UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

A RIGHT– BASED ANALYSIS OF GHANA'S FREE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL PRACTICES

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A thesis in the Centre for Conflict, Human Rights and Peace Studies, Faculty of social sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy (Human Rights) in the University of Education, Winneba

NOVEMBER, 2020

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I, Amankwaah Harry, hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Signature……

Date……

Supervisor's Declaration

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

Name of Supervisor: Dr Vincent Adzahlie – Mensah

Signature……

Date……

DEDICATION

To my mother, Sara Menu, for her continuous dedication to education as the anchor for human existence. She gives me all the support and encouragement despite the many challenges in my education. To all stakeholders in education whose quest it is to champion the right to education, globally.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere gratitude go to all those who through discussions, encouragement and supervision supported me in conducting this research. I am thankful to my supervisor, Dr. Vincent Adzahlie-Mensah, whose guidance enabled me develop the skill to understand the rudiments of research.

Special thanks to all lecturers and staffs of the Center for Conflict, Human Rights and Peace Studies, University of Education, Winneba. Further commendation goes to all staff and students of Nkawie Senior High School (Technical) for their support in making this research a reality.

My deepest gratitude goes to the Awuah-Amankwaah family. My special thanks to my wife, Rose Addai Boateng, my children (Edna, Edwin and Edward) and all my siblings. Above all, I thank God the Almighty for being the shield, source of strength, and my hope throughout the study.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACHPR	-	African Charter on Human and People Rights
ACRWC	-	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
AYC	-	African Youth Charter
CFS	-	Child Friendly Schools
CRC	-	Convention on the Rights of the Child
FSHS	-	Free Senior High School
FSHSP	-	Free Senior High School Programme
HRABA-E	-	Human Rights-Based Approach in Education
ICCPR	-	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	-	International covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IHRL	-	International Human Right Laws
LGBTI	-	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex
OECD	-	Organization for Economic Corporation and Development
PCT	-	Policy Cycle Theory
PFSHSP	-	Progressively Free Senior High School Policy
PTA	-	Parent Teacher Association
SHS	-	Senior High School
UDHR	-	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNESCO	-	United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children Fund
UN	-	United Nations
UNRISD	-	United Nation Institute for Social Development

ABSTRACT

The research analyzed Ghana's Free Senior High School Programme (FSHSP) in light of the increasing interest to expand and strengthen its implementation to provide access to quality education. The purpose is to do a Right-Based Analysis of the programme's implementation practices. The research, therefore, examined how stakeholders' participation affects the FSHSP implementation. It also analyzed how the FSHSP implementation practices promote the right to education. It further explored the effect of stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation practices on access to quality education. The pragmatic worldview, through the sequential mixed method design, was used for the research analysis. It provided an insight into divergent and complementary views from relevant stakeholders about the impact of the programme on the right to education. The research revealed that the FSHSP implementation have been mainly government-centered. 46.2% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the FSHSP implementation practices promote the right to education. The study further revealed that stakeholder participation to catalyze the right to education principles is inadequate. On the aspects of the programme that need improvement, the findings skewed towards unequal treatment of students. It is, therefore, recommended that there is the need for active stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation as an essential ingredient to promote the child's right to education in order to address its inequitable provisions.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Across the world, education is considered one of the most powerful tools used to alleviate poverty and reduce inequality to promote the Sustainable Development Goal four (Quinan, 2015). UNESCO and Right to Education Initiative (2019) consider education as both a privilege and a human right. A human right because it ~~–o~~perates as a multiplier that promote the enjoyment of all other rights and freedoms where it is effectively guaranteed, while it deprives people of the enjoyment of many other rights and freedoms when the right to education is denied or violated" (Tomasevski, 2001, p. 10). It is the instrument which facilitates the realization of human rights principles (Sandkull, 2005). According to Robeyns (2005), education plays both intrinsic and instrumental roles in human development. Therefore, students as right holders in education should be placed firmly at the centre of all educational policy and programme implementation to promote the right to education (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019).

The right to education is defined as the child's entitlement to access quality education (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019). According to UNICEF, (2007) the right to education is high on the agenda of the international, regional and sub-regional community because is pivotal in the pursuit of development and social transformation. It provides a safeguard through laws for the protection, promotion and the fulfilment of the child's human rights at school (Sotoye-Frank, 2015). It is the idealist view of how quality education should be delivered globally (Machado, 2015). This supports educational policy implementation premise on the need for a school environment that

respects the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the child (Matauranga, 2010). This is in line with Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) principles which require policies and programmes of development to promote the realization of human rights principles (UNRISD, 2016).

In Africa, human rights provisions which support the right to education include the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, (ACHPR) (Banjul Charter, 1981) (Article 17 and 21), the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, (ACRWC, 1980) (Article 11) and African Youth Charter (2006) (Article 13) (Right to Education Project, 2014). These human rights provisions explicitly support the need for every child in Africa to have access to quality education (Sotonye-Frank, 2015). The increase in primary school transitional rate coupled with the high population growth rate in West Africa has further increased pressures on countries to expand secondary education to ensure quality (Majgaardand & Alan, 2012). This is a necessary condition to protect, promote and fulfil the child's right to dignity and optimum development (UNESCO, Economic & Social Council, 1999; UNICEF, 2007).

The 4th Republican Constitution of Ghana (1992), Article 25(1) b supports the urgent need for the State to provide access to quality education at the secondary level. In line with this provision, secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational education, is to be available and accessible to all, progressively. According to Opoku-Agyemang (2013), because education delivery in Ghana is a right for all citizens of school-age, no person has to be denied access to education. Accordingly, the Progressively Free Senior High Policy (PFSHSP) was implemented in 2015 (Abdul-Rahman et al., 2018). They indicated that the PFSHSP was a partial

government-funded Senior High Educational Policy that prevented access. A fully funded Free Senior High School Programme (FSHSP) was subsequently introduced in 2017 to replace the PFSHSP; it is to provide access, equity and quality SHS education (Partey, 2017). The introduction of the FSHSP resonates with International Human Rights Laws (IHRL) because ~~"n~~on-discrimination as a right should not be subjected to progressive realization" (Tomasevski, 2001, p.27). More so, the increase in the primary transition rate of 68% (Ministry of Education's Strategic Plan, 2018) and the subsequent increase in enrolment at the Senior High School level by 43% (The budget Statement and Economic Policy, 2020); as well as the increases in enrolment in recent time at the SHS level of about 1,264,000 students (Ghana budget Statement, 2020) drivers the need to do a Human Rights-Based Analysis of the FSHSP implementation practices.

This analysis is premised on a 4-A model developed from the existing IHRL (Tomasevski, 2001). It covers four key dimensions of availability, accessibility, adaptability and acceptability (Tomasevski 2001, p.13; Coomans, 2007, p.3; UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative 2019, p.76). Briefly, the accessibility dimension deals with barriers (i.e. financial, geographical, legal and administrative) in education whiles the availability looks at the school environment which includes appropriate class size, conditions of service of the staff, teaching and learning aids and many more; whereas the acceptability encompasses curricula and pedagogy; and the adaptability deals with the need to integrate the unique needs of students, for example, LGBTI children, disabilities, etc., in education (Tomasevski, 2001; UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019). This analytical framework forms the minimum standard that guides all education policy implementations throughout the world (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative 2019). Research further indicates

that both quantitative and qualitative analysis, assessment and monitoring of the right to education are based on this model (Praneviciene & Puraite, 2010).

Within a Human Rights-Based Approach to Education (HRBA-E), the FSHSP implementation must address obligations, inequalities and vulnerabilities (UNRISD, 2016). It is the vehicle that makes the provisions of international human rights laws (IHRL) in education operational (UNICEF, 2006). It also analyzes how stakeholders' participation in the FSHSP implementation becomes an effective mechanism to promote quality education (Yaro, 2016). Further, the HRBA-E implementation strategy empowers children who are often vulnerable to be able to assert their rights (Dufvenmark, 2015). However, how a fee-free education policy is implemented can have consequences. It requires conscious and systematic integration of human rights principles in all aspects of educational programme/policy implementation (Dufvenmark, 2015). This is to strengthen the evolving capacities of the child to be able to claim his/her right to education (Lansdown, 2005). As such, this research was initiated to explore the FSHSP implementation practices and the consequences they have on the realization of the right to education.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Free Senior High School (FSHS) concept is a fee-free policy (Essuman, 2019). It is about a fully-funded government programme that seeks to provide access, equity and quality education (Partey, 2017). In Ghana, the Free Senior High School Programme (FSHSP) provides free tuition, admission fee, textbooks, library fees, science resource centre fees, ICT fees, examination fees, utility fees, boarding and meals (Akufo-Addo, 2017). The benefits derived from this concept globally are enormous (Taylor & Robinson, 2019). The Free Day Secondary Education Policy in

Kenya, for example, has expanded access (Muhindi, 2009). In Ghana, the FSHSP has offered about 1.2 million students‘ access to Senior High School Education (Ghana‘s Budget Statement, 2020). The Budget further intimates that the FSHSP is to increase the human capital base of the nation. It is also considered a poverty alleviation strategy to reduce the financial burden on parents and to inject money into the economy (Abdul et al., 2018).

In spite of the benefits associate with the FSHSP, the extent to which its implementation practices meet the right to education requirement (Tomaesevski, 2001; Coomans, 2007; Praneviciene & Puraite, 2010; UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019) appears not to have been thoroughly examined. It is acknowledged that research on education programme implementation advocates stakeholder participation (Yaro et al., 2016) to tackle discriminatory practices, unjust distribution of resources and vulnerabilities in education that impede and undercut the right to education (UNRISD, 2016). Though there are few studies conducted on a 4-A model used for the analysis of the right to education which appears to exist in theory. There is therefore, the need to research further into how the practical application of the right to education models impacts the FSHSP implementation practices. This research therefore, sought to provide a conceptual framework for a human right-based analysis of the FSHSP implementation practices. This is necessary since a context specific research on the child‘s right to education in Ghana appears scant. Hence, the desire to explore FSHSP implementation practices, using the case of Nkawie SHS (Technical).

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to do a right-based analysis of Ghana‘s Free Senior High School Programme practices.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Examine stakeholders‘ participation in the FSHSP implementation.
2. Analyze how FSHSP implementation practices promote the right to education.
3. Explore the effects of stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation practices on access to quality education.
4. Explore the aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices that need improvement.

1.5 Research Questions

The research questions that guided the study were:

1. In what ways do stakeholder participation affect FSHSP implementation?
2. How do FSHSP implementation practices promote the right to education?
3. What effects do stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation practices have on access to quality education?
4. What aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices need improvement?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study provides an insight into the status of the right to education in Ghana. This is to help create awareness among stakeholders in education of the need to respect and protect the child‘s right to access quality education. These help stakeholders in education to understand the drawbacks at the policy level and identify the factors responsible for it (Viswanath, 2014). The inclusion of human rights principles in FSHSP implementation practices is significant to the success of the programme. It draws the attention of government and school management to the need to inculcate the Child-Friendly School model‘s principles into school management practices to

ensure access to quality education (Aoife, 2017). The study further contributes to knowledge on the extent to which stakeholder participation in educational programme implementation affects the right to education. The findings offer the individual students the basis to claim their rights in case of violations and abuses. It helps advice educational policy implementers on the need to inculcate the HRBA-E principles to further the realization of human rights principles in education in Ghana.

1.7 Delimitation

This study is limited to Ghana's FSHSP practices. It is further limited to a Senior High School in the Atwima Nwabiagya Municipality in Ashanti region, specifically, Nkawie Senior High School (Technical). It is devoted to the participatory roles of the staffs and students as stakeholders in the FSHSP implementation and how it affects the child's right to education. It also considers the aspects of the programme that can be improved upon. It solicits from the perspectives of the school management, teaching staff, non-teaching staff and students in the school about the extent to which the programme affects access to quality education, in order to fill the identified gap.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

This section presents the operational definitions of the key terms used in the research:

Right-Based Approach in Education: This enjoins the FSHSP implementation practices to promote the realization of human rights principles in education (UNRISD, 2016; Sandkull, 2005).

Right to Education: It is defined as one's entitlement to access quality education (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019; Njogu, 2016).

Free Senior High School Programme: This is a fee-free educational programme geared towards widening access to quality SHS education.

Stakeholders in Education: They are the actors with conferred interests who influence educational programme implementation (Yaro et al., 2016). The actors of interest to the study are the school management, staff and students.

Implementation Practices: This refers to how the FSHSP is been executed at the school level.

Code: This in the frequency distribution table depicts the response scale for the Likert scale items (1 - strongly agree, 2 - agree, 3 - neutral, 4 - disagree, 5 - strongly disagree) respectively.

Working children: This refers to students who engage in jobs which are not physically and mentally harmful and potentially do not interfere with their studies.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study is structured into six chapters: briefly, chapter one comprises an introduction, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the research objectives and questions, significance of the study, delimitation, operational definition of key terms and the organizational structure of the study. Chapter two entails the theoretical underpins, related study literature and the developed conceptual framework.

Chapter three presents the study methodology which discusses the procedures used to obtain data, do the analysis, sampling, instruments used, reliability and validity of the instruments, ethical considerations, etc. Chapter four gives the presentation findings and results based on research objectives. Chapter five is the discussion of results: and chapter six presents the summary of the study and the key findings, the conclusion, recommendations and suggestion for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Chapter two presents the reviewed theories, relevant literature and concepts which underpin the research (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). The chapter is divided into sections: section one presents the theoretical framework whiles section two deals with the reviewed literatures and concepts. Section three gives the conceptual framework of the current study.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Policy Cycle Theory (PCT)

The PCT is one of the theoretical underpinnings of the study. It is an endless cycle of public policy administration pioneered by David Easton (Uiennet & Pont, 2017). Uiennet and Pont further explained the PCT using this diagram:

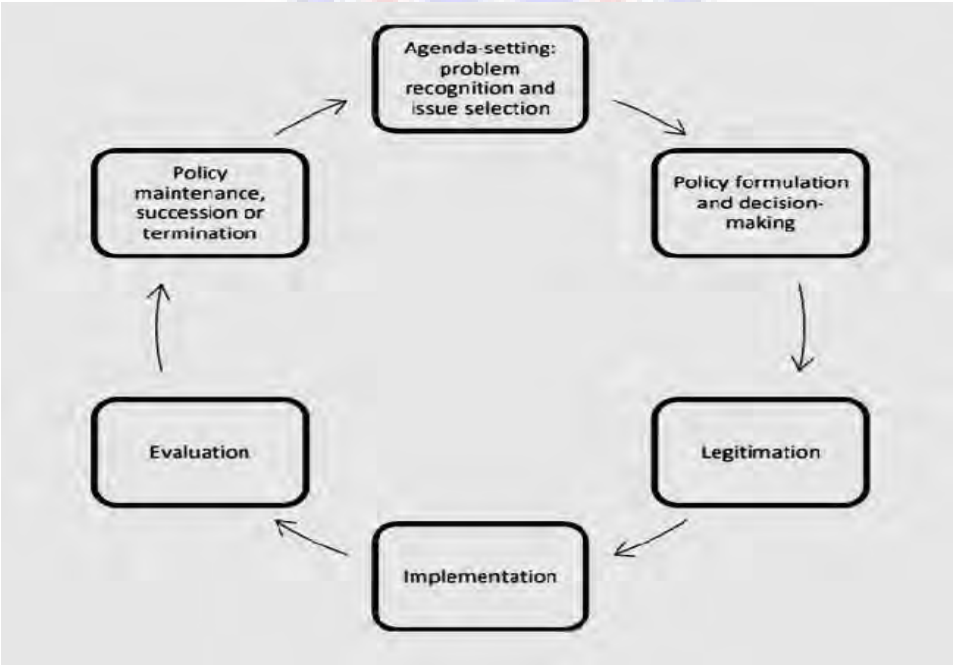

Figure 2.1: Policy cycle theory

Among the discrete and chronological order of the PCT stages is implementation. Research indicates that it plays a critical role in all public policy administration structure (Althaus et al., 2013). They further intimate that every good policy is meaningless unless implemented. More so, where implementation starts and the role it plays is critical in every policy success and failure (Uiennet & Pont, 2017). The implementation stage is where human-policy interface becomes essential to impact the realization of human rights principles. This resonates with the current study objective that looks at stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation. According to Cairney (2013), the PCT is very simple to be made actionable because of its straightforwardness; but it has been criticized for lack of coordination among the various independent discrete and chronological stages (Uiennet & Pont, 2017).

In spite of this weakness, the theory is applicable in contemporary times because of the adjustment made to it (Hill & Hupe, 2002). They called this adjustment the ~~–s~~ynthesis approach". The current study adapts this synthesis approach principles to analyze the research objective that examined how stakeholder participation affects the FSHSP implementation. This is necessary since the role of stakeholders in the FSHSP implementation (Cerna, 2013) has not been made explicit. Even though, implementation in education is a multidimensional process which stresses on continuous interactions among all stakeholders (Uiennet & Pont, 2017) the FSHSP is more a top-down approach. The synthesis approach offers the rights holder and the duty bearer the same opportunity to take active part in the educational programme implementation (Martin & Muff, 2012). This approach is premised on the belief that isolating stakeholders from educational programme implementation has not always been successful (Signe, 2017). Therefore, integrating the various relevant stakeholders

in educational programme implementation like the FSHSP offers a good lens for the analysis of how it affects the child‘s right to education.

The top-down approach sees implementation as a highly centralized process and a fully-fledged component of policy making which focuses mostly on government or administrative directives (Uiennet & Pont, 2017). They argue that the top-down approach helps government to achieve its goal at a faster pace; particularly when it is a political necessity. They further indicate that this approach allows a centralized programme implementation to move along with innovations, learning and refining in order to drive for results. Russell (2015) adds that this approach is more useful when programme objectives are clearer and policies are designed in a comprehensive way. However, critiques of the top-down approach see it to be undemocratic (Uiennrt & Pont, 2017). This is because it marginalizes the views of the stakeholders the program is intended to affect. According to Hui (2013), governments alone cannot lead educational programme implementation unless grassroots commitment, motivations and know-how are inculcated. Studies show that most educational programme implementations ideally integrate teachers, school management, students, the community and parents; but the top-down approach does not always consider the inputs of these stakeholders as critical (Devarajan, 2013). This approach has a poor record as an instrument for educational improvement (Fullan, 1994).

The Bottom-up approach, on the other hand, sees implementation as a process of interaction and negotiation between policy formulators and implementers (Uiennet & Pont, 2017). In other words, the bottom-up approach recognizes stakeholders‘ in a programme‘s implementation practices to be relevant in achieving policy successes (Wang et al., 2012). The success of the FSHS programme‘s implementation as

explained in Paudel (2009) depends critically on two broad factors: local capacity and the will of the government. What matters most in educational policy implementation is not only how the will of policy makers are executed, but the capacity of the programme to impact positively on the ground (Lipsky, 2010). This approach is considered an imperative in educational programme implementation like the FSHS because the inputs of stakeholders on the ground are equally critical due to their impeccable roles in education delivery. That is, the voice of the constituent the programme affects most should be given the due consideration in line with CRC 3(1), a relevant truism in education. Another important contribution of this approach according to Uiennet and Pont (2017) is the opportunity for continuous negotiations throughout the programme's processes, compromising and getting actors on board. The constraint of this approach though is its ineffectiveness and destructive nature than its constructive contribution to education (Hui, 2013). This is because the much-touted superiority of the grass-roots is only theoretical but deficient in practice (Fullan, 1994).

The general belief among researchers is that neither the top-down nor bottom-up approach alone works for educational programme implementation (Fullan, 1994; Hui, 2003; Russell, 2015; Uiennet & Pont, 2017; Signe 2017). But educational policy implementations have been mostly top-down with a very minimal input from bottom-up (Russell, 2015). Russell further indicates that these difficulties often result in educational programme failure. This "top-down-bottom-up" controversy is resolved in the synthesis approach (Hill & Hupe, 2002; Hupe, 2014), which is the amalgamation of the two approaches (Fullan, 1994). According to Signe (2017), implementation in this respect occurs at two levels: the macro implementation level and the micro implementation level. According to Signe, the macro implementation

stage is a centralized point where programmes are devised and directions emanate, whiles the micro implementation level is where local stakeholders in education react to the programme‘s directives as well as devise their own plans to sustain the Free SHS programme. Signe further poised that bringing these approaches together offers a comprehensive explanatory approach as an alternative model to the study of how educational programme‘s implementation like the FSHSP integration of stakeholders ensure the realization of the child‘s right to education.

2.1.2 The Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) model

The CFS model was developed by UNICEF (Aoife, 2017). It considers the rights of the child as paramount at all times (UNICEF, unite for children, 2006) in all educational programme‘s implementation. This child-centred principle supports the research objective that analyzes how the FSHSP implementation practices promote the right to education. Research indicates that the CFS model is geared towards the promotion of the well-being of the child in school (Njogu, 2016). Njogu further intimates that the model is based on the International Human Right Law (IHRL) instruments such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), (1989) Article 3(1) and other related human rights treaties including the UDHR, (1948) Article 26. Among the basic characteristics of this model is that it addresses the rights of every child to access quality education and to promote, monitor and protect children against rights violations and abuses in schools (Abdullahi et al., 2017; Mandiudza, 2012).

The aim of the CFS model, according to research, is to move education progressively towards quality standards (Cobanoglu et al., 2018). They further lament that by addressing all the issues that affect the well-being as the primary beneficiary of the FSHSP is to ensure access to quality education. It is to develop a learning

environment where children are motivated to learn; the staffs are friendly, welcoming, concerned; and the health, social and emotional safety issues of the child are prioritized (Abdullahi et al., 2017). The CFS model as a guide to the FSHSP implementation practices will promote the child's right to education. The child-friendly schools and learning spaces embrace principles and standards which ensure that children become free from fear, anxiety, danger, disease, exploitation, harm or injury (UNICEF, 2006).

According to Aoife (2017), the CFS model has five core principles to strengthen the theoretical explanation of how the model can promote the child's right to education. This is to help provide education that is in the best interest of children as stipulated in the CRC, (1989) Article 3(1). These five (5) principles are inclusiveness, safe healthy and protective school environment, effectiveness, democratic-participation and gender responsiveness (Cobanoglu et al., 2018, p.466; Orkodashvili, 2013; Aoife, 2017, p.4). According to Aoife, no component of the CFS principles is mutually exclusive: they are necessary reinforcing conditions to each other. Aoife further argued that the CFS model holistically promotes the right to education. These five components or principles of the CFS model are elaborated to explain how the FSHSP can ensure the realization of the right to education principles as follows.

Inclusiveness in education - this is about integrating stakeholders into educational programme's implementation (Orkodashvili, 2013). This helps in the protection of the rights of the child which underpins the current study to strengthen the best ways possible to keep students in school. In pursuance with this commitment, the CFS model enjoins schools to be suitable for every single child based on their human rights (Cobanoglu et al., 2018) needs. Yet, there are obstacles in this regard which include

administrative, financial, geographical as well as structural denial of access (Tomasevski, 2001). These are attributed to non-availability of infrastructures in our Senior High Schools (PIAC, 2020). Regardless, the non-discrimination principle should be adhered to since it is a non-derogatory right. This principle is to help build the participatory capabilities of all stakeholders, most especially the child, to be able to assert or claim and exercise their rights, freedoms and all entitlements whiles in school.

The second component of the CFS model focuses on safe, healthy and protective school environment (Ngene et al., 2018). That is, the rights of the child to health. Particularly, the safety and protection need of children at school are very vital to the model. According to Aoife (2017), the most important aspect of this component is access to clean drinking water, sanitation and hygienic educational environment. Research shows that the school environment, comprising the physical structures and the serenity of the school, allows for an unhindered flow of information between the teacher and the students (Ngene et al., 2018). It addresses both the emotional, psychological and physical health needs of the child by tackling physical violence against children whiles in school (Aoife, 2017). This resonates with the research objective that analyzes how the FSHSP implementation promotes the child‘s right to education. The school has to create a healthy, safe and protective environment through the provision of school-based health, nutrition, water and sanitation services, as well as relevant code of conduct for students (UNICEF, unite for children, 2006). This offers positive experiences that promote the human rights of the child; the one that provides life skills (Abdullahi et al., 2017) needed for effective and healthy cohabitation. This component of the CFS model is consistent with the available dimension of the right to education which stresses on the need for adequate physical

infrastructure required to deliver a good education (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019). It further indicates that quality teaching, teacher recruitment; training and labour rights together with the health and safety of stakeholders in the school further promote quality education.

The third component is effectiveness. This component reflects academically effective and inclusive pedagogy and curriculum for all children, taking into consideration the child's ability (Aoife, 2017). This aspect also deals with the enhancement of teacher's capacity, morale, commitment, status and income as well as their own recognition of the child right to education (Orkodashvili, 2013). Are the conditions of service of staff given the priority they deserve under the free SHS programme? According to Tomaesevski (2001), if the rights of staffs are not respected and protected, it always becomes impossible to imagine that this may be different for the rights of children. The CFS model inasmuch as it is child-centred also considers the best interest of school staffs. This component of the CFS takes into consideration, the structured content and quality teaching materials and resources appropriate to each child's developmental level, abilities and learning style, co-operative and democratic learning method (Abdullahi et al., 2017). This CFS component resonates with the acceptability dimension of the right to education: it recognizes children as rights holders; hence the government is obliged to provide standard curriculum and pedagogy for all students (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019).

The fourth principle of the CFS model is democratic participation. Democracy in education is about allowing the stakeholder the right to contribute to the FSHSP implementation practices. It is associated with non-discrimination, equality, liberty and collaboration (Feu et al., 2017). Participation involves a decision-making process

which is more inclusive (Cobanoglu et al., 2018). That is, stakeholders‘ consultation in the implementation processes should effectively include children in school. This is because the CRC (1989) Article 12 mandates education policy implementers to give the due consideration to parents as the primary caregivers in matters which affect the student. There must also be cooperation between the child, the teacher and the entire school community (Cobanoglu et al., 2018).

According to Abdullahi et al (2017), this component promotes the rights of the child in school and at the same time values child‘s participation, creativity, self-esteem, self-confidence and psychological well-being. It further supports the need for curriculums and pedagogies to be in turn with the special learning needs of the student and also responsive to the objectives of the educational system. This democratic participation component of the CFS model corresponds to the adaptability dimension of rights to education. It reemphasizes that children should not only be the primary beneficiaries of the right to education; but those with unique needs, especially the disabled, those from poor homes as well as rural children should be tolerated and their right respected (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019).

Gender responsiveness is the fifth and final variable in the CFS model. It requires that every child must have equal rights to education regardless of their gender (Cobanoglu et al, 2018). They also maintain that a good educational environment is provided when there is no gender discrimination. Despite, girls should be given the due attention because this stage and age in their development go with both physical and psychological changes, most importantly, the onset of menstruation (Aoife, 2017). The argument of Aoife supports the need for menstrual management practices, including supplying sanitary kits to girls. According to Cobanoglu et al. (2018),

whiles each student's rights, differences, and equality are respected, girls' friendly practices should also be encouraged. The acceptability dimension of the right to education equally supports this assertion that schools should be free from violence, including gender-based violence against women and girls, and corporal punishment (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019).

In conclusion, the challenge of the CFS model is inadequate resources to effectively provide universal access to quality education that promotes the right to education principles in developing countries including Ghana. In spite of this, non-discrimination as a right should be respected since the equal treatment of all students regardless of resources availability matters in education (Tomasevski, 2001: 27). This model's focus is on respect for the right to education which is child centred (Orkodashvili, 2013). This holds the potential to improve considerably, the present situation in our senior high schools which seem to violate the constitutional rights of students (Perinatal Services BC, 2015). Therefore, policy implementers should focus on equal treatment for all students to promote the right to education.

2.1.3 Liberalism theory

The liberalism theory advocates for political freedom, democracy, constitutionally guaranteed rights, privileges, the liberty of the individual and equality (Burchill et al., 2005) in society. The proponent of this theory is John Locke (Haas, 2014). Haas further indicates that governments are instituted by individuals to protect their fundamental human rights, dignity and freedoms. Chau (2009) sees it as a political and moral philosophical theory which is centred on an individual's liberty and equality. Research shows that the liberalism theory presently has become a dominant

subject of conversation in almost every contemporary social institution of which education is not an exception (Thompson, 2017).

Thompson (2017) defined liberalism in education as education policy implementation practices committed to equality, liberty, participation and the protection of the human rights of students. This is to build the capacity of all stakeholders in education to be able to assert their fundamental freedoms and inalienable rights in case of violations. How stakeholders are empowered to be able to assert their rights is vital to promote access to quality education. More so, ensuring the protection, promotion and fulfilment of the constitutionally guaranteed rights of the child under the FSHSP implementation practices is paramount to this research. The proponents of liberalism in education, according to Thompson, include John Henry Newman, F.D. Maurice, and Sir Wilfred Griffen Eady.

The equality and liberty principles of the liberalism theory have been adapted and reviewed to support this research to explore the effects stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation have on the right to access quality education. Equality in education is generally associated with the division of educational and education-related resources more equally or fairly among students (Lynch & Baker, 2006; Tomasevski, 2001; UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019). According to Uiennet and Pont (2017), equity goes hand-in-hand with quality. Therefore, ~~–e~~quitable distribution of resources among students promotes access to quality education" (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019, p.76). According to Thompson (2017), education is moving towards equality in access and quality of educational experiences to tackle discrimination (Sally, 2017) to provide equal educational opportunities for all. Equal opportunity also means designing the

educational programme such that it will remove barriers of any kind, whether economic, gender or geographical which prevent the students from taking advantage of their innate capacity (Wanja, 2014). The assertion that by making Senior High School education free the government meant to ensure quality education to all students regardless of their social class and status, is untenable. This is so because in providing equal opportunity for all, are other ingredients aside financial access. The concept of non-discrimination in education focused on the rights of the student to equal treatment; because discrimination in education cannot be justified on the grounds of lack of resources (O'Neil & Piron, 2003) as contained in (ICCPR, 1966 Article (2&3); CRC, 1989 Article 3(3); UNUDHR, 1948 Articles (1 & 7)).

Research shows that the liberty that enjoins every child to accessing quality education exists simply because they are human (Chau, 2009). Chau further argued that these liberties and rights are above the discretion of the state. Therefore, individuals as rational beings should be given the freedom to decide on what is in their best interest. It is undesirable for the State to always decide for the individual. Hence, giving the individual the liberty to contribute to policy implementation plays a vital role in the HRBA-E analysis (Thompson, 2017). In this regard, children must be allowed to enjoy their liberties in the FSHSP implementation. A moment of liberty is where the students are allowed to enjoy their freedom in education as well as to have the sovereignty to determine what goes on in their schools (Thompson, 2017). Thompson adds that there should be freedom in education with regards to pedagogy, curriculum, parental freedoms, and choices of schools, tracks, etc. For example, the content of what is to be taught and the way it should be delivered must be in line with human rights principles. Thompson further affirmed the need for parents to be given the

freedom to press against pervasive effects of indoctrination in schools by allowing choice of schools based on parents‘ religious orientation.

The sovereignty that empowers the individual to decide for himself/herself in this regard should be respected. In order to prevent and monitor human rights abuses in education, the 4-A dimensions should be operational at all levels of educational programme implementation. This has been instituted to provide protection for the child (UNESCO and Right to Education Initiative, 2019). It elaborates on the fundamental freedoms of students in education. For instance, as part of freedom in education is the need for students to freely choose between public and private school. It further upholds parental liberty to send their children to schools offering education that is in line with religious or philosophical beliefs. In all these, what is in the best interest of the child must be the guiding principle to the parent and the government with regards to their decisions on behalf of the child. In view of the above, the FSHSP implementation practices should be consistent with CRC‘ 89 Article 3(1). UNICEF, (2007) asserts that in order for students to claim their rights, they should know what rights they have, how to assert same, and strategies available to seek redress in case of violations. All these rights and freedoms are embedded in CRC provisions.

In conclusion, the liberalism in education principles as adapted and reviewed to underpin the research objectives seek to analyze how the FSHSP implementation affects the child‘s right to education and to identify the effects of stakeholders‘ participation in the FSHSP implementation on the child‘s right to education. The 4-A analytical framework provides the grounds on which students can make claims to their rights and freedoms. This is consistent with the liberalist philosophy which emphasizes on equality, equal opportunities, non-discrimination and liberty; as it

provides a more credible basis for analysing the child's right to education with regards to the FSHSP implementation.

2.2 Review of Related Literature and Concepts

2.2.1 The Free Senior High School (FSHS) concept in Ghana

Although the free primary education concept has contributed to the development of the individual's wellbeing, it is nevertheless an insufficient condition for national economic growth and poverty reduction (Muhindi, 2009). Muhindi further intimates that the Free Senior High School (FSHS) concept enhances economic growth. According to Taylor and Robinson (2019), nations are now moving from the progressively free secondary education towards an absolutely free secondary education across the globe. They assert that Asia and Latin America have shown these trends convincingly. They further observe that the trend has also taken root in Sub-Sahara Africa; Kenya, Uganda and Ghana as perfect examples.

Research shows that continue charging of full or partial fees at secondary schools level affects the education of the majority of children who have successfully transited from the free primary schools, particularly those from poor households (Muhindi, 2009). Muhindi argue that since the free primary concept has help increased enrolment massively in Kenya paying full or partial fees at secondary schools level may have consequences. This same argument underpins the introduction of the FSHSP in Ghana (Akufo-Addo, 2017). Like Kenya, the 1992 constitution of Ghana, Article 25 (a) mandates basic education to be free, compulsory and available to all children. The implementation of free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (fCUBE) policy has doubled the enrolment in the basic schools (Mensah, 2019). In response, the Progressively Free Senior High Policy was introduced in 2015 in

conformity with Article 25(1) b (The Constitution of Ghana, 1992). This was to handle the increased transitional rate into the senior high schools (Abdul-Rahman et al., 2018). This policy offered assistance to children from a deprived background.

In spite of the increases in the transitional figures at the basic level, the progressively free education policy figures at SHS level did not reflect increases in the transitional figures at the basic level (Partey, 2017). Partey further lamented that the implication is that a lot of transients were never enrolled into the SHS despite the PFSHSP. This ignited the socio-political debate in Ghana on the need for the absolutely Free Senior High School education. Subsequently, the FSHSP was introduced in 2017. ―By free SHS we mean free tuition, admission fee, textbook, library fees, science centre fees, fees for ICT, examination fee, utility fees, boarding and meals" (Akufo-Addo, 2017). He further indicated that the FSHSP in Ghana is to give a full effect to the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.

How the FSHSP implementation practices promote the child's rights to education is critical and worth studying. Even though Partey (2017) intimates that the FSHSP is in line with the global trend in education that seeks to make SHS education absolutely free for all children, most importantly, those from poor households. The extent to which stakeholders are incorporated into Ghana's FSHSP implementation and its impact on the child's right to education has been the preoccupation of the study.

2.2.2 The Philosophy behind Ghana's FSHS concept

Philosophy communicates the ideological directions of a programme (Partey, 2017). Partey argues that philosophies are in most cases embedded in logos and themes of a policy or programme. The FSHSP in Ghana, like other programmes, was launched with a logo underlining it was a theme ―access, equity and quality" (Akufo-Addo,

2017). This is the grounds on which the research analyzes the philosophy behind the FSHS concept.

The FSHSP logo highlights an open book, on which is a sketch of two delighted school children leaping in jubilation (Akufo-Addo, 2017). Akufo-Addo explained this by indicating that the open book depicts learning that generates hope and optimism for a prosperous nation. He indicated that the two children represent the larger beneficiaries of the programme: and their spontaneous explosion in joy signifies the total burden lifted on their parents in the form of financial relief. However, how the theme –Access, Equity and Quality" that drives the child's right to education is to be delivered was not explicitly stated, some of the gap in literature this study fills.

Research shows that the fee free concept has helped expanded access to secondary education in Sub-Sahara Africa (Muhindi, 2009). It offers the opportunity for students from poor backgrounds to gain access to secondary education. This promotes social, political and economic benefits associated with education. The aim is to widen access to senior high school education to enhance human capital development (Akufo-Addo, 2017). It has also increased the transitional rate globally (Ndolo & Simatwa, 2016). The global statistics stand at 43% to 68% increase. In Ghana, the transitional rate between 2016 and 2018 is 43% (Ghana's Budget Statement, 2020). This indicates the extent to which the programme has contributed to access to SHS education in tune with these global statistics. The statistics before the introduction of the FSHSP showed that averages of 27.3% of eligible students were not enrolled in SHS (Addo, 2019). The inference, therefore, is that the FSHSP has increased access to secondary school education. This is consistent with Addo (2019) position that most eligible students are currently in schools as a result of the FSHSP's implementation. The 2020

Budget Statement further affirm this assertion by indicating that the total beneficiaries of the FSHSP for both the first and the second cohorts stand at 794,899 students with an expected projection of 1,264,000 with the addition of the third cohort. According to Ndolo and Simatwa (2016), Kenya's Free Day-Secondary Education Policy is not different from these trends, as it accounted for about 74.6% of the variation in transition since its introduction. This is an indication of the extent to which the free secondary education programmes in Africa and in particular, Ghana, has contributed to the increase in access to SHS education. But the extent to which the FSHSP has holistically expanded access (geographical, legal, administrative) aside the financial access is the gap this study focuses.

Secondly, the Free SHS programme ensures equitable education (Akufo-Addo, 2017). Equity in education is geared at offering the same opportunities to all students; most importantly, students with unique needs for support (Diffey et al, 2017). According to Akufo-Addo, poverty, gender deprivation, etc., should no longer be a barrier to education. The FSHSP, therefore, bridges the gap between the poor and the rich in Ghana (Addo, 2019). Addo posited that as a result of the programme, about 30% of students from less-endowed community basic schools are enrolled in the ~~"e~~lite schools" in Ghana. This has been a deliberate attempt to promote equity in senior high schools by a government that is eager to ensure a just society (Akufo-Addo, 2017). Diffey etal added that a focus on equity must take into account the socio-economic status of students and their families in order to cater for their diverse needs. Therefore, equitable distribution of education across the student population matters most in education delivery (Levin, 2003). Levin further intimates that equity in education is human rights imperative because it offers all students equal opportunity to develop

their capacities that enhance the utilization of their talents. Is this assertion the reality in the FSHSP implementation in Ghana?

The FSHSP in Ghana also seeks to offer quality education. UNICEF (2000) offers many definitions on "quality education" to show the multifaceted nature of the concept. It observed that quality education exhibits some fundamental traits including healthy, safe, protective, well-nourished and gender-sensitive school environment. Research indicates that to ensure quality education, the school environment should reduce disparities among students; for instance, child-centred pedagogy or teaching approach which promotes child's participation should be encouraged, and curriculum content that promotes human rights principles should be adhered to. The distribution of educational resources should enhance quality education which is based on the non-discrimination principle (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019: 76). Non-discrimination in education is a matter of dividing educational and education-related resources more equally or fairly among students (Lynch & Baker, 2006; Tomasevski, 2001; UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019). The Ministry of Education (MoE) and Ghana Education Service (GES) also have variables they use to measure quality education, called the quality inputs (Partey, 2017). Partey gave examples of these input variables to include the required teacher-student ratio, student-trained teacher ratio, student-textbook ratio, student-classroom ratio, and the student-desk ratio among others. Does the FSHSP adhere to these input variables in promoting quality education?

Is the philosophical underpinning of the FSHSP in conformity with the dimensions of the right to education? Does the FSHSP promote access to quality education holistically? To what extent does the FSHSP improve the input variables of quality

education in Ghana? According to Partey (2017), removing the barriers to access, equity and quality, enrolment automatically increases but, the extent the FSHSP implementation practices satisfy its philosophy to promote the right to education is the subject the research investigates.

2.2.3 Implementation of the FSHSP in Ghana

Educational programme implementation is a series of activities that translate into action an educational policy objective (Yaro, 2016). It is designed to ensure the attainment of access to quality education. Effective education programme implementation is critical to obtain quality intended outcome (Durlak, 2011). Durlak sees implementation in education as a set of activities designed to execute access to quality education. It could be further acknowledged that quality implementation of the FSHSP in Ghana is one critical factor associated with a quality outcome.

Implementation however, is categorized into six types (Pedzisai & Tsvere, 2014; Spacey, 2017). But for the purposes of this study, three are discussed: The Direct Cut-over, Pilot and the Parallel Run. Briefly, the Direct Cut-over, according to Spacey (2017), is about replacing an old policy with a new one at a point in time. Spacey also defined the Pilot implementation as implementing a policy change on a limited basis in order to reduce risk in experimentation; whiles the Parallel Run, according to Spacey is about operating both old and new policies alongside each other until there is the confidence that the new policy is ready to support its intended objectives. An example of the Parallel Run is the introduction of the Junior Secondary School (JSS) concept in Ghana in the 1980s. The experimental schools were made to operate alongside the middle school concept in Ghana until it took over in the 1990s.

The Parallel Run appears to resonate with how the FSHSP implementation is done in Ghana. The PFSHSP operated alongside the FSHSP. That is the implementation of the FSHSP was made to run concurrently with the PFSHSP and gradually replaced it. The central government as the main implementing agency highlighted its objective of providing absolutely free education to all SHS students regardless of their economic and socio-political background to replace the PFSHSP. In other words, the implementation of the FSHSP was not a wholesale project; it was not piloted but operated alongside the PFSHSP. Even though the top-down implementation strategy of the FSHSP opens it to the idealistic criticism that suggests that such approach to implementation does not always consider the inputs of other stakeholders critical (Devarajan, 2013). This supports the general belief that ―Governments alone can't lead educational policy reforms unless grassroots commitment, motivations and know-how are inculcated in policy decisions" (Hui, 2013). The extent to which the current FSHSP implementation approach in Ghana considers the inputs of the major stakeholders in education as an integral component in its implementation is the preoccupation of the study.

2.2.4 Stakeholders participation in the FSHSP implementation practices

Stakeholders are a group of actors who have vested interest in the welfare, success and progress of an organization (Yaro et al., 2016). Stakeholders in education are, specifically, the actors with conferred interest to influence educational policy direction (Brugha & Varvasovszky, 2000; Schlechty, 2001; Adebayo, 2013; Yaro et al., 2017). Stakeholders include the Government, School Management, Teachers, Parents, Students, the Community, Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil Society Organizations, Committee/School Board Members, Elected Officials, the Ministry of Education, etc (Halle, Mokeki & Marinda, 2011; Adebayo, 2013; Abubakarri & Al-

hassan, 2016; Yaro et al., 2016, 2018). For the purposes of this study, the School (management, teaching staff, and non-teaching staff) and Students are the stakeholders of interest. Participation in education, on the other hand, involves a decision-making process that is more inclusive (Cobanoglu et al., 2018). The need to include relevant stakeholders in the FSHSP implementation decision-making processes is critical to education delivery. However, how stakeholder participation affects Ghana's FSHSP implementation is the major interest of the study.

Students as stakeholders play a leading role in every educational programme implementation, including the FSHSP, and should be integrated into the implementation practices (Yaro et al., 2016, 2018). They are the right holders and the main beneficiaries of the policy outcome. Hence, integrating them as observed by Yaro et al (2018) ensures the advancement of both intrinsic and extrinsic values they will obtain in education. They explained the intrinsic roles to mean the student's understanding of the values of education and the accolades that go with being able to successfully complete education, consistent with the CRC (1989). These CRC provisions particularly stress on the need to integrate children who are capable of forming their opinions in all policies including education. How the FSHSP implementation in Ghana includes the views of the SHS student with regards to issues affecting their schooling is of interest to the study. This is necessary because of the average ages of SHS students in Ghana supported by the studies demographic data analysis mandate that their views should be incorporated in the implementation practices in conformity with the CRC'89 Article 12(1). As to whether the FSHSP implementers include the views of these children in the programme's implementation practices are of interest to the study.

Secondly, the parent as an integral stakeholder in education must be given the freedom to provide education to their children that conform to right to education provisions (Tomaesevski, 2001; Clase et al., 2007). For example, their religious, moral and philosophical convictions should be the rod for measuring the children religious freedom in school (Tomaesevski, 2001; UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019). Parental involvement in the education of their children is essential in every successful education programme implementation (James et al., 2010). Mislan (2010) confers that parental inclusion in educational policy implementation practices supports the sensitivity of the families' needs and values in education. Particularly, every parent's primary objective in educating his/her ward is to provide them better education that makes them lead a fulfilling, productive and rewarding adult's life in this global society (Yaro, et al., 2018). Parental support and engagement in decision making is an important factor in the enhancement of students' performance (Lin, 2010). It is also a matter of law to incorporate parents in the implementation of children education (CRC, 1989). However, the constraint with parental involvement in educational programme implementation is that they rarely hear from the school unless there is a problem with their child's behaviour or performance (Van Roekel, 2008). This notwithstanding, parental involvement in educational programme implementation practices has a tremendously positive effect on students' academic progress (Galindo & Sheldon, 2012; Mandarakas, 2014). This supports the study's objective which looks at stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation practices and how it affects the right to education.

Next is the school as a stakeholder in education. This comprises management, teaching staffs and the non-teaching staffs. Basically, when the right to education within the context of Free SHS is discussed, special attention should be paid to these

elements in the school (Telli, 2013). They possess adequate professional and requisite knowledge that enable them to lead the school community (Yaro & Salleh, 2018). They further argue that empowering these stakeholders enable them to have control over their work environment such that they can ably serve in their variety of professional roles. Telli (2013) maintains that incorporating these stakeholders in educational programme implementation like the FSHSP enhances commitment and accountability. Telli further indicates that giving these stakeholders the right incentives and actively including them in the FSHSP implementation is critical to educational achievement. Even though most educational programme implementations normatively integrate teachers, the school management, students, and parents, when its implementation practices become a political emergency as in a top-down approach to a programme‘s implementation, it rarely considers the inputs of these stakeholders as critical (Devarajan, 2013).

2.2.5 Effects of stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation practices

Stakeholder participation in educational policy decision and implementation provides an effective mechanism for promoting access to quality education (Yaro, 2016). This study looks at the effects of stakeholder‘s participation in the FSHSP implementation have on the child‘s right to access quality education. How Ghana‘s FSHSP does integrate stakeholders in its implementation practices, particularly the staff and students. This is critical in the realization of the child‘s right to education. The CRC‘89 Article 12(1) mandates that every child should have the freedom to express his/her views on policies that directly affect them provided they are of ages capable of forming their own views on such issues. Compared to the FSHSP implementation practices in Ghana, the greater percentage of the students at the SHS level from the studies demographic data analysis are between 17 and 18 year age brackets: therefore

they should be encouraged to form their own opinions on issues affecting their education.

Regarding the effects, Tomaesevki (2001) observed that as part of the child‘s right to education, parents‘ religious orientation and philosophical background matters in their children‘s education as a matter of right. The school is a crucial variable in access to quality education (UNESCO, 2005). The impact of the school‘s environmental conditions that ensures equal treatment of students, good school facilities and many others are imperative to rights to education. The school environment plays a critical role in the child‘s right to education. The government as the main stakeholder and the duty bearer also has the responsibility to incorporate the entire stakeholders into the FSHSP implementation. All stakeholders enjoy basic rights in education policy implementation as enshrined in the constitution and international human right treaties and conventions (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019).

Stakeholder participation in all educational programme implementation impacts positively on children right to education (Oyelola, 2015). Research shows that the effects of poor implementation as a result of non-inclusion of relevant stakeholders result in falling standards of education (Yaro, 2016). However, when implementation becomes a political necessity, major stakeholders are most likely to be side-lined. But the inclusion of stakeholders in the FSHSP implementation helps translate more efficiently the programme objectives into reality (Oyelola, 2015) compared to non-involvement of stakeholders. Oyelola further indicates that adequate and efficient stakeholder participation promotes positive outcome.

2.2.6 FSHSP implementation challenges

A universal fee-free policy is believed to be burdensome on the government‘s limited resources (Essuman, 2019). Essuman suggested the parallel run approach to the FSHSP implementation which emphasizes on pro-poor targeting and means-testing strategies. The contrast, however, is that the absolutely free secondary education programme is a necessary condition for national economic growth and poverty reduction (Muhindi, 2009) to promote human capital development (Ghana Budget Statement, 2020). The challenge is how the universal fee-free implementation strategy can improve access to quality senior high school education.

The fundamental goal of the FSHSP is to provide financial access to students, particularly those from a poor background (Akufo-Addo, 2017). It is aimed at closing the gap between the rich and the poor (Prempeh, 2017). However, how these implementation practices impact the child‘s right to education in Ghana is the preoccupation of the study. Research shows that geographical inaccessibility of most SHS has been a challenge to a universal fee-free policy (Muhindi, 2009) because of the poor nature of schools‘ localization. This often prevents children from deprived backgrounds from accessing secondary education. Muhindi gave Kenya as an example where there is population density with scattered households impeding access to secondary school education. This is consistent with Essuman‘s (2019) assertion that population density with no secondary schools in close proximity brings an additional cost to students. Essuman lamented that this creates financial, safety and security problems, especially for children from deprived backgrounds. Even though the FSHSP is intended to eliminate the financial burden impeding access to SHS education, the additional cost created as a result of geographical inaccessibility of schools becomes contradictory to the intents of the FSHSP.

Secondly, disparities in the FSHSP implementation also pose a challenge. In spite of the improvement of equity as a result of the abolition of fees, disparities still persist in the FSHSP implementation (Essuman, 2019). For instance, migrant children not born in the country are excluded from enjoying the FSHSP (Prempeh, 2017). According to Prempeh, the programme is exclusively for Ghanaian citizens, inconsistent with the CRC'89 Article 2 (1&2). In addition, the unequal treatment among students, for example, day students being provided a daily meal whiles their mates in the boarding houses given three-square meals daily further affirm the disparities. Again, students from far distances who were not admitted into the boarding houses have to accommodate themselves at their own cost whiles their peers enjoy free accommodation. These disparities also add to the challenges in the FSHSP implementation practices.

The FSHSP is met with additional challenges in the form of infrastructural deficits (PIAC, 2020). These include lack of buildings, access to good drinking water, sanitation and waste management logistics (Ayele et al., 2014; PIAC, 2020). According to PIAC, majority of the senior high schools in Ghana have insufficient classrooms, inadequate staff quarters, inadequate infirmaries and other logistical constraints. The inadequacy of these educational facilities affects a child-friendly school environment (Barrett et al., 2019). They further added that these facilities in sufficient quantities ensure safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environment for all.

In order to deal with the infrastructural deficit challenges in Ghana, the government introduced the double-track system as a stopgap measure (Prempeh, 2018). Prempeh further indicates that the intervention allows schools to accommodate more students,

reduce class size, increase contact hours and to save costs relative to new school‘s construction. It divides the total students‘ population and staff into two tracks: while one track is in school, the other is on vacation, and vice versa (Mensah, 2019) — a good policy to handle the increasing students‘ population. Mensah, however, observed that the intervention can negatively affect quality education. It potentially breeds truancy among students if poorly supervised. PIAC (2020), therefore, suggests that the government must expedite actions on the provision of infrastructural facilities to end the double-track system to relieve staff of the extra pressure.

Summary, the FSHSP grants financial access to education; however, quality education which emphasizes on a good learning environment that dignifies the human rights of students is imperative (Njogu, 2016) in policy implementation. Regardless of the inherent benefits of the FSHSP which among others include human capital development, creating access for more students‘ intake, poverty alleviation, etc., the extent to which the Free SHS Programme implementation practices are consistent with the right to education principles is worth studying. It defines governments‘ obligation in education and the grounds on which the student can assert or claim his or her right to education.

However, literature on stakeholders‘ participation as an imperative ingredient (Yaro et. al, 2017) in the FSHSP implementation to promote the realization of the child‘s right to education has not been thoroughly examined in Ghana. Also, literature on Ghana‘s FSHS concept, the philosophy behind the programme, the mode of implementation and the programme‘s implementation challenges appear nascent. These are the gaps in literature that the research fills.

2.3 Right to Education

The Right to Education is defined as the individual entitlement to access quality education (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019; Njogu, 2016). This concept has a wider scope (Coomans, 2007), hence it has been conceptualized into dimensions called the 4-A model (Tomaesevski, 2001). The dimensions are accessibility, availability, adaptability and acceptability. The model guides the assessment, analysis and monitoring of education policy implementations globally (Tomaesevski, 2001; Coomans, 2007; Praneviciene & Puraite, 2010; UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019). According to Tomaesevsk (2001), the 4-A model defines governments‘ obligations in education and the grounds on which the child can assert or claim his/her right to education. How the FSHSP implementation practices promote the child‘s right to education has been the preoccupation of the study. The 4-A theoretical framework in this regard plays an integral role in this analysis. The dimensions to analyze the FSHSP have been expatiated as follows:

2.3.1 Accessibility dimension

This dimension deals with barriers that impede access to quality education (Matauranga, 2010). These barriers can either be geographical, economic, legal and administrative (Tomaesevski, 2001). The elimination of these barriers partly enhances the child‘s right to education. According to Coomans (2002), education has to be accessible to everyone, without discrimination on any ground. The economic access particularly deals with the elimination of financial barriers in education (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019). It involves the removal of the financial burden on education delivery. This could be the payment of tuition and other utility fees which make education of children difficult.

In addition to economic accessibility is geographical access (Essuman, 2019). The location of schools in close proximity aid schooling and impacts the right to education. Legal access, on the other hand, addresses barriers that keep children out of school (UNESCO and right to education initiative, 2019). This includes issues of child marriage, child labour, children in conflict areas, etc. These are legal issues which also hinder access to quality education. Administrative accessibility also focuses on the identification and elimination of structural denial to access quality education (Tomaesevski, 2001). This includes race, religion, ethnic or social origin, disability, sex, language, migration among others, as affirmed in Article 2 (CRC, 1989). All these aspects are an integral part of the accessibility dimension of the right to education.

Therefore, to promote the right to education, there is the need to create an enabling environment that makes education accessible to all students without discrimination on any grounds, be it financial, geographical, legal or administrative. How the FSHSP implementation practices facilitate access is fundamental to the study‘s objective which analyzes how the FSHSP promotes the child‘s right to education.

2.3.2 Availability dimension

This dimension embodies both civil and political rights and the social and economic rights into a single unit to make education available to all without discrimination (Sotonye-Frank, 2015). Cooman (2007), confers that any functional education programme should make educational institutions available in sufficient numbers in a country. Cooman further indicates that this could be done through both the public education system and also giving the private sector the freedom to establish non-public schools and admit some. Cooman also intimates that the availability criteria

include teacher recruitment procedure, fitness, and respect for their labour rights and trade union freedom as well as professional responsibilities of staff. According to Tomaesevki (2001), this dimension also deals with the respect for teachers‘ rights in education which has a direct relationship with respect for the rights of the child in education. It addresses issues on the school‘s physical environment that include the buildings, sanitation, sick bays, potable drinking water and the entire classroom surroundings (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019).

The effective inculcation of the availability dimension into the FSHSP implementation practices can promote the realization of the child‘s rights to education. This dimension further stress on the need to make available, teaching and learning materials and other equipment in sufficient quantity in order to enhance the child‘s right to education (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019). The availability of these as part of the FSHSP implementation promotes the realization of the child‘s right to access quality education. The study seeks to analyze how these dimensions affect the child‘s right to education.

2.3.3 Acceptability dimension

The acceptability dimension obliges the State to respect the freedoms in education (Tomaesevski, 2001; Coomans, 2007; Matauranga, 2010; UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019). For example, research supports the need for parents to be given the freedom to provide education to their children that conforms to their religious, moral and philosophical convictions (Tomaesevski, 2001). This conforms to the assertion that the parents‘ position regarding their children education must be given due recognition when implementing educational programmes like the FSHSP. However, these parental freedoms must be exercised in the best interest of the child as

stated in the CRC (1989) Article 3(1). This CRC provision further indicates that children like those at the SHS level capable of forming their own views on issues concerning their education should be given the freedom to do so on issues affecting their interest.

Other important elements within this acceptability dimension is ―the need to make curricula and pedagogy culturally appropriate and of good quality in accordance with the best interest of the child principles" (Coomans, 2007, p.3). ―Language of instruction in the school should be determined by the State as the official language" (Tomaesevski, 2001: 30). The school's environment must be free from any form of violence, including gender-based violence against women and girls, and corporal punishment (UNESCO &Right to Education Initiative, 2019). The handbook further indicates that in all these the child must be recognized as the right holders.

2.3.4 Adaptability dimension

This dimension requires ―education programme implementation practices to reflect what is in the best interest of the child" (Tomaesevski, 2001, p.30). The CRC (1989) Article 3(1) affirms that: ―In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interest of the child shall be of a primary consideration". Accordingly, educational programmes such as the FSHSP have to be flexible, so that they can adapt to the needs of changing societies and communities and at the same time respond to the needs of students (Coomans, 2007). In other words, educational programme implementation with regard to this dimension should ―meet the unique needs of individual students including children with disabilities, working children, gender affirmativeness and LGBTI students" (UNESCO & right to education initiative, 2019, p.78). It further states that

teachers and schools must adapt to children with diverse capabilities and support their needs.

According to Tomasevski (2001), allowing these dimensions as a benchmark to analyze the child's right to education promotes access to quality education. However, it appears that the application of this model only exists in books and not in practice in Ghana. This research, therefore, addresses this gap using Ghana's FSHSP practices. It makes a meaningful contribution to literature on how the practical application of this model can best promote the realization of human rights principles in education.

2.4 Human Rights-Based Approach in Education (HRBA-E)

The HRBA enjoins all programmes of development cooperation, policies, and technical assistance to further the advancement of human rights principles (Sandkull, 2005). According to UNRISD (2016), the HRBA-E analyzes the government's obligations, inequalities, and vulnerabilities in education. This underpins the study's objective which seeks to identify the effects of stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation practices on the child's right to education. In other words, how stakeholder participation in the programme's implementation addresses human right issues of inequalities and vulnerabilities against marginalized children in the schools.

The application of the CRC'89 Article 29 (1) b on the HRBA-E is geared towards strengthening the respect for the child as the right holders in education (UNICEF, 2006). It stresses on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of the child as enshrined in the UN Charter. In this regard, the child as a mutually inclusive stakeholder in the FSHSP implementation must have their human rights and fundamental freedoms respected in the FSHSP practices. According to UNICEF, the primary welfare and the best interests of the child in school is paramount in the

HRBA-E. Research shows that the HRBA-E is the vehicle that makes the provisions of the IHRL in education operational (UNICEF, 2006). Arguably –every human being, including every child, is entitled to decent education, even when one cannot be sure that this education will pay off in human capital teams" (Robeyns, 2005, p.10). Robeyns further indicates that the right-based discourse prioritizes the intrinsic importance of education to the child. In this vein, the state has the primary responsibility to ensure that its education systems meet the objectives assigned to education in international human right treaties (Singh, 2014). How the FSHSP in Ghana prioritizes the inherent rights of the child in schools is of optimal importance to the study. The right-based approach in education provides a guide for learning about and working against structural barriers that contribute to the violation of human rights principles in education.

The HRBA-E also takes a critical look at educational interventions which focus on structural violations (Verdel, 2015). For example, making schools available and accessible with well-trained and paid teachers as well as available teaching materials with good curriculum and pedagogy does not guarantee the respect for human rights (Robeyns, 2005). Robeyns added that sometimes it is necessary that the government goes beyond these duties to ensure that every child can fully and equally enjoy her/his rights to education in accordance with the best interest principles (CRC, 1989) Article 3(1). That is, the FSHSP implementation practices should focus on solving structural causes of discrimination and inequality. More importantly, the FSHSP implementation practices should be guided by the human rights principle of non-discrimination. The CRC, (1989) Article 12(1) further stresses on the need to allow the child to forms his/her views freely in all matters affecting them. That is, regardless of the inherent benefits of the Free SHS programme in Ghana, the net effect must

promote the best interest of the child. The HRBA-E's core principles provide the framework for the respect for the child's rights to education principles.

2.4.1 The core principles of the HRBA-E

The core principles of the HRBA-E have been adapted and revised to provide the framework on how to ensure the realization of the child's rights to education. This supports the research question that seeks to analyze how FSHSP implementation practices promote the child's right to education. These core principles address violations and marginalization in education (Sotonye-Frank, 2015). Sotonye-Frank further argues that the focus on these core principles provide the check list for rights holder to assert their rights and duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations. It is the guiding principle to assess participation in the FSHSP implementation (Sandkull, 2005; UNICEF, 2015; Sotonye-Frank, 2015; Sida, 2015; Dufvenmark, 2015; Moriarty, 2018).

2.4.1.1 The participation and inclusion principle

This principle is a necessary condition in the FSHSP implementation. This is where stakeholders are free to express or withhold their opinion (Sotonye-Frank, 2015). This is because the stakeholders are the base of the decision-making processes at the school level. It is, therefore, needful that they partake in FSHSP implementation (Dufvenmark, 2015). This enables both the duty-bearers and the rights-holders to be involved in the FSHSP implementation to promote the wellbeing of the student, consistent with the provisions in CRC'89 on child's right (Moriarty, 2018). According to Sandkull (2005), this principle gives the targeted beneficiaries of the programme the attention needed to promote the realization of their human rights. This includes access to justice, redress and complaints mechanisms. This supports the CRC, (1989)

Article 12(1) which affirms the need to include children who are capable of forming their views and the right to express them in accordance with their age and maturity. Allowing stakeholders, particularly the child, the freedom to participate in their education programme implementation promotes access to quality education.

2.4.1.2 The best interest principle

The term ‗best interest' broadly describes how the well-being of the child is positively affected by a programme (Sotonye-Frank, 2015). The respect for the human rights of the targeted beneficiaries of a programme like the FSHSP is considered essential in this regard. This is because, in every child-centred programme's implementation practices, children who are often vulnerable could be marginalized (UNICEF Finland, 2015). According to Sotonye-Frank (2015), the well-being of the child is determined by a variety of circumstances which potentially shape their childhood experiences. The CRC'89 Article 3(1), for instance, provides for how children should be treated in matters affecting their interest.

The best interest principle further gives comprehensive attention and consideration to the universality and inalienability, indivisibility and interdependence as well as interrelatedness of human rights, particularly the child's right to education. This is the guiding principle of CRC'89 Article 3(1). The universality and inalienability of human rights mean that children are entitled to their inherent rights and dignity as human beings (Dufvenmark, 2015) as stipulated in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (1948). The universality of human rights empowers the rights-holders to claim their rights because the human person, in whom they are inhered, cannot voluntarily give them up (UNICEF Finland, 2015), neither can it be forcibly being taken from them. The human persons in whom these rights are

inhered is deemed to be born free and equal in dignity and rights (UDHR, 1948) universally. The rights they are entitled to should be indivisible: this means that the rights they are entitled to are all equal in status, and cannot be ranked, a priori, in a hierarchical order (Dufvenmark, 2015; UNICEF Finland, 2015). It is further intimated that human rights are interdependent and inter-related. That is, the realization of one right depends, wholly or in part, upon the realization of others.

The realization of these human rights principles in education empowers the children to claim and exercise their rights: and at the same time, it strengthens the capacity of all stakeholders to respect, protect and fulfil their obligations to the child (UNICEF Finland, 2015). It is further emphasized that the rights of the poorest, weakest, most marginalized and the vulnerable should be respected and given the due consideration in educational programme implementation like the FSHSP by the ultimate duty-bearer which is the government. The attainment of these best interest principles promotes the right to education.

2.4.1.3 Non-discrimination and equality in education

This concept empowers the child to stand against discriminatory practices (UNICEF Finland, 2015). Non-discrimination in education is mainly about the right of the child to equal treatment (Tomasevski, 200, pp.27-30; UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019, pp.76-78). It is a human right under the CRC, (1989) (Article 1& 2). It ensures the protection of the child against all forms of discrimination (CRC, 1989: Article 2(2)). The non-discrimination principle deals with equality in education which is generally seen as dividing educational and education-related resources more equally or fairly (Lynch & Baker, 2006). This is clearly articulated in the UNCRC‘89 Article 2(1); which states that discrimination of any kind against the child is unaccepted.

Equality in education further addresses physical, structural and attitudinal barriers in education (Sida, 2015). The principles of non-discrimination and equality empower students to claim their human rights in case of violations. It also aimed at strengthening the capacities of the student to claim equal treatment as a right. In this respect, capacity building mechanisms should be instituted by the Stakeholders in schools to facilitate the realization of the rights of the child.

2.4.1.4 Transparency and Accountability in Education

This is about clarity of rules and procedure that support an educational programme's implementations (Martin & Muff, 2012). It involves information about how a policy like the FSHSP is been implemented, to be readily available and directly accessible to all stakeholders, including timelines and disclosures as and when needed. Martin & Muff argues that information dissemination during educational programme's implementation must be clearly understood by the beneficiaries of the programme and all other stakeholders in education. This is the rights to information. Most successful educational programme implementations are anchored on transparency principles in education of which the FSHSP concept is no exception.

Accountability on the other hand, is where relevant stakeholders in education proactively co-operate to fulfil their commitment to the protection of the child against violations of their right to education (Sotonye-Frank, 2015). Sotonye-Frank further intimates that the State as the ultimate duty bearer has the obligation to this effect. A HRBA-E focuses on the conscious and systematic enhancement of human rights in all programme implementations (UNICEF Finland, 2015) including the Free SHS educational programme. UNICEF further argued that when the State fails in this regard, an aggrieved rights-holder is entitled to seek redress. This notwithstanding, the

State is not the only party to be held accountable where the human rights of children are concerned (Sotonye-Frank, 2015). Parents and guardians, teaching and non-teaching staffs, as well as school managements, mostly referred to as non-State actors can equally be held accountable when they disrespect the inherent rights of the student. The State together with these non-State actors is answerable for the observance of the rights of the child (Dufvenmark, 2015) in school.

2.4.1.5 Respect for the rule of law in Education

The rule of law provides a mechanism of accountability that safeguards the child against abuses and violations (UNESCO, 2019). Allowing the laws of the country to govern all sectors including education reduces impunity and increases access to social justice (Martin & Muff, 2012). Research shows that the rule of law equips students with the requisite knowledge, values and skills about their human rights and how to assert same in case of violations (UNESCO, 2019). The rule of law's principles of equality before the law, legality or certainty, liberty and social and economic welfare enjoins the State to respect, protect and fulfil the fundamental human rights of all citizens including students in SHS. The application of the HRBA-E principles on the FSHSP implementation practice is a necessary double-edged sword. It requires both the duty bearers to fulfil their obligations towards the student, and empowers the rights-holders to assert their rights. The rule of law is instrumental in this regard. For example, the principle of equality before the law mandates the child to claim equal treatment from the government regardless of his/her status in society. The rule of law also stresses the due process of law where the marginalized in education like the child can claim their human rights in case of violation in court. It is important therefore to make available redress seeking mechanisms that build the capacity of students to know their rights and ways to assert same.

Another feature of the Rule of Law is Liberty. This is the freedom from the coercion of some by the others (Gregorio, 2018). This is where freedom of choice is respected. Parental liberty is where parents have the freedom to choose schools that conform to their religious inclinations and philosophies for their wards (UNESCO, 2019). It further states that the child should be allowed to choose freely between private and public schools they wish to attend. Does the Free SHS programme allow these freedoms in its implementation? The last feature is economic and social welfare. This enjoins the state to make available social facilities that enable the rights holders to assess their fundamental human rights and freedom. The HRBA-E principles provide the standards for measuring respect for human rights in education. These standards address violations and marginalization in education (Sotonye-Frank, 2015).

From the literature review, it has come to light that the integration of the right to education and the HRBA-E principles, through all-inclusive stakeholder participation defines the conceptual framework for the right-based analysis of Ghana's FSHSP practices. Research shows that the HRBA-E is the vehicle that makes the provisions of human rights laws on education operational (UNICEF, 2006). The relevance of this literature review is to enable researchers to use the identified gaps as a guide in the analysis of the extent to which the FSHSP implementation practices promote the realization of human rights principles in education.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework was developed after a critical review of the relevant concepts, theories, models and related literatures. It explains what has been learnt to best analyze the progression of a phenomenon being studied (Grant & Osanloo, 2014).

Figure 2.2: Conceptual framework

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

The study as conceptualized in the diagram above comprises the following variables: the independent variable (IV) which is FSHSP's implementation practices; the mediating variable (MV) which is stakeholder participation; and the dependent variable (DV) which is the child's right to education. It explains how the IV through the MV impacts the DV in the FSHSP implementation practices. It analyzes the extent to which the FSHSP implementation practices via stakeholders' participation promote the child's right to education using the 4-A model as a benchmark. It advocates for a top-down-bottom-up integrated approach into the FSHSP implementation practices (Hill & Hupe, 2002). It further campaigns for a mutually inclusive stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation to ensure access to quality education (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019). This is to ensure that the student is placed firmly at the centre of the FSHSP implementation to promote the realization of their constitutionally guaranteed rights and freedoms (Praneviciene & Puraite, 2010; Tomasevski, 2001).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology used for the study. The presentation includes research approach, paradigm, design, population, sampling and sampling techniques, research instrument, data collection techniques, data analysis techniques and ethical consideration.

3.1 Research Approach

The study employs the mixed method research approach. It combines elements of quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and analysis purposes (Creswell & Plano, 2011). The motive is to provide a rich insight into divergent and complementary views from relevant stakeholders associated with the FSHSP implementation. This is to facilitate a more robust analysis of the FSHSP (Venkatesh, 2013). Venkatesh further indicates that the approach provides the opportunity to assess assorted views from the various respondents on how the programme‘s implementation practices affect the child‘s right to education. The demerit associated with this approach, however, is time constraints. This notwithstanding, this approach is adaptable for this research because of its ability to cover and integrate the views of other relevant stakeholders in the FSHSP implementation.

3.2 Research Paradigm

The paradigm gives the set of beliefs and assumptions that guides the research approach (Lincoln et al., 2011). It presents the philosophical, epistemological and methodological features of the mixed method underpinnings of the study. Philosophically, the study adapts pragmatism which uses both positivism and

constructivism as two separate approaches to inquire into the study (Morgan, 2014). The positivism paradigm is about quantification of numerical data using statistical methods (Saleem, 2011) whiles constructivism paradigm, on the other hand, evaluates what is said to assert reality (Adom, et al. 2016). Epistemologically, these blends in pragmatism present empiricism (Vibha& Walsh, 2019); that is, knowledge acquired through experience and testing. This resonates with the study which focuses on how respondents' experiences with the FSHSP implementation practices can be tested using right to education principles. The pragmatism was chosen because of its ability to bring divergent and complementary views together for both numerical and discourse analysis. The nature of the research questions demands a combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyze and solve the identified problem.

3.3 Research Design

The sequential mixed method design was used for the study. This design allows the contextualization of quantitative data results with qualitative follow-up (Bowen et al, 2017). The procedure is that quantitative data is collected and analysed: then a follow-up qualitative data collection and analysis is done to elaborate further on the quantitative results; after which is interpretation (Creswell & Plano, 2011; Subedi, 2016; Crewell, 2003; Brewer & Hunter, 2006; Bryman, 2001, 2006; Creswell et al., 2003; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The quantitative aspect explains the objectives of the study by collecting numerical data that are analysed using the mathematically based method (Muijs, 2004). According to Bryman (2001), the quantitative aspect emphasizes numbers and figures in the collection and analysis of data. This approach is used to test an objective concept by examining the relationship among variables (Creswell, 2014). The study is basically about the analysis of how Ghana's FSHSP

implementation practices affect the child's right to education using the 4-A model as a benchmark. Crewell (2014) indicates that these variables can be measured using statistical procedures. The qualitative aspect of the design is to contextualize the quantitative findings from a better perspective (Niobe al et., 1994; Nataliya & Sheldon, 2007).

The motive for the use of this design stems from the fact that it reduces intelligent guesswork because of the clear guidelines and objectivity (Eyisi, 2016). However, Eyisi further indicates some of the weaknesses associated with the design, which is the possibility of researchers to detach from the participants and become just an observer. Despite the weakness, the design covers a wider scope; and at the same time it is able to include a sizable number of participants. This is the basis for the use of the design.

3.4 Population of the Study

The population covers all members that meet the settled specifications or a specified criterion for a study (Ngechu, 2004). The targeted population for the study includes all School Management, Teaching staff, Non-teaching staff and Students in Ashanti region. However, the accessible population comprised the School Management, Teaching staff, Non-teaching staff and Students at Nkawie Senior High School (Technical). The choice of school suits the study because it offers all courses at the SHS level, including technical education which provides the needed blend for the study. Besides, the proximity of the area to the researcher helps to reduce time and the cost involved in doing the study.

3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

Both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used for the study. Stratified random sampling was used to select respondents for the study, out of which some participants were purposively selected for the qualitative follow-up interviews (Dawson, 2002). The school's population of 2,243 was stratified into six strata: Management (18), Teaching staffs (171), Non-teaching staffs (43), SHS 3 Single Track students (767), SHS 2 Gold Track students (627) and SHS 1 Green Track students (617). The tracks to which students belonged were also purposively selected.

On sample size, the Sloven formula was used to calculate the appropriate sample size for the study. According to Stephanie (2013), the formula allows sampling from a population to be done with a desired degree of accuracy. Stephanie further indicates that the formula has a 95% level of confidence. This high accuracy and confidence levels accounted for the use of the formula to select the appropriate participants for the study. Langat (2018) gave the formula as n = N / 1+Ne2.

Where n is the desired sample size to be determined.

N is the total population for the study.

e = accepted margin of error (0.05) based on 95% confidence level.

In this study, the N which is the total population is 2,243 representing teaching staff numbering 171, non-teaching staff of 43, management staff of 18, SHS (3) 767, SHS (2) 627, SHS (1) 617. Therefore, n =2,243/1+2,243(0.052) = 339.

The desired sample size (n) for the study is 339. The stratified random sampling which is a sample in proportion to the number in a population was used as the procedure for the sampling. It was obtained as Size / Total population * Minimum sample size.

1. Management – 18 / 2,243 * 339 = 3.

2. Teaching staff – 171/2,243*339=26.

3. Non-teaching staff – 43/2,243*339= 6.

4. SHS (3) - 767 / 2,243 * 339 = 115.

5. SHS (2) 627 / 2,243 * 339 = 95.

6. SHS (1) – 617 / 2,243 * 339 = 94.

Subsequently, five participants were purposively selected for qualitative follow-up interviews among those sampled participants.

3.6 Data Collection Techniques

Data-collection techniques are the systematic means used to collect information about the phenomena been studied (Chaleunvong, 2009). In this regard, questionnaires were used to collect data for the quantitative aspect from both staff and students, whereas the follow-up personal interviews were conducted for qualitative data. These data collection techniques resonate with the current study since it analyzes the perceptions of staff and students about how the FSHSP implementation practices affect the child‘s right to education.

For the quantitative aspect, Likert scale questions were used. It is a psychometric responses scale used to assess people‘s perception of issues. It is seen as a psychometric mental measurement technique (Wadgave & Khairmar, 2016). Whiles personal interviews were conducted for the qualitative follow up to contextualize the quantitative findings into a proper perspective; it provided the avenue to cover a wide range of people with divergent opinions. The participants in the section were drawn from the school management, staff and student respondents, herein coded as staff 1, staff 2, staff 3, student 1 and student 2 respectively. Having explained the details of

the study as a follow-up to the questionnaire for some clarifications, and having been assured their rights and freedoms of participations and withdrawal, they were further made to understand that the interview would be recorded for translation and analysis: and that their anonymity was assured.

3.7 Data Collection Instrument

Two instruments were used to gather data for the study, questionnaires and interviews. The Likert scale questionnaires were used to measure people's perceptions, attitudes, character, and personality traits (Boone & Boone, 2012). It transforms an individual's subjective perceptions into an objective reality in numerical values (Subedi, 2016). The Likert scale questions used for the quantitative study comprise thirty (30) items for staff and twenty-six (26) items for students. It covered all the research objectives and questions. The Likert response alternative ranges from a scale of Strongly Agree (1) to Strongly Disagree (5). The respondents were required to tick one of the responses that best suit their comprehension. The two sets of questions were administered on all stratums respectively. The advantage is that the Likert scale instrument can be used to gather data at a relatively quick rate and from highly reliable persons (Nemoto & Beglar, 2014). An interview guide was used for the qualitative follow up. These findings were to put the quantitative data findings into a proper perspective. A semi-structured interview was conducted to further elaborate and contextualize some specific quantitative data analysis and responses.

3.8 Validity and Reliability of the Data Collection Instrument

The validity and reliability were to uphold the integrity and quality of the measurement instrument used in the study (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008). In testing for the validity and the reliability of the instrument for the study, a pilot test was

conducted at Toase Senior High School in the Atwima Nwabiagya municipality. The purpose of the piloting was to establish the accuracy of the measurement instrument and the internal consistency of the instrument. This was to determine the shortcomings of the instrument used for improvement before the actual data collection. Validity helps to ascertain the extent to which the data collection instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Ursachi et al, 2015; Golafshani, 2003). This is to assess both the internal and external validity of the instrument. According to Ursachi et al (2015), the internal validity checks the underlying construct measurement accuracy; whiles the external validity indicates whether the study is extrapolative. The data collection instrument tested proved to be accurate and can be repeated as a prerequisite in research (Mohajan, 2017).

The reliability, on the other hand, deals with the extent to which the results are consistent or the repeatability of results or observations when extended (Golifshani, 2003). The purpose is to assess the internal consistency of the instrument (Ursachi et al, 2015). According to Subedi (2016), the Cronbach‘s alpha is efficient for calculating the reliability of Likert scale items; hence, it was done for the study. The reliability test using the Cronbach‘s alpha for the various elements in the analysis of stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation practices was 71.49% (Cronbach‘s alpha of 0.714862) reliable for staff respondents and 95.46% (Cronbach‘s alpha of 0.954639) reliable for student respondents. On the analysis of how the FSHSP implementation promotes the child‘s right to education, the reliability was 85.64% (Cronbach‘s alpha of 0.856411) for staff and 79.48% (Cronbach‘s alpha of 0.794798) for students; whiles the aspects that needed to be improved had a Cronbach‘s alpha of 0.832929 for staff and 0.713727 for students, representing 83.29% and 71.37% reliable responses for staffs and students respectively.

3.9 Data Analysis Techniques

According to Boone and Boone (2012), a mainly Likert scale questionnaire instrument should be preferred to the use of descriptive statistics. This resonates with the current study as Likert scale questions were used for the quantitative aspect of the study. Frequency distribution tables and histograms were developed for the data analysis. Each of the frequency distribution tables was further summarized into cumulative frequency distribution tables. The quantitative findings were analysed using the summarized frequency distribution tables. The mean, percentages and histograms were used to carry out the quantitative data analysis (Nicholas, 1999; Boone & Boone, 2012).

The qualitative data were collected using interviews. A semi-structured interview guide was used in this regard. Discourse analysis was further used to analyze data findings of the qualitative follow-up. It analysed speech patterns in the conversations to identify the correlations and discrepancies (Carabine, 2001; Fairclough, 2001; Garoon & Duggan, 2008; Gotti & Salager-Meyer, 2006; Hamuddin, 2012; Morgan, 2005). It also analysed details of speech, gazes, gestures and actions (Gee, 1999). It has been underscored that an important first step to data analysis in qualitative research is transcription (Bailey, 2008; Easton, McComish & Greenberg, 2000). Transcription was done to identify common themes, patterns and relationships to interpret the interviewed conversations alongside gestures.

3.10 Ethical Consideration

Before the data collection, the school and the participants were informed about their participating role in the study as required; indicating to participants their right to exit at any point if they so wished. This agreement was reached before the questionnaires were administered to participants. They were further informed of their anonymous status (Adjei, 2012). The students and other participants were firmly assured of their protection in order to facilitate free, friendly and honest communication.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the data findings. It is divided into two main sections. Section one entails the demographic data findings and results. It also includes the quantitative data findings on research questions covering how stakeholder participation affects the FSHSP implementation; the ways the FSHSP implementation practices promote the right to education and aspects of the FSHSP that need to be improved. The second section covers both qualitative follow-up findings on some significant issues of the first section; qualitative findings on the third research objective, which is the effects that stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation practices, have on access to quality education: and the conclusion covers the interface between the quantitative and qualitative data findings.

4.1 Demographic Data Analysis

4.1.1 Students

This section presents the demographic analysis of student respondents with regards to their average age, class, parents‘ employment, etc. for both students and staff.

Table 4.1: Descriptive statistics of student respondents' demographic data

Items	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Respondent's Age	15 – 16	65	21.4	21.4	3.9770	0.63672	0.405
	17 – 18	181	59.5	80.9			
	19 or more	58	19.1	100.0			
	Total	**304**	**100.0**				
Gender	Male	135	44.4	44.4	1.5559	0.49768	0.248
	Female	169	55.6	100.0			
	Total	**304**	**100.0**				
Class	SHS 1	94	30.9	30.9	2.0691	0.82764	0.685
	SHS 2	95	31.3	62.2			
	SHS 3	115	37.8	100.0			
	Total	**304**	**100.0**				
Track	Single	115	37.8	37.8	1.9309	0.82764	0.685
	Gold	95	31.3	69.1			
	Green	94	30.9	100.0			
	Total	**304**	**100.0**				
Residential Status	Day	98	32.2	32.2	1.6776	0.46815	0.219
	Boarding	206	67.8	100.0			
	Total	**304**	**100.0**				
I stay with	Both parents	155	51.0	51.0	1.6382	0.72712	0.529
	Single parent	104	34.2	85.2			
	Guardian	45	14.8	100.0			
	Total	**304**	**100.0**				
Parent/ Guardian employment status	Government employee	33	10.9	10.9	1.9967	0.46315	0.215
	Self / Private employed	239	78.6	89.5			
	Unemployed	32	10.5	100.0			
	Total	**304**	**100.0**				
Distance between residence to workstation	Less than half a mile	10	3.3	3.3	3.3618	0.91232	0.832
	One to two miles	61	20.1	23.4			
	Three to four miles	42	13.8	37.2			
	More than five miles	191	62.8	100.0			
	Total	**304**	**100.0**				

Researcher's construct, 2020

This data revealed that the average age of the student respondents was between the ages of 17 – 18, supported by a mean of 3.9770, with a majority of 181 respondents out of 304. The average student respondents were female, with a mean of 1.5559, with

a majority of 169 respondents out of 304. The SHS2 student respondents were the average class; and also, gold track with means of 2.0691 and 1.9309, respectively. Also, average student respondents were in the boarding house, indicated with a mean of 1.6776, with a majority of 204 out of 304. Those student respondents who lived with single parents were indicated with a mean 1.6382. On average, most students have their parents to be self-employed with a mean of 1.9967. The average distances between the school and their house were three – four miles (mean of 3.3618). A detailed analysis is presented in a descriptive statistics table below.

4.1.2 Staff

This section presents the demographic data analysis of staff respondents with regards to their average age, class, parents' employment, etc. for both students and staff.

Table 4.2: Descriptive statistics of staff respondents' demographic data

Items	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Respondent's Age	18 – 25	4	11.4	11.4	3.9714	1.09774	1.205
	26 – 30	9	25.7	37.1			
	31 – 35	6	17.1	54.3			
	35 or more	16	45.7	100.0			
	Total	**35**	**100.0**				
Gender	Male	20	57.1	57.1	1.4286	0.50210	0.252
	Female	15	42.9	100.0			
	Total	**35**	**100.0**				
Category of staff	Management	3	8.6	8.6	2.0857	0.50709	0.257
	Teaching Staff	26	74.3	82.9			
	Non-teaching Staff	6	17.1	100.0			
	Total	**35**	**100.0**				
Residential Status	Off-Campus	35	100.0	100.0	2.0000	0.00000	0.000
Distance between residence to workstation	Less than half a mile	3	8.6	8.6	2.9143	1.09468	1.198
	One to two miles	13	37.1	45.7			
	Three to four miles	3	8.6	54.3			
	More than five miles	16	45.7	100.0			
	Total	**35**	**100.0**				

Researcher's construct, 2020

This also revealed that the average age of the staff respondents was between the ages of 35 years and more, indicated by a mean of 3.9714; and were the majority of 16 out of 35 respondents. The average staff respondents were male, with a mean of 1.4286, with a majority of 20 out of 35 respondents. The teaching staff respondents were the average staff; and also, all the 35 staff respondents were resident off-campus, with means of 2.0857 and 2.00 respectively. Also, the distance to the school from their houses was three – four miles, representing a mean of 2.9143.

4.2 How Stakeholder Participation affects the FSHSP Implementation

This section analyzes the perspectives of respondents on the research question regarding how stakeholder participation affects the FSHSP implementation. The findings are presented in frequency distribution tables with attached cumulative summary of all tables to analyze findings and results of all responses of both staffs and students based on this overarching research question.

4.2.1 Students

This sub-section presents the findings in frequency distribution tables of students' responses to answer the research question on how stakeholder participation affects the FSHSP implementation.

Table 4.3: Frequency distribution of students' responses to how stakeholders' participation affects the FSHSP implementation

Items	code	Freq	Percentage	Mean	Median	SD	Variance
My parents contribute to the way the free SHS implementation practices are done in my school	1	40	13.2%	3.79	4	1.45	2.11
	2	35	11.5%				
	3	14	4.6%				
	4	75	24.7%				
	5	140	46.1%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
My parents had the option to choose between either boarding or day status for me	1	34	11.2%	3.91	5	1.41	1.99
	2	34	11.2%				
	3	10	3.3%				
	4	72	23.7%				
	5	154	50.7%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
How the free SHS implementation is done in my school is always fair to both day and boarding students	1	41	13.5%	3.82	4	1.48	2.18
	2	35	11.5%				
	3	11	3.6%				
	4	67	22.0%				
	5	150	49.3%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
My concerns are always incorporated in the ways the free SHS is being implemented in my school	1	40	13.2%	3.82	4	1.46	2.12
	2	34	11.2%				
	3	12	3.9%				
	4	73	24.0%				
	5	145	47.7%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
I freely chose a course I love to study in my school	1	33	10.9%	3.95	5	1.41	1.97
	2	33	10.9%				
	3	10	3.3%				
	4	68	22.4%				
	5	160	52.6%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
I chose the track system I want to belong to	1	41	13.5%	3.8	4	1.47	2.16
	2	36	11.8%				
	3	10	3.3%				
	4	74	24.3%				
	5	143	47.0%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

Table 4.4: A summarized frequency distribution of student's responses to stakeholders' participation in FSHSP implementation

	Code	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Variance
Strongly agree	1	31	10.2	3.8586	4.0000	5.00	1.34841	1.818
Agree	2	30	9.9					
Neutral	3	24	7.9					
Disagree	4	85	28.0					
Strongly disagree	5	134	44.0					
Total		**304**	**100.0**					

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

The summarised response revealed that 10.2%, representing 31 students strongly agreed that there is stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation; 9.9% representing 30 students agreed; 7.9% representing 24 students were neutral; 28% representing 85 students disagreed; and 44% representing 134 students strongly disagreed. 72% student respondents cumulatively disagreed to adequate stakeholder's participation in the FSHSP implementation with a mean of 3. 8586. The histogram indicates students' disagreement to stakeholders' participation in the FSHSP implementation.

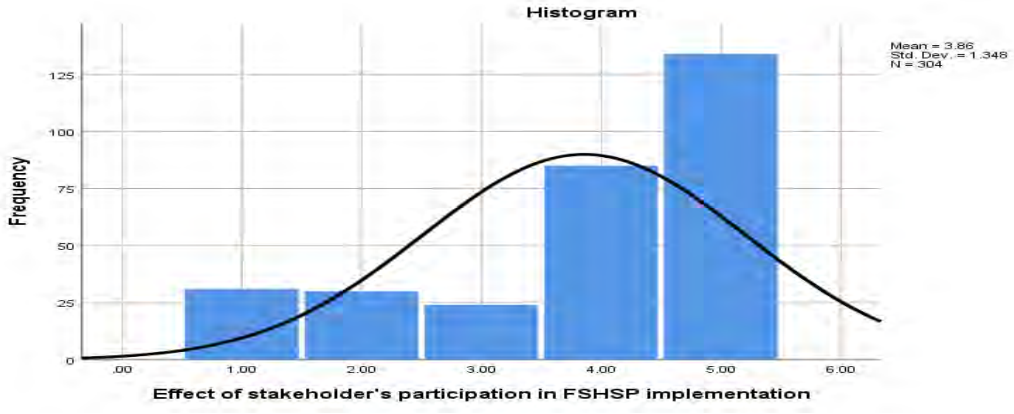

Figure 4.1: Histogram of students' responses to stakeholders' participation in FSHSP implementation

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

4.2.2 Staff

This sub-section also presents the findings in frequency distribution tables of staff responses to the research question on how stakeholder participation affects the FSHSP implementation.

Table 4.5: Frequency distribution of staffs' responses to how stakeholders' participation affects the FSHSP implementation

Items	code	Freq	Percentage	Mean	Median	SD	Variance
All directives for the implementation of the FSHSP are mainly from the central government	1	10	28.6%	2.54	2	1.36	1.84
	2	9	25.7%				
	3	7	20.0%				
	4	5	14.3%				
	5	4	11.4%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
My school management modifies the implementation directives from the government to suit the interest of the students	1	3	8.6%	3.4	3	1.33	1.78
	2	7	20.0%				
	3	8	22.9%				
	4	7	20.0%				
	5	10	28.6%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
Parents' views are always incorporated into the free SHS programme's implementation practices in my school	1	0	0.0%	3.49	4	1.09	1.198
	2	10	28.6%				
	3	4	11.4%				
	4	15	42.9%				
	5	6	17.1%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
The concerns of the student are always incorporated into the free SHS programme's implementation practices in my school	1	1	2.9%	3.66	4	1.11	1.23
	2	5	14.3%				
	3	8	22.9%				
	4	12	34.3%				
	5	9	25.7%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
The reasons for the implementation of the double track system in my school are clearly explained to me	1	2	5.7%	3.4	4	1.24	1.54
	2	8	22.9%				
	3	7	20.0%				
	4	10	28.6%				
	5	8	22.9%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
My school chooses the track system a student wish to attend	1	2	5.7%	3.43	4	1.24	1.55
	2	8	22.9%				
	3	6	17.1%				
	4	11	31.4%				
	5	8	22.9%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
Parents in my school are always given the option to choose between boarding and day status for their children	1	3	8.6%	3.34	4	1.33	1.76
	2	9	25.7%				
	3	4	11.4%				
	4	11	31.4%				
	5	8	22.9%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				

Researcher's construct, 2020

Table 4.6: A summarized Frequency distribution of staff's responses on how stakeholders' participation affects the FSHSP implementation practices

Stakeholder's participation in FSHSP implementation								
	Code	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Mean**	**Median**	**Mode**	**SD**	**Variance**
Strongly agree	1	0	0	3. 3143	3.0000	4.00	0.86675	0.751
Agree	2	7	20.0					
Neutral	3	12	34.3					
Disagree	4	14	40.0					
Strongly disagree	5	2	5.7					
Total		**35**	**100.0**					

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

The summarized responses of staff revealed that 20%, representing 7 respondents agreed; 34.3%, representing 12 were neutral; 40%, representing 14 disagreed; and 5.7%, representing 2 respondents strongly disagreed that there was stakeholders' participation. The mean of 3.3143 supports the findings. The histogram presents a graphical picture that supports 40% disagreement based on the statistics.

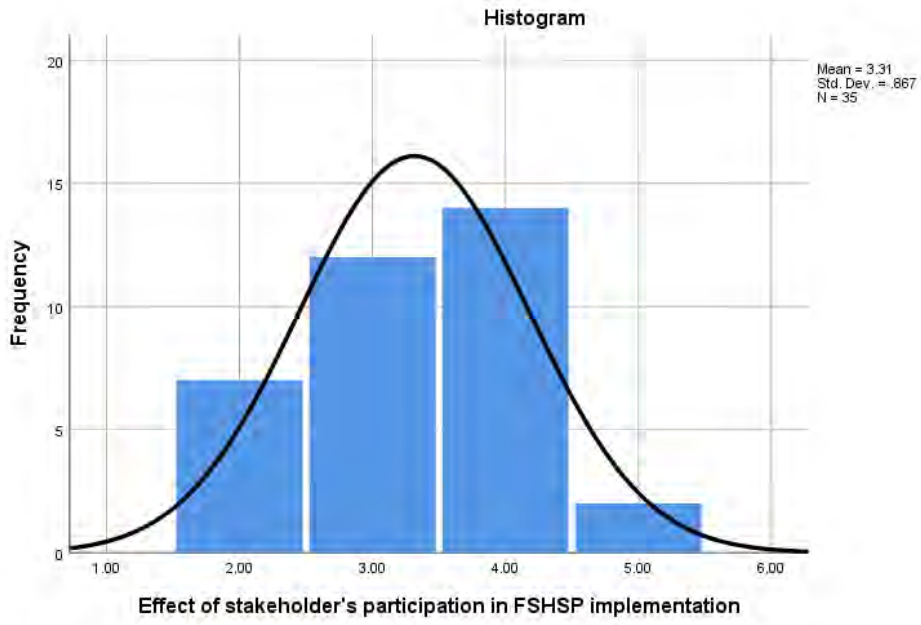

Figure 4.2: Histogram of staff responses to stakeholders' participation in FSHSP implementation

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

Table 4.7: Frequency distribution of the cumulative summary of all responses of how Stakeholder's participation affects the FSHSP implementation

	Code	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Variance
Strongly agree	1	31	9.1	3.8024	4.0000	5.00	1.31644	1.733
Agree	2	37	10.9					
Neutral	3	36	10.6					
Disagree	4	99	29.2					
Strongly disagree	5	136	40.2					
Total		**339**	**100.0**					

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

The total responses of all respondents indicate that 31 respondents representing 9.1%, 37 representing 10.9%, 36 representing 10.6%, 99 representing 29.2%, and 136 representing 40.2% strongly agreed, agreed, were neutral, disagreed, and strongly disagreed, respectively to indicate the extent to which stakeholders' participation affects the FSHSP implementation. It reveals that the majority of respondents of 40.2% strongly disagreed to stakeholders' participation in the FSHSP implementation. This is further supported with the mean of 3.8. The histogram skewed to the right, which represents disagreement to inadequate stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation.

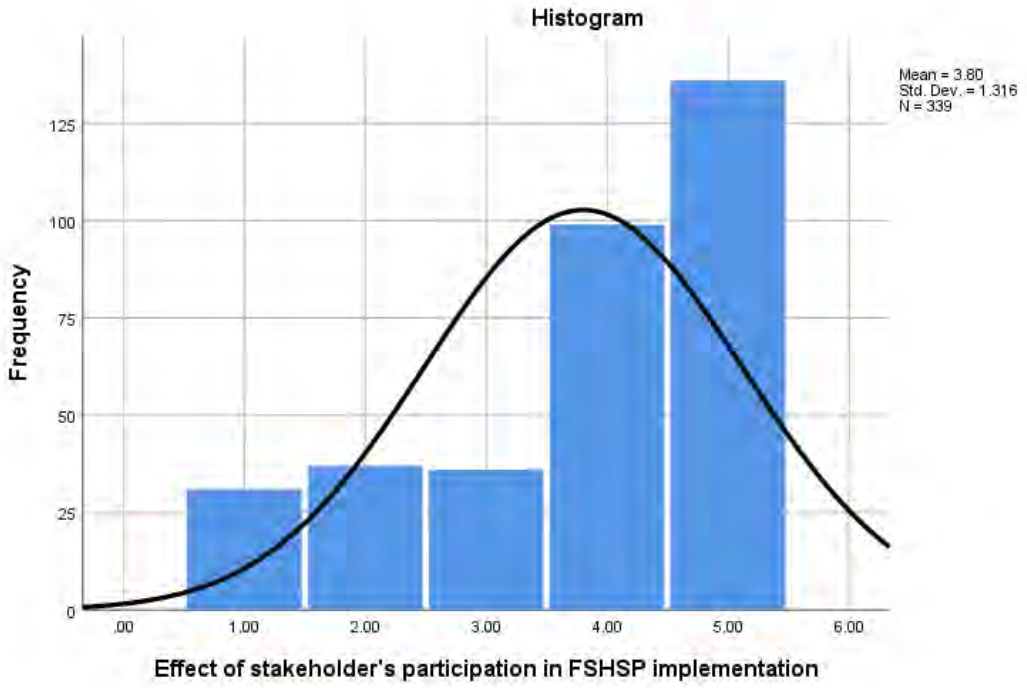

Figure 4.3: Histogram of all the respondents' responses to stakeholders' participation in FSHSP implementation

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

4.3 Ways the FSHSP Implementation Practices Promote Right to Education

This section is organized under sub-sections: first, students and staff responses to the research question as answered in frequency distribution tables; a cross tabulation analysis to predict how the FSHSP implementation practices over the years shift students' perception to the affirmative; and then the conclusion based on the cumulative responses from all respondents.

4.3.1 Students

This sub-section presents the students' perspectives regarding how the FSHSP implementation practices promote the right to education using the 4-A model as a bench mark to guide the analysis.

Table 4.8: Frequency distribution of student's responses to analyze how the FSHSP implementation practices affect the child's right to education

Items	code	Freq	Percentage	Mean	Median	SD	Variance
The free SHS programme has reduced the financial burden on my education	1	15	4.9%	4.3651	5	1.10276	1.216
	2	8	2.6%				
	3	35	11.5%				
	4	39	12.8%				
	5	207	68.1%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
The distance between where I stay and my school has brought an additional cost to me	1	23	7.6%	4.2401	5	1.2421	1.543
	2	14	4.6%				
	3	26	8.6%				
	4	45	14.8%				
	5	196	64.5%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
Education materials given to me by government are fairly distributed in my school among students	1	16	5.3%	4.2829	5	1.13984	1.299
	2	9	3.0%				
	3	43	14.1%				
	4	41	13.5%				
	5	195	64.1%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
The enrolment levels in my school always affect my health condition often	1	16	5.3%	4.2697	5	1.15167	1.326
	2	11	3.6%				
	3	42	13.8%				
	4	41	13.5%				
	5	194	63.8%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
My school sanitary conditions always make me sick	1	9	3.0%	4.4013	5	1.00664	1.013
	2	6	2.0%				
	3	45	14.8%				
	4	38	12.5%				
	5	206	67.8%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
The first aid facility in my school is equipped enough to offer me an initial treatment anytime I fell sick	1	16	5.3%	4.2993	5	1.1254	1.267
	2	5	1.6%				
	3	49	16.1%				
	4	36	11.8%				
	5	198	65.1%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
My school allows me to practice my religious faith without any hindrances from the school management	1	14	4.6%	4.2763	5	1.13566	1.29
	2	13	4.3%				
	3	42	13.8%				
	4	41	13.5%				
	5	194	63.8%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				

I can freely seek transfer to any other school at any point in time	1	26	8.6%	4.1743	5	1.27913	1.636
	2	7	2.3%				
	3	49	16.1%				
	4	28	9.2%				
	5	194	63.8%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
I have qualified teachers to handle all subjects in my class	1	8	2.6%	4.4243	5	0.97198	0.945
	2	5	1.6%				
	3	43	14.1%				
	4	42	13.8%				
	5	206	67.8%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
I am always free to participate in the teaching and learning activities in my class	1	10	3.3%	4.3849	5	1.02762	1.056
	2	5	1.6%				
	3	49	16.1%				
	4	34	11.2%				
	5	206	67.8%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
The free SHS has improved the quality of teaching in my school	1	20	6.6%	4.1382	5	1.22434	1.499
	2	15	4.9%				
	3	44	14.5%				
	4	49	16.1%				
	5	176	57.9%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
The free SHS has improved the quality of learning in my school	1	12	3.9%	4.375	5	1.07668	1.159
	2	11	3.6%				
	3	35	11.5%				
	4	39	12.8%				
	5	207	68.1%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
I am always given corporal punishment anytime I offend in my school	1	20	6.6%	4.2533	5	1.21527	1.477
	2	16	5.3%				
	3	27	8.9%				
	4	45	14.8%				
	5	196	64.5%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

Table 4.9: A summarized frequency distribution of student's responses on how the FSHSP implementation practices promote the child's right to education

	Code	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Variance
Strongly agree	1	0	0	4.3684	5.0000	5.00	0.74625	0.557
Agree	2	4	1.3					
Neutral	3	37	12.2					
Disagree	4	106	34.9					
Strongly disagree	5	157	51.6					
Total		**304**	**100.0**					

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

The summarised students' responses revealed that none of the students strongly agreed: 1.3% representing 4 of the students agreed; 12.2% representing 37 students were neutral; 34.9% representing 106 students disagreed; and 51.6% representing 157 students strongly disagreed that the FSHSP implementation practices promote right to education. It shows how the responses are skewed towards the disagreement, around a mean of 4.3684. The histogram supports the assertion that the FSHSP implementation opposes the child's right to education, as the diagram skews to the right indicating disagreement.

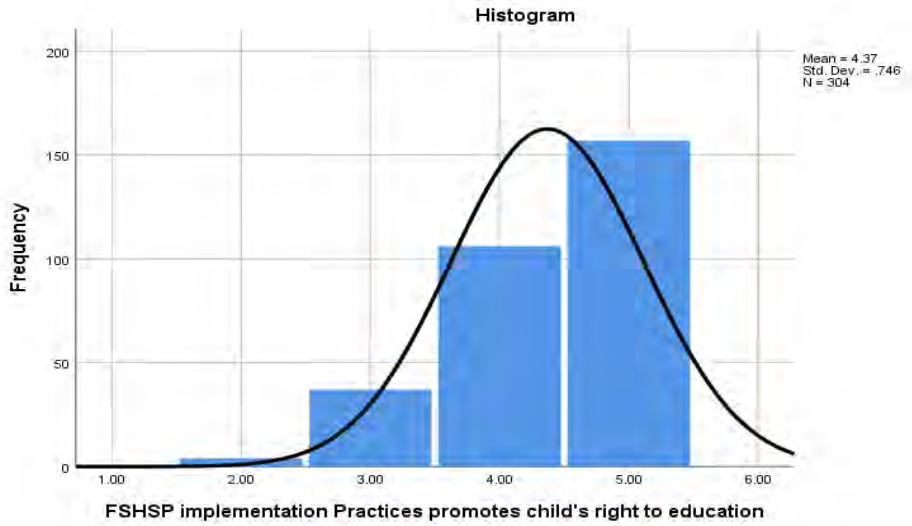

Figure 4.4: Histogram of students' response to FSHSP implementation practices promotes the child's right to education

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

Table 4.10: Cross tabulation of responses to 'class' with 'FSHSP implementation Practices promotes child's right to education'

		Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Class	SHS 1	0	3	36	55	94
	SHS 2	0	9	36	50	95
	SHS 3	4	25	34	52	115
Total		**4**	**37**	**106**	**157**	**304**
Pearson Correlation (Sig.= 2.31E-06)						**0.267109**

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

It was revealed from the cross tabulated figures that all the 4 students who agreed to the FSHSP implementation practices promoting the child's right to education were in SHS 3. Also, the majority of students who were neutral were also in SHS 3, whiles the majority of students who disagreed and strongly disagreed were in SHS 1. The inference drawn from this analysis is that the SHS 3 students who have been in this FSHS system relatively long enough to understand and appreciate the changes over the years of study affirm the extent to which the programme promotes right to education, compared to those in SHS 1.The findings further show that as the class of students increases from SHS 1 to SHS 3 their perception would shift to the affirmative about the FSHSP implementation practices promoting the right to education.

4.3.2 Staff

From the staffs' perspectives regarding how the FSHSP implementation practices promote the right to education via the 4-A model revealed majority of staffs respondents' agreement to the FSHSP implementation practices in promoting right to education.

Table 4.11: Frequency distribution on how the FSHSP implementation practices affect the child's right to education

Items	code	Freq	Percentage	Mean	Median	SD	Variance
The free SHS programme implementation has reduced the financial burden on students' education in my school	1	7	20.0%	2.63	3	1.03	1.06
	2	6	17.1%				
	3	15	42.9%				
	4	7	20.0%				
	5	0	0.0%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
The average travel distance to my school brings additional cost to most students' education	1	23	65.7%	1.57	1	1.07	1.13
	2	9	25.7%				
	3	0	0.0%				
	4	1	2.9%				
	5	2	5.7%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
Educational materials provided by the government to students are fairly distributed in my school	1	2	5.7%	2.74	3	1.01	1.02
	2	15	42.9%				
	3	10	28.6%				
	4	6	17.1%				
	5	2	5.7%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
The high enrolment levels in my school affect negatively the students' health condition	1	3	8.6%	2.66	3	0.998	0.997
	2	14	40.0%				
	3	12	34.3%				
	4	4	11.4%				
	5	2	5.7%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
The poor sanitary conditions in my school are often the cause of students' sickness	1	5	14.3%	3.11	4	1.25	1.58
	2	7	20.0%				
	3	5	14.3%				
	4	15	42.9%				
	5	3	8.6%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
My school's first aid facility is well equipped to offer first aid treatment to sick students always	1	4	11.4%	2.69	3	1.05	1.1
	2	12	34.3%				
	3	12	34.3%				
	4	5	14.3%				
	5	2	5.7%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
My school allows students to practice their religious faith without hindrances	1	4	11.4%	3.09	3	1.22	1.49
	2	9	25.7%				
	3	5	14.3%				
	4	14	40.0%				
	5	3	8.6%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				

Students in my school are free to go on transfer to other school at any point in time	1	5	14.3%	2.74	3	0.92	0.84
	2	5	14.3%				
	3	19	54.3%				
	4	6	17.1%				
	5	0	0.0%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
Students in my school are allowed to choose freely, the kind of courses they wish to pursue in the school	1	7	20.0%				
	2	11	31.4%	2.63	2	1.19	1.42
	3	6	17.1%				
	4	10	28.6%				
	5	1	2.9%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
My school has qualified teachers to handle subjects they are assigned to teach	1	27	77.1%	1.34	1	0.76	0.59
	2	6	17.1%				
	3	0	0.0%				
	4	2	5.7%				
	5	0	0.0%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
My school allows corporal punishment to deal with who offend in the school	1	5	14.3%	2.77	3	1.14	1.3
	2	11	31.4%				
	3	7	20.0%				
	4	11	31.4%				
	5	1	2.9%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
Students are allowed to participate freely in the teaching and learning activities in the class	1	26	74.3%	1.43	1	0.98	0.96
	2	7	20.0%				
	3	0	0.0%				
	4	0	0.0%				
	5	2	5.7%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
The free SHS has improved the quality of teaching in my school	1	1	2.9%	2.71	2	0.99	0.98
	2	18	51.4%				
	3	8	22.9%				
	4	6	17.1%				
	5	2	5.7%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
The free SHS has improved the quality of learning in my school	1	2	5.7%	2.63	2	0.97	0.95
	2	17	48.6%				
	3	10	28.6%				
	4	4	11.4%				
	5	2	5.7%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				

Source: Researcher‘s construct, 2020

Table 4.12: Summarized frequency distribution of staff responses to FSHSP implementation Practices promotes child's right to education

	Code	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Variance
Strongly agree	1	0	0	2.4571	2.00	2.	0.61083	0.373
Agree	2	21	60.0					
Neutral	3	12	34.3					
Disagree	4	2	5.7					
Strongly disagree	5	0	0					
Total		**35**	**100.0**					

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

The cumulative responses from the staff as presented in the frequency distribution table revealed that though none of the respondents strongly agreed to the FSHSP promoting the right to education; a majority of 60%, representing 21 respondents agreed to this assertion, whiles 34.3% stayed neutral. Also, a minority of respondents of 5.7%, representing 2 respondents disagreed; and none of the staff strongly disagreed to this assertion. The histogram shows the extent to which the staffs affirm the FSHSP in promoting the child's right to education, as the diagram skews to the left.

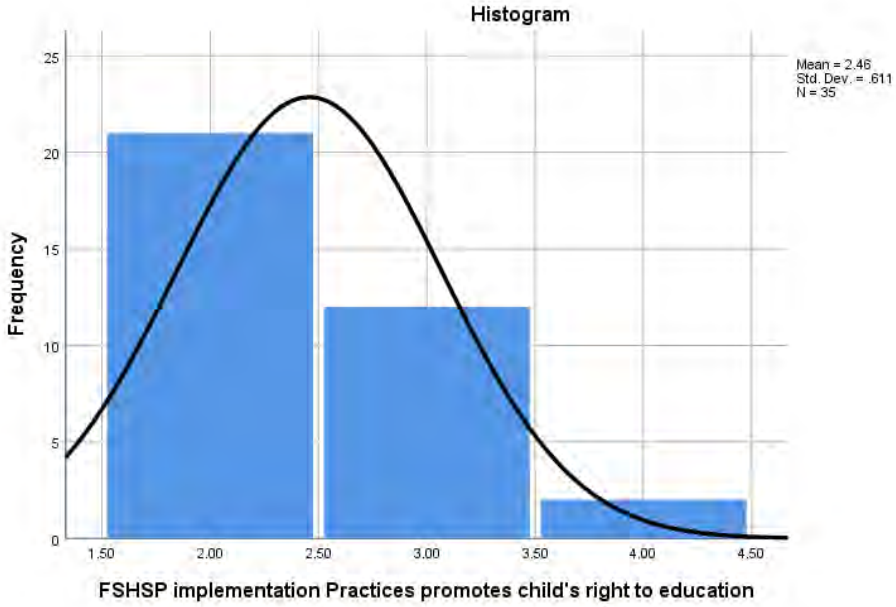

Figure 4.5: Histogram of staff responses to FSHSP implementation Practices promotes child's right to education

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

Table 4.13: Frequency distribution of total responses to FSHSP implementation Practices promotes child's right to education

FSHSP implementation Practices promotes child's right to education								
	Code	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Mean**	**Median**	**Mode**	**SD**	**Variance**
Strongly agree	1	0	0	4.1711	4.000	5.00	0.93593	0.876
Agree	2	25	7.4					
Neutral	3	49	14.5					
Disagree	4	108	31.9					
Strongly disagree	5	157	46.2					
Total		**339**	**100.0**					

Source: Researcher‘s construct, 2020

In conclusion, none of the respondents (both staffs and students) strongly agreed that the FSHSP implementation practices promote the right to education: whiles 31.9%, representing 108 respondents disagreed; and a majority of 46.2%, representing 157 respondents strongly disagreed to this fact. On the other hand, a minority of 7.4%, representing 25 respondents agreed; and 14.5%, representing 49 respondents were neutral that the FSHSP implementation practices promote the child's right to education. The general responses as summarised by the histogram show that the FSHSP implementation currently opposes the child‘s right to education principles, as it skews to the right.

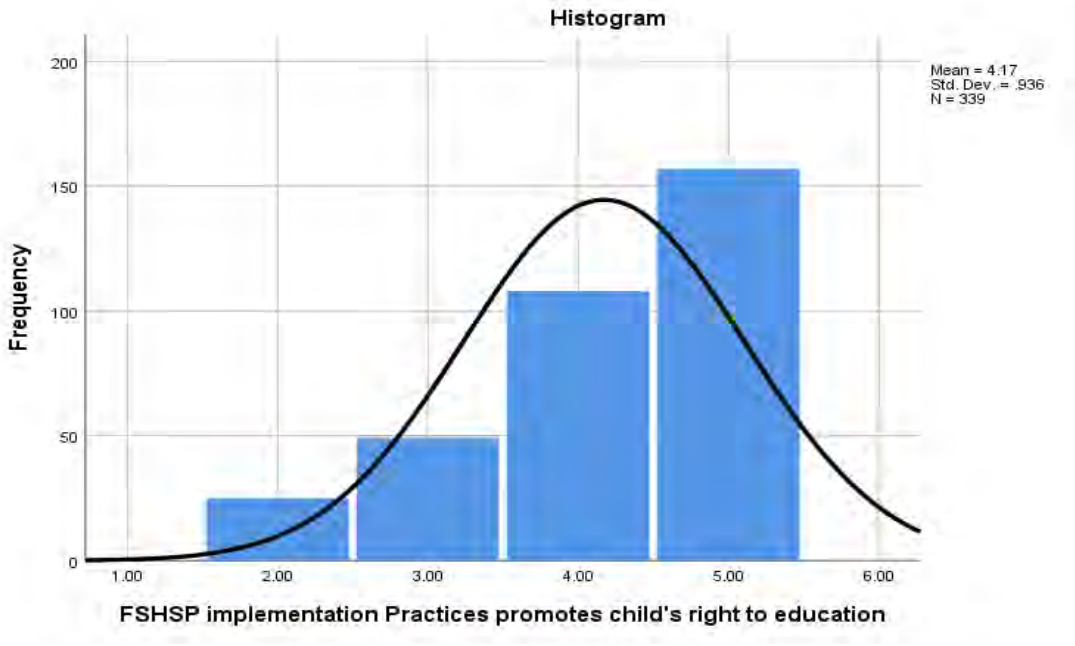

Figure 4.6: Histogram of all respondents' responses to FSHSP implementation Practices to promote the child's right to education

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

4.4 Explore the Aspects of the FSHSP Implementation Practices that need Improvement

This section sought to find out from respondents what could be improved upon in the FSHSP implementation practices.

4.4.1 Students

This sub-section presents the findings from students perspective on the FSHSP implementation practices which can be improved upon in the light of inadequate infrastructure making the implementation difficult in the school, the double track system as a solution to the infrastructural inadequacies, the double track contributing positively to academic work and putting pressure on residential facilities, and day students getting same treatments as boarding students in terms of accommodation support and meals.

Table 4.14: Frequency distribution of students' responses to explore the aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices that needs to be improved

Items	code	Freq	Percentage	Mean	Median	SD	Variance
Inadequate infrastructure is making the free SHS implementation difficult in my school	1	10	3.3%	4.41	5	1.03	1.05
	2	9	3.0%				
	3	36	11.8%				
	4	41	13.5%				
	5	208	68.4%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
The double track system has solved all the infrastructural inadequacy in my school	1	24	7.9%	4.02	5	1.33	1.76
	2	26	8.6%				
	3	41	13.5%				
	4	41	13.5%				
	5	172	56.6%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
The double track system has contributed positively to the academic work in my school	1	13	4.3%	4.37	5	1.12	1.26
	2	18	5.9%				
	3	24	7.9%				
	4	38	12.5%				
	5	211	69.4%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
The double track system has put pressure on residential facilities in my school	1	10	3.3%	4.41	5	1.07	1.15
	2	18	5.9%				
	3	24	7.9%				
	4	38	12.5%				
	5	214	70.4%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
Day students get the same treatments as boarding students	1	26	8.6%	4.16	5	1.28	1.64
	2	7	2.3%				
	3	50	16.4%				
	4	29	9.5%				
	5	192	63.2%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
Day students from very far distances need support to rent accommodation	1	14	4.6%	4.28	5	1.14	1.29
	2	13	4.3%				
	3	42	13.8%				
	4	41	13.5%				
	5	194	63.8%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				
Day students not from this town should be allowed to eat three meals as those in the boarding house	1	19	6.3%	4.14	5	1.21	1.47
	2	15	4.9%				
	3	46	15.1%				
	4	49	16.1%				
	5	175	57.6%				
	Total	**304**	**100.0%**				

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

Table 4.15: A summarized frequency distribution of student's responses to aspects of the FSHSP implementation that needs improvement

Aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices needs improvement								
	Code	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Mean**	**Median**	**Mode**	**SD**	**Variance**
Strongly agree	1	1	0.4	4.31	4.00	5.00	0.82	0.675
Agree	2	11	3.6					
Neutral	3	31	10.2					
Disagree	4	112	36.8					
Strongly disagree	5	149	49.0					
Total		**304**	**100.0**					

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

This summarized finding shows that majority of the student respondents strongly disagreed to improving any aspect of the current FSHSP implementation practices. The responses of 36.8% disagreement and 49% strong disagreement confirm this perception. The histogram clearly shows how the responses skewed to the right, indicating the respondents' disagreement to any improvements.

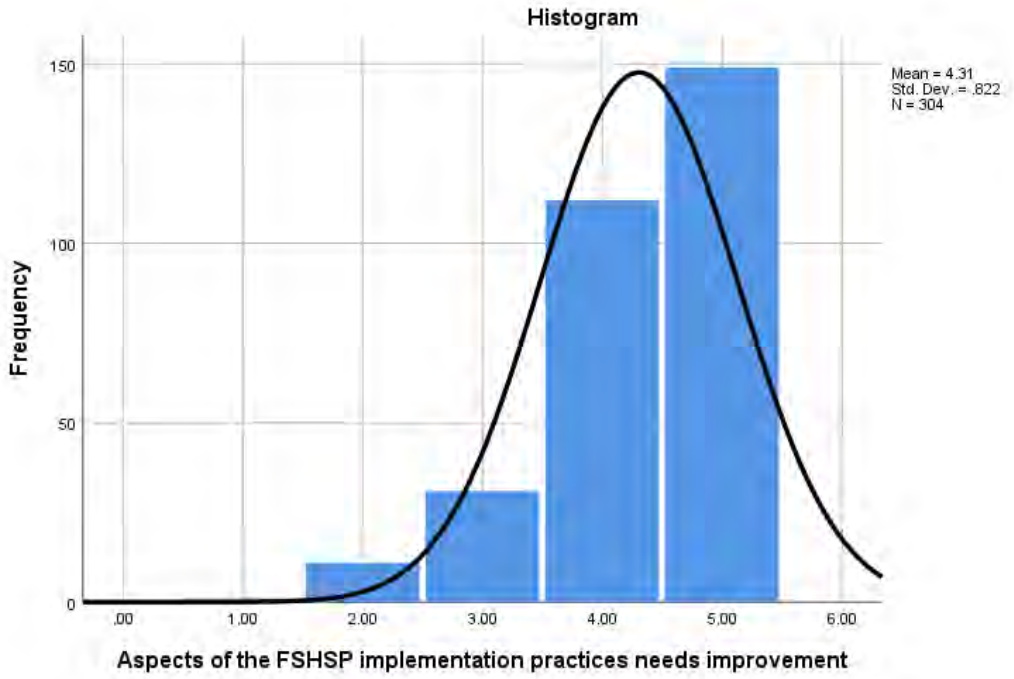

Figure 4.7: Histogram of summarized students' responses to aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices that needs improvement

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

4.4.2 Staff

The staff respondents, on the other hand, agreed to the need to improve the FSHSP implementation practices holistically. In this regard, the question of inadequate infrastructure making the implementation difficult in the school, the double track system as a solution to the infrastructural inadequacies, the double track contributing positively to academic work and putting pressure on residential facilities, and day students getting same treatments as boarding students in terms of accommodation support and meals were answered in the affirmative.

Table 4.16: Frequency distribution of staff responses on aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices that needs to be improved

Items	code	Freq	Percentage	Mean	Median	SD	Variance
Inadequate infrastructure is making the free SHS implementation practices difficult in my school	1	24	68.6%	1.54	1	1.07	1.14
	2	8	22.9%				
	3	0	0.0%				
	4	1	2.9%				
	5	2	5.7%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
The double track system puts pressure on teaching staff in my school	1	14	40.0%	1.97	2	1.22	1.499
	2	16	45.7%				
	3	1	2.9%				
	4	0	0.0%				
	5	4	11.4%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
The double track system in my school has affected academic work positively	1	0	0.0%	3.38	4	0.88	0.77
	2	8	22.9%				
	3	7	20.0%				
	4	19	54.3%				
	5	1	2.9%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
The double track system puts pressure on the administrative staff in my school	1	8	22.9%	2.26	2	1.01	1.02
	2	16	45.7%				
	3	5	14.3%				
	4	6	17.1%				
	5	0	0.0%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
The double track system puts pressure on my kitchen staff	1	11	31.4%				
	2	18	51.4%				
	3	2	5.7%	1.97	2	0.92	0.85
	4	4	11.4%				
	5	0	0.0%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				

The double track system puts pressure on residential facilities in my school	1	6	17.1%	2.43	2	1.22	1.49
	2	20	57.1%				
	3	0	0.0%				
	4	6	17.1%				
	5	3	8.6%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
Day students get the same treatments as boarding house students	1	10	28.6%	2.06	2	0.94	0.88
	2	17	48.6%				
	3	4	11.4%				
	4	4	11.4%				
	5	0	0.0%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
Day students who are not from the town need support to rent accommodation	1	15	42.9%	1.94	2	1.24	1.53
	2	15	42.9%				
	3	1	2.9%				
	4	0	0.0%				
	5	4	11.4%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				
Day students who are from the town should be allowed to eat three meals as those in the boarding house	1	14	40.0%	1.89	2	0.96	0.93
	2	15	42.9%				
	3	2	5.7%				
	4	4	11.4%				
	5	0	0.0%				
	Total	**35**	**100.0%**				

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

Table 4.17: A summarized frequency distribution of staff responses to aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices that needs improvement

Aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices needs improvement								
	Code	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Mean**	**Median**	**Mode**	**SD**	**Variance**
Strongly agree	1	3	8.6	2.2	2.00	2.00	0.677	0.459
Agree	2	24	68.6					
Neutral	3	6	17.1					
Disagree	4	2	5.7					
Strongly disagree	5	0	0					
Total		**35**	**100.0**					

Researcher's construct, 2020

The staff responses as summarized cumulatively indicate that the majority, 68.6%, agrees that all aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices should be improved. The data findings showed that a mean of 2.2 agreed to the responses. The histogram is

affirmative of the need for an improvement in the ways that the FSHSP is been implemented.

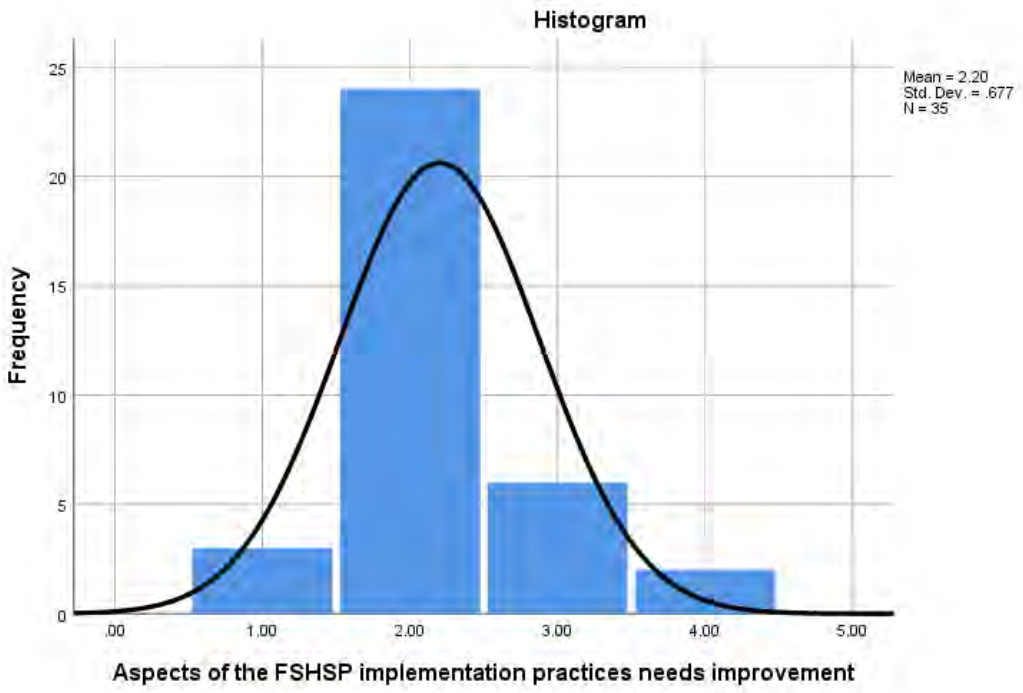

Figure 4.8: Histogram of summarized staff responses to aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices that needs improvement

Source: Researcher's construct, 2020

4.5 Qualitative Findings and Results

This sub-section contextualizes the quantitative findings with follow-up qualitative interviews on some significant findings which needs further clarifications. It is divided into themes: how stakeholder participation affects the FSHSP implementation; the effects stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation practices have on access to quality education; the aspects of the programme implementation that may need improvement; and the conclusion section which discusses the interface between the qualitative and the qualitative data analysis and discussions.

4.5.1 How stakeholder participation affects the FSHSP implementation

This sub-section presents the data findings on the followed-up qualitative interviews on respondents' perceptions that the FSHS implementation has been mainly government centred. The clarification was to ascertain how it affects the programme. The interviewed findings from staff respondents in this regard present the following:

> *The Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service, since time immemorial enforce policies on staff and students of which the FSHSP has not been different. They intimated that government alone plays about 80% role in the FSHSP implementation. This makes the programme a one-sided affair. The programme's implementation was done without soliciting the views of most stakeholders on the ground. This makes the program too government centred, making both teaching and non-teaching staffs to have their hands tight in so many ways …*

These responses indicate respondents' awareness of the need to include stakeholders as a principal requirement for a smooth implementation of any educational policy like the FSHSP. It could further be inferred from the findings that the government alone, through the FSHSP secretariat, though not 100% has centralized the programme's implementation. The comments seem to suggest that the political nature of the programme's implementation influences the use of this strategy. This has created a parallel authority between GES and the Free SHS secretariat about who does what; though effective and inclusive stakeholder participation in educational policy implementation ensures quality education.

Further, a student respondent added:

> *…the desire to study a particular programme is essential to making teaching and learning more effective. Studies become easier when students are passionate about the subject they are to study, hence, their involvement in some decisions as to what, how and when to study would boost their desire and improve on the efficiency of teaching and learning. But as it stands everything is from the central government including the track system student's wish to attend.*

The response is a clear manifestation of the impact of this perceived ―top-down" implementation strategy on the programme. This implementation strategy may help governments to achieve its goal at a faster pace, particularly when it is a political necessity. But the contrast is that the CRC'89 Article 12(1) mandates state-parties to include the views of the child as a matter of right. This is because governments alone can't lead educational programme implementation, but grassroots commitment, motivations and know-how is vital in every programme's implementation including the FSHSP. The extent to which stakeholders are involved in the programme's implementation practices from the perspective of a staff participant indicates that:

> *...the FSHSP implementation as it stands gives very little authority to other stakeholders to be able to modify the implementation practices at the school level due to excessive centralisation of the programme (A staff respondent).*

Stakeholders involved in the implementation must include teachers, school heads and educational managers at the regional and districts levels. In general, the Ministry of Education as a major stakeholder in education has been the host implementing agency. Teacher unions have been active in promoting the effectiveness of the FSHSP. The gap is more profound at the level of parental involvement.

4.5.2 The effects stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation practices have on access to quality education

This section presents the findings on the effect's stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation practices have on the child's rights to access quality education. An interviewed participant intimated that:

> *...the effects of any policy are twofold: the positives and the negatives (participant 3, a staff respondent).*

This finding can be verified when the assessment is situated within context of the 4-A model's analytical framework which is the international benchmark to ascertain the veracity of such claim with regards to the FSHSP implementation.

4.5.2.1 Accessibility dimension of the right to education

This sub-section deals with the barriers to education policy implementation that prevent access to quality education. This may be economic, geographical, legal and administrative in nature. How these barriers impact the FSHSP implementation practices was the subject under consideration. In this regard the staff participants interviewed indicated that:

> *.... the FSHSP implementation has made education accessible through the removal of the relatively huge financial burdens on guardians/parents in financing their wards education. It is intimated that students pay virtually nothing as everything has been catered for by the government. The benefits include one hot meal for day students, free accommodation, and three-square meals for boarding students, and textbooks among others. They further indicated that this has reduced the cost of SHS education for the guardians/parents to bear.*

This positive attribution of the FSHSP meshes with the economic aspect of the accessibility dimension of the 4-A model. However, there are other aspects to this dimension which equally needs attention. For example, how the dispersed nature of the SHS in Ghana affects quality delivery is remarkable; most importantly, with respect to students from poor backgrounds. From the findings, the FSHSP implementation practices seem to be silent on legal issues which keep children out of school which include working children, rural children, children in conflict affected areas, child marriage, etc. The findings talk of economic access without indicating how the programme relates to migrants' children. Even though the findings suggest positive effects of the FSHSP implementation practices on economic access, other

aspects of this dimension pose a challenge. From the findings, to ensure access to quality education there is the need to promote the accessibility dimension holistically.

4.5.3.2 The availability dimension of the right to education

The qualitative interviews clarify respondents' perspective on how the school's physical environment affects the FSHSP implementation practices. The following comments from Participants 2 and 1 provided insight into the current state of the school's environment and it impact on right to education.

> *In terms of infrastructures there are deficits because the PTA who should have supported management to improve on this… has been marginalized making the whole programme mainly government-centered […] but for the introduction of the double track system to support the FSHSP implementation, the school's infrastructure would have suffered (staff respondent 2).*

> *Despite no significant expansion in the infrastructure in the school from the beginning […] the double track system has handled the infrastructure defects. However, as the programme progresses there are ambits of expansions in the school. This has reduced the burden small but it hasn't solved entirely the problem. He indicated that the double track system has even put a lot of pressure on the current infrastructure in the school (staff respondent 1).*

Given these comments, it may be correct to say that the double track system has helped the school environment to improve considerably in terms of sanitation, class room conditions, and teacher-student ratio. Even though the double track system has its own challenges; *of which the Covid 19 pandemic has exposed a natural occurrence, it has exposed the deficiencies in the system (staff respondent 2).*

The views expressed in these comments bring to light the other rights of students which include the freedom of choice students have between public and private schools they wish to attend. The programme, though has improved access to quality education, the respondents believed that the FSHSP is mainly one-sided:

> *…Access…Access…. Access!!! …. neglecting other parts that equally promote quality education. They intimated that the increases in enrolment creating the double track system have also brought in a lot of inexperienced teachers, affecting quality delivery. They further believe that the programme should be expanded to include private senior high schools to stimulate competition so that the public schools will sit up. They also stressed on parental inclusion in the FSHSP practices. They believed that these will improve the implementation of the programme.*

The quality assurance indicators deduced from respondents‘ comments is to ensure that all educational related resources are put into good use to derive the desired outcome. The efficient management of both human and material resources with regards to both external and internal in-servicing of staff, inspection and monitoring of resources will improve the child‘s rights to access quality education.

4.5.3.3 Acceptability dimension of the right to education

On the acceptability of the FSHSP implementation practices in terms of how children are recognized as rights-holders, there is the need to make curricular and pedagogy culturally appropriate, etc. An interviewed respondent on how the FSHSP practices recognize the child as rights-holders presented this discourse:

> *The FSHSP implementation practices have over pampered the children in many so ways (staff respondent 2).*

> *Some of the decisions of the government which are geared toward our protection seem to suggest to others as "over pampering" which is not the case, but they are there to motivate us to study (student respondent 2).*

The support given to students to be able to enjoy their fundamental freedoms and human dignity by government is seen by some of staff respondents to be ―over pampering.” This position by the staff respondents seems to oppose liberalism in education theory. More so, the CRC‘89 Article 3(1) intimates that all policies about children like the FSHSP should satisfy the best interest of the child. On curricular and

pedagogy, the FSHSP is silent on curriculum, but interactive teacher-student relationship in the school was encouraging.

4.5.3.4 Adoptability dimension of the right to education

The adoptability dimension places the onus on the state to bring education to where children are: for example, rural communities, children with disabilities, the poverty disadvantaged children, etc. The aim is to meet the unique needs of the individual student. An excerpt from the interviews highlighted these:

> *...since the placement of day-boarding status is always from the FSHS secretariat you may find a rural or very disadvantaged child who is supposed to be in the boarding house been given a day status. It is therefore not far-fetched to belief that the programme has brought untold hardship to some of the students, particularly rural children and those from poor households, something the FSHSP seeks to eradicate. On students with disabilities, the programme is blank, as there is no prescribed treatment for this category of students. But the school has only a student in this category; and it is very easy to handle this situation.*

It could be inferred from the findings that the FSHSP lacks the flexibility for other stakeholders apart from the central government to make critical modifications in the implementation practices on the ground. But as it stands per the findings, the program adequately provides financial access at the detriment of other equally important dimensions, creating a gap to impact negatively on right to education.

4.5.6 Aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices that needs to be improved

On the aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices that need to be improved, the findings show the need for a holistic improvement in the programme‘s implementation; more importantly, to end the discriminatory practices in the programme‘s implementation as presented in the following findings:

> *...the programme's implementation treats day and boarding students differently. This perceived discrimination needs to be improved to ensure equal treatment of all students (student respondent 2).*

Discrimination cannot be justified on any ground since non-discrimination as a right should be respected at all times. From the findings, the students offered some solutions to help improve on this perceived discrimination in the programme's implementation practices. They indicated that:

> *...government should provide hostel facilities for day-students who come from very far distances to help reduce cost [...] alternatively, the day students renting accommodation around the school's environs should be allowed to join their mates in the boarding house to enjoy the daily three-square meals since it is the government who pays for all these services. Additionally, they suggested that the school should make available buses to help commute day students for free.*

The promotion of fairness among students is in conformity with the universal principles of equality and non-discrimination, which is fundamental to all human rights laws. From the findings, an improvement in the infrastructural base of the school will help improve the programme implementation significantly.

4.6 Interpretation

This concluding section presents the interface between the quantitative and the qualitative data findings (Nataliya & Sheldon, 2007). On how stakeholder participation affects the FSHSP implementation, it was revealed that majority of respondents strongly disagreed to adequate stakeholder involvement. The qualitative follow-up findings attribute this to the over centralization of the FSHSP implementation on the government. About how the FSHSP implementation practices promote right to education, the respondents cumulatively believed in the opposite of the programme promote the child's right to education. The effects that stakeholder participation in the FSHSP practices have on access to quality education revealed both positive and negative impact; however, the findings showed a lack of flexibility for

other stakeholders apart from the central government to make critical modifications to the programme‘s implementation practices. This has overshadowed the positive impact of the program which provides financial access to student. On the aspect of the programme that needs improvement, the quantitative findings called for a holistic improvement in the programme‘s implementation practices; whiles the qualitative follow-up findings advocate equal treatment for all students.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses and integrates the study's findings with the relevant theories and literature adapted. This is to identify the correlations and discrepancies between the findings of the study and the existing literatures. The discussions specifically relate with the study's objectives that examine how stakeholder participation affects the FSHSP implementation, analyze ways the FSHSP implementation practices promote right to education, identify the effects stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation practices have on access to quality education, as well as the aspects of the programme implementation practices that need improvement.

5.1 How Stakeholder Participation affects the FSHSP Implementation

The findings indicated that the FSHSP implementation has been mainly government-centred; consistent with Russell's (2015) assertions that education policy implementation has been mostly top-down when it is a political necessity. This buttresses the general assertion that the FSHSP implementation in Ghana, though not 100%, used more of the top-down approach (Cerna, 2013). The demerit associated with the top-down approach as indicated by Signe (2017) is that isolating stakeholders from education programme implementation can negatively affect the success of the programme. On the other hand, integrating the various relevant stakeholders in the programme's implementation practices by combining top-down and bottom-up approaches (Hill & Hupe, 2002) offer a good lens to understand how best the programme implementation can promote quality education. But as it stands, the

general belief among respondents from the findings indicate that there is minimal stakeholder involvement in the FSHSP implementation, as it is more centralized.

Stakeholders‘ participation is the basic requirement for smooth educational policy implementation, of which the FSHSP is no exception (Brugha & Varvasovszky, 2000; Schlechty, 2001; Adebayo, 2013; Yaro et al., 2017). The stakeholders, according to Yaro et al. (2017), include Staff, Students, the Government and Parents, and by extension the National Teachers Council, the Community where the school is situated, Civil Society Organisations, and many more. However, the inferences from the data findings indicate that the government alone, through the FSHSP secretariat, largely controls the FSHSP implementation. This suggests that the political nature of the programme‘s implementation has created a parallel authority between GES and the Free SHS secretariat about who does what; though effective and all-inclusive stakeholder participation in educational policy implementation ensures quality education (Devarajan, 2013).

In summary, the inference drawn from both the quantitative and the qualitative findings suggests that an integration of other stakeholders at the school level will improve access to quality education. Comparatively, isolating relevant stakeholders from the programme implementation can negatively affect the success of the programme (Signe, 2017), which has been the practice with regard to the FSHSP implementation. Therefore, stakeholder integration through the top-down- bottom-up combinative approaches (Hill & Hupe, 2002) offers the explanatory framework on how best the programme implementation can promote quality education.

5.2 Ways the FSHSP Implementation Practices Promote the Right to Education

This objective was to identify the effects of the FSHSP implementation practices on the child's right to education. The findings correspond with Abdul et al. (2018) position on how the free secondary school concept has expanded access to education globally. However, contrary to the financial access (Tomaesevski, 2001) the FSHSP offers, the increase in enrolment has been a challenge. This has created congestions in the schools because of the geographical inaccessibility of most senior high schools (Tomaesevski, 2001; Coomans, 2007; Praneviciene & Puraite, 2010; UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019). This has resulted in the introduction of the double-track system (Mensah, 2019). The double-track system offers stakeholders in the school, particularly the students, no opportunity to choose freely between the tracks they wish to attend, depriving them the freedom of choice. The findings also suggest that there is a lack of parental freedom to choose between private and public schools for their wards. There is also the lack of parental freedom to choose a school which conforms to their religious and philosophical believes for their children, inconsistent with (Tomaesevski, 2001; UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019). These implementation challenges partly account for the general perception among participants that the FSHSP implementation practices look inimical to right to education principles.

Though the FSHSP implementation practices oppose the child's right to education principles (Praneviciene & Puraite, 2010), the inference drawn from the study's findings established that the staff and the SHS 3 students with relatively more experience in the system are affirmative of the FSHSP to promote the right to education. This shows a gradual improvement in the programme's implementation

practices to better promote the child's right to education. But as it stands, a lot more needs to be done for the FSHSP to promote the right to education.

5.3 The Effects Stakeholder Participation in the FSHSP Practices have on Access to Quality Education

The findings contradict the assertion that stakeholder participation is a requirement for a smooth implementation of every educational policy, including the FSHSP. Studies show that the impact of stakeholders' participation on the child's right to access quality education is tremendous (Brugha & Varvasovszky, 2000; Schlechty, 2001; Adebayo, 2013; Yaro et al., 2017).

In spite of the important role of stakeholders in education policy implementation, the FSHSP implementation practices in Ghana have been mainly government-centred contrary to (Uiennet & Pont, 2017). This seems to be problematic. That is, the top-down implementation strategy marginalizes other stakeholders. The findings indicated that the students, who are the right holders, feel sidelined in the programme's implementation, inconsistent with the CRC'89 Article 12(1). It mandates State-parties to include the views of children capable of forming their opinions in all programme implementation like the FSHSP as a matter of right (Uiennt & Pont, 2017). This is consistent with Hui's (2013) position that governments alone cannot lead educational programme implementation expect for grassroots commitment, motivations and know-how. The effects this implementation strategy has on access to quality education within the context of the 4-A model underpinned the discussions.

The findings further indicate that the FSHSP only promotes economic access because of the fee-free nature of the programme. However, there is another aspect to this dimension which equally needs attention (Tomaesevski, 2001; Coomans, 2007;

Praneviciene & Puraite, 2010; UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019). For example, the dispersed nature of most of the SHS in Ghana brings additional cost in terms of accommodation and feeding for day-students (PIAC, 2020). The geographical inaccessibility of most SHS in the country affects negatively the success of the FSHSP implementation to access quality education (Tomaesevski, 2001). This potentially worsens the financial plight of students, most importantly students from poor backgrounds; something the programme seeks to eradicate. The FSHSP seems also to be silent on legal issues which keep children out of school. This includes how the programme treats working children, rural children, children in conflict-affected areas, child marriage, etc. Administratively, the programme is only for Ghanaian children and not migrants' children. These are violations of the CRC'89 Article 2(1) which frowns on discrimination of any kind.

The findings on the availability dimension also indicate that the double-track system has improved the infrastructural conditions in the school considerably. It has helped the school environment to improve in terms of sanitation, classroom condition, and teacher-student ratio (UNESCO and right to education initiative, 2019). These conditions are caused by overcrowding resulting in congestions in schools, and impacts negatively on teaching and learning. Though the double-track system has it challenges, which the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed, it solves the availability dimension of the right to education. The rights students have to choose freely between public and private schools have also been curtailed. All these impact negatively on access to quality education, which is inconsistent with studies on quality education indicators (Tomaesevski, 2001; Coomans, 2007; Matauranga, 2010).

The acceptability dimension obliges the State to respect human dignity and freedoms in education. However, the findings look inconsistent with other studies on this dimension (Tomaesevski, 2001; Coomans, 2007; Matauranga, 2010; UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019). From the perspective of staff, the way the FSHSP has been implemented has over pampered the students. They argued that everything has been waved, including corporal punishment which should have served as a deterrent. On the contrary, the student respondents see this as the support given to them to be able to enjoy their fundamental freedoms and human dignity. The position by the staff respondents seems inconsistent with the liberalism in education theory which enjoins the government to protect the rights and freedoms of students at all times (Thompson, 2017). More so, the CRC'89 Article 3(1) intimates that all policies about children like the FSHSP should satisfy the best interest of the child principle. This shows that the child as the rights-holder should be placed at the centre of the FSHSP implementation to ensure that their interest is protected (Cobanoglu et al, 2018; Orkodashvili, 2013; Aoife, 2017). On curricular and pedagogy, it was observed that the FSHSP is silent about it; as the programme's direction is on expanding access through the removal of financial constraints on parents. This potentially impact negatively on access to quality education under the FSHSP.

The adaptability dimension requires that every educational programme implementation practices reflect the best interest of the child (Tomaesevski, 2001). In other words, the FSHSP implementation should meet the unique needs of the individual student including children with disabilities, working children, rural children, gender affirmativeness' and LGBTI students (UNESCO & Right to Education Initiative, 2019, p.78). However, the findings from the study seem to be inconsistent with this dimension. For example, the placement of day-boarding status

of students is from the FSHS secretariat. This may deprive a rural or very disadvantaged child. The school in this regard can use the needs-based approach to allot this status to satisfy the best interest principle. About students with disabilities, the programme seems to be blank on it as there is no prescribed treatment for this category of students.

In summary, it is evident from the discussions on the findings that the FSHSP gives little room for other stakeholders to make input into the program‘s implementation practices to suit students. The programme‘s implementation practices further place a lot of emphasis on economic accessibility to education, neglecting other equally important aspects of the child‘s right to access quality education. Therefore, to provide access to quality education, all dimensions which serve as the benchmark for access to quality education should be promoted holistically.

5.4 Aspects of the FSHSP Implementation Practices needs Improvement

The findings indicate that FSHSP implementation practices treat day and boarding students differently. These perceived discriminatory practices need to be improved to ensure equal treatment for all students as underscored in the Liberalism theory which advocates equality and non-discrimination (O‘Neil & Piron, 2003; Wanja, 2014; Sally, 2017). The findings highlighted, for example, that students from far distances not admitted into the boarding houses accommodate themselves at their own cost whiles their peers enjoy free accommodation. Again, migrant children not born in the country are excluded from enjoying the FSHSP (Prempeh, 2017). The implication is that the FSHSP respects the rights of some students more than others. This is inconsistent with equality and non-discrimination as the fundamental principle in all IHRL (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2008).

In light of these discriminatory tendencies in the findings, the students offered the following solutions. In their opinion, government should assist day-students who come from very far distances to rent hostel accommodation to help reduce cost. Alternatively, day students renting accommodation around the school's environs should be allowed to join their mates in the boarding house to enjoy the daily three-square meals. Additionally, they suggested that the school should make available buses to help commute day students for free. The findings from the staff perspective indicate that the staff cumulatively advocates for a holistic improvement in the programme's implementation practices for the advancement of the right to education principles.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings and discussions. The research questions are implicitly answered in the summary of the findings. It brings the themes together to present an organized thought in the form of a conclusion; and to make recommendations that could help improve or solve the identified research gap. This chapter is organized in sections: after this introduction is the summary of the findings; and the last section is on the conclusion of the research, recommendations, limitations of the study and a suggestion for further study.

6.1 Summary of Findings

The purpose of the research was to do a right-based analysis of the FSHSP. In line with this purpose, the summary of the responses to the main research questions were:

6.1.1 How stakeholder participation affects the FSHSP implementation

The analysis revealed that majority of respondents strongly disagreed to adequate stakeholder involvement in the FSHS programme‘s implementation. Nonetheless, the staff respondents did not entirely disagree with stakeholders‘ participation in the FSHSP implementation. This indicates that the FSHSP implementation over the years shows ambit of stakeholder participation. Even though, the general assertion from respondents is that the programme implementation is centralized, adequate stakeholder participation in the FSHSP will ensure access to quality education.

6.1.2 Ways the FSHSP implementation practices promote the right to education

From the analysis, the students were sceptical about the extent to which the FSHSP implementation practices promote the right to education. They were of the views that the free SHS programme has improved access to education for all in terms of removing the financial barriers that usually prevent some students from enrolling. However, the analysis showed that these students believed that the programme implementation practices have been counter-productive. They argued that the implementation practices were discriminatory for various reasons. First, day students were not fed as boarders. They secure their own accommodation, breakfast, and supper. Second, the track system was imposed such that students and parents did not have the right to choose which track they wished. Third, students and parents were not allowed to choose schools in line with their religious beliefs or other considerations such us the nearness factor. However, the staffs had a greater majority in favour that FSHSP implementation practices promote the child's right to education. A cross-tabulation to predict students-class perceptions on this assertion indicated that the FSHSP implementation practices are gradually improving towards promoting the child's right to education as the changes and experiences over the years point towards this direction.

6.2.3 The effects stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation practices have on access to quality education

The effects stakeholders' participation in the FSHSP implementation have on the child's right to access quality education established that elaborative stakeholders' participation in the FSHSP implementation practices would positively affect the child's right to access quality education. This is because most stakeholders who serve as the catalyst to ignite the right to education principles on the ground have been

sidelined. However, more needs to be done in this regard to precipitate the realization of the right to education principles.

6.1.4 Aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices need to be improved

Finally, the fourth research question explored the aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices that may need improvement. It was established that the student respondents strongly agreed in support of equal treatment for both day students and boarding students. Also, both staff and students affirmed that the FSHSP implementation practices show a trend of discrimination among students in terms of feeding and accommodation. The staff particularly supported a holistic improvement in the programme's implementation practices. They believed that all aspects such as inadequate infrastructure which makes the implementation difficult, the double track putting pressure on teaching, administrative and kitchen (non-teaching) staff, and residential facilities need to be improved. The students were also of the view that day students should be given the same treatment accorded boarding students in terms of support for accommodation and meals.

6.2 Conclusion

An in-depth right-based analysis of the FSHSP established that the programme's implementation is flooded with issues which seem to oppose the right to education principles. From the students' perspective, there is minimal stakeholder participation to impact positively on the programme's implementation. On how the programme's implementation practices promote right to education, it was revealed that though the class of students suggests a gradual improvement in the FSHSP implementation practices in promoting the right to education however, the cumulative responses point to the fact that the programme's implementation practices frown on the right to

education in the face of the 4-A dimensions. It is, therefore, believed that an increase in stakeholders‘ participation in the FSHSP implementation would promote the child‘s right to education. To this end, equal treatment for all students in the programme‘s implementation practices will further the realization of their right to education.

The staffs, on the other hand, believed that there is some level of stakeholders‘ participation in the FSHSP implementation practices. Like the students, they agreed that increasing further stakeholders‘ participation in the FSHSP implementation practices would promote the right to education. They supported the need to improve the programme‘s implementation practices, particularly the areas as specified in this research. It is imperative that the integration of the right to education and the HRBA-E principles, together with all-inclusive stakeholder participation should define the conceptual framework for the right-based analysis of Ghana‘s FSHSP practices.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and discussions, the following are recommended:

6.3.1 The need for increased stakeholder involvement in the FSHSP practices

The findings and discussions indicate that active stakeholder participation in education is an essential component to promote the child‘s right to education. The study, therefore, recommends an extensive, inclusive and continuous stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation practices, as it is mainly government centred. This is an indispensable component to promote the child‘s right to education.

6.3.2 The child's right to education oriented FSHSP implementation practices

The findings indicate that the FSHSP implementation practices oppose the right to education principles in the face of the 4-A dimensions, the international benchmark to monitor the child's right to education. The study, therefore, recommends that the FSHSP implementation practices should be guided by the right to education principles, which will go a long way to improve on the right of the child to access quality education, through the enhancement of the infrastructural base of schools for both academic and non-academic activities and provision of a support policy for day students.

6.3.3 The need for a balanced treatment to avoid discrimination among students

The findings and discussions suggest the need for equal treatment for both day and boarding students in the programme's implementation practices. This is necessary as the FSHSP shows some traits of discrimination among students in terms of feeding and accommodation. The promotion of fairness among students is fundamental to equality and non-discrimination principles, the basis of all international human rights laws.

6.4 Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to one school, so the results cannot be generalized. The community members, including parents' views, were not included. The COVID-19 pandemic prevented large scale data collection. The politicization of the programme meant that there is likelihood that some participants gave socially desirable responses. Also, the analysis had to be adapted in such a way as to avoid giving the impression that I tacitly support a particular political opinion on the FSHSP implementation.

6.5 Suggestion for Further Research

A further study on "quantitative and qualitative analysis of the FSHSP" will put the effects of the programme on the child's right to education in a better perspective.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire for Students

I am a student of University of Education, Winneba, conducting a research in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of MPhil degree in Conflict, Human Rights and Peace Studies. The topic for the research is: ―A Right-Based analysis of Ghana's FSHSP Practices." The study is being conducted at Nkawie Senior High School (Technical) in the Atwima Nwabiagy Municipality of the Ashanti Region - Ghana. You are humbly requested to respond to this questionnaire to help me undertake the research. Be assured that your identity is held confidential, as the study is only for academic purposes. You are at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time if you so desire. Please, answer the questions to the best of your knowledge and understanding. There is no right or wrong answer to the questions.

Section A: Demographic Data.

1. Age:

(a) 11 - 12 (b) 13 – 14 (c) 15 – 16 (d) 17 – 18 (e) 19 or more

2. Gender:

(a) Male (b) Female

3. Class:

(a) SHS 1 (b) SHS 2 (c) SHS 3

4. Track:

(a) Single (b) Gold (c) Green

5. Status:

(a) Day Student (b) Boarding Student

6. I am staying with:

(a) Both parents (b) Single parent (c) Guardian

7. Parents‘ / Guardian employment status/ or type:

(a) Government employee (b) Self-employed (c) Unemployed

8. The distance between where I stay and my school is:

(a) Less than half a mile (b) one - two miles (c) three - four miles (d) more than five miles

Please tick or circle the responses in ONE of the corresponding boxes to show your extent of disagreement or agreement to each of these statements:

Section B: How stakeholders' participation affects the FSHSP implementation. Likert Scale	Responses				
	Strongly agree (1)	**Agree (2)**	**Neutral (3)**	**Disagree (4)**	**Strongly disagree**
1. My parents contribute to the ways in which the Free SHS implementation practices are executed in my school.					
2. My parents had the option to choose between boarding or day status for me.					
3. How the Free SHS implementation is done in my school is always fair to both day students and boarding house students.					
4. My concerns are always incorporated in the ways in which the Free SHS is being implemented in my school.					
5. I freely chose the course l loved to study in my school.					
6. I chose the track system l wanted to belong to.					
Section C: Ways the FSHSP implementation practices promote the right to education					
7. The FSHSP has reduced the financial burden on my education.					
8. The distance between where I stay and my school has brought an additional cost to me.					
9. Educational materials given to me by government are fairly distributed in my school among students.					
10. The enrolment levels in my school affect my health condition often.					
11. My school's sanitary conditions always make me sick.					
12. The first aid facility in my school is equipped enough to offer me the initial treatment anytime I feel sick.					
13. My school allows me to practise my religious faith without any hindrance from the school management.					
14. I can freely seek transfer to any other school at any point in time.					
15. I have qualified teachers to handle all subjects in my class.					

16. I am always free to participate in teaching and learning activities in my class.					
17. The Free SHS has improved the quality of teaching in my school.					
18. The Free SHS has improved the quality of learning in my school.					
19. I am always given corporal punishment any time I offend in my school.					
Section E: Aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices that may need improvement.					
20. Inadequate infrastructure is making the free SHS implementation difficult in my school.					
21. The double track system has solved all the infrastructural inadequacy issues in my school.					
22. The double track system has contributed positively to academic work in my school.					
23. The double track system has put pressure on residential facilities in my school.					
24. Day students get the same treatments as boarding students.					
25. Day students from very far distances need support to rent accommodation.					
26. Day students not from this town should be allowed to eat three meals as those in the boarding house.					

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire for Staff

Please tick or circle the responses in ONE of the boxes below to show your extent of agreement or disagreement to each of these statements.

14. My school allows students to practice their religious faith without hindrances.					
15. Students in my school are free to go on transfer to another school at any point in time.					
16. Students in my school are allowed to choose freely, the kind of courses they wish to pursue in the school.					
17. My school has qualified teachers to handle subjects they are assigned to teach.					
18. My school allows corporal punishment to deal with students who offend in the school.					
19. Students are allowed to participate freely in teaching and learning activities in the class.					
20. The Free SHS has improved the quality of teaching in my school.					
21. The Free SHS has improved the quality of learning in my school.					
Section E: Aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices which may need improvement.					
22. Inadequate infrastructure is making the FSHSP implementation difficult in my school.					
23. The double track system puts pressure on teaching staff in my school.					
24. The double track system in my school has affected academic work positively.					
25. The double track system puts pressure on the administrative staff in my school.					
26. The double track system puts pressure on my kitchen staff.					
27. The double track system puts pressure on residential facilities in my school.					
28. Day students get the same treatments as boarding house students.					
29. Day students who are not from town need support to rent accommodation.					
30. Day students who are not from the town should be allowed to eat three meals as those in the boarding house.					

APPENDIX C

Interview Guide

This guide is to collect data on the research topic 'A RIGHT–BASED ANALYSIS OF GHANA'S FREE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL PRACTICES.'

How stakeholders' participation affects the FSHSP implementation.

*Do you agree to the statement that the FSHSP implementation has been mainly government centred?

*To what extent are other stakeholders involved in the FSHSP implementation?

*What are the effects of stakeholder's participation on the FSHSP implementation?

What effects do stakeholder participation in the FSHSP implementation practices have on the child's right to access quality education?

*In your opinion, have the FSHSP implementation practices been able to eradicate the financial burden that hindered students' education in the school?

*How does the school's physical environment affect the FSHSP implementation practices in terms of (I) infrastructural adequacy (ii) sanitation (iii) health (iv) classroom conditions

*Has the FSHSP implementation practices improved teaching and learning in the school?

*Are students with special needs offered different treatments under FSHSP implementation in terms of (I) disabilities (ii) rural children (iii) children from poor households?

Explore the aspects of the FSHSP implementation practices that need improvement.

*What do you consider in the FSHSP implementation practices that may need to be improved?