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THE IMPACT OF GHANA SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME ON GIRLS' ENROLMENT AND ATTENDANCE IN ST. CECILIA PRIMARY 'A' SCHOOL, SOMBO IN WA MUNICIPALITY

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to assess the impact of Ghana's School Feeding Programme on girls' enrolment and attendance in St. Cecilia Primary 'A', Sombo in the Wa Municipality. Using a mixed design strategy, primary data were obtained from the Chairperson of Ghana School Feeding Programme Implementation Committee, Head Teacher and Teachers in St. Cecilia Primary 'A', Sombo, Girl Students and Parents of school girls in St. Cecilia Primary 'A', Sombo in the Wa Municipality. The result indicated that the programme has influence girls' enrolment and attendance in St. Cecilia Primary 'A', Sombo. The Ghana School Feeding Programme was implemented in 2012 in the school. Besides, the meal provided for the girl students cuts down household expenditure on education for girls. The programme also reduces the incidence of sexual activities among girls. This occurs through its effects of reducing short term hunger that pushes girls into sexual activities to get money and buy food during school hours. Moreover, the programme motivated parents to enroll and keep their girls in the school by generating direct or indirect livelihood sources for them. By empowering parents and providing meals for girls during school socio-economic challenges such as poverty and sexual harassment which affects girls' enrolment in the school has been minimized. The study recommends that the management of the programme should give special attention to girls in the school. Strong collaboration among key stakeholders is also recommended to support the school feeding programme.

Keywords: Ghana School Feeding Programme, Girl's Enrolment, Girls Attendance, St. Cecilia Primary 'A', Sombo, Wa Municipality.

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a significant role in the development of many countries (Afoakwa, 2009). However, about 57 million children around the world are not going to school, most of who are found on the African continent (UNICEF, 2012). Besides, young females receive considerably less formal education than males in almost every developing country (Todaro, 2009). Discrimination against women in formal education hinders economic development apart from reinforcing social inequality.

It is contended that about 95% of children who live in low and lower-middle-income countries do not get primary education, 44% in sub-Saharan Africa, 19% in South and West Asia, and 14% in the Arab states. Out of this, girls constitute about 55% of the total and are often the victims of rape and other sexual violence (UNESCO, 2000). Kazianga (2009) added that young females receive considerably less education than young males in almost every developing country. They further pointed out that women enrolment in primary and secondary education is lower than that of men by at least 10%. In most communities, especially in developing countries, most parents do not ensure that their daughters receive quality education (Ministry of Education, 2010).

Five main challenges have been identified which make it difficult for girls to access formal education. These are the cost of education, poor school environments, the weak position of women in society, conflict, and social exclusion. These challenges are not exhaustive, but they are recurrent in Ghana and many countries. Governments, the international community, and other development agencies have, therefore, focused their concentration through collaboration on strategies to improve girls' access to formal education. In 1990, the Education for all Conference was held in Jomtien. It prompted over 100 governments to formulate various policies towards encouraging the education of all children especially the girl child (World Food Program, 2004).

In September 2000, the 189 member countries of the United Nations adopted eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), committing themselves to make substantial progress toward the eradication of poverty and achieving other human development goals by 2015 (Akyeampong, 2009). The focus of this development includes the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; the achievement of universal primary education and the promotion of gender equality and women empowerment. The purpose was to bridge social inequality through the universal education of girls (Ampofo, 2017).

Ghana also recognized the crucial role of female education in national development. As acknowledged by many scholars, educated women are more likely to participate effectively in political discussions, meetings, and decision making, which in turn promotes a more representative and effective government than the uneducated ones (Akanbi, 2011). They also have a greater chance of escaping poverty, leading to healthier and more productive lives and raising the standard of living for their children, families, and communities. According to Kwegyir Aggrey, "the surest way to keep people is to educate the women and neglect the men. If you educate a man you simply educate an individual, but if you educate a woman,

you educate a whole nation". Consistent with these premises, past and present governments have, therefore, given attention to female education in several ways.

There has been a Ministry responsible for educational development in Ghana. This body has over the years implemented various policies to influence girls' access to basic education. For example, the Free Compulsory and Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) policy was implemented in 1995 to influence gross enrolment at the basic level. Under this policy, the government of Ghana provides free tuition in basic public schools across the country as a way of addressing the problem of enrolment and attendance. Scholarships and other specific interventions have been designed in favor of girls to achieve gender equity in education. In Ghana, successive governments have attempted to influence female access to basic education by drawing their success stories from other third world countries (Eliasu, 2013).

It is significant to note that the importance attached to basic education has motivated its recognition in the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana [Article 25 (1) (a)]. In support of this effort is the "Education for All" (EFA) campaign and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), initiated in the year 2000 to achieve universal primary education by 2015. Ghana, therefore, initiated specific interventions such as the Primary Education Project (PREP), Capitation Grant, Free Compulsory Basic Education (FCUBE), free books provision, free school uniforms, and school feeding (Adamu-Issah, 2007; Akyeampong, 2009; Ananga, 2011)

The purpose of these reforms, among other things, was to address the gender gap (in enrolment, attendance, and performance), enhance the quality of teaching, increase access to quality education and improve academic performance. The target of some of these interventions may be mixed, consisting of both male and female students. However, none has ever excluded the girl child as an effective beneficiary (UNESCO, 2000, Ananga, 2011). The need for universal basic education in Ghana has attracted concurrent interventions. Universal access to basic education involves resolute efforts and commitments to gender parity in education as well. Gains have been made in Ghana towards increasing the number of girls in the basic level of education.

The Ghana Education Service in 1997 established a Girl's Education Unit as part of its Basic Education Division to boost the participation of girls in basic school education and other activities related to female education. With support from the World Food Organisation (WFP), enrolment and retention of girls in the basic level were improved. The Upper East and Upper West Regions recorded an increase of 31.4% and 26.1% respectively compared to the national average of 12.8% (Adamu-Issah, 2007). An analysis of the intervention showed an improvement of the Gender Parity Index for Primary Gross Enrolment from 0.93 in 2004/05 to 0.95 in 2005/06. (Ghana Web, 2014)

Notwithstanding these positive trends, the country has not been able to meet the MDGs target of achieving gender parity by 2015. The gaps are particularly sharp in northern Ghana [1] and the Wa Municipality in particular. Furthermore, among some of the pro-poor programmes initiated by the government to increase enrolment levels is the Ghana School Feeding Programmes (GSFP). School feeding is an in-school meal adopted over the years intended to provide meals or snacks at school with the hope of reducing children's hunger during schooling days (Daily Graphic, 2013).

Chachu (2011) and Alderman (2012) recommended that it is a tool capable of enabling hundreds of millions of poor children worldwide to attend school in both developed and developing countries. Building on this strength, the government of Ghana with the support of the Dutch Government began the School Feeding Programme in 2005. The objectives include reduction of hunger and malnutrition among school pupils, increasing school enrolment, attendance, and retention (Ananga, 2011). Since 2005, the coverage of the programme is being increased and sustained.

The government started the GSFP on a pilot basis between 2005 and 2010. The Wa Municipality has equally benefited from the GSFP implemented to influence access to basic education. Ten (10) basic schools in the Wa Municipality were included at this stage. The implementation of the GSFP can be said to have been successful considering some of its achievements. At least, the introduction of the GSFP has increased enrolment, attendance, and retention in various public schools across the country and the government has often emphasized its commitment to ensuring that children are well fed at school (Duah, 2011; Eliasu, 2013; Ampofo, 2019). However, the observed increase in gross enrolment across the country is characterized by gender disparities in some localities.

The pieces of evidence are only limited to gross outcomes. For instance, Adamu-Issah (2007) argued that the GSFP has contributed to higher enrolment figures among all beneficiary schools throughout Ghana. However, it has not been able to completely settle the disparity matters thereby creating a gender access gap in enrolment. Various stakeholders (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection) of education are, therefore, not sure whether the recorded positive effects of the programme can represent the solution to the problem of gender disparity in enrolment and attendance.

In St. Cecilia Primary 'A', Sombo in the Wa Municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana, no scientific studies have been conducted on the influence of the GSFP on girls' enrolment and attendance. As a result, there is still a research gap on whether the program, influences gender disparity in the school. The influence of the programme on gender disparity on enrolment and attendance is yet to be determined and this brings to the fore the need for this study to fill in the literature gap. Even where attempts have been made to evaluate the programme's effect on enrolment, including the Wa Municipality, the case of gender disparity has not always received the desired attention. They have, more often than not left out its role in girls' enrolment, attendance, and retention. Therefore, this study intends to fill in the literature gap by assessing the influence of the Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP) on girl's enrolment and attendance in St. Cecilia Primary 'A', Sombo in the Wa Municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Food for Education Conceptual Model

The School Feeding Programmes (SFPs) are a visible social safety net used by political leaders around the world. Communities that participate in these programs can see the tangible benefits to their children, such as their children being fed regularly or families supplied with additional food. The Food for Education (FFE) programmes are typically targeted towards populations that are food insecure, reside in areas with high concentrations of low socioeconomic status, who are facing poor attendance and enrolment in schools. School children are the target of these types of interventions and children who are younger than five

years old are left out. The Food for Education (FFE) programme was relevant in this study since the Sombo community (population) faces food insecurity; reside in area (Wa municipality) with a high concentration of low socio-economic status, who are facing poor enrolment and attendance of which St. Cecilia Primary 'A' is part.

METHODOLOGY

Study Area

The study was conducted in St. Cecilia Primary 'A', Sombo in the Wa Municipality. According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census (PHC), the Sombo community has a population of 3795 representing 3.5 percent (%) in the total population of Wa Municipality in the Upper West Region. This is broken down into 48.4% male and 51.6% female. The percentage of females suggests that girls' enrolment in various schools in the vicinity is likely being higher than boys.

Research Design

The research design refers to the overall strategy that a researcher chooses to integrate the different components of the study coherently and logically, thereby, ensuring the researcher to effectively address the research problem (Ampofo, 2017, Ampofo 2020). To address the research questions appropriately mixed research study approach was employed. Mixed research design is a research approach, popular in the social, behavioral, health sciences, in which researchers collect analysis and integrate both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study (Ampofo, 2019; Ampofo, 2020).

The mixed research approach was used in this study because it enhances the integrity of the findings and it is also useful to the practitioners and also provides a deeper understanding of the examining behavior. Both qualitative and quantitative research was employed to obtain views of teachers, students, parents, and municipal implementation committee on 'the impact of GSFP on girl enrolment and attendance in St. Cecilia primary school Sombo, in Wa municipality'. This enables the acquisition of the needed data (information).

Study Population

The population of the study considered pupils (girls), class teachers, a headteacher in St. Cecilia Primary School, a student's parents in the Sombo community, and the chairperson of GSFP implementation committee (Wa Municipal). The Headteacher is functional in this study, the headteacher performs school curricula activities and can provide data on enrolment and attendance of pupils in the school. Class teachers are useful in the study, they can provide data on the attendance of pupils in the school. Students are useful in the study because they can provide vital information on how the SFP affect their attendance. Parents are functional in the study because they can provide information on what motivates them and keep their wards (girls) in the school.

Sampling Procedure and Size

The sampling procedures that were employed in this study are probability and non-probability sampling which includes: purposive sampling and simple random sampling.

A Sample

A sample is a smaller group of the subject drawn from the targeted population in which a researcher is interested in purposes of concluding the population or universe (Ampofo, 2020). The result from the sample can be used to generalize the entire population as long as it is truly representative of the population.

Sample Size

The sample size refers to the number of items of persons to be selected from the targeted population. The sample size was drawn from the school using the following sampling procedures or techniques.

We determined the sample size of the girls using the mathematical formula ($n=N/1+N(e)^2$) to select the category of students to be used for the study. Therefore
$$n = \frac{154}{1+154(0.10)^2} = 60.62$$

Where

n= number to sampled,

N= total population, 1= constant proportionality

e = the significant level

So taking the population of female students present on 24th May 2019, 154 with an error margin of 10%. The group sampled 60 students (girls) in the study.

Purposive Sampling

In purposive sampling, individuals, groups, and settings are considered for selection if they have sufficient information on the phenomena under investigation (Ampofo, 2019). A total of one hundred and sixty-six (166) respondents were selected using a purposive method to include in this study thus, 1 headteacher, 14 teachers from the school, 150 parents, and the chairperson of the municipal implementation committee. The method also saves time and provides reliable information.

Simple Random Sampling

Considering the vastness of the female pupils in St. Cecilia's primary 'A', the researchers could not cover the entire female pupils in the school from each class. Papers (A4) were cut into pieces with "selected and not selected" written on and folded. The papers were uniformly mixed and placed on a table; students (girls) were called one by one to pick the folded papers. Those students that picked "selected" were included in the study leaving those who picked "not selected". This method was used to give equal opportunity to all students (girls) in all the six classes to get included in the study by picking the "selected paper". A total of sixty students (girls) were selected using this method to include in this study.

In class 1 were 21 girls, 21 papers were cut into pieces with "selected and not- selected" written on. Out of the 21 folded papers, only 10 were written on selected. Girls (students) who picked selected were included in the study. The researchers used this method in all the remaining classes. The number of girls in class 2 was 25, class 3 was 28, class 4 was 30, class 5 was 22 and class 6 was 28.

Data Collection Instruments

The instruments that were used for the topic under investigation were questionnaire and interview. A researcher using this instrument typically will be seeking to gather large-scale data from a sample population to indicate that certain observed characteristics occur. Therefore, we choose to employ a self-developed questionnaire as the instrument for the data collection.

Questionnaires: Questionnaires were meant to elicit data from teachers and some of the parents (literate). 79 questionnaires were used to solicit data for the study. This instrument has been chosen because a lot of information from a large number of people can be gathered within a very short time and it saves time. The questionnaire for the headteacher was divided

into four sections. Section A had structured questions requesting background of the study, section B contains the activities of GSFP on girls' enrolment and attendance, and while section C comprises the influences of GSFP on girl enrolment and attendance.

The questionnaire for teachers was divided into two (2) main sections, the first section, section A depicts personnel information and section B also represents the influences of GSFP on girls' enrolment and attendance. A questionnaire for a literate parent was in a single section and depicts ideas and views that motivate them to enroll and keep their girls in the school.

Interview: This instrument was employed by the researchers to collect data from the selected students (girls) in the school, illiterate parent, and the chairperson of the municipal implementation committee. The method provided a wider scope for the gathering of the necessary information needed for this study. Responses from interviews were written down under major headings. The researchers used nine printed interview questions to elicit data from 147 respondents (illiterate parents, girl students, and chairperson of implementation committee-GSFP).

One for the municipal chairperson of the implementation committee which contains activities of the GSFP, also four papers which contain interview questions were used by the researchers to interview the students, these papers hold interview questions to elicit data on the views, challenges, and suggestion the students (girls) have on the implementation of the GSFP. While the remaining questions contain ideas and views of illiterate parents on what motivates them to enroll and keep their girls in the school. This method, however, assisted us in obtaining information that was not covered in the questionnaires administered.

Data Collection Procedures

Before conducting the study, the researchers obtained informed consent from the Headteacher of the school chosen and the chairperson of the municipal implementation committee. Participants were informed of what the study entails. The headteacher contacted the researchers on the date and time that will be convenient for the data to carry on in the school. On 24th, May as scheduled, the researchers went to the school to carry out the study. To ensure cooperation from respondents the researchers explained that confidentiality is going to be kept.

Questionnaires were given to teachers to answer during their staff meeting while selected students (girls) were interviewed on that very day. Girls who were selected to be interview were very happy and eager to answer any question being asked. Data collection in the school was successful. Also, the chairperson of the municipal implementation committee was contacted to get updates on the programme target and currents effort towards achieving them. The researchers went to the Sombo community (nearby houses) to elicit information from parents who have enrolled or have their girl child/children in the school. The researchers targeted 150 parents in the community. Data collection was carried in respective houses till we reached the targeted population. It was successful.

Data Analysis

After the data collection, the questionnaires were checked for completeness and errors, this was arranged and coded using the Statistical package for social science (SPSS) and Excel. Closes ended question were analyzed and presented in a form of frequencies, percentages in tables and charts.

Secondly, qualitative data were obtained using interviews. It was analyzed by considering major themes to extract relevant information. This helped the researchers to make a description of the data collected from the field on research objectives and derived conclusions on what to take regarding its usefulness.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Background Information of Respondents

Gender of Teachers

The result of the study reveals that out of fifteen (15) teachers (including Headteacher) in the school, twelve (12) were females and three (3) were males representing 80% and 20% respectively. The distribution is shown in the table

Table 1
Gender of Teachers

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Males	3	20
Females	12	80
Total	15	100

Source: Field Survey (2019)

From table 1, the majority of teachers were females respondents representing 80% whilst 3 males representing 20%. The analysis indicates that female teachers are more than their male counterparts. Therefore, female teachers can serve as a role model for girls in the school to enhance their attendance.

How Enrolment and Attendance of girls in St. Cecilia Primary 'A' have over time Girls Enrolment (2006 to 2018) in St. Cecilia Primary 'A', Sombo (Wa)

According to Ampofo (2019) addressing educational enrolments is vital to promoting girl child education. For that reason, there was the need to assess the previous enrolment with the current impact of the GSFP on enrolment. Against this backdrop, the researchers requested from the Headteacher of St. Cecilia Primary 'A' previous enrolment before and after the introduction of GSFP. The GSFP was introduced in St. Cecilia Primary 'A' in 2012.

Table 2
Enrolment of Girls Before and After the Implementation Of GSFP

Before			After		
Years	Enrolment	Percentage	Years	Enrolment	Percentage
2007/2008	282	11.51	2013/2014	360	14.70
2008/2009	136	5.55	2014/2015	220	8.98
2009/2010	272	11.11	2015/2016	229	9.35
2010/2011	184	7.51	2016/2017	220	8.98
2011/2012	297	12.13	2017/2018	249	10.17
Total	1171	47.81%	Total	1278	52.18%

Source: Field Survey (2019)

The result in table 2 shows an improvement in the enrolment of girls in St. Cecilia Primary 'A' after the implementation of GSFP in the school. Again, the statistics indicated that, in all, the enrolment of girls 5 years after the enlistment of the GSFP in the school stood at 1278 representing 52.19% as compared to enrolment 5 years before the implementation of the GSFP which is 1171 representing 47.81%. These enrolment figures imply that there is an improvement in enrolment owing to the GSFP.

Girls' Attendance in 2007/2008 and 2009/2010 by 2015/2016 and 2016/2017

The analysis was done on girls' attendance and there was the need to assess previous attendance with the current impact of the GSFP on attendance. Against this backdrop, the researchers requested from the Headteacher of St. Cecilia Primary 'A' School previous attendance before and after the introduction of GSFP. Table 3 shows girls' attendance statistics in 2007/2008, 2009/2010, 2016/2017, and 2018/2019 in St. Cecilia Primary 'A' School since the GSFP was introduced in 2012 in the school.

Table 3

School Attendance of Girls in 2007/2008 and 2009/2010 by 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 Academic Years Respectively

	Years	Enrolment	Attendance	Years	Enrolment	Attendance
Before	2007/2008	282	3912	2009/2010	272	4884
After	2015/2016	220	4137	2016/2017	229	6903

Source: Field Survey (2019)

From table 3, it is observed that school enrolment in the 2007/2008 academic year was higher than the 2015/2016 academic year, yet still, there was an increase in attendance in the 2015/2016 academic year. In the same manner, was 2009/2010 and 2016/2017. It is obvious from the analysis that there was a trend increase in attendance. Using 2009/2010 and 2016/2017 academic years, with an enrolment of 272 and 229 respectively, the attendance increased from 4884 to 6903 putting credence to the theory that SFP leads to an increase in attendance.

Influence of GSFP on Girls' enrolment and attendance in St. Cecilia Primary 'A'

Impact of GSFP on Enrolment

Specifically, when respondents were asked how they will describe the influence of the GSFP on girls' enrolment, 10 respondents representing 66% confirm that the GSFP has led to high enrolment of girls within the school. Besides, 2 respondents representing 13% of the total teachers maintain that enrolment of girls is encouraging due to the SFP in the school.

Table 4

The Influence of GSFP on Enrolment of Girls

Influence of GSFP on girls enrolment	Frequency	Percent
High enrolment	10	66
Encouraging	2	13
No response	3	20
Total	15	100

Source: Field Survey (2019)

From table 4, 3 respondents representing 20% of the total teachers did not respond because they have no stand on the issue. The results imply that many teachers in the school believe that the programme has a positive influence on the enrolment of a girl in various schools. This finding agrees with empirical studies that total enrolment figures in basic schools have increased during the period of the GSFP.

A respondent (Headteacher) in the school indicated that:

"The GSFP has boosted girls' enrolment. For example, the enrolment of girls was 196 when the GSFP was first introduced in the 2012/2013 academic year in the school and increased to 360 in the 2013/2014 academic year".

Influences of girls enrolment in the school

Respondents (both teachers and parents) were asked to express their opinions on what influences girls' enrolment and attendance in the school. The result concludes that the responses from teachers and that of the parents match over what influences girls' enrolment in the school.

Table 5

Teachers and Parents' Responses on what Influences Girls' Enrolment in the School (Teachers' Response)

Reasons	Teachers		Parents	
	F	P	F	P
The nearness of the house to the school	01	6.667	16	10.67
Presence of free meal	11	73.00	83	55.33
Presence of good teachers	03	20.00	09	6.00
Good academic performance of the school	00	0.00	37	24.67
Others	01	6.67	05	5.00

Source: Field Survey (2019)

From table 5, most of the teachers (73.33%) indicated that it is due to the presence of free meals, and the majority of parents (55.33%) attributed to it the presence of GSFP in the school as well. This indicates that most girls' got enrolled in the school due to the presence of a meal. Though, other factors have been contributing to enrolment in the school. 37 parents representing 24% of the total respondents indicated that good academic performance of the school motivated them to enroll their children (girls), 10.56% of the total respondents (both teachers and parents) attributed it to the nearness of the house to the school, etc.

Teachers' opinions on Enrolment figure should the Programme Stopped

Respondents (teachers) were asked to indicate in their opinion whether the increase in enrolment can be sustained without the GSFP. The results, as shown in figure 4, revealed that 3 respondents representing 20% are of the view that the enrolment figure will not decline should the programme be stopped while 12 respondents constituting 80% indicating that enrolment of girls will drop if the programme is stopped.

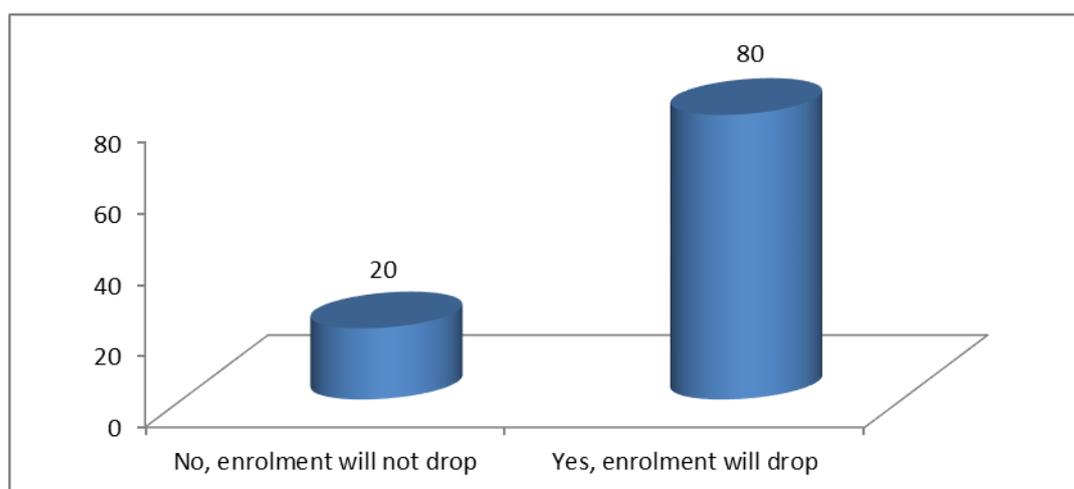


Figure 1: Will Enrolment Drop if the Programme Stopped

Source: Field Survey (2019)

The majority of the respondents believe that the absence of the programme will drop the enrolment figure while a proportion (20%) has a different opinion about the enrolment if the GSFP is halted in the school. They believe that the enrolment figure will not drop if the

programme is stopped, but the majority are of the view that the effect of the programme on enrolment is too strong to an extent that its absence will lead to a decrease in enrolment.

Parents Opinion on Enrolment

Expressly, respondents were asked if they will still enroll their girl child if the GSFP ceased in the school. 89 respondents representing 59.3% stated that they will withdraw their girl child when the programme is stopped. They further explained that, if it had not been the SFP, they would have been selected among their children who are to attend school due to economic hardship. Also, 53 respondents representing 35.3% of the total parents stated that they will still maintain their female wards in the school if the GSFP is stopped. The distribution of respondents' opinion is shown in table 6.

Table 6

Parent Opinion on Enrolment

Parent opinion	Frequency	Percent (%)
Maintain	53	35.33
Withdraw	89	59.33
Uncertain	8	5.33
Total	150	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2019)

From table 6, some (5.33%) respondents, however, indicated that they are uncertain of what they will do if the programme is closed.

Impact of GSFP on Attendance

Teachers' opinion of GSFP on attendance

Respondents were asked to express their opinion on the influence of GSFP on girls' attendance. The results indicate that 14 respondents representing 93.3% maintained that the programme has led to an improvement in attendance. However one of these respondents maintained that

“in general, the attendance has improved due to the implementation of the GSFP, but if the programme should be stopped, I do not think it will have a negative influence on all the girls' attendance”. The distribution is shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Influence of GSFP on Attendance of Girls

Influence of GSFP on Girls Attendance	Frequency	Percent (%)
Improved attendance	14	93.3
Remain unchanged	0	0
Worsen	0	0
No response	1	6.7
Total	15	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2019)

All the teachers have indicated that the GSFP has improved the attendance of girls in the school. The possible justification for this observation could be that girls that otherwise would have been absenting themselves from school because of hunger will no longer be motivated to do so.

The finding, therefore, concurs with [15] that school feeding programmes often lead to increasing in enrolment and attendance by reducing dropout and retention respectively.

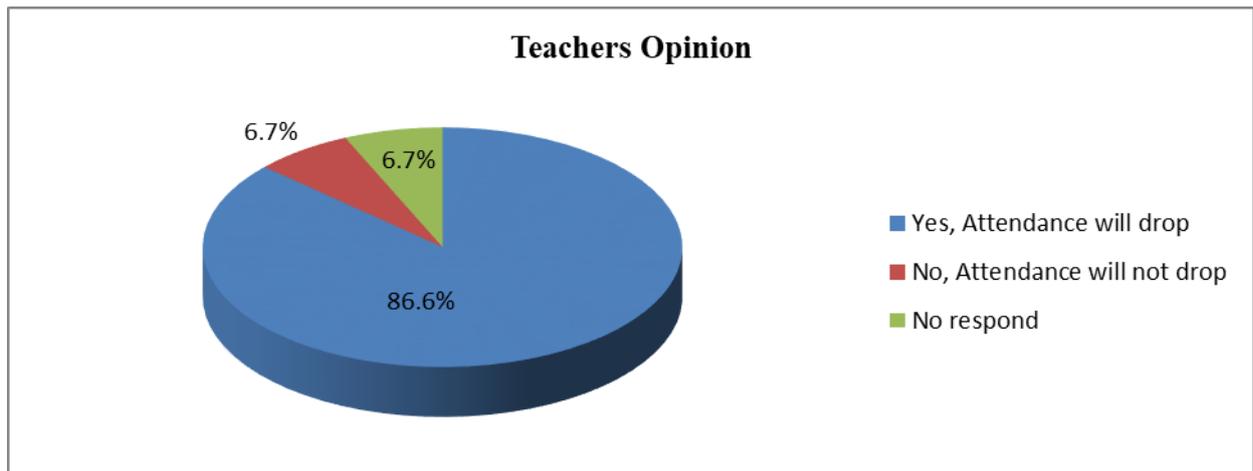


Figure 2: Respondents Opinion on the effect of GSFP on Attendance

Source: Field Survey (2019)

From the chart, the majority of the respondents (teachers) revealed that the attendance figure will drop in the absence of the programme. The evidence is that 13 respondents representing 86.6% confirmed that attendance figure will drop if the GSFP ceased. Only 1 respondent representing 6.7% confirmed that attendance will not drop in the absence of the programme. This shows that school attendance will drop if the GSFP is halted.

Table 8

Students' (girls) Opinion on Attendance

Response	Frequency	Percent
No	39	65.0
Yes	21	35.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2019)

From Table 8: the majority of the respondents (students) indicated that they will not be punctual in school if the programme is stopped. However, these respondents explained that they rely on the GSFP as a motivation to come to school regularly. 21 respondents representing 35% of the sample students indicated that they will be punctual with or without SFP in the school. This clearly shows that the implementation of the programme has increase punctuality (attendance) in the school.

Influences of GSFP in St. Cecilia Primary 'A' on school dropouts

Teachers were asked if the implementation of the GSFP has reduced school dropouts in the school. Out of the total number of teachers (15), 14 respondents confirmed that the implementation of the GSFP has reduced school dropout. Only one respondent did not prove that the execution of the programme has reduced school dropout.

Again, respondents (teachers) were solicited for the category of pupils who are more likely to drop out of the school. The majority of the respondents believe that the intervention of the GSFP has reduced more girls' dropout than the boys. Figure 5 shows the category of pupils the implementation of the GSFP has succeeded in minimizing more dropouts.

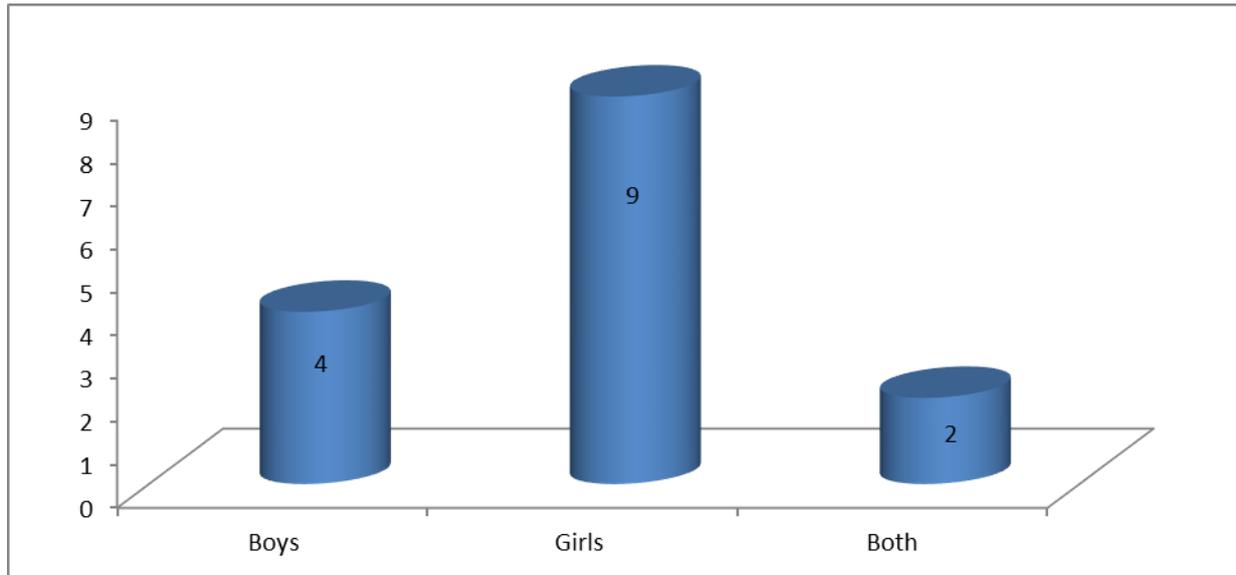


Figure 3: Category of pupils more likely to drop out of the school

Source: Field Survey (2019)

From figure 5, the majority of the respondents (60%) consider that the intercession of the GSFP has minimized high girls drop-out. This suggests that the implementation of the programme has succeeded in reducing more drop-out rates among girls than boys which affect enrolment and attendance in the school.

Activities of GSFP with Special Attention for Girls

A respondent was asked whether there are other activities of the GSFP that have special attention for girls. The chairperson of the municipal implementation committee (Wa) stated that the GSFP does not spell out the specific activity that gives special attention to girls in basic schools. It only provides food and nutritious meal for both girls and boys. This explains that the programme does not have any stated activity aimed at influencing enrolment and attendance figures for only girls.

The GSFP Motivation for parents to enroll and keep their girls in the School

A focused Group Discussion with parents reveals that GSFP has been motivating parents to enroll and keep their girls in the school. This occurs through the programme effort in meeting household educational needs.

The GSFP cut down girls' education expenditure

Parents have expressed their views on how the GSFP motivates them to keep their girls in the school. One main area is the cutting of educational expenditure on girls. Respondents explain that girls required special attention to keep them active in school. These, however, increase the cost of enrolling and keeping girls in the school relative to boys. This caption suggests that parents even rely entirely on the GFSP for their girls to have access to a meal during the day.

Increase Household Income

One of the objectives of the GSFP is to increase the domestic supply of locally produced crops. The results of the study pointed out that some parents are engaged in the production or supply of food items to the school. According to these respondents, they receive income from the supply of the food crops which enables them to take care of their girls in the school. Others who are cooks in the school also receive sustainable income that enables them to meet

their female children's educational expenditure. The income made from the activities of the programme endows parents the chance to enroll and keep their girls in the school. This implies that some parents enroll and maintain their girls in the school, not because of the opportunity to access the meals but because they earn enough income from the activities of the programme for which they can now meet their children's educational wants.

GSFP Addresses Social Economic Factors Affecting Girls' Enrolment and Attendance

The GSFP is said to have been addressing some socio-economic challenges facing girls' enrolment and attendance in the school. The results of the study disclosed that the main socio-economic factors that influence girls' enrolment and attendance that have been addressed by the programme include: poverty, teenage pregnancy, early marriage, and high sexual drive of the youth.

Poverty

Poverty has been a challenge confronting parents in enrolling their female children and keeping them in school. However, the involvement of the GSFP, according to the results of the study has contributed to minimizing the upshot of poverty among households. To the large extent, GSFP has addressed some social-economic factors that affect enrolment and attendance of girls in the school. With the poverty factor, parents are now assured of a meal for their children in school, parents do not push their girls to marry early because they need money to feed the rest of the children at home.

The girls themselves do not employ sexual activities to get money to buy food to eat because they are provided with food to eat at school. This proves that GSFP is a cost-effective strategy for parents in meeting their girls' educational expenditure. Extra resources that would have been spent on girls feeding can be used in meeting other needs of girls such as the provision of sanitary pads, books, etc.

School Drop-Out Resulting from Poverty

It was discovered from the study that the categories of the pupil who the implementation has succeeded in minimizing were girls' dropouts. Thus, 9 respondents representing 60% indicated that girls drop out of the school has reduced more than boys' dropout, while 4 respondents representing 27% said boys drop out has reduced more in the school. Moreover, 2 respondents indicated that both boys and girls drop out has been dealt with by the implementation of the programme in the school.

Suggestions to Improve Girls' Enrolment and Attendance in The School

Respondents were questioned to suggest modifications under GSFP that will improve girls' enrolment and attendance in the school.

Table 9

Suggestions to Improve Girls' Enrolment and Attendance in The School on GSFP

Modifications to increase girls enrolment and attendance	Frequency
Improve the quality and quantity of food	107
Increase the fund	3
Regular distribution of the fund	2
Provide plates and bowls	27
Provide girls with sanitary pads	4
Provision of meal Twice daily	7
No response	72
Total	226

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Suggestion from 107 respondents representing 47.35% was that the GSFP should improve the quality and quantity of the food. Also, 3 respondents constituting 1.33% indicated the Government should increase the fund for the programme while 2 respondents denoting 0.88% are of the view that the Government should regularly distribute funds for the programme. Moreover, 27 respondents who made up to 11.95% point out that the GSFP should provide plates and bowls for the girls, and 4 respondents representing 1.77% maintain that GSFP should provide girls with sanitary pads.

However, 72 respondents amounting to 31.86% were of the view that the GSFP should provide meal twice daily, and lastly, 11 respondents denoting 4.87% of sample respondents did not answer the question. It can be concluded from the above analysis that the quality and quantity of food being served in the school should be highly improved.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

Primary data were taken from many sources in response to the research questions. Respondents include the Headteacher of the school, the entire teachers, parents, sample students (girls), the chairperson of the municipal implementation committee, and the Director of Ghana Statistical Service (GSS). Several findings were opened by the study and summarized according to the following research objective.

How enrolment and attendance of girls' in St. Cecilia Primary 'A' change over time

Enrolment of girls in St. Cecilia's primary 'A' school has seen a positive change since the introduction of GSFP in (2012\2013) academic year. It was recorded that, the total enrolment of girls in the year of implementation (2012/2013) was 196 and increased to 360 in the next academic year, representing 83.6% of the previous year's enrolment. Also, our research compared the total enrolment of girls in five (5) years before and five (5) years after the implementation of the SFP. This revealed an increment of 6.7% over the previous years (5years before).

Attendance of girls in St. Cecilia's primary 'A' on the other hand has also resulted in a positive change since GSFP was introduced in the school. It is observed that school enrolment in the 2007/2008 academic year was higher than the 2015/2016 academic year, yet still, there was an increase in attendance in the 2015/2016 academic year. In the same manner, was 2009/2010 and 2016/2017. It is obvious from the study that there was a trend increase in attendance.

How the GSFP addresses the punctuality of girls in St. Cecilia Primary 'A'

The majority of the respondents (students) indicated that they will not be punctual in school if the programme is stopped. However, these respondents explained that they rely on the GSFP as a motivation to come to school regularly. 21 respondents representing 35% of the sample students indicated that they will be punctual with or without SFP in the school. This clearly shows that the implementation of the programme has increase punctuality (attendance) in the school.

The influence of GSFP on girls' enrolment and attendance in St. Cecilia Primary 'A'

All the respondents including 93.3% of the teachers have indicated that the programme intervention has led to an increase in enrolment and attendance of girls in St. Cecilia Primary 'A'. Respondents, therefore, believe that the GSFP is the main factor influencing enrolment figures. Their justification is that enrolment and attendance of girls in St. Cecilia Primary 'A' will decline if the programme is stopped.

How GSFP motivate parents to enroll their girls in the school

The GSFP motivates parents to enroll and keep their girls in school because once they are provided with meals, parents save the cost that would have been incurred in providing daily means for their girls in school. An inquiry conducted by the researchers revealed that 89 respondents representing 59.3% of parents who have their wards (girls) in St. Cecilia primary 'A' school were motivated by the GSFP. This occurs through the program's efforts in reducing parents' expenditure on their girls' education. Food given to girls at school is considered by parents to have been rich with the required nutrients relative to what is given to them at home in some cases. They, therefore send their girls to schools benefiting from the GSFP to have access. Some parents work and earn a sustainable income under the GSFP. The categories of workers include the cooks, farmers who supply foodstuffs, and suppliers who give food to the schools. These people intend to have the capacity through the program to enroll and keep their girls in school.

CONCLUSIONS

The study provides mixed findings on the impact of GSFP on attendance and enrolment of girls in St. Cecilia primary 'A' school, Sombo. The conceptual model was adopted to guide the analysis. While all respondents have acknowledged its role in increasing gross enrolment yet it has no special objective or attention for girls alone. However, some challenges that were facing parents in female education were addressed by the intervention of the programme.

Through the programme activities of providing enough and nutritious meals for girls in the school, girls' education expenditure that would have been borne by parents is minimized. Besides, the programme has generated some source of livelihood for some households. These opportunities are the sources of motivation for people to enroll and keep their girls in school. Conditions that would have pushed girls to sexual activities leading to school drop-out, early and forced marriage are addressed by the GSFP. These facts imply that the GSFP addresses some socio-economic factors limiting the enrolment and attendance of girls at St. Cecilia primary 'A' school, Sombo.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the summary of findings and conclusions;

1. For the sustainability of the feeding programme, a reliable and guaranteed source of funding is required. The spirit of volunteerism among beneficiary communities and school farms or gardens should be encouraged.
2. The implementation committees at the Wa Municipality should continue to monitor the quality and quantity of the daily meals provided for pupils. This is necessary since the quality of the food such as its nutritional value is a factor motivating parents to enroll and keep their girls in school.
3. Strict measures should be taken by the stakeholders of education in the Wa Municipality against immoral sexual activities among the youth. Other efforts of the GSFP in improving girls' enrolment and attendance will be nullified if such girls later become pregnant and drop out of school. The Municipal Director of Education, Parents and Teachers Association (PTA), the Department of Social Welfare should

strengthen their collaboration in the fight against immoral sexual activities among school girls.

4. Education infrastructures must be expanded in the school to contain the rising enrolment figures by the Minister of Education and school management of St. Cecilia Primary 'A'.
5. Enough educational drives such as a free supply of books, uniforms, etc, should be given to attract more girls into the school aside from the GSFP by stakeholders.

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