

KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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The Capitation Grant: Impact on enrollment of pupils in the Basic Education Schools in
Ghana. A Case Study of some selected Junior High Schools in Sunyani Municipality.

BY:

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE LEARNING,
KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN
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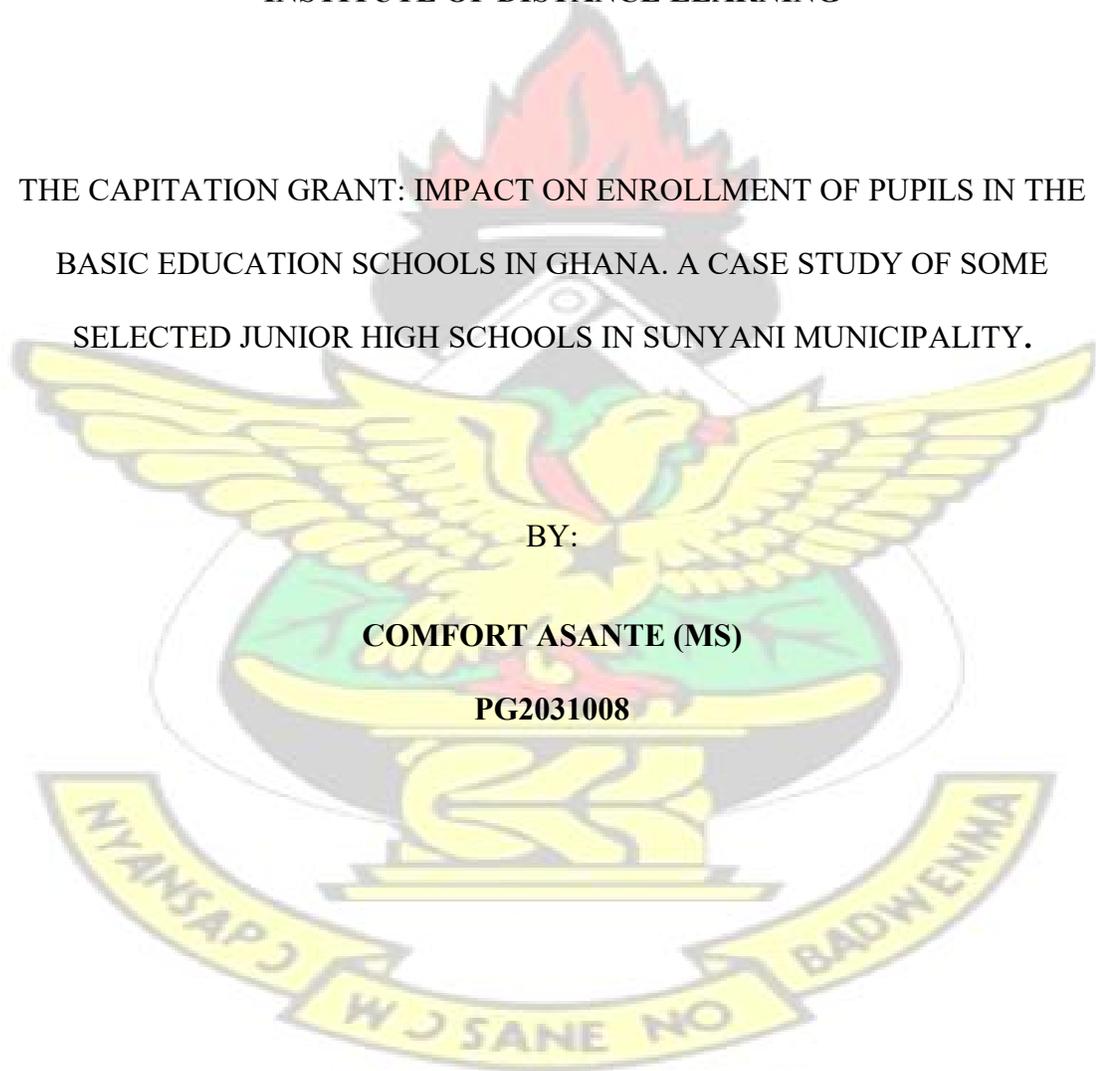
KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE LEARNING

THE CAPITATION GRANT: IMPACT ON ENROLLMENT OF PUPILS IN THE
BASIC EDUCATION SCHOOLS IN GHANA. A CASE STUDY OF SOME
SELECTED JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN SUNYANI MUNICIPALITY.

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JUNE, 2011

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work for the award of the Commonwealth Executive Masters in Business Administration (CEMBA) and that to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person or material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband Mr. Michael Agyapong Selby and my children Gifty, Sammy, Portia and Boateng who have been of immeasurable support to me during the writing of this project.



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ABSTRACT

This study provides an assessment of the impact of the capitation grant on the enrollment of pupils in the basic education schools in Ghana. It provides an empirical platform for assessing how the capitation grant is contributing to the enrollment of pupils in the basic schools in Ghana more especially in the Sunyani Municipality. It used a survey to assess the opinion of head teachers, teachers and other stakeholders of education regarding the impact of the capitation grant policy on pupils' enrollment in the municipality. A survey of hundred (100) respondents within 20 selected schools captured questions on staff demographics, capitation grant and pupils' enrollment, capitation grant and pupils' performance, and capitation grant and its challenges. The findings of the study revealed that the capitation grant has actually led to increase in the enrollment of pupils in the basic schools. However, it notes that given a rise in enrollment year after year with the introduction of the capitation grant, the amount of the grant as a percentage of unit cost per primary child represents a minute rise, and this raises concerns about the ability of the policy to enhance educational quality. The paper argues that capitation grant provides an opportunity to increase quality and suggests the need to link capitation grant to classroom-based policies such as pupil-teacher ratio, performance, drop-out and irregular attendance in order to impact on quality. Besides, the researcher recommended complementary education programmes help serve the most

disadvantaged or remote areas. The paper provides three key policy messages: increase in capitation grant should target disadvantage groups. Again there could be provision of incentives to schools with good record of progression and completion and effort should go towards the shortening of the capitation grant delivery chain.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

The Government of Ghana committed itself to the achievement of Universal Primary Education (UPE) by ensuring that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling. The government's commitment towards achieving the educational goals is reflected in several policy frameworks and reports. In May 2003, for instance the Ministry of Education and Sports came out with the Education Strategy Plan (ESP) for 2003- 2015. The Education Strategy Plan (ESP) was informed by many documents and policy frameworks, especially the goals for Education for All the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) and the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy. The Education Strategy Plan (ESP) serves as the framework by which Ghana meets its commitments to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in education that is the Gender Parity by 2005 and Universal Primary Education by 2015.

Within the Education Strategy Plan (ESP), primary education is designated as a sector priority and various measures and decisions have been taken by the Government to accelerate its efforts in achieving the MDG 2 by 2015. Some of the measures taken include the institution of the Capitation Grant to all public basic schools, inclusion of pre-school education for children between the age of 4 to 5 years old as part the of the Free Compulsory Basic Education (FCUBE), the introduction of a school feeding programme, special programmes to bridge the gender gap in accessing education and targeted programmes to improve access in deprived area. All these efforts, it is believed

will result in positive progress in the education sector, especially in the basic education. For example the government believes the primary school enrollment increased significantly as a result of the capitation grant and the waving of all remaining fees and levies. The Ghana Government also believes that the policy has helped bridge the gap between Gender enrollments in schools.

However, other researchers have been quick to point out some of the loopholes and challenges and have even doubted if the government could accomplish her vision of making education free for all. One school of thought asserts that the capitation grant will not be able to fulfill its natural promise of enhancing quality education; instead it will succeed in adding higher numbers to the already deplorable state of education in Ghana. Others also claim that the capitation grant has made schooling more accessible to households but food and uniform costs continue to constitute significant proportions of rural households' educational expenditure and could pose a barrier to parents who do not have the resources to cater for their wards in schools.

Nevertheless, there are others also who chastise the government for poor policy formulation, implementation and monitoring, which is retarding progress in the national educational advancement and so injuring the future of the current generation. It has been observed that the government of Ghana has to spend between 5-7% of her Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on education, as this will be in line with the views of the association of African universities and World Bank position on quality education. It is interesting to note that Burkina Faso spends 7% of her GDP on education, Togo 8%, Namibia 8%, South Africa 7%, and Botswana 15% whilst Ghana spends a paltry 3.1%.

This raises much concern as to whether the government would be able to achieve her vision of education for all at the basic level (Moran, 2006).

This has made the researcher feel that it is important to conduct this research on the impact of the capitation grant on enrollment of pupils in the basic education schools in Ghana.

Not much research has been conducted on the issue of the capitation grant since the government of Ghana instituted capitation in the basic schools in the country.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The Government of Ghana instituted the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) programme in 1996. This is because the government was determined to get more children into school. The programme brought a cost-sharing scheme to cover non-tuition fees, under which parents were expected to bear limited expenses in relation to the education of their children. More importantly, the government stressed that no child was to be turned away for non-payment of fees. It is sad to note that this initiative did not work smoothly. Although Ghana's school enrollment rates are high as compared to some other African countries, a persistent 40 per cent of children within the ages of 6 and 11 years of age remained out of school as of 2003 (Adamu-Issah et al, 2007). One of the main reasons why these children did not attend school was that their parents could not afford to pay the levies charged by the schools.

Despite the policy of fee-free tuition in basic schools, many districts charged levies as a means of raising funds, for cultural and sports activities, and for the maintenance of the

schools facilities. This had the effect of deterring many families, particularly the poorest, from sending their children, especially girls, to school.

In order to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for education and national targets established in the 2003-2015, the Government has taken a bold step forward by abolishing all fees charged by schools and also providing schools with some grant for each pupil enrolled. The programme was first piloted with World Bank support in Ghana's forty most deprived districts in 2004. Overall enrollment therefore rose by an impressive 14.5 per cent; enrollment gains for pre-school were particularly significant over 36 per cent (Adamu-Issah et al, 2007). This success led to the nationwide adoption of what is known as the 'Capitation Grant' system in early 2005. Under this system, every public kindergarten, primary school and junior high school received a grant of about \$3.30 (GH ¢4.50) per pupil per year and schools were not permitted to charge any fees to parents (Adamu-Issah et al, 2007). This study therefore intends to find out if the implementation of the Capitation Grant has made an impact on the enrollment and academic performance of pupils in basic schools in Ghana and whether it can help the country achieve the Millennium Development Goal 2 by 2015 as set by the government of Ghana.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The general objectives of the study:

1. To examine the impact capitation grant has made on the enrollment of pupils at the basic school level in the Sunyani Municipality.
2. To find out how the Capitation Grant in Ghana has affected the performance of pupils in the national Basic Education Certificate Examination.
3. To identify challenges and problems hindering the efficient running of the programme.
4. To find out if the programme has had any impact on gender disparity.

1.3 Research Questions

The project seeks to address the following questions:

1. In what way can the adoption of the capitation grant affect the performance of pupils in the Basic Education Certificate Examination?
2. How has the capitation grant bridged the enrollment gap between the boys and the girls education?
3. Does the running of the capitation grant programme come with problems and challenges?
4. Are there solutions or counter measures to rectify these problems and challenges?
5. Has the introduction of the capitation grant increased the enrollment in basic school in the Sunyani Municipality?

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study will be beneficial to all stakeholders in the education sector especially the government of Ghana. It will help sensitize districts that are yet to access the facilities to know the problems and challenges that come with it. It will enable them to make the necessary preparation and provision before they get on board the programme.

The problems and challenges identified by the researcher will help policy makers in their future formulation of long term plans and policies for the educational sector especially for children in the rural/ deprived areas. The study is expected to serve as a basis for review and regulations on the subject matter.

The study will further be useful to international bodies like United Nations International Children Education (UNICEF now United Nations Children' Fund) World Health Organization (WHO) International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and other foreign donors; as the study will reveal the areas where they can offer assistance to help humanity.

1.5 Limitation of Study

The area of study was limited by a variety of factors and notable ones are:

- Time constraints, due to the fact that the period for the research is short to allow for collection of adequate data on the subject and this can affect the final outcome of the project.
- Some respondents for no apparent reason failed to cooperate with the researcher during the data collection period.
- There were not enough funds to cover the whole of Brong-Ahafo Region and other regions. The sample size was limited to respondents in the

Sunyani Municipality because the researcher could not move to other areas to gather information.

1.6 Organization of Study

The study comprises five main chapters. Chapter one looks at the general introduction to the Capitation Grant. Chapter Two provides literature related to the topic. The Chapter three describes the research methodology, including the population, sampling techniques, questionnaire design, and data collection and processing. The section describes the core set of interviews that was used in the analyses. Chapter four presents, and analyses the results of the survey interviews conducted and questionnaires administered. Finally, chapter Five provides a summary of the major findings, conclusions and recommendations, and also raises issues requiring further research investigation in future.

1.7 Definition of Terms

C.P	Capitation Grant
FCUBE	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
ESP	Education Strategy Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
UNCF	United Nation Children Fund
CE	Complementary Education
UPE	Universal Primary Education

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Impact of Education Related Interventions

Countries worldwide are making good and encouraging progress towards reducing the number of out-of-school children. Specifically, Sub-Saharan Africa has witnessed an unprecedented 25% increase in enrollment between 1998/99 and 2002/03 (ADEA, 2007).

Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have been exploring ways of improving their education systems in order to achieve their commitment to education for all. Ensuring that children have access to free, compulsory and good quality primary education is receiving considerable attention from governments and aid agencies alike. Two main systems through which certain governments are using to achieve this aim are the abolition of school fees and the School Feeding Programme.

2.1.1 Abolition of School Fees and Education Outcomes

Abolition of school fees, especially at the basic education level has been adopted by many countries as one of the key policy interventions for influencing education outcomes. Fees charged at schools especially public schools, have been identified as one of the main barriers of access to education especially among the poor, orphaned and vulnerable children within societies (USAID, 2007).

2.1.2 Proponents of School Fees Abolition

There are two schools of thought on the abolition of school fees. The argument advanced by proponents of school fees' abolition is that, school fees and other direct education related costs to households represent a significant obstacle to enrolment of children in basic schools especially among the poor households (USAID, 2007). Abolishing of school fees will therefore make it easier and less costly for parents of children from poor homes to enroll their wards in schools and eventually help the country in achieving some of her education related goals.

Malawi represents one of the first countries to adopt the policy of school fees abolition (Al-Samarrai *et al*, 2006). Other countries in Africa that have also abolished school fees in the 2000s include Lesotho, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia and Ghana (Al-Samarrai *et al*, 2006). As a result of abolishing school fees in Malawi, enrollment rates is reported to have increased dramatically at both the primary and the secondary levels and the impact of this increment was very biased in favour of the poor (Al-Samarrai *et al*, 2006 and USAID, 2007). Abolition of the school fees in Uganda nearly led to a doubling in enrolment figures in the year after the abolition. Similar increases in enrollment rates following school fees abolition were also realized in Tanzania in 2001, Lesotho in 2000 and Cameroon in 1999 (USAID, 2007). Of utmost importance within these enrolment figures are enrollment rates among the disadvantaged children (girls, orphans, and children in rural areas) which experienced rapid increases and thereby widened access to education.

The other school of thought against school fees abolition states that abolishing school fees does contribute to reduction in the direct cost of education but does not necessarily

reduce the costs to zero (USAID, 2007). There are other costs, aside school fees that are still borne by households.

These costs include those on transportation to and from school, contribution of households to construction of school buildings and other management costs, cost of textbooks and other support given to teachers by households. In line with this argument, the policy should critically take into consideration the totality of all these costs borne by households and not only school fees.

Abolishing school fees, although identified to have a positive effect on enrollment, may have a negative effect on the quality of education (USAID, 2007). It could be argued that the increase in enrollment figures following school fees abolition are more likely to exceed the available space in schools, teachers, and education and teaching materials in the schools. In Malawi for instance, after the abolition of school fees, the ratio of pupils to the number of classrooms increased to 119:1, the ratio of pupils to teachers also increased to 62:1 and the ratio of pupils to text books increased to 24:1. Similarly, expenditure per-pupil fell approximately by \$12 per year for primary school pupils (USAID, 2007).

In most instances, the rise in enrollment figures resulting from school fees abolition is likely to increase the number of pupils per teacher or a phenomenal rise in the number of newly recruited and untrained or barely trained teachers. This is likely to affect the quality of teaching in the classroom.

Anecdotal evidence from Malawi indicates that elimination of school fees reduces the willingness of communities to provide voluntary support for local schools as local

leaders interpret abolition of school fees as central government's assumption of full financial responsibility. Voluntary community support is a very important contribution to schools especially in the rural and deprived communities.

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2.2 Policy Framework

Ghana has since 1951, and especially after independence in 1957, made significant strides in its education system. The system, as it is now, is the result of major policy initiatives in education adopted by both the present and past governments. Some of the laws, policy documents and reports, like the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education Programme (1996) have helped in meeting the educational needs and aspirations of the people to some extent. Article 38 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana requires the Government to provide access to Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE), and depending on resource availability, to Senior Secondary, Technical and Tertiary education and life-long learning. In recent times, the government's commitment towards achieving her educational goals has been expressed in the following policy frameworks and reports:

1. Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy 2002 – 2004 (GPRS I, February 2002)
2. Education Sector Policy Review Report (ESPRR, August 2002)
3. Education Sector Review (ESR, October 2002) and the Government's White Paper on the report (2004)

4. Meeting the Challenges of Education in the 21st Century. (The report of the President's Commission on Review of Education Reforms in Ghana, ERRC, October, 2002)
5. Education for All (EFA, UNESCO, Dakar, 2000) – International Paper
6. The Education Strategic Plan (ESP) covering 2003-2015.

In 2006, Ghana started the implementation of its second Growth Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II). The GPRS II is very much focused on developing Ghana to the status of a middle income country by 2015. Developing its human resources is one of the three main thematic areas of the GPRS II, emphasizing the creation of competent manpower for development of the country whereby education obviously plays an important role. The GPRS II not only aims to meet the MDG 2 but also to strengthen the quality in basic education, improve quality and efficiency in the delivery of education service and bridging the gender gap regarding access to education.

The Education Strategic Plan (ESP) which came out in 2003 and is focused on the period between 2003 and 2015 is based on the Poverty Reduction Strategy and operates within the framework of a Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) for education, which in Ghana is partly situated within the Multi-Donor Budget Support (MDBS) framework. The ESP provides the framework and roadmap for achieving the education related MDG's. The strategic framework of the Education Strategic Plan 2003-2015 is based on four main areas: Equitable Access to Education, Quality of Education, Educational Management and Science, Technology and Technical and Vocational Education (TVET). The ESP has ten policy goals including increasing access to and participation in

education and training, improving the quality of teaching and learning for enhanced pupil/student achievement, promoting good health and environmental sanitation in schools and institutions. In 2004, the Government of Ghana came out with a White Paper on Education Reform. The White Paper on Education Reform outlines a portfolio of reforms and objectives spanning the entire education sector, which are to be implemented from 2007 and have major targets identified for 2015 and 2020. The key objectives of the White Paper Reform are two folds. The first is to build upon the ESP commitments and ensure that all children are provided with the foundation of high quality free basic education. The second is to ensure that second cycle education is more inclusive and appropriate to the needs of young people and the demands in the Ghanaian economy.

With the reform, basic education will be expanded to include 2 years of Kindergarten as well as the existing 6 years of primary and 3 years of Junior High Schools (JHS). The entire basic cycle will be free and compulsory and will receive the highest priority of all sub-sectors. Overall funding for this sector will be supported in full by government. The overarching target is 100% completion rates for male and female pupils at all basic schools level by 2015.

Building on the ESP indicators and its targets, the education reform proposals have identified new areas of focus and targets, which will hopefully facilitate the achievement of the education sector goals. As a result of the Government White Paper on Education Reform, some of the Education sectors targets in the ESP, which were due to be achieved in Year 2015, are to be achieved earlier within the period of 2012. For instance, the Gross Admission Rate for entry into Primary One, which originally in the ESP was

to reach 100% by 2010, was achieved in 2006/2007 academic year. Similarly, Primary 6 Completion rate, which was to reach a level of 100% by 2015, is now to be achieved by 2012. Gross Enrollment for Primary education is now scheduled to reach 107.4% by 2012, in order to achieve Universal Basic completion of course content by the end of 2015. It could be argued that although Basic education in Ghana is from Kindergartens to Junior High School, spanning the age group 4 to 15 years, this will focus on the six years of primary education only. In assessing whether Ghana is on track to achieve and sustain Universal Access to Quality Primary Education, only the six years of primary education will be taken into account.

2.3 Policy Strategies Adopted

The following are the various policies adopted in the educational sector:

2.3.1 The Capitation Grant Policy

In recent years, there has been a worldwide momentum in which more developing countries are moving to sustain and reinforce the renewed progress toward Universal Primary Education through bolder, accelerated and scaled strategies. School fees abolition is becoming increasingly acknowledged as one of these strategies and as a key measure to achieving children's right to education. In view of this, the World Bank and UNCF in 2005 launched the School Fee Abolition Initiative which aimed at disseminating lessons from the experience of countries that have abolished fees and provide context-specific advice to countries that are seeking to do so.

Experience in several countries shows that the private costs of schooling are a major barrier that prevents many children from accessing and completing quality basic education. They are especially burdensome in countries where poverty imposes tough choices on families and households about how many and which children to send to school, and for how long. School fees represent a regressive taxation on poor families, and the enrollment of poor, excluded and vulnerable children is very sensitive to fees, even when these are small.

School fee abolition is not just about “tuition fees” (which do not necessarily constitute the main bulk of fees). School fee abolition must take into consideration the wide range of the costs of schooling to families and households. This means any direct and indirect costs/charges (tuition fees, costs of text books, supplies and uniforms, PTA contributions, costs related to sports and other school activities, costs related to transportation, and contributions to teachers’ salaries) as well as opportunity costs and other burdens on poor families. Countries that have taken bold steps to eliminate school fees and other indirect education costs saw a surge in total enrollment in the year following the abolition – 11% in Lesotho (2001), 12% in Mozambique (2005), 14% in Ghana (2006), 18% in Kenya (2004), 23% in Ethiopia (1996), 23% in Tanzania (2002), 26% in Cameroon (2000), 51% in Malawi (1995) and 68% in Uganda (1998) (ADEA, 2007).

2.3.2 Capitation Grant Application (School Fee Abolition) in Ghana

The Government of Ghana implemented the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) programme in 1996. This implied that there was going to be a cost

sharing scheme to cover non- tuition fees determined to get children into school under which parents were expected to bear limited expenses. More importantly, no child is to be turned away for non-payment of fees. It is sad to note that this initiative did not work. Although Ghana's school enrollment rates are high as compared to some other African countries, a persistent 40 per cent of children between 6 and 11 years of age remained out of school as of 2003 (Adamu-Issah et al, 2007).

One of the main reasons why these children did not attend school was that their parents could not afford to pay the levies charged by the schools. Despite the policy of fee-free tuition in basic schools, many districts charged levies as a means of raising funds, for example, for school repairs, cultural and sporting activities. This had the effect of deterring many families, particularly the poorest, from sending their children, especially girls, to school.

To meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for education and national targets as established in the 2003-2015 Education Strategic Plan, the Government took a bold step by abolishing all fees charged by schools and also providing schools with a small grant for each pupil enrolled. The programme was first piloted with World Bank support in Ghana's 40 most deprived districts in 2004 (USAID 2007). Overall enrollment rose by an impressive 14.5 per cent; enrollment gains for pre-school were particularly significant (over 36 per cent). This success led to the nationwide adoption of what is known as the 'Capitation Grant' system in early 2005. Under this system, every public Kindergarten, Primary School and Junior High School receives a grant of about \$3.30

(GH¢4.50) per pupil per year. Schools were not permitted to charge any fees from parents.

2.3.3 Impact of Capitation Grant on Education Outcomes

The decision to replace school fees with capitation grants has yielded some dividends by impacting positively on many enrollment- related figures during the 2005/06 school year. Some of the benefits that are highlighted by a UNICEF working paper in 2007 are as follows:

- Primary school gross enrolment rose by nearly 10 per cent, bringing total primary enrolment to 92.4 per cent nationwide. Primary net enrolment increased from 62 percent to 69 per cent.
- Every region in the country experienced a rise in enrolment; Northern Region (where rates were lowest) experienced the largest increase.
- Overall enrolment in basic school increased by 16.7 per cent in the 2005/06 school year compared to 2004/05. Enrolment of girls increased slightly more than that of boys (18.1 per cent vs. 15.3 percent).

2.3.4 Possible Challenges: Capitation Grant in Ghana

Critics of the capitation grant argue that this strategy may not have the desired impact on the quality of education. The quick high increase in enrollment experience from most of the countries that have adopted the school fee abolition raises questions about its impact on the quality of education. It is argued that when classes become too large or overcrowded and resources (human and other educational resources) are not increased

proportionately, the result can reverse hard-earned gains and de- motivate teachers, parents and pupils. Enrolling children in school is one thing, but keeping them there in attendance is the more important challenge. Furthermore, in most Sub Saharan African countries like Ghana, education quality is generally low to start with and any deterioration in the conditions of learning resulting from a surge in enrolment is likely to have a dramatic negative effect on completion and achievement.

The Ghana Education Service (GES) has indicated that the capitation grant scheme is not devoid of challenges. Some of the challenges identified by the GES include the following:

- (i) Increased demand for additional classrooms
- (ii) Demand for additional teachers
- (iii) Demand for additional textbooks and other teaching and learning materials
- (iv) Difficulty of sustaining community participation
- (v) Revision of the capitation grants and proportion between Kindergarten, Primary, JSS or between boys and girls
- (vi) Even though actual release of funds has been smooth and effective, timely release of funds to districts and schools remains an issue
- (vii) Inadequate level of transparency at school level

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodology used for the study. It involves the research design, data collection, population and sample, as well as the instruments used. The procedure for data collection and data analysis has been discussed.

3.1 Research Design

The research design was a descriptive survey which assessed the impact of capitation grant on the enrollment of pupils in the basic education schools-Sunyani in Ghana. The major methods the researcher used to gather data were purposive sampling technique, questionnaires and unstructured interview.

3.2 Data Collection

Both primary and secondary sources of data were collected for the study. The primary data used were those that were collected from Municipal Education officers and Head teachers'. Secondary sources were collected from directories of Ghana Education Service, online articles, journals and books.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population for the study constitutes all the entire Basic Schools in Sunyani, Ghana.

This was made up of the Municipal Director, Head teachers and Teachers.

3.4 Sample Selection and Technique

A sample size of 100 from 20 selected schools was chosen for the study, which comprises the Municipal Director, 20 head teachers and 79 teachers. A purposive sampling technique was employed for this research.

3.5 Research Instrument for Data Collection

Questionnaire was designed to collect data from heads of the selected schools. Other information was also solicited from the Municipal Director of Education and the teachers of the selected basic schools through interviews.

3.6 Pre-Testing of the Instrument

The questionnaires were personally administered to respondents by the researcher. The researcher explained the details of the questionnaire to the respondents thoroughly in order to prevent respondents skipping, avoiding or giving wrong information to certain pertinent questions. The purpose was to help the respondents to understand the content of the questionnaire and to do away with ambiguities, suspicions, partiality and also to be able to provide independent opinions and views. The researcher established a good rapport with respondents throughout the distribution and collection periods to enable

them feel comfortable to give independent and accurate information. Questionnaires were finally refined before its final administration to respondents.

3.7 Data Analysis Plan

The collected data were statistically analyzed, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Representations like tables, histograms and pie-charts were used to ensure easy and quick interpretation of data. Data from completed questionnaires were checked for accuracy and consistency. The open-ended questions were grouped based on the responses given by the respondents. Quantitative statistics indicating frequencies and percentages were used to present the results in a tabular form.

3.8 Reliability and Validity of Results

In order to strengthen the reliability of the study, the researcher undertook the following activities. In the first place, the researcher ensured that the objectives set were in conformity with the research questions. Literature reviewed covered both the objectives and the research questions. Secondly, special interviews were held with respondents who had sufficient knowledge in the area of study. In addition to the above, before interviews were conducted, three meetings were held to establish good human relations with the respondents which as a result, made the respondents feel more comfortable to give independent and accurate information which can be trusted or relied on.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the various data gathered from the field whilst administering the questionnaire and interviewing the staff of 20 selected basic schools in Sunyani Municipal/District Assembly.

Bar charts and tables have been employed to summarize the data obtained from the field and also used for analysis and discussion on the impact of the capitation grants on enrollment and attendance of pupils in the basic education schools.

The capitation grant started in the 2003 academic year. However, the year 2006 is used as the baseline in terms of discussing trends in capitation grants. However the trend for the whole period for which there is data (2003 to 2010) is observed for conclusions in this study. The primary indicators of performance that have been identified include pupil-teacher ratio, class size and enrollment rate.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 4.1 Status of Respondents

Items Investigated	Frequency	Percent (%)
Municipal Director	1	1
Head Teachers	20	20
Teachers	79	79
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

As shown in table 1 and Fig1, 1% respondent was Municipal Director, 20% of respondents were head teachers while teachers formed 79% of total respondents. Teachers, and head teachers forming the bulk of respondents has the tendency to give a clear picture of what is happening at the grassroots since they happen to be the major implementers of the capitation grant policy.

Table 4.2 Gender Composition of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	54	54
Female	46	46
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

From the table 2 above, it could be argued that there was almost equal representation of both genders. This was to ensure that the researcher obtains a balance with respect to the government capitation grant policy. This has the tendency of reducing gender biases. 54% of males against 46% of females clearly reduce the male dominance with respect to the views on government policies.

Table 4. 3 Educational Background of Respondents

Educational level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Tertiary	25	25
Post Secondary	57	57
Secondary & Below	18	18
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

The data portrays that, 25% of respondents had completed their tertiary education while 57% forming the majority had completed their post secondary education and the others forming 18% of the overall respondents. The above composition of respondents shows their ability to be able to analyze government policy on capitation grant.

4.2 New trends with the introduction of Capitation Grant

The table 4.4 depicts the changes observed with the introduction of capitation grant.

Table 4. 4 Changes Observed with the Introduction of Capitation Grant

Items Investigated	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Increase in pupils' enrollment	15	37.5
Increase in pupils' attendance	12	30.0
Improvement in pupil/teacher ratio	5	12.5
Improvement in pupils' performance	8	20.0
Total	40	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

The table and graph above depict that 35% out of 80 respondents (head teachers and teachers) interviewed revealed that there has been an increment in pupils' enrollment while 25% affirmed to increase in pupils' attendance. But in contrast were a small percentage rise in pupil/teacher ratio (11%), and 9% rise in pupils' performance. This is an indication that there is the need for more recruitment of trained teachers to complement the rising pupils' population and probably improvement in teaching/ learning aids in order to enhance overall pupils' performance.

4.3 Impact of Capitation Grant on Gender Enrollment

Table 4.5 Impact of Capitation Grant on Gender Enrollment

Items Investigated	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Boys	160	64
Girls	90	36
Total	250	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

This question was to find out whether the capitation grant has been able to increase the enrollment of one particular gender at the expense of the other. The above table and graph revealed that there has been an increase in population in school. This is represented by 64% boys against 36% girls. This is an indication that the government may need other supporting policies to convince parents to send their female daughters to school in order to correct this protracted gender disparity.

Table 4.6 Schools Covered By Capitation Grant

Items Investigated	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Covered Areas	18	90
Non-covered Area	2	10
Total	20	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

This question was to find out from head teachers as to whether the capitation grant covers all the basic schools within the municipality. Out of 20 schools visited, a total number of 18 schools were covered by the grant while 2 schools were not covered but they claim to have been assured of being enrolled on the scheme the subsequent year by the government. This is an indication that the government would need more funding to enable her include almost all basic schools in the country in the capitation grant policy in her quest to fulfill the millennium development Goals (MDGs) by the 2015.

Table 4.7 Areas Supported By Capitation Grants in School

Items Investigated	Frequency	Percent (%)
Sports	0.80	18
Culture	0.50	11
Other School Improvement Activities	03.20	71
Total	4.50	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

With respect to the key items that the capitation grant covers in schools, 18% of respondents claimed to have covered sports, while 11% asserted to have extended to cover culture with 71% contending to cover other school improvement activities such as teaching and learning, aids, improving access, school management, school/community relation and other school facilities. This is an indication that the government of Ghana needs to do more in the areas of retention drive and enrollment drive, which have the tendencies to improving pupils' enrollment and attendance in schools.

Table 4.8 Paying Additional Levies In support of Capitation Grant

Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	75	75
No	25	25
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

On the payment of other levies, despite the introduction of the capitation grant, 75% of the respondents were head teachers and teachers who have admitted that there are still other levies and fees in support of capitation grant while 25% disagreed.

From the table and pie chart, majority of the stakeholders (75% of head teachers, teachers and PTA executives) believed that parents and guardians should pay some levies, irrespective of the Capitation Grant, to guarantee quality education of the pupils.

In contrast, 25% of parents think that school authorities have no business asking them to pay any form of fees. This is a clear indication that government assistance cannot alone revamp the basic level education.

Table 4.9. Effect of Capitation Grant on Pupils' Enrollment

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	15	75
No	5	25
Total	20	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

This question was to find out from head teachers and teachers from the selected schools of how the capitation grant had impacted on pupils' enrollment. The table and graph show that 75% of teachers and head teachers believe that there has been a massive increase in enrolment with the advent of capitation grant while 25% were of an opposite view. However, it was observed that some discrepancies in enrollment figures from the

various quarters, as some of the funding conflicts with official figures given by head teachers conflicted with that of Regional Education Office. This could give an indication that there is a probability of head teachers bloating up their enrollment figures in order to get a bigger share of the government's capitation grant. This may call for Ministry of Finance to organize monitoring and evaluation activities in order to flash out ghost names. For instance, it was observed that figures from head teachers showed that enrolment in schools increased by 45% between the 2006/2007 and the 2008/2009 academic years. However, figures from District Directors of Education for the same period indicate an increase of 13 per cent.

Also it was found that GES enrollment figures for the survey districts were higher than those provided by District Education Officers by 32% in 2006/07, 33% in 2008/09. These inconsistencies in enrollment figures should be worrying because it can be a gateway to corrupt activities.

Table 4.10 Effect of Capitation Grant on Pupils' Attendance

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	18	90
No	2	10
Total	20	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

In this section, the researcher tried to find out changes in pupils' attendance with the introduction of the capitation grant. It is interesting to note that 88% of respondents

(mostly headteachers and teachers) claimed that there has been massive improvement in attendance with the introduction of the capitation grant and provision of food for the pupils could be singled out to be the main catalyst. This is an indication that the policy is chalking some successes and calls for other stakeholders of education to come and support the government in this direction.

Table 4.11 Effect of Capitation Grant on Pupils' Performance

Items Investigated	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	16	16
No	84	84
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

It was clearly seen that there has been an improvement in pupils' attendance in classroom. The same could not be said for how capitation grant has contributed to improving pupils' performance in examination. This is because the figures in the table and graph above revealed that only 16% of respondents being heads and teachers believe that there is improvement in performance with the introduction of the capitation grant whereas a larger 84% disagreed. This is an indication that the massive improvement in pupils enrollment might have worsened pupil teacher ratio. This gives a little room for more academic exercises to improve performance. As large number of children completing primary school without qualifying to proceed onto higher levels of education raises questions as to whether the capitation grant has not created new forms of social problem.

Table 4.12 Capitation Grant and Teaching Aids

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	6	30
No	14	70
Total	20	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

This question was to find out if the capitation grant had subsequently improved upon teaching aids to support learning activities in the classroom. The table and graph above depicts that 70% of 100 respondents studied(representing 70%) said there has not been any improvement in teaching aids at all while 30 respondents (representing 30%) responded seeing improvement in teaching aids. Besides, it was observed that, learning aids were found to have been mostly acquired by head teachers for their schools and sometimes some had trickled in from the government.

Table 4.13 Monitoring and Evaluation of the Capitation Grant

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	7	35
No	13	55
Total	20	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

This item on the questionnaire was to find out if there had been efficient monitoring and evaluation in the implementation of the capitation grants policy. According to the table

and graph above only 7% of respondents are satisfied with the monitoring and evaluation of the programme whilst a huge 93% of respondents seemed dissatisfied. This comes in support of the survey by the Centre for Democratic Development, Ghana (CDD-Ghana) which seriously interdicted officials of the Ghana Education Service (GES), especially headteachers, for leaks in the disbursement and utilization of the Capitation Grant, thereby defeating the purpose for which the grant was introduced.

Another survey had further exposed the deliberate inflation of enrollment figures by some officials and delays in the release of the funds, some as late as three years, with an average misappropriation of GH¢ 600 per school in a year (Ato, 2010). This indicates that the spending pattern of the grant must be evaluated to determine whether it is being used to improve education, as anticipated by the policy. Hence the relationship between the allocation, equity and improved quality outcomes in the educational sector must be assessed.

Table4.14: Efficient Usage of the Capitation Grant in Public Schools

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	20	20
No	80	80
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

This question was to assess the efficient usage of capitation grant by the policy implementers. The above table and graph depict that out of 100 respondents visited only 20% of headteachers were pleased with the disbursement and utilization of the grant

while 80% seemed dissatisfied. This comes in support of the findings contained in a report dubbed: “Public Expenditure Tracking Survey in Ghana: Tracking Capitation Grant in Public Primary Schools for the 2008 and 2009 academic year”, which noted that because of the discrepancies in enrollment figures from the various quarters, there is the likelihood of the Ministry of Finance releasing funds for “ghost pupils”, with more going into the wrong hands.

Explaining the discrepancies further, it was discovered that figures from headteachers showed that enrollment in schools increased by 45% between the 2005/2006 and the 2008/2009 academic years. However, figures from district directors of education for the same period indicate an increase of 13%. These inconsistencies in enrollment figures should be worrying because they gave room for corruption.

Table 4.15: Challenges impeding efficient running of Capitation Grant

Items Investigated	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Delay In The Release Of Capitation Grant	41	41
Inadequacy Of Capitation Grant	28	28
Limited Coverage Of Capitation Grant	10	10
Poor Monitoring And Evaluation Of Capitation Grant	21	21
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

Here, the researcher was interested in ranking the challenges confronting the efficient running of capitation grant. In the table and graph above, 36% of respondents pointed at the delay of release of grant while 28% touched on the inadequacy of the grant. 10% complained about the limited coverage of the grant while 21% highlighted on the poor monitoring and evaluation of grant, while (5%) disagreed. From the table, the most top rank challenge confronting the efficient implementation of capitation grant has been delay of release of grant.

Interviews with the Municipal Director and some headteachers revealed that the capitation grant is often received in the middle, close to the end or at the end of the academic year and those were confirmed by the financial records of the head teachers. This is an indication that the grant at times may fail to meet its purpose due to its delay.

Table 4.16: Adequacy of Capitation Grant

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	15	15
No	85	85
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

The table and graph indicate that only 15% of headteachers were content with the sufficiency of the capitation grant while a large number of 85 % shows dissatisfied. This indicates that the fixed amount of capitation grant per pupil per year must be reviewed and that equity and need factors should be the basis for calculation because schools with huge populations would

have more and would be able to meet basic essentials better than those with a smaller population of pupils, thereby leading to a widening of the social inequalities gap.

Table 4.17: Time Release of Capitation Grant

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	4	4
No	96	96
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

Concerning the time of release of the capitation grant, only 4% of respondents seemed content while 96% of respondents saw it as one of the major challenges hampering the smooth implementation of the programme. Generally, majority of district directors and head teachers received the Capitation Grant for the 2008/09 academic year in the middle, close to the end or at the end of the academic year and those were confirmed by the financial records of the head teachers. In addition, some of the payments that had been in arrears since 2007/08 had been paid in May, June and July 2009.

Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS) provide a good tool for assessing whether money allocated to capitation grants actually gets to schools. These groups who had not complained so much was observed to depend much on their own internally generated funds and were to some extent self-supportive 96% who seemed dissatisfied claimed the money always comes at the late hour specifically at the middle or the latter part of the academic term. Hence Headteachers are compelled to borrow before the grant finally

arrives. For planning purposes, capitation grants need to be predictable: the amount needs to be reliable and the disbursements need to arrive on time. Unfortunately, late disbursement of capitation grants, and the capitation grant arriving in small amounts rather than in meaningful amounts, does not help to move the institution forward.

This is an indication that for the capitation grant to have an impact, the money needs to reach the schools on time and also there would be the need for Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS) to provide a good tool for assessing whether money that is allocated to capitation grants actually gets to schools as there is a likelihood of a region, district, or school receiving more or less than its budget allocation.

4.4 Capitation Grant Quota to Schools

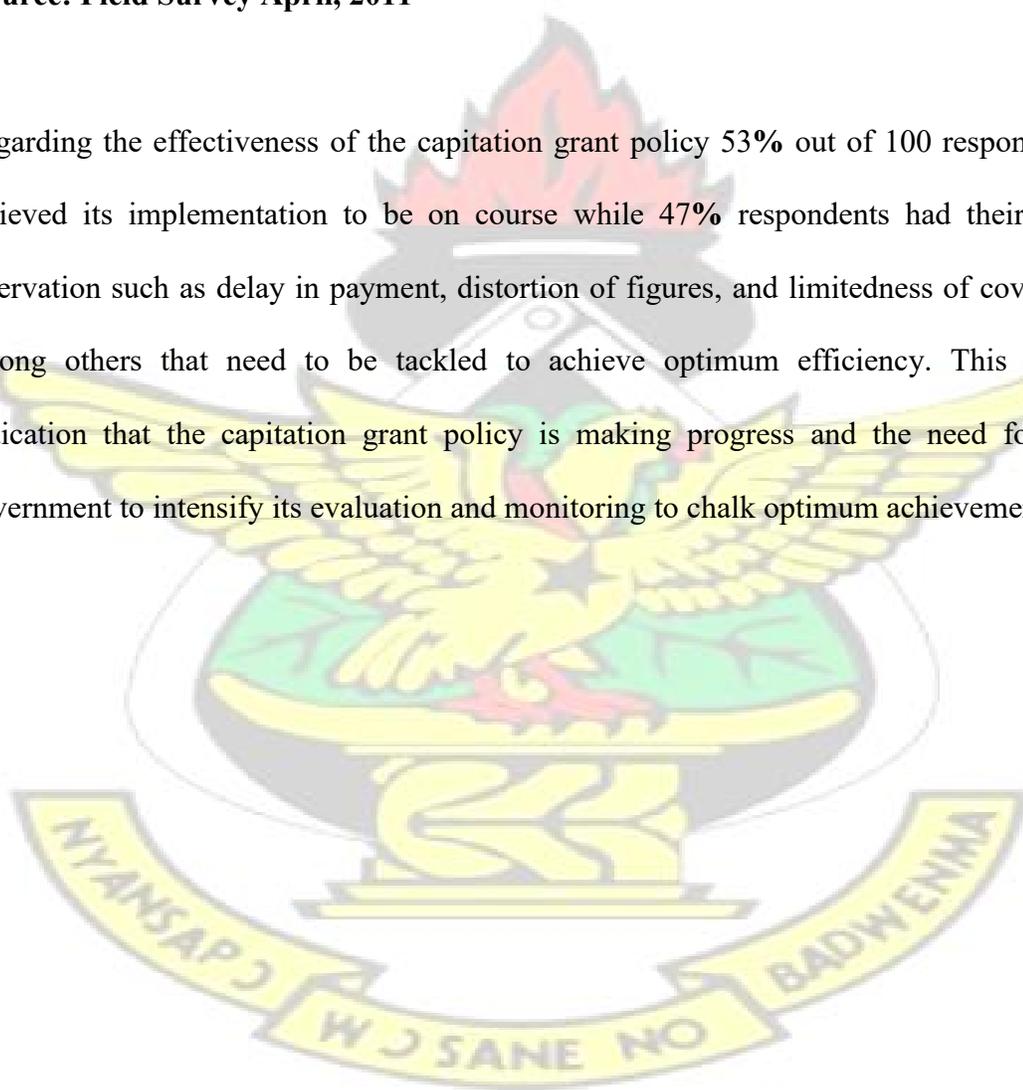
The researcher had no access to data relating to the total capitation grant allotment to the selected schools under study but it was found that the grant quota per child is GH¢4.50p and the quota for each school depended on certain factors such as the school's population size. This is an indication that there is the tendency for the head teachers to bloat figures in order to get a larger share. Hence the mode of disbursement may need a critical monitoring and evaluation from time to time in order to bring about equity and fairness in the allocation of the grant.

Table 4.18: Effectiveness of Capitation Grant Implementation

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	53	53
No	47	47
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey April, 2011

Regarding the effectiveness of the capitation grant policy 53% out of 100 respondents believed its implementation to be on course while 47% respondents had their own reservation such as delay in payment, distortion of figures, and limitedness of coverage among others that need to be tackled to achieve optimum efficiency. This is an indication that the capitation grant policy is making progress and the need for the government to intensify its evaluation and monitoring to chalk optimum achievement.



CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 FINDINGS

This study examines the extent to which the Capitation Grant in Ghana has impacted on the enrollment of pupils in some basic schools in Ghana; and specifically, some selected schools in the Sunyani Municipality. The study sought to collect data from the year 2005 to 2010 as the study period. The capitation grant has not had any significant impact on the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) pass rates in Sunyani Municipal area since 2006, when the capitation grant started in the Sunyani municipal area. The grant had been increasing over the study period, and there had been an increase in the gross enrollment ratio at the primary school level.

For instance, an impact assessment of the capitation grant policy revealed that even though it has helped to increase enrollments in 2005 to 2010, it also compounded existing problems. Some of the key challenges are:

1. Access to Schools

The increased enrollment of children into primary schools had led to a massive overcrowding of classrooms. It was realized that enrollment had kept on rising year after year.

This means that new classrooms have to be built year after year in order to manage the growing pupils in the public basic schools in the area. There had also been a corresponding shortage of furniture and sanitation facilities.

2. Shortage of Teachers

Shortage of qualified teachers plays a major part in deepening the inability of the country to provide quality primary education for the growing number of primary school-aged children between 6 and 11 years. Available statistics show that teacher availability and deployment together with staff to match the ever increasing pupil population remain problematic, especially in the municipal areas. In some cases, a teacher is expected to handle as many as 100 or more pupils. Once again, the deprived districts had been the worse off.

3. Repetition and Dropout Rate

Some key indicators on the impact of capitation grant on enrollment of pupils had been promotion, repetition and dropout rates. Across all public primary schools in the municipal area, the average rate of promotion, repetition and dropout in 2008/2009 were 90.85, 6.0% and 3.2% respectively. If this trend continues, it means that 3.2% of pupils (possibly higher) will not complete school, and this can easily affect the attainment of the MDG 2.

4. Economic and Socio-Cultural Practices

Socio-cultural practices can also have an effect on enrollment figures, particularly of girls.

Prevailing cultural/traditional beliefs, perceptions and practices towards the role of girls in communities and families is the opportunity costs of sending girls to school in some of the communities. For instance, the practice of engaging girls early in trading activities

keep many girls out of school as many parents prefer to engage them in income-generating businesses aside schooling.

Some of these parents, especially the old ones, may also be too poor to pay for the education of such wards. Often there is a mismatch between school calendar/timetable and household duties such as fetching water, collecting firewood, cooking, caring for younger siblings and sick family members resulting in some children (girls) not being able to go to school regularly.

5. Special Education

Between 2005 and 2009 there has been a steady increase in the enrollment of children with disabilities in special schools of about 40.5%. Female enrollment also increased from 1,249 to 1,901 (i.e. 40.3% increase). Between 2005 and 2009, there was an increase of about 6.7%. However, efforts need to be made to increase enrollment, especially of girls' as there are a number of children with disability who are not enrolled. Besides, even for those enrolled, there is a problem of shortage of teaching and learning materials (Adamu-Issah M. et al, 2007).

From the analysis so far, it can be surmised that despite the successes chalked by the capitation grant, over one million children are out of school in the area and being denied the right to education. The following remain as major challenges which need to be addressed if the Millennium Development Goal 2 is to be achieved in Ghana:

- Gross inadequacy of teachers in the Sunyani Municipal area.

- Insufficiency of some school infrastructure in the area such as classrooms and sanitary facilities,
- Unfavourable socio-economic and cultural factors
- Geographically hard to reach areas, hard to reach children

The goal of universal access to primary quality education cannot be achieved through the linear expansion of existing public schools system alone. There must be an alternative policy option to ensure that at least 10% can be enrolled each year in primary education in order to reach the MDG2 by the year 2015.

6. Alternative Policy Options/The Way Forward

Analysis of the current trend of enrollment growth rate at the national level in primary schools points to difficulties ahead in the attainment of Universal Primary Completion (UPC) by 2015, unless a special approach is adopted to reach the unreached. There is, therefore, the need to adopt

a programme that is flexible and adaptive and can reach large numbers of children in 'hard to reach areas' including urban slum areas or children who have to perform other duties besides schooling as well as children living in under-served areas.

Complementary education programmes which are designed specifically to extend the reach of formal public schooling in developing countries to better serve the most disadvantaged and/or remote areas will best serve this need. Successful complementary programmes leverage community interest, resources and management capabilities will help pupils to acquire skills. This programme will also promote development and

administrative capabilities of international, local and governmental partners to create schools that could increase the access, completion and learning of local children in under served areas. This can be achieved through the ability to:

- bring schools closer to pupils
- enroll older children who may feel uncomfortable to enroll in grade one and may drop- out later due to their age
- utilize local volunteers as teachers
- allow children to be educated while still supporting their parents
- utilize local resources as classrooms, teaching and learning materials
- reduce number of years spent by pupils in school (cost effectiveness)

Evidence from a number of developing countries with some characteristics similar to Ghana's such as Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, Bangladesh, Ethiopia show that complementary basic education has been used to address a number of problems in education (ADEA Biennale, 2006).

(i) Complementary Basic Education in Ghana

Since the mid-1990s, some organizations notably School For Life (supported by DANIDA), have piloted complementary basic education programmes in the three northern regions of the country for children between 8 and 12 years of age who do not otherwise receive primary schooling.

Phase 1 of the SFL programme (1995-1998), 10,500 children in 2 districts were given the opportunity to access basic education in reading, writing and arithmetic. In Phase 2 (1998-2003),

50,000 children in 8 districts were given the possibility to get basic education in their mother tongue while in Phase 3 (2003-2008), another 48,000 children had the same opportunity.

The major characteristics of the School For Life (SFL) programme include:

- Focus on children between the ages of 8-14 years (50% should be girls)
- All communities with complementary schools provided their own teachers or facilitators.
- Facilitators are residents from the community who volunteer to do the work and are literate in the language of the community (Preference given to females)
- Use of mother tongues as both literacy language and medium of instruction, strong community involvement / animation.
- Flexible School Calendar / Hours (9 months starting from October; 3 hours every afternoon) (generally 2 to 5 pm); and, 5 days a week (two off days are typically the market days, Friday or Sunday depending on major day of worship)
Allow children to maintain daily duties and to contribute to everyday activities in the communities
- Calendar is adapted to the community
- Use of primary school classroom in the afternoon or any other suitable place
- Link with Formal Education (one third of the students can read fluently after nine months and more than 60% of the graduates enter the formal school system and continue their education. In 2004, out of 10,959 pupils enrolled, a total number of 10,586 graduated.

(ii) Going to Scale with Complimentary Basic Education in Ghana

Complementary education approaches are proving to be not only effective but essential in assisting children, who would otherwise not be reached by the formal system. Taking such a programme to scale will ensure the provision of basic education opportunities to all out-of school children. Taking the programme to scale will call for the implementation of a number of key activities such as:

- school mapping exercise specifically linked to out-of-school children (location and size of structures to be used as schools, Governance and decision-making in the school, etc)
- identification and improvement in capacities of key partners such as NGOs, Charity organizations, community based organizations, and employers involved in providing basic education, to plan and implement education for out-of-school children;
- Sensitization of communities and parents to be receptive to and appreciative of educational and other basic rights of all children in order to increase their (communities) support and participation in complementary basic education.
- identification of a relevant time-tabling to allow children to participate in other duties typical of the rural area such as farming, fishing, household chores (fetching water, fire wood, taking care of siblings/ the sick);
- Identification of locally available human resources to be trained as teachers for the programme;
- Establishment of monitoring bodies for the programme, a system for linking the programme with existing education structures so as not to create a parallel

structure. The programme is envisaged as an interim solution to the lack of access to education in the target areas.

(iii) Rationale for Recommending Complementary Education Programme

• **Areas of low population:** In areas of very low population, it is not economical to establish a school. A complementary education programme can be used to mop up children of school-going age and prepare them to join schools elsewhere. This will be especially necessary where it is difficult for the children to commute to school in the initial stages and also where it does not make economic-sense to use scarce resources like classrooms and teachers.

• **Long distance to school.** Evidence from School Mapping done in nine regions in Ghana show that some children commute long distances to school. In the Afram Plains District of the Eastern Region, some children commute seven kilometers each day to school. This makes it difficult for very young children to go to school. It is possible to organize a complementary education programme to prepare them to school later when they are old enough to walk the long distances to school.

• **Over-aged children:** Majority of over-aged out-of-school children, especially girls, find it difficult to enroll because of the number of years they will have to spend in school and also the “embarrassment” of sitting in the same classroom with children much younger than they. A Complementary Education (CE) programme can be used to prepare the older children and place them in upper classes to be with their age mates.

• **Reducing of opportunity cost of education, especially for girls:** One major reason, according to the School Mapping reports referred to earlier, for children staying out of school is that they are needed to support their families carry out household duties or in

commercial ventures. In the Builsa district of Upper East Region, for instance, most of the out-of-school children are involved in cattle herding while in the Pru District of Brong Ahafo Region and Afram Plains district of the Eastern Region, most of the out-of-school children in communities along the Volta Lake are involved in fishing. Their parents/guardians are often very reluctant to release them to spend eight hours a day at school. Besides, most of these boys are over-aged and cannot be made to start grade one. Once again, it is possible to use CE to get them interested in school. The school mapping report on the Afram Plains district indicates that such children claim they can attend classes during late afternoons for about three hours per day. Their parents also reported that they could release their children for those periods.

(iv) Challenges of the programme as a basic education model for achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE)

- Difficulty to ensure quality of complementary basic education, considering the financial, physical and human resources gaps, especially for children of hard-to-reach communities;
- Weak linkages for co-ordination especially between state and non-state actors.
- Ensuring active community participation (in monitoring attendance, ensuring access of the most vulnerable children (including children with disabilities);
- Ensuring that complementary basic education is not treated like a separate programme rather than a complement to the formal system, and the formal primary school is regarded as the 'real' school.

- Defining a definite time-line for the programme (as this is a temporary solution to address existing problems) and ensuring that it does not become a permanent programme running parallel to the formal education system.
- Provision of adequate funding for the programme.
- Also the study finds that household welfare, education of household head and employment in public sector positively impacted on who attends school. While boys were more likely to dropout of school, children not biological children to household heads are less likely to be in higher access group. The study found that the large absolute increase in enrollment appears to have kept pace with population growth. Poorest households due to their large family size are more prone to school dropout and argues that a combination of demand and supply side policies will be required to support the poorest.
- Further, the government should move away from spending on education to investing in education and note that improving the economic conditions of the country is key to dealing with education problems. In addition, the country needs to engage in participatory planning, noting that education thrives when the political and socioeconomic fundamentals are right. Education should be understood in terms of lifelong learning rather than simply schooling. The government therefore should go beyond simply looking at physical access, and fully domesticate the process through workshops and publications targeting different audiences.
- Despite these successes, it is not clear how the capitation grant has contributed to improving quality of education. One disappointment is that a good number of

pupils remain unable to perform in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (B.E.C.E). In 2010, only fifty percent of the pupils who sat for the examination qualified to proceed into Senior High school.

- Moreover, statistics for the regions show a considerable variation in performance. Some regions are good performers with more than 70 percent of pupils passing, while others have just over 30 percent passing.
- The introduction of the capitation grant allowed children from all wealthy backgrounds to go to school. This reduced social exclusion as children from poor households could now afford to attend school. Net enrollment rates rose sharply from less than 60% of eligible school age children in the year 2000 to more than 95% since 2006.

5.2 Recommendations

This study provides insights into the ‘hidden realities’ of the capitation grant policy in the Sunyani Municipality in Ghana. It applauds the establishment of School Management Committees (SMCs) and the term preparation of the School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP), an off-shoot of the capitation policy. However, it notes that given the 17% rise in enrollment a year after the introduction of the capitation grant, the amount of the grant as a percentage of unit cost per primary school child in 2005 represents a 4% rise, and raises concern about the ability of the policy to enhance educational quality (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2006).

The study argues that capitation grant provides an opportunity to increase quality and suggests the need to link capitation to classroom-based policies such as average

enrollment, dropout and irregular attendance in order to impact on quality. The study provides three key policy messages: increased capitation should target disadvantage groups; there should be provision of incentives to schools with good record of progression and completion; and effort should go towards the shortening of the capitation delivery chain. Thus Capitation Grant should get to the school within the term period

1. The research revealed that the capitation grant has made public schooling in the Sunyani Municipality area a more viable choice relative to private schooling. The study revealed that capitation grant has made schooling more accessible to households but food and uniform costs continue to constitute significant proportions of rural households' educational expenditure and could pose a barrier to the very poor households.
2. It also found out that the marginal cost of schooling between public and private is not significantly high enough to discourage households from enrolling their children in fee paying private schools, it costs rural household about a quarter more when they enroll in private schools. This study suggests the need for government to intensify school feeding alongside the capitation grant policy in all poor rural communities to enable children from poor households to access education. Improvement of quality of education remains an important goal for many countries including Ghana. This is in line with the country's subscription to the MDGs and also its own local constitutional requirement.
3. Improving the quantity and quality of education requires that the policy addresses both demand and supply side constraints of education. The provision

of more textbooks, classroom blocks, and trained teachers tend to ease supply side constraints to education.

4. Also understanding how such a policy contributes to the achievement of the MDGs, and more, is non-trivial. Stakeholders of education in Ghana should constantly be made aware and when done, the Capitation Grant can be expected to positively affect the quantity of education that is effectively provided.
5. As a consequence, we argue that the capitation grant needs revision: In terms of policy, more money should be allocated; in terms of practice, the budget allocation should be disbursed in full and in a timely manner; and in terms of transparency, everyone –including teachers, parents and students – should be aware about how much money will be sent when and for what purpose..
6. Data about capitation grant disbursements per district council and at school level are surprisingly inaccessible. Since capitation grants are public money intended to improve the quality of learning, it is in the interest of citizens that such information be more readily available. The Government would equally benefit from access to such data as monitoring is essential for appropriate planning. There is, therefore, an urgent need for systematic approach to monitoring and reporting the amount in capitation grants disbursed from central government to councils and from the councils to schools.

While this information is not yet available, this brief relies on information from Public

Expenditure Tracking Surveys of the sector, the budget books, and interviews we conducted with teachers. The following observations stand out as requiring further attention.

7. For the capitation grant to have an impact, the money needs to reach the schools in good time. Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS) provide a good tool for assessing whether money allocated regarding capitation grants actually gets to schools. Recently, in collaboration with its donors, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training commissioned a tracking of public expenditure for the fiscal year 2007/08. This survey reveals that, in addition to allocations falling short of the policy, not all money that is allocated actually flows to the schools. A region, district council, or school may receive more or less than its budget allocation; usually they receive less. For instance, in 2007/8 the amount in capitation grants reaching the schools averaged GH¢ 5,026.80 per pupil, while the district councils reported making disbursements averaging GH¢ 5,484.00 per pupil (MOEVT 2010). Yet, when one compares this to budget allocation, one finds that GH¢ 6,622.80 per student had been allocated (Figure 8). The PETS notes further variations across district councils and schools, and that amounts disbursed ranged from a minimum of GH¢ 1,512.00 to GH¢ 23,083.20 per pupil.

5.3 Discussion on Recent Trends in Gaining Access to Education

From the analysis of enrollment trends presented it could be argued that currently, Ghana has experienced gains in gross and net enrollment ratios in primary and senior high schools since 2002. While it is not possible to infer a causal relationship between

the Capitation Grant Scheme and accompanying increase in enrollment in primary schools at this time, the evidence that we do have seems to suggest that the Scheme encouraged an influx of students initially. Anecdotal evidence from informal interviews of officials at the Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service suggests similar results. Rates of enrollment after the initiation of the Grant continued to grow subsequently but at lesser rate. The Grant seems to be associated with an increase in enrollment of boys in schools as compared to girls and in spurring on enrollment in deprived versus non-deprived districts. This could be due to the fact that more children were out of school in deprived schools to start with or could be due to the scheme having an actual incendiary effect in encouraging parents to send their children to school. While outside factors that historically overlapped with the initiation of the grant could pose a challenge to validity and possibly lead to the observed effect, these challenges are unlikely when looking at the data at such an aggregated level.

A March 2006 “Impact Assessment of the Capitation Grant” carried out by officials at the Ministry Of Education (MOE) on a sample of nine districts revealed that preliminary figures received from the districts recorded an increase in the (GER) in the public basic schools. The Assessment also suggests that students that had formerly dropped out of school returned as a result of the introduction of the capitation grant, and that School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations were supportive in urging parents to take advantage of the capitation grant to send their children to school. On the other hand, the Assessment found that many classrooms were overcrowded and that dilapidated conditions in some schools prevented an effective implementation of the capitation grant policy and discouraged some parents from sending their children to

school. The assessment noted that schools faced issues in accessing the grant, which resulted in the delay of planned activities. Bank charges also eroded the actual per student amount of grant that schools received. Furthermore, the Assessment suggests that school leaders did not include teachers in the School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP) process and that many school leaders were unqualified making it difficult for them to understand the principles involved in the preparation and implementation of the School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP).

Moreover, the Assessment suggested that the Ghana Education Service needs the ability to monitor and ensure an effective use of the capitation grant as there is no monitoring and evaluation team at the central Ministry to ensure that the structures put in place at the district and school level are working effectively.

Interviews with District Education Officials at the Accra Metro Office replicated the general assessment results revealing that the timeline and execution of the programme activities involved with the disbursement of the Capitation Grant are unpredictable. During 2006-2007, for example, there was no clear timeline for the disbursement of funds and the third tranche of funds had yet to be released to districts from the central Ministry as of the end of August, 2007. The district office was not given any explanation for this delay. This finding was also confirmed by one of the top officials at the Ministry; however, a reason for the delay was not given.

As mentioned in Section II, the funds provided by the Capitation Grant to schools should be channeled towards the provision of teaching and learning materials, school management (includes travel and transportation, stationery and sanitation), community and school relationship, support to needy pupils, school based in-service training, minor

repairs and the payment of sports and culture levies. The District Assembly should be distributing funds to schools for up school building, renovation and furniture related issues. Officials in the Accra Metro Education Office, however, reported that the Accra Metro Assembly has failed to provide this funding, which leaves schools in this area without the proper funds to pay for infrastructure and building expenses. As a result, the Capitation Grant funds are being used for school building, renovation and furniture related issues, which prevents them from going towards critical teaching and learning areas.

In their 2007 analysis of access to education in Ghana, (Akyeampong et al. 2007) assert that while Ghana has made progress in providing basic education for all children, even after 15 years of reforms, gross enrollment rates have risen by only 5%, and show little signs of reaching 100%. They assert that the issue in Ghana is not about getting more children officially enrolled, but rather is about reducing the leakage through dropout especially in the early grades as the nature of enrollment patterns from grade to grade has remained virtually unchanged even though enrollment in primary 1 has risen steadily. It could be argued that, it is critical to improve school quality and tackle the efficiency problem in order to ensure high enrollments continue in the various grades. Moreover, neither the Capitation Grant nor education policy does much to assure that all students who complete Junior High School (JHS) can attend Senior High School (SHS) as it provides no funding or free access to SHS. An analysis of participation by household income and rural/urban locality indicates that children from poor households and those in rural localities are less likely to continue their education to the secondary level.

In summary, there are two critical findings from our analysis:

1. Providing per-pupil funding directly to schools seems to be associated with increase in enrollment in the selected Basic Schools in Ghana. The Capitation Grant Scheme seems to be associated with gains in enrollment in under represented groups in Ghana such as those who live in deprived areas.
2. Accordingly, students living in one area of the country versus another are affected differently by the resources made available by the Capitation Grant Scheme. While the pre-pupil allotment of funding may be too small to remove what appears to be large financial barriers in many cases, differences in enrollment trends among different population groups and regions prompt us to believe that the capitation grant is being utilized differently in practice. The question of why some regions and districts as well as certain segments of the population appear to realize gains in enrollment after the initiation of the Capitation Grant Scheme remains unanswered. Our hunch is that certain districts implement certain administrative structures and processes that are associated with better outcomes. The data suggests that differences in practice exist across regions; however, we lack evidence on the nature of these differences.

The guiding assumption of education decentralization that putting responsibility in the hands of local educational authorities will improve the quality of education by improving decision making and allocating resources needs to be explored. A central issue in the debate about the merit of a decentralized school system is the extent to which local school and district leaders are able to use their increased influence to promote more effective school management; however, little research has investigated the implementation of decentralization at the local level (De Grauwe et al. 2005). Field

research that delves into local level education decentralization implementation structures and strategies is critical if education decentralization is to reap its potential benefits and impact the quantity and quality of education offered on a wide scale. Accordingly, for a future study, we hope to investigate the impact of the Capitation Grant Scheme on student enrollment and achievement across the country and delve into the process of the implementation of education decentralization at the district and school level through case studies on two regions of Ghana focusing four schools from three distinct districts. As Grindle (2004) argues, “it matters how reforms are introduced, designed, approved, and implemented”.

5.4 Conclusion

The study revealed that Ghana has made great strides in enrollment of children in school. Unfortunately, the efforts made so far, have not been able, and do not appear capable, to enroll all school-aged children. A complementary education programme appears able to supplement efforts made through the formal school system. For such a system to be adopted, however, will require strong government commitment, backed by a strategic vision and policy framework for the education sector that has the support of other key ministries like Finance, Local Government, and Women and Children’s Affairs.

Expansion of complementary education calls for reallocation of existing resources or mobilization of additional resources. It is expedient to note that expanding complementary education in Ghana is a hope to reach many children as possible as this

will ensure that the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG 2) will be a reality.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

THE IMPACT OF CAPITATION GRANT ON ENROLLMENT OF PUPILS IN THE BASIC EDUCATION SCHOOLS IN GHANA, A CASE STUDY OF SOME SELECTED BASIC SCHOOLS SUNYANI MUNICIPALITY

The researcher is a Master of Business Administration student of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science And Technology, Kumasi who is undertaking a research into *“The Impact of Capitation Grant on Enrolment of Pupils in the Basic Education Schools in Ghana, Sunyani Municipality”* for purely academic purposes. All information furnished will therefore be treated with strict confidentiality. Kindly answer or tick [] one of the options.

Section A: Personal Data

1. Status:

- (a) Head teacher
- (b) Teachers
- (c) Parents
- (d) Director

2. Gender:

- (b) Male
- (b) Female

3. What is your educational background?

(a) Tertiary

(b) Post- Secondary

(c) Other, please specify.....

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Section B: Impact of Capitation Grant and Pupil Enrollment

4. (i) What changes have you observed since the introduction of the capitation grant in your school?

(a) Increase in pupils enrollment

(b) Increase in pupils' attendance

(c) Improvement in pupils' academic performance

(c) Improvement in pupils- teacher ratio

(d) Others, please kindly state

6

5. Which of the gender by your observation has an enrollment increased?

(a) Boys

(b) Girls

6. Does the capitation grant cover all schools in this district?

(a) Yes

(b) No

(ii) If yes, kindly state

how

7. What are the facilities in the school that the capitation grant comes in to support?

- (a) Food
- (b) Uniforms
- (c) Others,(trip, Teaching aids, Sport equipment ,Health facilities)

8. (i) Should parents and guardians still pay some levies, irrespective of the Capitation Grant?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

(ii) If yes, kindly state

how

Section C: Capitation Grant and Pupils Attendance in School

9. Has the capitation grant brought any changes in the enrollment of pupils in the classroom?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

(ii) If Yes/No, kindly state

how.....

Section D: Capitation Grant and Pupils Performance

10. (i) Has the capitation grant improved pupil academic performance in the classroom?

(a) Yes

(b) No

(ii) If Yes/No, kindly explain

how?

.....

.....

11. Has the capitation grant improved upon pupils' general performance?

(a) Yes

(b) No

Section E: Capitation Grant and Its Major Challenges

12. Has the capitation grant been able to provide the teaching and learning materials of your school?

(a) Yes

(b) No

13. Do you think there has been enough monitoring and evaluation measures in the efficient usage of the capitation funds?

(a) Yes

(b) No

14 (I) Do you think there have been efficient usage of the Capitation Grant in public basic schools in Ghana?

(a) Yes

(b) No

(ii) If Yes/No, kindly explain how?

...

15. (I) Rank these challenges impeding the efficient running of the of capitation grant.

(a) Delay in the release of capitation grant

(b) Inadequacy of capitation grant

(c) Limited coverage of capitation grant

(d) Poor monitoring and evaluation of capitation grant

(e) Others

16. Has the capitation grant allotted to your school been adequate?

(a) Yes

(b) No

17(i) Is the capitation grant released on time?

(a) Yes

(c) No

(ii) If No, at what time do your schools receive it?

(a) At the beginning of the term

(b) At the middle of the term

(c) At the latter part of the term

(d) Others, please kindly state it

18. What is your yearly capitation grant

quota?

.....

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19 Do you think the capitation grant has been/is being efficiently implemented?

(a) Yes

(b) No

20. Suggest how best to improve the efficient and effective operation of the capitation?

.....

