

ASSESSING GHANA SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME ON THE ENROLLMENT OF BENEFICIARY SCHOOLS IN THE TAMALE METROPOLITAN ASSEMBLY OF NORTHERN GHANA

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Abstract

The study assessed the Ghana School Feeding programme on the enrolment of beneficiary schools in the Tamale Metropolis of the Northern Region. The case study design was used particularly targeting teachers, caterers, head teachers and key actors in the four selected beneficiary schools. Questionnaires and interview guides were used. The key findings revealed that, there has been a significant increase in enrolment of beneficiary schools. Pupils are motivated to stay in school, and as a result, there has been an improvement in the universal basic education. The beneficiary schools of GSFP are not without challenges since the study revealed that there is lack of commitment from key actors in the implementation of the programme. The study recommends that, since the majority of the respondents are aware of the existence of the GSFP, they should be educated on its implementation to improve on the performance of the programme. Also the provision of the one hot nutritious meal should be supplemented with some snacks in other to make the GSFP better. Efforts should be made by government to increase the amount of money per child from fifty pesewas to one Ghana cedis to enable caterers provide nutritious meals to the pupils.

Keywords: Enrollment management, Nutrition, Ghana, Education Management

INTRODUCTION

The ambition of all nations under the United Nations (UN) is to address the challenges resulting from advancing globalization, has brought about the formulation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the year 2000. In the formulation of the MDGs attention has been paid to hunger and poverty as stated in MDG number 1: to eradicate extreme hunger and poverty. The sub-goal formulated hereby is: by the year 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger is halved as compared to 1990 (UN2005b). School Feeding Programmes (SFP's) are said to among other things contribute to achieving this first Millennium Development Goal (Ghana Government, 2006a).

The New Partnership on Africa's Development (NEPAD) focuses on the combination of school feeding programmes and agriculture. The NEPAD Secretariat has formulated the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), which functions as a framework for the restoration of agriculture, growth, food security, and rural development in Africa. In this framework, pillar 3 has a specific focus on increasing food supply and reducing hunger and includes the following objectives: (1) to reduce malnutrition in school going children through diet supplementation via a complete and adequate meal (in terms of calorie and micronutrient content), and (2) to expand local demand for food products and to stimulate production by small holder farms. NEPAD has formulated an indicator of improvement: the provision of basic school lunches that are balanced in terms of calorie and micronutrient content to 1,000,000 children in poor and vulnerable areas throughout the NEPAD member states (NEPAD, 2005a).

School Feeding began in Ghana in 1940 where school children in the then northern territories were provided with free meals in the boarding schools. However, the mode of feeding children in those days was described as "chaotic" because the menu was usually porridge (Koko) served without sugar for breakfast, maize meal (Tuo Zafi) with dry okro soup without meat for either lunch or supper which was not nutritionally balance. Rice and beans was provided occasionally as a special meal (Imoru, 2010).

School Feeding Programs are targeted social safety nets that provide both educational and health benefits to the most vulnerable children, thereby increasing enrollment rates, reducing absenteeism, and improving food security at the household level. In response to increasing food and fuel prices in 2008, funds from the World Bank's Global Food Crisis Response Program and the subsequent pilot Crisis Response Window provided rapid assistance by supporting existing school feeding programs and essentially linking access to both food and education for poor and vulnerable children living in highly food-insecure communities in the country. With a global turnover in excess of US\$100 billion and reaching

hundreds of millions of schoolchildren, school feeding is clearly evident as a major social program in most countries, including low-, middle-, and high-income countries. Ghana, a country located south of the Sahara is lucky to be one of the beneficiary countries (Global Food for Crisis Response Programme, 2008).

The GSFP commenced in most of the beneficiary communities on a pilot bases in September 2005 with ten schools, one in each region of the country. The GSFP was expanded to cover 200 schools in taking care of the nutritional needs of 69000 pupils in all 138 districts of the country. By August 2006 (Osei, Owusu, Asem and Afutu-Kotey, 2009). Subsequently, the GSFP began with nationwide. By the end of first quarter of 2011 as Osei et al. (2009) indicated, the programme fed 713,590 children in all the beneficiary schools nationwide.

Tamale Metropolis, the capital of Northern Region was one of the areas selected for piloting the GSFP and currently accounts for 44,248 pupils. With the expansion of the GSFP in 2012, many stakeholders' expectations have risen. These expectations encompass both increasing the number of beneficiary schools nationwide and improving the quality of students' educational experiences. More especially, Ghana adopted the GSFP as one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) under the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy I and Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy II which is expected to impact positively on school enrolment and attendance.

Sabbi, Amankwah and Boateng (2012) disclosed the view that, low-income countries are expanding school feeding, because these programs help push them closer to reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by drawing more children, especially young girls, into the classroom. If these programs provide micronutrients such as iron, iodine, vitamin A, B-vitamins, and zinc through fortified foods and are combined with other school health interventions such as deworming, there may be additional benefits for children's cognitive abilities and educational achievement. Researches have shown that, the school feeding programme has a significant impact on attendance and retention resulting in positive impact of the programme. This study therefore seeks to assess the Ghana School Feeding Programme on school enrolment in the Tamale Metropolis of Northern Ghana.

Problem statement

School Feeding Programme is increasingly being viewed as a potential safety net and as a social support measure that helps keep children in school. As an intervention to response to the shocks of the global food and financial crises, countries including Ghana try to implement school feeding as a rapidly social protection mechanism, able to provide food supplements for pupils in basic schools in the Metropolis.

Irrespective of the benefits of the school feeding programme, the social support measure is challenged with numerous difficulties ranging from their high operational costs, insufficiency of the meals due to the inadequate capacity for caterers and cooks as well as the difficulty to procure food locally for the program.

In Bangladesh and other countries, the WFP distributes micronutrient-fortified biscuits as a mid-morning snack to more than a million children each day. As Bangladesh plans for a national school feeding programme, the partnership has supported analyses on the programme coverage, costs, and the investment case (World Food Program, 2009). For a smooth transition towards a National School Meals Program, efforts have been made in the subsequent years, the World Bank is acting as a supervisory entity for the Global Partnership for Education (formally the Education for all-fast Track Initiative) funds needed to continue the program in 2010, while WFP is providing operational capacity-building support in terms of monitoring and exploring the feasibility of providing fortified rice noodles in the school feeding program.

The above interventions are virtually non-existing in Ghana's School Feeding Programme since it is evident that, the children are only provided with one main meal without snacks as food supplements. Also, there is inadequate monitoring and supervision from the external sponsors since there hasn't been any body acting as a supervisory entity from the Global partnership for School Feeding Programme in the educational sector.

The study therefore seeks to assess the Ghana School Feeding Programme on the enrolment of beneficiary schools so as to come out with findings and recommendations aimed at addressing the challenges that negatively affects the GSFP in Tamale Metropolitan area of Northern Ghana.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess whether the Ghana School Feeding Programme has improve on the enrolment of beneficiary schools in the Tamale Metropolis.
2. To assess the opportunities that the Ghana School Feeding Programme is capable of offering to retain or increase enrolment of the beneficiary schools in the Tamale Metropolis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

An Overview of Ghana School Feeding Programme

Ghana is the first of ten (10) countries in Sub-Saharan Africa implementing a SFP modeled to the guidelines of the NEPAD as described in the CAADP. The formulation of the GSFP started in the year 2004 and the programme has been run from January 2006 until December 2010. It was preceded by a pilot programme, which was carried out from September to December 2005.

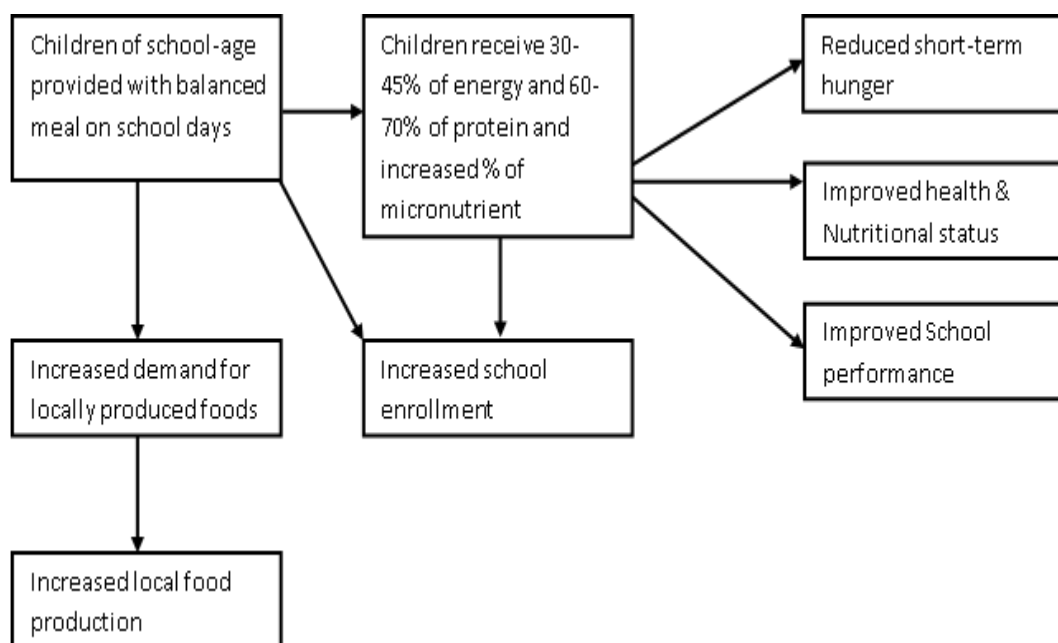
(NEPAD, 2005b). In the year 2010, the programme intended to serve about 1.04 million children in all 138 districts of Ghana. (Ghana 2006a; Ghana 2005; Ghana 2006c). The long-term objective of the GSFP is to contribute to poverty reduction and food security and to increase school enrollment, attendance and retention. The SFP is based on locally grown food products, which should promote domestic food production and improve market access for resource-poor farmers. The government wants to achieve this objective through an increase in employment and income level of farmers at community and national level. In addition, greater availability, access and utilization of food crops and products at community level are assumed to enhance food security. By the end of the programme, it is expected that there will be: a real increase in income at national and community levels, an increased employment at community level and a greater availability, access, utilization and stability of food crops at community level. This strategy complements the development strategies of the government of Ghana (Ghana 2006a).

Conceptual framework

Figure 1 illustrates a framework of possible impacts of SFP as formulated by the Ghana School Feeding Programme's National Secretariat. The framework advocates for the nutritional intervention using locally produced meals as ingredients. The main expected outcomes of the Ghana SFP are: increased demand for locally produced foods, increased school enrollment and increased nutrient intake.

In this regard, it is envisaged that this framework would work to direct, guide and shape the study towards achieving its objectives in areas of school enrollments, retention and attendance. It is assumed that once a child is fed well in the school, it motivates him/her and further encourages colleagues who are not in school to get enrolled to benefit from the feeding programme. The framework in this perspective is not only envisaging an increase in enrollment, but further will regularize attendance to school, especially students from poor homes who hitherto could not make it to school as a result of parents inability to provide feeding money. It is also envisaged that providing hot meals to students serve as a motivation to maximize school retention among students generally and especially among the girl child in the northern parts of Ghana, where poverty levels are high.

Figure 1: Impacts of SFP
as formulated by the Ghana School Feeding Programme's National Secretariat



Source: Adopted from NEPAD, 2005a

School Feeding

The term school feeding has been used over the years to mean the provision of meals or snacks at school to reduce children's hunger during the school day (WFP, 2004). School feeding is also defined as in-school meals only. School feeding has increasingly come to represent a more varied and comprehensive set of uses of food for the achievement of educational outcomes.

School Enrolment

According to Collins Thesaurus, (2002) the term school enrolment means admission, enlisting, recruitment or signing in of students to undergo training.

The Purpose of School Feeding in Schools

According to UNDP these objectives are to be achieved through measurable targets by the year 2015. Many countries throughout the world including the Netherlands, South Korea and the Philippines have in the years before the 2000 MDGs adopted poverty reduction strategies including school feeding programme.

Education is widely regarded to be significant for the development of many countries. Many economists have emphasized the impact of education on economic growth (Lucas, 1988;

Barro, 1991; Mankiw *et al.*, 1992), although some others have raised questions about the causal relationship between education and economic growth. Education has also been found to play a crucial role in the adoption of new agricultural technologies in those countries (Foster and Rosenzweig, 1996).

Finally, the effectiveness of the SFP has succeeded in making education a means to improve health and nutritional requirements of pupils so as to motivate them to stay in school thereby reducing fertility (Schultz, 2007 and 2003; Strauss and Thomas, 2005) and is seen as an intrinsic good in itself (Sen, 2009). This general notion is emphatically expressed under the Millennium Development Goal aimed at achieving universal access to primary education by the year 2015, and eliminating gender disparity in education by 2015.

The Impact of Ghana School Feeding Programme

Ghana School Feeding Programme in relation to its stated objectives has the following positive impacts;

Positive Impacts

Improvement in Education:

Ghana School Feeding Programme has improved in the education of the beneficiary schools because there has been an increase in pupils' enrolment and reduction of school drop-out rate. Yet its antecedent problems like shortage of furniture and high pupil to teacher ratio remain unsolved.

Improvement in health:

The health of pupils in the beneficiary schools has improved as there is less complaints of pupils' ill-health. It could have improved better than it is now if de-worming has been regular and the quantity of food improved (UNDP Report 2003).

Improvement in Food Production and Patronage of locally produced foodstuffs:

Farmers in the beneficiary schools have been encouraged to produce more to feed the GSFP and therefore it is likely to increase food production in the country. Yet the farmer groups complain that their farm produce are not patronized by the programme (Sen, 2009).

Creation of Employment and Improvement in Living Standard:

Ghana School Feeding Programme has reduced unemployment rate by creating employment for farmers, caterers, cooks and food suppliers. This as a result has improved their living standard.

Participation of Stakeholders:

The programme has been able to bring stakeholders such as GES staff, District Assembly staff, Health staff, Farmers, Chiefs, Assembly members who were hitherto not doing things in common, are together in an effort to carry out government policy

Negative impacts

Among the negative effects are that parents are likely to be irresponsible since their children are fed by the government, caterers and other actors are likely to exploit the system due to poor supervision, high pupil-teacher ratio resulting in inefficient teaching and learning and shortage of furniture and low enrolment in the non-beneficiary schools.

The Objectives of Ghana School Feeding Programme

According to GSFP policy document, GSFP 2006 Programme Pilot Review Report, and Programme Document 2007-2010, the basic objectives of GSFP is to provide children in public primary schools and kindergartens with one hot nutritious meal prepared from locally grown foodstuffs on every school going day.

The policy has a secondary objective of improving education, health and agriculture of the country. The health component involves the fact that pupils of the beneficiary schools are to be given good drinking water, de-wormed and fed in a good sanitary environment. In line with improvement of education, enrolment of pupils will improve so as to achieve universal basic education. In the agriculture sub sector the patronage of locally produced goods will be and food security in the country will be achieved. Programme implementation partner organizations such as Netherlands Development Co-operation (SNV), (SEPD), and World Food Programme (WFP) are to carry out training sessions for caterers and cooks to enhance their capacities. The recruitment of caterers and cooks as required by SNV is based on an academic qualification and standard for hygiene. (GSFP Pilot Programme Review Report, (2007-2010).

To achieve the objectives of the programme, roles were assigned to the following key stakeholders as follows;

- i. The government made up of Cabinet and Parliament are responsible for passing the GSFP Bill to legitimize the operations of the programme and sourcing for funds;
- ii. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), in collaboration of the Ministry of Education (MoE) is responsible for the implementation and supervision of the programme;
- iii. Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) is responsible for achievement of the agric objectives;

- iv. Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MoFEP) responsible for the release of funds;
- v. Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) responsible for monitoring and supervision;
- vi. Ghana School Feeding Programme National Secretariat responsible for the implementation of the policy at the national level. (GSFP Annual Operating Plan 2008 page 11)

Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) are to form the programme steering committee in every region. The RCCs are to plan and execute the programme with inputs from the national level. Each Assembly in collaboration with the DIC and SIC is to manage and implement the programme at the local level. They are in charge of food procurement and logistic spending. The Ministry of Agriculture through the District Agriculture Directorate is to sensitize the farmers to produce and supply foodstuffs. The Directorate is also to provide training for farmers especially cooperative farmer groups and assist them to access loans to increase their productivity. The DICs are in charge of planning and monitoring of the programme in all the beneficiary schools whilst the SICs do the implementation and supervision in each school. Below is the structure showing actors of GSFP and their relationship (GSFP Annual Operating Plan 2008)

According to the Ghana government, the institutional framework for implementation of GSFP is designed to avoid corruption, embezzlements and misapplication of funds. The institutions responsible for the implementation are:

- i. Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
- ii. National Implementation Secretariat
- iii. District Implementation Committee (MMDCE as chairman)
- iv. School Implementation Committee including PTA.

Other actors who play several roles in GSFP are Send Foundation International, Centre for Social Fertility and Agric Development (IFDC) Ghana, Agricultural Initiative (GAIN) and Plan International Ghana. Afford Foundation Calabash Foundation, SNV, Berea Social Foundation were involved as partners in the conduct and analysis of interviews on the Annual Operational Report Plan 2007 in Northern Ghana, Upper East Region, Volta, Western Region and Central Region respectively.

Educational Benefits of the School Feeding Programme

School feeding programmes can help to get children into school and help to keep them there through enhancing enrollment and reducing absenteeism and once the children are in school, the programmes can contribute to their learning, through avoiding hunger and enhancing

cognitive abilities. These effects may be potentiated by complementary actions, especially deworming and providing micronutrients. The analysis presented here benefited from early work in this area (Strickland, 2000) and from three recent reviews (Krist jansson et al., 2007; Adelman, Gilligan, and Lehrer 2008; Jukes, Drake, and Bundy, 2008), which arrived at similar conclusions about the direction of the effects. What is less clear is the scale of effect. Different studies have shown an increase in both Gross Primary School Enrolment Rates (GSPER) and Net Primary School Enrolment Rates (NSPER), an increase in school attendance rates and a reduction of drop-out rates compared to controlled schools (Ahmed 2004 & Bennett, 2003). The fact that poorly nourished children benefit cognitively from SFPs has also been demonstrated in several studies (Allen 2001; & Levitsky, 2005). In all these studies, a significant increase was detected in school test-performance between under-nourished children receiving breakfast or lunch and children in the control group not receiving breakfast or lunch at school.

The Ghana School Feeding Programme Budget

To achieve the objectives of the programme, a budget was drawn for a five-year period. The budget was as follows; Total Budget (2006 – 2010): \$ 328.0m or € 270.0m Capital Expenditure: \$ 15.0m Operational Expenditure: \$ 287.0m Other Expenditure: \$ 26.0m **Budget (2006)** Total Cost of programme: € 20.0 million Contribution by Dutch Government: € 6.0 million (30%) Contribution by Ghana Government: € 14.0 million (70%) (*GSFP Annual Operating Plan 2008- page 11*).

Policy Instrument on the School Feeding Programme

Public Ownership is a very important policy instrument in the implementation of public policy. Public ownership takes the form of state corporations, joint ventures, private-public partnerships, contracting out in the distribution of goods and services.

The GSFP was constituted under Section 2(2) of the Chieftaincy Act, 1971 (Act 370) directly implement school feeding programme rather than allow the private sector to do it. Under the programme policy document, there is heavy state involvement in the implementation plan. A review of the GSFP annual operation plan 2008 indicates that, as at 2008, the government of Ghana had spent GH¢52,848,962 representing 79% of the entire cost, Royal Kingdom of Netherlands, GH¢12,835,473 representing 19% and the World Food Programme GH¢1,591,200 representing 2%.

Review of GSFP for the year 2008

A review Report of GSFP 2008 activities revealed that, 596,501 pupils were covered in one thousand, six hundred and ninety-eight (1,698) schools across the country. The expansion of the programme was however resumed in November 2008 to address the disparities in beneficiary schools distribution. The programme as at 2008 covered 20% of all primary and kindergarten pupils in public schools across the country. The Review Report saw the need to increase the feeding cost per child from GH¢0.30 to GH¢0.40 a day. Among the challenges identified by the report are the poor programme linkages with the local farmers contrary to what is stated in the policy document as well as the programme's inability to carry out the de-worming exercise as planned. Other problems include the in extensive involvement of the stakeholders especially Regional and District Directors of Education, and those of Health and Agriculture.

Annual Operating Plan 2009

The major source of funding according to the annual operation plan 2009 is from the government of Ghana, supported by the Royal Kingdom of Netherlands organisation (SNV) and the World Food Programme (WFP). The funding was to cover emolument, administration, service (operations), feeding cost and investment. In Holland, through the UN Hunger Taskforce, the Dutch government was willing to support G.S.F.P. and as a result, several organizations and institutions in that country organized themselves into a platform called School Feeding Initiative Ghana Netherlands (SIGN) to support school feeding programme in Ghana. For example SNV a member of the SIGN in Holland served as a link between the organizations in Netherlands who were willing to support G.S.F.P. and institutions in Ghana involved in the implementation of the programme (SNV Food for Development December, 2007 p. 2).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Case study was used as a framework for to conduct this research. Case study is a comprehensive and empirical enquiry that investigates a phenomenon within real-life context; and adopts flexible methods in analyzing contemporary social issues, such as the Ghana School Feeding Programme.

Target Population

It is very vital in every research that the sampling frame include all members of the study population. Issues relating to the Ghana School Feeding Programme involve the evaluation of the efforts of the stakeholders, the teaching staff in the selected beneficiary schools in the

metropolis. The views and opinions of the above respondents were efficiently utilized for this particular study.

Sampling Procedure

A non-probability sampling technique specifically purposive sampling technique was used in the determination of the sample size of this study. The researcher visited the selected schools in the Tamale Metropolis for the purposes of obtaining the needed sample size.

Sample Size Determination and Distribution

Out of the over 100 communities in the Tamale Metropolis, the research intends to use 30% of the identified communities. Taylor, (2002) indicates that, when determining the sample size needed for a given level of accuracy, researcher must use the conventional response rate of 20% which is considered as a good response rate, while a 30% response rate is considered to be *really* good. This is usually accepted in order to determine a general level of accuracy for a sample. To determine the sample size for this particular study, the researcher considered 30% of the 100 communities; and this yielded 30 communities as the population universe from which the actual sample size was obtained. As one of the options for determining a representative sample size, a margin of error of 10% and a confidence level of 90% is also chosen. With an adult population of 200 comprising both male and female respondents in each community, the 30 communities will yield 6000 communities members as the target population.

Using a mathematical formula given below, the sample size will be calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(\alpha)^2}$$

Where n represent the actual sample size, N representing target population, 1 is constant in the formula, α (.05) stands for the margin of error.

$$n = \frac{6000}{1 + 6000(.10)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{6000}{1 + 6000(0.01)}$$

$$n = \frac{6000}{1 + 60}$$

$$n = \frac{6000}{61}$$

$$n = 98.360$$

$$n = 98$$

The sample size for this study as the calculation above shows is 98. This means that the researcher contacted 98 respondents in the field for the purpose of data collection using the identified data collection tools.

ANALYSIS

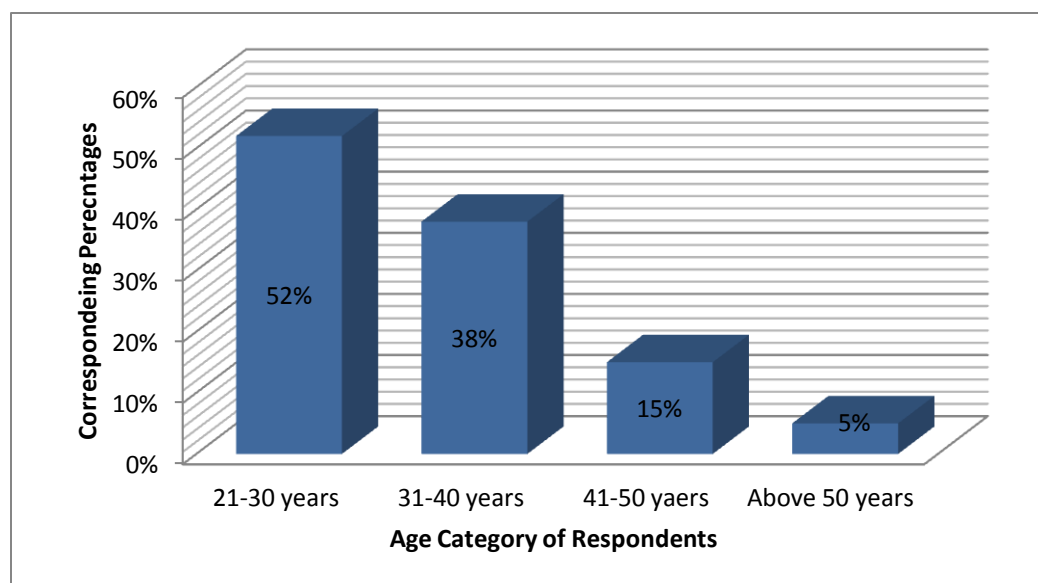
Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The figures in this section deals with the different data pertaining to the features of the respondents who took part in the data collection exercise. Demographic characteristics such as age, sex, education and job description are presented.

Age Distribution of Respondents

Figure 1 below contains data on the ages of respondents who participated in the study. Out of the 100 respondents contacted for this data, 52% fell between the age group of 21–30 years. Those found to be in the bracket of 31-40 years were 35%. The age group of the respondent falling within 31–40 years was 12% of the entire sample. Those whose ages were above 50 years but less than 60 represented 3%. The ages of all the respondents appeared to be below 60 years, implying they were all in active service. The above data therefore depicts that the workforce of the schools selected in question were youthful. This also implies that the youthful nature of the workforce of the schools if properly utilized will contribute effectively in the improvement of teaching and learning leading to improved performance.

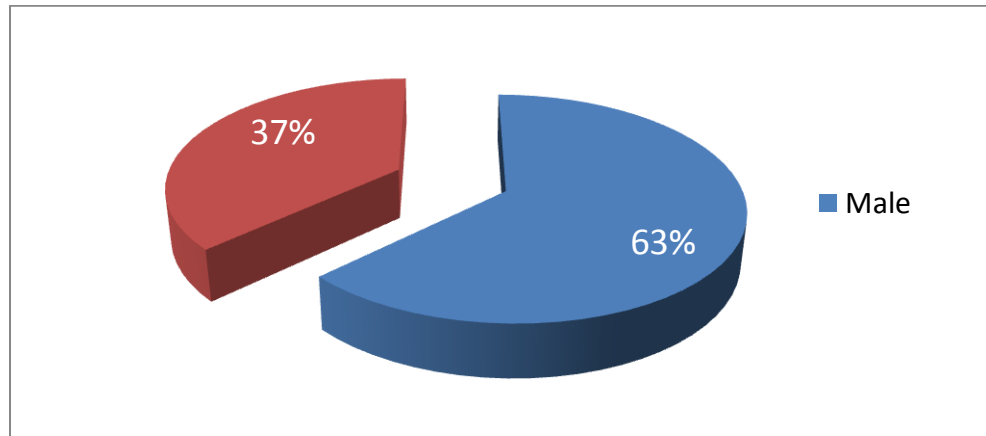
Figure 1: Age Distribution of Respondents



Sex Distribution of Respondents

As revealed in Figure 2, 63% of the respondents were males constituting majority of the sample selected for the data collection. Also, 37% of the remaining respondents were females. The data therefore shows that the population of men in the beneficiary schools outnumbered their female counterpart. However there is the possibility of male dominance in dealing with issues relative to the management of the school feeding programme.

Figure 2: Sex Distribution of Respondents

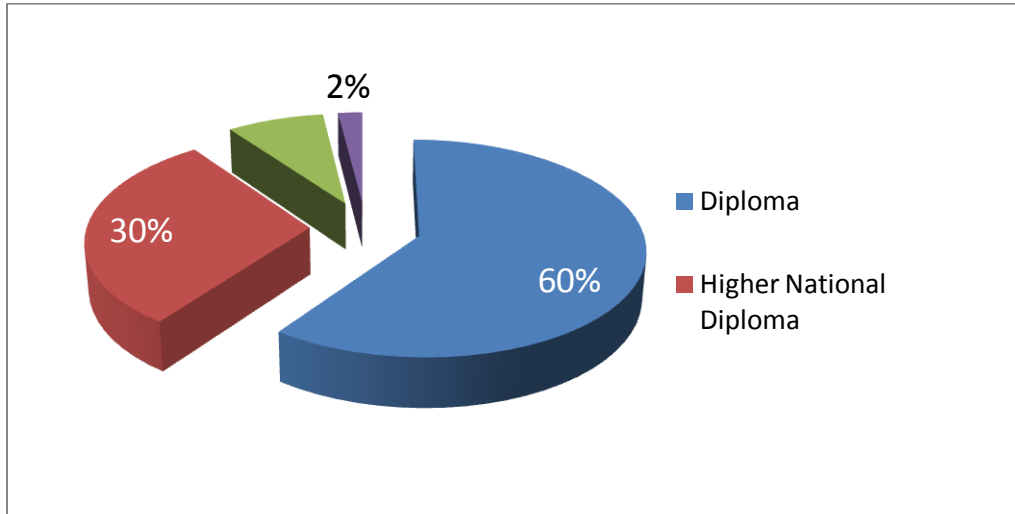


Educational Background of Respondents

With regards to the educational background of respondents who were mainly teachers, it was realized that, 60% of the respondents had diploma as their highest educational qualification. As it can also be seen in the data below, those with Higher National Diploma represent 30% of the sample chosen for the data collection. University degree was among the least educational qualification of the respondents since 8% of the teachers in the beneficiary schools of GSFP obtained university degrees. The role of education is very essential in the appreciation of issues relative to risk management. Furthermore, the data revealed that, very insignificant part of the teachers representing 2% made mention of NVTI and other technical courses as their level of educational qualification.

One can argue with high level of certainty that, the different educational background of respondents has contributed to different responses emanating from the various dynamics of the School Feeding Programme. The researcher's interaction with the respondents further revealed that all the different levels of educational qualification appears to have a greater influence since all the respondents had different understanding relating to the management of the selected schools under the Ghana School Feeding Programme in the Municipality for this particular study.

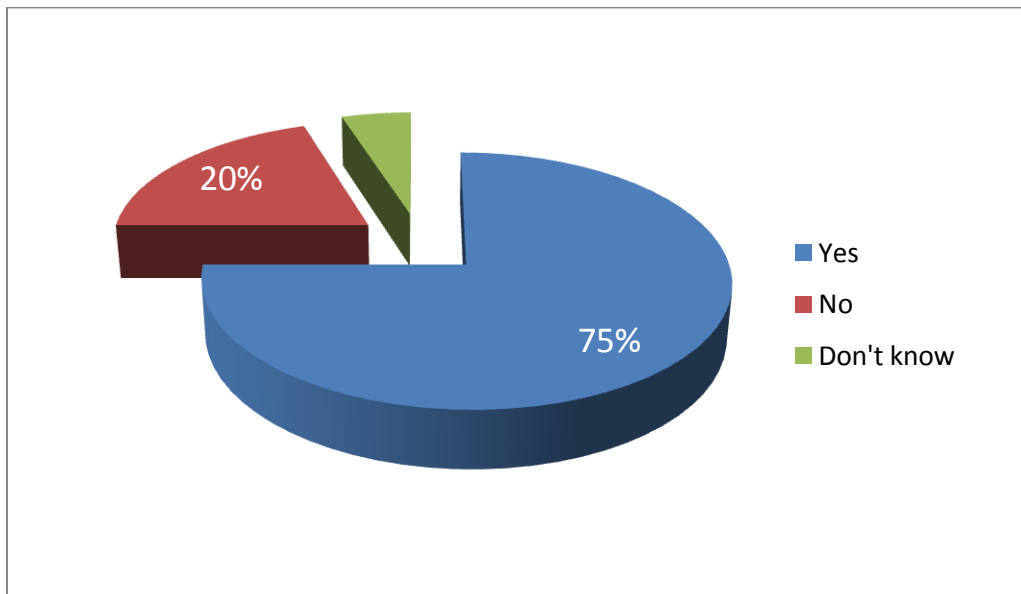
Figure 3: Educational Background of Respondents



Ghana School Feeding Programme and its impact on the enrolment of beneficiary schools in the Tamale Metropolis.

This part of the study seeks to discuss Ghana School Feeding Programme and its effects on pupils' enrolment of some selected beneficiary schools in the Tamale Metropolis. Themes earmarked for the discussions include awareness of the GSFP in the Metropolis, the provision of one hot nutritious meal by the GSFP, the purpose of the School Feeding in Schools and the Success of the GSFP and its impact on enrollment.

Figure 4: Awareness of the GSFP in the Metropolis

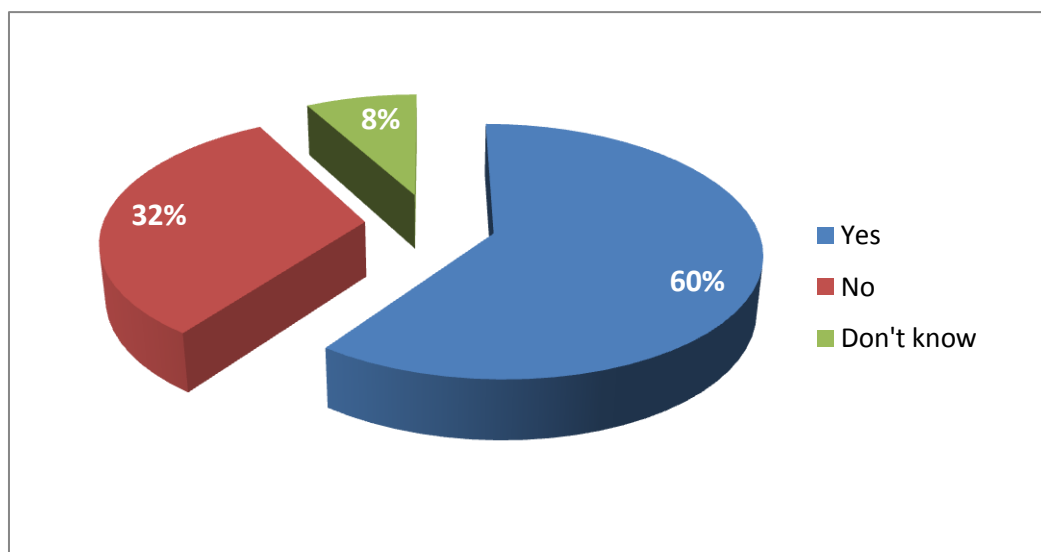


In response to a question on whether teachers and other communities members in the beneficiary schools are aware of the GSFP in the Tamale Metropolis, quite a significant part of all the respondents selected for this study answered in the affirmative since 75 percent of them said they were aware of the existence of the Ghana School Feeding Programme in Tamale and its environs. However, 20 percent of the respondents provided a contrary answer to the one held by the majority of the respondents since they said they were not aware of the existence of the School Feeding Programme in the Metropolis. The study again reveals that, some of the beneficiaries at the various communities in the Tamale Metropolis expressed their uncertainty to the issue and could accept or reject the view concerning the awareness or otherwise of the school feeding, though there are a whole lot of schools in the study area, few schools which benefits from the programme includes the Songnayili Rahaniya Primary School, Cheshei Primary school, Zogbeli Ansuariya primary school and Tua Sunia Islamic Primary School.

A look at all the schools under study in which the GSFP has been implemented reveals an increase in enrolment per ten thousand population increased from 34.98 in 2010/2011 to 40 in 2013/2014 academic year. The figure fell in 2008/09 and thereafter begun to increase again. The school feeding program was introduced in the 2006/2007 and after its implementation; enrolment rate kept rising till in the 2008/09 academic year depicting the positive impact of GSFP on pupil's enrolment.

However the enrolment per ten thousand populations decreased in 2009/10 academic year after which it went up again in 2010/2011. The school authorities revealed that, after this period, there has been a remarkable improvement in the enrollment of pupils in the beneficiary schools.

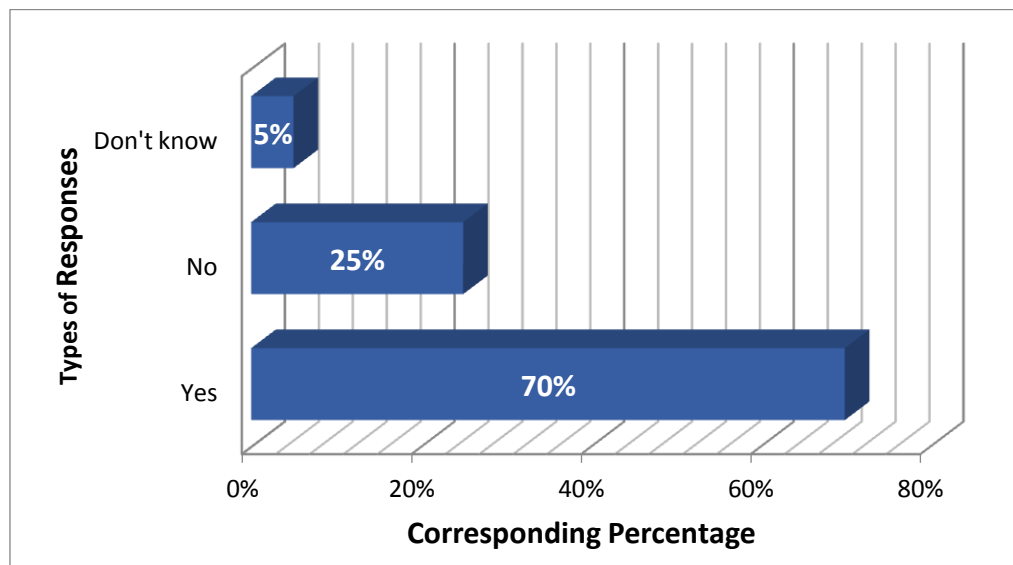
Figure 5: GSFP Provides One Hot Nutritious Meal per Day



As figure 5 indicates, majority of the respondents representing 60% revealed that, the GSFP provides one hot nutritious meal per day in the beneficiary schools in and around the Tamale Metropolis. Even though most of the respondents answered in the affirmative, 32% of the members in the various identified communities expressed their doubt about the above assertion that confirms the provision of one hot nutritious meal a day. The meals received by most beneficiaries are sometimes very cold and therefore defeats the purpose for which the GSFP was established. The category of respondents representing 8s% said they do not know of anything concerning whether the meals provided are hot or otherwise.

After the implementation of the GSFP, the attendance per school open days increased drastically. This increase can be attributed to the introduction of the GSFP in the various schools since the 2006/07 academic year. Most of the heads teachers of the beneficiary schools indicated that, though enrollment dropped in the following academic year (2008/2009). This illustrate that the attendance by pupil per open days for the schools improved significantly after the implementation of the programme.

Figure 6: Knowledge on the Purpose of the School Feeding in Schools



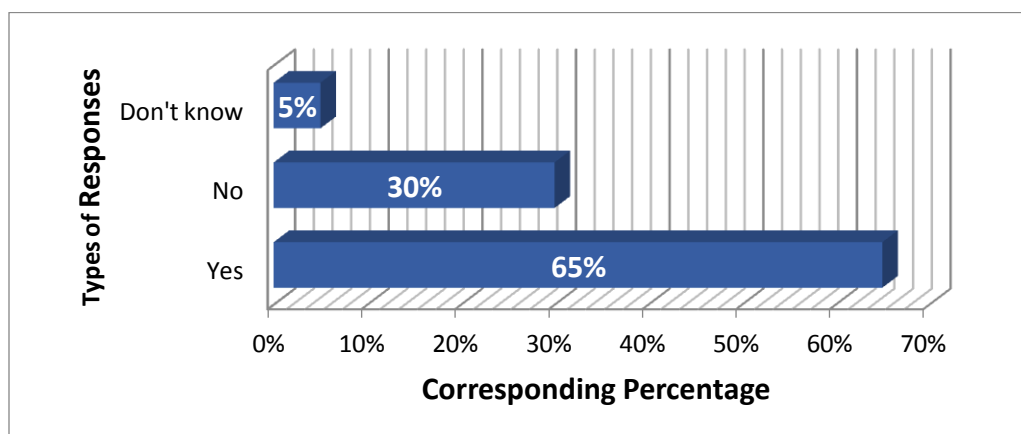
When asked whether they have an idea about the purpose of the Ghana School Feeding Programme, the above figure revealed that, 70 percent of the respondents, especially teachers and parents of beneficiary children indicate that, they have ample knowledge on the purpose for the establishment of the Ghana School Feeding Programme. The school feeding programme according to the respondents is used as a catalyst for the increment and sustenance of enrollment among the beneficiary schools in the Metropolis. As the respondents further added

to the above, this in a way goes to encourage parents irrespective their economic condition to get their wards enrolled in the beneficiary schools in the Tamale Metropolis. Improved enrolment undoubtedly contributes to the reduction in streetism among children of school going age in the Metropolis. Furthermore, 25% of the respondents clearly said they do not have any knowledge on the purpose of the school feeding in schools, hence the rejection of the fact that people have knowledge about the purpose of the GSFP. An insignificant part of the respondents represented by 5% held the position that, they are completely unaware of this issue.

The respondents were confident that enrolment indeed is having positive effects on academic performance of the pupils from schools with GSFP. In the years gone by, academic performance has been better off and this is attributed to pupils improved enrollment in beneficiary schools of the GSFP. The head teachers of schools namely Tua Sunia Islamic primary schools, Songnayili Primary and Cheshie Primary stressed with great emphasis that, the average mark the pupil obtained in English, Mathematics and Integrated Science in the third term examinations was 57.3 percent in 2012. The pupils average marks increased significantly by 10% over the previous years to 62.7 percent. This was exactly 6 years after the introduction of the school feeding programme. In the researcher's perspective, this is a reflection of the impact of the GSFP on the academic performance of the pupils. The rising trend continued in 2010 after which it started a downward trend in the following years in 2009/10 but even that, the average mark was still higher than the period before its implementation.

In order to establish the fact that GSFP has had positive effect on enrolment, attendance and performance, data from schools without the GSFP was also collected and analyzed to enhance a comparative study. Starting with the pupil enrolment, the enrolment per 1000 population was highest (12.9) in 2010/11 academic year and then started dwindling over the years to 8.45 in 2011/12 academic year.

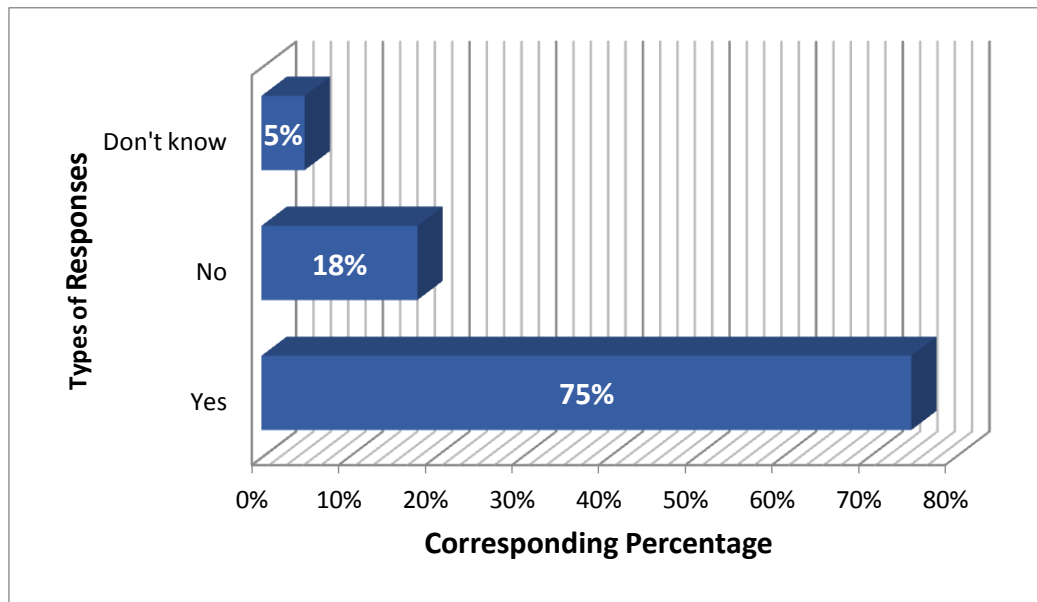
Figure 7: The Success of the GSFP and its impact on Enrollment



With regards to whether the GSFP has succeeded in motivating pupils to stay in school, 65 percent of the respondents, agreed to the assertion that, the success of the GSFP and its effect on enrolment is not in any way doubted and cannot therefore be underestimated. This response does not represent the entire opinion of the respondents chosen for this since 30% of the respondents provided a contrary view on the success of the GSFP on the improvement of enrollment in the beneficiary schools. In addition to the above two separate responses, 5% of the respondents said they have no any idea on the success of the school feeding programme due to indecisiveness on their part.

The attendance of pupil per school's open days was somehow stable within the period under review. In 2010/11 the attendance per open day increased sharply under unexplained circumstances by almost by 21%.

Figure 8: Increment in Pupils' Enrolment in Schools



A comparative analysis between the schools participating in the GSFP and those not participating in the GSFP within the same Metropolis was done to envisage the substantial impact of the school feeding programme on enrolment and attendance. Moreover, the figure revealed majority of the respondents representing 75% attesting to the fact that, schools with the schools feeding programme has an increment in pupils' enrollment in schools, this outcome cannot be achieved in schools where the Ghana School Feeding Programme is virtually absent.

However, not all of the respondents agreed to this assertion since 18% of the respondents indicated that, even in schools with the Ghana School Feeding Programme, increment in enrolment is not automatic, how much more the schools where GSFP is not in existence.

The increase in the enrolment in the schools with the GSFP could be attributed to the prudent management practices of the GSFP. It could be concluded that the GSFP has had a positive impact on school enrolment. It must be emphasized that class-sizes have been identified as determinants of academic performance. The increase in enrolment without commensurate increase in infrastructure may have a negative effect on academic performance.

Authorities of the schools investigated revealed that schools with smaller class sizes perform better academically than schools with larger class sizes. The school authorities reiterated that, though enrolment is good, the effect is that class sizes have gone above 40 bringing about certain negative effects on students' achievement. The school environment such as the classroom size, available teaching and learning materials and even playgrounds are all affected due to the increased enrollment.

They also held the opinion that, class supervision and control can only be effective when the population is minimal and this in turn promotes teaching and learning process. Fabunmi and Okore suggest or propose that class size, pupil-teacher ratio and the school population are major factors of performance in most of the Ghanaian schools.

The difference in pupils' attendance within the four (4) different academic years between GSFP- participating schools and non-GSFP schools is displayed reflected in all classrooms of the selected schools. In class one, the attendance of pupil in the schools without GSFP was 80% as against 70% attendance of by pupil in the schools without GSFP. In class three (2010/11 academic year), four years after the GSFP was implemented in the schools, the attendance in the school without GSFP was 81% which was still higher as compared to 76% of attendance in schools with GSFP. The picture became clearer in class four when attendance in schools without GSFP improved.

A head teacher at Tua Sunia Islamic Primary School along the Nyankpala road and other classroom teachers attested to the fact that, in classes four and five, the attendance of pupils in the above mentioned school and other schools in the Metropolis, enrollment dropped and improved again in class six. In class five and six, the attendance of pupil with GSFP went up by 20%.

The picture depicts that though GSFP have a positive impact on pupils' school attendance which is the cases in class four, five and six since the attendance in these classes were higher than that of class three, the case in class four of schools without GSFP shows that there is more to attendance than simply GSFP. Though the GSFP had a positive impact on

attendance in schools on the programme, there are other compelling factors that positively influenced the attendance of pupils in schools.

The Office of the Metropolitan education said certain factors are militating against pupils' enrolment in the GSFP beneficiary schools. They however categorized the factors that contribute to truancy in school and family as economic and pupils' factors. Under school, factors such as a school's size and the attitudes of administrators, teachers, and other pupils, as well as the degree to which a school is flexible in meeting the diverse cultural and learning styles of pupils were mentioned.

The most important attribute being the approach to which a school tries to unravel the truancy problem among their students. Family factors included poverty, domestic violence, lack of familiarity with school attendance laws, varied educational priorities and lack of parental supervision and/or guidance which is very important especially considering the age of pupils.

The responses in the Table 1, relates to the level of agreement or disagreement to the following benefits of the school feeding programme on enrollment as listed.

Table 1: Benefits of School Feeding Programme

Benefits of School feeding programme	Agree	Percent (%)
Even the poor parents, do enroll their children in schools	26	22%
Motivate parents to enroll their children in school	30	25%
Increase in attendance and retention of pupils	28	23%
Enrollment results in retention and attentiveness in class and enhancement of pupils' participation	16	13%
Enrollment results in retention and attentiveness in class and enhancement of pupils' participation	25	20%
Total	120	100%

When asked to indicate whether they agree or disagree to the following benefits of school feeding programme in Tamale Metropolis, the table above represent the response of the respondents. As the Table 1 indicates, all the respondents agreed GSFP has contributed in one way or the other towards the improvement of enrollment of pupils on the beneficiary schools. First and foremost, 26 respondents representing 22% revealed that, the school feeding programme has provided some respite for most people, even the poor parents, who hitherto

could not enroll their children in schools to now to enroll their children due to the introduction of the school feeding programme in the Tamale Metropolis. According to 30 respondents representing 25%, the school feeding programme has motivated majority of parents to enroll their children in school. Adding to the above benefits of GSFP, 28 respondents with a percentage point of 23 further reveal that, the school feeding programme has undoubtedly increased attendance and retention of students in the beneficiary schools.

Furthermore, 16 respondents (13%) points to the fact that, with the effective management of the schools feeding programme, the increased enrolment attained has certainly resulted in retention and attentiveness in class thereby enhancing of pupils' participation in teaching and learning in all the chosen schools for this study. This in the view of the respondents has brought hope to parents, especially the very poor who have continually suffered over the years in enrolling their wards in schools prior to the introduction of the school feeding programme. It is quite apparent in the above table that, 25 respondents (20%) expressed the fact that, the hope of enjoying good meals makes pupils stay in schools.

The importance of the impact of GSFP has not only brought improvement on pupils' enrollment but on factors such as pupils' academic performance, pupil attentiveness in class, pupil school attendance. This study confirms earlier findings by Schultz, 2007 and 2003; Strauss and Thomas, 2005 on schools in which school feeding programme has been implemented. The confirmation lie in the fact that, the effectiveness of the SFP has succeeded in making education as a means to improve health and nutritional requirements of pupils so as to motivate them to stay in school thereby reducing fertility (Schultz, 2007 and 2003; Strauss and Thomas, 2005).

The study found that GSFP impacted positively on school attendance and attentiveness in class which enhanced pupils' participation in the teaching and learning process leading to improvement in their academic performance. Pupil's school attendance did not show any statistically significant difference between schools with GSFP and schools without GSFP and this call for more focused measures to ensure that pupils attend school regularly.

The real effect of the GSFP according to the stakeholders is the improvement in enrolment since the pupil academic performance also to be improved. As explained by the school authorities such as head teachers and their assistants as well as caterers since the GSFP has really resulted in increased enrollment, and this means that there is the need to consider other factors that positively influence the academic performance to ensure effective social development.

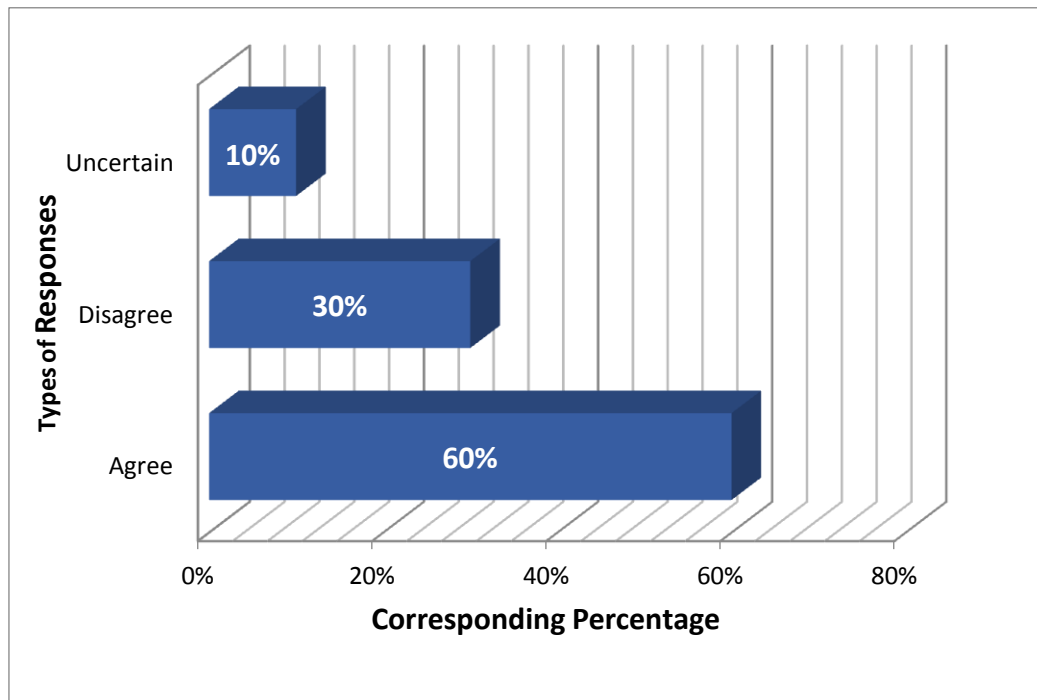
A relationship can also be established between the findings discovered by this study and the assertions put forward by Lucas (1988) and Barro (1991). The assertion of (1988) and Barro (1991) that relates to this study is the fact that, education is widely regarded to be significant for

the development of many countries. Many economists have emphasized the impact of education on economic growth

Opportunities offered by GSFP in increasing pupils' enrolment of the beneficiary schools

This aspect of the study presents findings on the prospects of the GSFP in increasing enrolment and its associated benefits of the beneficiary schools in the Tamale Metropolis.

Figure 9: The Reduction of Hunger and Malnutrition by the GSFP



In terms of whether the GSFP has contributed to the reduction of hunger and malnutrition among pupils of the beneficiary schools, 60 percent of the respondents agreed to the fact that, the programme has really resulted in the reduction of hunger and malnutrition with the ultimate effect being an increased in school enrolment, attendance and retention among others. Contrary to the above assertion which portrays positivity, 30% of the respondents on the other hand as it can be seen in the data of the above figure disagreed to the discovery that the GSFP has contributed to the reduction of hunger and malnutrition among pupils of the beneficiary schools. The last category of the respondents representing 10 percent expressed their uncertainty on whether the GSFP has contributed to the reduction of hunger and malnutrition among pupils of the beneficiary schools.

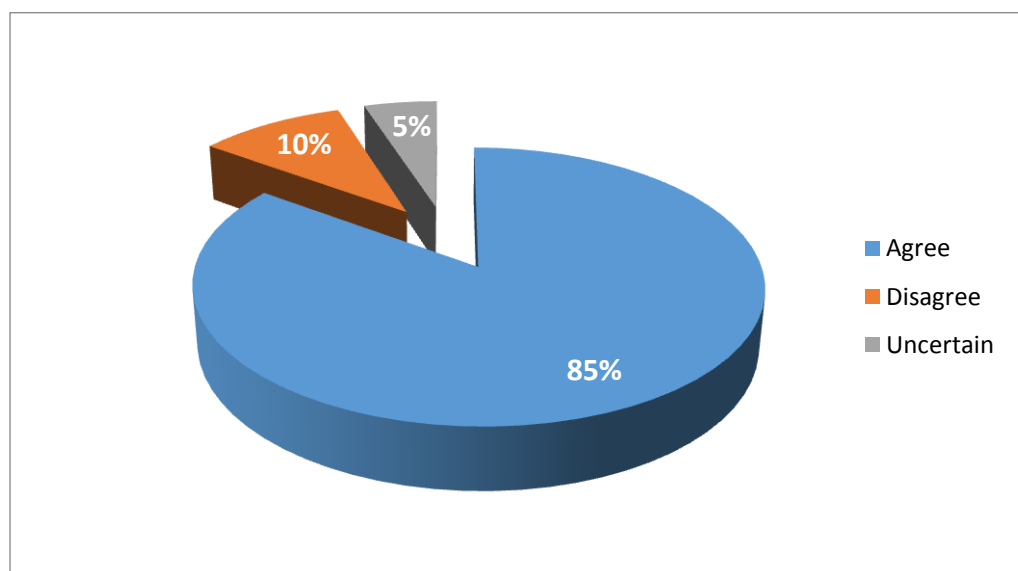
The stakeholders including secretariat at the Metropolitan Assembly pointed to the fact that, GSFP has now become one of the indicators of education that has created effective

demand for education and the improvement it has brought, especially at the basic school level. The data files of the Metropolitan education office also revealed that, at the primary school level, gross and net enrolments have been quite impressive and stood at 60% and 70% respectively in 2010. The survival or completion rate in basic schools increased from 83.2% in 2004 to 85.4% in the same year. In spite of these successes, indicators further suggest that the quality of education is declining to the widening of the pupil teacher ratio. On the pupil to core text book ratio, the number of pupils sharing one core text book increased from 2 in 2010 to 3 in 2012. These trends suggest that while the number of people accessing education in Ghana may have increased over the years, the quality levels may not have improved.

The identified stakeholders in this study held the opinion that, the Ghana School Feeding Programme which is a laudable idea, will ensure high quality of teaching and learning such as teacher motivation, good condition of service for the education sector as well as proper supervision and management will go a long way to improve not only quantity but quality of education as well. The government together with the schools authorities should provide suitable learning environment, adequacy of educational infrastructure like textbooks since these have been found to influence academic performance of students.

With all of the above revelations, suggestions from the respondents points to the fact that, there are several opportunities that the GSFP has offered and will continue to offer in order to increase enrolment of the beneficiary schools in the Tamale Metropolis. A typical example suggested by the pupils themselves relates to the fact that, providing a meal at school is a simple but concrete way to give poor children a chance to learn and thrive

Figure 10: Encouraging Pupils to Stay In School

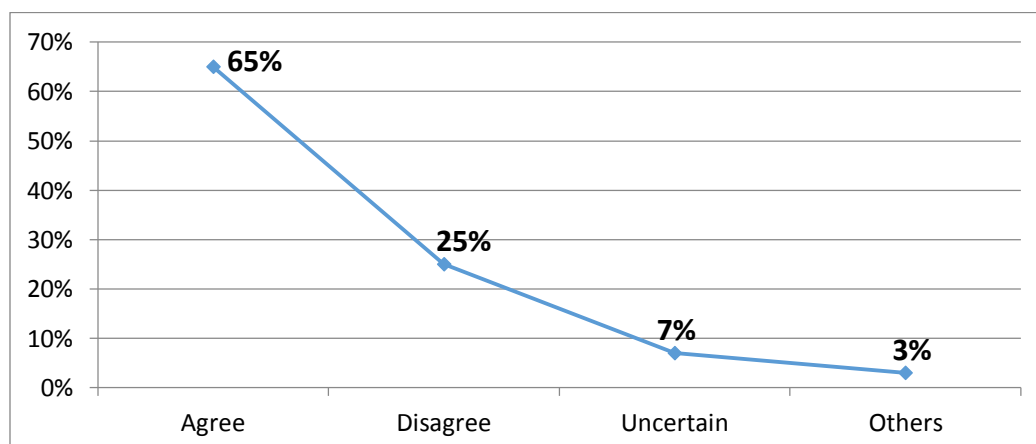


With regards to the programme encouraging pupils to stay in school when they are assured of good food and drinking water in their respective schools, an overwhelming 85% of the entire responding including teachers, caterers and even the stakeholders who are outside the school environment agreed to the assertion that, the school feeding programme is encouraging pupils to stay in school when they are assured of good food and drinking water in their respective schools. However, a proportion of the respondents representing 10% of the research sample were not sure if the programme is encouraging pupils to stay in school when they are assured of good food and drinking water in their respective schools, and therefore disagreed with the earlier assertion. According 5% of the respondents, they are unsure and doubtful concerning the possibility of the programme encouraging pupils to stay in school when they are assured of good food and drinking water in their respective schools.

Those who answered in the affirmative concerning the ability of the programme to encourage pupils to stay in school when they are assured of good food and drinking water in their respective schools therefore argues that, on empty stomachs, pupils become easily distracted and have problems concentrating on their school work. They become better students when their bodies are well nourished and healthy. This means that, the incentive of getting a meal also reduces absenteeism. Most importantly, performance improvement and drop-out rates decrease.

This can therefore be interpreted that, health and education which are interrelated are considered as the cornerstones of human capital and form the basis of an individual's economic productivity. They also help to keep a country's economy healthy and to create a literate society. There is considerable evidence that education plays a central role in empowering citizens, which in turn is linked to numerous long term benefits such as smaller family sizes and increased agricultural production.

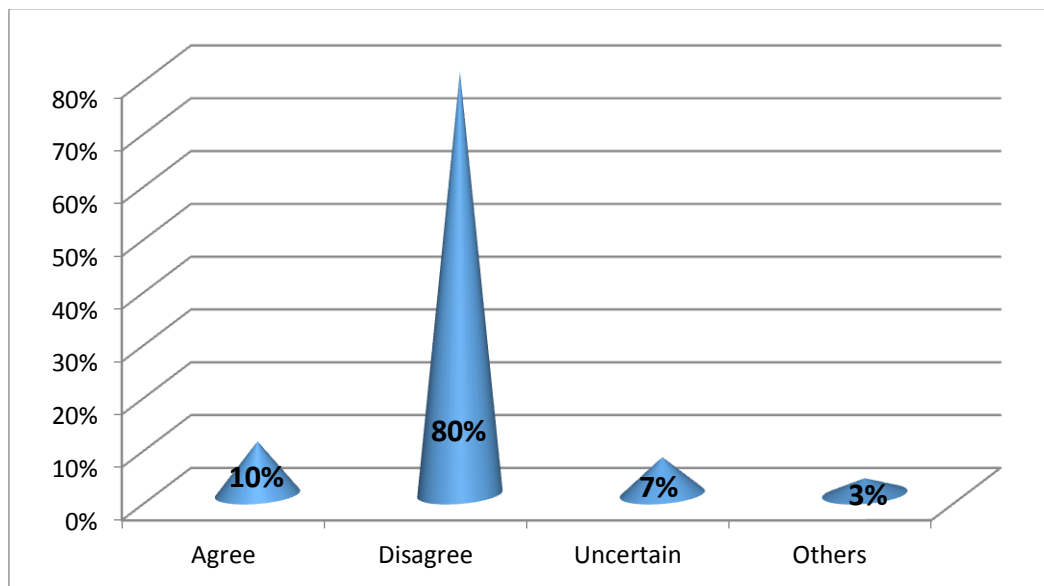
Figure 11: Improvement of Enrolment towards Universal Basic Education by GSFP



In line with improvement of education through the Ghana School Feeding Programme, the study seeks to determine whether enrolment of pupils will be improved so as to achieve universal basic education. In response to this question, 65% of the respondents answered in the affirmative by agreeing to the assertion which suggests that without the school feeding programme, schools will not be in the position to improve on the universal basic education. Those who answered in the affirmative further added that, the school feeding program in basic schools showed positive effects on school enrolment in the beneficiary schools in the Metropolis.

Contrary to this response, 25% of the respondents' thoughts opposed the assertion that, the Ghana School Feeding Programme has improved the enrolment of pupils in order to achieve universal basic education. Those who disagreed further disclosed that, the existence of the school feeding programme has not made any impact on enrolment in the Tamale Metropolis and its environs. In addition to the above, 7% of the respondents were uncertain and could not provide any meaningful response to the question asked. Also, 3% of the respondents thought not only enrollment has been improved upon due to the introduction of the school feeding programme.

Figure 12: The Increased in Enrolment as an Indirect Impact



On whether the increased in enrolment is an indirect impact of the school feeding on pupils participating in the programme, 10% of the respondents held the view which is in agreement to the above assertion. The results of the study also point to the fact that, 80% disagree to the assertion that, the increased in enrolment is an indirect impact of school feeding on pupils

participating in the programme. The outcome of the data obtained also point to the fact that, 7% of the respondents were uncertain and therefore could not provide any meaningful response to the issue being investigated in this section. According to 3% of the respondents, the school feeding programme has also brought about serious pressure on the limited infrastructure in the beneficiary schools in the Metropolis.

One can therefore argue to the effect that, major worries which use to be a bother to parents when deciding to send their children to primary school has now become a thing of the past. According to most of the parents, they usually weigh the long-term benefit of education against the short-term costs of school fees, and however urge governments to continue with the school feeding programme because its impact on school enrolment since its inception has been very encouraging.

With regards to enrolment, the Ghana School Feeding Programme has impacted positively in increasing the enrolment of pupils in the beneficiary schools, particular the girl child who in times of economic crisis or emergencies are usually the first to be withdrawn from school in order to assist with sibling care and to generate income.

CONCLUSION

The role of the school feeding programme towards the improvement of enrollment so as to reduce school dropout is very important. The programme has really resulted in the reduction of hunger and malnutrition and therefore increases in school enrolment. School feeding programme is considered as a creditable initiative and can therefore ensure high quality of teaching and learning as a result of pupils enrolment, it again encourages pupils to stay in school if they are assured of good food and drinking water in their respective schools and the programme contributes to improved enrolment of pupils so as to achieve universal basic education.

The beneficiary schools are however faced with practical challenges due to increased enrolment. These challenges are difficulties in getting enough furniture, inadequate classroom in the beneficiary schools, high teacher-pupils ratio and inadequate teaching and learning materials. The schools lack sufficient infrastructure and other means of addressing the above challenges.

In order to address these challenges, essential and appropriate steps are to be taken to ensure the provision of sufficient furniture and adequate classroom in the beneficiary schools, posting more teachers to the beneficiary to correct high-teacher-pupils ratio as well as provision of adequate teaching and learning materials.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to strengthen the effectiveness of the school feeding programme in increasing and improving enrollment in the beneficiary schools, the following recommendations are provided:

Efforts should be made to persuade women to seek employment and in other jobs in order to solve the gender disparity in the various available. Though the teachers have various educational qualifications, Diploma and Degrees, they should go for further studies to make them more knowledgeable so as to enable them appreciate different issues relating to the school feeding programme.

Since majority of the respondents are aware of the existence of the school feeding programme they should be educated on the nature of the implementation of the programme. This can go a long way to enable us contribute effectively in improving upon the performance of the school feeding programme.

The provision of one hot nutritious meal per day should be maintained and supplemented with some snacks in order to make the school feeding programme better. The knowledge of the respondents on the purpose of the school feeding in schools should be effectively so as to be able to understand the processes involved in the workings of the programme in order to avoid corruption.

Efforts should be made by government to increase the amount of money per child from fifty pesewas (50.0p) to one Ghana cedis (Gh¢ 1.00) to enable caterers provide adequate and nutritious meals that will improve on the health and academic performance of the pupils and also to further motivate of pupils to stay in school. The secretariat responsible for GSFP at the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly should be strengthened effectively in terms of the provision of logistics to facilitate their monitoring activities for more and better improvement in the implementation of the GSFP; this undoubtedly will further increase enrolment in the schools. The staff at the secretariat should regularly be trained in order to enable them acquire best practices in managing the school feeding programme.

Since the GSFP has brought about benefits such as encouraging parents to enroll their children in school, enhanced attendance and retention of pupils, attentiveness of pupils in class and enhancement of pupils' participation, the above successes should be set as benchmark in not only the beneficiary schools but also in other schools where the school feeding programme is being implemented. Though there has been a reduction of hunger and malnutrition, there should be improvement such as introduction of eggs, fish or meat for the achievement of protein or calcium supplement from the meals provided. The drinking water provided in the beneficiary schools should be kept safer so as to avoid the contamination of the water provided.

Since there has been improvement in the GSFP, this will further contribute to improved enrolment of pupils towards the achievement of universal basic education; the ministry of education in collaboration with the local government service secretariat should strengthen their collaboration in order to supervise the programme properly for improved performance.

In order to ensure that, the school feeding programme is properly managed to achieve the desired objectives, there is the need for the harmonization of the program of activities so as to ensure a coordination of the functions undertaken by each of the stakeholders. By so doing, the GSFP will best be managed, supervised and monitored on regular basis for the effectiveness of the programme.

Given that most poor people in Ghana live in rural areas and earn livelihoods in the agricultural sector, the school feeding programme should be linked directly with agricultural development so as to provide local farmers with the opportunity to sell their produce to participating schools.

The skills and knowledge of farmers should be developed in other to improve on their yields and group marketing will enable them to take advantage of other markets for their goods including export markets. It is important to make sure that conditions are in place so that farmers can increase production. If farmers cannot produce more food to supply the school feeding programme, the new demand for food created by these programs will push up local food prices, thus cutting into poor people's food budget. Higher food prices could even cause poor farmers to keep their own children out of school to help with farm work.

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