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COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR POOR CHILDREN: A CASE STUDY OF COMPASSION  
INTERNATIONAL IN THE AGBOGBA COMMUNITY, GHANA

BY

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# **DEDICATION**

To

My friends and family with love

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## **ABSTRACT**

Education has been recognized as an important tool in reducing poverty, especially due to its intergenerational effects. Thus poverty reduction efforts have often targeted the educational sector with national governments leading the way. Government interventions have however been unable to adequately ensure educational access for all. As a result, Non-Governmental Organisations such as Compassion International (CI) have stepped in to provide complementary programmes to make education attainable to poor children.

The research aims to analyse the role of personal characteristics (gender, parent's education, family size, school type) and membership to the Compassion International (CI) intervention to explain the difference in educational attainment of students in Agbogba. In order to achieve this aim, data was collected on students' performance and personal characteristics for 162 students between the ages of 15-19 in the Agbogba community. These constitute two groups of students: one group that are beneficiaries of the CI intervention and another that did not benefit from the intervention. Regression methods are applied to identify the roles of these factors for the two groups of students. Results show that parental education and being on the intervention are important determinants of school performance, with positive and negative association, respectively, with performance on the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). Further analysis showed however that lower BECE scores of beneficiaries of the intervention did not impede their educational progress, and that CI actually improved the participants' progress holistically.

## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
CI	Compassion International
FCUBE	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
GLSS	Ghana Living Standards Survey
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
IPA	Innovations for Poverty Action
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
SFL	School for Life
SHS	Senior High School
SSCE	Senior School Certificate Examination
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WASSCE	West African Senior School Certificate Examination

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.1 Introduction

In 2013, the World Bank reported that an estimated 10.7 percent of the world's population lives in extreme poverty. This percentage represents a staggering 767 million people living on less than US\$1.90 a day. The report also mentions that poverty is unequally distributed among the world's regions, with sub-Saharan Africa being the home of about half (389 million) of the world's extreme poor (World Bank, 2013). With such high levels of poverty in the region, Africa's growth is stunted in various aspects of socio-economic life. One of the many aspects of concern is the effect of poverty on children's development in the region. The UNICEF State of the World's Children Report predicts dire consequences for children in sub-Saharan Africa. According to the report by 2030 if development efforts are not put in place, children in sub-Saharan Africa will be 10 times more likely to die before their fifth birthdays than children in high-income countries, nine out of 10 children living in extreme poverty will live in sub-Saharan Africa and more than 30 million primary school aged children from sub-Saharan Africa will be out of school (UNICEF, 2016).

Poverty has severe consequences on children's psychosocial and physical wellbeing. Some physical problems including malnutrition, stunted growth and poor health are common among children from poor households. The lack of education or the lack of access to education further hampers their developmental prospects, leading to the incidence of intergenerational poverty (UNICEF, 2016). Education has therefore stood out as one of the strategies used to tackle child poverty in many countries.

At national levels, investments in education take many forms. These include education for all programmes in line with global agreements such as the Millennium Development Goals and provision of school supports such as school feeding, uniforms and books.

The problem of hidden costs when government programmes are poorly funded creates a hindrance to education for children from low economic backgrounds. The cost of education often prevents children from low economic backgrounds from attaining higher education such as the Senior High School level. It is estimated that about 20% of students admitted into Senior High School in Ghana did not enroll, with many citing costs of fees as the reason (Ajayi, 2014).

The involvement of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in poverty interventions to support national efforts has become a common feature of the development process in Ghana. One of such organisations is Compassion International (CI), a Christian-based organisation that engages in child poverty intervention and child protection advocacy, with the aim "...to release them [children] from their spiritual, economic, social and physical poverty and enable them to become responsible and fulfilled Christian adults."(Compassion International, 2017c). The CI model combines various approaches that have been used or tested by government in its effort to tackle childhood poverty through education. As part of its aim to release children from poverty, CI provides beneficiary children with educational support by covering extra costs of education, such as school uniforms, books and part payment of school bills.

In view of the on-going debate on the efficacy of poverty alleviation interventions, the present study evaluates Compassion International's effort to reduce child poverty through their Christian based education intensive intervention. Using a mixed methods approach the study assesses the effect of the CI intervention on the educational performance and educational progress of students who have been in the CI programme in Agbogba over the period of 10 years. This study seeks to ascertain whether the intervention has succeeded in making education accessible to children in the programme as it aims towards the broader aim of releasing them from poverty.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

A high incidence of child poverty persists in Ghana despite national interventions (GSS et al 2006 cited in Mba et al, 2009). In the case of Ghana, findings of the 2006 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey showed the levels of multiple deprivations that children suffered. Education proved to be the second highest deprivation that children suffered at 30.1 percent (GSS et al 2006 cited in Mba et al, 2009). In 2014, poverty was found to be higher among households whose heads were uneducated. Poverty levels had an inverse relationship with level of education of household head. "More than a third of household heads with no education are poor compared with 15.7 of those with a BECE and 8 percent of those with a secondary education". Households headed by uneducated heads made up 72.4 percent of the national poverty incidence. (GLSS6, 2014)

Education has been recognized as an important tool in reducing poverty, especially due to its intergenerational effects (Lee, Hill, & Hawkins, 2012 and Janjua & Kamal, 2011). Thus poverty reduction efforts have often targeted the educational sector. This brings up the question of what

works in child poverty intervention. Both international bodies (UN, UNICEF, World Bank) and national governments have highlighted education as important in poverty reduction but government efforts have been insufficient in ensuring that all children, including the poor have access to education. The involvement of NGOs such as Compassion International has the potential of helping poor children gain access to education by providing support to cover educational needs and hidden costs. In view of this, this study examines the effect of the intervention on the educational performance and educational progress of children who have received the intervention. The children involved in the study are beneficiaries of the Compassion International Project in Agbogba, namely the Bethesda Methodist Child Development Centre. The study poses the following questions:

### **1.3 Research Questions**

1. What are the strategies used by Compassion International in Childhood poverty alleviation?
2. What are the effects of Compassion International's intervention on educational performance and progress?

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

1. To investigate the strategies used by Compassion International in childhood poverty alleviation.
2. To assess the effects of the intervention on educational performance and progress.

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The research presents the opportunity to compare and contrast best approaches in poverty reduction. In view of this, this study looks at the educational approach used by Compassion International in reducing childhood poverty and what this approach contributes to our understanding of what works. Compassion International has been working in Ghana since 2005 (Compassion International, 2017b). This research will be useful in providing literature on the work that the organisation does in reducing childhood poverty. Also the research will be an addition to the literature on NGO work in Ghana, specifically among those that engage in child welfare.

## **1.6 Organization of Study**

The study is sectioned into five chapters.

Chapter two – The literature review is discussed in four sections. The first part provides a background to the Compassion International Intervention. The second part reviews literature on national efforts to reduce childhood poverty. This part concentrates on sub-Saharan Africa and especially Ghana. The third part reviews literature on the contribution of NGOs in improving access to education for poor children and the relationship between educational interventions and educational attainment. The final section reviews the literature on factors that affect educational attainment of students.

Chapter three- The methodology covered in this chapter outlines the whole process of the research, including a description of the research site, research design and techniques, and sampling strategies. The methodology also describes the method used in analyzing the data.

Chapter four – Data Analysis and Discussion- In this chapter the findings from the research are presented and discussed in line with the research questions and existing literature.

Chapter five- Conclusion. This chapter includes a summary of the research, concluding chapters and policy recommendations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews the literature on the poverty alleviation strategies used by Compassion International and other developing countries. The focus of the literature review is on the educational aspects of childhood poverty alleviation strategies and the known impacts on children's educational achievement. The review relies on both conceptual and empirical evidence to draw out assumptions on factors that affect childhood poverty. The review provides a description of the Compassion International programme. This is followed by a critique of other childhood poverty programmes that are run by national governments, with a focus on Ghana. The next section discusses the factors that affects educational performance and justifies the need for interventions in childhood poverty. The final section provides a discussion on the conceptual bases of the research and includes a conceptual framework which shows the relationship between education and poverty alleviation.

#### **2.2 The Compassion International Programme**

Compassion International is a faith-based child development and advocacy organization which started in 1952 with Evangelist Everett Swanson. The organization engages in childhood poverty intervention in developing countries with the stated goal of "Releasing children from Poverty". This involves helping children develop in all spheres of their lives, whether physical, spiritual, social or emotional. Thus the programme provides children in selected communities with food supplies, and educational and health support. Children enrolled in the programme receive a variety

of benefits such as school uniforms, school supplies and routine health screening. Some projects also engage in early life interventions by providing mothers with resources and training to take care of their babies and young children. Also there is an emergency fund set aside for critical situations. In the case where a child suffers from a life threatening illness, this fund is accessed by the project and used to pay for the treatment. Other uses for this fund include "...providing safe drinking water, distributing mosquito nets, funding life-saving surgery, setting up programmes to prevent malnutrition and providing emergency relief after a disaster" (Compassion International, 2017c). In addition children receive spiritual guidance, mentoring and leadership training to help them become empowered adults (Compassion International, 2017c). Thus the aim of Compassion International is to provide holistic developmental support to poor children and not just a focus on educational achievement.

Compassion exists in 40 countries. These include "14 independent fundraising partner countries and 26 implementing partner countries in the developing world" (Compassion International, 2017c). In each of the implementing countries, local churches partner with Compassion International to run project centres. Children are then enrolled onto the local project and linked with a sponsor from a fundraising partner country. A separate fund is set aside to cater for enrolled children who do not yet have sponsors. The number of children enrolled is limited by the number of available sponsors (Compassion International, 2017c). Sponsors correspond with children through letters and they receive annual updates of the child from local Compassion Staff. These updates include a current picture and school progress of the child (Wydick, Glewwe, & Rutledge, 2013).

Central to the Compassion International programme is the religious/faith based and educational component. A manual published in Compassion Ireland in 2017 stated that the local church. "...is uniquely qualified to understand the real needs of the community and reach the children in poverty who need care" and education is a means of providing children with the skills to become economically self-supporting (Compassion International, 2017a).

### **2.3 Childhood Poverty Reduction in Ghana**

Studies in Ghana have shown that poverty reduction interventions face several challenges at the implementation stage, leading to reduced effectiveness. For example implementation challenges were discovered by Handa et al. (2013) in an impact evaluation of the Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty (LEAP) programme in Ghana. The evaluation strategy used was a longitudinal propensity score matching (PSM) design. Participants of the study were selected and grouped into matched samples of treatment and comparison groups. Selected participants were then interviewed at two time periods to measure changes in outcomes across the two groups (treatment and comparison groups). A multivariate analysis was used to arrive at the following conclusions. Irregular payment cycles were the main limitations of implementation. Irregular payment was linked to a zero impact of the programme on household consumption. Despite its limitations, Handa reports that LEAP had a positive impact on children's schooling. The programme increased secondary school enrolment, and reduced grade repetition and absenteeism among children of beneficiary families (Handa et al., 2013) .

Most poverty intervention programmes run by government are not targeted specifically to address childhood poverty. Even when they are targeted at children, their effectiveness has been reduced due to the lack of available data that adequately distinguishes between child and adult poverty. In a study by Addaney (2016) the researcher analysed national sample surveys and policy reports, on child poverty and social protection in Ghana. From the analysis the researcher deduced that social protection programmes such as the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty, School Feeding, National Health Insurance Scheme and Supplementary school feeding programmes and take-home rations for girls had not yielded “meaningful impact” on child poverty due to the lack of clarity on the specific targets of the programmes. An evaluation of the strategies adopted in each of the above mentioned social protection programmes attributed their reduced impact to “failure of most poverty profiles, mappings and evaluations to distinguish between child and adult poverty” (Addaney, 2016, p1 in Policy,R.S.P., 2016) ). Finally the study recommends that child-focussed social protection programmes should be based on evidence, should involve the child in the planning process, ensure the rights of the child and be aimed towards the development of the child, as these affect the overall effectiveness of such programmes. (Addaney 2016)

Consequently poverty reduction interventions in Ghana have generally been more successful at reducing adult poverty than childhood poverty. Hague et al. (2016) studied child poverty and inequality in Ghana, through a content analysis of the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS 2013). Results on poverty were reported based on the two poverty lines issued by the Ghana Statistical Service. These were the upper and lower poverty lines of GHC 1314 and GHC 792.0, representing those living in poverty and extreme poverty respectively. The results of the study showed that children experienced a worse depth of poverty than adults did. Also the rate of poverty

reduction among children was found to be slower than for adults, with consumption levels being lower in households with children. The study however mentioned that although growth in income was generally lower for children than for households as a whole, significant growth in income occurred among the “ultra-poor, especially for households with children and those in urban areas”. This may be explained by the fact that most poverty interventions target the poorest groups (Hague et al, 2016).

A few national programmes like the Ghana School Feeding Programme however exist which target children. The Ghana School Feeding Programme was started as a pilot project in September 2005. One of the goals of this programme was to increase school enrolment, attendance and retention in primary schools. As reported in Buhl (2012) and Atta and Manu ( 2015), the implementation of the School Feeding Programme, took two approaches. The first approach was to provide take home rations for girls in deprived communities in the three northern regions. The second approach was to provide one hot meal per school day to primary school children using locally grown food products. The free Senior High School policy of 2017 is the most recent of educational policies that the government of Ghana has put in place to remove the barrier of cost to acquiring secondary education. In a statement published by the Ministry of Education on the purpose of the programme it alludes to the ultimate goal of “enhance the human capital base of the country by making Secondary Education the minimum academic qualification in Ghana” (Prempeh, 2017, p 20).

Another example of programmes which place children at the centre of the intervention is the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) programme in Ghana. This programme aims at

ensuring that all children of school going age are enrolled at the basic level without discrimination. Other educational investments have focused on the provision of skills training to participants. Such programmes are in the form of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and adult education programmes which are sometimes linked to business and entrepreneurial training. In Ghana, the government instituted the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) policy in 1995 to ensure that all children had access to education. This was followed by the school feeding programme and also by the capitation grant, a government subsidy paid to schools to cover extra costs.

These endeavors to tackle poverty by improving access to education have not been without challenges. Ghana's Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) educational programme has been fraught with problems. The programme was criticized for not providing enough inputs to remove all forms of fees. Government funding was found to be unreliable and school management had to find other ways of maintaining the schools. This led to the levying of extra charges to households. Households then had to cover all indirect costs associated with attending school. Although overall enrollment in school increased, this was later followed by high dropout rates and low retention rates especially among children from the poorest households who benefited the least from the programme (Akyeampong, 2009).

The school feeding programme also achieved the goal of increased school enrollments, but faced sustainability problems. This was due to the fact that like most poverty intervention programmes, the school feeding programme was donor-dependent hence when donor funding dwindled the

government of Ghana as sole sponsor had challenges sustaining the programme. The high cost of maintaining the programme has led to erratic disbursements of funds to participating schools (Atta & Manu, 2015). The free SHS policy has faced similar criticisms of sustainability considering the high costs involved in running the programme.

The problems that educational interventions face have implications for children, especially those from low socioeconomic backgrounds. In Ghana progress from basic education to secondary education is dependent upon passing the Basic Education Certificate Examination. Students who obtain passing grades qualify for Senior High School admission based on a computer placement system, while students who do not pass are ineligible to continue into Senior High School although they have the opportunity to retake the exam until they pass. Under this system, children from low income families are vulnerable to being excluded from attaining higher education for the following reason. While education is accompanied by several costs such as books, uniforms, and learning materials, children from low income backgrounds are often unable to afford these things, leading to a lower quality of education if they are able to access it at all. According to Ajayi (2014) only about 60% of students who take the BECE pass, meaning that a large number of students are unable to continue their education due to poor performance.

#### **2.4 Non-Governmental Organizations and Poverty Reduction**

Non- governmental organizations play an important role in poverty reduction in many countries, through providing supportive services to already existing government interventions. In the area of education this role may be in the provision of school uniforms, textbooks and other hidden costs.

In an assessment of the ‘School for Life’ (SFL) education project, Akyeampong (2004, p2) stated:

“The inability of many governments to institutionalize strategies that respond satisfactorily to the challenges of improving access to quality basic education in poor deprived areas has provided the *raison d`etre* for NGOs and other aid organizations to jump in with a host of interventions.”

He mentioned that NGOs had the added advantage of sufficient funds and a better understanding of practical issues on the ground, and thus they could provide more tailored solutions to tackling poverty. A disadvantage was the unsustainability of NGO interventions after the project period is phased out. Akyeampong concluded that there was the need for NGOs to work together with local government in order to ensure sustainability of projects(Akyeampong, 2004).

Wydick et al (2003) conducted a study of impacts on adult life outcomes of the Compassion International intervention. Data for the research were collected from 10,144 individuals over 2 years from six developing countries that ran the Compassion International intervention namely, Bolivia, Guatemala, India, Kenya, the Philippines, and Uganda. Using regression models to estimate effects of the intervention, the researchers found positive impacts on years of schooling, school completion at primary, secondary and tertiary levels and also the probability of being employed as highly skilled labour (Wydick et al., 2013).

A social experiment conducted by Duflo et al (2008) investigated the impact of free secondary education on Ghanaian children who were awarded Senior High School scholarships by Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA). In the study 2064 Ghanaian students who had gained

admission into secondary schools but could not enroll (mostly due to lack of funds) were selected for the study. Of the sample, 682 were awarded scholarships by lottery, while the rest did not receive scholarship. Baseline and follow-up data was collected until 2016 to record impacts of the scholarship by age 25. An analysis of the data collected showed that scholarship recipients were more likely to complete secondary school, acquired more years of schooling and scored higher on a reading and mathematics test (Duflo, Dupas, & Kremer, 2016).

From the above literature, NGO's interventions have been shown to have positive impacts on their beneficiaries due to an increased support offered by such NGO's. A major problem with such support is the issue of sustainability where an intervention ends when these NGO's leave the area where they operate at the end of the project phase. In many cases, beneficiaries having lost this support, often fall back to their previous state of deprivation.

## **2.5 Factors Affecting Educational Attainment**

Poverty has far-reaching effects on children's wellbeing. Children have a peculiar experience of poverty due to their vulnerability and immaturity and the need to depend on others for their sustenance (Mba et al., 2009). Thus more children experience extreme forms of poverty than adults, with children constituting about half of the nearly 900 million people living on less than US\$1.90 a day (UNICEF, 2016). This is even more critical when it comes to the provision of resources to allow the child access to education. Evidence of this assertion can be found in a study by Andrew and Odroho (2014) which explored the relationship between socio-economic factors and pupils' access to education. Data was collected from 114 participants, including 6 head teachers, 48 teachers and 60 parents using surveys and interviews. Results of a Pearson correlation analysis identified parents' ability to finance fees as an important socio-economic factor affecting

children's access to education. The other socio-economic factors were parents' educational level, adequacy of physical educational resources, and occupation of parents (Andrew & Orodho, 2014)

Aside the ability to afford education, several factors affect students' educational attainment. These factors are related to academic performance and they include gender, family background and type or quality of school attended. In a study by Farooq et al, (2011), to investigate the factors that affected the academic performance of secondary school students, 600 10<sup>th</sup> grade students in Pakistan were selected to participate in a survey. Academic performance was measured by their 9<sup>th</sup> grade annual examination results. From a standard t-test and ANOVA analysis, socio-economic status (SES) and parents' education were found to have a significant effect on students' academic achievement (Farooq, Chaudhry, Shafiq, & Berhanu, 2011).

Another study which used a national cross sectional data, comprising of 868 students (436 females and 433 males), and aged between 8-12 year olds showed the influence of parents' education and family income on child achievement. The researcher used structural equation modeling techniques to show that parents' years of schooling were an important determinant of children's academic achievement and this manifests through parents' beliefs and behaviours (Davis-Kean, 2005)

Family size has also shown to have an effect on childhood poverty. In a study that examined the relationship between family size and academic achievement of students in Trankei, South Africa, children in the ages of 13-17 years old were selected randomly from a stratified sample of 14,765 males and 26, 109 females. Selected students were in standard nine level of education. A

questionnaire was designed to establish family size of students and academic achievement was measured by student grades in selected subjects on the Standard 7 external examination. Analysis of the data showed a significant and negative relationship between family size and educational achievement (Cherian, 1990). Thus the bigger the family size the higher is the likelihood of children scoring lower grades in school.

A similar study in Calabar, Nigeria, investigated the influence of family size and family type on students' academic performance in government. The study used a simple random sampling technique to select 200 students in Senior High School from six public secondary schools. The results from a one way analysis of variance test revealed a significant influence of family size and family type on academic performance of secondary school students. The findings showed that when families were actively involved in the education of students there seems to be a positive impact on education regardless of family size (Ella, Odok, & Ella, 2015).

Studies on gender have shown variations in educational performance due to gender based experiences of learners. A study by Amuda, Ali, & Durkwa (2016) sought to investigate how gender difference determined academic performance in SSCE economics subject among senior secondary school students from 2006 to 2010 sessions in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria. Using a purposive sampling technique, WASSCE results from 5679 male students and 3020 female students were used to establish how students scored based on their gender. The results of the analysis revealed that male students in senior secondary schools in Maiduguri metropolis

have better grades than their female counterpart in economics for 2006-2010 sessions. (Amuda, Ali, & Durkwa, 2016).

A focus on school type and academic performance in a study conducted in Indonesia with junior secondary school students (grades 7–9) provides insights into the relevance of the type of school in enhancing academic performance. In that study public school graduates from both religious and secular schools were compared based on their results. The findings showed that Muslim private schools, including Madrassahs, fare no worse on average than students attending secular private. After controlling for a wide variety of characteristics the researcher found an indirect evidence that higher-quality inputs at public junior secondary schools promotes higher performance regardless of the school type (Newhouse & Beegle, 2006).

Several factors have been shown to influence children's performance in school. These include gender, family background and type or quality of school attended. However, poverty turns out to exacerbate the problems and hidden factors that hinder progress and performance of school children. When programmes that seek to alleviate childhood poverty do not take these challenges into consideration, the effectiveness of these programmes are reduced. This has called for more comprehensive programmes that take into consideration the specific needs of communities and the individual in addressing childhood poverty. The Compassion International programmes is one such programme that is child-focused and community-based. It projects a holistic idea for child development and promises a need-centered approach for dealing with childhood poverty. The

research investigates the impact of the Compassion International intervention on beneficiaries' educational attainment taking into consideration, the effects of individual factors such as gender, family background and type or quality of school attended.

## **2.6 Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual bases for this research are Amartya Sen's Human Capabilities approach and the human development perspectives. According to (Sen, 2014) human development must be seen as a process of expanding the capabilities of people.

He introduced the concept of functionings, "what people do or can do with the commodities of given characteristics that they come to possess or control" (Todaro & Smith, 2012, p 16); and concept of capabilities: "the freedoms that people have, given their personal features and their command over commodities"(Todaro & Smith, 2012, p 19) to explain the goal of development of reducing poverty in order to achieve human wellbeing. This goal exceeds that of human capital theories of increasing incomes or the ability to earn higher incomes. Thus the goal of poverty reduction strategies should not end with the reduction of income poverty as income poverty forms only a part of overall poverty. In studying the effects of poverty on livelihoods, all aspects of human life should be considered. The human development perspective influenced by Amartya Sen's work incorporates this assertion in the theory.

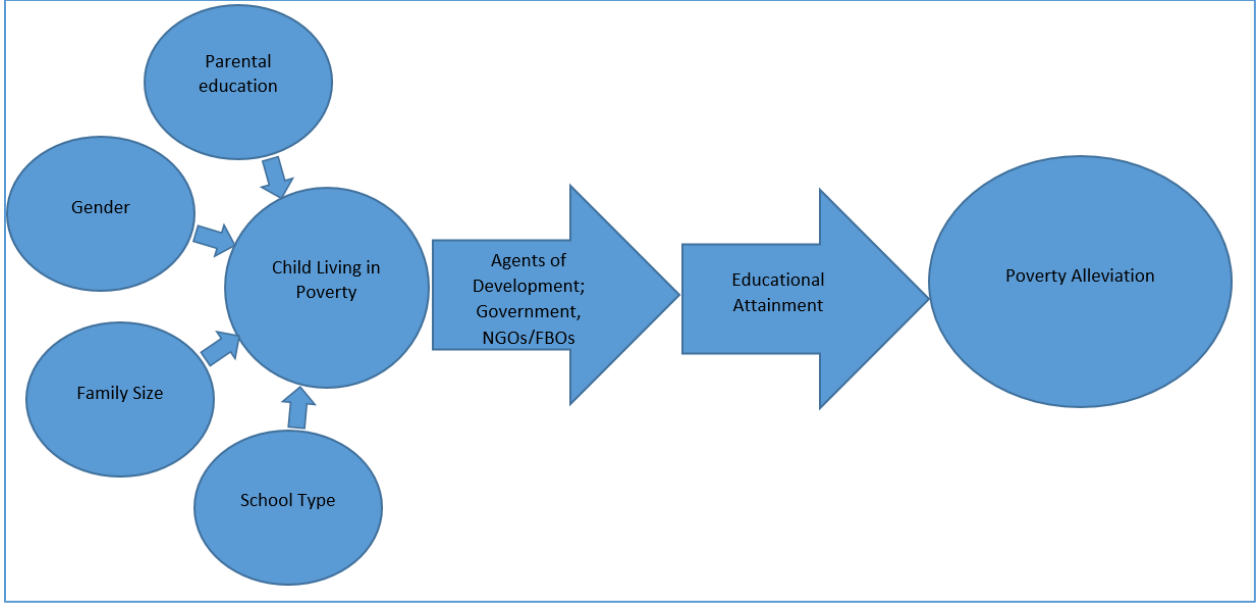
The 2010 Human Development report defines human development as "the expansion of people's freedoms to live long, healthy and creative lives; to advance other goals they have reason to value; and to engage actively in shaping development equitably and sustainably on a shared planet"(Klugman, 2010, p 2). In other words, development should be a holistic process that

involves providing the environment for people to be empowered and to gain the abilities to shape their own lives. It is not enough that people have their basic needs met but it is also important for people to have the ability to choose what kind of capabilities they possess and how to apply those capabilities to their own benefit (Deneulin, 2009). In this case being educated provides one with the abilities to overcome poverty. Also being educated implies higher earning capabilities due to higher skills and leads to a better quality of life. Based on the Human Development Perspective, education then is not only a means to end poverty but an end in itself (Deneulin, 2009). Development organisations such as the UNDP, UN, UNICEF and World Bank have reiterated the importance of education in the goal of reducing worldwide poverty and for good reason. Individual studies by each of these organisations have shown poverty alleviating effects of education to varying degrees. Also an important benefit of education is its effectiveness in ending intergenerational poverty (UNICEF, 2016).

While education has been shown to be an effective way of reducing poverty, it is not easily attained, especially for the poor. Poverty limits access to education ( Field, (2000) and Hossain & Zeitlyn, (2010) ) . Even in instances where there is affordable or free education available, it is usually limited to basic education and of poorer quality due to the low level of funds invested in such interventions. Thus children from poor families are often unable to access higher education due to higher costs. Also the quality of education or skills received affects the intervening effects of education on poverty (Ahmad, 2003).The implications of this fact is that while education may be a helpful tool in overcoming poverty, low levels of income may be an inhibiting factor in accessing good quality education.

Intervening or antipoverty strategies such as government programmes, together with NGO interventions such as the Compassion International help strengthen poor people’s capabilities through improved access. The following is a conceptual framework showing the relationship between factors that affect educational attainment, agents of development and poverty alleviation.

Fig 2.1: Relationship between factors affecting educational attainment, agents of development and poverty alleviation.



From the above diagram, several factors affect the educational attainment of children living in poverty. These include gender, family size, parental education and school type. These factors inhibit the child’s attainment of quality education, and are capable of sufficiently alleviating poverty and breaking the poverty cycle. NGO’s such as Compassion International help children achieve their educational goals by reducing the impact of these inhibiting factors. When a child is able to get an education, their developmental prospects are greatly improved. Education increases

individual skills and the probability of getting higher income through getting higher paid jobs. Thus education, among other poverty intervention strategies, has the added advantage of empowering children from poor backgrounds to overcome current poverty and also to end the generational cycle.

Based on the above, the following are expected from the study.

1. Children who are beneficiaries of the CI intervention are more likely to perform better on the BECE than children who are not beneficiaries of the intervention
2. Children whose parents have higher education are more likely to perform better in the BECE than children whose parents have lower education
3. Children who have smaller family sizes are more likely to perform better in the BECE than children who are not beneficiaries of the intervention.
4. Children who go to private schools are more likely to perform better on the BECE than children who go to public schools.
5. Males will perform better than females in the BECE.

For the purpose of the present study, and based on the literature reviewed, the following are the main hypotheses.

Null Hypothesis 1: There is no difference in BECE results between children who are in the CI intervention and those who are not on the CI intervention

Alternative Hypothesis 1: Children who are beneficiaries of the CI intervention will perform better in the BECE than children who are not beneficiaries of the intervention.

Null Hypothesis 2: There is no difference in school progression between children who are in the CI intervention and those who are not on the CI intervention

Alternative Hypothesis 2: Children who are beneficiaries of the CI intervention will progress further in school than children who are not beneficiaries of the intervention.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the methods used to answer the research question postulated. A description of the analysis process is also provided in this chapter. The section also provides information on the location and a description of how the programme is run in the community. Also in this chapter the econometric model for the study is explained and terms and concepts are defined.

#### **3.2 Study Area**

The research was conducted in the Ga East Municipal Assembly, which is located at the northern part of the Greater Accra Region. It is one of the sixteen (16) districts in the Region and covers a land area of about 96 sq. km. The capital of the Municipal Assembly is Abokobi. The specific community where the research took place was Agbogba where the Compassion International Student Centre, named the Bethesda Methodist Child Development Centre is located.

Bethesda Methodist Child Development Centre, the case study, is a Compassion operated student centre in Agbogba, in the Ga East District of Accra. The centre was established in 2005 but registered its first group of children in 2006. Since then there have been two more enrollments in 2014 and 2015 as funding increased. Children enrolled in 2005 were between the ages 5-9, known to be from impoverished homes and or orphaned, lived in Agbogba Community or within 3km (10-30 minutes' walk) from the project location. A total of 200 children were selected based on

the above criteria. Currently the centre has 244 children enrolled. Like other project implementation centres, sponsored children gather on Saturdays where they participate in structured programmes based on the Compassion curriculum. In addition, children take part in extracurricular activities such as music, art, sports, jewellery and dressmaking. Most children are sponsored through secondary school and a few through to the university. Some beneficiaries prefer to learn a trade, such as carpentry and dressmaking through apprenticeship training at project approved centres. Such beneficiaries receive all tools and funds necessary for the training period and in addition, capital to start a business after the completion of their training period. Children are graduated out of the programme at age 22.

### **3.3 Research Design**

The research design for this study was a causal comparative research which utilizes a mixed method design. Its choice was based on its ability to aid comparison of different groups in order to investigate the effect of the intervention on beneficiaries. Data for the study was gathered from two categories of people. These two groups under study were differentiated by their membership to the Compassion International Intervention or otherwise.

### **3.4 Sampling**

#### *3.4.1 Selection of Project Beneficiaries*

A purposive sampling method was used to select participants for the survey. However, each selected participants had to meet a predetermined criteria obtained from the project implementers.

The sample collected from the compassion intervention for the research was based on the following criteria. First students selected were between the ages of 15 and 19. This is because this was the age category of children selected for the intervention 10 years ago. The first batch of selections that the Compassion International made were between the ages 5 to 9. However some beneficiaries who were older or younger were considered thus added to the sample as they were registered by the centre irrespective of their age. Also selected participants necessarily had to still be in the programme. A total of 75 children had exited the programme at the time of the research and so they were not included in the study. Another criterion was that students selected must have necessarily taken the BECE in order to generate data on their educational performance in the BECE. Based on these criteria a total of 76 individuals were identified and data was collected on them.

#### *3.4.2 Sampling Non-Beneficiaries*

To select the sample for non-beneficiaries of the intervention, the following criteria were used. Non-beneficiaries necessarily had to live in Agbogba, but were not selected for the intervention. They also should have written BECE and be between the ages of 15 and 19. Also they should be identified as coming from low income backgrounds. Participants were either nominated by social workers at the Compassion office or by some Compassion beneficiaries. Some of the students were also selected from schools that Compassion children usually attended. A total of 86 participants were included in this sample. In all 162 children took part in the survey. This sample was taken from a population size of 1165 young people in the Agbogba community between the ages of 15-19 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012).

Also 12 beneficiaries of the Compassion International intervention took part in a focus group discussion to discuss the impact of the intervention on their lives. A key informant interview with a staff at the project office was also conducted. Overall there were a total of 175 participants in the study in the study.

### **3.5 Sources and Type of Data**

Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected for the study. The qualitative data was sourced from secondary data from both the Compassion International website and the local project office where the study was conducted. Also primary qualitative data was collected from project staff and through both focus group discussions and interviews. The choice of the mixed method aided evaluation of data obtained from the varied sources used (i.e. primary quantitative and qualitative data).

Different types of interviews were used for the different categories of respondents. Key informant interviews were used in sourcing data from project staff and a focus group discussion was conducted to source data from beneficiaries of the intervention. The key informant interview was useful in providing background information about the implementation of the intervention in the project of interest. The focus group discussion with the selected beneficiaries provided information about beneficiaries' experience of the intervention and how it benefited them.

Document analysis involved sourcing data from the Compassion International website and the project office under study. Some data acquired from these sources included information about the structure of the intervention. Quantitative data was collected through a survey, using a

questionnaire designed to elicit information about gender, family background, school type and BECE scores.

### **3.6 Analysis of Data**

The quantitative data in this study was analyzed using three methods namely, t-test, Chi Square and regression analysis. The T-Test analysis was used to test for difference in mean BECE scores between beneficiaries of the Compassion programme and non-beneficiaries selected for the study. The regression analysis was used to test for the effects of other factors (namely, family size, parents' education, gender and school type) on performance. Regression analysis was used to test the effect of the intervention when the socioeconomic factors and personal characteristics of respondents are held constant.

Pearson's Chi-Square analysis was used to test for the differences in school progression between the two groups in this study- the CI beneficiaries and the comparison group.

To analyze the quantitative data, different themes were derived from the information collected. The information was then grouped into thematic areas with the use of tables and discussed according to the various topics identified.

### **3.5 Variable Descriptions and Measurement**

#### *3.5.1 Educational Performance*

The dependent variable, educational performance was measured by individual BECE aggregate scores of respondents. The BECE grades are based on the standard nine system where actual scores obtained in each of the various subjects are converted into equivalent grade scores, namely, 1, 2,

3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. The BECE aggregate score is calculated by adding grade scores obtained in the three core subjects, English, Mathematics and Science with the best three grade scores obtained in the other subjects. In effect, when the value of the aggregate score is large it depicts poor grades while lower aggregate values depict better grades. The lowest aggregate score that can be obtained is aggregate 06, where a student scored 1 in each of the core subjects and three other subjects.

Regarding the independent variables, a distinction was made between personal characteristics (gender, parents' educational level, family size and school type) and membership to the CI intervention.

### *3.5.2 Personal characteristics*

On gender, responses of whether or not respondents were male or female were collected and coded into the two categories, 0 for male and 1 for female.

### *3.5.3 Parent's education*

Respondents were asked to state parents educational level based on five levels; none, basic/primary, secondary and tertiary. Responses were coded to represent the educational levels of parents.

### *3.5.4 Family size*

Respondents were asked to state the number of people living in their household. The results of family size were presented as averages for each of the two groups, namely, beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. For school type, respondents were asked to state whether they attended public or private schools.

### *3.5.5 Membership of CI*

Membership to the CI is the main variable of interest. It was measured by responses to whether or not respondents belonged to the CI intervention. It is a dummy variable where 1 represented beneficiary of CI and zero otherwise.

### **3.6 A priori Expectations**

Based on the above discussion, the following are the expectations of the study.

- Beneficiaries of the intervention are expected to perform better in the BECE than non-beneficiaries of the intervention.
- Males are expected to perform better in the BECE than females.
- Respondents who have smaller family sizes are expected to perform better than respondents in larger family sizes.
- Respondents who go to private schools are expected to perform better in the BECE than respondents who go to public schools.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical standards were upheld to ensure sensitivity in collecting and presenting data. During the data collection process and analysis for this study informant's anonymity was upheld by using pseudo names and numbers to represent interviewees and respondents of the survey. Permission was sought from necessary authorities before the research was conducted. Informed consent was sought from interviewees.

### **3.8 Limitations of the study**

The main limitations of the study are related to the self-reporting of BECE results by non-beneficiary respondents, and the purposive selection of the comparison group for the research. These may have contributed to the differences observed in BECE aggregate scores between the two groups. Because the grades were self-reported there was the possibility of over estimation of the reported grades. The confidentiality surrounding the release and use of such official documents also posed a challenge in confirming the validity of the results through the educational authorities.

A possible solution to this problem would be to request beneficiaries to also report their grades, and then use the difference between actual and self-reported grades to correct possible upward biases in the self-reported non-beneficiary grades.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This study set out to examine the Compassion International programme as an educational based poverty intervention strategy to address childhood poverty. The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the strategies used by Compassion International in Childhood poverty alleviation?
2. What are the effects of Compassion International's intervention on educational performance and progress?

A mixed method approach was used in gathering data for the study. Qualitative methods, mainly interviews and document analysis, were used to examine the features of the programme and to compare it with other programmes run by the government. A quantitative approach was used to measure the effects of the programme on school performance and retention. The first section of this chapter presents findings on the features of the CI programme. The second section presents a description of the quantitative data used in this study. The third section presents results of a t-test analysis which tests the difference between mean BECE scores. This is followed by a results of a regression analysis which tests the effects of the intervention when socioeconomic and personal factors are held constant. Finally, results of a chi square analysis are presented showing the difference in school retention between the two groups.

## **4.2 Features of the CI programme - Compassion International's Education Based strategy in Agbogba**

A focus group discussion with selected compassion International beneficiaries elicited various views about the benefits of the intervention. Respondents provided their views on what was the most important of the benefits received, limitations of the intervention and how it can improve. The following are some responses beneficiaries gave to the question “What is the most important benefit of the Compassion International Intervention?”

“I know Compassion International is an NGO that has seen a lot of us through school. Like from primary school to university and we are progressing.” (Focus Group, 2016)

Another participant commented:

They are helping. At least they are paying your fees and for those who are in their final year they are organising classes for them and stuff and it's pushing you and there's also some motivation through words of encouragement and stuff even if we feel that there can be improvement (Focus Group, 2016).

Although beneficiaries confirmed that the support from CI was helpful in supporting their education and livelihood they also show the limitations that come with funding on the programme. Beneficiaries complained that the assistance given to them by way of direct financial support is inadequate. Some participant's in response to the issue of financial support said that:

Maybe you'll [need to] pay 1000 and they give you like 200. 200 is too small. Maybe you don't have money and you'll expect like 500 or 600 (Focus Group, 2016).

In reaction to the financial support another participant commented:

The fees if they're going to pay half for everyone then it's supposed to be for everyone because I don't understand why I pay almost 2500 and I am given 400. I appreciate it but....so something should be done about it (Focus Group, 2016).

From the above, beneficiaries confirmed educational support as one of the benefits of the compassion intervention. Some beneficiaries however mentioned that the amount provided by compassion as support was inadequate considering their needs. This concern was more common among students in higher levels of education where fees were much higher. A few also named health benefits as the most important especially when it involved life-saving health procedures. Two beneficiaries of the health care assistance programme in the focus group discussion confirmed they were given assistance in curing their ulcer and appendix surgery.

On the official website of Compassion International and in their annual reports they cite four strategies used in the implementation of the intervention. These are Child-Focused, Christ-Centered, Church-Based and a Commitment to Integrity. Compassion International cites the following reason for the areas chosen:

The local church creates an environment of unparalleled stability, giving children the opportunity to experience God's love and acceptance."... "Each sponsored child is equipped with the skills to be economically self-supporting. Alongside formal education, children are taught income-generating skills as well as cultivating their unique vocational interests (Focus Group, 2016).

The above emphasizes the fact that Compassion International is faith based and works through local churches (Compassion International, 2017a). These features together with their focus on the individual child implies that the intervention is targeted to directly meet the needs of poor children. The Compassion International 2015/2016 annual report showed that about 80 percent of all donor sponsorship goes to programmes that directly benefit the child.

In order to ensure that those who need the intervention are the ones who receive it, Compassion International developed a list of conditions that potential beneficiaries must satisfy. A document

analysis provided information on conditions for receiving educational support from Compassion International with the following stated criteria for selection of beneficiaries for the Compassion Programme: Child must be needy - low family income and low family assets; both Christians and non-Christians can be registered; both boys and girls (50% of quota from the church partner and 50% from the community); child must be between five (5) years and nine (9) years - this should be verified with birth/baptismal-certificates and should be brought along on registration day; child must live within 3km from the centre (10-30 minutes' walk).

According to a case worker at the Compassion office:

“We don't only accept brilliant but needy children. We take everyone....” (Nana Yaw, 2016)

Thus Compassion International does not provide the educational support based on academic performance of beneficiaries.

From the above the following deductions can be made. Education forms an important part of the intervention. This is in line with the United Nations sustainable development goal of ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all (Hackett, 2015). These deductions inform the nature of the intervention in two ways.

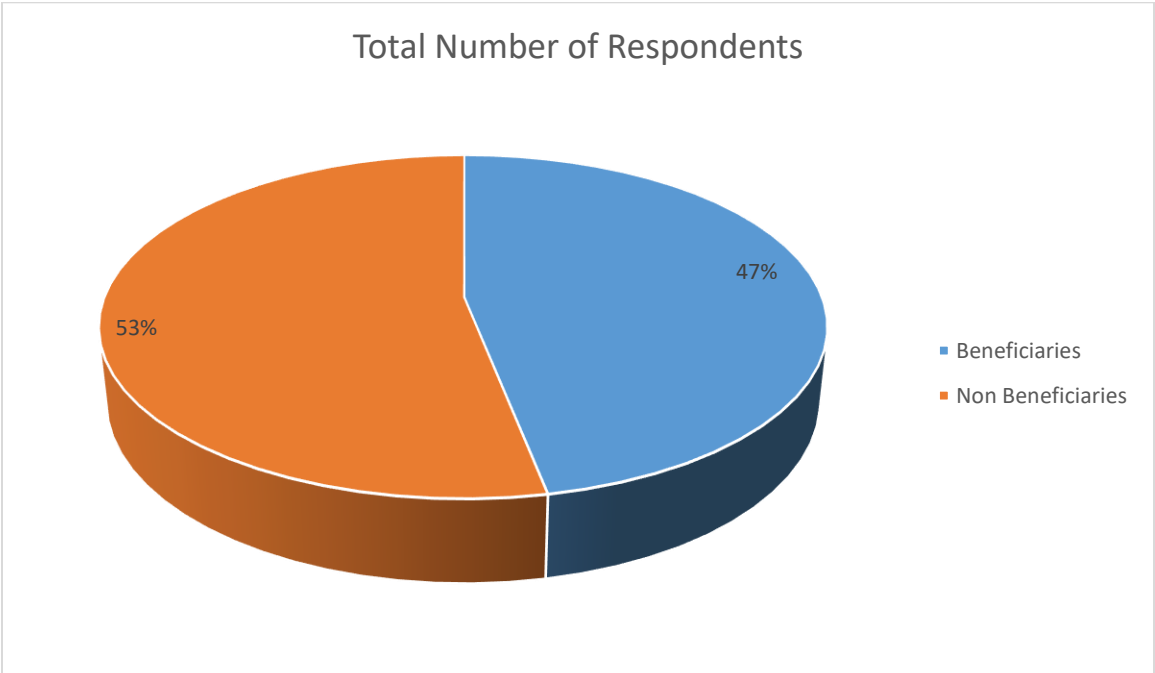
Firstly, an important feature of the Compassion International Intervention is that it is child focused. Consequently the project is able to target children and tailor interventions that adequately solve their needs. This is incongruent to most poverty interventions that target the family unit as a whole.

Another feature of Compassion’s Intervention is that their educational sponsorship is need- based and not merit-based. Thus award of the support is not dependent on the academic performance of student beneficiaries. Compassion International understands the challenges to education that children from impoverished homes face and, hence, does not attach a condition of academic excellence. Beneficiaries however have to obtain pass marks to progress through the various educational levels as it is a requirement in Ghana’s educational system.

**4.3 Effects of the intervention on educational performance**

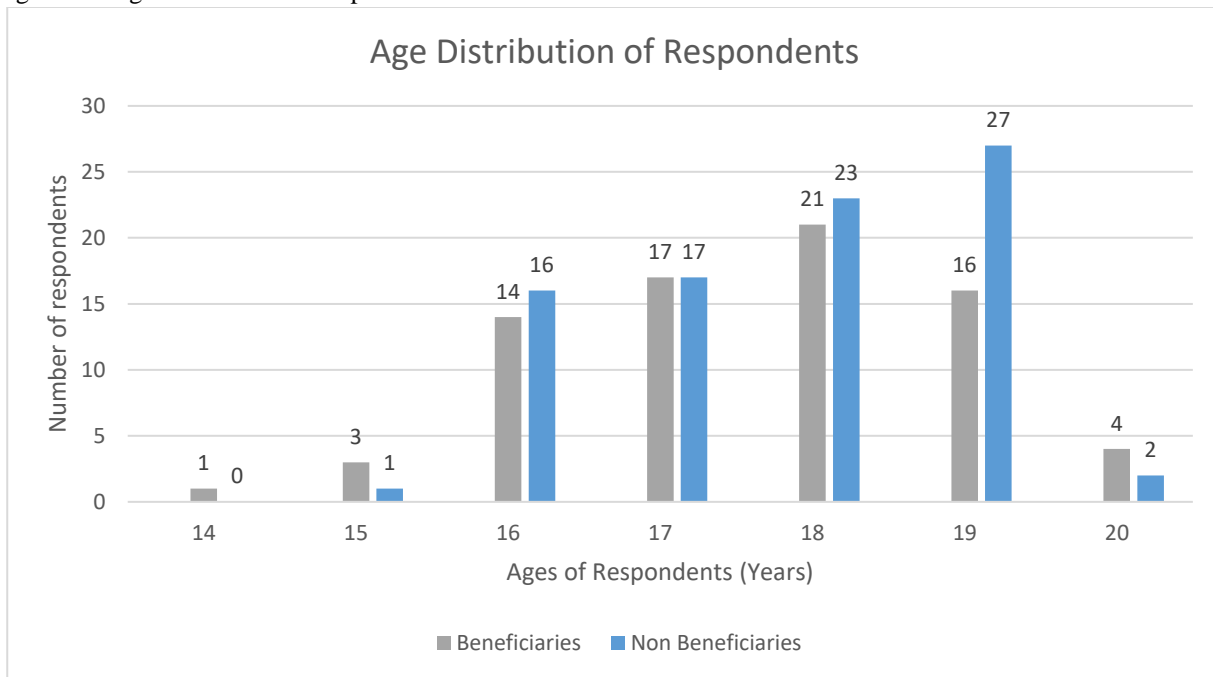
The following presents results of a survey conducted to investigate the effects of the intervention of educational performance. The following provides a description of respondents. Figure 4.1 provides a summary of the sample by whether or not respondents/participants were beneficiaries of the Compassion programme.

Figure 4.1: Total number of respondents of the study.



The above shows a distribution of the 162 participants of the survey. Of this number 76 were beneficiaries of the Compassion intervention. The target age group for the study was ages 15-19 as they formed the group that would have been selected for the intervention ten years ago. However during the compassion International selection process, some children were selected although they did not meet the age criterion. These students were included in the sample. Figure 4.2 shows the age distribution of respondents of the study.

Figure 4.2 Age distribution of respondents



From the above, majority of the sample, 156 respondents, were between the ages 15 to 19, making up about 96.3 percent of the total sample. Respondents were at various levels of education at the time of the study, namely Primary/Basic, Secondary, Tertiary and Vocational. Table 4.1 provides a distribution of the respondents by level of education. From table 4.1, the majority of respondents (82.55%) were at the secondary level of education while the rest were at primary (7.38%), tertiary (6.71%) and vocational (3.36%).

**Table 4.1: Distribution of educational level of respondents**

Highest level of education	Respondents at each level of education	
	N	%
Primary/Basic	11	7.38
Secondary	123	82.55
Vocational	5	3.36
Tertiary	10	6.71
Not reported	13	8.02
Total	149	100

Source: Field data 2016

#### 4.4 Impact of the Compassion Intervention on BECE Performance

A two sample t-test was used to test the hypothesis that there is no difference in BECE performance between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

**Table 4.2 Two sample T-test with equal variances**

	Compassion Intervention		<i>T</i>	<i>df</i>
	Beneficiaries	Non-Beneficiaries		
Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) Results	22.73333 (6.348273)	17.10606 (6.154745)	5.0495 ***	124

Note. \*\*\* =  $p \leq .001$ . Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means.

The above results shows that beneficiaries scored an average aggregate score of 22.7 in the BECE while non-beneficiaries scored an average aggregate score of 17.1 in the BECE. This shows a significant difference in average aggregate score of about 5 aggregates in the BECE between the two groups ( $\alpha < 0.10$ ,  $df = 124$ ). The results show that non-beneficiaries performed better than beneficiaries as higher aggregate scores in the BECE imply worse performance and lower aggregate scores imply better performance. Thus, this result is contrary to the alternative

hypothesis that the CI intervention pupils would perform better on the BECE.

A regression analysis was used to test the effects of the intervention when other factors such as family size, gender and parental education are held constant. As a first step in the analysis of the impact on BECE performance, an estimated performance model for beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of Compassion was constructed. If the hypothesis of a pooled model is rejected, we estimate separate models. Table 4.3 presents descriptive statistics of our sample.

**Table 4.3: Descriptive statistics of respondents**

Variables	<i>Non-Beneficiaries of CI</i> N=86	<i>Beneficiaries of CI</i> N=76
Gender (male = 1) Male/female (%)	67.44/32.56	47.4/52.6
<u>Parents Highest Educational Level (%)</u>		
<u>Father/Male Guardian</u>		
No Formal Education	11.63	35.53
Basic/Primary Education	19.77	35.53
Secondary Level	45.35	25
Tertiary	23.26	3.95
<u>Mother/Female Guardian (%)</u>		
No Formal Education	10.47	18.42
Basic/Primary Education	36.05	52.63
Secondary Level	38.37	27.63
Tertiary	15.12	1.32
Average family Size	6.5	4.9
<u>School Type (%)</u>		
Private/Public	52.33/47.67	50/50

From the above, males made up 67.44 percent, while females made up 32.57 percent of the non-beneficiaries sample. Males made up 47.4 percent and females made up 52.6 percent of the sample for beneficiaries.

Parents' educational levels for the two groups were as follows. 11.63 percent of non-beneficiaries fathers/male guardians and 35.53 percent of beneficiary's fathers had no formal education. 19.77 percent of non-beneficiaries' fathers/male guardians and 35.53 percent of beneficiaries' fathers had only basic/primary education. This shows more beneficiaries fathers have lower or no education than non-beneficiaries of the CI intervention. The trend shifts at the secondary level with 45.35 percent for non-beneficiary fathers and 25 percent for beneficiary fathers/male guardian. This trend also continues for mothers/female guardians, with non-beneficiary/beneficiary percentages at 10.47 percent/18.42 percent having no formal education, 36.05 percent/52.63 percent with only basic education, 38.37 percent/27.63 percent with secondary education and 15.12 percent/1.32 percent with tertiary education.

Non-beneficiaries of the intervention lived in homes with an average of 6.5 persons while beneficiaries lived in families of an average of 4.9 persons. The distribution of school type was fairly similar for both groups. For non-beneficiaries 52.33 percent and 47.67 percent attended private schools and public schools respectively. Exactly half of CI intervention beneficiaries attended private schools and the other half attended public schools.

#### *4.4.1 Performance equation for Beneficiaries and non-Beneficiaries pooled*

Table 4.4 presents the estimated pooled performance equation for CI beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. The first column contains the model estimates for beneficiaries and the second column contains the model estimates for non-beneficiaries. Table 2 shows that there is a significant positive relationship between being on the Compassion intervention and BECE aggregate scores.

Thus non beneficiaries performed better than beneficiaries as higher aggregate scores in the BECE imply worse performance and lower aggregate scores imply better performance. The Compassion dummy is positive and significant at 5 percent significant level.

This result is in contrast with expected results that children in the CI intervention will perform better than those who are not in the CI. The outcome of this result could be due to two factors. First, the fact that the comparison group self-reported their grades and may have overestimated their BECE results. Secondly there is the possibility that the criteria for selecting beneficiaries for the CI programme targets the poorest of the poorest hence the sample had lower ability than the compared group. In this case although CI may have improved their school performance they were still unable to measure up to the compared group. Thus the differences observed within the two groups may not be wholly attributable to the CI programme.

There was a significantly negative effect for mother/female guardian and father/male guardian secondary education. This is the same case with tertiary education of parents/ guardians. Parent's education has a negative and significant effect on BECE aggregate scores. Thus higher education levels of parents lead to lower aggregate scores on the BECE which implies higher performance. From the data children whose parents had attained higher educational level had lower aggregate scores and thus performed better in the BECE than children whose parents had lower education. This can be seen from the data where secondary and tertiary educational levels of parents had a negative and significant relationship with BECE aggregate scores. This is in line with the study by Davis-Kean (2005) which showed that parents' years of schooling was an important determinant of children's academic achievement.

For school type, the coefficient is negative. However it is not significant. This is in line with the study by Newhouse and Beegle (2006) that showed that students who went to public schools did not perform significantly worse than their compatriots in private schools.

Family size has a positive effect on BECE aggregate score. This effect is also not significant, however.

**Table 4.4 Estimated pooled performance equation for respondents**

VARIABLES	(1) Without Intervention	(2) With Intervention	(3) Pooled Model
Gender	1.138 (1.693)	0.0293 (1.364)	0.480 (1.039)
MEduBasic	2.716 (5.629)	-0.557 (1.741)	-0.577 (1.634)
MEduSecondary	-0.0561 (5.621)	-4.572** (1.882)	-4.085** (1.676)
MEduTertiary	-3.414 (5.462)	-14.14*** (5.300)	-7.627*** (2.230)
FeduBasic	-3.520 (4.616)	-3.090 (2.066)	-2.013 (1.765)
FeduSecondary	-5.962 (4.520)	-7.138*** (2.367)	-5.176*** (1.851)
FeduTertiary	-6.146 (4.525)	-5.917 (7.063)	-5.391** (2.469)
SchType	-0.749 (1.457)	-1.202 (1.537)	-1.431 (0.951)
Famsize	-0.147 (0.256)	0.119 (0.385)	0.00841 (0.198)
Compassion Intervention (Dummy)			2.676** (1.108)
Constant	22.52*** (3.726)	28.78*** (2.818)	25.04*** (2.188)
Observations	66	60	126
R-squared	0.295	0.505	0.474

Standard errors in parentheses \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

## 4.5 School Progression

Table 4.6 shows results of a chi square analysis of respondents and whether or not they are still in school. The Pearson's chi square value is 8.6285 which yields a significance level of 0.003. From the cross tabulation, a large majority of beneficiaries of the CI intervention are still progressing through school, making up 90.67 percent of the sample while only 9.33 percent are not in school. There is a similar observation with non-beneficiaries but to a lesser scale, with 72.15 percent being in school and 27.85 percent not in school.

**Table 4.6: Cross tabulation of respondents by membership to CI and School Progress**

Are you a beneficiary of the Compassion Intervention?	Are you still going to school?		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	68 90.67	7 9.33	76 100
No	57 72.15	22 27.85	79 100.00
Total	125 81.17	29 18.83	154 100.00

Pearson chi2(1) = 8.6285 Pr = 0.003

Table 4.7 provides results of a chi square analysis on reasons for non-enrollment cited by respondents. The Pearson's chi square value is 24.0404 which yields a significance level of 0.001. Majority of non-beneficiaries who were not enrolled cited needed finances not available (45.45%) and child is working (31.82%) as reasons for non-enrollment. This implies that beneficiaries of the intervention have a greater likelihood of progressing through their education than non-beneficiaries. This result supports the fact that Compassion International aims to improve the overall wellbeing of the child and is not just focused on their educational achievement.

**Table 4.8 Cross tabulation of respondents by membership to CI and reasons for not being in school**

Are you a beneficiary of the Compassion Intervention?	Why aren't you in school?							Total
	None	Needed finances not available	Child is working	Dropped out of school	Has completed planned education	Health issues	Undergoing apprenticeship training	
Yes	0 0.00	0 0.00	0 0.00	0 0.00	2 33.33	1 16.67	3 50.00	6 100.00
No	2 9.09	10 45.45	7 31.82	1 4.55	0 0.00	2 9.09	0 0.00	22 100.00
Total	2 7.14	10 35.71	7 25.00	1 3.57	2 7.14	3 10.71	3 10.71	28 100.00

Pearson chi2(6) = 24.0404 Pr = 0.001

#### 4.6 Conclusion

The chapter presented the findings of the research based on the objectives outlined in the study. These were: to investigate the strategies used by Compassion International in childhood poverty alleviation and; to assess the effects of the intervention on educational performance and progress. To achieve the first objective qualitative methods were used such as document analysis. Results from the analysis show that CI strategies included a focus on the individual child. Also the intervention was found to be need based. In answer to the second objective results revealed that contrary to expectations of the study, beneficiaries of the CI intervention did not perform better than non-beneficiaries. Also parental education had a positive impact on children's BECE aggregate scores. Furthermore, the results showed that children who were beneficiaries of the CI intervention have a greater likelihood of progressing through their education than non-beneficiaries. The next chapter presents a summary and conclusions of the study

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Summary**

This study investigated the effects of the CI intervention on educational performance and progress. Based on existing literature, the following assumptions about educational access and poverty informed this study. First, children who are beneficiaries of interventions are more likely to perform better in school than children who are not beneficiaries any intervention (Lacour & Tissington, 2011). Secondly children whose parents have higher education are more likely to perform better in school than children whose parents have lower education (Andrew & Orodho, 2014). Thirdly, children who have smaller family sizes are more likely to perform better in school than children who come from large families (Ella et al., 2015). Fourthly, children who go to private schools are more likely to perform better educationally than children who go to public schools (Stipek & Byler, 1997). And finally males will perform better than females in school (Amuda et al., 2016). The study hypothesized that beneficiaries of the intervention would perform better than non-beneficiaries of the intervention based on the above assumptions.

A mixed method approach was used in the study. The methods utilized in this study are interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis, and a survey. The mixed method approach helped the researcher to assess the effects of the intervention and also understand the nature of the intervention, including how beneficiaries experienced it. The research used both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect the data observed. In the study, children between the ages of 15-19 were grouped according to their membership to the CI intervention in Agbogba, which had been

running for 10 years. A survey was conducted using a student questionnaire to obtain information about students' family and school background and also their BECE aggregate results. Students' BECE aggregate results were used as a measure for students' academic performance.

A t-test analysis was used to test significance of the difference in aggregate scores between the two groups while a regression model was constructed to estimate the effect of the intervention on beneficiary scores. Also the Oaxaca-Blinder Decomposition model was used to establish how much of the effects observed was attributable to personal characteristics and how much was attributable to unexplained factors. A chi square analysis was performed to test significance in differences in educational progress between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the Compassion International intervention.

Results of the study showed that generally beneficiaries of the intervention scored lower grades in the BECE. Parental education was shown to be an important factor in determining student performance. That is, children were more likely to perform better on the BECE when their parents had higher education. Other factors such as gender, family size, and school type were not statistically significant.

However lower scores of beneficiaries did not impede their educational progress. From a chi square analysis, 90.67 percent of Compassion beneficiaries were still progressing through their education against only 72.15 percent of non-beneficiaries. Also for those whose education had ended, reasons were 'has completed planned education', 'health issues' and 'undergoing

apprenticeship training'. Non-beneficiaries on the other hand cited 'needed finances not available', 'child is working', 'dropped out of school' and 'health issues' as reasons for not going to school.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The extent of global poverty is alarming with about 767 million people living on less than US\$1.90 a day. Sub Saharan Africa is the worst affected, housing about half (389 million) of the world's extreme poor (World Bank, 2013). With such high levels of poverty in the region, Africa's growth is stunted in various aspects of socio-economic life. One of the many aspects of concern is the effect of poverty on children's development in the region. The UNICEF State of the World's Children Report forecasts that if current trends continue, by 2030, children in sub-Saharan Africa will be 10 times more likely to die before their fifth birthdays than children in high-income countries, nine out of 10 children living in extreme poverty will live in sub-Saharan Africa and more than 30 million primary school aged children from sub-Saharan Africa will be out of school (UNICEF, 2016).

Aside the physical and psychosocial implications that poor children are periled with, there is the added disadvantage of lack of access to education leading to the incidence of intergenerational poverty. Education has been lauded by international bodies such as the World Bank, UNICEF and UN as an effective strategy to end poverty. This has translated into national poverty intervention strategies with varying degrees of success. Consequently, improving access to education for poor children has taken a place of importance in development planning. Government's educational interventions in Ghana have been criticized for the low level of funds invested into these projects,

creating the incidence of hidden fees, a phenomenon which excludes many poor children from accessing education.

National governments have not been the only ones involved in educational interventions. NGOs such as Compassion International have also been involved providing resources aimed at making education accessible for children from impoverished backgrounds. In view of this, this study sought to assess the impact of its work on educational attainment of its beneficiaries. Thus the aims of the study were to assess the effects of the intervention on educational performance and educational progress of its beneficiaries.

Empirical studies reviewed in this research concentrated on the limitations of government educational programmes, the importance of NGO interventions and the relationship between educational interventions and educational attainment. Empirical literature on factors that affect educational attainment of students was also reviewed. These factors aside economic reasons were gender, parent's education, family size and type of school.

Amartya Sen's Human Capabilities Approach and the Human Development perspectives by Mahbub al Haq formed the theoretical basis for the research. The theories explained the importance of education in ensuring a more holistic approach to poverty alleviation through the provision of education for poor children in order to empower them to overcome the poverty trap and become fulfilled adults.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

From the research, beneficiaries of the Intervention performed worse on the BECE than non-beneficiaries. If these results are correct, considering the limitations of the study, then the CI intervention must put together a programme to help correct this disadvantage. An example of such a programme could be a greater emphasis on after- school classes geared towards improving learning.

An important issue to note is that even if CI participants actually performed lower on the BECE than their counterparts, such performance did not impede their educational progress generally, as most of them got into senior high school and made passing grades. This would then be a case for need-based as against merit-based support. Thus the government would do well to assist needy children improve their educational progress.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

#### **TITLE OF STUDY**

**Access to Education among the Poor: A Case Study of Compassion International in Agbogba Community**

#### **Consent and confidentiality Statement**

**This questionnaire is designed to solicit your views about educational attainment in the community. The research is being conducted solely for academic purposes. Information generated by this survey would be treated with the utmost confidentiality. If you have any questions, you can reach me at [densuadarku@gmail.com](mailto:densuadarku@gmail.com) Below, you will find a number of questions. Please answer as honestly as possible.**

Qn No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Enumerator \_\_\_\_\_ Location Name \_\_\_\_\_

*Instruction: Circle or tick the appropriate responses provided by respondent. Probe further for answers if required.*

1. Have you received any form of scholarship to pursue education in the last..... Years Yes 2. No  
type of scholarship \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please indicate the type of scholarship received? \_\_\_\_\_

What for did the scholarship take? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **A. Demographic Background of Students**

1. Gender 1 male 2. Female

2. Age \_\_\_\_\_

3. Household religious affiliation 1. Christian 2. Muslim 3. Traditional

Others. Please state \_\_\_\_\_

### **B. Family structure**

4. Who is the head of your households? (*Note: household refers to people living and eating from the same pot*) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Is the household head female? 1 yes 2. No

6. How many people constitute your household? (inclusive yourself, siblings, parents)  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. What is the marital status of your parents?

1. Married 2. Were married now separated by death 3. Were married, now divorced or permanently separated 4. Never married 5. Unknown

8. How many siblings (sisters and brothers) do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Are all your siblings of school going age?

1. Yes 2. No

10. How many are presently in school \_\_\_\_\_ ? (Instruction: respondent must include him/herself).

### **C. Socio- economic status of Parents**

1. Father/male guardian educational level 1. None 2. Basic/Primary 3. Secondary 4. Tertiary

2. Please state your Father/male guardian occupation. \_\_\_\_\_

3. . Father/male guardian employment status. 1. Regularly employed 2. Sometimes employed 3. Not employed

4. Mother/female guardian educational level

1. None 2. Basic/Primary 3. Secondary 4.Tertiary Please state your Mother/female guardian occupation. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Mother/female guardian employment status 1. Regularly employed 2. Sometimes employed 3. Not employed

**D. Educational Attainment of Student**

1. Are you in school (Formal education)?

1. Not enrolled 2. Primary 3. Secondary 4. Vocational 5.Tertiary

2. Please state what level you are in (Level e.g. SHS 2, level 200)\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why aren't you enrolled?

1. None 2. Under age 3. Needed finances not available

4. I am working 5. Awaiting entrance exam testing/results 6. Awaiting school vacancy

7. Dropped out of school 8. Has completed planned education 9. Health issues

10. No available/appropriate option

Other reasons. Please state

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4. What type of vocational/technical training

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5. Major course of study in vocational School

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6. Have you written BECE (academic records)? 1. Yes 2.No

If not why?

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If written BECE ask the following questions

7. Please state your index no. \_\_\_\_\_

8. Please state your aggregate \_\_\_\_\_

9. Please list your grades

English \_\_\_\_\_ Mathematics \_\_\_\_\_ Intergrated Science \_\_\_\_\_ Social Studies \_\_\_\_\_

Religious and Moral Education \_\_\_\_\_ Pre-technical Skills \_\_\_\_\_ Ghanaian Language \_\_\_\_\_

French \_\_\_\_\_ Information and Communications Technology (ICT) \_\_\_\_\_

*Instruction: If No BECE, kindly provide us with your recent academic results for the following subjects?*

Please list your grades

English \_\_\_\_\_ Mathematics \_\_\_\_\_ Intergrated Science \_\_\_\_\_ Social Studies \_\_\_\_\_

Religious and Moral Education \_\_\_\_\_ Pre-technical Skills \_\_\_\_\_ Ghanaian Language \_\_\_\_\_

French \_\_\_\_\_ Information and Communications Technology (ICT) \_\_\_\_\_

10. What is the name of the Junior High School you attended

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11. What type of School did you attend?

1. Public

2. Private

3. Mission School

4. Others (Please State) \_\_\_\_\_

12. Please list any academic achievements (e.g. Best student, first in class)

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13. Please list any non-academic achievements ( eg. Best at sports, second place in district games)

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14. What do you want to be in future?

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## **APPENDIX B**

### **Interview Guide for CI Focus Group**

How old are you? How long have you been in compassion?

Tell me what you know about Compassion International.

What is the most important aspect of the intervention to you?

Any instance where you were given more than the half you are given?

Is there something you think should change about the way they run the intervention?

What are future plans and how has the program helped/is the program helping to achieve that aim?

How do you want to give back to society?

### **Interview Guide for Key Informant**

Tell me about the Intervention.

What do you offer poor children?

How do you select beneficiaries for the programme?

How do you think the programme has helped the beneficiaries?

What are some of the challenges faced by intervention?