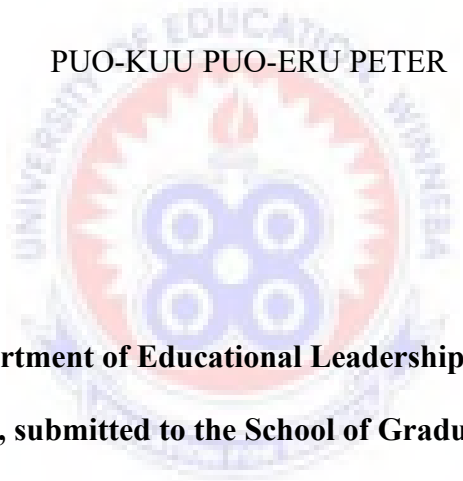


UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

THE INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME ON PERFORMANCE,  
ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE OF BASIC SCHOOL CHILDREN IN THE NANDOM  
MUNICIPALITY OF THE UPPER WEST REGION OF GHANA.

PUO-KUU PUO-ERU PETER



**A Dissertation to the Department of Educational Leadership, Faculty of Education and  
Communication Sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, University of  
Education, Winneba, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of the Master of  
Arts (Educational Leadership) degree**

DECEMBER, 2020

**DECLARATION**

**STUDENT'S DECLARATION**

I, PUO-KUU PUO-ERU PETER, declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

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DATE:.....

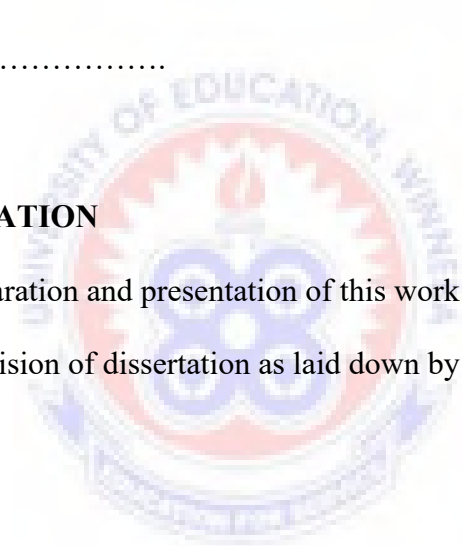
**SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME: DR. KOFI YEBOAH ASIAMAH

SIGNATURE :.....

DATE:.....



## **DEDICATION**

To my lovely wife, and children with love and gratitude.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I take this opportunity to thank Almighty God for good health and for bringing me this far. I also want to extend special gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Kofi Yeboah Asiamah for taken his time off busy schedule to supervise my work.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>AU</b>     | African Union   |
| <b>CAADEP</b> | Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development           |
| <b>CAADP</b>  | Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme |
| <b>DIC</b>    | District Implementation Committee                       |
| <b>EFA</b>    | Education for All                                       |
| <b>FCUBE</b>  | Free Compulsory and Universal Basic Education           |
| <b>FCUBE</b>  | Free Compulsory Basic Education                         |
| <b>FFE</b>    | Food for Education                                      |
| <b>GAIN</b>   | Ghana Agricultural Initiative                           |
| <b>GES</b>    | Ghana Education Service                                 |
| <b>GSPF</b>   | Ghana School Feeding Programmes                         |
| <b>GSS</b>    | Ghana Statistical Service                               |
| <b>MDGs</b>   | Millennium Development Goals                            |
| <b>MLGRD</b>  | Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development      |
| <b>MMDCE</b>  | Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief              |
| <b>MoE</b>    | Ministry of Education                                   |
| <b>MoFA</b>   | Ministry of Food and Agriculture                        |
| <b>MoFEP</b>  | Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning               |
| <b>MOU</b>    | Memorandum of Understanding                             |
| <b>MoWCA</b>  | Ministry of Women and Children Affairs                  |
| <b>NGOs</b>   | Non-Governmental Organisations                          |
| <b>PESP</b>   | Primary Education Stipend program                       |

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>PHC</b>    | Population and Housing Census                        |
| <b>PREP</b>   | Primary Education Project                            |
| <b>PTA</b>    | Parent Teacher Association                           |
| RCCs          | Regional Coordinating Councils                       |
| SIC           | Schools Implementation Committee                     |
| <b>SFP</b>    | School Feeding Programme                             |
| <b>UNICEF</b> | United Nations International Children Emergency Fund |
| <b>USDA</b>   | United States Department of Agriculture              |
| <b>UWR</b>    | Upper West Region                                    |
| <b>WFO</b>    | World Food Organisation                              |



## ABSTRACT

This study focused on Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP), which was conceptualized to provide pupils at the public basic schools with one hot nutritious meal per day. The objectives of GSFP included reduction of hunger and malnutrition, increase school enrolment, attendance and retention among others. The study therefore seeks to assess the “Effects of school feeding programme on school enrolment, attendance and academic performance of the pupils in the basic Schools”. The study adopted qualitative research design to explore the perceptions of people about the Ghana School Feeding Programme and its impact on school enrolment, attendance, retention and academic performance of Basic school children. The study also explored some of the challenges encountered in the implementation of the SFP in Ghana. The researcher used a purposive sampling technique to select 5 basic schools which were used the study. Data was collected through a semi- structured questionnaire with purposive sampling to select 14 respondents which will include; Circuit supervisors, parents, teachers and caterers as respondents. 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 performance. 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 monitoring of the programme for it to realize its purpose effectively.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

With the quest to achieve Universal Primary Education (MDG 2), the Government of Ghana has shown progressive and purposeful commitment through policy directives and interventions like the Education Strategy Plan (ESP) for 2003-2015 (UNESCO, 2000), the Growth Poverty Reduction Strategy 2002-2004 (GPRS) and the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education Programme. Certain programmes, including the abolition of school fees known, as Capitation Grant, promotion of measures to improve Gender Parity in primary schools, expansion of Early Childhood Development services, and the introduction of Nutrition and School Feeding programmes, are all strategies by government toward the achievement of Universal Primary Education.

The Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP) was conceptualized to provide pupils at the public basic schools particularly those in the poorest areas of the country with one hot nutritious meal per day (Ato, 2014). Ghana was one of the ten African countries to be selected by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) to implement domestically run school feeding programmes on pilot basis. The programme was aimed at achieving the first three objectives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), i.e. eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal basic education and promoting gender equality and women empowerment. The GSFP identified three key objectives: to reduce hunger and malnutrition; increase school enrolment, attendance and retention; and boost domestic food production (GSFP, 2008).

Many organizations across the globe have adopted the UNHTF approach in implementing

SFPs (Del Rosso, 1999; Husein, 2014; NEPAD, 2002). The New Partnership on Africa Development (NEPAD), which was founded in 2002 and part of the African Union and the European Union combined SFP and agricultural development (Husein, 2014). The objective of this effort was to reduce malnutrition among school children and expand local demand for food production. This would help to improve food security, increase employment and expand agriculture in Africa and other developing countries (NEPAD, 2002). Other organizations and partners like the United Nations, WFP, the Government of the Netherlands, and the World Bank have also contributed to the implementation of the school feeding program.

The 1992 constitution of Ghana specifies the right of every child in the country to basic education, and efforts were made by various governments to promote access to education in the country. It is therefore not only overbearing but a responsibility of the government to ensure that barriers to education are curtailed, and citizens have access to education (Husein, 2014). As a result of this, the government has implemented various policy strategies and frameworks to promote access to education for all. Some of these measures include the Capitation Grant, Free compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE), Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy, and Education Strategic Plan in 2003-2015 (Ghana Government, 2015; Husein, 2014). Despite the significant contributions of these efforts towards access to education, attendance and completion was still low among school children (Ghana Government, 2015; Husein, 2014). According to Husein (2014) and WFP (2013), hunger and poverty are problems that affect school attendance and completion among school children.

It has been evidence that hunger and poverty can adversely affect the academic performance of school children (Yendaw & Dayour, 2014; Osei-Fosu, 2011; UNESCO, 2013). Based on this, the Government of Ghana introduced the SFP in the year 2005 to alleviate hunger which is a

hindrance to access to education and academic performance of school children. According to NEPAD (2002), Ghana is the first of the 10 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa that implemented the SFP according to guidelines set by NEPAD. The Ghana School Feeding Program (GSFP) was started as a pilot program in 2005 and implemented across the country in the year 2006 (NEPAD, 2002; Husein, 2014).

The SFP in Ghana has its short-term objectives as to alleviate hunger and malnutrition among school children, to encourage local food production as well as promote school enrolment, attendance, and completion. The long-term benefit of the program is to contribute to the overall poverty reduction through an increase in employment opportunities for people and the promotion of food security (Ghana Government, 2015). Since the inception of the program, coverage has increased from 1.04 million in 2010 to 1.7 million school children in 2014 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015). The government of Ghana has gained support from the WFP, the Netherlands Government and other international organizations for implementing the program in many rural communities. Moreover, the WFP assisted the government of Ghana by providing school meals to 122,000 school children in 304 schools in 2015 (WFP, 2015). Also, the UNHTF has also supported the program by providing seven recommendations that serve as a guideline in the successful implementation of the program.

The GSFP started on a pilot bases in September 2005 with ten schools, one in each region of the country. By August 2006, it had been expanded to 200 schools covering 69,000 pupils in all 138 districts of the country. The next phase of the GSFP began in 2007 with nationwide coverage in all the 170 districts. By the end of first quarter of the year 2011, the programme supported 713,590 children in all the beneficiary schools nationwide. Since 2005, the coverage of the programme is being increased and sustained.

Different studies on the impact of school feeding programme have shown an increase in both gross primary school enrolment ratio (GPSER) and net primary school attendance ratio (NPSER) and an increase in school attendance rates. The fact that poorly nourished children benefit cognitively from GSFPs has also been demonstrated in several studies.

In these studies, a significant improvement could be detected in school performance of undernourished children who received breakfast or lunch especially when compared with children in the control group who did not receive breakfast or lunch.

Though high school performance by the pupils is supposed to be an indirect impact of school feeding on pupils participating in the programme (ESPRR, 2002), there has been limited or insufficient research into the relationships between nutritional status, the participation in school feeding programs and school performance. Most of the evidence which shows improved school performance resulting from a school feeding programs is based on rather subjective evaluation. According to Osei, Owusu, Asem, and Kotey (2009), though the school feeding programme together with the capitation grant in the early periods of implementation in Ghana have chalked some gains, their impact on the quality of education is not well defined because any increase in enrolment resulting from these education subsidies puts added pressure on existing school facilities with adverse implications for the quality of education provided.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Government started the GSFP on pilot basis between 2005 and 2010. There have been contributions of GSFP to education. However, despite the contributions that the SFP has made on education, some researchers have found the program to be ineffective in achieving its stated goals (Agyeman, 2011). According to (Agyeman, 2011), the withdrawal of many partners from the program has diminished the overall coverage of the program as funding has been reduced.



The 2013 fiscal year report of the Wa Municipal Assembly shows a gross fall in enrolment figures in the basic schools with an enrolment figure of 25,616 with girls the least enrolled inspired by the high female population across all districts in the Region (Population Census, 2010). This situation has compelled stakeholders to question the role the GSFP has played since its inception on the enrolment, attendance and retention of pupils in the basic schools within the Nandom municipality. Notwithstanding, many empirical studies (Ahmed, 2004; Dreze & Kingdon, 2001) have provided evidence of positive impact of school feeding programmes including the GSFP on school enrolment, attendance and retention. These evidences are only limited to gross outcomes (Lazmaniah & Mothe, 2010). For instance, Integrated Social Development Center (ISODEC, 2015) 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 its real contribution to pupil's 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 pupil going to and staying in school. Nandom municipality has not enough studies conducted on the "The effects of GSFP on enrolment, attendance and performance of basic school children". This is resulting in a research gap on whether the GSP programme in the district has really contributed significantly to education in the district because the influence of the programme in the district on enrolment, attendance and performance is yet to be determined, and hence bringing forth the need for this study to fill in the literature gap.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

To assess the contribution of the Ghana School Feeding Program on enrolment, attendance,

and performance as well as the setbacks in implementing the program.

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

1. To explore the influence of the SFP on school enrolment, attendance, and completion.
2. To ascertain the influence of the SFP on the academic performances of basic school children.
3. To examine the challenges inhibiting the implementation of the SFP in Nandom municipality.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

The study seeks to address the following questions:

- i. How does the GSFP address the needs of children in basic schools of the Nandom municipality?
- ii. To what extent have GSFP influence enrolment, attendance and performance of children in basic schools?
- iii. How does the GSFP address challenging factors that affect enrolment, attendance and performance of children in basic schools?

#### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

Education has been recognized as the driving force to every country innovations and economic prosperity. Giving opportunity to children of school going age to be in school n stay in school is one sure way of giving them much greater power to enable them to make proper choices as to the kind of life they wish to live. Since Ghana School Feeding Programme has been

implemented to increase school enrolment, attendance and performance at the basic level. It is confident that, this study would contribute immensely to policy development by providing insights into enhancing the management of the GSFP.

The study further hopes to provide policy makers with insightful information that will feed into other educational policy framework(s) that seeks to achieve universal basic education in a long run. A better understanding of the impact of the GSFP will help create new structures or measures that will deliver on the developmental aspirations of the beneficiary schools in the district and the country as a whole. The study results will provide information for the assessment of the outcome of the programme. This will be useful to various stakeholders in the implementation process, such as, the District Implementation Committee (DIC) and the Schools Implementation Committee (SIC). The results of this study would, therefore, fill the gap and suggest various solutions that can help increase enrolment of children at the basic level. Also, the study would examine and justify the role of the Ghana School Feeding Programme on the enrolment of children.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study was limited to the effect of GSFP on enrolment of children in basic schools in the Nandom municipality of the Upper West Region. It will entail an exploration into what influences children of school going age in the district enrolment in public basic schools and stay in school within basic schools benefiting from SFP in the Nandom municipality. Moving forward, more attention would be given to the role played by the GSFP in the district on children enrolment, attendance and performance in schools. Children enrolment, attendance and performance can be influence by number of factors. The scope of this study would exclusively concentrate on those factors associated with the GSFP, a development intervention. The units of

analysis will, therefore, be limited to key informants with insights enrolment in public basic schools in the district and the operations of the GSFP that effect.

### **1.8 Delimitations**

The study would be conducted in both participants and non-participants schools to enables the researcher have treatment and control group. However, it is estimated that, there will be challenges of controlling for other variables influencing enrolment, attendance, and retention in basic schools which will limit the use of limits as comparative analysis between participants and non-participants groups. The outcome of the study is expected not to be affected because views of respondents provided will be such that it gives a better assessment of the effect of the GSFP on enrolment, attendance and performance of children in the basic schools.

### **1.9 Organization of the Study**

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one; would constitute the introduction of the study covering the background, statement of the problem, research questions and research objectives, significance, scope, organization of the study and limitation. Chapter two will constitute literature review. Chapter three will deal with the research methodology with respect to the study. Chapter four would also cover the findings and discussions from the study and Chapter five will consist of the summary, conclusions and suggestions based on the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews existing literature on the GSFP and its effects on children's education on aspect of enrolment, attendance and performance most importantly in the basic schools. These reviews will purposely cover issues related to how various socio- economic programmes and interventions have influenced school enrolment in different places all over the world. Specific attention, however, will be given to the role of the Ghana School Feeding Programme in basic schools on enrolment, attendance and performance.

The scope of the study includes SFP relevance to children, the various interventions of SFP in Basic schools, the theoretical framework, the school feeding programs in Ghana and their efforts to improve children enrolment, attendance and performance in school.

#### 2.2 Theoretical Framework

According to Vitahl and Jansen (2013) theoretical framework is a well- developed, coherent explanation of an event/phenomenon. Theories assist in interpreting and understanding events in the world. Similarly, the purpose of a theory is to provide tools for the interpretation of collected data, prevent the fragmentation of knowledge by ordering, giving the inquiry a focus, and providing theoretical explanations and deeper understanding of what is being investigated.

This study adopted the Change Theory to examine the effects of GSFP on enrolment, attendance and retention issues in the schools under study.

### 2.2.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

The Maslow hierarchy of needs was utilized in this research to explain the fundamental essence of providing food in schools as a way of influencing the academic and educational performance of primary school children. The Maslow hierarchy of needs is a theory in psychology propounded by Abraham Maslow in his 1943 book "A Theory of Human Motivation" explains human needs and the general patterns of motivating human beings. According to Maslow, human needs can be categorized under different levels of hierarchy ranging from the basic to the higher levels. These levels include the physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, self-esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. The theory establishes that certain needs, the basic needs such as food, water, air, and shelter must be met before the other higher-level needs.

Additionally, Maslow (1954) postulated that human beings are inspired by the desire to achieve goals and this inspiration is based on satisfying their human needs. As a result, the ability to meet one's needs is an important tool to achieving one's goals. This approach has been extended by various theorists to explain human behaviour. The theory suggests that human behaviour is predicated on meeting the lower order needs of the individual and then subsequently sustained by meeting the higher-order needs of the individual. The theory and its tenets continue to be used as a popular framework in management, psychology and in sociological research (Kremer, Olga Robinson, and Rostapshova, (2013). Behavioral biases and firm behavior: evidence from Kenyan retail shops. *The American Economic Review* 103 (3), 362–368; Maslow, 1954).

### 2.2.2 Key Concepts of the Theory

**Hierarchy.** Hierarchy refers to the arrangements of concepts from one grade of a lower rank to another grade of a higher rank. According to Maslow (1943), individuals needs can be

categorized in the level of a hierarchy, from the lowest to the highest. Maslow used a pyramid to depict the hierarchy of needs with most basic forms of human needs at the bottom of the pyramid and then it progresses to the top of the pyramid according to the importance of the needs to humans. Please refer to the diagram below for more information.



Source: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

### **Deficiency and Growth Needs**

Maslow, (1954) distinguished between two types of needs according to the essence of the needs of human beings. According to him, deficiency needs includes all the four basic levels of the

pyramid. These include the physical needs, safety needs, social needs and self-esteem needs. Without the satisfaction of these needs, an individual can be depressed and anxious and can be distracted from his or her everyday activities. The theory also establishes that except for the physiological needs that can be seen, felt and touched, the other forms of the deficiency needs are not visible and lack of them could only be reflected in the form of anxiety and lack of focus.

Additionally, the theory suggests that individuals' basic needs must be satisfied for them to focus on the secondary or growth needs. Moreover, the desire to satisfy the deficiency needs declines as the individual satisfies those needs.

On the other hand, the growth needs refer to the needs of an individual on the higher level of the pyramid. These include the perception the individual has about himself, his potentials and talents and the self-actualization needs of the individual. Unlike the deficiency needs for which the desire to satisfy them declines as the individual meets them, the desire to meet the growth needs increases as the individual satisfies them. As a result of this, Maslow mentioned that the growth needs of human beings cannot be completely met (Maslow, 1954).

### **Meta-Motivation**

The concept of meta-motivation was developed by Maslow to describe people's desire for a continuous betterment that goes beyond their fundamental needs. According to Maslow, because of the complex nature of the human mind, parallel processing could occur at the same time. Therefore, individuals can have the desire to meet different needs on different levels of the pyramid at the same time. As such, the satisfaction of these needs and their level of importance to the individual is subjective, general and primary (Maslow, 1954). However, Maslow recognized this limitation of the theory and focused more on identifying the basic types of human needs or human motivations and the way in which they should be satisfied (Maslow, 1954).



### **Physiological Needs**

According to Maslow, the physical needs are basic for human survival. These needs include food, water, air, shelter, and clothing, among others. Maslow identified these types of needs as the fundamental and the most important needs for human survival. Food, air, and water are basic metabolic necessities of human beings while shelter and clothing provide necessary protection for the individual. These needs can be found at the bottom of the pyramid and must be met before the other higher-level needs.

### **Safety and Security Needs**

This type of need must be met after satisfying the basic needs of humans. According to Martin (2007), “Safety is the feeling people get when they know no harm will befall them, physically, mentally, or emotionally; security is the feeling people get when their fears and anxieties are low”. The safety and security needs include the protection from various forms of violence and war, natural disaster, community and family violence, childhood abuse, insurance among others.

According to Maslow(1954), the desire of humans to satisfy their safety needs takes precedence after the physiological needs have been met. Furthermore, Maslow identified that these needs are more associated with children than adults as children feel the need to be safe and protected from various forms of harms. Safety needs could also include economic safety, financial stability, and sustained health and freedom from injury.

### **Social Needs**

The third level of needs comprises of social needs which have been referred by some theorists as the need for love and belonging. According to Maslow, individuals identify their need

to be part of society and have the sense of belonging to the society to which he belongs. Examples of the needs identified at this level include the need for friendship, family, society, community feeling, and intimacy. Maslow mentioned that individuals have the desire to feel accepted in a social group in which they belong to and this could be fostered through regular interaction, common goals, and acceptance. Individuals can belong to a large social group which includes the community, schools, religious groups, and trade unions. Also, individuals may also belong to a small social group which includes nuclear family, colleagues, and intimate partners. According to Maslow, the absence of these needs could expose the individual to loneliness, depression and various forms of anxiety.

Furthermore, he explained that this type of need can sometimes override the need for safety and security as well as physiological needs depending on the pressure from the group in which the individual belongs to.

### **Self-Esteem Needs**

This type of needs represents the fourth level of hierarchy according to the theory. The desire to satisfy self-esteem needs takes precedence after the individual has satisfied the previous lower level needs; physiological, safety and security, and love and belonging. Individuals begin to develop positive perceptions about themselves and feel the need to be valued, respected and recognized in the society or community. However, Maslow mentioned that individuals who are not able to satisfy and balance the needs at the three-previous level can struggle from an inferiority complex at this stage. They may then participate in various forms of activities to positively enhance their self-worth and gain recognition or resort to fame and glory from others.

However, the latter is not the most successful way of satisfying esteem needs especially as it involves individuals to accept themselves the way they are. Factors such as trauma and depression

can negatively impact the self-esteem needs of individuals.

Furthermore, Maslow identified two forms of esteem needs, which include a lower version and a higher version. The former relates to when an individual seeks recognition and value from other people while the latter relates to when an individual seeks self-respect. Maslow also acknowledged that the desire to satisfy the needs at this level is not separated from the three previous level of needs and as such the absence of which can also result in inferiority complex, depression and anxiety (Maslow, 1954).

### **Self-Actualization Needs**

The individual needs for self-actualization can be found at the topmost level of the pyramid. Self-Actualization refers to becoming whatever the individual desires to become, and the ability to pursue one's dreams. At this level of the hierarchy, the individual also desires to express their full potential and talents into positive contributions.

According to Maslow, the satisfaction of these needs is dependent on satisfying the previous basic needs. Maslow, (1954) however, emphasized that it is difficult for an individual to attain self-actualization. Maslow, (1954) estimated that less than 1% of every adult achieves their self-actualization needs.

### **2.2.3 Application of Maslow's Theory to the Research**

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs provides a basic understanding of human needs and the order in which they should be met. In doing so, the theory also establishes the fundamental connection between the physiological needs of humans which include food and water and higher-order needs such as academic successes. The theory draws a fine line between food and academic success and

implicates that the desire of the human body to maintain homeostasis of salt, water, minerals, and micronutrients through the consumption of food are all part of the physiological needs of humans (Maslow, 1943). According to him.

“Undoubtedly these physiological needs are the most pre-potent of all needs...If all the needs are unsatisfied, and the organism is then dominated by the physiological needs, all other needs may become simply non-existent or be pushed into the background...for consciousness is almost completely pre-empted by hunger. For the chronically and extremely hungry man...life itself tends to be defined in terms of eating. Anything else will be defined as unimportant”. In contrast to the directive authority of food, achievement is among the least potent of needs. According to Maslow (1954), “all people in our society...have a need or desire for self-esteem...that is soundly based upon real capacity, achievement, and respect from others”.

Maslow’s theory suggests that humans who strive to achieve the higher-level needs such as to be successful in life, to be talented, to gain respect in the community and to be academically sound in school should first be able to satisfy their basic level need, which includes food.

Additionally, individuals who ignore their basic nutritional needs are not able to successfully attain their higher-level needs. As a result of this, cognitive development (ability to think critically, analyze issues and be able to understand complex issues and be a problem solver) which is mainly associated with the higher-level needs, cannot be attained by students or learners who face constant deprivation of their basic needs. Similarly, learners are not able to meet their basic needs when they have difficulty in focusing on school and this can affect their interest in school as well as their academic performances. In explaining the interconnection between food and learning, Maslow proposed that individuals must pay attention to what to eat in order to meet

their physiological needs and whether there are certain types of diets that meet basic human needs better than others.

This study uses Maslow's hierarchy of needs to explore the basic underlining of SFPs in schools and SFP's impact on the educational and academic performance of primary school children. Maslow's theory also provides readers with a better appreciation of human needs and the fundamental connection between physiological needs such as food and the higher-level needs of humans such as academic success.

### **2.3 Conceptual Framework to the Study**

SFP has a conceptual framework that links school feeding programme to pupil enrolment and attendance as well as their academic performance. The school feeding programme is aimed at increasing school enrolment because it is believed that because poor parents could not provide food for their wards in school, these parents do not enrol their wards into schools (UNESCO, 2015). Even the poor parents, who do enrol their children in schools, find it thorny to ensure that their wards attend and remain in school every day till the school closes because they cannot provide food for their children in school every day through the term. The GSFP thus motivate parents to enrol their children in school and to see that they attend school regularly. It is thus the expectation that pupil's enrolment in schools with the GSFP show an increase as well as attendance and retention as this is supported by literature on school feeding programmes in various countries and contexts, including Ghana (Ahmed, 2002).

Tulane University Early Childhood Research Center in New Orleans did a more direct study of the learning ability of malnourished children in 1971 where learning ability was measured by practical learning tests, and a significant relationship was found between malnutrition and

impaired learning ability and attributed this result to the difficulties of the malnourished children in maintaining attentiveness. Thus, early malnutrition was associated with abnormalities in brain development, behavioural disturbances, mental retardation (as measured by IQ tests or tests of intersensory integration), and impaired learning ability (Amcoff,1980).

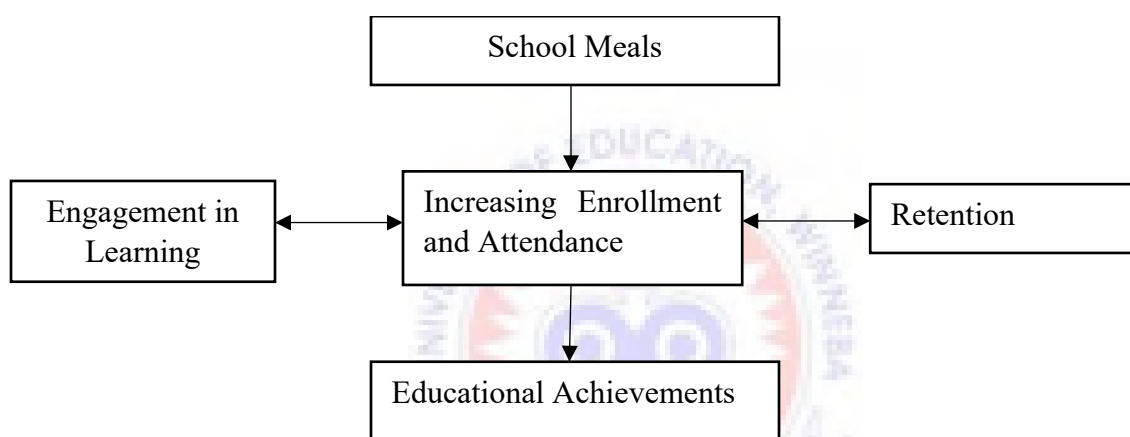
There is other persuasive evidence that poor nutrition in early childhood adversely affects cognitive development and learning potential (Jukes,2008). The thought that the GSFP is supposed to reduce hunger and malnutrition among the pupils on the programme and as a result improve the pupil's academic performance is very fragile. A study on the impact of the Ghana School feeding programme on Nutritional and Health status of Ghanaian pupils in the Central Region. Van den Berg, (2008) indicates that although the school lunch significantly contributed to the diet diversity among children at GSFP schools, no differences were found between the whole day food consumption of GSFP children as compared to non-SFP children. Also, the study did not show that the nutritional and health status of the children in the Ghana SFP schools improved by serving them with one hot meal on every school day.

This research rather posits that the GSFP is supposed to lead to an increase in school attendance and retention, attentiveness in class and thus enhance the pupils participation in the teaching and learning process which is latent and this is expected to have a positive impact on their academic performance. GSFP alleviates immediate short-term hunger and this is expected to increase pupil attentiveness in the class. Children who are not hungry are more attentive and have higher cognitive abilities (Simeon, 1998). Short-term hunger can adversely affect attention and interest of (Levitsky, 2005).

Therefore, school attendance and retention, attentiveness in class and enhancement of pupil's participation in the teaching and learning process lends credence to the expectation

of improvement in academic performance. According to Adams Hayes (Adams, 2001) academic performance really means three things: The ability to study and remember facts, being able to study effectively and see how facts fit together and form larger patterns of knowledge and being able to think for yourself in relation to facts and thirdly being able to communicate your

**Figure: 1 Conceptual Framework for food for Education**



**Source:** Student Construct (2020)

## 2.4 School Feeding Programme and Enrolment

According to Thesaurus,(2002) the term school enrolment means admission, enlisting, recruitment or signing in of students to undergo training. Studies on the evaluation of the impact of School Feeding provide several benefits that have changed human life in different places. Economic, social and health impacts have been outlined by several empirical studies. Solid empirical evidence of the impact of school feeding programmes on educational outcomes proves that school feeding increases school enrolment and attendance by reducing drop-out (Ahmed, 2004; Dreze and Kingdon, 2001). These studies have justified that feeding in schools serves as pull factors for poor families as it reduces home expenditure on food. Besides, the quality of food

given at school in many instances meet the nutritional requirement compared with those prepared by poor families.

Consequently, families are motivated to get their children enrolled because of the immediate benefits. There is also significant evidence that such interventions go beyond traditional educational outcomes by providing a wider range of short and long-term social and economic impacts.

Besides, further assessment of school feeding by WFP and the World Bank provide that the intervention remains a productive safety net in times of economic shock, protracted crisis and vulnerability, and emergency (Bundy, Burbano, Grosh, & Gilli, 2008). According to their assessment reports, school feeding was regarded as one of the programmes eligible for support from the US\$1.2 billion Global Food Crisis Response Facility established in 2008 to address the global food and financial crises (Grosh, Ninno, Tesliuc, & Ouerghi, 2008). This means that among all possible food assistance interventions, school feeding represents a unique opportunity by providing multiple benefits at both the outcome/short-term and the impact/long-term levels. The implications of these findings is that, in period of economic crises, disasters and vulnerability, school feeding can minimize the magnitude of the effect through the provision of relief items (food) for the most affected and vulnerable groups (students).

From a different perspective, School feeding leads to increased time spent in school, through increased enrolment and attendance and decreased drop-out rates (Ahmed, 2004). It motivates parents to enroll their children in school and have them attend regularly. Moreover, when programmes succeed in reducing absenteeism and increase the duration of schooling, educational outcomes (performance, dropout, and repetition) get improved (Del Rosso, 1999). This position may be convincing especially in deprived areas of northern Ghana where some families



cannot afford three square meals per day. Children must regularly attend school to meet the quantity of food requirement per day. Specifically, for the Ghanaian, Duah, (2011) points out that one of the major aims of the Ghana School Feeding programme is to increase enrolment and retention in the basic school level. It is to serve as a magnet that will attract school children to be in school every day and be consistent throughout the stages of learning. Thus, improve feeding increase enrolment and reduce school dropout.

The observation of Musah and Imoro (2015) in the Garu-Tempane district in the Upper East Region of Ghana points out that the GSFP has succeeded in increasing enrolment among participating schools. Similarly, Abotsi (2013) concluded that the programme has not only improved enrolment, but also attendance and retention. The writer further observed that the reverse in terms of these achievements has taken place in non-participating schools. The Ghana School Feeding Programs has improved the health status of the pupils. It has got the components needed for growth and development. The Ghana school feeding programme has increased dietary diversity of the diet of children in school. The programme has attained its own recommendation for protein and energy intake.

However, iron intake is low while vitamin A intake is enough (Martens, 2007). Researchers such as Alhassan, (2013) and Duah, (2011) argued that school feeding programmes cannot be seen as the only factor that influences enrolment in Ghana's schools but other factors, such as, high pupil to teacher ratio, classroom accommodation, inadequate furniture, teacher pupil relationship, teacher absenteeism, cultural beliefs, among others, should be considered. This position implies that an assessment of the role of the feeding programme on enrolment should include a consideration of other factors that can have a significant influence besides feeding.

## 2.5 The Influence of School Feeding Programmes on Attendance and Performance

In general, the Ghana School Feeding Programme has influenced positively on the attendance and retention of pupils in the basic schools. Kedze (2013) states that the School Feeding Programme has gained prominence for its multi – roles in developing countries. What the writer meant is that enrolment alone is not the only challenge of achieving universal basic education but regular attendance and drop-out rates. The feeding programme, according to Kedze,(2013) motivates children to be present at schools as attendance is a necessary condition for access to the food. This is true within the Ghanaian context. Bukari, Hajara and Oloruntoba, (2015) points out that there exists a positive link between the Ghana School Feeding Programme and academic performance. This revelation suggests that the school feeding programme has met its aims. Mohammed, (2014) posits that the significant increase in enrolment is because the School Feeding Programme motivates the pupils to stay in school and study leading to an improved universal basic education in the country.

Mohammed, (2014) therefore, suggests that though the one hot meal per school days is significant, pupils should be given snacks as supplements.

The author maintains that the importance of the nation school feeding programme must not under any circumstance be undermined. The national school feeding programme promotes and supports: the right to food, the right to education, local development and economic growth, food and nutrition security, gender enhancement and participation (Global Child Nutrition Forum, 2014). These efforts mark significant steps towards educational development in the country through achievement of universal basic education. The empirical review has provided evidence on the effects of school feeding interventions on enrolment. The literature also provides that school feeding programmes leads to increase in attendance and reduction of drop-out rates in beneficiary

schools in different places. These findings will serve as basis for comparing the influence of the GSFP on enrolment, attendance and performance of children in basic schools in the Nandom municipality of the Upper West Region.

## **2.6 Concept of Poverty and Hunger**

According to a United Nations report in 2015, more than 24% of the population of Ghana live below the poverty line. At least 45% of the population live either on US\$ 1.25 a day or less. However, unlike many developing countries whose poverty rates keep increasing, Ghana has experienced a strong economic growth that has helped in reducing the poverty rate by half in the past two decades (UNESCO (2015). Between the year 1991 and 2012, the poverty rates shrank from 52.6% to 21.4% (Central Intelligence Agency, 2017; Ghana Statistical Service, 2014; World Bank, 2015). Furthermore, Molini and Paci (2015), mentioned in the World Bank report on “Poverty Reduction in Ghana” that “over the last 20 years, the Ghanaian economy has almost always grown more quickly than have the economies of other African countries and at rates similar to those of lower-middle income countries”. This development assisted Ghana in staying on track in their efforts to achieving the MDGs.

According to the World Bank Report in 2015, because of the rise in gold mining, and cocoa oil production, there has been a significant reduction in poverty in the country. However, there remain many people who still live below the poverty line. This is because of the large disparity of wealth distribution among the population which is reflective in the poverty disparity rate between the northern and southern part of the country (United Nations, 2015; World Bank, 2015).

In addition to this, severe weather conditions and overreliance on rudimentary tools

continue to affect food production and agriculture, thereby resulting in food insecurity, hunger, poverty, and malnutrition (World Health Organization, 2015). In 2015, Ghana was recognized by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Milan as one of the 72 countries across the world that contributed to the reduction of the percentage of malnourished population and people suffering from severe hunger (Cornet, 2016).

Despite this achievement, 23 percent of children in Ghana are still challenged with chronic malnutrition. Acute malnutrition and underweight also continue to affect many children in Ghana (Ghana Government, 2015; United Nations, 2015; World Food Program 2009, World Bank, 2015).

## **2.7 Education System in Ghana**

The general school system in Ghana has a 6-3-3-4 structure. The first 6 years are spent on primary education, the following three years are spent on junior high school, the next three years after junior high is spent on secondary education and the last four years on tertiary education. Primary education in Ghana starts from grade one to grade six (CIA, 2017; Ghana Government, 2017). This means that a total of 6 years is spent on the overall completion of a primary school. The Ministry of Education is charged with every political decision that affects the education system and the Ghana Education Service (GES) is the agency that implements the decisions made by the Ministry of Education. The GES is also responsible for the maintenance and administration of the Ghana school system. Under the Ministry of Education, ten regional offices supervise 138 district offices (Ghana Government, 2015). As of 2015, Ghana has about 14,405 public primary schools and 6,904 private primary schools (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015). Education is compulsory for all children between the ages of 6 and 15 (Ghana Government, 2017). Due to the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) policy established in 1996, access to

primary education is free for all public institutions. Although there is no certificate awarded after primary school, the curriculum focuses on writing, reading, arithmetic, and developing problem-solving skills ( Nuffic, 2015; Ghana Education Service, 2017).

## **2.8 Enrolment and Completion**

The enrolment of children in primary schools has increased significantly since 2000 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015). This progress is primarily ascribed to new developments and interventions introduced in schools. According to the United Nations (2015) and Osei-Fosu (2011), some of these interventions include the SFP, capitation grant and the introduction of free school uniforms. The total enrolment in primary schools increased by 5.5% in 2015 compared to what was recorded in 2014. The total enrolment for both public and private primary schools in 2015 was 4,342,315 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015; Ghana Government, 2017) which is to support other facts that the SFP is associated to increased school enrolment and regular attendance.

According to the WFP (2004a) SFPs have proven effective in reducing the education gap between girls and boys. For example, program evaluation results from Pakistan, Morocco, Niger and Cameroon show that while food is the initial motivation for sending girls to school, parents of participating girls develop an interest in the education of their daughters. This change in attitudes is an important factor in enhancing parents' commitment to education beyond the duration of food assistance.

Evaluation of a SFP in Burkina Faso found that school canteens were associated with increased school enrolment, regular attendance, consistently lower repeater rates, lower dropout rates, and higher success rates on national exams, especially among girls (Moore & Kunze 1994). However, in a study conducted in Kenya, the investigators did not find a difference in the

attendance rates between schools with and without the SFP (Meme, Kogi-Makau, Muroki, & Mwadime, 1998).

## 2.9 Education and Development

The United Nations in the year 2000 established a global movement called “Education for All” to promote an international agenda on access to education. This movement, led by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, was implemented between 2000- 2015 with the commitment to meet the basic educational needs of children, youth and adults in all UN member countries. During the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal in 2000, 164 UN member countries met and identified the following six goals to be achieved by the year 2015;

- Goal 1; Expand early childhood care and education
- Goal 2; Provide free and compulsory primary education for all
- Goal 3; Promote learning and life skills for young people and adults
- Goal 4; Increase adult literacy by 50 percent
- Goal 5; Achieve gender parity by 2005, gender equality by 2015
- Goal 6; Improve the quality of education (UNESCO, 2015).

These goals were put in place as a strategy of advancing international development across the world. These goals are also included in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The MDGs, which were established for the year 2000-2015, had eight international development goals, and goal number two aimed to achieve a universal primary education. On the other hand, the SDGs have 17 global goals and goal number four targets quality education. These international goals are incorporated into the global agenda of education, because of the understanding that education is an imperative tool in sustainable national and international development (United Nations, 2015a; United Nations, 2015b).

In reference to the Education for All initiative (UNESCO, 2015), several challenges are noted that affect educational attainment globally. These global issues, which affected schooling at different rates across the world, include poor nutrition, school dropout, gender inequalities, and poverty. Although there are additional factors that inhibit the attainment of educational development, this qualitative study is primarily focused on the SFP and its impacts on educational outcomes in Ghana.

## **2.10 School Feeding Programme (SFP)**

### **History**

As early as 1790, an introduction of food for needy children in schools began in Munich, Germany and later diffused throughout Europe in the 1800s where lunch was provided to children in schools (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2005). The global economic crisis that brought about social problems such as poverty, hunger, chronic health diseases, and food shortage in many societies, especially the developing countries also challenged the World Food Program (WFP) and other international organizations to adopt some strategies to address these problems (WFP, 2006). The WFP developed then adopted the SFP over 45 years ago as a tool to address some of the challenges faced by school children. The goal of the WFP is to promote learning and improve academic performance of school children through the reduction of short-term hunger and malnutrition that impede learning. According to WFP (2015), the SFP serves as a safety net that provides health and socioeconomic benefits to children and their families. Consistent with this, Yendaw and Dayour (2015) also mention that the SFP guarantees nutrition and safeguards positive health and education outcomes among school children.

Furthermore, the provision of food serves as an incentive to parents to enrol their children

in schools while also ensuring that children complete their schools with limited challenges (Osei-Fosu, 2011). Due to the significant impacts achieved through this intervention, SFPs have been implemented under different conditions by many countries across the globe (WFP, 2015). Since its inception, the WFP has mobilized 31 national governments across the globe to provide school feeding to vulnerable school children. The WFP proposed some strategies that SFP should incorporate. These include, “strategies for sustainability, sound alignment with national policy, stable funding and budgeting, need-based and cost-effective design, strong institutional arrangements for implementation, monitoring and accountability, local production and sourcing where feasible, strong partnerships and inter-sector coordination, strong community” (WFP, 2015).

### **2.11 International Recognition for the SFP**

SFPs have received substantial support from many international organizations and inter government agencies (De Carvalho et al., 2011). The United Nations Millennium Project (2005) endorsed that SFPs be extended to all vulnerable children focusing severe hunger. The SFP also promotes the six “Education for All” goals contained in the Dakar Framework for Action (De Carvalho et al., 2011; UNESCO, 2015; World Food Program, 2015). Other recognition includes the incorporation of SFPs in the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP), which was approved by the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) in 2003 and later supported at the African Union Food Security Summit held in Abuja in 2006 (WFP, 2015; Yendaw & Dayour, 2014).



## **2.12 Circumstances under which the SFPs can be implemented**

According to the WFP (2015), SFPs are implementable under different conditions across countries. These conditions include a state of emergency or crisis, post-disaster and conflict conditions, either a stable or unstable economy of a country, among others. The WFP further proposed that SFPs must be tailored to meet outcomes and targets set in the national policy, and these outcomes and targets must serve as a benchmark in the implementation of the program. Meals provided under the program should be served as early as possible during school time to ensure an optimum functioning of the children while in school. The WFP continuously provide support to governments in most developing countries to be able to implement the policy in their individual countries (Yendaw & Dayour, 2014; World Food Program, 2015).

## **2.13 School Feeding Program Importance**

### **2.13a School Feeding and Health**

According to World Food Program (2015), SFPs enhance nutrition and health of children in schools. An enhanced nutrition precludes malnutrition, diabetes, and morbidity among children. Similarly, UNESCO (2015) reports that SFPs not only eradicate severe hunger among school children but more importantly enhance child growth and development. As specified by the WFP, meals provided under the school feeding program should contain micronutrient, and kilocalories necessary for healthy growth and development. According to World Health Organization (2015), micronutrient deficiencies are the leading cause of infections that are widespread among children especially in developing countries. The mortality and morbidity rate among children under the age of five escalated to over 90% and 80% respectively from 1990 to 2015 (WHO, 2015). Also, in Nigeria, the major causes of mortality among children have been associated with malnutrition,

diarrhea, malaria, vaccine-preventable diseases and respiratory infections (Nigeria Federal Ministry of Education, 2007). In Nigeria, childhood illnesses account for 49% of school absenteeism among school children. The SFP is therefore implemented to address such issues and promote child growth.

Furthermore, an increase in the micronutrient particularly in vitamins and irons are essential to the cognitive development and learning capacity of school children (Bloom, 2009; Dauncey, 2009). Similarly, evidence supports that iron deficiency and anemia are the major causes of morbidity among school children, which affect more than half of the population of school children across the globe ( Kristjansson et al., 2009). Recent studies conducted in Kenya and Uganda on the impacts of SFP, however, reveal that the SFPs significantly reduce anemia and worm infection prevalence among school children (Adelman et al. 2008; Grillenberger, 2003).

Moreover, the SFP could give a child the potential to focus on his/her studies with limited health complications. This will allow children to fulfill their future desires and reach their fullest potential (Grillenberger, 2003; UNESCO, 2015; World Food Program, 2015). Also, Grillenberger, (2003) reveal that poor nutrition in early childhood can affect the cognitive development and learning capacity of a child. Additionally, (Jukes, Drake, Bundy, 2008) mention that poor health among children in primary schools could affect their educational outcomes, especially in areas regarding enrolment, attendance and completion.

Despite the nutritional benefits associated with SFP, Jukes et al. (2008) noted that the SFP should not be seen as a substitute to some nutrition interventions such as mother and child health and supplementary and therapeutic feeding interventions. This is because the SFP does not directly target poor nutrition that occurs during pregnancy and at infancy and childhood, between 6 months to 2 years, which are the most important years to nourish a child's cognitive development.

However, according to Grillenberger, (2003), some of the challenges faced during pre-primary school that are related to hunger and malnutrition can be prevented through SFPs. In support of this, the WFP also indicated that SFPs should include nutritious meals to support an optimal growth in height and weight of children in schools.

## **2.14 School Feeding and Education**

According to WFP (2006), hunger is one of the most persistent and damaging problems faced by school children of today. Similarly, Adelman, Gilligan, and Lehrer, (2008), states that hunger has an overwhelming impact on the performance of school children in school. This is because it affects the brain development and impedes the intellectual capacity of children (Bloom, 2009). According to many scientists and psychologists, acute and chronic hunger affects children's ability to stay attentive and perform well academically in school (Bloom, 2009; Dauncey, 2009; Kazal, 2002).

Additionally, the WFP (2006) and Grantham (1988) highlight that hunger and poor education are interrelated in that a hungry child is less likely to attend school.

According to the World Food Programme (2015), factors such as the distance from home to school, child labor, running family errands before school, and poor quality of meals consumed at home can also contribute to poor classroom performance. Del Rosso, (1999) also mentions that SFPs and other school-based nutrition and health programs motivate parents to enrol their children in school and help ensure that they attend school regularly. An increase in enrolment and attendance helps ensure positive academic performance of children in schools (UNESCO, 2015) which eventually promotes positive educational outcomes. A research conducted in Jamaica by Grantham-McGregor (1988) showed that providing breakfast to primary school children increased

the attendance and performance of the children, especially among the stunted and vulnerable children. In addition, an analysis of the SFP in Burkina Faso revealed that schools with canteens or food pantries that provide food for the children during school hours were associated with increased enrolment, attendance and higher completion rate (WFP, 2006).

According to Nelson Mandela (1994) “education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.

Concurring, Sen (1999) believes that providing quality and adequate education for the youth is the only way to build a strong nation. People who are educated are better able to become responsible people in the world. Persons such as politicians, policymakers, scientists, and economists that a country depends on all need education in order to become successful (Food and Agricultural Organization, 2005; World Food Program, 2015). Education imparts training, knowledge, and skills that every person needs to become responsible in the society (Sen, 1999). Ahmed (2002) and Edstrom et al. (2008) found that children who are educated are more likely to feed themselves and their immediate families when they reach adulthood.

Additionally, Kristjansson et al. (2009) also mentioned that SFP guarantees limited challenges in school attendance and ensure that children who enrol in schools attend regularly. Furthermore, the SFP has promoted both male and female youth education and reduced child labor in Malawi (Edstrom et al., 2008).

Despite the massive developments made in education across developing countries coupled with a high increase in enrolment rate, many problems burden education systems across the world (UNESCO, 2011; WFP, 2015). Poverty and hunger have kept about 67 million children across the

world out of primary school, 53% and 47% of these children represent girls and boys respectively. Approximately 43% of these children are found in the Sub-Saharan African region. Furthermore, the school dropout rate is increasing in many developing countries. In Sub-Saharan region alone, the estimated number of children who dropped out of school increased from 29 million in 2008 to 31 million in 2010. In addition to this, the enrolment rate of school children in primary schools has slowed in the past decades (UNESCO, 2011; WFP, 2015).

### **2.15 School Feeding and Enrolment**

According to the World Food Program (2004), the impact of the school feeding program on enrolment cannot be overemphasized. Kazianga, De Walque, and Alderman (2009) identified a positive relationship between the SFP and school enrolment, academic performance, and cognitive development. Similarly, Akanbi (2011) identified a significant increase in the attendance and enrolment rates in schools after the introduction of the SFP in Nigeria.

Furthermore, a research conducted by Alderman et al. (2012) to assess the impacts of the SFP in Northern Uganda found a significant increase in school enrolment and attendance in primary schools as a result of the SFP in the first five years of implementation. Alderman et al. (2012) however mentioned that the impact of the SFP varies by location depending on the type of SFP implemented. The authors assessed how the implementation of the on-site SFP and the take-home ration differently impacts enrolment rates among children in Northern Uganda. The authors identified that in schools where there is a combination of the on-site school feeding program and the take-home ration, enrolment rate among girls alone was sustained at thirty percent after the first year. However, in schools that have the on-site school feeding program, the increment rate recorded after the first year reverted to that recorded before the implementation of the SFP.

In congruence with these results, Moore and Kunze (1994) also found a positive

relationship between school enrolment and school canteens. They found that in Burkina Faso, schools with canteens have higher enrolment rates than schools without a canteen system. Moore and Kunze also found that school canteens have a positive influence on school attendance, academic performance, and educational success. These results, however, contradict the findings of Meme et. al (1998) that there is no difference in the enrolment rates among schools with canteens and schools without a canteen system in Kenya.

### **2.16 School Feeding and Academic and Cognitive Development**

Many studies have investigated the impact of the SFP on cognitive development and academic performance. Simeon and McGregor (1989) conducted a research on the effects of breakfast on the cognitive development of children between the ages of 9 and 10 years. The authors utilized a crossover design on three different groups comprised of children who were malnourished, stunted and non-stunted children. They found that serving breakfast for children is crucial to their cognitive development and the impact is even more significant among malnourished children.

Similarly, a study conducted on two groups from four primary schools in Jamaica, a group of malnourished children which was the experimental group and another group with nourished children that served as a control group. The researchers performed four cognitive tests; verbal fluency, information processing, visual search and digit span on both groups after breakfast was provided to the experimental group. The authors found an improvement in the verbal fluency of the experiment group while there was no change in the control group. The authors then concluded that providing breakfast to children helps improve their cognitive development (Chandler, 1995). This result is consistent with the results of Simeon and McGregor (1989). However, (Lopez, and

Ramon, 1999), found a contradictory result when they assessed the impacts of breakfast on the cognitive development of primary school children. The authors found that there is a disassociation between breakfast and cognitive development, specifically in problem-solving, visual memory and attention task of children.

The authors concluded that in the short-run, missing breakfast does not affect the cognitive development of children. However, Husein (2014) mentioned that these researchers did not pay attention to the food that children ate the night before the research was conducted and the time they had that food as that could have influenced their findings. Nonetheless, Ahmed (2004) have also found that iron and iodine nutrients are crucial for cognitive development in children. Del Rosso (1999) also emphasized that children who lack iodine and iron nutrients perform poorly in schools. A similar assertion was also made by Seshadri and Gopaldas (1989) that the provision of iron to children is crucial to their IQ development which eventually improves their performance in schools. The provision of micronutrients in the SFP supports the cognitive development and academic performance of children in primary schools (Jacoby & Cueto 1996)

This implies that the implementation of the SFP to malnourished children is a significant step to improving children's academic performance and cognitive development.

### **2.17 Challenges of School Feeding Program**

According to Chelangat (2011), there are several factors that affect the successful implementation of the SFP in schools. Some of these factors include lack of adequate financial resources to sustain the program, problems associated with the policy and regulatory framework in charge of the SFP implementation, and the lack of community and parental involvement in the program. Various literature has been reviewed on the challenges facing the implementation of the

SFP in schools among which are;

### **2.17.1 Lack of Financial Resources**

According to Koontz and Weirich (2001), the availability of financial resources is a major factor to consider when implementing a national program or policy. Just like any other national program, the successful implementation of a school feeding program depends on a strong financial commitment typically by the government and all other interested parties to fund the program. Ayieke (2005) also mentioned that national programs like the SFP should be included in the government fiscal budget spending for the year according to the national planning process.

In addition to this, money allocated to the program must also be distributed to the appropriate institutions on a timely basis to support the program (Ayieke, 2005; Nkethia, 2011). However, according to Kootnz and Wierch (2001), the unstable source of funding for SFPs continue to be one of the major challenges of the program. Similarly, Olubayo et al (2013) also found that even though there are resources allocated to the spending on the SFP, there is no proper spending plan on how the funds are distributed in Nigeria.

Similarly, Nkethia (2011) found that schools in Kenya that receive resources directly from the government to carry out the SFP reported delay in the timely distribution of funds to them affecting their ability to implement the SFP successfully and in a timely manner. As a result of this, some of the children in these schools are not able to a receive adequate meals to sustain them. Furthermore, the few schools that provide enough food for the children are usually not able to meet the basic nutritional elements specified under the program (Nkethia, 2011).



### **2.17.2 Policy and Regulatory Network Problems**

According to Chelangat (2011), in order to ensure a successful implementation of the SFP, there should be an institutional arrangement that is responsible for carrying out the program. The author also recommends that the institutions set to carry out the implementation of the program must have qualified and adequate staff to help in the implementation process and the system of operation must be transparent to the general public.

In addition to this, WFP (2008) mentions that the implementation of the SFP must involve all stakeholders and the system must be monitored and evaluated. This according to Briggs (2008) will ensure a successful implementation of the program. However, a research conducted by Olubayo, Amisialuvi, and Namusonge, (2013), on the SFP in Emuhaya county in Nigeria revealed that there is lack of adequate skilled personnel to successfully implement the program. The authors also mentioned that lack of transparency and effective communication between the policy network in charge of the problem were found to be a major challenge associated with the SFP implementation. According to WFP (2013) and United Nations (2008), issues such as corruption, political instability and lack of proper monitoring and evaluation are also problems with the policy administrations that inhibit the successful implementation of the SFP in many developing countries.

### **2.17.3 Lack of Parental and Community Involvement**

According to Cole (2007), community involvement is key to the development and implementation of a SFP. Similarly, Tablot and Verrinder (2005) affirmed the proposition that community involvement is crucial in program implementation as it allows all stakeholders to participate in the decision-making process. Additionally, Briggs (2008) found that the

development and implementation of a sound policy can be accomplished through the involvement of the community actors including community leaders, schools, parents, and children among others. Extending this to the implementation of the SFP, Young (2005) has argued that community and parental involvement are crucial in carrying out the program.

According to Young (2005), “Implementation of SFP can be successful if the community can be consulted while designing the program if there are community-level structures for communication if there is a committee with parents and teachers...and if the community gets the motivation to execute their roles fully in providing SFP”.

Furthermore, Nkethia (2011) indicated that the involvement of parents, teachers, and communities in decisions on the SFP provides them the opportunity to be aware of the impacts of the program on their children or students and their educational performances. Despite the essential implications to involve community and parents in the implementation of the SFP, Nkethia (2011) found that community and parents have not been involved in the SFP implementation process in Kenya. Similarly, WFP (2008) also mentioned that not much energy has been expended to involve parents and the community in the implementation of the SFP in many countries. This affects how parents and the community members perceive the program and its impacts on their children.

### **2.18 Models of Implementing the SFP**

The SFP can be implemented under different types, models, and principles. Yendaw and Dayour (2015) identified two main types of school feeding program. They are the in-school feeding and the take-home ration. The in-school feeding program describes a type of school feeding program where children are fed in school whereas the take-home ration describes a situation where families are given food when they enroll their children in schools. The WFP (2015)

also proposed five types of models for the implementation of the SFP. They are the centralized and decentralized model, school-based and community-based model and the combination model. The centralized model describes the process where food is imported and obtained from the central government or government bureaucracy and distributed to schools. It is usually utilized in traditional school feeding programs.

In addition, the decentralized model describes a process where cash is remitted by the central government to local and municipal authorities who contract with suppliers to provide meals for schools in their municipalities or districts.

Furthermore, the school-based model describes a situation where cash or purchasing vouchers is received by the government to schools who in turn use this money to buy food items for their schools from the local markets, farmers, and co-operatives. In the community-based model, communities that have the capacity to provide food to schools provide lunch meals for their children to take to school or pay schools to provide lunch meals for them.

Finally, the combination model encapsulates the entire previously mentioned models which are used contingent on the social context (WFP, 2015). Also, coverage under the SFP varies immensely depending on the size and capacity of the country where the program is implemented. According to Yendaw and Dayour (2015), in low- income countries, the SFP usually caters for a specific category of people in the population. This can be based on the geographical location, the income level of the family among other factors. On the contrary, in high and middle-income countries, the coverage is usually extended to the general population of children attending school. Children are usually given free meals or subsidized meals in schools. This is typical of SFPs in the Scandinavian countries and other developed countries (FAO, 2005; WFP, 2015). According to the WFP, the number of people covered under the SFP are usually shaped by the capacity of the

country to support the implementation of the program.

### **2.19 Criticisms against the Implementation of the SFP**

There are various criticisms against the implementation of the SFP. According to Vermeersch and Kremer (2004), there are negative social and educational implications associated with the implementation of the SFP. The authors argued that the SFP only caters for the needs of children in school while ignoring children who may come from a poor family but who are too young or weak to go to school. This defeats the purpose of the program in meeting the nutritional needs of children from a poor home. Additionally, the SFP has been seen to be a contributor to academic underperformance of primary school children in schools. According to several authors, the SFP takes away hours of teaching time that students could use for learning. Instead, they spend the time on eating meals provided under the program. This contributes to the academic underperformance of children in primary schools (Vermeersch & Kremer, 2004; Kazianga et al. 2009).

Moreover, the introduction of the SFP has promoted enrolment rates in schools which have resulted in overcrowding. According to He, (2009), school infrastructure has not been able to accommodate the increase in enrolment and as such children are left under poor school conditions. Moreover, the program has also affected teaching quality as a limited number of teachers are made to teach more children than they can adequately serve. Another critic against the SFP is that children in schools where the program is not being implemented could move to schools where the program is being implemented. This could disproportionately affect the primary school system as some schools will have more pupils than they can afford while other schools would have too few students (Gilligan et al. 2008; He 2009).

## **2.20 Operation of School Feeding Programme in other countries**

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). The phenomenon implies in-school meals only where children are provided with meals at school. School feeding has increasingly come to represent a more varied and comprehensive set of uses of food for the achievement of educational outcomes. Several countries have put in place stringent measures towards alleviating poverty. On the global scale, about 805.1 million people live in hunger or do not have enough food to eat (FAO, 2014). The effort by governments and other stakeholders to eliminate hunger has called for the introduction of school feeding programmes the world over. Different programmes come with specific missions such as increasing enrolment, retention, nutrition and performance. However, they all have a common objective of achieving universal basic education using the school feeding programme as a catalyst.

In a similar dimension, School Feeding Programmes seek to enhance food security and minimize hunger which is in connection with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (ECASARD and SNV Ghana, 2009). Winch (2009) points out that school feeding is of crucial significance to national development. Aliyar, Gelli and Hamdani, (2012) defined school feeding as the provision of food on – site or take – home which aims to increase school enrolment, attendance and retention, and exists as a social safety net for households with very low income. This implies that the aim of school feeding is to provide children of low-income earners with nutritious meals to help sustain and maintain them in school.

International Food Policy Research Institute (2014) stated clearly that proper nutrition is the foundation of human health. Good nutrition among young children equips their body to grow and develop well. It ensures effective learning in schools. School feeding is a key apparatus to

improve food security, education and agricultural development. Calls have been made in recent times for countries to scale up their budgets towards developing agriculture and to connect school feeding programs towards national agricultural production (Global Child Nutrition Forum, 2010).

Majority of the world population living in hunger are found in developing countries and sub Saharan Africa has become the home of about one – fourth of under-nourished people (FAO, 2014). Malnutrition among poor families hinders their economic and social development. In the field of education, such families find it extremely difficult meeting educational expenditure and food necessary for child growth. Lawson (2012) points out that school feeding is common in developing countries where many families often fall short of resources to satisfy their basic needs. This discussion suggests that school feeding programme which is often facilitated by donors' interventions is a significant relief measure for such poor households.

Many countries that have successfully implemented SFP began on a pilot basis. They include Indonesia, Bangladesh and Ghana. The programmes though are implemented in different areas shared some similar characteristics such as targeting the poor, involvement of government and to some extent donor financing. Besides, they scaled up their operations after achieving success stories from pilot basis.

In Indonesia, according to the National Development Planning Agency, the Government introduced a national SFP in the 1990s which was initiated and financed wholly by government. The main targets of the programme were children, schools, parents, and the broader village community (BAPPENAS, 1996 cited in Studdert, Burstin, & Thomas, 2004). It was initiated as a poverty reduction strategy and hence became an ingredient in their development plan.

Levinger, (1986) as cited by Del Rosso (1999), indicated that the model on SFP adopted by the Indonesian government created a platform for many other countries to follow. To ascertain

the effectiveness of the programme in Indonesia, a pilot study of the programme was carried out in other regions of the country for possible expansion to the entire country (Del Rosso, 1999).

As an economic growth strategy, the government of Indonesia guaranteed that locally grown commodities could be used in feeding the children (Central Coordinating Board for Child and Youth Improvement Program, 1996). The package of food consisted of deworming and snacks for the children. As the role of the district level government was effective in implementation, movement of programme funds went directly from the national level to a local bank, bypassing the provincial and district levels of government. This was to ensure that more of the allocated funds reached the targeted programme beneficiaries. Only the school principal could withdraw funds from the local bank and to do this he was required to present a menu plan signed by the village leader, the village midwife, and the heads of the local women's and school parents' associations (Studdert et al., 2004). This process was designed to ensure that multiple local parties verified student numbers and were aware of the funds being provided for the program.

The menu plan was prepared at the village or sub-district level with technical advice from the Ministry of Health staff. This strategy of implementation resulted in lasting success, leading to more enrolment of children in school.

In Bangladesh, feeding children in school is not an old phenomenon as compared to the case of Indonesia. In order to diminish hunger in the classroom as well as to promote school enrolment and retention rates, the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) and the World Food Programme (WFP) launched the School Feeding Program (SFP) in chronically food insecure areas of the country (Ahmed, 2004).

Ahmed further explained that this initiation started on pilot basis as at 2002 where milk and biscuits were given to children at school in a chosen district. The U.S.

Department of Agriculture (USDA) made significant contribution in funding the programme during its initial stages. In 1993, the Bangladesh government implemented the Food for Education (FFE) programme to increase primary school enrolment of children from poor families. The package of the FFE programme consisted of a monthly distribution of wheat to poor families in deprived communities whose children attended primary school.

Literature suggests that the FFE did raise primary school enrolment in all beneficiary communities (Ahmed, 2000; Ahmed & Del Ninno, 2002). Later there was the Primary Education Stipend Program (PESP), which replaced the FFE program in 2002.

This development could afford to offer cash assistance to poor families if they sent their children to primary school. At this point, even students in secondary schools were covered as beneficiaries of the cash incentive. These conditional cash transfer programs aim to increase the enrolment and retention rates of students in primary and secondary schools throughout rural Bangladesh. A recent study indicates positive influence of these programs on educational attainment (Ahmed, 2004). The literature established that SFP are designed by implementing agencies to enhance school enrolment, nutrition and academic performance. While remarkable achievements have been demonstrated by the literature in the area of nutrition and enrolment in different countries, the empirical literature lacks evidence of gender access gap analysis. Besides, the literature does not show the strategies that have been adopted by countries with School Feeding Programmes to influence childrens' enrolment in basic schools. The objectives of this study have therefore, included measures taken by management of the Ghana School Feeding Programme to improve children school enrolment, attendance and performance especially in the Upper West Region and Nandom at large.



## 2.21 Operation of the School Feeding Programmes in Ghana

An attempt to introduce School Feeding in Ghana began in 1940 where children in the then Protectorate of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast was provided with free meals in the boarding schools. However, the menu was not nutritionally balanced. Rice and beans were provided occasionally as a special meal (Imoru, 2010). In the 1950s, pupils of several Catholic primary and middle schools were given take-home rations of food aid. The objective was to improve the nutritional status of school children and increase school enrolment and performance. The programme was in line with government policy to accelerate the education and training of Ghanaians to fill job vacancies created by foreigners who had to leave the country after independence (Imoru, 2010).

Over time, WFP and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) became two lead agencies providing SFPs in the country, focusing on the North due to its high incidence of poverty and food insecurity. World Food Programme has been involved in Ghana for 40 years. Other development partners involved in food assistance programmes are: World Vision, Adventist Development Relief Agency (ADRA), Dutch Development Agency (SNV) and Social Enterprise Development (SEND). The objectives of the SFPs of these organizations are not different from those in the 1950s, except that poverty, food insecurity and gender inequality have become additional concerns for these organizations. The North is relatively poor and rural households, especially women and their young daughters, lack physical and economic access to food (WFP, 2007).

School feeding plays a significant role in the development of education in Ghana. Governments, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and stakeholders have made efforts to successfully feed the school child in Ghana over the past decades. International Business Development program (2015) revealed that some communities initiated their own school feeding

programs using local produce. This notwithstanding, other NGOs play crucial roles in ensuring that the school child in Ghana is well fed. Catholic Relief Services, World Vision, and Adventist Development and Relief Agency among others are some of the organizations that in one way or the other support the school feeding agenda of Ghana's school children. Kleiman (2010) asserts that school feeding ensures food security; hungry children are likely to be found in food insecure homes. Partnership for Child Development (1999) points out that education and learning depend on good nutrition. School feeding in Ghana has achieved greater prominence by providing the nutritional needs of pupils (Kedze, 2013; Bukari et al., 2015; Martens, 2007). School feeding aims vary from country to country (Aliyar et al, 2012). School feeding programmes in Ghana have gained significant boost by increasing enrolment and reducing school drop-out rate (Duah, 2011; Martens, 2007; Kedze; 2013 Gyawu 2012; Nkosha et al., 2013 and Alhassan, 2013). School feeding motivates children of lower income earners to constantly attend school every day.

However, Alhassan (2013) points out that schools that are not under the school feeding programmes have low enrolment and high rate of school drop-out in the Northern region of Ghana. School Feeding Programms are targeted social safety nets that provide both educational and health benefits to the most vulnerable children, thereby increasing enrolment 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 programmes 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 school children, school feeding is clear as a major social programme 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 Ghana School Feeding Programme (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 (Osei et al., 2009). Subsequently, the GSFP began with nationwide coverage and 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. 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, attendance and retention. As part of its support for educational development in Ghana, the WFP has included in its targets the three Northern Regions of Ghana. In WFP's support to childrens' education, 42,000 childrens and their families in 25 districts of the three Northern Regions benefit from take-home rations as a monthly incentive for achievement of 85 percent or higher attendance at school. The success implementation of this programme provided evidence for scaling up to cover the entire stages of the primary school level. In some instances, Junior High Schools with low gender parity are covered. However, WFP has been phasing out its assistance to children education since 2006, as agreed with the Government. The challenge, therefore, is how to bridge the gaps that are being created by the phasing out of externally supported programmes including CRS's school feeding and WFP's support to children education.

WFP and GSFP signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2006 that outlines collaboration in the following areas:

- providing a fortified food basket to complement GSFP menus;

- supporting district-level planning and implementing school feeding;
- harmonizing planning and managing cash and food inputs at the district level;
- testing procurement processes;
- building capacity of PTAs, SMCs and other stakeholders;
- testing models for sustainable funding;
- developing systems for monitoring and evaluation.

This development provided collaborative assistance for the implementation of the programme. The literature provides evidence of School Feeding Programmes that have been implemented in the country. The GSFP is considered as one of the major interventions in terms of scope and this suggests the need to evaluate its effects on students' enrolment, attendance and performance in the region and Nandom as a district.

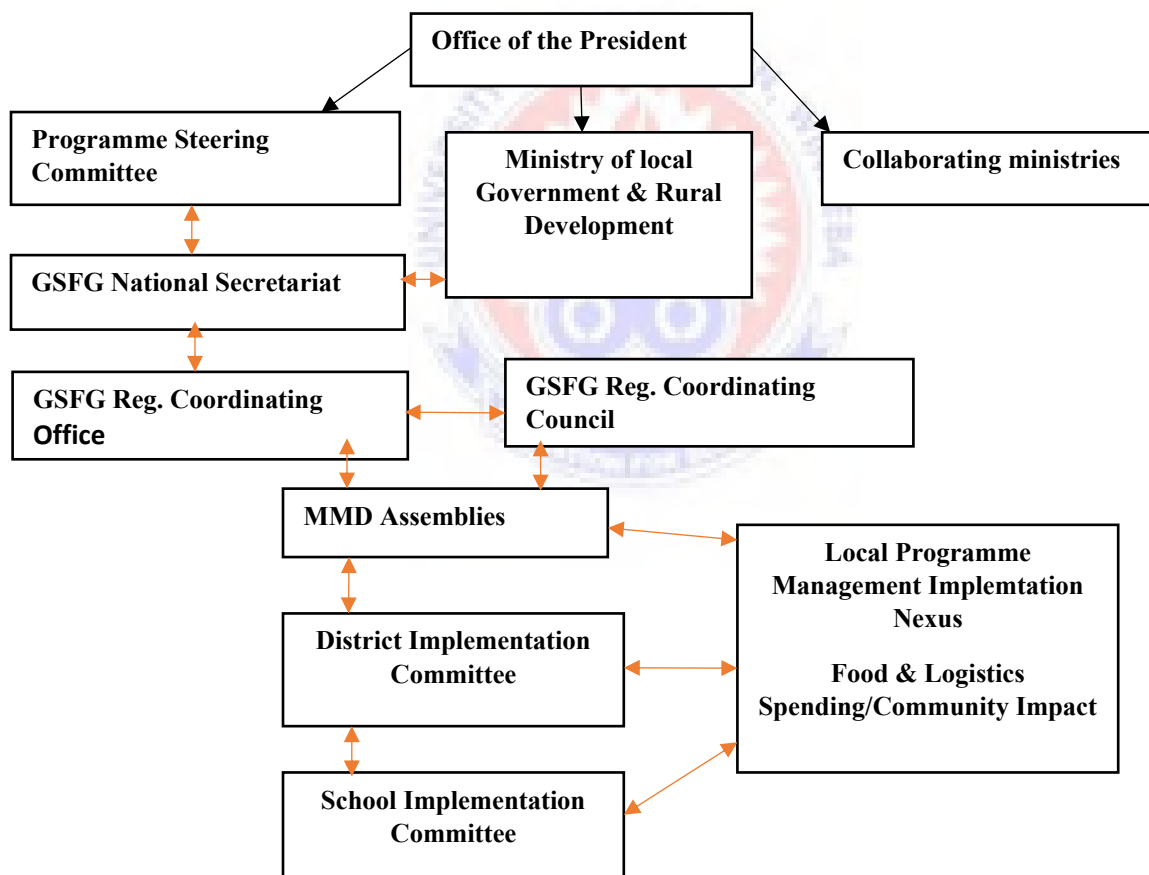
## **2.22 Implementing agencies of the GSFP**

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 with 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 the achievement of the agricultural aspect objectives;

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

**Figure 2: Implementation Framework for the SFP in Ghana**



Source: GSFP Annual Operating Plan, 2010

### 2.23 Summary

The literature discusses empirical review on the role of SFP on education and interventions to increase enrolment of children at basic schools. The review implies that several school feeding programmes have achieved success in enrolment, attendance, retention and academic performance in different countries such as Bangladesh. In Ghana, successful school feeding programmes have been implemented since the 1940s to date. Literature provides that the GSFP has improved enrolment in many of the beneficiary schools. However, no evidence on its effect on school children enrolment, attendance and performance has been provided for the Nandom municipality. Besides, the fact that all the empirical studies on the subject has been conducted outside the Upper West Region and the Nandom municipality brings to interest the need to conduct this study.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **STUDY METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The study examines the effects of GSFP on enrolment, attendance and retention in the Nandom municipality of the Upper West Region. This chapter will discuss issues such as research design; population of the study; sample size, and sampling techniques; sources of data collection; data collection instruments and field work observation.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

This study utilized a qualitative research design and used an exploratory method of collecting data. According to Creswell (2009), a qualitative research design focuses on exploring and understanding the social phenomenon from the viewpoint of the people who experienced it. Similarly, Green (1999) also defined qualitative research design as a type that seeks to explore the human understanding of social problems. Exploratory research, as the name implies was used and intended merely to explore the research questions and does not intend to offer final and conclusive solutions to existing problems. The use of this will help to study the SFP that has not been clearly defined yet.

Additionally, qualitative research aims to understand the experiences of participants. This study adopted this methodology to explore the perceptions people have about the Ghana School Feeding Program and its influence on school enrolment, attendance, and completion of primary school children. No intervention was executed by the researcher to determine any cause and effect.

Creswell (2012), explained that the experiences and insights shared by the participants in a

qualitative research study provide an in-depth explanation of the research topic and the participants involved. The qualitative research design also provides an opportunity to understand the issue from the perspectives of the participants (Merriam, 1998). In addition to the above, Green and Thorogood (2009) also agreed that a qualitative research design allows the phenomenon to be understood from the perspectives of the communities and individuals who are affected.

### 3.2.1 Sampling

The Nandom municipality has 36 schools benefiting from GSFP (Nandom municipality Assembly, 2017). The researcher utilized the non-probability sampling technique in recruiting the participants. A non-probability sampling technique refers to a situation whereby the participants of the study are selected based on the personal biases of the researcher rather than a random sampling (Creswell, 2013; Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006).

In this research, the sample was selected based on the subjective judgment of the researcher because all schools in the Municipality are benefactors of SFP.

**Table 1: Selected Schools**

| #  | School Name | Circuit                   |
|----|-------------|---------------------------|
| 1. | School (A)  | Puffien Circuit           |
| 2. | School (B)  | Nandom West Circuit       |
| 3. | School (C)  | Brutu Nandom East Circuit |
| 4. | School (D)  | Basellebe Circuit         |
| 5. | School (E)  | Nandom North Circuit      |

According to Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006), the effectiveness of a qualitative research depends on the depth of information gathered during the interview and not the number of people



who participated in the interview. The authors also mentioned that qualitative research does not require a standardized sample size. Additionally, Creswell (2013) suggests that a sample size of ten to twelve participants is sufficient for a qualitative research. These ideas validate the sample size utilized in this research.

Moreover, the researcher explored the research questions extensively during the interview by allowing participants to talk freely without cutting them. This helped the researcher to gain adequate information needed to meet the research objectives.

This research focused on the level of experience of the participants and this criterion allowed the researcher to gain an in-depth information from the participants.

Similarly, the criteria used in this research allowed only people who had had relevant years of experience on the topic to participate in the research. All participants in this research have had at least one year of experience with the SFP with exception of the parents who were considered. Parents who participated in the research had children who have had at least one year of experience with SFP. The researcher considered one-year experience as adequate to have allowed participants to gain quite a significant experience to share during the interview. However, one of the limitations associated with the purposive sampling method is that it excluded people who do not meet the one-year criteria but have a potentially useful experience to take part in the research.

At the beginning of the research, the researcher telephoned the headteachers of each primary schools. These initial contacts provided the researcher with other potential participants for the research. Another strategy that was helpful to reach out to these individuals was visiting schools during their Parents-Teachers Association Meetings (PTA). This made the researcher to meet many parents without difficulties. Also, caterers of each school were visited and interview granted. In all the researcher finally arrived at fourteen participants: 5 headteachers, 4 circuit supervisors, 2

parents and 3 caterers who were affiliated to at least one of the 5 Junior High schools selected.

**Table 2: Research Participants**

| #  | Role in School      | Number    |
|----|---------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Circuit Supervisors | 4         |
| 2. | Head Teachers       | 5         |
| 3. | Parents             | 2         |
| 4. | Caterers            | 3         |
| #  | <b>Total</b>        | <b>14</b> |

### 3.2.2 Data Collection

The primary data as already emphasized above was gathered through a series of one-on-one interviews with the participants. According to Merriam (1998), interviews in a qualitative research study are conducted in situations where it is difficult to observe the participants' experiences or behaviors. The interview was done mostly via telephone and WhatsApp lasted for between 30 and 60 minutes. Due to the difference in respondent's duty times, the researcher had to select times that worked best for the participants. The approximate time around which the interview was scheduled was between 3 pm and 7 pm to suit their work schedule and not to inconvenience them.

A semi-structured interview was utilized for the research. A semi-structured interview is a data collection strategy that combines a set of pre-determined open-ended questions that allows the researcher to explore the issues of interest without necessarily limiting participants to a set of questions (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006). This method was selected by the researcher to allow the participants to express themselves on selected research questions considered relevant to study

by the researcher.

Also, an interview guide was used in the interview process. An interview guide is a set of pre-determined questions that are asked in an interview and which ensure that information gathered from the interview is relevant to the research purpose (Creswell, 2009).

The interview guide also provided the opportunity and flexibility for participants to express themselves on certain important questions. The researcher designed four different versions of the interview guide, one for each group of participants; parents, teachers, administrators, and caterers. The questions were structured around the research objectives.

The researcher probed for further explanation when there was the need to seek a better understanding of the participants' responses. The researcher also ensured that there was no noise in the background during the interview to allow participants to feel comfortable to participate in the research. According to Moustakes (1994), it is important to consider the environment in which an interview is conducted as that can influence how participants contribute to the discussion. The author suggested that the environment must be free from inconvenience to allow participants to feel comfortable to express themselves fully. In addition to this, the researcher was also respectful of every opinion expressed by the participants, which according to Merriam (1998) improves response rate and participation. The researcher also reminded the participants that the conversation would be recorded for transcription.

The researcher started the interview with an introduction to his background which was very informal. This was to build understanding with the participants. Furthermore, the participants were given the opportunity to express themselves in the language they were most comfortable. Most preferably, all the interviews were conducted in English with only a few comments passed in 'dagaari' which the researcher eventually translated directly into English. During the interview,

the researcher recorded the conversation with a voice recorder and the information was securely stored. After the interview, the researcher transcribed the recordings of participants for maximum usage. Transcripts were kept in a word document for analysis.

### **3.2.3 Data Analysis**

Creswell (2009) defined data analysis as the process of making sense out of a text or an image that can be interpreted and understood. After the interview, the researcher listened to the recorded data and made notes from each conversation. According to Maxwell (2013), it is important to pay attention and take notes when listening to the recordings. According to Maxwell (2013), this helps to gain a clearer understanding of the ideas and the relationships that exist in the conversation. The researcher then transcribed the data into a word document file for analysis.

Data transcription refers to the process of translating audiotaped recorded data into text (Creswell, 2012).

The researcher then employed the Attride-Stirlings guide to thematic network analysis in qualitative research to analyze the transcribed data. This process involved coding the data and putting the responses under categories. Basic themes emerged from these categories which were reframed into organizing themes. The organizing themes were further classified around the research questions and interpretations were made from them. The researcher also compared the findings of the research to the information gathered from the literature review to identify the similarities and inconsistencies in the findings of the study with other research work.

### **3.3 Validity of the Findings**

Meriam (1998) mentioned that it is imperative for researchers conducting a qualitative

research to ensure that the findings of their research are valid and present insights that are true to targets, educators, policymakers, and other researchers. According to Maxwell (2013), analyzing the validity of the data helps the researcher to acknowledge ways in which the research findings might be bias. This is usually based on the objectivity of the research, the methodology and the data collection procedures used in the research. Some qualitative research authors have also referred to the validity of the research as the trustworthiness of the research; a strategy to test whether the research findings are reliable and can be trusted (Creswell, 2012; Maxwell, 2013).

There are different threats that can affect the validity of the findings in a qualitative study. According to Maxwell (2013), since the researcher is the primary interpreter of the data gathered for the research, researcher bias can influence the ways in which the data collected for the research is interpreted and this can subsequently affect the validity of research findings. For the purposes of this research, it is possible that the researcher's judgment about the SFP could have clouded the interpretations made from the data gathered for the research.

Another threat to the validity of the research is how the participants react to some of the questions asked. There was the possibility that due to my initial conversation and the relationship that I built with the participants before the actual interview, they may have responded to some of the questions in ways to impress me. Also, because the researcher introduced himself as someone studying outside Wa in one of the regions universities, some of the participants may have responded to the questions in ways that would appeal to the researcher's sympathy to support them in improving the conditions of the SFP in their schools. These events could affect the validity of the research.

In addressing the problems above, the researcher employed peer examination, triangulation, respondent validation and a rich-and-thick-description to enhance the validity of the

research. Triangulation involves the process of collecting data from multiple sources to aid in the research.

The study also consulted peer-reviewed journals, scientific materials, and newspapers from credible sources that shed light on the SFP without any form of biases. The researcher also reviewed reports from the Ghanaian government on the SFP and this also gave a clearer picture of the programme and how it is implemented. This information was eventually useful in how the collected data was interpreted in such a way that is meaningful to the topic of interest.

Furthermore, the peer examination strategy was also used to reduce the threat to validity. According to Maxwell (2013), Peer examination is the process whereby the researcher consults with peers and other researchers on identifying and limiting flaws within the research approach or methodology. For the purposes of this research, the researcher through the study also consulted with his peers, academic advisor and the members of his research committee to seek advice about themes and codes drawn from the data gathered. This process helped the researcher to identify and minimize the flaws in data interpretation.

Additionally, the rich and thick description strategy used also ensured that there is an adequate description that suited a phenomenon of interest (Becker, 1970; Maxwell, 2013). The researcher ensured that adequate information about the research topic was gathered from participants to help in the data analysis. The richness of the data limited the researcher from bringing his own judgment into the research and allowed for clearer and more adequate judgment to be made from the information gathered.

Finally, the researcher also informed the participants about the data gathered to confirm whether their responses accurately reflect those presented during the interview. This process helped in ensuring the responses were reported the way they were presented to ensure that

inferences and conclusions from the interviews were accurate and valid. This process is referred to as respondents' validation (Maxwell, 2013).

### **3.4 Ethical Considerations**

#### **Informed Consent**

An informed consent form was sent individually to all the people who were willing to participate in the research. A copy of the informed consent is attached at the end this paper (Please refer to appendix B). The informed consent form provided the participants with every detail of the research. This was to ensure that the participants understood the research project and the risk involved in participating in the research. The information provided in the consent form includes a brief background of the researcher, an introduction to the study, the purpose of the study, and the research procedures utilized in the study. Furthermore, the consent form also provided information on the voluntary nature of the research which indicated that participants could withdraw from the study at any time if they find the research inconvenient to them.

Additionally, the anticipated risks involved in participating in the study were also specified in the consent form. Risks involved in the research are not more than those experienced in daily life. The participants were also informed of the data collection procedures and how the information they provide for the research will be stored. The consent form also expressed that any information given by the participants for the research is confidential.

Furthermore, the consent form informed them about the data collection procedures, and on how much of their time would be needed for the study.

### **3.5 Confidentiality/ Anonymity Protection**

The information obtained from participants for this research was kept confidential. Access to this information was restricted to only the researcher. The consent forms were stored separately from the data recordings and transcripts. The researcher also locked away the consent forms in a secure file cabinet in the researcher's office. Furthermore, the audio recordings and transcripts were stored on a secure online server (gmail), which utilizes server authentication that only the researcher could access. The audio recordings of the interviews will be kept for a maximum of one year, after which they will be deleted. All the participants were informed about this procedure to assure them of their confidentiality

### **3.6 Self-Determination**

The researcher ensured the self-determination of the participants by allowing participants to respond to the interview questions freely without rushing. None of the participants was forced to provide a response that was favorable to the researcher.

### **3.7 Researcher Subjectivity**

Creswell (2012) emphasized that in qualitative research, it is always difficult to separate the researcher's personal biases from the interpretation of the data. In the same way, Merriam (1998) also mentioned that in qualitative research, the researcher is the primary instrument in gathering and interpreting the data. Based on these statements, it is therefore imperative for researchers involved in qualitative research projects to acknowledge the level of their biases in interpreting information gathered. Creswell (2012) also encourages researchers to limit their personal biases in interpreting data gathered through a qualitative approach.



The researcher's bias in this study lies in the fact that the researcher comes from the research area and has been living in the district in which the research was conducted. Also, the researcher is acquainted with children who attended the schools where the data were gathered. Based on this, it is therefore important to acknowledge that prior knowledge about the SFP and its impacts on school children may have been publicly discussed with other people in the district. Also, the researcher may have gained prior information about the SFP from the children he knew. These informal conversations could have affected the judgment of the researcher in interpreting information gathered from the participants.

### **3.8 Limitations of the Research**

There were several limitations encountered while conducting this research. During this study, the researcher faced inadequate cooperation from some head teachers and caterers. The researcher also persuaded the head teachers who had declined to cooperate to consent to participate in the study. They were assured that the research was for academic purposes and that the information they gave would be made confidential.

Additionally, inability for some of the participants to read correctly (illiterate parents) and language differences. To curb this, the researcher had to seek for an interpreter in some cases which might affect the understanding of the question and the responses.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the findings from fieldwork conducted to examine the influence of the GSFP on enrolment, attendance and retention in the beneficiary basic schools in an area the

Nandom municipality of the Upper West Region. Thematic network analysis was used to draw common views that emerged from similar experiences shared by the participants during the interview. Views generated were focused on addressing the research objectives. The main objective of this research was to explore the contribution of the Ghana School Feeding Program on enrolment, attendance, and completion among primary School children as well as the setbacks in implementing the programme.

In this research, three main themes were generated from the responses of the participants. These include the contribution of SFP, the challenges of the SFP, and other related issues associated with SFP and its impact on school enrolment, attendance and performance.

## **4.2 Impacts of the School Feeding Program**

When asked about their understanding of the impacts of the school feeding program, the responses of the participants varied based on several issues. These include enrolment, attendance, retention, academic performance and other benefits.

### **4.2.1 Enrolment**

When is about enrolment, most of the participants perceive that the school feeding program has had a positive impact on the overall enrolment of students in basic schools. Some of the participants mentioned that before the introduction of the SFP, parents found it difficult to enrol their children in schools because they were not able to meet the basic needs of their children. However, some of the participants mentioned that, as a result of the SFP, parents are motivated to take their children to school because they will be provided with food. A respondent (F) of Nandom West circuit who has a her children in School (B) Adding to her voice was, Respondent (Youra),

*“all my two children are now going to school because I know they will be fed when they get there. It saves me a lot of money that I would have spent on school”.*

Similarly, Respondent Mary, Nandom north circuit who is a teacher and also has his kids in School (E) where the feeding program is implemented said:

*“ I have never been this free, my wife is pregnant again because my children gets food to eat at school*

Respondent (E), the headmaster of one of the schools mentioned,

*“enrolment keeps rising every now and then since the introduction of the school feeding program. ...I can testify that most parents that I talk to confess that they are inspired to enrol their kids in my school because they believe they wouldn't have to stay hungry at home”.*

Another issue with enrolment that came up was that the feeding program has resulted in many children who would previously stay home because they are too young to be enrolled in primary school level, are now being enrolled in school. As a result, increases in the enrolment rate in primary schools can be observed. In the words of Respondent (H) who is a circuit supervisor said,

*“... little kids who you wouldn't expect to be in primary school have now come to school. They can barely read or write but they are here. I believe their parents brought them here because of the program..., and it is simply because it never used to be the case before the introduction of the school feeding program. “*

Another participant by the name Respondent (A), who is a teacher in School (D);

*“I teach children at the very basic level, some of whom I think should have been matured enough before coming to primary school. I suppose their parents brought them to school*

*so they can take advantage of the school feeding program. My class size keeps rising day by day, there are new faces added everyday...*”

Also, Beatrice, a caterer in School (C) mentioned,

*“... The number of children we feed every day in School (C) keeps increasing every academic year. This is because, the children come in their numbers and their parents because of the school feeding program, are bringing them to school, more and more...”*

A parent “Aasuor” told me that she would rather enrol her young child in my school as soon as she turn 4 years than to have him sit at home without any food...”

However, despite the positive responses that most of the participants mentioned about the SFP to enrolment, three of my participants think otherwise of the program. They think the contribution of SFP is just the same as when it was not there. There is another participant who thinks that even though the SFP has positive impacts on enrolment, the impact is not significant. These three participants believe that the increment in the enrolment rate is the result of many children moving away from schools where the feeding program is not implemented to schools where the feeding program is implemented. As a result of this, the overall number of primary school children who are enrolled nationally is not going to change. The third participant among the three thinks that even if there is going to be any impact, it is not significant. For instance, Zakaria who is one of the teachers interviewed in Puffien circuit for the research mentioned;

*“...I don't think the school feeding program has any impact on the overall number of children who are enrolled in primary schools. I think children are rather moving from one school where the feeding programme is not there to schools where there is the feeding programme”*

Also, A Respondent (C) in one of the schools agreed to this point in his statement,

*“...I think school children are now moving from one school to another.*

An increase in and one school’s enrolment rate as a result of a decrease in another schools. I think the effect is the same”. Finally, Respondent (A) at Puffien circuit said, *“I think there is no significant change in the overall effect because it is just a movement of students. However, even if there is any, it’s not much”*.

#### **4.2.2 Attendance**

On the issue of attendance, almost all (over 90%) the groups of participants professed that the school feeding program has had a positive impact on primary school attendance. They mentioned that children now report to school more often than they used to be. According to them, this has to do with the introduction of the school feeding program. For instance, Respondent (E) mentioned,

*“I always feel motivated to get my children ready for school every day. I don’t even make them absent or late to school... I do so because I don’t want them to miss the free lunch given in school, Otherwise they will stay hungry and I don’t want that...”*

In addition to this, Respondent (I) also affirmed this statement in her words,

*“because I know there is food in school, I tell my children to go to school. I’m strict in making sure they attend school. I’d rather have them in school to get food every day than to stay here with me hungry with no food”*.

The above perception is the same among teachers and circuit supervisors who were interviewed for the research mentioned “I believe parents are now ensuring that their children

attend to school regularly. Attendance is key in my school. Teachers do not even have to punish children who are absent because the attendance is massive everyday'. Moreover, another teacher of also mentioned that, "attendance has increased ever since our school started the school feeding program...I can tell you that it never used to be like this. I have been in this school for 15 years and the attendance level has never been like this...". Respondent (C), a caterer at School (E) also mentioned that

*"the number of children that we serve in our school never declines. This is because children attend to school regularly. I think they do so because of the school feeding program. I know they love the food. They love it haha!"*

It was further confirmed from two of the participants that the children are motivated to come to school because of the school feeding program. Respondent (K) mentioned that;

*"As for me, I do not have to even tell them (children).... They just wake up every morning and go to school". This was also confirmed by Osman who said that "My child always praises the food served in school. He always checks his menu and feels motivated to go to school every day. I do not even have to tell him"*

Even though almost all the participants mentioned in their experiences that they think the school feeding program has increased school attendance, one of them further explained that children only come to school because of the food. Some of them leave as soon as they have had their food. According to another participant who is a head teacher

*"...Some of the kids run away sometimes after having their lunch. It is not good. I'm not sure they do so every day, but they do so most times."*

### 4.2.3 Retention

SFP on its impact on retention has most of the participants mentioned that the SFP has impacted the ability of children to remain in school till they complete Basic schools. Most of them saw the SFP has a program that fosters pupils' interest to want to be in school, concentrate on their studies and avoid school dropout. For instance, Respondent (M) mentioned;

*“My child is always happy to go school and I am very sure that he will be in school. All the hunger that will stop him from going to school is no more... my child wants to be a lawyer, so he will remain in school. Thanks to government for the school feeding program”.*

In addition to this, Respondent (K) also mentioned that,

*“Erhmm... I feel like the school feeding program has been very helpful to my family. One of my children has graduated from junior high school and hoping to get into high school. This is because the school feeding played a part, you know. I would not have been able to pay for so much money and that could have prevented her from finishing”.*

Moreover, a common experience that was shared during the interview was that the general school dropout rate has declined since the inception of the program. Most of the participants credit this change to the impacts of the SFP. For instance, according to Respondent (A), “the overall school dropout rate for some time now have declined. Most of the kids are now finishing school and doing very well in their exams ever since the government introduced the school feeding program”. Additionally, Respondent (C), a headmaster also affirmed,

*“Yes, the school dropout rate has declined. The kids are now completing school and one big barrier which is hunger is out of their way”.*

#### 4.2.4 Academic Performance

Twelve (12) of the participants perceive the SFP has significant improvement in the academic performance of basic school children. This improvement according to the participants transcends in class participation, class assignments and final exams. Two of the parents and all four (4) teachers mentioned that the school feeding program has improved class performance.

According to Respondent (L),

*“I do not have to go the market with my child to sell anymore... as a result, my child now gets more time to study and focus in school. This has significantly improved his class performance”*. Likewise, respondent (F) mentioned that, *“the children are now able to participate more and I feel like they are studying more. This is because, most of them do not work after school and they spend more time in school than they use to when there was no school feeding program”*.

Furthermore, Respondent (C) mentioned,

*“The overall performance of my students keeps improving year by year. I have two students who sell pure water after schools on the street. They have stopped and now coming to school regularly. I spoke to them and they mention to me that their mother said the pressure on their educational needs has decreased and for that matter, they should focus on school” and their performances have improved since then”*.

Moreover, Respondent (E), a headmaster also said that

*“the overall performance of the children in the final exams continue to increase ever since the feeding program was implemented”*.

Despite the overall improvement on the performance of the children, one of the participants (parent) also mentioned that the SFP does not allow the basic school children to use full school



hours on school. He mentioned that the children spend school hours on the program which sometimes delays lessons being taught by the teachers. In the words of dagaare, "... because of the school feeding program, children do not spend all full school hours on school. They also spend most of the time in queue for food and that they come back to class very late. This sometimes distracts teachers from finishing lessons on time. That can negatively affect the performances of the kids in comparison to their peers in other schools".

### **4.3 Other Benefits**

#### **4.3.1 Child Personal Development**

With regards to the impacts of the SFP on the cognitive ability of primary school children, the researcher found that even though most of the participants did not say much about how they perceive the feeding program to contribute to the cognitive development of the kids, two of the participants mention that the kids are better able to apply classroom lessons to everyday problems and questions given in class. For instance, Respondent(N) said,

*"...I think the children are now able to apply whatever is being taught in class to their exams. I witness maturity every time among the kids"*.

Furthermore, Respondent (D) also mentioned *"the children understanding has greatly improved. They learn and can apply what they learn to school assignments and activities"*.

#### **4.3.2 Reduction of Hunger and Malnutrition**

Hunger as a matter of concern is confirmed by participants that the SFP has reduced hunger among basic school children. According to the participants, primary school children who previously would have struggled from hunger are now provided with meals when they go to school. This helps in reducing hunger among school children. For instance, Respondent (F) mentioned

that “Just like my kid, I believe many children who would have struggled with hunger are now being fed constantly by the help of the school feeding program, haha...” Another participant, Respondent (D) mentioned,

*“I think the issues of hunger is no more a worry for many families because of the school feeding program...”*

They believe that these meals have helped to prevent hunger and malnutrition among the children helping them gain the needed body form to learn and leave well. Some of the participants also mentioned that as a result of the SFP, many children are provided with good nutrition needed for growth and development. For instance, Jatrude, a caterer in one of the schools mentioned

*“... we make sure the food that we provide the children contains good nutritional elements needed for their growth and development...In deciding on their menu, we make sure that we consider whether the food has enough protein, carbohydrates, vitamins and many others”.*

Another participant, Respondent (I), also mentioned that “...

*we ensure that our school children are fed with good nutrition in schools to make them healthy... That can reduce childhood diseases and illnesses...”*

Adding to Beatrice mentioned that,

*“I personally see to it that there is always balance diet for the kids ...”*

However, two of the parents who were interviewed mentioned that they do not think there is a good menu plan for the children. They mentioned that their kids complain to them that they eat the same food every time. There is no balanced diet in the food that they eat. According to Mrs. Lang,

*“My child always complains that they always eat the same food over and over. The caterers have to do proper menu planning and ensure that the kids are not only fed with carbohydrates because it is cheap. The kids are made to eat rice every day... this is bad! They (Caterers) can do something about it”.*

### **4.3.3 Challenges around School Feeding Program**

To every program, there are issues to successful implementation; participants were asked to share their experience that they deemed challenging to the successful implementation of the SFP. The responses of the participants on this theme vary on many issues ranging from lack of resources, delay of funds, and poor nutrition.

### **4.3.4 Lack of Resources**

All the headteacher/teachers, circuit supervisors and caterers who were interviewed for the research mentioned the lack of resources as one of the major challenges associated with the implementation for the SFP. The main concern of the participants was the lack financial resources to meet the expenditure on the program. Insightfully, it was made clear from two of the participants highlighted some other resources such as enough caterers, cooking materials, portable water system for the schools and other essentials needed to successfully carry out the programme.

According to Respondent (A),

*“I think one major problem with the SFP is that there are not enough resources to carry out. Adding that, “We sometimes need to look for cheap options when meeting the needs of the students, some of these options may not be the best. The government need to increase funding for the program so that we can cook enough and healthy meals for the*

*children”.*

Likewise, Respondent (J) mentioned, “... there is not enough funding for the SFP. It makes it difficult to implement the program. We always struggle when making the menu for the children. This is because, even though we want to make sure we meet the nutritional needs of the students, we do not have enough money to do so. The government has to increase the funding for the school feeding program”.

Furthermore, Respondent (C) a headmaster of one of the school’s mentioned;

*“I know the government has helped these children a lot with the provision of the SFP, however in order to meet the objectives of the program, there should be enough funding for it. My caterers are good cooks and they will need enough funds to carry out their job, without it the cooks through the program cannot function effectively. Sometimes the school even has to add some money to the program in meeting some of its expenditure which isn’t the best”.*

Another issue identified with the lack of resources is the inability of the funds provided by the government to meet the needs of the increasing number of children in the school. For instance, Respondent (G) said,

*“hmm...we have never been able to make the best food for the children, you know. Sometimes we try, yes we try our best...haha... but in order to meet the high number of children in the school, we have to look at options that will do that. We need more money to carry out the SFP”.*

Also, Respondent (E) also mentioned that

*“the number of children in my school are increasing every time. The money the government allocates is not enough to meet their needs. The government has to do more”.*

Also, “As more and more children are being enrolled in schools because of the program, the government needs to increase the funds allocated to the program, so that we can meet the needs of the children. That is what the program seeks to do and that is what the government has to do to reach that goal...”.

Moreover, Respondent (H), a circuit supervisor also mentioned that

*“I know the government is trying but that is not enough. Our kids need to be taken care of... there should be more funding to help the program. That is the only way”.*

#### **4.3.5 Delay in the Release of Funds**

All circuit supervisors and the caterers who were interviewed admitted that the delay of funds is one of the major challenges affecting the implementation of the SFP. The study reviews that, the funds from the government do not come early and sometimes the school is forced to use their own money to carry out the program. Even though they also agree that money from the school is eventually paid off by the government, they believe it distracts the school from being able to focus on other projects that are needed by the school. It was also known from the study that money from the schools is not enough to meet the needs of the school children and therefore believe that a timely allocation of funds for the school feeding program is necessary.

For instance, Respondent (A) mentioned that “the funds that the government give to the program does not arrive on time, in fact, we are compelled by this delay to use the small money of the school to carry out the program in the meantime until such a point that the government brings back our money...”. Also, Respondent (H), a circuit supervisor also mentioned that, “the children will come to the school anyways expecting to have food. It is bad as a mother who is the circuit supervisor of my schools to make these children go hungry. I tell, most of them would drop out of

school if that happens! (Sigh), so we use our money and then take it from the funds later when it arrives”.

Furthermore, Respondent (C) who is headmaster also mentioned that

*“as for the fund from the government, it is always late. It has never come on time from the time we started the programme in this school. We could wait several months without any feedback from the government regarding that. I hope something is done about it!”*

#### **4.3.6 Poor Nutrition**

Nutritional diet is very relevant in every meal; however, the study reveals another challenge that most of the participants raised about the school feeding program which is poor nutrition. Six of participants mentioned that there is usually poor nutrition which defeats the purpose of the program. Participants found issues with improper menu planning; a diet being served every time because it is more affordable, and the inadequate portion sizes of meals served that do not usually sustain the children throughout school hours.

On the issue of improper menu planning, Respondent (I) (caterer) mentioned “the menu we design is not the best, but we do so because we want to meet the needs of all the children in the school with only limited funds. This may affect the nutrition of the children. They may have to eat one food more frequently than others. That could affect their diet...but again I said we do our very best”. Also, Beatrice emphasized that

*“More could be done to improve the nutrition of the children. But you know, we do not have enough means to do so. The children do not consume vegetable as often as they should. Also, we do not give them fruits sometimes. These are my concerns. It affects*

*their nutrition... we have to include them in their menu often, but we do not have enough resources”.*

Moreover, Respondent (F) (caterer) also mentioned that, “Hardly do the children have fruits and vegetables. Even if they do, most of them are not fresh. The whole system needs improvement. Massive improvement is needed!”

Similarly, some participants also mentioned that the growing number of children in the school affect their ability to feed the children with proper nutrition. This is because they had to look out for the cheaper way of meeting the needs of all the students and which may not necessarily be nutritious. For instance, Beatrice (caterer) mentioned that.

*“We resort to making rice and stew all the almost all the time for the kids. Sometimes they consume it without any fish or meat...we try not to make some students hungry, so we cut down on cost for some items”*

Finally, some of the participants also mentioned that the food served is usually not enough to sustain the children. According to Beatrice, the food we give the kids are sometimes too small. But that is what we can afford at the time. We do not have enough funds to serve it abundantly.

#### **4.3.7 Other Related Issues**

##### **4.3.7a Expansion of the Program**

Another issue that came up during the interview was the need to expand the SFP to other schools. Most of the participants mentioned that the government has the need to expand the SFP to involve so many schools if not all public schools. This is because, according to the participants, the government is responsible for every child in the country and it is not fair to have the program only implemented in some selected schools. The participants also believe that there will be an

equal development in all public schools when the program is implemented in all government schools.

According to Respondent (D) who is a circuit supervisor,

*“the SFP has to be implemented in all public schools. The government is responsible for everyone not the selected few. All children in the public schools must benefit from the SFP. This could even reduce the pressure on the schools where the program is being implemented. ... For instance, in my school...”*

Also Respondent (A) a headmaster mentioned, “the SFP is a good initiative. The only problem is that it is not done in all schools. The government could expand to all other schools. I believe the government can get more money for it when there is proper administrative system in place...” and Mrs. Respondent (F) also affirmed by saying,

*“there are many school children out there who need the program but are not getting because it is not implemented in their schools.*

Some of them do not even have it in their entire community. The government must generate more money to meet the needs of these children” through our budgetary needs.

#### **4.3.7b Understanding of the SFP**

The study also explored the knowledge that participants have about the program. While most of the participants shared quite a good knowledge about the SFP, some of them do not know much about the programme.

They mentioned that they have always thought the program is implemented by schools out of their own money. They did not know it was a government initiative. For instance, when asked about



how he knows about the SFP, Another Respondent mentioned,

*“haha, ermm, haha....I think the SFP is where the schools provide their students with food. I think they do that to help the children to come to school”.*

Furthermore, Respondent (L) mentioned that “ I didn’t know what the SFP means, all I know is that my child’s school provides free food for him and all the other students. My neighbor’s child does not have it in their school. So my child school is doing very well”.

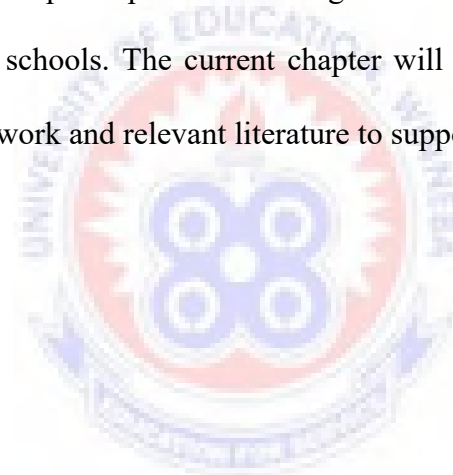


## **5.0 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

The objective of the study as emphasize from the beginning in the previous chapter was to explore the perceptions that people have about the school feeding program (SFP) and its contribution to children in the basic school level on educational outcomes and challenges to implementing the SFP. The study focused specifically on the influences of the SFP on enrolment, attendance, and completion and the academic performances of primary school children. The study also explored the challenges of the school feeding program.

The findings of the study revealed the perceptions teachers, caterers, parents and school administrators have about the SFP and its influence on enrolment, attendance, completion and the academic performances of primary school children. The research also found other issues such as improvement in cognitive development and the reduction of hunger associated with the SFP.

Furthermore, this research found some major challenges of the SFP. Three main challenges were identified; the lack of financial resources, the delay of funds to support the implementation of the SFP and poor nutrition mainly associated with improper menu planning and the frequent absence of vegetables and fruits in school meals. Apart from the influences and challenges of the SFP, the research also explored participants' knowledge on the SFP and whether the program should be expanded to other schools. The current chapter will discuss these findings in detail utilizing the theoretical framework and relevant literature to support the arguments.



## **5.1 Influences of the SFP**

### **5.1.1 Enrolment**

The study found that ten of the participants mentioned that the SFP has a positive influence on the enrolment of primary school children. This finding is largely consistent with the findings of Alderman et al. (2012), states that SFP has a significant positive influence on the enrolment of children in schools. The participants identified several reasons for the improvement in enrolment in primary schools. First, the participants mentioned that the SFP motivates parents to enrol their children in schools as parents would rather send their children to schools where they would be

given free food than to be at home without food. Also, parents who find it difficult to provide their children with food at home are more inclined to enrol their children in schools because of the SFP.

Furthermore, consistent to the findings of Kristjansson et al. (2009), the SFP addresses major challenges such as child labor and financial constraints affecting families, which are major challenges to school enrolment. The study found that the financial constraints that prevent parents from enrolling their children in school are reduced as a result of the SFP. The research revealed that parents who hitherto would have involved their children in child labor to earn a source of income are motivated to enrol their children in school. This implies that most parents involve their children who are of school-going-age in child labor instead of school because they are not able to meet the basic needs of their children. As such, they rather prefer to have their children in school in so far as their basic needs such as food are met.

Again, it can be inferred from the findings that even though there are various expenses that preclude many parents from enrolling their children in school, most parents find the provision of free food for their children a big incentive to enrol their children in school. For instance, even though there are many expenses including exams fees, the purchase of school uniforms, money for lunch, examination fees, and general school fees, among others (Husein, 2014), consistent with the findings of Ahmed (2002) and Kristjansson et al. (2009), most participants in this research consider the provision of free food for their children a major motivation for parents to enrol their children in schools. The involvement of children in child labor to earn a source of income for their immediate families instead of being enrolled in school was found to be declining, as the participants mentioned that the parents are more encouraged through the SFP to enrol their children in school. This is consistent with the findings of Edstrom et al. (2008) that the SFP has reduced the involvement of school children in child labor in Malawi.

Additionally, the research found that parents are more willing to take their children to primary schools even when they are younger than primary school-going age. Two of the participants mentioned that parents are now more encouraged to enrol their children in schools without regards to their age. Moreover, two of the teachers also found some of the children enrolled in their schools too young to understand what is being taught in class.

However, despite these children inability to cope in primary schools because of their age, their parents would rather have them in schools to be provided with free food than to have them at home without food. This is possible because, in Ghana, especially most rural areas, there are no strict rules about what age a person must have before going to school. This finding contradicts the critics made by Vermeersch and Kremer (2004) that the SFP ignores children who suffer from severe hunger but who are too young to go to school. Despite these issues and how they contribute to enrolment, the researcher found that some of the participants do not think the SFP has any influence on the overall enrolment of primary school children in Ghana. This is because, like Adelman et al. (2008) and He (2009) believe that the introduction of the SFP has made school children move from schools without the SFP to other schools where the SFP is implemented. As a result, enrolment rate in schools without the SFP continue to decline while schools with SFP continue to receive more school children than they can sometimes accommodate. This weakens the overall influence of the SFP on enrolment and consistent with Adelman et. al (2008) and He (2009) criticize that the SFP can sometimes result in overcrowding in some schools where the SFP is being implemented, while other schools are disproportionately affected by enrolment drops.

### 5.1.2 Attendance

The participants revealed that as a result of the SFP, more children now attend school more consistently than they did in the past when the SFP was not in place. Also, most of the participants revealed that the SFP has been a motivation to the children themselves to want to go to school regularly. However, the research also found that despite these improvements in primary school attendance, the SFP sometimes defeats the purpose of education as it shifts the interest of children from education to the feeding program which can potentially affect their academic performances.

Firstly, in congruence with the findings of McGregor (1988) and World Food Program (2006) that providing a school feeding program promotes school attendance among primary school children, this study found that children attend schools more regularly than they did in the past when the SFP was not in place. In Ghana, just as identified by WFP (2015), there are many factors that affect school attendance in primary schools. These include the distance between school and home, financial constraints, child labor, and provision of a meal for the children, among other factors. However, ten of the participants mentioned that despite these many challenges that affect attendance rate in primary schools, the implementation of the SFP has otherwise helped to positively promote school attendance among primary school children. Based on this, it can, therefore, be inferred from the findings that all the participants of the research view the provision of food as the most crucial need for the children and that when satisfied could ensure that children attend school regularly. The provision of food for school children is also important to prevent parents from involving their children in child labor, a factor which could jeopardize their school attendance (Edstrom et al., 2008).

Knowingly, it was found based on this research that most of the participants believe that the children feel motivated to attend school when they are provided with food. This supports the

implication of the Maslow's (1954) theory of need that school children are able to seek other high-level need such as education very regularly when their basic needs like food and water are catered for. Children who go to school on an empty stomach may find it very difficult to stay in school and as such will be inclined to be involved child labor and help their parents raise extra money to meet their families' basic needs. However, the research mentions that when the basic needs of the children are met, they can attend school regularly.

In contrast, two of the participants believe that the interest of children towards education should be because it provides them with an opportunity to learn new things and gain knowledge that will be useful in the future. However, they mention that the SFP has shifted the interest of children from the purpose of education to the SFP. This is largely consistent with criticisms raised by Vermeersch and Kremer (2004) and Kazianga et al. (2009) on the SFP. According to Sen (1999), education imparts training, knowledge, and skills for persons to become responsible citizens in the society. They believe that children who feel motivated to attend school simply because they will be provided with food defeats the purpose of education can negatively affect the performance of primary school children.

However, the findings resonate with the implication of Maslow's hierarchy of needs that children will be able to focus on education only when their basic needs such as food is met. As a result, any effort to promote school attendance among primary school children should be focused on providing school meals for the school children.

### **5.1.3 Reduction of Hunger and Malnutrition**

Even though the research did not probe in greater detail the nutritional elements of the meals provided under the school feeding program, some participants mentioned that the SFP has helped

to improve nutrition and growth in children. This is consistent with WFP (2006) assertion that the SFP fosters nutrition and growth by providing nutritious meals to children. Children who may otherwise not have access to nutritious food at home because of poverty and family nutritional illiteracy are able to get quality and nutritious meals under the SFP when they attend school. This could help them avoid acute and chronic illnesses that could affect them as a result of malnutrition (Kazal, 2002).

Furthermore, consistent to Kristjansson et al. (2009) finding, the participants also revealed that the SFP has reduced short-term hunger among many children who receive daily meals from school.

#### **5.1.4 Retention**

On the influence on retention, the researcher found that children are able complete primary school as a result of the SFP. This is largely consistent with the findings of many researchers, especially that of Husein (2014) and WFP (2006) that primary school children are able to stay in school and complete their education as a result of the SFP. It can be inferred from the study that, just as proposed in the Maslow's hierarchy of need, because the most basic needs of children which include food and water are met under the SFP, they are able to focus more on school and improve their academic performances. When there is an improvement in the performance of school children, they are able to avoid being dismissed because of poor academic performance. Also, the children are motivated to stay in school without dropping out because they feel motivated and happy about their performance.

Furthermore, the severe hunger which has been identified as a major challenge to education (WFP, 2006) when reduced through SFP can result in children more likely to finish school thereby influencing school completion.

### **5.1.5 Academic Performance and Cognitive Development**

Similarly, to the findings of many researchers that the SFP improves academic performance among school children (Chandler, Walder, Connolly, and Grantham-McGregor), this study found that participants perceived the performances of basic school children to have increased as a result of the introduction of the SFP.

Participants believe that school children are now able to participate effectively in school activities, apply what is being taught in school to their everyday activities, and increase their performance on school exams. It can be inferred from the findings of the research that as children avoid from child labor and are able to spend more time on their studies, their academic performance will increase. This finding is also consistent with Simeon and McGregor (1989) findings that the performance of school children increases when meals are provided to them in school.

The researcher also found that, despite the significant contributions of the SFP to the academic and cognitive improvement of school children, the school children tend to use some of the school's hours on the program which can potentially affect their performances at the school level. This is consistent to some of the critics of the SFP by many researchers (Gelli, A., Meir, U., and Espejo. F.,(200). It can be concluded based on this finding that some school hours that could be used by teachers to finish a lesson could be compromised as a result of the SFP. Children could be in a long queue for approximately 1 hour or more when waiting to receive their meals. Some of these children when are not able to receive their meals in time can be late to class. As a result,



teachers may start lessons late and which precludes them from finishing their lessons. In an event like this, the performance of children at the school level will be relatively poorer than schools where the children use full school hours on academics and teachers are able to finish their lessons.

## **5.2 Challenges of the SFP**

### **5.2.1 Lack of Resources**

All the participants in this study perceived the lack of resources as one of the major challenges facing the implementation of the SFP. This is very consistent with Kootnz and Wierch (2001) assertion that the lack of resources is a major challenge to the implementation of the SFP. The study also found that resources available are not able to meet the increasing enrolment of children in primary school. This confirms WFP (2006) assertion that the lack of resources can inhibit the implementation of the SFP. In this research, participants emphasized financial resources more than any other resources such as materials and staff, among others, even though they agree that they are all crucial to the implementation of the SFP. Participants mentioned that occasionally the money they receive from the government to carry out the program is not enough to meet the increasing number of students who are enrolled in school.

It is important to note that, unlike Ayieke (2005) and Nkethia (2011), this research did not explore whether government spending on the SFP is included in the government fiscal budget and how much money is allocated to the program per year. The research findings also did not reveal any information on other sources of funding and all other parties apart from the government who contribute to the program. This could be because the participants do not have any information on the financial state of the SFP. Also, it could be because most of the participants interviewed lack adequate information about the SFP.

Moreso, the lack of resources prevents the children from receiving adequate nutritious food which inhibits the success of the program in meeting nutritional needs of the children.

### **5.2.2 Delay of Funds**

The second challenge revealed in this study is the delay of funds that inhibit the successful implementation of the program. This supports the findings of Nkethia (2011) that many schools in Kenya find the delay of government funds a major threat to the SFP. Due to the delay in funds, participants mentioned that they sometimes have to support the program with their own school money before they are eventually refunded by the government. This, according to the participants, delays the school's completion of other developmental projects. Furthermore, some of the participants also mentioned that the school funding sometimes is not enough to meet the demands of the schools. This affects menu planning, the type and quantity of food served as well as the frequency which meals are served. These factors can negatively affect the implementation of the program.

### **5.2.3 Poor Nutrition**

The last challenge identified in this research is the poor nutrition of food served under the program. Four of the participants mentioned that the nutrition of the meals served under the SFP is poor. They mentioned that this stems from menu planning and the absence of some basic nutritional elements needed for child growth and development.

The research revealed that schools occasionally resort to cheaper alternatives when deciding on the children's meals because of the lack of resources which consequently negatively affects the

meals provided to the children. Furthermore, participants mentioned that primary school children are sometimes unable to receive adequate meals to sustain them in schools.

In situations where there is an inadequate food, according to participants, it usually lacks nutritional elements needed for the growth and development. It can, therefore, be inferred from the findings that schools are made to choose between either providing nutritious food to only a few children or providing numerous children with adequate non-nutritious food. Schools feel more inclined to choose the latter because they choose to partially meet the needs of all the children in the school. This may be detrimental to the health of the children and defeats the purpose of the SFP.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

Food for Education programs are one type of intervention used by policy makers and Non-governmental organizations as a social safety net in developing nations to aid in several Policy areas. These programmes are believed to be effective because of the ability of the Interventions to target a specific population that is vulnerable – school-aged children.

The findings also revealed that SFP enhance school attendance and enrolment. Most pre-schools with SFP recorded high percentage of school attendance and enrolment even though in some schools there is absenteeism due to health issues and uniforms issues.

This is so because SFP encourages children in schools without SFP to move to schools with SFP thereby resulting in a flat enrolment rate nationally. In construct, the study reveals high school populations due to SFP. The research also found that children of younger ages are now enrolled in school because of the SFP.

Again, the SFP improves academic performance among school children. This study found that participants perceived the performances of basic school children to have increased as a result of the introduction of the SFP. This was supported by (Chandler, 2002), when it was asserted that SFP improves the academic achievement of school children. Improvement in performance as a result of participation, regular in school etc. all this due to the SFP.

Additionally, the research found that SFP helps in promoting school attendance among primary school children. This is because the SFP is said to motivate the children to go to school. One major issue found with attendance is that some participants believe that children no longer go to school with the belief of learning and becoming successful people in future but instead, go to school because they believe they will be provided with food. According to some participants, this defeats the purpose of education. However, participants also believe that the SFP promote retention and academic performance of children. This aligns with the Maslow hierarchy of needs that when the basic needs of people are met, they are able to focus on other higher-level needs such as academic success. Children are also able to spend more time in school and focus on their studies because they do not have to worry about food.

In regard to the challenges that inhibit the implementation of the SFP, the research found three subthemes which include, the lack of resources, delay of funds and poor nutrition. Participants show that if all these bottle necks are addressed SFP will be the best intervention to improve enrolment, attendance and performance in schools.

## **5.6 Recommendations**

Despite, the many more revelations about SFP and its influence on basic school children, there are various ways in which the implementation of the school feeding programme (SFP) can

be improved to meet its objectives. Some of these ways include having a sustainable source of funding for the programme, increased collaboration and partnerships with individuals, private and international organizations, periodic monitoring and evaluation, and education to the general public about the program.

Firstly, one of the ways of promoting the implementation of the SFP is by ensuring a sustainable source of funding for the programme. The government could ensure that money allocated to the program is included in the annual fiscal spending of the state. This will ensure that there are always funds available to be used for the project. The funds allocated for the programme must also be adequate to meet the expenses on the program. Furthermore, the government must ensure that there is a timely distribution of funds to schools to carry out the programme in a timely manner. An adequate and timely distribution of funds would help ensure school children are provided with adequate nutritious meals needed for child growth and development. To accomplish this, the government must put in place proper planning and all stakeholders of the programme must be involved in the decision-making process.

Secondly, the government must ensure that there are increased collaborations and partnerships for the programme. This could be done through public-private partnerships and the involvement of many international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), World Food Program (WFP), intergovernmental agencies, and local organizations.

The government can also involve community members and local farmers to ensure the successful implementation of the programme. The involvement of many private and intergovernmental agencies could increase the scope of funding for the programme which may influence the successful implementation of the program. Community members and local farmers can also contribute to the programme through donations, labor, and the provision of food materials.

Furthermore, collaborations with other countries like Sweden, Germany, Netherlands, and United States are needed in ensuring that the challenges that inhibit the SFP are curtailed. This will help reduce hunger, mortality and malnutrition among children across the globe as well as improve conditions that will promote their educational performance in school, thereby enhancing the growth and development of the world's future generation.

In addition, the periodic monitoring and evaluation at the national, regional, district and circuit level could ensure that the objectives of the programme are met. The government must put in place measures and outcomes for the programme and these outcomes can serve as a benchmark when implementing the programme.

Also, the government can set up a committee that will periodically monitor and evaluate the implementation process and ensures that the programme is in line with its objectives. Outcomes of the programme can also be made available to the general public to ensure transparency. The actors of the SFP must also ensure that the programme provides nutritious meals for the children. This will help in reaching the programmes primary objectives. In doing so, there must be a proper menu planning which will include nutritious meals for the children. Fresh vegetables and fruits can also accompany daily designed meals to help prevent chronic diseases related to malnutrition. Ghana can also borrow from the guidelines set under the Healthy Hunger Free Act established by President Obama in 2010 which provides nutritional standard of food for school children.

The final way of promoting the program is through education. The research found that most of the participants are ignorant about the SFP. The government can increase publicity of the program to the public to help residents of Ghana understand the programme. When the general public is made aware of the programme, they are able to contribute to the implementation of it.

### **5.7 Suggestions for Future Research**

This research made good use of qualitative approach to conducting a research. Future research could employ a quantitative research design to measure the significance of the influences of the SFP on the educational outcomes (enrolment, attendance, and completion). A similar approach could also be employed to measure the influences of the SFP on academic performances of school children. Future research could also utilize two different groups, an experiment group, and control group from different schools in the same district to help measure the significance of the SFP on educational outcomes. A measurement of how the SFP influences different populations in the same country can also be achieved.

Secondly, future research could also include policy actors from the Ministry of Education and administrators from the Ghana Education Services to explore the programme implementation plan and the factors that affect money allocation for the programme. The criteria used in the selection of schools who can participate in the programme can also be explored. This will help enlighten schools and the public on how schools can participate in the program and what they will have to do.

Finally, this research focused only on parents, teachers, administrators and caterers who are not direct recipients of the program. Future research, however, could consider the children who are direct recipients of the programme. This will provide a better understanding of how the program directly affects them.

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## APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM

### Informed Consent

**Introduction:** My name is Peter Puo-Kuu Puo-Eru and I am a graduate student at University of Education-Winneba. I am currently enrolled in the Master of Art in Educational Leadership. My advisor is Dr. Kofi Yeboah Asiamah at the University of Winneba.

As a requirement for graduation, I am doing a dissertation about the Ghana National School Feeding Programme (GSFP) and people's perceptions about the programme influence on school enrolment, attendance and completion.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of the SFP programme on school enrolment, attendance, academic performance and completion. For this study, I am looking at five different primary schools in five (5) circuit within the Nandom municipality of the Upper West Region. Although the study is not designed to help you personally, your opinions are valuable in understanding the school feeding program and providing an insight into how best the program can be improved.

**Procedure:** If you agree to participate in this study, I will conduct one interview with you that will

take proximately 60 minutes or less. The interview will be done through telephone or WhatsApp. During the interview, I will ask you questions relevant to the school feeding program and I will use a voice recorder to record our conversation. After the interview, I will transcribe the recordings and I will give you a penname (false name) that will be used on transcripts and in subsequent publications after which they will be deleted. Within one month of the interview, I may contact you again with follow-up questions that will not take more than 20 minutes of your time. Follow-up interview questions will be based on your previous responses and will seek for further clarification in your responses. I will also send you a copy of the interview transcript upon request.

**Voluntary Nature:** Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time and there will be no penalty for withdrawing from this study. You may decide to skip questions or discontinue at any time.

**Confidentiality Protection:** The information obtained from this research study is kept confidential. Access to this information is restricted to the researcher. Consent forms will be stored separately from the data recordings and transcripts. The audio recordings and transcripts will be stored on a secure online server (gmail), which utilizes server authentication that only I can access. The audio recordings from the interviews will be kept for a maximum of one year, after which they will be deleted. A penname (assigned name) will be used on all the transcripts and publications. With the penname, I may quote in published research some of the things you discuss with me during the interview. Your name will not be associated in any way with the research findings.

**Risks:** The anticipated risks to you are no greater than those normally encountered in daily life. There are no physical or mental risks associated with your participation in this study.

**Contact Information:** If you have any questions regarding this study, you may contact me at

+233(0) 247677755 or email at [puokuupeter@gmail.com](mailto:puokuupeter@gmail.com) and/or my advisor Dr. Kofi Yeboah Asiamah at the University of Winneba- Kumasi Campus.

**Agreement:** I have been informed of the purposes, procedures, risks and benefits of this study. I have had the opportunity to have all my questions answered and I have been informed that my participation is completely voluntary. My agreement to participate in this study is signified by my saying “yes” to the question “Do you agree to participate in this study?” and my participation. Thank you for your time.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

All the interview questions will be in English.

#### **All Participants**

1. How do you understand the school feeding programme (SFP)?
2. How would you describe some of the challenges and benefits of the SFP?

#### **School Administrators and Teachers**

3. How does the SFP work in your school/area?
  - a. How is it funded?
  - b. How is it implemented?
  - c. What are the extents of community involvement?
4. What is the relationship, if any, between the SFP and the following:
  - a. Classroom performance
  - b. School enrollment
  - c. Retention

#### **Parents**

5. How does the SFP influence children’s willingness to attend and stay in school?
6. How would you describe the impacts of the SFP on parent’s willingness to send their kids

to school?

### **Caterers**

7. How would you describe the quality of food and its influence on the children's nutrition?
8. How does the quantity of food measure up to the number of children?
9. How frequent are the meals served?
10. How do you describe the school dropout rate after the introduction of the SFP?
11. What responses do the children give you about the SFP?

