programme. The student to teacher ratio has not improved due to the increased enrolment of students as a result of the policy.

*“The teachers bemoaned the stress they had to go through in controlling the students due to the large class sizes”*.

The inadequate availability of teachers as a result of increased enrolment is consistent with studies in Kenya and Uganda by Kalunda and Otanga (2015) and Oyaró (2008) who identified teacher shortages and heavy teaching loads as key problems that confronted secondary schools after the implementation of “free secondary education.” From the capital theory of school effectiveness having adequate supply teachers greatly enhance the quality of education. This

implies that without any effort to recruit more teachers into the senior high schools in the district will greatly hamper quality education.

#### **4.4.4 Delay in the payment of grants by government**

Most of the teachers interviewed lamented on the delay in the payment of grants by the government. Per the policy, the government is expected to provide funding and grants for all senior high schools in order for them to undertake their operations successfully. As such the timely release of funds is very crucial for the schools to be able to function effectively.

However, it was identified that *“the government mostly delays in the fund disbursement to the various schools. This according to the head teachers put a huge burden on them in getting the school to operate effectively. It was highlighted by respondents that, grants paid by the government were mostly inadequate.”* (Head of School). This, therefore, affects the completion of some of the programmes by the schools.

The lack of adequate finance coupled with the delay in the release of these funds could comprise effective and quality education. According to Verspoor (2008), constrained by limited public revenue sub-Saharan countries implementing free secondary education tend to spread the same resources a relatively large number of students.

#### **4.5 Factors to enhance effective implementation**

Respondents were asked to indicate the measures they believe can enhance “effective implementation of the free SHS policy.” Respondents identified a number of issues that can enhance the effective implementation of the policy in the Dekyembuor district. These factors include the provision of infrastructure, recruitment of teachers, provision of teaching and

learning materials. Others also emphasized the need for more consultation with stakeholders to enhance the effective implementation of the policy (Deputy Minister for Education, Dr. Yaw Adu Twum). Depoliticization of education was also indicated by some of the respondents to enhance effective delivery of quality education delivery by senior high schools. Finally, some of the respondents expressed the need for

*“the government to allow parents who are able and willing to bear some portion of the funding like food and clothing to do so in order to cut down government expenses.”*

The foregoing issues clearly indicate that the free SHS programme is faced with significant constraints which not addressed can hamper effective quality education. The capital theory of school effectiveness has highlighted that for quality education to be enhanced depends greatly on the increased enrolment, adequate physical and material resources, adequate qualified teachers, adequate and prompt finance from government and, community and stakeholder support. Based on the findings gathered by study it is evident that whilst the free SHS programme has greatly increased enrolment levels in the senior high schools, reduced financial burden on parents and also promoted equitable access to education, there has not been the corresponding improvement in terms of infrastructure, adequate teachers, teaching and learning materials, which are very crucial for quality education to be enhanced (Director: Ministry of Education).

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a summary of the study and conclusion. The study examined the prospects and challenges of the free SHS programme implementation in Denkyemba District. Summary of key findings, conclusion from the findings are discussed in this chapter. The final part presents the recommendations from the achievement of effective implementation of the FSHS in Denkyemba District.

## 5.2 Summary of Key Findings

The first objective of the study was to examine the prospects of the free SHS programme in the Denkyembaour district. The study findings indicated that since the inception of the programme there have been positive signs of prospects in terms of increased enrolment of students, equitable access to education, reduction of a financial burden on parents, and recruitment of new teachers. In relation to the increased enrolment, the study discovered that the enrolments of students moving from junior high school to senior high schools in the district have appreciated since the introduction of the policy due to the non-payment of tuition and boarding fees by parents.

In addition, “equitable access to senior high education” has been greatly enhanced since tuition and boarding fees are all borne by the government students from both well to do families and poor families all have equal “access to senior high education.” The study further found that the policy has taken away a huge financial burden on parents since parents now do not pay any amount for their wards at the senior high school level. Furthermore, another prospect of the policy has to do with the recruitment of new teachers. The expectation increased enrolment of students necessitates the recruitment of more teachers to enhance effective teaching and learning. Thus, indirectly the policy would create jobs for unemployed qualified trained teachers.

The study further finds several challenges in the implementation of the free SHS policy in the district. The study found that a key challenge was inadequate infrastructure in the senior high schools in the district. The increasing enrolment of students into senior high has not been met with necessary infrastructure and other facilities causing overcrowding and congestion. Another challenge is the inadequate supply of teaching and learning materials which was affecting effective teaching and learning activities in the district. The study also found inadequate as teachers another challenge of the free SHS policy. It was evident that the increased enrolment in

senior schools has brought a heavy workload on teachers. Subsequently, inadequacy and delay in the payment of grants by the government were also highlighted as affecting the effective management of the senior high schools in the district. Delays in the release of funds affected the timely implementation of programmes of the schools.

Finally, the study revealed effective measures of implementing the free SHS policy in the district. These include, but not limited to, the provision of infrastructure, recruitment of teachers, provision of teaching and learning materials. Others are the need for more consultation with stakeholders to enhance the effective implementation of the policy. The de-politicization of education was also found to enhance effective delivery of quality education delivery by senior high schools. Finally, there is the need for the government to allow parents who are able and willing to bear some portion of the funding like food and clothing to do so in order to cut down government expenses.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Having examined the implementation of the free SHS policy in the Denkyembaour district, and based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made to enhance effective implementation of the policy:

- The government needs to speed up the expansion of infrastructural facilities in senior high schools in the Denkyembaour district and all other districts in the country considering the transition rates of students from basic level to the senior high level.
- With a large number of unemployed trained teachers, there is need the for the government to recruit more teachers to meet the growing numbers of students in the senior high schools and also offload the heavy workload on the teachers.

- The government should also ensure timely and adequate payment of grants to the various schools in the district so that the schools can meet their needs and execute their programmes on time. Such as teaching and learning materials should be readily and timely supplied to enhance teaching and learning activities effectively in schools in the district. Also, head teachers should be proactive in partnering with civil society groups for support in relation to teaching and learning materials such as laboratory equipment, library, computer accessories etc.
- Management of the various schools should reach out to community, Parents and Teacher Associations and other stakeholders for voluntary support and projects that will enhance the capacity of the schools in promoting quality education service delivery. They should be part take in the decision-making process as far as the development issues of the schools are concerned.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

The study, therefore, concludes that though the free SHS policy has enhanced enrolment into senior high schools as a result of equitable access, without the corresponding government provisions in terms of infrastructural, physical and material resources would have a negative effect on the quality of education.

## REFERENCES

- Adu-Gyamfi, S., Donkoh, W. J. & Addo, A. A. (2016). Educational Reforms in Ghana: Past and Present. *Journal of Education and Human Development*. 5(3), 158-172.
- Aluko, J.O., and Adan, A. (2015). Constraints of Implementing Free Secondary Education in Mandera West Sub-County, Mandera County, Kenya. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6, 102-111. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1082462.pdf>
- Ampramtwum, E., Awal, M. & Oduro, F. (2016). 'How politics shape the quality of education in Ghana'. *ESID Working Paper*.
- Bennett, S., Myatt, M., Jolley, D., & Radalowicz, A. (2001). Data Management for Surveys and Trials. A Practical Primer Using EpiData.
- Berman, P. (1978). The study of macro and micro implementation of social policy.
- Bruns, B, A. Mingat, and R. Rakotomalala. (2003). "Achieving Universal Primary Education

- Bryman, A., Becker, S., & Sempik, J. (2008). Quality criteria for quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research: A view from social policy. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 11(4), 261-276.
- Creswell, W.J. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. SAGE Publications Inc
- Ekpe, I. R., K. (2012) "Abolition of School Fees in Ghanaian Basic Schools". Quality Issues at By 2015: A chance for every child". Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Goldin, C. (2001). *The Human Capital Century and American Leadership: Virtues of the Past*. NBER Working Paper No. 8239, National Bureau for Economic Research, Cambridge, MA.
- Hargreaves, D. H. (2001). A Capital Theory of School Effectiveness and Improvement, *British Educational Research Journal*, 27(4), 487-503
- Hopkin, J. (2001). Bringing the members back in? Democratizing candidate selection in Britain and Spain. *Party politics*, 7(3), 343-361
- Kalunda, L.M. and Otanga, H. (2015) Challenges in Provision of Free Primary Education in Public Primary Schools in Mombasa County, Kenya. *International Journal of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education*, 2, 62-72.
- Korpi, W. (1989). Power, politics, and state autonomy in the development of social citizenship: Social rights during sickness in eighteen OECD countries since 1930. *American sociological review*, 309-328
- Lewin, K. M. (2008). *Strategies for Sustainable Financing of Secondary Education in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Denzin, N. K. (Eds.). (2000). *The handbook of qualitative research*. Sage. Policy and Implementation Level.
- Mazmanian, D. A., and Sabatier, P. A. (1989). *Implementation and Public Policy*. Lanham: University Press of America.
- Moon, B. & Mayes, A. S. (1994). *Teaching and Learning in Secondary Schools*. London: Routledge.
- Morojele, P. (2012). Implementing Free Primary Education in Lesotho: Issues and Challenges. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 32, 37-45.

- Nyaga, B. M. (2005). Effects of Delayed Fees Payments on the Teaching and Learning Process in Public Secondary Schools in Mbeere District, Kenya; Unpublished MEd Thesis, Kenyatta University.
- O'Toole Jr, L. J. (2000). Research on policy implementation: Assessment and prospects. *Journal of public administration research and theory*, 10(2), 263-288.
- Oyaro, K. (2008). *Free Secondary Schooling Policy Faces Testing Times*: Inter-Press News Agency.
- Psacharopoulos, G. (1989). Time trends of the returns to education: Cross-national evidence. *Economics of Education Review*, 8(3), 225-231.
- Pressman, J. L., and Wildavsky, A. B. (1973). *Implementation*. Berkeley: University of California.
- UNESCO (2005). *Global Monitoring Report: The Role of the Organization and Social Context of Schools*. <http://portal.org/education>.
- UNESCO (2000). *Informe Final, Foro Mundial Sobre la Educacion*, Dakar, Senegal.
- Van Meter, D. S., & Van Horn, C. E. (1975). The Policy Implementation Process: A Conceptual Framework. *Administration and Society* 6(4), 445-448.
- Verspoor, A. (2008a). *At the Crossroads: Choices for Secondary Education in Sub Saharan Africa*; Washington DC: The World Bank.
- Verspoor, A. (2008b). *The Power of Public-Private Partnership: Coming Together for Secondary Education in Africa*, Paris: Association for the Development of Education in Africa, Available at [www.adeanet.org](http://www.adeanet.org)
- Winter, Soren C.(2003). *Political Control, Street-Level Bureaucrats and Information Asymmetry in Regulatory and Social Policies*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management held in Washington, DC, 6-8 November. Danish National Institute of Social Research, Copenhagen.
- World Bank (2007). *Recruiting, Retaining, and Retraining Secondary School Teachers and Principals in Sub-Saharan Africa*. World Bank Working Paper No. 99. Washington, D.C.
- World Bank (2005). *Expanding Opportunities and Building Competencies for Young People: A New Agenda for Secondary Education*, Washington D.C.: World Bank

World Bank (2008). *World Development Indicators*, Washington D.C: World Bank

## **Appendix**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

This interview guide is prepared by a student to undertake research on the prospects and challenges of the implementation of the FSHS policy programme in the Denkyembaour District in Ghana.

### **BIODATA**

1. Gender: Male [ ] Female[ ]
2. Age.....
3. Educational Level.....
4. Occupation (Please specify).....
5. Department/ Unit.....
6. Position (if applicable).....
7. Number of years in the position .....

**Prospects of Free SHS Program**

8. In order of importance, mention two benefits of the Free Senior High School program in Ghana?
9. Please state two ways by which all Senior High Schools in the District are benefiting from the policy?
10. Are there enough physical facilities available to ensure the quality of education in the District?
11. Please give 2 reasons?
12. Has the FSHS implementation affected the adequacy of infrastructure?
13. Please give two reasons for your answer?
14. What has been the effect of the introduction of the Free SHS program on enrolment trend in senior high schools in Dekyembour District?
15. State the main effect on the quality of education in the District since the implementation of the program?
16. How has the implementation of Free Senior High School policy impacted on education at the Denkyebour District?

17. How will you describe the adequacy of teaching and learning resources available to ensure the quality of education in the Denkyemba District?

**Challenges of the Free SHS Program**

1. Mention 3 challenges facing the implementation of the FSHS in Denkyemba District?
2. Explain how each of the ..... is a challenge?
3. Mention 3 key stakeholders in the implementation of the policy?
4. Explain the views of each?
5. State 1 challenge each face by the stakeholder?

**Factors to Enhance Implementation of the FSHS program**

1. State 3 ways by which the above challenge may be addressed?
2. State 2 ways to enhance stakeholder participation?
3. In your own view, state 2 ways of improving the implementation of the FSHS policy in this District?