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**Master's Thesis in Public Administration**

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**ASSESSING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
GHANASCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAM (GSFP): A  
COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF SOME SELECTED  
SCHOOLS IN THE ATWIMA NWBIAGYA DISTRICT AND  
ATWIMA MPONUA DISTRICT OF GHANA**

BY

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THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION THEORY, UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN, NORWAY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIRMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

## **DECLARATION**

This is to certify that this thesis is the result of research undertaken by Rosemond Serebour towards the degree of Master of Philosophy in Public Administration at the Department of Administration and Organization Theory, University of Bergen, Norway. I hereby declare that this thesis is entirely my own work under the guidance of my supervisor. This thesis has not been presented or published in part or whole anywhere for another degree and that all resources used in this work have been duly acknowledged and proper references made. All ethical requirements in the pursuit of this academic project have been accordingly observed and adhered to.

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## ABSTRACT

*This thesis sought to assess the implementation of the Ghana School Feeding Program (GSFP) in both the Atwima Mponua District (AMD) and Atwima Nwabiagya District of Ghana (AND). Two beneficiary basic schools – Adupri Basic Primary School (ABPS) and Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School (MMBPS) – respectively located in AMD and AND were purposively selected as objects of study in undertaking this comparative assessment of the feeding program. The study is mainly qualitative in nature and relies on both primary and secondary sources of data. The study further employed both the Winter and Van Horn & Van Meter theoretical models of implementation in its findings and analyses.*

*Findings from the study reveal that the caterers' model of procurement under the local GSFP is in operation in the two selected schools because it offers stable funding and no disruption in the continuity of the feeding program in the face of undue government delays in the release of feeding funds. Again, the study's outcomes show that the implementation of the GSFP has increased school enrolment, attendance and retention in the two districts and schools.*

*The study further identified peculiar implementation challenges in both schools. ABPS lacked basic infrastructural development such as a properly-built kitchen and access to potable water to effectively run the GSFP while the feeding program at MMBPS is affected by local politics and a zero or little community involvement. The inability of the Government of Ghana (GoG) to promptly pay the caterers for their services coupled with undue delays in releasing feeding grants was a common problem. Also, the quality and quantity of food provided to pupils at lunch was low. The study recommends that the GoG should minimize its undue delays in releasing feeding grants and endeavour to promptly pay the caterers.*

*Finally, the schools especially ABPS should be assisted with its infrastructural development.*

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my sweetheart, Mr. Eugene Wiafe and my parents, Mr and Mrs Otuo Serebour.

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My heart is full of thanks and praise to Jesus Christ – My Lord and Saviour – for all these years of His manifold blessings, unmerited favour and protection. God’s grace and mercy indeed brought me through. Glory and honour be to His holy name now and forever: Amen!

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Finally, I take full responsibility for any unintended omissions, commission and misrepresentations that may be found in this thesis. Thank you!

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ABPS	Adupri Basic Primary School
AMD	Atwima Mponua District
AND	Atwima Nwabiagya District
AU	African Union
CCTI	Conditional Cash Transfer Initiative
CREATE	Consortium for Educational Access, Transition and Equity
DCE	District Chief Executive
DIC	District Implementation Committee
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GES	Ghana Education Service
GLSS	Ghana Living Standards Survey
GNA	Ghana News Agency
GoG	Government of Ghana
GPRS	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy
GSFP	Ghana School Feeding Program
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
IGFs	Internally Generated Funds
LEAP	Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MMBPS	Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture

MoFEP	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NHIS	National Health Insurance Scheme
NPP	New Patriotic Party
PCD	Partnership for Child Development
SIC	School Implementation Committee
SNV	Netherlands Development Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WFP	World Food Programme

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

The Government of Ghana joined the then Organization of African Unity (OAU) which is now the African Union (AU) with other member states of the continental body to adopt the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in July, 2001 in Zambia. NEPAD offers the socio-economic development blueprint for the entire African continent by drawing on key projects and programs, resource mobilization and the broader engagements of the international community and other economic blocs.

NEPAD serves as facilitating vehicle for all AU member states to work towards implementing workable policies and projects aimed at reducing the levels of poverty, underdevelopment and curb international marginalization that Africa is deeply enveloped. NEPAD has four broad objectives that are critical in the development of AU member states. The objectives include the following: eradication of poverty, promotion of sustainable growth and development, fostering integration of Africa in the world economy, and acceleration of the empowerment of women (NEPAD, 2001).

In November 2002, NEPAD under its Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, itemized four pillars for priority investment. The *Pillar One* centres on Land and Water Management; *Pillar Two* deals with Rural Infrastructure and Trade-related Capacities for Improved Market access while *Pillar Three* focuses on Increasing Food Supply and Reducing Hunger and finally, the *Pillar Four* is concerned with Agricultural Research, Technology Dissemination and Adoption.

Of much interest to this research study is the *Pillar Three* which was aimed at ensuring food security, fighting poverty and ending extreme hunger that led to the birth of a pro-poor initiative in Ghana called the Ghana School Feeding Program (GSFP). The introduction of the GSFP was widely hailed as, it among others, sought to achieve the then Millennium Development Goals (MDG) *One* (eradicating extreme poverty and hunger) and *Two* (achieving universal primary education).

The World Food Programme (2004) defined *school feeding* as the provision of meals or snacks in schools with the objective of reducing pupil's or children's hunger while schools are in session. Put simply, school feeding is solely in-school food or meals. The GSFP was officially rolled out in 2005 with a three-prong objective or agenda. These objectives are

- Reducing hunger and malnutrition
- Increasing enrolment, attendance and retention in school
- Boosting the production of local foods

In 2005, the GSFP was implemented on a pilot basis with a total of ten schools drawn from each of the ten administrative regions of Ghana – one school from each region. A caterer and a number of cooks were mandated through contracts to prepare the food or meals for 500 school children. Often, where a beneficiary school has large population beyond the 500 school kids- per caterer ratio, additional caterer is brought on board to help quicken the preparation and service of the meals to the children. Given the primary education cycle of Ghana, the provision of food per day is estimated to be 195 school days for one academic year (Drake et al, 2016).

In the succeeding years of 2005, the Government of Ghana extended the GSFP coverage of beneficiary schools to two hundred schools in 2006 serving approximately seventy thousand pupils across the 138 administrative districts then – the current total number of districts in

Ghana now stands at 216 (Government of Ghana, 2016). According to Drake et al (2016), by close of 2009 the GSFP had extended its coverage of beneficiary schools to 1,695 which corresponded to 656,624 pupils or children being fed across all Ghana's 170 districts then.

The Ghana News Agency (GNA) in September, 2011 citing Mr S. P. Adamu who was the National Coordinator of the GSFP at the time, revealed that prior to the beginning of the second quarter of 2011, a nationally computed figure of seven hundred and thirteen thousand five hundred and ninety (713,590) pupils across all the beneficiary schools enjoyed a hot nutritious meal at lunch. In essence, the GSFP 'baits' school children to remain in school and study to improve their cognitive skills because they will be served a balanced meal at lunch and would not even think of running away from school as a result of feeling hungry.

By the third quarter of 2012, there was an approximately 150% increase in the number of school children who, at each school session, enjoy a hot meal at lunch break: this significant increase translates into a statistical figure of 1,642,271 in 4,952 beneficiary schools across all the 216 districts of Ghana (Drake et al, 2016). In spite of this increase, the school children's population of the 4,952 beneficiary primary schools only represents less than 40% of the overall national primary school population – in fact, it hovers around 38%.

In terms of costing, the daily feeding cost for each school child, Drake et al (2016) opine that prior to the increment in 2013, GHC0.40 i.e. 40 pesewas was spent on each school child which translates into a paltry US\$0.18 (18 cent). Beginning 2013, the daily feeding cost per child rose marginally to GHC0.50 (50 pesewas) which is equivalent to US\$0.23 (23 cents). For the on-annual basis analysis, an amount of GHC100 which is approximated to a US\$45 was expended on each school child as feeding cost.

In its inception in 2005 under then ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP), the GSFP was run under the ministerial oversight of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development



(MLGRD). The MLGRD sector Minister assisted by his deputies plus the coordinator and staff of the national school feeding secretariat provide national policy guidelines for the running of the GSFP. However, in September 2015, a cabinet decision by the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) relieved the MLGRD of the overall ministerial responsibility and placed it under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP) for the running and management of the GSFP.

The Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MoFEP), Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) are the collaborating ministries; the Ghana Health Service and Ghana Education Service are the allied partners of the GSFP while the GSFP's strategic partners include the World Food Programme (WFP), Netherlands Development Organization (SNV), Royal Netherlands Embassy in Ghana, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) as well as the Partnership for Child Development (PCD).

For the specific assigned roles as contained in the GSFP Annual Operating Plan (2008), the MGCSP (which hitherto was MLGRD) was to work in close collaboration with the MoE with the implementation, monitoring and supervision of the GSFP with the MoFA in charge with achieving the agriculture aims of the program and also working through the agriculture directorates at the district levels educate local farmers on the production and supply of food items as well as train and assist them particularly on farmer credit unions and accessing loan facilities to boost their efficiency and yields. The responsibility of releasing budgeted funds was placed on the MoFEP. The Regional Coordinating Council in each region was responsible for the regional-level implementation of the GSFP through the formation of steering groups with support and contributions from those at the national office and the collaboration with the district assemblies in constituting district- and school-level of implementation committees which will primarily be responsible for procurement of food items and other necessary logistics. While the district implementation committee is tasked

with the responsibility of planning, supervising and monitoring the GSFP in all the schools benefitting from the program within the district, the school implementation committee on the other hand is charged with implementing, monitoring and supervising the feeding program in each beneficiary school.

The Government of Ghana through GSFP Annual Operating Plan (2008) laid out ten-point criteria for selecting communities and schools to benefit from implementation of the feeding program. All the ten-point criteria have been itemized in the next chapter. Among these criteria include the poverty status of the community as established by the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS) data and National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) poverty mapping; low levels of school enrolment and attendance; schools that have never before enjoyed any school feeding intervention; communities with very high illiteracy and school drop-out rates and the willingness of would-be beneficiary communities to build basic infrastructure such as kitchen and store rooms as well as the show of strong communal spirit and total commitment of the local administrative district towards the feeding program and its preparedness and interest in sustaining the program in the district.

The study's chosen districts – Atwima Mponua and Atwima Nwabiagya Districts – are two of the selected beneficiary districts in the Ashanti Region because they are part of the most deprived districts of Ghana in terms of development, literacy rates etc (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010). From the foregoing criteria listed (not exhaustive) and given the high poverty status of these two districts, the study's choice of Adupri Basic Primary School in the Atwima Mponua District and Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School in the Atwima Nwabiagya District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana as GSFP beneficiary schools for empirical investigation into the GSFP being implemented in their schools is justified given that these schools lack the needed basic infrastructures and essential logistics and are located in very poor local communities populated predominantly by peasant farmers with little or no

education yet under these challenging circumstances, the GSFP has been in operation for years in the Adupri and Mfensi communities. This study therefore aims at making critical assessment of the GSFP in these selected schools in the two districts.

It is in the quest of the Government of Ghana to bring development to the Ghanaian people that led it to formulate and implement some poverty-reduction programs collectively called social interventions such as the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) which has effectively replaced then ‘cash and carry’ system, the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) which is aimed at alleviating poverty and promoting economic growth through cash transfer to extremely poor and vulnerable households in the society (GoG, 2013), and the GSFP among others (GoG, 2010). These social interventions (NHIS, LEAP, GSFP, Free Maternal Care etc) that sprang out in succession are closely intertwined. For example, the LEAP program according to ‘*Reducing Poverty and Promoting Growth in Ghana*’ report released by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection in October, 2013 revealed that “For families with Orphaned and Vulnerable children, regular school attendance has improved at all levels.

According to beneficiaries and key informants in Dompase [in the Central Region of Ghana], not only has school attendance increased due to LEAP, beneficiary families are now able to keep up with additional fees and also spend more on school books and uniforms. While LEAP has not had a significant impact on primary school enrolment rates, the programme has reduced school absenteeism (by 8 percentage points), grade repetition (by 11 percentage points) and the chance of missing an entire week of school (by 5 percentage points)”. The report further highlighted that “LEAP had a greater impact for older children’s schooling. For children aged 13-17 the programme significantly increased enrolment (by 7 percentage points), although mainly for boys, and reduced grade repetition (by 10 percentage points). LEAP also reduces the likelihood of older girls missing school (by 11 percentage

points). Hence, while girls already in school experienced an improvement in their attendance, boys experienced an increase in secondary school enrolment.’’

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Social intervention programmes are some of the means through which most governments seek to address issues that affect its citizenry. Social intervention programmes have existed in Ghana since independence to address a plethora of issues such as poverty, vulnerability, exclusion among others. Under the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) introduced in 2007 which serves as the umbrella policy under which policies on health, education, livelihoods, energy among others are implemented or rolled out. A pro-poor policy such as the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) which is aimed at making health care accessible and affordable to the citizenry through the payment of a yearly affordable premium was launched in 2003.

The high prevalence of poverty among a large section of the Ghanaian population contributes to the high level of hunger that is pervasive in the country coupled with parents’ inability to send their children to school. Poverty remains a major obstacle in the path to development as Ghana is still considered to be a food deficit country (Feed the future 2011, WFP, 2011, cited in Lynch 2013). Household poverty is one major reason why children may not attend school or stay in school. The inability of parents to provide their children with money for school propels children to find other means of getting money to feed other than attend schools. According to a study conducted by Consortium for Educational Access, Transition and Equity (CREATE) children who do not eat breakfast may not want to stay in class preferring to look for opportunities elsewhere to find food (CREATE, 2011). As part of a number of social intervention programmes to alleviate poverty and curb hunger thereby bring development to the people of Ghana, the Ghana School Feeding Program (GSFP) was birthed

in 2005 by the Government of Ghana (GoG) in collaboration with its donor partners. The objectives of the GSFP as stated earlier include the reduction of hunger and malnutrition; boosting the production of local foods as well as increasing enrolment, attendance and retention in school.

There have been sustained efforts by the Government of Ghana with the support of international partners to improve on the economic well-being of the people and also their liberate productive energies for national development as seen by the number of pro-poor social interventions key among them is the GSFP which is to address the concerns of school enrolment, attendance and retention among all children of school-going age as well as curb malnutrition in school children and finally to increase the productivity and wealth creation of domestic farmers in the country. A number of studies have shown an increase in the overall rate of attendance and a reduction in dropout rate of children in schools which are enrolled on the School Feeding Programme in Ghana (Bennett 2003, Del Rosso 1996, cited in Mertens 2007): this finding is corroborated by results obtained Lynch in 2013.

Mertens (2007) on the other hand found that the GSFP has contributed to improving the nutritional intake of the children (as the menu provided by the caterers and the food served contained the basic nutrients such as fats and oil, protein, carbohydrates and vitamins) and as such made some impact in curbing malnutrition. The school feeding programme is also intended to bridge the gap between boys and girls in schools by seeing an increase in enrolment of the girl child. This objective has seen a positive outcome in most countries especially in countries that provide take-home rations (take home rations are food supplies given to school children to be taken home) for school children particularly the girl child and this has contributed to a rise in the number of girls being enrolled into schools.

This is evidenced in the 2006 World Food Programme's report which showed a 7% increase in girl child enrolment and 90% increase in attendance among girls in Bolivia. In a study conducted by Ahmed (2001) in Bangladesh, the presence of take-home rations included in the Food for Education programme saw an increase in girl child enrolment as compared to their male counterparts. The effect of the programme on the productivity of local farmers has been found to be low as the link between the local farmers and the GSFP is weak. Most procurement of foodstuffs is done in the larger markets instead of the local community markets where the various beneficiary schools are located (Berkeley University 2006, cited in Mertens 2007).

In spite of the numerous research studies on GSFP and upon reviews of literature, no empirical study has been conducted into the GSFP in this study's selected basic schools in the Atwima Nwabiagya District and Atwima Mponua District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. This study therefore seeks to examine the effects of the Ghana School Feeding Program on school enrolment, attendance and retention as well as the local procurement mechanism in Adupri Basic Primary School and Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School in the Atwima Mponua District and Atwima Nwabiagya District respectively in Ghana's Ashanti Region. The study further seeks to discuss the challenges facing the program these local districts and basic schools.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The study was motivated by the following questions:

- ❖ What procurement mechanism(s) of GSFP is/are being rolled out in these districts/schools?

- ❖ What is the gross effect of the Ghana School Feeding Program (GSFP) on school enrolment, pupils' attendance and retention in Adupri and Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary Schools?
- ❖ What are the challenges facing the implementation of GSFP in these districts/schools?

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The study's broad objective is to critically assess the effective implementation GSFP in selected schools in both the Atwima Mponua District and Atwima Nwabiagya District in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. In addition to this general objective, the specific objectives of the study include:

- ❖ To ascertain the procurement mechanism(s) of the GSFP being adopted in these districts/schools.
- ❖ To investigate the gross effect of the Ghana School Feeding Program (GSFP) on school enrolment, pupils' attendance and retention in Adupri and Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary Schools
- ❖ To identify and discuss the challenges facing the GSFP in these districts/schools.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The importance of the GSFP on the socioeconomic development of a developing country like Ghana cannot be overemphasized. There have been positive outcomes amidst some challenges of the feeding program relative to school enrolment and the boosting of production of foodstuff in the local economy in some parts of Ghana as evidenced by findings of many empirical studies that have been undertaken by scholars like De Carvalho (2011), Lynch (2013) and Atta & Manu (2015) among others. The sustainability of the feeding program is therefore critical if more direct and indirect benefits of local, regional and national proportion are to be reaped.

This study is unique and significant in that the study brings to the fore the effect of GSFP on enrolment and retention in the selected schools located in the focussed districts. Again, the study highlights some local challenges that plague the implementation of the GSFP at the school level. Identifying such local problems and proposing policies towards remedying the identified problems will go a long way of making the feeding program better in the districts.

Moreover, the study thoroughly investigates the local procurement mechanism in the selected schools and whether the procurement mechanism in place is achieving the desired results.

The study further seeks to make recommendations based on the study's obtained empirical findings that are aimed at making the school feeding program robust at both the district and school level in order to meet the needs and aspirations of the people.

The study is expected to add to existing literature on school feeding programs and also contributes to the growing knowledge on the effect of feeding program on community involvement, local procurement processes as well as on enrolment, attendance and retention of school children.

## **1.6 Research Methods**

This study adopts the case-study approach into empirical investigation of problems under the social sciences. This approach is appropriate as it relies on the collection of data, analysis of the data and the interpretation of the data where a thorough and scientific examination is being conducted into objects of interest in our society. The case-study approach offers a scholar a comprehensive understanding regarding natural or social phenomena. To Yin (2009), the case-study approach is the technique employed when the 'why' or 'how' questions are asked, the research has no or little control over happenings and the interest or focus is placed on a modern phenomenon within the context of a real life.



The author therefore adopted the case-study approach to be able to answer the research questions set out in the study and particularly so when the interest or area of study is based on a contemporary occurrence in a real life setting instead of a historical phenomenon.

This study draws its data from primary and secondary sources. The primary data was sourced from direct interviews of carefully selected and relevant stakeholders, personal observations etc as Yin (2009) called it *triangulation of data* while review of publications, newspapers, books etc constituted the secondary data. The author placed emphasis on qualitative method instead of quantitative technique in answering the study's research questions. In this regard, findings of the study are analysed and generalized theoretically instead of being statistically generalized.

### **1.7 Organization of the Study**

The study is organized under six (6) chapters. *Chapter One (1)* entails the background of the study, problem statement, research questions and objectives plus the significance of the study. *Chapter Two (2)* contains an overview of Ghana School Feeding Program, its policies and practices. *Chapter Three (3)* covers the theoretical framework underpinning the study. It also captures the theoretical and analytical models including the specification of independent and dependent variables employed in the study. *Chapter Four (4)* constitutes the research methodology used in the study. The scope and area of study, research design, sample size, methods for data collection and analysis among others the author employed in carrying out this research are included in this chapter. The concerns of the study's reliability, validity and generalization as well as ethical issues inherent in this research are featured under this chapter. *Chapter Five (5)* presents and discusses the findings and results of the study. Last and not least, *Chapter Six (6)* highlights the summary, important outcomes of the study and draws conclusion. This chapter again captures the limitation(s) of the study, contribution to knowledge and some recommendations for further studies and policy formulation.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **OVERVIEW OF GHANA SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The chapter presents an overview of the Ghana School Feeding Programme. This chapter further explores the historical antecedents of school feeding programs in Ghana as well as institutional arrangements and funding sources of the GSFP aimed at the realization of the objectives set out in the establishment of GSFP. The chapter again touches on relevant policies closely related to the GSFP.

#### **2.2 Historical Evolution of School Feeding Programs in Ghana**

Ghana has since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century experimented with school feeding programs. The Catholic Church in Ghana in the 1950s rolled out a school feeding program in the form of take-home rations as a food aid to pupils attending many of the beneficiary catholic primary and middle schools. The essence of the food aid was to boost the nutritional status of enrolled pupils and also to ensure high retention rate in school.

Additionally, the program was to increase enrolment as the food aid was to attract those school-going children at home to enrol in schools particularly in the rural areas or inner cities where children are either left at home or go to farm or market place with their parents instead of being in school. The food aid program was hailed as it aligned with government broad objective of educating and training the human resources of Ghana to occupy offices and positions that were left vacant by colonial masters when they returned to their home country after Ghana attained independence.

The two bodies who have played major and pioneering roles in feeding school children are the Catholic Relief Services and the World Food Program. These two lead agencies together with other local and international organizations like Adventist Development Relief Agency, World Vision International, SEND Ghana and Dutch Development Agency have primarily focussed in areas such as the regions of the north of Ghana where the incidence of poverty is extremely high. A finding by WFP (2007) revealed that vulnerable groups particularly women and their young female children living in rural households in northern Ghana do not economic and physical access to food.

The food aid program is what has evolved to the present Ghana School Feeding program which has a much wider coverage net – this expansion to cover more beneficiary schools is to be expected given the explosion of Ghana’s population since independence. It is instructive to note that, the aims set out in the pioneered feeding programs in the 1950s are basically the same as those under the current GSFP but where the present feeding program has more widened objectives such as addressing the issues of gender imbalance, poverty, food insecurity and creation of local wealth and the improvement of the local economy (Mertens, 2007; WFP, 2007).

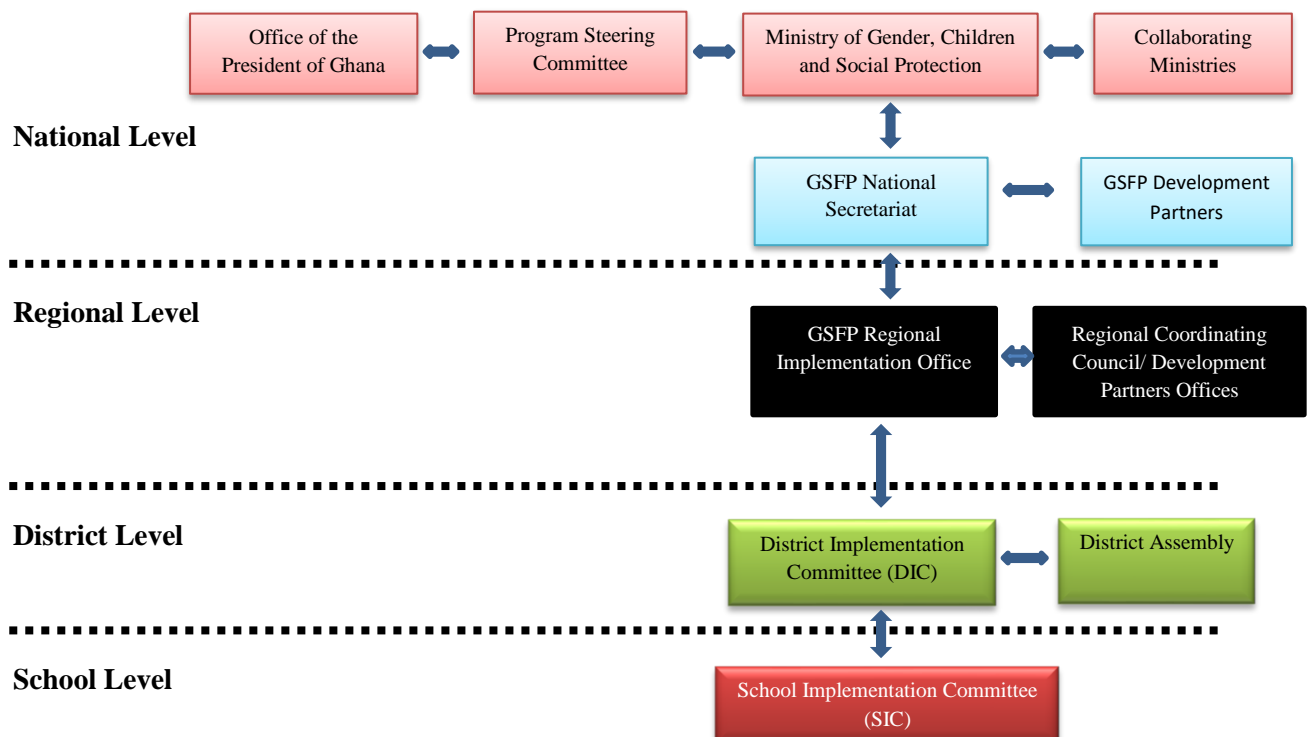
### **2.3 Institutional Structure of the GSFP**

The institutional arrangements of the GSFP have been embedded within the larger framework of Ghana’s decentralization agenda. Ghana has ratified a number of international and continental as well as regional agreements and conventions enjoining Ghana to devolve authority, power and obligations to the grassroots to engender local participation, democracy and good governance. Ghana therefore to give impetus to its decentralization agenda has operationalized the District Assembly concept where at the local level there’s a replication of

the national structure of governance that is purely run by citizens at the grassroots with wide community participation (Government of Ghana, 2010).

The Program Steering Committee (PSC) has the mandate to provide technical support through the collaboration of all the concerned government ministries. These institutional arrangements underpinning the implementation of the GSFP are well structured to serve as effective mechanism for preventing and checking corruption, misapplication and embezzlement of resources purposely earmarked for the feeding program (GoG, 2008). As stated earlier, the GSFP is now under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection overseeing the National Secretariat’s day-to-day running of the program and the technical assistance from PSC. Figure 1 below depicts the institutional arrangement of the GSFP.

**Figure 1: Structural Organogram of the Ghana School Feeding Programme**



**Figure 1: Existing Relationships among GSFP partners**  
*Source: Adapted from Government of Ghana (2015)*

## **2.4 Legal Regime, Policy & Institutional Framework of GSFP**

Since its inception, the GSFP lacked policy or legislative instrument(s) until 2016 when the nation through the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection engaged the services of some consultants to draft a national school feeding policy and prepare the necessary instruments to give the GSFP a legitimate and legal backing and further address any perceived shortfalls thus far in its (GSFP) implementation (Government of Ghana, 2016).

Ghana has been striving to attain food sufficiency through a number of government interventions such as '*Operation Feed Yourself*' introduced in the 1970s under General Acheampong military regime and in most recent times, the Government of Ghana's flagship program dubbed '*Planting for Food and Jobs*'. All these are aimed at ensuring employment for Ghanaians who venture into agriculture and also ensuring ready market for farmers' produce as the latter is the heart of the GSFP i.e. supply of foodstuff from the local economy to feed pupils under the GSFP. As it has already been stated earlier, the GSFP was instituted as a national strategy to curb the levels of poverty in Ghana and also ensure high enrolment and retention amongst pupils at the basic education level.

There is adequate policy literature on the goals of GSFP particularly at the national stage which helps in contributing to the measure of the attainment of policy objectives as enshrined across the key ministerial sectors such as the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection; Ministry of Education (Ghana Education Service) as well as the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. In spite of the aforementioned interventions and given that GSFP's success is partly dependent on agricultural produce, the government has not prepared sufficient national legislative framework that would serve as a guide for even successive governments to be bound to pursuing already existing agricultural policies aimed at ensuring security of food produced in the country (Drake et al, 2016).

This study explores a few of Ghana's legal and policy documents covering the GSFP. The legal and policy documents serve as the instruments which the Government of Ghana relies on to attain the set goals of the GSFP in the fields of education, health and agriculture.

First, the 1992 Constitution which contains the supreme laws of Ghana in Article 25 (1) stipulates that basic education should be free and compulsory for all pupils within the school-going age. In spite of this constitutional injunction, the country is not enjoined to provide, as a basic right, food and health to pupils – the GSFP is therefore not be viewed as a right of entitlement but as based on needs approach (Drake et al, 2016; Mohamed & Sakara, 2014). Closely related to Article 25 (1) of the 1992 Ghanaian Constitution is the Education Act of 1961 (Act 87) which is the major legislation on education in Ghana. Act 87 makes education in the basic cycle compulsory and free for all pupils.

Secondly, the *Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) II* which spanned the period between 2006 and 2009 consisted of a number of strategies aimed at reducing poverty such as the GSFP initiative aimed at providing affordable nutritious food to pupils at lunch break and women at fertility age (GoG, 2005). In 2007, the GoG launched the *Annual Education Sector Operational Plan (2007–2009)* where among other strategies, the GSFP was to be a key national strategy to achieving government's objective of full completion rate (i.e. 100%) at the basic school level for both boys and girls by 2015. That notwithstanding, Drake et al (2016) posited that instead of the GSFP being seen as an educational intervention, the GSFP was strategically initiated and implemented to address malnutrition among school children.

Another critical policy instrument is the GoG's '*Policy — Imagine Ghana Free of Malnutrition*' introduced in 2005. This important document was the product of a multi-sectoral group involving many stakeholders. Its goal was providing a framework for strategic nutrition objectives and estimating the cost in implementing nutritional interventions across

the nation. GSFP and other national nutritional policy initiatives can be said to be by-products of this strategic document (GoG, 2005\*).

Finally, the GoG in 2007 launched the *National Social Protection Strategy* to methodically identify and target Ghanaians reeling below the poverty line often described as the ‘core poor’. This policy mechanism was to be operationalized by the implementation of the Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty (LEAP) program which among other objectives was the promotion of the GSFP through the *conditional cash transfer initiative (CCTI)*. The *CCTI* is an instrument where government provides support either in monetary terms or in-kind subject to a certain course of action or behaviour, usually in investing in human capital, for example, enrolling and retaining children in schools; availing children for a vaccination program at a hospital among others (Rawlings & Rubio, 2005).

The few selected legal and policy documents outlined above given a clear indication of how the government and people of Ghana are keen on ensuring a free universal basic education thereby increasing literacy rate, reducing drop-out rate and having an educated populace. The GSFP is therefore a good pro-poor strategy to raise enrolment and retention levels in basic schools in line of global and national objectives of eradicating extreme poverty and at least providing a basic education for all.

## **2.5 Sources of GSFP Funding**

The Government of Ghana is the largest source of funding for the GSFP. Donor supports in monetary terms from Ghana’s international development partners at the inception of the program were huge. The Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, for example, committed itself to providing financial support to the GSFP in the first phase of the program spanning 2006 to 2010 via the match funding mode. By ‘matching funding’, equal amounts of funds – on a one-to-one scale – were to be provided by the Dutch Government and the

Ghana Government for the actualization of the objectives of the GSFP and in addition widening the GSFP coverage net to rope in more schools.

The ‘matching funding’ was operationalized by the GoG having the responsibility of shouldering the cost of feeding the pupils covered under the GSFP while the Government of the Netherlands, for every amount spent by the GoG, matches these amounts up to 10 million euros which translates, in approximation, to GH¢26,025,000 or US\$11,668,611.5 per annum (Drake et al, 2016). It is worthy of note that the Dutch government withheld the 2008 match funding because of perceived delays in implementing some recommendations such as improving the GSFP management systems and instituting appropriate monitoring and evaluation measures aimed at making the GSFP better to achieve its set goals (WTF, 2007). However, disbursement of funds by the Dutch government to the GoG resumed in 2009 until 2012 against the backdrop of the cessation of official support from the Dutch government in 2010 per the 4-year duration period i.e. 2006-2010: forty million euros (€40m) in total which is equivalent to GH¢104.1m or US\$47m was the financial commitment from the Dutch government for the stated duration (De Carvalho et al, 2011).

**Table 1: Budgetary Funding of GSFP for 2011 to 2013**

ITEMS	GH¢ (Millions)		
	2011	2012	2013
Personnel Emolument	0.48	0.6	1.6
Administration	0.11	0.4	1.6
Service:			
Feeding Cost	67.2	90.3	195.0
Other Service Activities	0.6	0.0	0.0
Investment/Capital Expenses	0.72	0.0	1.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>69.11</b>	<b>91.3</b>	<b>199.2</b>

Source: Government of Ghana (2013)



## **2.6 Mechanisms for Procurement under GSFP**

The hierarchical structure of the GSFP has a decentralized School Implementation Committee (SIC) at its very base as shown in the GSFP organogram table. While the SIC falls under the supervisory jurisdiction of the District Implementation Committee (DIC) which is mandated to plan and oversee the effective functioning of the GSFP in all the beneficiary schools within the concerned district, the SIC is primarily tasked with the role of implementing, supervising and running the day-to-day feeding of the pupils at the respective beneficiary school (Mohammed and Fawzia, 2014).

The SIC consists of the primary school head who chairs it, both the senior boys' and girls' prefects, local traditional ruler or his representative, two opinion leaders (a male and female) in the community one elected assembly member, two nominated members (a male and female) each from both the School Management Committee (SMC) and the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) as well as one religious leader of unblemished character (Sulemana et al., 2013; Morgan & Sonnino, 2008) cited in Atta and Manu (2015). The SIC is charged with purchasing foodstuffs from farmers resident in the local district; planning the school menu, ensuring the food is cooked and served in safe and hygienic environmental conditions. It is also the SIC responsibility to ensure pupils eat the served food in clean places (Atta and Manu, 2015).

In 2008, Morgan and Sonnino revealed that the SIC as a managerial unit has been totally ineffective if not moribund in delivering on its core mandate leaving the SICs to be run, in several cases, by only the heads of the schools as the other members derelict their duties of not attending meetings neither getting involved nor helping to make decisions to strengthen the GSFP in their respective localities. This phenomenon has been put down to lack of commitment and apathy by local stakeholders towards such a pro-poor policy as school feeding program (Atta and Manu, 2015). If this apathy or lack of commitment is not

immediately arrested, it would have a negative tendency on the local economy, the strengthening and sustenance of GSFP – as eventually local or community ownership of the feeding program will be completely missing or lost. For Sulemana et al. (2013) and Atta & Manu (2015), a continuous education on the roles of the local stakeholders is extremely important as it will inure to the benefits of the school children/pupils and ultimately for the betterment of the GSFP.

The SICs and the DICs are to work and cooperate closely together in an efficient and effective manner to make the implementation of the GSFP at the grassroots a success. The DIC as chaired by the District Chief Executive (DCE) is made up of other members drawn from the district assembly and persons (mainly professionals) from the district-based Ghana Education Service (GES), Ministry of Food and Agriculture and the Ghana Health Service. Per its mandate, the DICs are the unit mandated to coordinate all GSFP affairs in the district and to also release the districts funds to the various SICs to effectively run the operations of the GSFP in the schools but in practice this has not been the norm to be able to meet desired outcomes of local farmers having their produce procured by the SICs whose composition as outlined above is mainly made up of the local people.

Given the reality on the ground and the shortfalls in matching supplies of local farmers to that of demands of the SICs, the regions and districts have developed few procurement and implementation models which this study briefly explores. The models under consideration are the caterer, supplier and school-based models.

### **2.6.1 The Caterer Model**

The two most populous regions of Ghana – Ashanti and Greater Accra regions – have rolled out this model. This procurement mechanism works by the metropolitan assemblies (MA) contracting caterers to purchase and prepare meals at designated central locations or kitchens

for multiple schools (WFP, 2007). The caterers upon the production of appropriate invoices are paid weekly based on the total number of pupils fed for each school day for all the working days within the respective week. This model is most suitable in the cities and towns given the hurly-burly of lives in the cities and the attendant challenges in mobilizing members of the SIC into action (Atta & Manu, 2015). The hiring of cooks and other assistants to carry out the daily tasks of cooking and serving of food to the pupils as well as the purchase and storage of foodstuff become the responsibility of the caterer. The MA and caterers plan the menus for the schools with little or no input from the community or schools. Research studies by WTF (2010) and other scholars (e.g. Atta & Manu, 2015) have explored this model as a more viable option under GSFP procurement given that one of the criteria for selecting the caterers is ability of potential caterers to pre-finance the foodstuff purchase, cooking and feeding of the school kids for a couple of months until such time GoG releases funds via the DICs as funds disbursement can considerably delay (Ghana SFP Operation Manuals, 2013). The ability of caterers to pre-finance is important in order to ensure continuity or avoid distraction in the flow of GSFP owing to lack of timely release of funds. Although this model enables the schools to focus more on academic activities or work, same (caterer model) deprives local farmers in the communities where the schools are sited of their produce being bought since caterers bring the food outside of these communities thereby defeating a key objective of GSFP: increasing demand of local farmers' foodstuff and creating more jobs in the agricultural sector. Wealth creation and utilization of domestic goods are at the heart of the feeding program however, city-based caterers are often accused of resorting to imported foodstuff like rice among others. Another shortcoming of this model is the lack of transparency in the selection of caterers as other factors such as political party affiliation plays a role in the selection (WFP, 2007). Table 2 below gives summary statistics of the sources of finance of GSFP caterers.

**Table 2: Source of Funding for Caterers**

Funding Source	% to Caterers
Credit from Suppliers	33.33
Bank Loan	23.16
District Assembly	1.69
Internally Generated Fund	18.64
Loans: Non-bank Institution	6.21
Personal funds	6.78
Friends/relatives	1.13
Foodstuff from own farms	0.56
Others	8.47

**Source: Ernst and Young (2012) cited in Drake et al (2016)**

### **2.6.2 The Supplier Model**

According to the WFP (2007), in the commencement of the expansion phase of the GSFP in late 2006, the supplier model was developed to address the problems caused by the delays in the release of funds in procuring goods for feeding the school kids at the pilot stage of the program especially in Northern Ghana where procurement was done in the community or the school level. This model is implemented in districts that are abundant in foodstuff harvest. This is mainly in districts in the upper northern sector of Ghana comprising Brong Ahafo, Northern, Upper East and Upper West. Under this arrangement, contracts are awarded to entities to supply foodstuff to schools. The supplier produces to the DIC invoices covering the purchases and delivered food items to the schools for payments to be made and this is mostly done on weekly basis. The school menu is drawn by the SIC (largely head teacher) in conjunction with the DIC and the caterer (or local cooks) which the supplier is accordingly guided to supply the necessary foodstuffs. Like the caterer model, the supplier model exhibits some weaknesses in terms of lack of transparency in the choice or selection of the suppliers as the nationally stipulated protocols for procurement or tender processing is are not adhered

to (WFP, 2007). In many instances, ‘connections’ or ties to the ruling political party play a major role on who gets the contract to supply the food items.

Among the strengths of this model include a deeper focus on academic work since school authorities are absolved of the responsibilities of combing around to purchase foodstuffs; the feeding program is not interrupted with delays in release of funds by local authorities given that suppliers are selected on their ability to pre-finance their supplies. According to WFP (2007), sometimes produce of local farmers is outstripped by quantity demanded by suppliers so procuring foodstuffs outside of the local community ensures continuity in supply throughout when schools are in session.

On the weakness on this model, given how overly partisan Ghana’s political landscape is, the supplier model may compromise on efficiency and cost-effectiveness if supplies are picked on the grounds of political ties to power. This model may breed corruption if proper vetting of suppliers’ claims or invoices is not done; and in addition, both quantity and quality of food supplies may be compromised if strong monitoring and assessment mechanism of suppliers’ procurement are not instituted and implemented as well. At a point, the national secretariat of GSFP raised issues about this model given how invoices presented by suppliers do not pass strict scrutiny test at the districts and directed for this model’s suspension however it is still in operation (WFP, 2010).

Another shortcoming of this model is the reduced role of the local communities and authorities in the schools relative to food items procurement which may trigger apathy and disinterest in the success of the feeding program. Under this model, the role of SICs has been reduced mainly to taking custody of the goods supplies, releasing same to the cooks, supervising the cooking and feeding of the pupils. The inputs of school management and communities regarding what food items to buy and how funds are to be used are almost non-existent. Another weakness is that this model to a large extent defeats an objective of GSFP

i.e. increasing the utilization and consumption of food produced in the local economy thereby raising market opportunities for local farmers. Purchasing food items under this model from sources outside the local economy stifles the anticipated market opportunities for local farmers.

For the long-term sustenance of GSFP, both the caterer and supplier models do not portend well towards that direction (i.e. sustainability) in that community ownership and involvement is relegated to the background as far as these models are concerned. A study by WFP in 2008 revealed that communities and their inhabitants where GSFP is practised were desirous of actively getting involved in making the feeding program a success, unfortunately however, the reality on the ground with the implementation of the caterer and supplier models does not give space or room for this to be actualized: a critical ingredient for effective and sustainable GSFP roll out is community engagement which leads to local ownership of the feeding program.

For such a well-acclaimed pro-poor feeding program to serve its useful purpose without any inhibitions and to rope in the community and other local stakeholders, Ghana placed less emphasis on the caterer and supplier models of procurement in recent times as focus has shifted to a school-based model of procurement which is the next model this study briefly expounds on.

### **2.6.3 School-based Model**

Under this model, decision making relative to the feeding program is devolved to local stakeholders, that is, those at the grassroots. Food items are purely procured and kept by the beneficiary schools in the local communities with the involvement of the local stakeholders.

The decision of what food items to procure, when and how much to purchase same lies purely with the community, school and other interested parties at the local level. This is

aimed at fostering a sense of local ownership of the feeding program. An effective GSFP at the grassroots comes about in part when procurement of logistics i.e. food items is carried out at the local or community level to achieve the objectives of the feeding concept because home-grown food will be purchased and used for feeding the school kids. This model promotes greater transparency and efficiency as the services of middlemen are not employed and everything is openly executed by the community and school enjoying the GSFP. Besides, the model is ideal as locally-produced foodstuffs are bought from local farmers thereby creating wealth and market opportunities in the local economy. A positive and direct nexus is therefore generated between the beneficiary schools and communities on one hand and the local farmers on the other hand (WFP, 2007). The engagement of the community is patently manifest in the areas of effective supervision, cooking and feeding of the pupils (GoG, 2014; Martens, 2007).

## **2.7 Criteria for Selecting GSFP Beneficiary Schools/Communities**

The GSFP as a national strategy is aimed at raising the enrolment rate in schools, increase attendance among pupils and ensure school children remain in school during contact hours (GSFP Annual Operating Plan, 2008). The GSFP was rolled out in two-folds: first, the GSFP took the form of take-home ration for school girls who live mostly in deprived areas of the north; secondly one hot meal using local produce to be served at lunch for each child in public basic school – as has already been discussed in the preceding paragraphs of this study. On which community and administrative districts were to be benefit from the implementation of GSFP, the GSFP document of 2008 established among others some criteria such as:

- i. Poverty status per both the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS) data and National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) poverty mapping
- ii. Gender Parity Index as well as Low enrolment and attendance rate in schools
- iii. High rate of school drop-outs

- iv. High levels of illiteracy or low levels of literacy
- v. Scheduled or existing health and nutrition program
- vi. Inadequate access to portable water
- vii. Community management capacity; strong communal spirit
- viii. Community's willingness in putting up basic structure e.g. school stores, kitchen etc and to make contribution in kind or cash
- ix. Show of commitment of the local district towards the program and its level of readiness and interest in the program's sustenance
- x. Schools to benefit should not have already been covered by any other feeding program



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In every scientific study under the social sciences, King *et al.* (1994) opines that a theoretical framework that underpins a particular research study is needed. It is for this reason that, this chapter has been devoted to develop a framework to analyse the GSFP and its operations in each of the selected school in the Atwima Mponua and Atwima Nwabiagya Districts of the Ashanti Region, Ghana. The theoretical models, the selected independent and dependent variables and the set of hypotheses are contained here. In line with the objective(s) of the study, theoretical perspectives and models' reviews have led the author to formulate appropriate framework for the study in achieving the set goals based on thorough analysis of issues relating to key stakeholders and other factors closely related to the GSFP roll out in Adupri and Mfensi Basic Primary Schools in the aforementioned districts. The study, under this chapter, focuses on public policy issues and different implementation approaches that permeate the public policy implementation research space.

#### **3.2 Use and Application of Theories**

Theories employed in any empirical study provide very useful guide in the analysis of some social or natural phenomena and facilitate a deeper reflection, description and understanding of the issues of interest (i.e. research problems) on the part of the person carrying out the study (Kipo, 2011). Theories as part of a social science research enterprise are very crucial, whether it is the aim of a researcher to test or to develop a theory (Yin, 2003). According to

Creswell (2013:51) “a major component of reviewing literature is to identify what theories might be used to explore the questions or scholarly study”. This is to say that a researcher can hardly embark on a research expedition without being informed by a theoretical perspective, as data collection and observations in a research are based on and influenced to a certain degree by prior theoretical assumptions. Kerlinger (1979:64) also sees a theory as “a set of interrelated constructs (variables), definitions and propositions that presents a systematic view of phenomena by specifying the relations among variables with the purpose of explaining natural phenomena”. In all social research there is the combination of the element of deduction where the theory acts as a guide and the element of induction where the theory is seen as emerging from data. The choice of a deductive or an inductive study is dependent largely on the kind of research approach a researcher adopts.

### **3.2. The Concept of Public Policy**

Public policy has become part of our society and daily life activities to the extent that our day-to-day actions are directly or indirectly affected or regulated by same. Public policy has received much scholarly attention so far as civil bureaucracy is concerned. These policies are usually administered by either private or public actors. Public policies are mostly administered to address the needs or problems of the general public, low enrolment of school children, high illiteracy rate etc and as such it is imperative for decision makers to be in tune with issues that are of importance to the public – as the concept of public policy concerns the whole process of public decision making.

A number of scholars have defined public policy in diverse ways. Hogwood and Gunn (1984) view policy as emanating from the interactions among a number of sequential decisions and so to them a policy is the by-product of decision making. Knill and Tosun (2012:4) define it

as “a course of action or non-action taken by a government or legislature with regards to a particular issue”. Thus, from both definitions decision making is key in public policy and that the choice of governmental actors to address an issue or sometimes not so as to maintain the existing status quo can constitute public policy. The definition also recognizes the role of public actors as vital and also the fact that their actions focus on a particular issue which they intend to solve or maintain. However, public policy does not only concern public actors but private actors as well and this is captured in the definition provided by Jenkins (1978).

According to Jenkins (1978), public policy is a “set of interrelated decisions taken by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specified situation where those decisions should in principle be within the power of those actors to achieve”. All these actors influence the public policy process with their varying interests and values which contribute to making the public policy process a complicated one. To Atsu Aryee (2000), a public policy is defined as a “broad statement of goals, objectives and means”. The GSFP as one of the numerous government programs is therefore aimed at creating wealth in the local economy thereby reducing poverty, tackling the issue of school drop-outs and absenteeism among others. The identification of such societal problems triggers a public policy action through the implementation of a social intervention program to solve them. This GSFP intervention resonates with Aryee (above) and Dye’s definition of public policies. For Thomas Dye, public policy is “anything a government chooses to do or not to do” (Dye 1972: 2 cited in Ramesh et al 2009: 4).

### **3.3 The Concept of Policy Implementation**

The formation of a policy involves a number of stages and each stage is not mutually exclusive of the other. The first stage in this process is the agenda setting and this is where problems that need to be addressed are defined and then moved to the next stage which is the

formulation stage where decisions are made among plethora of issues which of them should be put together as a policy. The next stage in the process is to put the policy into action in order to serve the targeted group.

The final stage in the policy making process is evaluation which involves assessing whether the policy has really attained its intended outcome and impacted the lives of the target individuals or group and if not, the policy may be reformulated based on experience from the previous one. Assessing the GSFP and its effect on school enrolment, attendance and retention therefore situates well within the last stage of policy making process and whether modification in the feeding policy should be recommended based on findings is at the heart of this study. Thus, in analysing the public policy process, certain fundamental principles namely, how decisions are made and how policies are put into action are worth addressing (Lynch 2013). The GSFP as a policy implementation subject of interest is the focus of this study.

Many scholars have defined policy implementation differently. Knill and Tosun define policy implementation as being concerned with the process of putting a public policy into effect by bureaucrats or organizations responsible for such actions (Knill and Tosun, 2012).

Thus, from the definition for a policy to be rolled out there must be some implementation agencies or actors such as bureaucrats. In the case GSFP, as evidenced in the institutional arrangement of the program, the officials from the Office of the President, Ministers of State, RCC, District Assemblies etc are all active and critical actors of the feeding program and each has assigned role(s) to play for a successful implementation of the program.

Ramesh (2009) also affirms the importance of bureaucrats in the implementation process by stating that “bureaucrats are the most significant actors in the implementation process” in that they are charged with seeing to it that a policy is carried out. According to Van Meter and

Van Horn, public policy implementation is “encompassing those actions by both public and private individuals (and groups) that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions. This includes both one-time efforts to transform the decision into operational terms, as well as continuing efforts to achieve the large and small changes mandated by the policy decisions” (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975:445).

Other scholars also view policy implementation as the execution of policy decisions which were made by public officials (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1973). Pressman and Wildavsky who are credited as the founding fathers of policy implementation also define it as “the carrying out of basic policy decisions usually made in a statute, court decisions or executive orders (Pressman et al, 1973:540). From all these definitions we find that implementation can be possible only after a decision on a policy has been made detailing the objectives and procedures for carrying it out before those with the expertise or technical know-how are charged with the task of implementing the decisions to achieve the prior objectives as set out. On the surface, the implementation process appears quite a simple task as implementers are merely expected to follow the laid-out rules or principles stipulated by decision makers to execute the programme and achieve the goals as prescribed in the policy document.

It is the acknowledgement of the difficult task of implementing a feeding program on a universal or nationwide basis that the GSFP was rolled out on a pilot basis to among others observe the teething challenges that might be encountered and serve as guidelines when GSFP is fully implemented across the nation.

For Buabeng (2009), it is the anticipated challenges of huge proportion that are often associated with the implementation of public policies by nations and organizations that gives enough indication that translating public policies into reality is not a simple exercise. On the contrary, proper planning and thorough preparations towards the implementation of a particular public program are required. Aryee (1994:208) argues that “there has been an

implicit assumption that once the policies were formulated by government, the policies would be implemented and the desired results of the policies would be near those expected by the policy makers”. However, for most times public policies face initial setbacks and some do not get implemented and where others get rolled out, they fail or make little impact deviating from the intended objectives. Implementation stage is therefore critical and all the necessary focus, preparation and commitment towards the program on the part of all actors and stakeholders are essential. As a corollary, varying interest and values of the implementers also contribute to the success or otherwise of the implemented program and managing same is critical. For example, the GSFP provides different kinds of food during the school week and where a school head teacher has an aversion, on religious or cultural grounds, for a particular meat provided on a particular day, may not be fully involved in supervision and monitoring.

The realisation on the part of scholars to the fact that implementation of public policies could prove to be a difficult endeavour contributed to the debate on which approach would better serve the needs implementation process of a policy. The *top-down* and the *bottom-up* approaches of implementation constitute the traditional approaches in the implementation process. Due to some inherent weaknesses identified in the utilization of each of these approaches, scholars and researches over the years have synthesized these two approaches leading to the emergence of the third approach called, the *mixed* approach. The nexus of these theories/approaches in relation to the objectives of the study is well established

### **3.3.1 Top-down Approach**

The proponents of the top-down approach view the process of implementation as existing in a chain of command where officials at the top make a decision on policy and then subordinates are to carry out the decision towards the attainment of its set objectives as stipulated by the

authorities. According to Clark (1992) the top-down approach assumes that we can view the policy process as a series of chains of command where political leaders articulate a clear policy preference which is then carried out at increasing levels of specifying as it goes through administrative machinery that serves the government” (Clark 1992:222, cited in Howlett and Ramesh 2003:189). Thus, here implementers or Bureaucrats are expected to follow the procedures prescribed by their authorities regardless of their interest and this would bring about an effective process.

With this approach the “degree of goal attainment serves as an indicator of implementation success and that effective implementation corresponds to a match between policy objectives and outcomes” (Knill and Tosun 2012). Other top-down proponents are of the view that the analysis of policy implementation process commences with the governmental officials or actors’ decision on policy with a focus on the attainment of the policy goals by implementers and the reasons that explains implementers actions or inactions.

This is captured by Ramesh when he opined that “top-down approach starts with the decisions of government, examines the extent to which administrators carry out or fail to carry out these decisions, and seeks to find the reason underlying the extent of the implementers conduct” (Ramesh 2012:165). This definition recognizes the fact that despite the laid down procedures in a policy documents other factors may also affect the effectiveness of the implementation process. The top-down perspective happens to be the dominating approach for implementing public policies in Ghana as almost all policy decisions are made by the political leaders and then given to the civil servants (bureaucrats) to carry them out (Buabeng 2009; Kipo, 2011; Lynch, 2013). This approach was in vogue in the pre-independence era where the colonial authorities were in the helm of affairs and devolving power to the grassroots was absent (Kyei, 2000). The GSFP that was rolled out on pilot basis relied on this approach to implementation. Officials at the national level

communicated decisions taken to those at the regional and district level to implement same (Lynch, 2013).

A key component for a successful implementation of the GSFP is decentralized decision-making inputs. According to Drake et al (2016), community involvement in the implementation of feeding program engenders a sense of community ownership of the program but such ownership which vital to the sustenance of the feeding program is withdrawn with the top-down approach. The top-down approach has therefore been perceived by other group of scholars including Benny Hjern and Chris Hull to be inadequate approach in dealing with the issue of policy implementation. A major criticism of the top-down perspective by the bottom-up proponents is based on the fact that they overemphasize the role of central decision makers or the top officials ignoring the role or effort of other actors such as the local implementing officers who also have an influence on the implementation process (Elmore 1979). Another criticism of the top-down approach is based on the fact that they neglect the “strategies used by street level bureaucrats and target groups to get around policy and divert it to their own purpose” (Weatherly and Lipsky 1977, Elmore 1979, Breman, 1978).

### **3.3.2 Bottom-Up Approach**

Given the intrinsic shortcomings in the top-down approach, a new approach called bottom-down approach was developed. Proponents of this perspective include Benny Hjern, Chris Hull, Richard Elmore among others are of the view that implementation studies should start with a focus on the actions of the actors who are involved with the implementation process at the local level as well as those affected by it and the strategy they employ in achieving their objectives. This approach in part identifies with the principle of decentralized GSFP program where grassroots inputs are factored into the planning and implementation of the school



feeding program at the local level. Ramesh (2013) wrote that the “bottom-uppers” argue that “actions of those who are affected by and engaged in the implementation of policies should be examined in any implementation study”.

To the bottom-uppers, the street level workers are very influential as they possess the expertise and the requisite knowledge in carrying out the policy and as such can implement the policy in ways that suit their interest at the expense of the stipulated procedures. Hence a focus on the happenings at the street level of the implementing process is imperative other than focusing on upper officials who provide procedures for the process. Rothstein sums this up when he wrote that bottom-uppers “focus on the doings of the field organization charged with implementing the programme and seeks to analyse the results without worrying so much about whether the program’s democratically established goals have been any importance for its operations” (Rothstein 1998). Hjern points out that “implementation analysis should identify the network of actors involved in service delivery in one or more local areas and ask them about their goals, activities, contacts and strategies.

Thus, the bottom-up approach provides a mechanism for moving up from street level bureaucrats (bottom) up to the (top) policy makers” (Hjern and Hall 1985). During the late 1980s the government of Ghana saw the need to incorporate the bottom-up approach in the implementation of policies particularly the policies that were pro-poor in nature (Lynch, 2013). In spite of the infusion of local inputs into the GSFP, a wholly local content policy is far from reality as the central government plays a dominant role in the implementation of the program and in policy directions among others. A blend of these two approaches therefore captures the focus of the study.

### 3.3.3 Mixed Approach

The mixed approach is a synthesis of the traditional approaches to the implementation process of public policy. Despite the fact that these traditional perspectives have their strength and weaknesses, other group of scholars are of the view that a combination of these two approaches would better serve the implementation process. Thus, the two approaches should be viewed as complementing each other rather than being a contradiction. “As a rule, hybrid models seek to integrate the ‘macro-world’ of policy-makers with the ‘micro-world’ of the implementers (McLaughlin, 1987:177, cited in Knill and Tosun 2012). In the words of Winter “the top-down and the bottom-up approaches were useful in bringing to fore the fact that both top and bottom play important roles in the implementation process, however this battle between the two approaches over the years was not productive” (Winter 2006, cited in Hill and Hupe 2013:58). To others like Elmore (1978) “no single model adequately captures the full complexities of the implementation process and that it is just a matter of comparing alternative approaches rather than regarding one as being superior” (Elmore 1978, Hill and Hupe 2002:82, Buabeng 2009).

Scharpf (1978) points out that the main departure of the traditional perspectives is that under the top-down (prescriptive) perspective policy making appears as a purposive activity which calls for evaluation of its results in the light of its goals. While to the bottom-up (‘positive’) perspective policy making is an empirical process which calls for an explanation in terms of its cause and conditions. Thus, to Scharpf even though top-down perspective concerns of the notion of unitary goals developed by individuals or consensual groups are not central in today’s studies purpose is very important to actors involved in the policy process (Scharpf 1978:346, Hill and Hupe 2003:59, cited in Buabeng 2009).

From the discussion on the various perspectives to the implementation process we can conclude that each perspective has its own strength and for that matter would be appropriate

in a particular context. For instance, bottom-up perspective would be very essential in policies that are pro-poor in nature as the input and feedback from the target group as they interact with the implementing officials would have an influence on the implementation process. Also, these perspectives can complement each other to facilitate the achievement of the set objectives of the policy that is being implemented. This study relies on the mixed approach in assessing the implementation of the GSFP at the school and district level by engaging both local and regional actors and stakeholders through interviews etc in achieving the goals of the study.

### **3.4 Analytical Framework for the Study**

This study employs both the Van Meter and Van Horn model and Winter model as the basis for building a framework for the study. Additionally, views and perspectives from other sources in the implementation literature would be referenced to enrich the framework for the study. The study combines various aspects of these models which are relevant to the specific objectives of the study which include among others the effective implementation of the GSFP. The author combines all the three approaches of implementation that have been outlined in the preceding paragraphs to help to comprehensively analyse all the issues of interest and stakeholders as far as the implementation of the GSFP in the Atwima Mponua and Atwima Nwabiagya Districts.

The independent variables of the study are first, effective implementation operationalized by school enrolment, attendance and retention; community involvement as the second independent variable is proxied by community inputs such as provision of basic logistics and infrastructure by the local community as well as attendance of GSFP decision-making meetings. The dependent variables include target group behaviours, implementation structure, human and financial endowments (i.e. available resources) and partisan politics. The

explanatory variables as highlighted are adopted after review of some empirical studies from these models and utilized in the study to ascertain and explain the community-level intricacies and happenings in the implementation process of the feeding program. As such the various models provide useful guides to the author in developing a framework that is appropriate for this study. Below is a discussion on the various models that would be employed in the study.

### **3.4.1 Van Meter and Van Horn Model of Implementation (1975)**

Van Meter and Van Horn Model of implementation serves as a starting point for a departure from the position of the earlier scholars like Pressman and Wildavsky in the study of public implementation. According to Van Meter and Van Horn, “earlier studies even though they have been highly informative, their contributions have been limited by the absence of a theoretical perspective”. They went further to say that previous scholars had not advanced a specific theoretical framework within which policy implementation can be examined and that without such framework it would be difficult to further our understanding of the process of implementation in desperate policy areas and jurisdictional settings” (Van Meter and Van Horn (1975:451-2). Thus, the implementation process should be based on a specific model instead of the general prescriptions that were provided by earlier scholars.

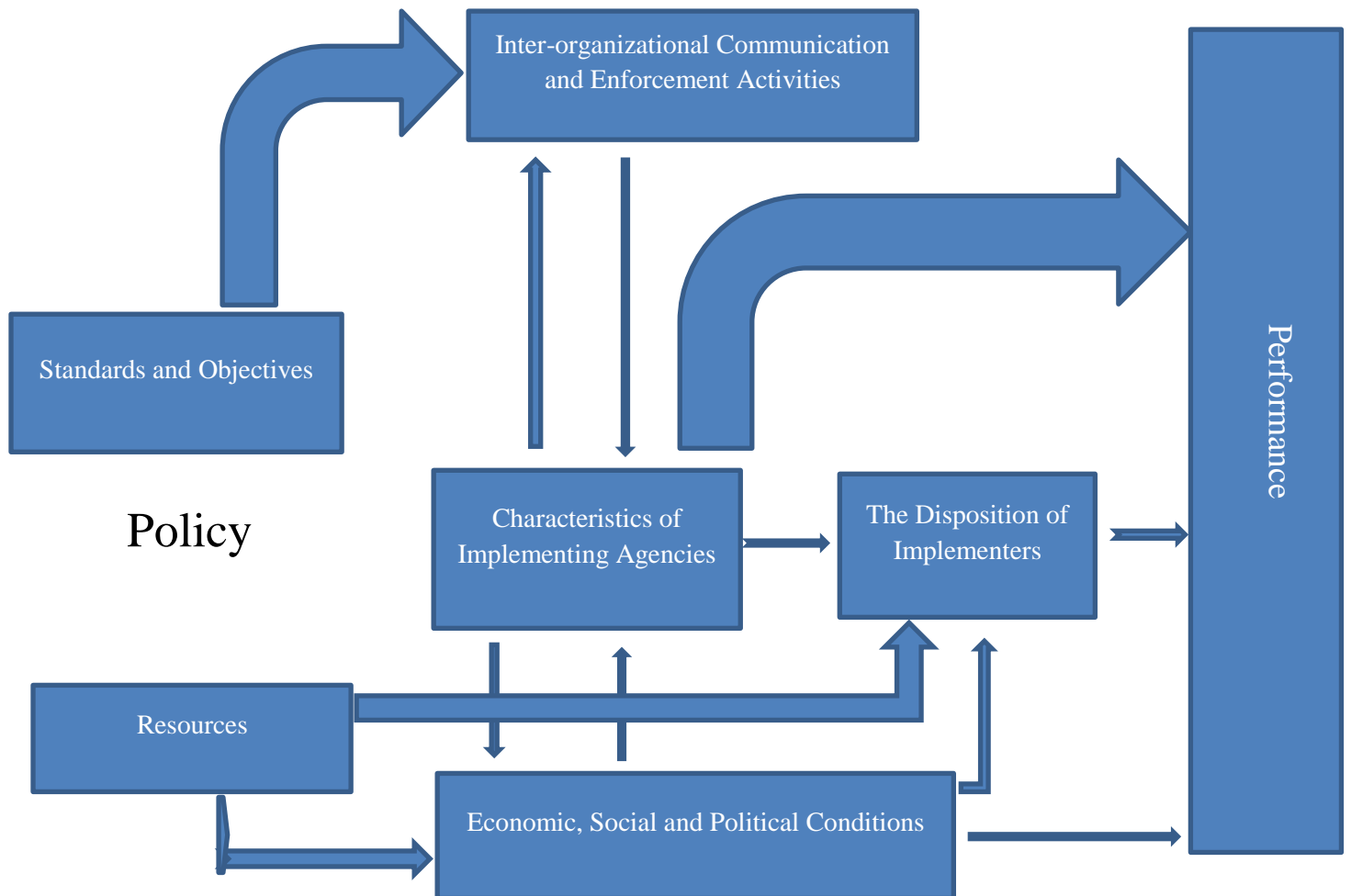
To them in the process of implementation, the level of consensus and the depth of change should be taken into consideration by researchers or students of implementation as they are very important to ensuring a successful or unsuccessful implementation of a policy. They opined that “implementation will be most successful where only marginal change is required and goal consensus is high whiles where only a marginal change is required and goal consensus is low the prospect for a successful or effective implementation would be most doubtful. Also in the instance of a major change or high consensus policies would be implemented more effectively than policies involving minor change and low consensus.

Therefore, the expectation is that goal consensus will have a greater effect on the policy implementation than will the element of change” (Van Meter and Van Horn 1975:461). Thus, high consensus on a policy among decision makers and compliance to the procedures detailed in a policy document by implementing officials are of essence for effective implementation. The relevance of this model to this study relates to consensus building on the implemented school feeding program in the local community and among stakeholders at both the regional and district level in the; the selection of caterers and decisions on the kinds of food items to procure. Van Meter and Van Horn assert that certain variables must interact to make a successful implementation and as such they outlined six variables which they deemed imperative for a successful implementation. These variables include inter-organizational communication and enforcement activities, policy standards and objectives, resources and incentives made available, characteristics of implementing agencies, the disposition of implementers, and the economic, social and political conditions (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975 cited in Hill and Hupe).

As has been outlined before, the Van Meter and Van Horn model aligns well with the GSFP where there is interdependence of institutions and officials as well as opinion leaders, inhabitants and resources of the communities where the GSFP is rolling out. To them, these outlined factors interrelate and therefore they connect the policy being implemented to the performance of the programme. This model is appropriate in achieving the third objective of collating views on the implementation problems and also the second objective of assessing the effect of GSFP on school enrolment, attendance and attendance as local stakeholders, community characteristics etc are at the core of effective implementation. Thus, the resource factor, inter-organizational communication and the characteristics of implementing agencies as well as political conditions mentioned in this model are in explaining the effectiveness or otherwise of the implementation process of the GSFP in this study.

Figure 2 below shows a pictorial representation of the Van Meter and Van Horn model of implementation of public policy.

**Figure 2: The Van Meter and Van Horn Implementation Model**



*Source: Adopted from Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) and also cited in Buabeng (2009)*

### 3.4.2 Winter's Integrated Implementation Model

To fully achieve objectives one and two as set out in the study, the Winter's integrated model is relied on. This model is placed in the perspective of the third-generation scholars (i.e. researchers who combined the top-down and bottom-down up approaches) in the

implementation debate. His model tends to integrate the arguments of the top-down and bottom up perspectives. One basic difference between the traditional perspectives on implementation and Winter's model is that Winter considers evaluation of the implementation outcome in his model – this is the nucleus of objective two, that is, evaluating the effect of the implementation of the GSFP on school enrolment, attendance and rates at the local level.

“Whereas top-down analysis compares implementation outcomes with stated policy goals or objectives, Winter's approach to implementation also addresses bottom-up concerns such as the interest of implementation actors and social change outcomes. As such implementation should be evaluated on the basis of both output and outcome/impact” (Ryan 1996: 738). Thus, the model takes into consideration the interests of the implementing actors as a contributing factor to the output of the implementation process and subsequently the impact a policy would have on its target group. This point is very important because the GSFP incorporates a wide gamut of interests of stakeholders at the national, regional and local level in its implementation (Buabeng, 2009).

The model further integrates both the process of putting a policy into action and then assessing whether the policy has attained its intended outcome and the effect of it on the target group. Winter structures his model around four conditions which explains the happenings in the implementation process and its effect on the outcome thereof. This includes the character of the policy formation process prior to the law (decision) to be implemented; organizational and inter-organizational implementation behaviour; street-level bureaucratic behaviour; responses by target groups and other changes in the society and the socio-economic context or conditions (Winter 1990:20-1, cited in Ryan 1996).

According to Winter, the formulation or design of a policy has an effect on the outcome of the policy. To him the level of consensus among formulators determines the level of conflict in the process and that the level of conflict in the formulation stage has an impact on the outcome of implementation. He opines that the greater the degree of conflict in the formulation stage the more likely that implementation would be distorted (Ryan 1996:738). In effect, policy harmonization in both the formulation and implementation stages is critical if the policy is to succeed and achieve its goals.

He further suggests that the level of consensus among formulators and the attention given to the process determines the support for the policy during its implementation stage. He also mentions that the choice of implementation tools (i.e. policy instruments) and the attempt made at solving a problem can impact the design of a policy and ultimately affect the implementation process. Tools for implementation are ‘policy instruments which affect either the content or processes of policy implementation, that is, which alter the way goods and services are delivered to the public or the manner in which such implementation processes take place’ (Howlett, 2000). ‘Policy instruments are the subject of deliberation and activity at all stages of the policy process and affect both the agenda-setting and policy formulation processes as well as being the subject of decision-making policy implementation and evaluation’ (Howlett, 2005; Howlett, Ramesh & Pearl, 2009).

The second condition in the model concerns how the various structures involved in the implementation of a programme behave and the effect their behaviour has on implementation outcome. Thus, in the implementation process organizational and inter-organizational behaviour determines the level of corporation and coordination which is paramount in ensuring effective implementation (Peters and Pierre 2003:229, Pressman and Wildavsky 1984, O’Toole 2000). These variables therefore refer to the reaction of organizations and inter-organizational relationship to programme directives. In this instance the degree of



harmony, consistency or compatibility between programme objectives and organizational interest, and the corporation among institutional interest is of essence. Also, Organizational power and institutional relationships between the implementation structures should be considered (Peters and Pierre 2003, Ryan 1996:738-739). This brings into focus, the implementation structure of the GSFP and how each unit plays its role to realize the goals thereof.

The third variable in Winter's Integrated model refers to the implementing officials at the local levels who are involved with the day to day execution of a programme or policy, these actors he called the "street-level bureaucrats". According to Lipsky, street-level bureaucrats can be described as public service officials who interact directly with the citizens in the process of providing services and who possess some level of discretion in executing their duty (Lipsky 2010:3). These street bureaucrats are like 'retail' officials easily accessible to the general public and whose knowledge of happenings at the grassroots is considerably deep. To this end, the District GSFP coordinators who are almost always in touch with the school-level stakeholders and which the author of this study interviewed during the fieldwork fit the description of street bureaucrats. There is the tendency for inputs of street bureaucrats to be overlooked or ignored by superiors and thus their rich experience and knowledge may be missing in effectively implementing the GSFP at the local level hence the reliance of this study on such people.

To Winter the role that these actors play could not be over emphasised as their actions or inactions can influence the output and ultimately the outcome of the implementation process. According to Winter "street-level bureaucrats have the tendency to systematically distort the implementation process" as such it is important to analyse their role in the implementation process" (Ryan 1996:739). Winter goes on to say that the distorting behaviour of the

bureaucrats at the street-level may constitute an aspect of organizational culture and as such to change these behaviours would amount to a change in the organizational culture (ibid).

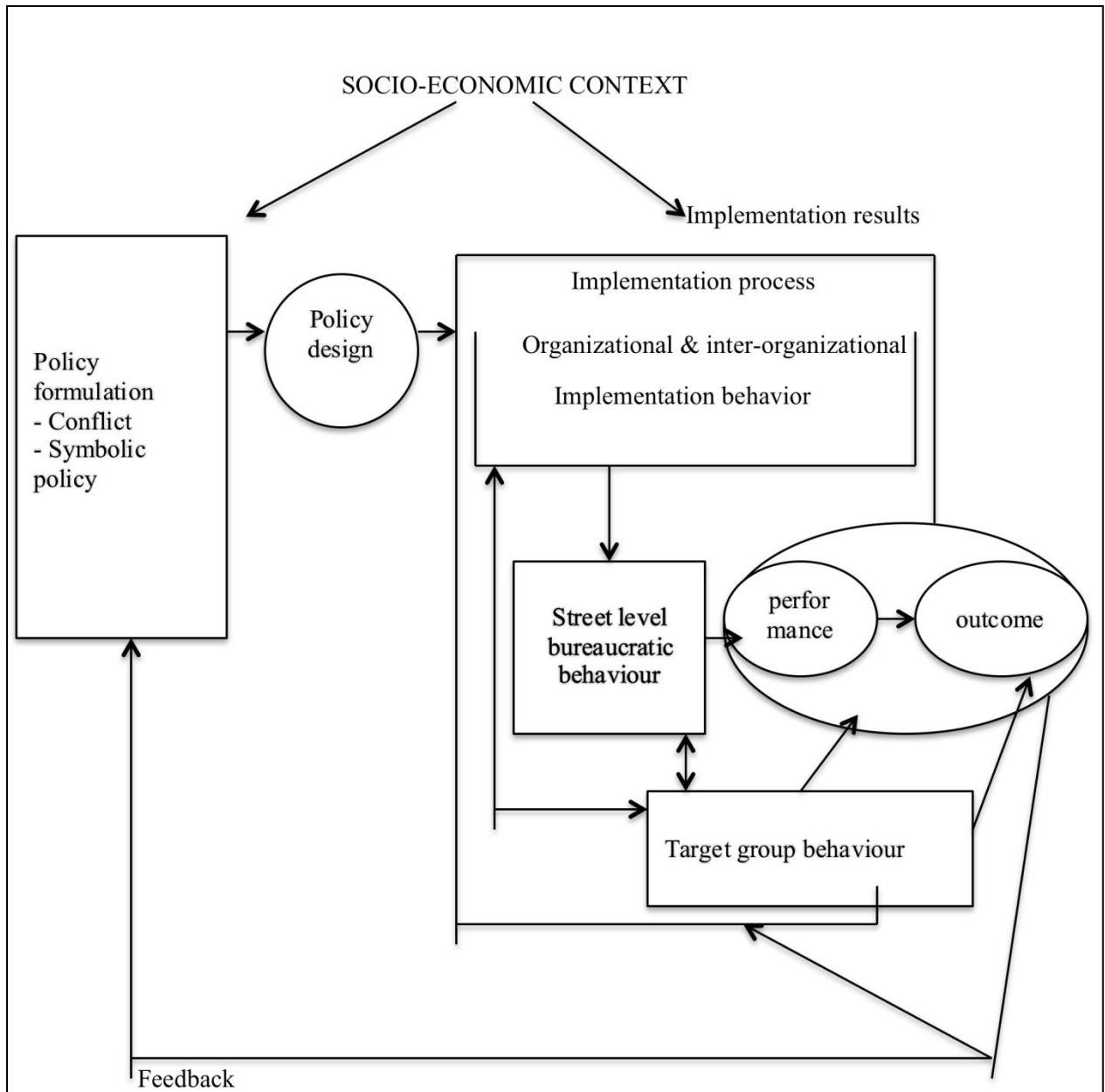
The final variable captured in the model looks at the target group behaviour as well as the socio-economic conditions that may affect the implementation process. To Winter, the nature or the behaviour of the target group of a policy should be incorporated in implementation studies as a neglect of these factors may affect the outcome of the implementation process. It is against this backdrop that this study as one of its objective is focussing on the level of involvement of the community and those at the grassroots in the implementation of the GSFP in their communities – attitude and contribution of parents of beneficiary school children, the behaviour of school children themselves among others towards the feeding program.

According to Winter, different socio-economic or educational backgrounds of the target group may imply differences in the strategy that may be needed for the implementation of a policy. As a result, target groups are more likely to respond to and cooperate with policies or programmes when prescriptions are in accordance with existing behaviours and norms (Ryan 1996:739). This is to say that the actions and inactions of the target group can affect implementation outcome either in a positive or a negative way. Winter (1990) also mentions that output or outcome of policy implementation can be affected by some environmental and societal factors as such socio-economic context in which policies are made should be considered.

These variables espoused by Winter in his model interrelate and as such one variable has the tendency to influence as well as be influenced by the other. As such in analysing the variables there is the need for a researcher to consider the impact of one set of variables on the other(s) (Ryan, 1996).

The Figure 3 below depicts an illustration of Winter’s Integrated Model of Implementation

**Figure 3: The Winter Integrated Implementation Model**



*Source: Adopted from Winter (1990) in (Winter 2012: 7) and also cited in Eshun (2015)*

### 3.5 Comparisons, Differences and Synthesis of these Two Models

The two models have been explained and their different approaches towards implementation articulated. However, some principles and variables run through these two models and this

study attempts to synthesize these common tenets to enrich the study with the guidance of existing literature.

Firstly, both models acknowledge that organisational hierarchy or structure matters in the implementation of public policy. The Van Meter and Van Horn model highlights the essence of inter-organizational coordination and communication in the process of implementing a policy. Additionally, the model encapsulates the need of taking into account the peculiar characteristics of the agents of implementation when rolling out a public policy as their directly or indirectly influence the outcome of the implemented policy. The Winter model also asserts the importance of the existence of cooperation and coordination among agencies responsible for the implementation of a particular public policy. In essence, both models accept that the lack of effective policy implementation structure and niceties such as communication, coordination and the oversight of the characteristics of the implementing agencies can hamper the successful outcomes of implemented policies.

Secondly, both models acknowledge the role of political partisanship as a determinant of policy implementation outcomes. Harold Lasswell in 1936, famously defined *politics is who gets what, when and how*. Politicians are involved public policy implementation and therefore the impact of politics in policy implementation cannot be discounted. Both models differently explain how politics is incorporated into the implementation process, the models factor in the role of politics in the implementation outcomes of policies. Decision-making and politics about allocation of resources sometimes generates conflicts. The political environment, local agitations and the resolution of conflicts that are generated in policy design, formulation and its implementation feed into the final outcomes of policies. In effect, the role of politics is critical in policy implementation outcomes.

Both models identify target groups as critical components of the implementation process of public policy. Ownership of the policy by target groups is essential to sustain the program. Characteristics of the target groups such as cultural sensibilities, language, beliefs among others as highlighted by the models are vitally relevant if an implemented policy is to succeed and achieve its intended impacts.

A major point of departure for Van Meter and Van Horn model and the Winter model of implementation is the issue of resources. While Winter model is generally mute on the employment and distribution of resources, the Van Meter and Van Horn model places emphasis on resources and how resources should be available and efficiently allocated and optimally utilized for the sole purpose of effectively implementing the policy and attaining the goals thereof. Many policies may have failed to make the needed impact because of lack of funds and to this end the weakness or limitation of Winter model is revealed for its no emphasis on resources. It is synchronizing these common variables and drawing on the strengths of these models that this study employs both models in its analysis.

### **3.6 Relevance of these Models to the Study**

The review and discussion of the theoretical models above relevantly relate to my study in terms of the underlying principles of public policy implementation process and the variables that were highlighted. This study draws inspiration from these models and makes adoption of some variables such as organizational structure, the role of politics, target group and resources among others in assessing the implementation of the feeding program have both theoretical and empirical basis in research.

A synthesis of the models shows that actors (either at the local or national level) are key component of the implementation process. The behaviour, skills etc of actors as well as the characteristics of target group in the implementation of a public policy and fed into the

effectiveness of the implementation the program or not. In essence, these models place emphasis on how policies are designed and formulated as they are directly linked to the outcomes of the policy (Howlett *et al*, 2009). In either way one looks at the models i.e. the top-down or bottom-up approach, a window of evaluating or assessing how the implementation of the feeding program has so far gone through the target group and other stakeholders can also be opened and analysed and useful feedbacks will help shape up or better the process up going forward. To the extent that target groups and other interested parties of the GSFP at the regional and local levels will be engaged and interviewed makes the application of these models to the study relevant.

A key indicator of how effective an implemented policy has been its achievement of desirable outcomes. An index for measuring performance of a program such as the school feeding is its output and the impact made on those the programs are intended for vis-à-vis the program aims and objectives. Nevertheless, other factors such as political environment etc are essential when it comes to assessing how implemented policies have fared. It is in the light of this that the models emphasized the widening of the perspectives on the effective measurement of policy implementation process as only a focus on just the outcome may skew analysis and mask a holistic view of the entire process. As has been previously outlined, a good design and formulation of policies can partly ensure effective implementation while controlling for other factors within the implementation process (Buabeng, 2009; Kipo, 2011).

As this study seeks to achieve its specific objectives, the application of both the Van Meter and Van Horn Model and Winter Model enables the study to rely on some variables in assessing the implementation of the GSFP in the Atwima Mponua and Atwima Nwabiagya Districts by drawing a link between the dependent variable which is the implementation of the GSFP and the independent variables such as politics, organizational structure (monitoring, coordination, supervision etc), resources (human and physical) and target group

behaviour. It is noteworthy that these variables have been selected for this study after a careful review of both theoretical and empirical studies.

The study offers brief discussions of the independent variables that compositely explain the implementation of the school feeding program at the above-stated districts below.

### **3.6.1 Organizational or Implementation Structure**

The organizational chart of the implementation of the Ghana School Feeding Program has been shown (drawn) and detailed in *Chapter Two*. The study is however limiting itself to the implementing agencies at the regional and district (local) levels only where officials of the GSFP are interviewed to provide useful information to the researcher or author on how the school feeding is effectively being implemented in the selected districts of the Ashanti Region. This study is restricting the implementation structure to the coordination, communication, monitoring and supervision of the implementation bodies at the regional and district offices with much emphasis on the latter.

The role of implementation agencies in such a social intervention like the feeding program cannot be overemphasized. An effective implementation or organizational structure is sine qua non to the successful outcomes of rolled out programs. On the contrary, when the implementation structure is not properly instituted, the implemented program may run the risk of doom and failure and this has been succinctly summarized by Rothstein (1998) as “...using an inappropriate organizational structure often leads to failure in the stage of implementation- forms of organization are like tools- they are only suitable for the performance of certain definite tasks” (Rothstein 1998: 89). In addition, clearly defined roles by the implementing agents must be outlined in order to avoid duplication of duties or roles and also arrest any potential issues of conflict that may arise among the agents.

This point is also closely related to the number of stakeholders involved in the implementation process. For Pressman and Wildavsky (1984), for implementation of a policy to succeed, it is largely dependent on and affected by a host of factors like the number of stakeholders or actors involved, how different shades of opinions are managed or considered, local dynamics, veto points, varied interests among others all come into play in the process of implementation. If these factors are not handled well, it may affect the desired outcomes of the implementation of the policy in question. It is against this background that the choice of this variable is justified in this study as empirical evidence is adduced in this research about how organization structure as constituted is shaping up in the implementation process to achieve the stated goals of the GSFP.

### **3.6.2 Role of Politics**

Many major policies that have been rolled out as social interventions have been initiated as a result of political decisions either it was a campaign promise as captured in political party manifestoes or was simply a product of thought (or convenience/capital) after winning political power. Either way one looks at it, politics plays a central part in such decisions. For example, the Free Maternal Health of 2001 and the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) rolled out in 2005 by the NPP government were brought into being as a campaign message and got implemented. The GSFP was also birthed as a consequence of a political decision. A strong political will and support do not only provide lifeblood for such social interventions but their sustainability and ultimate success.

The Directive Principles of State Policy as captured in the 1992 constitution of Ghana enjoins successive governments to continue with policies initiated, formulated and implemented by government of Ghana but the reality is far from the truth as observations and happenings evidenced by the political history of Ghana have shown that successive governments especially governments formed by different parties do not give flesh or true meaning to this



constitutional provision. In some instances, the fear of the previous government taking all credits for the introduction of a program among others makes incumbent government particularly from a different party shy away from continuing the program or even if it continues shows less political commitments regardless of how progressive, poverty-reducing and development-oriented such policies are.

Political ideological differences and some parochial interests of political actors may swing the implementation of some social interventions in a particular direction. May and Winter (2007) confirmed this observation by asserting that “implementers have a greater urge to diverge from national goals when those local politicians who are closest to them disagree with the national goals”. Worst of all, over-politicization of implemented policies has been identified as one of the major causes of policy implementation failures in Ghana (Buabeng 2005). The choice of this explanatory variable (role of politics) has been necessary given that this study is being undertaken in the era of an NDC administration when its political rivals, NPP, initiated and implemented the GSFP.

Stroker (1991) advised that, “to understand the operation of local government, it is essential to examine the internal politics of local authorities” (Stroker 1991: 89). Thus, an investigating the role of politics relative to the effective implementation of the GSFP at the local level is quite appropriate. It is also important to state that, where there is a strong political will and commitment, funds are often made available for the smooth running of the program (Eshun, 2015).

### **3.6.3 Resource Endowments**

Funding of the implementation of the GSFP program is critical for both its success and sustainability. Resource endowments available at the local level where the GSFP is in operation help in community mobility and participation in the program. Resources are either financial or human or the combination of both. The funding mode of the localized GSFP is

assessed in this study. The focus of the study relative to resources is operationalized by timing of release of funds to caterers and the SICs in the respective schools and districts. Efficient use of resources is expected in the continuous roll out of the program and therefore ensuring value for money with respect to how these public funds are expended on the program is nothing less than the ideal expectation (Momen, 2010). Probably, the communities may be abundant with particular resources such as firewood etc that can help support the program. The human aspect of resources in this study are assessed through a brief profile of the Regional and District Coordinators of the GSFP to ascertain their level of qualifications and requisite skills as regards their frontal and pivotal roles they play in the GSFP implementation process.

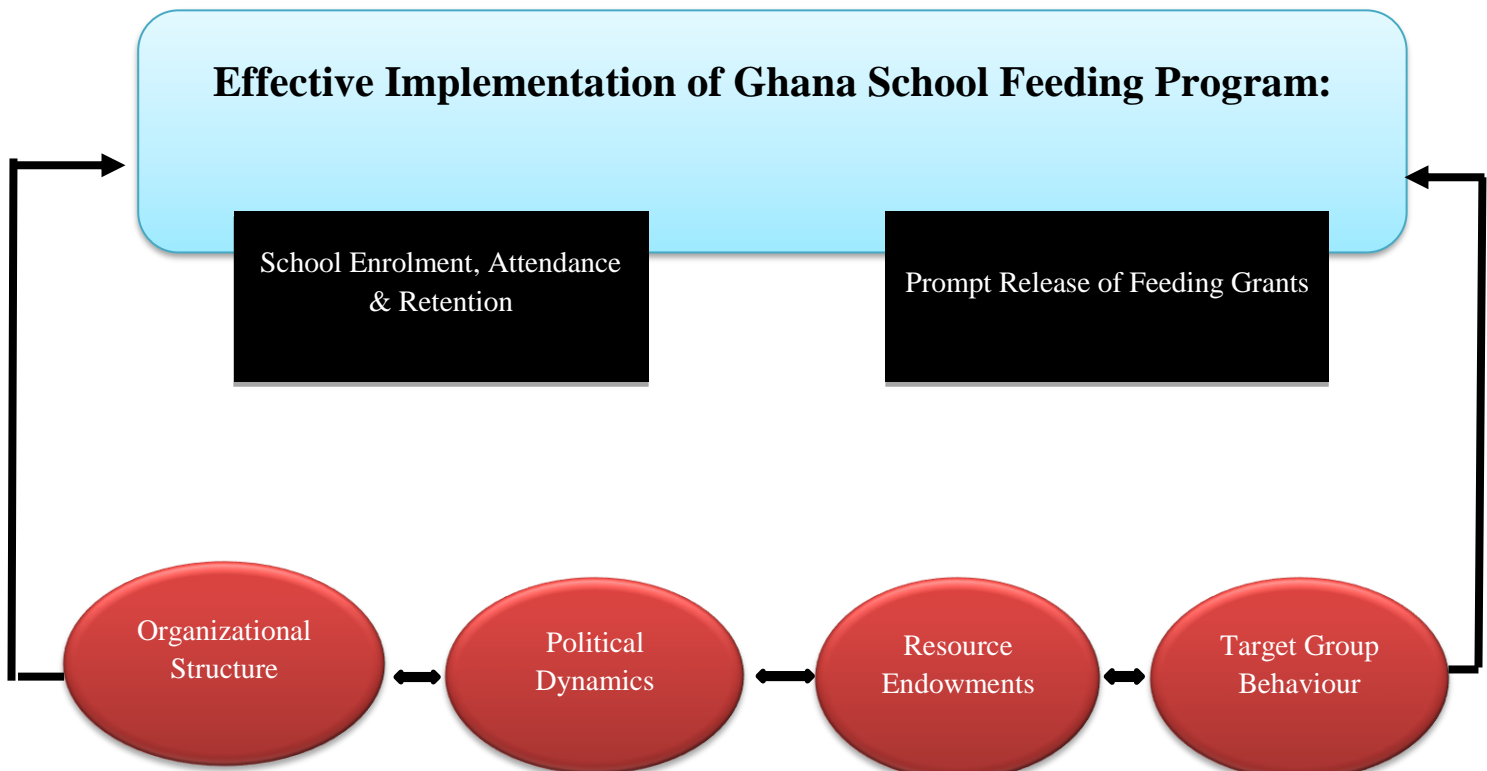
#### **3.6.4 Target Group Behaviour**

All those which a particular implemented program is intended to benefit them really matter in the implementation process. The attitude, behaviour and commitment towards the program by target groups are important constituents of the whole implementation scheme. This point is corroborated by Winter (2012) who posited that “target group of a program can affect the behaviour of the implementers through either their positive or negative actions in the co-production of public services”. A sense of ownership and impact of the GSFP on the lives of target groups as well as their viewpoints on how the program is directly or indirectly affecting them and their readiness to sustain the program or hand it down to successive generations are all important signals when assessing the implementation of a public policy. In this vein, the school children, their parents, school authorities, and community opinion leaders and ordinary inhabitants among others are engaged through interviews and observation in analysing the behaviour of the target groups.

### 3.7 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for the study as developed by the author of this study is the product of both the discussions and reviews of literature and the models propounded by Van Meter and Van Horn as well as Winter. The conceptual framework is illustrated below.

**Figure 4: Conceptual Framework for the Study**



*Source: Author's own Designed Framework (2017)*

### 3.8 Explained Variable and its Operationalisations

The primary objective of this study is to assess the implementation of the GSFP in the Atwima Mponua and Atwima Nwabiagya District Assemblies. Specifically, the study assesses the effectiveness or otherwise of the implementation of the GSFP in the Adupri Basic Primary School and Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School in the Atwima Mponua District and Atwima Nwabiagya District respectively. The explained variable also known as

dependent variable in this study is therefore the effectiveness of the implementation of the GSFP.

There is no better measure of the effectiveness of an implemented program than the assessment of desired outcomes or the anticipated outputs that are produced in the implementation process (Rawlings and Rubio, 2005; De Carvalho, 2011). However, Hill and Hupe (2009) caution researchers to be circumspect in evaluating outcomes and stressed that it is imperative for thorough and better analysis of the outcomes or output to be done as far as assessment of the effectiveness of implementation of programs is concerned. In this study, the implementation outcomes of the GSFP in the selected schools are assessed within the context of school enrolment, attendance and retention of children of school-going age. As cited in Eshun (2015), implementation output refers to the “the degree to which anticipated services are actually delivered” (Meter & Horn 1975: 449).

For Winter (2014), the assessment of the effectiveness or otherwise of an implemented program should be carried out in “in terms of delivery behaviours and outcomes in terms of change in the behaviour or conditions of the target populations”. This study employs *school enrolment; prompt release of feeding grants; and community ownership or participation* as proxies or operationalized variables for the effective implementation of the GSFP in the selected districts; brief discussions on these operationalized variables or proxies are done below.

### **3.8.1 School Enrolment, Attendance and Retention**

The central objective of the initiation and implementation of the GSFP was to arrest the menace of very low school enrolment, absenteeism and dropouts at the basic level of education in Ghana. In essence, the GSFP is a national strategy to, among others, increase school enrolment, attendance and retention among school-going kids. This objective is very

pivotal in terms of assessing whether the implementation of the feeding program has so far been effective or not.

A number of scholars such as Lynch (2013), Mohammed and Sakara (2014), Drake et al (2016) among others in their studies or research on GSFP elsewhere, have used this variable as a proxy measure in assessing how the implementation of the GSFP has been effectively carried out towards attaining the set-out goals. This variable gives a reasonable idea or signals relative to direct impact and to some extent indirect impact of the rolled out feeding program on the target groups i.e. beneficiary school children, their guardians or parents and the communities as a whole. The choice of this variable to operationalize effective implementation of the GSFP in the selected schools and districts is both theoretically and empirically based.

### **3.8.2 Prompt Release of Feeding Grants**

A key component for the success of the implementation of the GSFP is the prompt and timely release of feeding grants. Continuous and uninterrupted flow of funds to the various beneficiary schools, caterers and suppliers among others provide a lifeblood for the effective and sustainability of the implemented GSFP (Lynch, 2013). Essentially, the of the implementation of the feeding program at the district level thrives well and becomes very effective if those contracted in the supply chain receive their grants or funds on time so that the school children can be fed every day during school hours.

This study focuses on how prompt the caterers get paid or have their funds released to them, thus, the study operationalizes the effective implementation of the GSFP at the selected districts and schools by the timely release of funds to caterers who are one of the very important stakeholders at the local level of implementation.

### 3.9 Explanatory Variables

The independent variables as contained in the conceptual framework include organizational (implementation) structure, political dynamics (politics), resource endowments and target group behaviour. These variables are the inputs that are fed into the implementation process to generate or produce the envisaged outcomes. Below are brief explanations of these explanatory variables and their operationalisations.

#### 3.9.1 Organizational Structure

The study has captured the design of the organizational structure of the GSFP under the overview chapter (Chapter 2). As has been earlier stated, the study limits itself to the Regional and District including school levels of implementation where the selected schools are sited. The study examines the relationship that exists among the Regional Coordinating Director of GSFP, the District Coordinator and the SIC. The study operationalizes organizational structure by the level of ‘coordination, communication (cooperation), monitoring and supervision’ that runs through the implementation structure from the top (regional level) unit right down to the school level.

It is essential to note that any effective implementation process needs proper coordination, communication and cooperation among the hierarchical offices that have been established to closely work together to achieve the objectives of the public policy being implemented (Kipo, 2011). **Hypothesis 1:** The study hypothesizes that *the level of coordination, communication (cooperation), monitoring and supervision have material effect on the effective implementation of the GSFP at the local level.*

### 3.9.2 Political Dynamics (Politics)

There is a general phenomenon in Ghana where some parastatal jobs or contracts become spoils for members of the victorious political party at elections (Aryee, 2002). It ranges from the seizure of management of tolls booths to the control of the running of public toilet facilities among others. The school feeding program is not insulated from such political ches (Atta and Manu, 2015). The political dynamics – either at the top level or at the grassroots level – shapes up the process of effective implementation of a public policy (Eshun, 2015). The role of political actors in the public policy implementation process has received considerable scholarly and research coverage (Aryee, 2002).

In the selection of caterers, there exists the possibility that political dynamics locally takes the shape of political interference through cronyism and nepotism: preferential treatments of political clients. This political patronage is anathema to national development (Aryee, 2002). In this study, political dynamics or simply politics is operationalized by political choices in terms of decision made in selecting caterers for the beneficiary schools at the district level.

**Hypothesis 2:** The decision taken at the district level is localized and has some political colouration hence this study hypothesizes that *the choice of local caterers for the GSFP has political consideration and same affects the effective implementation of the GSFP in both the district and school.*

### 3.9.3 Resource Endowments

In this study, the resource endowments of the GSFP is tailored towards the skills and competence of the officials at both the regional and local level as well as the contributions made in kind by the parents or guardians of the school kids, the community as a whole among others. This variable – resource endowments – is important in measuring how effective the implementation has so far been. The resource endowment is operationalized by both the human resources (i.e. academic qualifications, knowledge, skills and competences) of the

regional and district GSFP coordinators and the physical resources (i.e. firewood supply, water supply, basic infrastructure such as kitchen set up) which are often made available by the parents, members of the local community etc.

In rural setting where the GSFP is in operation, examining physical endowments availability such as firewood and water supply from streams or rivers etc by the local people to enable the caterers cook and feed the children is important in both the short and long run in pursuit of the continuity of the GSFP in such poverty-stricken areas. To achieve this, focus groups and local stakeholders are engaged through interviews to assess the resource endowments that are employed in the implementation of the GSFP in the schools. **Hypothesis 3:** This study therefore draws a hypothesis that *resource endowments (i.e. physical and human) have effect on the effectiveness of the implementation of the feeding program in the schools and communities.*

### **3.9.4 Target Group Behaviour**

The behaviour of the beneficiary schools, pupils and the community as a whole towards the implementation of the GSFP is important as it serves as a form of verdict on or assessment of the GSFP by the local people; thus, in this study the behaviour is examined for analysis. The target group behaviour is operationalized by the degree of community involvement gauged by the feedback from or reactions of the beneficiaries towards the feeding program. Local ownership of the GSFP by the community engenders confidence in the feeding program by the grassroots and also triggers full involvement of the operations of the GSFP by the community and its inhabitants. The acknowledgement that the extent of community ownership or involvement which serves as a fulcrum around which the effective implementation of the feeding program at the local level revolves has found expression in the 2008 GSFP Operating Manual. Discussion by focus group enables inputs of the people to be aggregated and analyzed relative to the outcomes of the program. Author of this study



assumes that a positive feedback or reaction is a good indicator of the degree of community ownership. **Hypothesis 4:** The study hypothesizes that *target group behaviour which is connected with the degree of community involvement explains the extent of effectiveness or otherwise of the GSFP being implemented in the selected schools and communities.*

### **3.10 Conclusion**

Under this chapter, the theoretical framework underpinning the study as well as the models of Winter and that of Van Meter and Van Horn were discussed and some adopted. The similarities, differences and synthesis of these models were equally highlighted. The conceptual framework was designed and drawn by author of this study based on reviewed literature and the theoretical framework. The study further explored the dependent variable which is the effective implementation of the GSFP in the selected schools and districts of the Ashanti Region and its operationalisations discussed as well. The study again featured and discussed the independent variables used in this research which are organizational (implementation) structure, political dynamics (politics), resource endowments and target group behaviour and their respective proxies.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

The chapter discusses data collection in general. The study under this chapter emphasizes the methods of data gathering, sample size, areas of study, research strategy, target population and research design. The study highlights major concerns relating to validity, reliability and generalization of the findings of the study. Again, ethical issues that may arise in the course of carrying out this research as well as the challenges the author faced in collecting data on the field and the limitations of the study are presented and discussed here.

#### **4.1 Areas of Study**

The Adupri Basic Primary School and Mfensi Basic Primary School are all found in deprived rural communities located respectively in the Atwima Mponua District and Atwima Nwabiagya District in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. These schools were selected purposively to achieve the objective of the study in assessing the implementation of the GSFP at the local levels. These schools have been beneficiaries of the school feeding program since GSFP inception as they met almost all the set-out criteria in the selection of schools, communities and districts to benefit from the program (GoG, 2013). The Atwima Mponua District and Atwima Nwabiagya District form part of the 216 administrative districts in Ghana (MLGRD, 2012).

#### **4.1.1 Atwima Mponua District**

The Atwima Mponua District was established by Legislative Instrument (L.I) 1785 and lies between longitude 2°00'W and 2°32'W and latitude 6°32'N and 6°75'N (MLGRD, 2010).

The Atwima Mponua District with its administrative capital called Nyinahin is located in the South-west of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The district which is a predominant agrarian economy like many rural districts in Ghana covers a geographical area of approximately 894.15 square kilometres (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015).

A socio-economic survey conducted in 2005 by the GSS revealed that approximately 80% of the labour force in the Atwima Mponua District cited Agriculture as their occupation as compared to about 52% and 61% at the National and Ashanti Regional levels respectively. In 2006, the annual income of households in this district averaged GH¢178.10 whereas the urban economy was GH¢270.00. Again, while the per capita income in the urban economy was pegged at GH¢69.20, that of the Atwima Mponua District was a paltry GH¢34.90 (GSS, 2007).

The net effect of all these shows that about 60% of household incomes in the Atwima Mponua District falls below the national and rural incomes indicating low living standards in this district with poverty being prevalent among the local people (*ibid*). According to the Population and Housing Census (2010) report, this district has a population of 119,180 comprising of 61,090 males and 58,090 females. The Atwima Mponua District shares boundary with eight districts, where it mainly borders Atwima Nwabiagya District to the east of, with Ahafo-Ano South District to the north and Amansie West District to the south.

#### **4.1.2 Atwima Nwabiagya District**

Atwima Nwabiagya District covers an estimated area of 294.84 square kilometres making it one of the largest districts in the Ashanti Region. The Legislative Instrument 1738 established the Atwima Nwabiagya District and it is one of the 216 decentralized administrative and political Districts of the Republic of Ghana (MLGRD, 2010). Ashanti Region where this district is located has 27 Districts. The Atwima Nwabiagya District lies approximately on latitude 6°75'N and between longitude 1°45' and 2°00' West (*ibid*). The 2010 Population and Housing Census conducted in Ghana shows that the district has a population of 149,025 with males being 71,948 and 77,077 as females.

The district is located in the West of the Ashanti Region sharing common boundaries with both Atwima Mponua Districts and Ahafo Ano South District to the West and to the East are Kumasi Metropolitan and Kwabre District. It borders the following districts to the South: Bosomtwe, Amansie–West, Atwima Kwanwoma Districts and to its northern border is Offinso Municipality. Given its proximity to the Kumasi metropolis, a lot of trading activities go on in this district thus giving it a peri-urban status as a district. Agriculture, Industry, Trading and Services have characterized the economy of the Atwima Nwabiagya District. Agriculture, notwithstanding the peri-urban status of this district, is the predominant sector employing about 51% of the labour force available in the district.

Trailing the Agriculture sector are the industrial sector (17.41%), trading sector which constitutes buying and selling with 14.43% and finally the service sector which comprises hospitality, hairdressing, transportation and a host of other activities. Although there are a number of problems the district is battling with, a major development problem this district is facing, according to available data by the Department of Social Welfare, is that some children of school-going age are used in exploitative child labour in meeting their respective family needs instead of being enrolled in schools or receiving formal education which better their

lots in future. These children are used in economic activities such as farming and trading. (MLGRD, 2011). It is such unpleasant development of child labour that GSFP was implemented at the local level to curb such unfortunate phenomenon.

From these staggering or not-too-pleasant statistics about these two under-developed districts, an empirical study launched into assessing the effectiveness of the implementation of such a pro-poor social intervention as the GSFP to bring about turnaround in development in these districts is justifiably appropriate. The study's selection of one beneficiary school in each of the district is aimed at bringing the issues of effective implementation and challenges of the feeding program to the fore and also snaps same to the attention of relevant actors and policy makers.

## **4.2 Research Strategy**

A qualitative method of research is adopted for the study. This method facilitates the establishment of participants' feedback, meanings and perspectives on societal issues. This is important in achieving the objective of this study: assessing the effectiveness of the implementation of the GSFP. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), qualitative research data place much emphasis on the "forms of words rather than numbers" and the collected data proffer "explanations of processes in identifiable local context". Creswell (2013) stated when qualitative methods are employed in research, they offer better grasps of people's appreciation and meaning of societal problems as a result of the natural context within which the problems happened.

According to Gray (2009) and cited in Kipo (2011), qualitative research relies on some techniques, resources and tools for data collection and these include interviews, focus group discussions, observations, review of documents and other sources of information such as online news portal etc. All the appropriate techniques, tools and resources employed during

the field work for data collection are stated in the succeeding pages. The study's objective of assessing the effective implementation of the GSFP at the local level has made the study both explorative and adaptive in approach, style and form. A theoretical framework which supports the study was delineated leading to the identification of independent variables (organizational or implementation structure, political dynamics, resource endowments and target group behaviour) that explain the dependent variable, that is, the implementation of GSFP in the selected schools which has been operationalized school enrolment, prompt release of feeding grant and community ownership.

The study as it has been outlined earlier, relies mostly on qualitative approach to research and data collection with data sourced from regional and local stakeholders as well as selected beneficiaries of the GSFP. It is the author's expectation and hope that, the use of qualitative research method will enrich the study by providing a better appreciation and understanding of how effective or otherwise the GFSP has been implemented at the grassroots level in a natural setting. In addition, the author is enabled by the use of qualitative method to grasp the different perspectives of the numerous actors involved in the implementation process and author is again better positioned to familiarize with the real challenges confronting the operation of the feeding program at the very base of its implementation.

Furthermore, the use of qualitative research methods allows the mood, emotions, feelings and body language of interviewees to be significantly captured by me. Direct observation of behaviour and activities of actors on the field of operation which are closely linked to the implementation of the GSFP all provide useful guide and memories to the researcher and are importantly factored into the examination of the implementation of the localized GSFP. The face-to-face interview embarked upon during the data gathering enabled author to ask probing questions that elicited responses from the relevant actors and where possible, follow-up questions were posed to respondents for better understanding of the issues raised.

Although the study sparsely used the quantitative technique which mostly solicits answers through closed-ended questions except in few cases where, for example, it was used in assessing the effectiveness of the implementation of the GSFP in terms of school enrolment, attendance and retention over the period. It is instructive to note that, the chunk of the study heavily relied on qualitative method which was highly convenient and useful because it did not restrict the interviewees from freely expressing themselves and also supplying information as far as the GSFP at the local level is concerned.

A possible drawback of the qualitative research approach as employed by the study was the small number of areas of study (i.e. one selected GSFP-beneficiary basic school in each of the two selected districts) with a relatively small sample size in this research; this may lead to some questions being raised to challenge aspects of the findings of the study in terms of external validity. In this regard, portions of the study's findings instead of being statistically representative may be analytically generalized. For qualitative methods of scientific investigation, few social phenomena or single societal issue may be examined and to this extent, extrapolation of research outcomes to the larger population may be severely constrained (Kipo, 2011; Eshun, 2015).

### **4.3 Research Design**

A guide for a researcher about how to go on a particular scientific study in terms of gathering, analysing and interpreting data is called research design. It is simply the techniques relied on to undertake a research. According to Yin (2009), research design entails specific procedure adopted by the scholar in linking collected data to a set of research questions posed in the study of which the study seeks to find answers to and thereafter draw conclusions based on empirical outcomes. Literature has covered extensive research designs and their strategies for

undertaking research of qualitative nature. Yin (2009) further stated three conditions that must be met or that serve as guides when constructing or framing a research design.

These conditions, as revealed by Yin (2009:3) are first, the research questions posed; second, the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioural events; and lastly, the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events. Given that this empirical research is a case-study, the 'how', 'why', and 'what' questions were posed to respondents during the field work in seeking to assess the implementation of the GSFP at the level which fits Yin (2009) classification of the nature of investigations into a 'contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context [with] the researcher having no or little or control over events.

This study is comparing the implementation of the GSFP in two adjoining districts where Atwima Nwabiagya District is better developed than Atwima Mponua District, as evidenced by the statistical report of the GSS (2005), where both districts are found in the same region. For a thorough comparative study and analysis, this study considers the same issues or set of variables across both districts. That is, the units of analysis are the same or similar. This comparative study is aimed at examining whether differences exist in terms of the effectiveness of the implementation of the GSFP at the local level in these districts. The study further explores, if differences exist, some factors such as a district location's proximity to urban centres, deeper sense of communal spirit etc play a role. To this extent, the case study approach to undertaking research is adopted and preferred in examining a societal phenomenon.

#### **4.4 Target Population, Selected Respondents and Sample Size**

This section of the Chapter discusses the study's target population under the GSFP implementation, how respondents were selected during the fieldwork and the sample size used in the study.



#### **4.4.1 Target Population**

The study was guided by the words of Twumasi (2001) who cautioned and advised that students or scholars of research should always bear in mind about the rural or urban settings of their study's target population. Twumasi (2001) opined that "researchers must know the characteristics and behaviour patterns of rural people" and cited in Kipo (2011).

The study targeted specific and relevant actors and stakeholders in the GSFP implementation process at the both the regional and district levels. In this regard, data for the study was therefore gathered at the Ashanti Regional office of the GSFP, the District Office of GSFP, authorities or representatives of the beneficiary schools, GSFP-contracted caterers including cooks, members and opinion leaders of the community and parents of enrolled wards enjoying the GSFP.

All these highlighted sources of data were activated in furtherance of achieving the objectives of this empirical study as each source proved useful in collating the views of all the relevant stakeholders as expected in qualitative study and soliciting the needed information for rigorous analysis on the effectiveness or otherwise of the implemented GSFP at the grassroots level.

#### **4.4.2 Selected Respondents**

The study purposively selected respondents in the data collection process. The significance of purposive sampling employed in such qualitative study as this relates to its facilitation of important information supply by the relevant actors and the release of vital data or statistics the research so desires. Again, given that time in data collection is of supreme essence, purposively approach to data sampling and gathering helps in minimizing if not completely eliminate time wasting and brings focus and speed to the on-field researcher (Buabeng, 2015; Eshun, 2015).

The study again took a cue from Creswell (2013) in selecting the types of respondents as outlined in the section above (4.4.1). Creswell stated that “the idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants that will best help the researcher to understand the problem and the research questions” (*ibid*). To this extent, data was drawn from the Ashanti Regional coordinator of the GSFP and the two District Coordinators of the Atwima Mponua and Atwima Nwabiagya District Assemblies; each head teacher or an assistant headteacher and the school coordinators in each of the selected basic primary schools; beneficiary pupils; each caterer and their cooks among other key actors and stakeholders. It must be stated that the selected respondents constitute, to the best of author’s knowledge, almost all the core or key players in the GSFP implementation process from the regional level to the school level.

The use of these respondents for this purposive exercise should however not be construed as representative survey sample of the wider public who populate these districts. It is in the acknowledgement of the small number of respondents which belies or lacks a proper and true reflection of the entire population of the districts that the findings of this study will be analytically rather than statistically generalized as it has been previously outlined in this chapter.

The respondents purposively selected for this study include the following:

- ✓ Ashanti Regional GSFP Coordinator
- ✓ The two GSFP District Coordinators
- ✓ Authorities of the two beneficiary Basic Primary Schools
- ✓ The GSFP School Coordinators
- ✓ Caterers, Cooks and Kitchen staff in the two selected beneficiary Schools
- ✓ Pupils or School children in these schools
- ✓ Parents or guardians of wards in beneficiary schools

- ✓ Assembly Members whose local jurisdiction the schools are situated in each district.
- ✓ Key Opinion Leaders and ordinary members of the beneficiary communities.

All the above listed stakeholders-cum-respondents contributed to the data that this study relies on to assess the implementation of the GSFP at the local level and to accordingly make findings out of this research study.

#### 4.4.3 Table 3: Sample Size

ATWIMA MPONUA DISTRICT		ATWIMA NWABIAGYA DISTRICT	
Respondents	Number of Respondents	Respondents	Number of Respondents
Ashanti Regional GSFP Coordinator	1	Ashanti Regional GSFP Coordinator	1
District GSFP Coordinator	1	District GSFP Coordinator	1
Headteacher of Adupri Basic Primary School	1	Headteacher of Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School	1
School GSFP Coordinator	1	School GSFP Coordinator	1
Caterers, Cooks and Kitchen Staff	2	Caterers, Cooks and Kitchen	2
Pupils or School children	4	Pupils or School children	4
Parents or guardians of wards	4	Parents or guardians of wards	4
Assembly Men/Women	1	Assembly Men/Women	1
Key Opinion Leaders and ordinary members in beneficiary localities	2	Key Opinion Leaders and ordinary members in beneficiary localities	2
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS = 33</b>			
<b><i>NB: The Ashanti Regional GSFP Coordinator is only one individual who has supervision over all the districts in the Ashanti Region so he is counted as one for both districts to avoid double counting</i></b>			

## **4.5 Modes of Data Gathering**

Author of the study employed different means of data gathering during the field work. The study therefore discusses the various techniques used in the data collection below.

### **4.5.1 Face-to-Face Interview**

The study gathered data through face-to-face interview. Most of the key actors who double as respondents were interviewed through this interview mode. The GSFP coordinators at the regional and district offices, the headteachers, assemblymen, caterers etc were all interviewed using this approach. The information provided by some of the respondents were very revealing as some of these interviewees could be described, according to Yin (2009), as useful informants given the kinds of highly relevant information they supplied to this researcher.

Almost all the face-to-face interviews were conducted in a conversational manner and this proved very beneficial in discussing broad range of issues where necessary interviewer pushes further for clarification and expatiation of the subject under discussion. This helped in enriching the data that were gathered and to a large extent clear lingering doubts the interviewer bore about some of the answers provided by the respondents as some were sometimes evasive in their responses. Some of the respondents in the face-to-face interview were initially withdrawn and quite edgy but as the conversation or interview picked momentum, those respondents relaxed and freely expressed themselves and supplied the needed information for the study. The study also administered open-ended and semi-structured questionnaire to offer respondents the avenue to solicit their opinions, observations and sentiments about the GSFP implementation at the local level. It must be noted that, the study used the face-to-face interview when respondents were individually interviewed.

#### **4.5.2 Focus Group Discussion**

In gathering of data, where respondents are grouped for researcher to engage them through interview them *en masse* in one location and at the same time, such interactions according to Creswell (2009) is called ‘Focus Group Discussion’. In qualitative research, Merton, Fiske and Kendall (1990) advocated for data sourcing from grouped respondents who are also relevant actors in the public policy implementation process through “focussed interview” (Yin 2009; Kipo, 2011). Usually, Focus Groups consist of six to about ten individuals drawn from the target population by the researcher where discussions are well coordinated and moderated and follows a pattern of semi-structured questioning (Bryman, 2004; Creswell, 2013).

The essence of *Focus Group Discussion* is to give the scholar undertaking the study the opportunities to explore by extensively probing into the diverse views held and expressed on the subject of interest by the respondents who form the group (Yin, 2009). On the field where data was collected, author relied on FGD to put together pieces of information gleaned from the varied views expressed and perspectives shared by the members of the focus group on the effective implementation of the GSFP. Key community leaders, ordinary members in the locality, assemblymen/women and parents or guardians of beneficiary pupils were assembled together to solicit information from them as far as the GSFP at their local community is concerned.

The composition of this focus group reflected the shade of grassroots participation as enjoined by the 2011 Operating Manual of the GSFP. In line with the objectives of the study, the discussions involving the focus groups in each district were more of guided conversation than being led along lines of structured questioning (Yin, 2009). This guided conversation was to limit respondents to the acceptable discussions perimeters of the subject on board and thereby prevent them from overly straying from the core and local issues of the GSFP

implementation. The role of this author during the *Focus Group Discussion* segment of the data gathering was restricted to moderation and coordination to give room for respondents to freely air their opinions, feelings, reservations and concerns on the effective implementation of the GSFP in their community.

### **4.5.3 Direct Observation**

Directly observing happenings on the grounds of implementation of a policy like the feeding program afforded the author of this study the rare privilege and opportunity to have a first-hand information and personally witness real events as were the cases in both Adupri and Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary Schools at the point where cooks served lunch to the happy-looking school children. This direct observation enabled the author to move beyond the views, reservations and personal judgments of others (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; Gray, 2009). In these schools that direct observations were made, basic infrastructural issues, environmental cleanliness and hygiene, convenient places for eating by school children among others captured the attention of the author. The necessary protocols and tools for recording events while author was making a direct observation during food servings and eating at lunch break were used (Creswell 2013; Buabeng, 2015; Eshun, 2015). This helps in the gathering of useful information that would probably not be provided or fully made known thereby offering the author the leverage in giving vivid accounts or reports of how either grassroots issues are shaping up or not in these schools that enjoy the GSFP.

### **4.5.4 Documentary Materials**

Another mode the study employed in gathering data was documentary sources. Review of documentary materials such as official reports, publications, journals, official

correspondences etc brings deeper understanding and reveal important insights into the of the operations of GSFP at the local level (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Credibility of documents in undertaking an endeavour like research is key thus Twumasi (2001) stressed that documents sourced from recognized institutions ‘are usually reliable with the reason being that they were collected with more care and patience’ (Kipo, 2011).

The Ashanti Regional Coordinator of GSFP – a bachelor’s degree holder from the University of Ghana – was very helpful in releasing vital documents and statistical report and data on the GSFP to the author and this eases the burden of ‘fishing’ for some information that are very germane to this study. The headteachers or authorities of the selected basic primary schools also assisted very well in this regard by cooperatively providing useful statistical report that goes to enrich the data gathered and ultimately the study. These documentary sources of data reduce the challenges of missing or leaving out important information through interviews and poor memory recollection (Gray, 2009; Creswell 2013).

#### **4.6 Data Analysis**

The gathered data has to be processed, interpreted and meaning made out of it (Creswell, 2009). The act therefore of interpreting processed data and placing meaningful value on it is called data analysis. Processed data should not be technical and esoteric and must be its interpretation done in simple way where its understanding must be clear to even the ordinary person (Twumasi, 2001; Creswell, 2013). During the fieldwork for data collection, interviews of respondents were captured on a recording device after which author transcribed the responses of the interviewees and then typed for analysis. The appropriate sorting and coded categorizations were done for purposes of analysing the data without difficulties and in a simplified manner. According to Creswell (2013), coding is the ‘giving of labels to

categorized segmented sentences with a term usually based on the actual language of the participant' (Eshun, 2015).

Guided by reviewed literature, the coded categorizations of the responses through data sorting were done under the following four variables: organizational structure, political dynamics (politics), resource endowments and target group behaviour (Creswell, 2015; Eshun, 2015). The study uses content analysis to both interpret and make proper meanings out of the data gathered and processed. The study checked accuracy of facts and the provision of consistent responses through editing to clarify issues and present clear narratives of responses. Relevant tables and narratives have been used in this study to convey meanings of processed data. In some instances, for emphasis sake and some useful views shared by respondents as well as important information revealed by same, direct quotations are made (Kipo, 2011). Some of the pictures taken after observing the necessary protocols on the field are attached to the study.

#### **4.7 Limitations of Study**

Limitations necessarily arise when qualitative research study such as this is being undertaken (Creswell, 2013; Twumasi, 2001). Limitations relative to validity, reliability and generalizations of the findings of the study enrapture the attention of the researcher and remedial measures are found to address them. However, scholars who oppose the qualitative methods of research opine that the limitations in terms of validity, reliability and generalizations are never addressed no matter how or what the researcher tries in finding solutions to them (Kipo, 2011).

Accurate and quality findings in a study under the social sciences go a long way to influence policy, enrich literature and illuminates deeper understanding of social phenomena (Creswell,



2013). The study discusses below its limitations on the following themes: validity, reliability and generalizations.

#### **4.7.1 Validity and Reliability**

Creswell (2009) explains validity as the examination or verification of the correctness of findings of a study through the use of standard procedural mechanisms in research (Adcock and Collier, 2001; Kipo, 2011). Any qualitative research study derives its strength from the robustness and accuracy of the outcomes of the study (Atta and Manu, 2015). Schwandt in 1997 as cited in Eshun (2015) also defined validity as “how accurately a study’s account represents participants’ realities of the social phenomena and is credible to them”. The evaluation or appraisal of the quality of a study and its outcomes falls within the remit of reliability (Yin, 2009). Reliability also gives the student or scholar of scientific research a measure of consistency in approach across different projects and different research scholars within the context of empirical study (Creswell, 2009; Kipo, 2011).

That is, reliability ensures that findings of a particular study are consistent with and sound in theories and that the findings can be replicated or corroborated by other findings produced from other studies and in some instances, be conflicting or disagreeable, if other unique factors that were not controlled for in previous studies are accounted for (Eshun, 2015). This was succinctly summarized by Yin (2009) stating that principal objective of validity and reliability is to ‘reduce errors and biases in a research study’. In examining and addressing the challenges of validity and reliability of the study’s findings, the study generated case-study database and kept records which were obtained during fieldwork through interviewee’s responses (Yin, 2009) and cited in Kipo (2011). This led to the adoption of the triangulation methods of data gathering via the different modes as outlined in the preceding paragraphs. The rationale for the mixture of all the modes of data gathering is to compare or verify

responses from one mode with the others to obtain and maintain consistent and accurate representation of facts and also to eliminate author's biases prior to embarking on the fieldwork (*ibid*).

The study did not only apply the triangulation methods in combining all the modes of data gathering but also to the choice of respondents in soliciting their perspectives, opinions, experiences, reservations and sentiments on the implementation of the feeding program at the local level with the twin-aim offirst, increasing the study's validity and second, improving the quality outcomes of the study (Kipo, 2011; Buabeng, 2015). The sample size chosen for the study was to reasonably help check and minimize respondents' biases. In addition to this, the study's reliance on multiple sources of data collection provides a boost to the reliability and validity of results of the study.

The author mindful of the importance of precision or accuracy of findings based on the data gathered was armed with deeper grasps of the concepts of the subject that were discussed during the fieldwork which were subsequently employed in the study. Key operational terms were simplified to the understanding of the layman particularly for those in the local communities where the feeding program is being rolled out and also the study's use of appropriate proxies in operationalizing the explained and explanatory variables all goes to strengthen the validity and reliability of the study and its results. All these steps taken facilitated the removal of any ambiguity in understanding, communication and the proper usage of concepts and terminologies as far as the implementation of the GSFP at the local level is concerned.

#### **4.7.2 Generalization**

In qualitative research, findings of study are generally not representative of the larger populations and therefore generalizations are more viewed from the analytical angle rather

than from the statistical perspective (Yin, 2009; Creswell, 2013). Generalizations go to the core of external validity of the study and its findings (*ibid*). In research, generalizations have to do with the determination of findings of the research study being significant beyond the study itself and the core sample group or population the study relied on (Kerlinger, 1979). Critics of qualitative study assert that there are inherent limitations in generalizing results from such study above and beyond the scope of the study (Eshun, 2015). Outcomes or findings from this case study being undertaken are analytical generalized since the results may not truly or necessarily reflect the extent of effectiveness in the implementation of the GSFP in other local areas of administration where the development and implementation dynamics may sharply differ. However, the findings of this study may provide or reveal useful information and guide to policy makers as well as stakeholders and thereby influence future policy directions as far effective implementation of the GSFP at the grassroots is concerned.

#### **4.8 Challenges Faced During Data Collection (Field Work)**

As it is with experiences in most data collection on the field of work, challenges were encountered. A foremost challenge was the lack of strict adherence to agreed time by some of the respondents particularly the bureaucrats and caterers who were not residential in the local communities. They are caught up in either a meeting or they were away on official (and/or sometimes personal) duties. This phenomenon sometimes disrupted the author's planned schedules which led in some cases re-adjusting schedules and drawn time-table for the data gathering exercise which often clashed with or distorted other prior fixed meetings or engagements with other actors or stakeholders.

Another challenge encountered was the 'go-come' syndrome. This problem arose, for instance, where a secretary to a key official tells author (me) to go and come back after the latter has made an appearance at the office on agreed scheduled date to interview or collect

some documents or pieces of information from the officer because the boss had travelled or unavailable at that moment.

Last and not least, assembling discussants of the focus group at one location was a real challenge. In typical farming communities, almost all the adults leave for their farms very early in the morning and return quite late in the evening. Author made a lot of trips to the communities to fix a mutually convenient date and time for the planned group meeting. Eventually, the numerous trips and engagements paid off for the focus group discussion to take place.

#### **4.9 Ethical Considerations in the Study**

Confidentiality and the protection of the identities and personal data of respondents are key as they bother on ethical standards in research. Yin (2014) posits that a study being undertaken which involves human beings must out of necessity invoke ethical considerations. Yin's viewpoints were shared by Gray (2009) who opines that empirical studies involving the gathering of data or contacts with human populations has element(s) of 'ethical considerations'' (Kipo, 2015). This study's author in an attempt not to breach respondents' confidentiality and privacy, adulterate the responses (information) obtained on the field which may compromise the integrity of the study and the quality of its findings, observed highest ethical standards throughout the entire study's duration as required in carrying out empirical research.

The ethical issues of interest considered are briefly discussed below in line with Creswell (2013) guide.

First, the author in properly identifying herself introduced herself as a student of the University of Bergen, Norway and presented upon demand my student's ID card and an introductory letter issued to me by the Department of Administration and Organization

Theory of the same university. This was to reinforce my true identity and reveal my real intention of strictly carrying out an important academic exercise and fulfilling a major university requirement. This engendered trust and cooperation from/among respondents and key actors. Secondly, respondents' consents were sought to get their full support and participation in a voluntary and non-coercive manner.

Again, author showed respect to respondents and gave them an assurance of confidentiality and their privacy will not be encroached (Israel and Hay, 2006). Author provides full information about how the interview will go including the use of recorders and cameras to the respondents. They were further assured that data being gathered and the recorders will be jealously protected from leaks and falling into the hands of unauthorized persons. This helped in getting their full attention and maximum cooperation and involvement. This also boosted my own integrity of not withholding anything from them but being open and transparent as much as possible. Lastly, for the results of the study and in its analysis, author assured them their anonymity will remain forever intact.

#### **4.10 Conclusion**

This chapter captured the strategies, methods and modes of collecting data during the field work. The means of analysing the gathered data as well as the units and areas the data was collected. Data was triangulated to boost the validity and reliability of the study and its findings. The study employed the qualitative methods of research to assess the implementation of the GSFP at the local and ascertain whether the implementation has been effective or not. This research was both a case-study and comparative study. It is a case study because the qualitative approach enabled me to gauge the operational environment of the GSFP and capture actors and stakeholders' concerns, reservations and comments among others.

The research is a comparative study in that comparison, similarities and differences where possible are drawn between the two selected primary schools and districts where the GSFP is being implemented. The chapter further discussed the various modes of data such as face-to-face interview, focus group discussion and documentary sources as well. The study under this chapter also discussed and adhered to ethical standards in research. Ethical issues such as author's true identity and purpose of the fieldwork, respondents' anonymity and consent as well as issues of privacy and confidentiality were considered.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 5.0 Introduction

The study, under this chapter, presents and discusses the findings or outcomes of the study. The dependent or outcome variable which is effective implementation of GSFP has three operationalized variables, namely, school enrolment, attendance and retention; prompt release of feeding grant and community ownership or involvement. The chapter also captures the independent or predictor variables which include organizational structure proxied by the level of coordination, communication (cooperation), monitoring and supervision' which flows through the hierarchical GSFP structure; political dynamics operationalized by the political decision in selecting caterers. These explanatory variables predict the effectiveness or otherwise of the implementation of the GSFP in the selected basic schools.

#### **5.1 Objective One: Ascertaining the Procurement Mechanism(s) of the GSFP Adopted in These Districts/Schools.**

In an attempt to answer the first research question, which is, '*what procurement mechanism(s) of GSFP is/are being rolled out in these districts/schools?*', the study extensively examines all the relevant data gathered during fieldwork to ascertain the procurement process or mechanism that is in place at the Atwima Mponua District and Atwima Nwabiagya District.

The kind of procurement mechanism that is employed in the operation of the GSFP partly accounts for the successes or failures of the feeding program (MoGCSP, 2012). In effect, the procurement process goes to the heart of effective implementation of the GSFP. For the implementation of the feeding program to succeed or achieve its set goals, a robust supply

chain mechanism is needed. According to official documents released by the Ashanti Regional Office of the GSFP to me, the national secretariat of GSFP together with international partners and donors such as The Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) have played critical role in fashioning out appropriate procurement mechanisms in the operation of the GSFP both at the national and local levels.

SNV (2016) defined public procurement within the context of feeding program to mean a mechanism for improving the economic lives of local farmers, going ‘beyond efficiency’ and according to Arrowsmith (1995) to promote justice and ‘use procurement as a social policy tool’. SNV (2016) maintains that in recent times, policy makers have shifted their focus on sustainable public procurement. According to European Commission (2016), sustainable public procurement is the right mix of social, economic and environmental thoughts and considerations when procuring goods and services with public funds. According to SNV (2016), sustainable procurement under the GSFP aims at attaining an effective mix and balance of ‘horizontal’ and ‘vertical’ strategies and policies in procuring foodstuffs and other logistics in the most cost-efficient manner from. That is, food items and other relevant supplies meant for the feeding program should be procured or purchased with the ‘best value for money’ sourced from the appropriate suppliers within the school feeding supply community(*ibid*).

The horizontal strategy and policy criteria deal with the socio-economic perspectives of the GSFP supply chain. The socio-economic perspectives of the procurement mechanism under the Ghana School Feeding Program relate to the inclusion or involvement of local farmers. This is to help boost the local economy by creating wealth among local farmers or producers – this is one of the key objectives of the implementation of the feeding program (GSFP Operating Manual, 2011). In the GSFP supply chain or procurement process, the local farmers are included as either direct or indirect suppliers.



The vertical strategy and policy criteria on the other hand, are concerned with the quality and prices of the foodstuffs or products as well as delivery of the food items among others. This helps to check that no sub-standard goods and overpriced food items are supplied. Given that suppliers only present their claims of supplies to the district assemblies for reimbursement or payment, the vertical criteria of the procurement thoroughly assess all these components of food items. The district in turn rigorously vets the claims made by the suppliers in order not to be fleeced, neither pay for foodstuffs not supplied nor goods items failing to meet basic standards in terms of quality and quantity. Again, the vertical policy criteria check that the correct purchase order of foodstuffs is delivered and that no diversion of the food items occurs in the delivery process.

Evidence based on the gathered data indicates that in both the Atwima Mponua District and Atwima Nwabiagya District as well as in Adupri Basic Primary School and Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School, the caterers model of procurement has been adopted and in force.

Under the caterers' model, the caterers who have been contracted for each of the school have the responsibility of procuring, purchasing and storing food items meant to be cooked for the pupils in the beneficiary schools.

Through face-to-face interview, I asked the Ashanti Regional Coordinator of GSFP about the choice of the Caterer model over the Suppliers and Mixed Models in both districts and schools, he proffered the following answer:

*“My sister, among the three models contained in the 2011 GSFP Operating Manual, the Caterers Model is the most suitable and appropriate model to be relied on for the GSFP implementation in Adupri and Mfensi Methodist Primary Schools because of the prevailing circumstances. What I mean by the ‘prevailing circumstance’ is that funding in most times is lagged for two or three terms in academic year. Currently,*

*as I speak to you, we are in the third term of the 2015/2016 academic year... what happens is that funds for the purchase of food supplies and payment of the services of the caterer for the first term of this [2015/2016] academic year have now been released to the Regional Office for disbursement to the caterers in the various districts of the Ashanti Region''.*

The Ashanti Regional GSFP Coordinator further threw more light on the suitability of the choice of the Caterers model over the other two procurement models in the Atwima Mponua and Atwima Nwabiagya. He thus opined:

*“When faced with such not-too-healthy phenomenon in terms of the time lags in the release of funds vis-à-vis the need to keep running the GSFP in these lucky beneficiary districts and schools and this certainly calls for hard thinking outside the box. It is such reality on the ground and to prevent the implementation of the feeding program at the local level from suffocating [sic] to doom and failure because of delays in releasing of funds that has necessitated the adoption of the caterers’ model. What sets the caterers model apart is the capacity to meet the strict requirement of pre-financing of the food supplies meant to feed the school children by prospective caterers. With this measure in place, whether there is prompt or delay release of funds for disbursement to the caterer does not in any way stall the activities of the GSFP in these schools. We do not want these school children to absent themselves, run away from school or even drop out of school because of the reason that there are no funds hence the lunch served them that kept them enrolled and retained in schools has been stopped. My dear, we do not want to dream of us getting nowhere near that let alone see it happen under our watch... no we want to avoid that at all cost’’.*

From the responses given by the regional coordinator, the overarching consideration for the choice of the Caterers model is its stable pre-financing arrangements and the removal of barriers for sustaining the feeding program in these districts. Per the data collected, under the caterers' model, the respective district plans the beneficiary school's menus with the caterer with minimal or no input from the schools or the community where the school is located. The caterer is given greater latitude under this model to organize, procure and store her own supplies of food items. The caterer is allowed under this model to recruit her own cooks and other hands in helping to cook.

Ghana is drifting more towards the caterers' model as the prospects of stable funding by way of the caterers having to pre-finance is more assured. Excerpts of a report (portions on the Caterer model) by SNV and released to me at the regional office during the fieldwork are reproduced below to buttress the facts as stated above:

*“As of January 2016, the procurement of foodstuffs is conducted by registered caterers under contract to the Ghana School Feeding Programme Secretariat. Caterers, buying on their own behalf to produce the meals themselves, are not limited to buying from registered entities and can buy food directly from all suppliers, including smallholder farmers. Caterers are required to pre-finance the purchase of food as well as any costs related to storage, cooking, and serving meals and are paid by the government after their services are rendered. As a result, even though caterers may purchase ingredients directly from smallholders, they often purchase from suppliers that provide their goods on credit, which typically limits caterers to purchasing from traders”.*

In the ensuing face-to-face interview with the Ashanti Regional GSFP director, I asked him that with the adoption of the caterer's model, how are the caterers selected, that is the process of selecting the caterers? This is the response he provided

*“Forms specially designed for the purpose of selecting the caterers are dispatched to the various district assemblies where we [Regional GSFP Secretariat] have jurisdictions over. The District Assemblies then announce for the information of interested prospective caterers to come and pick the form at small fee. Currently, the fee has been pegged at GH¢50. The forms are then comprehensively filled and returned within one month with all the other relevant documents such as bank statement, sources of credit etc. A review panel is then constituted to initially assess and vet all the returned application forms. The main task of the review is to shortlist applicants who meet the required minimum standards as set out by the GSFP secretariat. Those who are shortlisted then go through a thorough interview process at the district level and finally meet a joint interview panel made up of officials from the regional and district GSFP secretariat. After rigorous deliberations and checks, one of the applicants is selected as the eventual ‘winner’ and the school feeding contract for the school for which the person so applied for is awarded. For Adupri and Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary, the caterers there were selected based on what I have outlined to you”*

In the interview, I asked the Ashanti Regional GSFP Coordinator whether regional and local politics partly influences the selection of the caterers for the feeding program. He smiled and made the following remarks:

*“My sister, the whole GSFP is both a social intervention and political program where politicians are active and critical actors. I would not expand further except to say, we*

*cannot take out or discount the role of political interference [politics] both at the regional and local levels from its implementation. There are many instances to cite but I will leave you to make your own deductions from what I have just said''.*

Given that under the Caterer model, the caterer who has been contracted to cook for the beneficiary schools have greater autonomy in terms of their food supplies, procurement and storage, I further probed into how the activities of the caterer are monitored and supervised. The Ashanti Regional GSFP Coordinator was terse in his answer except to say that I should put that question to the Atwima Mponua and Atwima Nwabiagya District Coordinators since the role of monitoring and supervision have left to those at the local level. He said that his office receives regularly briefings, updates and periodic reports from the bureaucrats at the grassroots and in addition, once-a-while those at the national and regional offices make impromptu or surprise visits to the beneficiary schools to learn at first hand happenings in the schools.

In separate face-to-face interview with both the GSFP coordinators in Atwima Mponua and Atwima Nwabiagya Districts, they both provided similar responses on how their respective offices and the District Assemblies monitor and supervise the activities of the caterers. In their respective responses, it was clear that both the District GSFP office and the caterer have close collaboration and keep constant touch. For example, the caterer is invited to the respective District Assembly and draw the school menu. The Agriculture and Health directorates of the District Assembly are called upon to regularly check the food items purchased and cooked for consumption by the pupils. A major difference in their responses is that while in the case of Atwima Mponua District (Adupri Primary), the school authorities are at least involved in drawing up the menu for the school; the involvement of school authorities or their representatives was quite missing for Atwima Nwabigya District (Mfensi Methodist Primary). It is worthy of note that the two district coordinators hold at least bachelors' degree

honours and therefore possess the minimum qualification and skills to occupy such position per the standards set out in the 2011 GSFP Operating Manual.

In essence, in as much as the caterers' model may have its inherent weaknesses such as the complaints by local farmers of being side-lined in the procurement of goods and logistics for the program among others, the model by far brings a measure of stability and continuity in the running of the feeding program not least when delays in the release of funds are rife (Lynch, 2013; Atta & Manu, 2015). It is the prevention of any possible disruptions in the flow of feeding the school children that partly accounts for the choice of this model in these schools and districts.

This finding is the product of the mixed approach to the implementation process. It is theoretically related to the Winter's integrated framework where a competing decision is weighed against other options and a choice is subsequently made to achieve intended purpose (Winter, 1990). Interestingly, the findings above support and reflect empirical results obtained by Atta & Manu(2015)and SNV (2016)to the effect that the caterers' model is more ideal in the efficient running of the feeding program. However, the results run counter to the findings by Mohammed& Sakara (2014)who revealed that given the peculiar dynamics of the northern part of Ghana as a major food basket, the suppliers' model is in use in many of the implementing schools there.

## **5.2 Objective Two: The Gross Effect of GSFP on School Enrolment, Attendance and Retention in the Selected Districts/ Schools**

A direct and key measure of the effectiveness of the implementation of the GSFP at the Adupri Basic Primary School and Mfensi Methodist Primary School is the enrolment, attendance and retention of school kids. Outcomes of the implementation of a public policy give the clearest indication about the extent of the policy's success (effectiveness) or not

(Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980; Aryee, 2002). The GSFP was aimed at decreasing drop-outs and absenteeism in schools thus the feeding program was to increase enrolment of pupils, encourage attendance and ensures the pupils remain in school till closing (MLGRD, 2006). The study sought to examine whether the implementation has been effective, that is, the rate of school enrolment, attendance and retention has been positive and increasing.

When I sought enquiry into how the implementation of the GSFP has grossly affected school enrolment, attendance and retention among children who fall within the school-going age brackets in both Adupri and Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary Schools, below is the response from the GSFP Coordinator of the Ashanti Region:

*‘Madam, to begin with, the success story of the school feeding program on school enrolment in almost all the beneficiary primary schools in the Ashanti Region has been phenomenal. The enrolment levels have been rising at an increasing rate particularly in communities where there are more basic schools but only one or two of those schools are beneficiaries of the GSFP. What we have observed and official reports from both the district and school levels that have been sent to our (regional)secretariat showed that some parents or guardians changing their wards attending the non-GSFP beneficiary schools and enrolling them in the GSFP-run schools. Largely, the numbers in terms of those children across the region who but for the feeding program would have stayed out of school have sharply shot up and that really is exciting news to us. The statistics available to us points to a significant rise in enrolment and attendance in both Adupri Basic School and Mfensi Methodist Primary School. The authorities in these schools will provide you with more figures and data when you meet them’.*

From the above submission, it is apparent that the response rate of guardians or parents with regards to the implementation of the GSFP program in the Ashanti Region has been very impressive. In the Mfensi Methodist Primary School, the headmistress of the school gave the following initial response when I asked her how the implementation of the GSFP in her school has fared in terms of her school enrolment, attendance and retention:

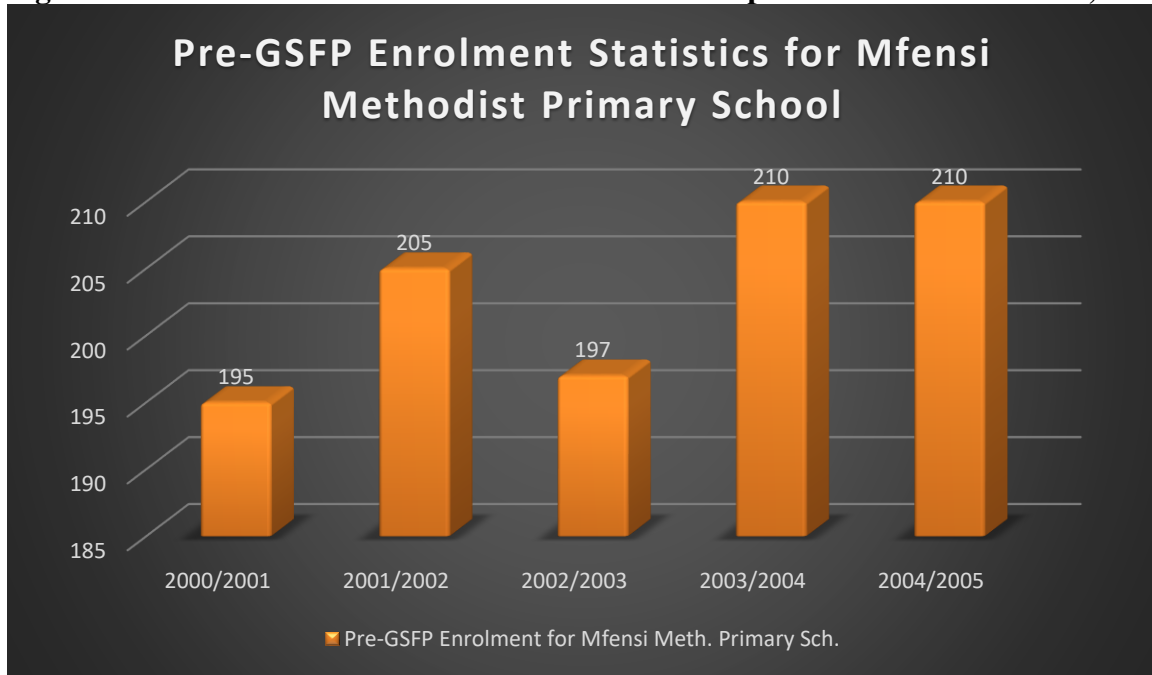
*‘It is gratifying to note that, the school feeding implementation has so far gone very well. The enrolment numbers have almost doubled and the current population of the pupils we have from Primary One (1) to Primary Six (6) is even getting out of hands. We the authorities here are almost on daily basis seeing parents or guardians trooping into our school to seek admission to enrol their wards. What seem to be attracting both the parents and their children are the meals we provide at lunch as part of the feeding activities in this school’.*

For the study to better appreciate and assess the effectiveness or otherwise of the implementation of the GSFP in terms of school enrolment, attendance and retention, I sought for data on both the pre-GSFP and post-GSFP enrolment figures from the school authorities. This seeks to bring a broad perspective to trends on enrolment and thereby enrich to the study’s analysis. Enrolment figures of the first five academic years prior to the school feeding take-off at the Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School (MMBPS) were released by the headmistress of the school.

Figure 5 below shows a very simple bar charts which depicts pre-GSFP enrolment data for the 2000/2001... 2004/2005 academic years of MMBPS.



**Figure 5: Data on Enrolment Levels Prior to GSFP implementation in MMBPS, 2016**

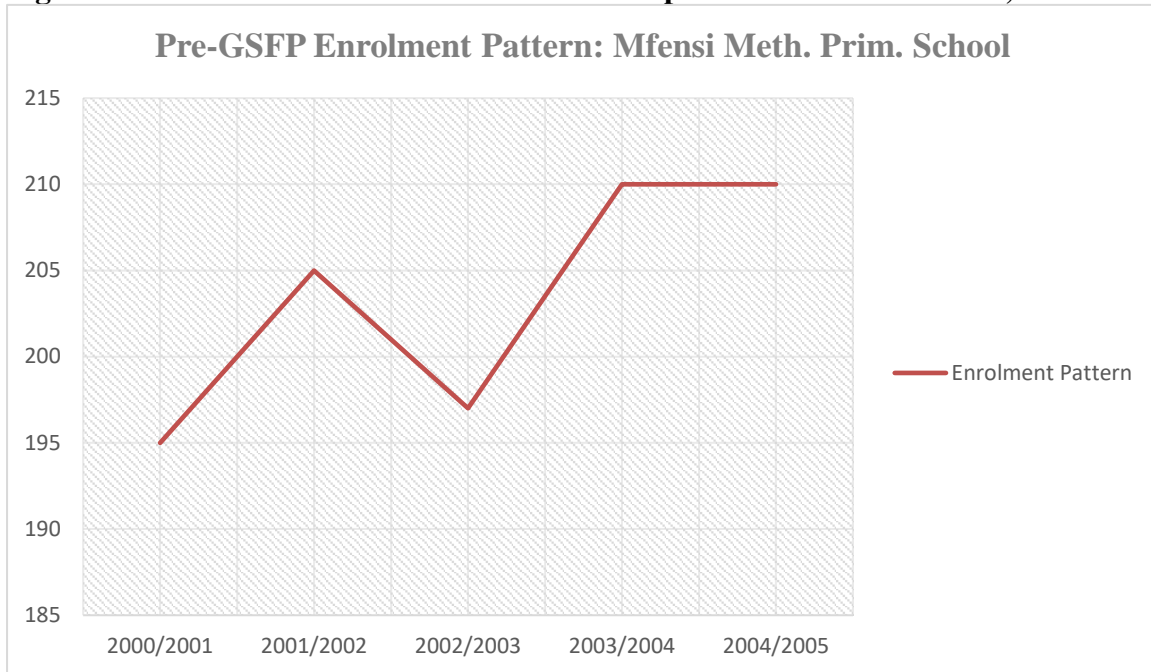


*Source: Author's own design based on Pre-GSFP Enrolment Data of MMBPS, 2016*

In Figure 5 above, the chart shows the raw enrolment figures of the MMBPS. The total number of pupils from Class One (1) to Class Six (6) – which constitutes the primary school population in Ghana– stood at 195. In between the years, there were fluctuations in enrolment and for both the 2003/2004 and 2004/2005 academic years, the enrolment stood at 210.

In Figure 6 below, the raw pre-GSFP enrolment figures as shown in Figure 5 above have been transformed to a line graph to assess the trend or pattern in pre-GSFP enrolments.

**Figure 6: Enrolment Trend before the GSFP Implementation in MMBPS, 2016**



*Source: Author's own construction based on MMBPS' pre-GSFP enrolment data, 2016*

The line graph clearly shows the pattern or trajectory of school enrolment at Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School has been for the first five academic years from the 2000/2001 academic year to 2004/2005 academic year prior to the running of the feeding program in the school. The line trend depicts an initial rise in school enrolment and then it slumped in the 2001/2002 academic year. Enrolment rose the following year and began to show a stable pattern for the immediate years prior to the GSFP implementation.

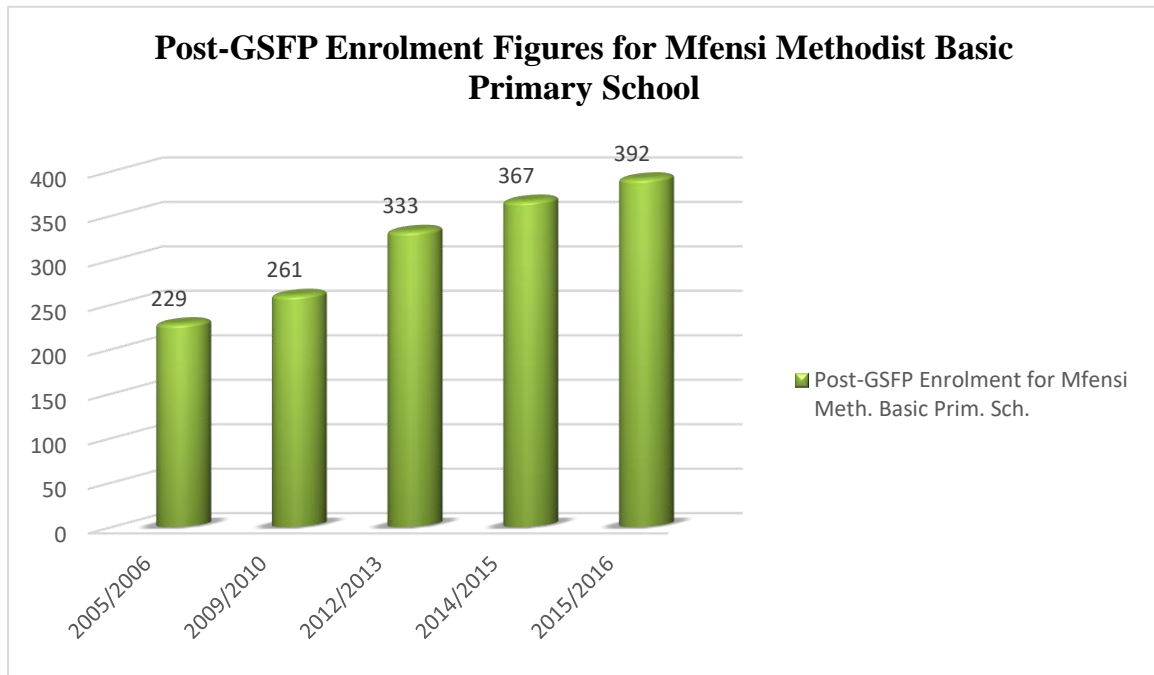
Interestingly, in the periods where there was a rise in enrolment, the (percentage) increase was very marginal.

In the interview, data on pupils' enrolment after the GSFP has been implemented at the MMBPS was also obtained. This is to assess how the implementation of the feeding program has had effect on school enrolment and attendance: this is the task of objective two.

It has been a little over a decade since the inception of the GSFP in the school; for want of space and being guided by the scope of the study, the study presents enrolment figures of five academic years in the post-GSFP era (i.e. 2005/2006 to 2015/2016 academic years). The five

academic years selected, without any particular consideration, for analysis are the 2005/2006, 2009/2010, 2012/2013, 2014/2015 and 2015/2016.

**Figure 7: Statistics of post-GSFP Enrolment Figures at MMBPS, 2016**

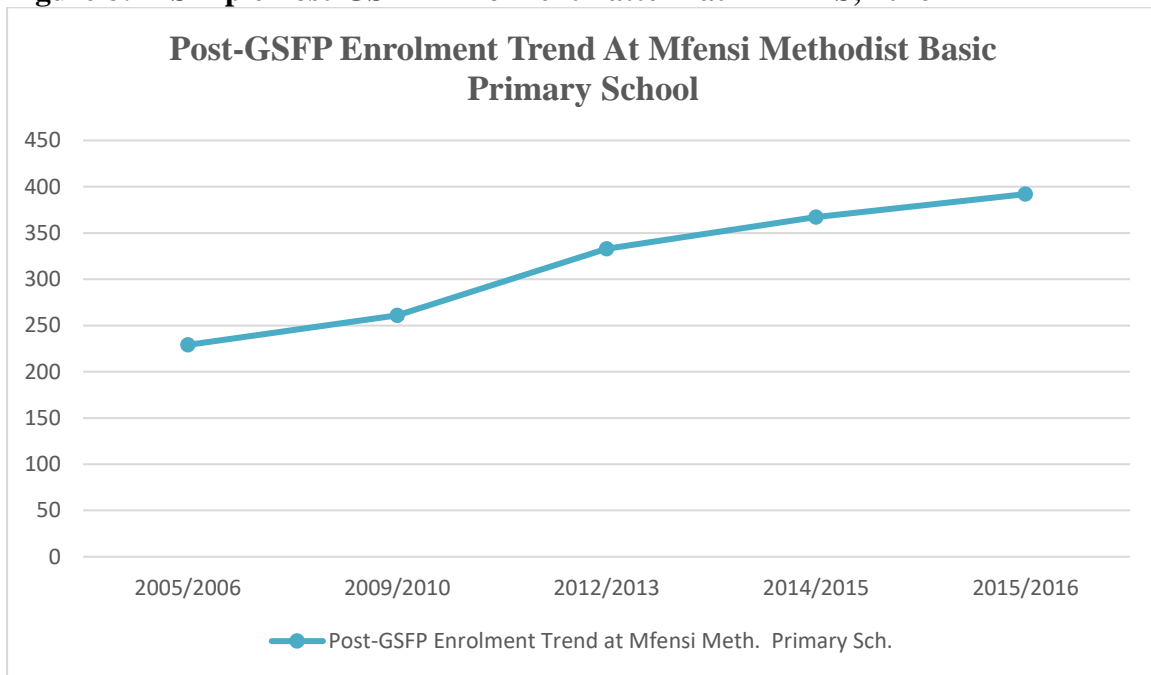


**Source: Author's own design based on MMBPS Post-GSFP enrolment data, 2016**

Figure 7 above shows the gross enrolment data for MMBPS since the commencement of the implementation of the GSFP over there. The 2005/2006 academic recorded a total enrolment of 229 pupils, followed by 261 and 333 pupils enrolling respectively for the 2009/2010 and 2015/2016 academic years. The enrolment figures for succeeding academic years of 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 were 367 and 392 respectively. Compared to enrolment figure in the pre-GSFP implementation era, there have been steady increases in enrolment numbers at the MMBPS in the Atwima Nwabiagya District.

The study sought to do a simple but important trend analysis by processing the data as shown in Figure 7 into a line graph. Figure 8 below therefore shows a general trend in enrolment since MMBPS became a GSFP-beneficiary school.

**Figure 8: A Simple Post-GSFP Enrolment Pattern at MMBPS, 2016**



**Source: Author's own design based on MMBPS Post-GSFP Enrolment Data, 2016**

Figure 8 above gives a simplified line graph depicting the pattern of enrolments in the MMBPS. The trend as evidenced by the line map in Figure 8 shows a steady but continuous rise of school enrolment numbers at the Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School in the years following the implementation of the feeding program.

When I asked of her general impression about the developments in her school relative to the data (enrolment and attendance figures) she has released, the visibly elated headmistress remarked that *'in the circumstances, in terms of enrolment and attendance in our school I can, with all humility and pride, say and confirm to you that Mfensi Methodist School is charting the right cause as far as the implementation of the GSFP is concerned'*. By and large, pupils' enrolment and attendance at MMBPS has been satisfactorily good.

When the study probed the issue of retaining the pupils throughout during school sessions, the headmistress conceded that at the initial implementation of the feeding program, school retention among her pupils was less than salutary. She continued that, however, the school retention rate has tremendously improved over the years. Below is an excerpt of her response:

*‘My lady, at the early or initial stages of the implementation of the feeding program in this school, we (authorities) realized that after lunch break some of the classes will be half full. After the children have been served and eaten, some of them do not return to the classrooms to continue their studies. They left the school before official closing time after lunch. We monitored the situation and swiftly acted. We regularly met with the pupils in the morning and strongly warned them of their exclusion from the feeding if they leave school after the lunch break. We then followed it up with a PTA [Parent-Teacher Association] meeting which was well attended; we deliberated on key issues including this (the school retention matter). It was agreed at the PTA meeting that among others, wards of parents or guardians who leave the school after lunch without permission shall be excluded from the feeding. New comers [pupils] to the school are also given forms to fill and we take our time to explain this agreement and other school rules to them. These steps we [the school] took have helped us very well. In summary, pupils’ retention in the school has improved over the years’.*

For the Atwima Nwabiagya District, in the post-GSFP implementation period, school enrolment and attendance have been substantially great. On the contrary, school retention rate per the data based on the accounts of the school authorities was initially low but had seen an improvement over the years.

In the Atwima Mponua District, data was obtained on pupils’ enrolments, attendance and retention at the Adupri Basic Primary School (ABPS). Unlike in the case of Mfensi

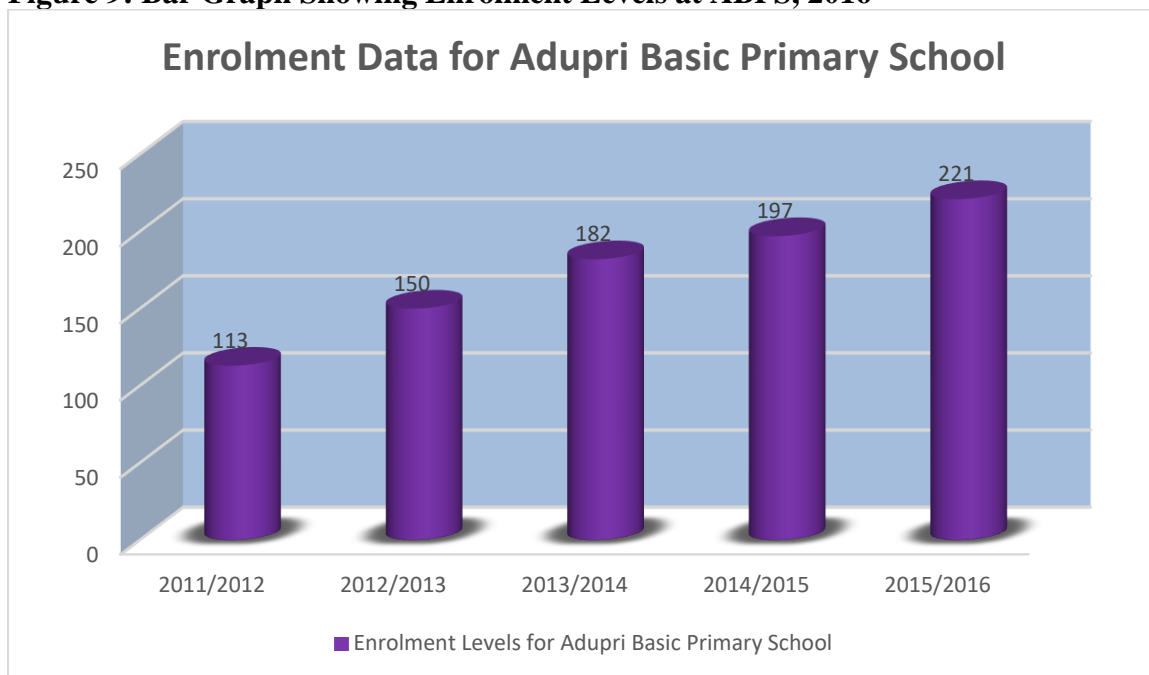
Methodist Basic Primary School where pre-GSFP data was obtained, only post-GSFP data was collected for the ABPS since the school was established just a year before the feeding program was in the school.

When the study inquired from the authorities of ABPS how the enrolment and attendance of pupils in the wake of the feeding program school has been, the headmaster pointed to explosion in enrolment and attendance as well as retention of pupils. He explained that

*‘being a resident in the community myself, parents or guardians whose children hitherto the implementation of the school feeding were not enrolled or attending school - this is the only school in this our small village – were now coming in their numbers. This is partly due to the fact that pupils who have already enrolled and are attending school spread word of being freely fed in school to their friends and brothers or sisters in the community and adjoining villages. Their friends and sisters or brothers in turn force their parents to enrol them so they can come and enjoy the food too. It is amazing how things are fast changing here in Adupri and its environs. The Ghana School Feeding Program is performing wonders here and it is my hope that the community, parents and the children who are due for schooling will continuously and favourably react towards it’.*

The study obtained ABPS’ enrolment and attendance figures (data) for analysis. For want of space and to simplify the analysis of the data, the study presents enrolment data for the following academic years: 2011/2012, 2012/2013, 2013/2014, 2014/2015 and 2015/2016. As stated earlier, all these academic years are post-GSFP implementation periods. Figure 9 below shows the statistics on school enrolment and attendance at ABPS.

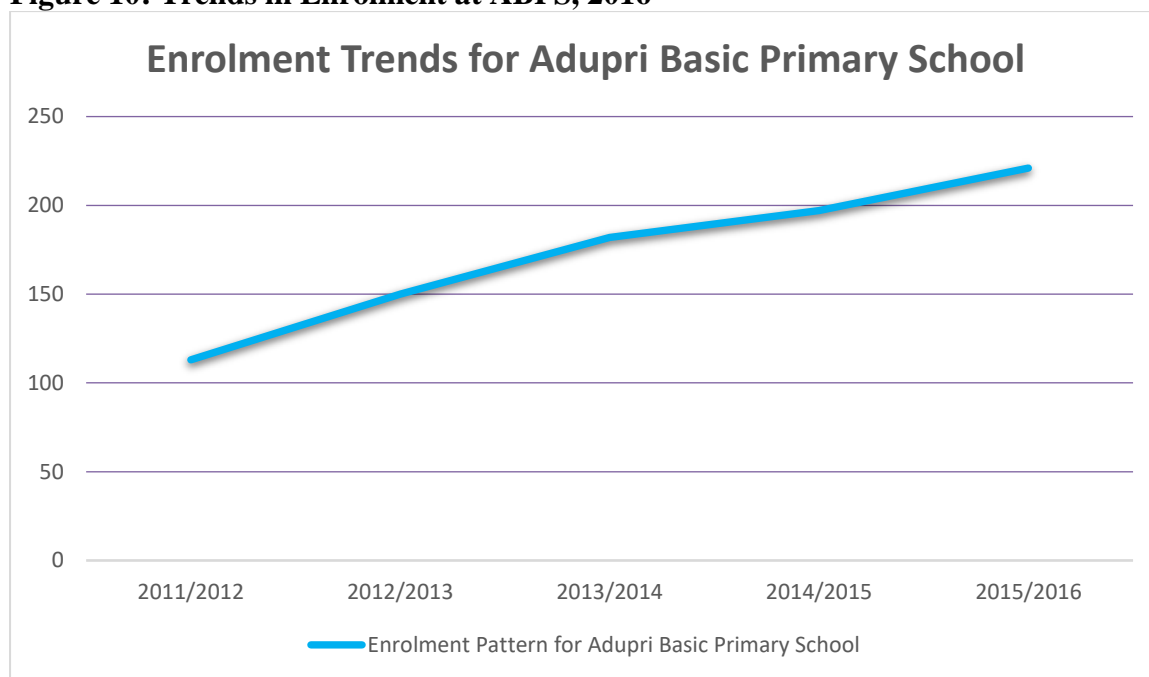
**Figure 9: Bar Graph Showing Enrolment Levels at ABPS, 2016**



***Source: Author's own construction based on MMBPS Post-GSFP Enrolment Data, 2016***

From Figure 9 above, following the implementation of the GSFP at Adupri Basic School, enrolment figures for 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 stood at 113 and 150 respectively. In the 2013/2014 academic year, enrolment was 182 and later increased to 197 for the 2014/2015 academic year and it shot up to 221 in the 2015/2016 academic year. Generally, enrolment at Adupri Primary School has been encouraging.

**Figure 10: Trends in Enrolment at ABPS, 2016**



**Source: Author's own design based on MMBPS Post-GSFP Enrolment Data, 2016**

The line graph in Figure 10 above depicts an upward trend in the general enrolment levels at Adupri Basic Primary School. The school enrolment rate is increasing and this is a positive feedback from the implementation of the school feeding program.

The study sought the headmaster's general overview of Adupri's enrolment, attendance and retention upon the implementation of the GSFP. He offered the response below:

*‘Adupri Primary [school] has witnessed a growth in enrolment numbers as evidenced by the data available. The school feeding has succeeded in driving children in this community and villages near-by to enrol and attend school. Occasionally, pupils who did not attend or absented themselves in school for a day or two will join their mates during lunch to eat and afterwards went back home. This was slightly affecting official attendance records because such absentee pupils are not recorded in*



*our register as having been in school although they come in to take part in the lunch break. This practice has however been minimized as we now use the daily attendance records to feed the pupils. This has boosted the general school attendance. For school retention, it is close to perfect. We seldom witness pupils who have reported to school and leaving without the authorities' prior approval either before or after feeding them. I cannot end without recognizing the community's cooperation with us here. The relationship existing between us is strong and mutually beneficial''.*

The implementation of the GSFP at Adupri Basic Primary School in terms of school enrolment, attendance and retention based on gathered data has generally been effective.

These findings on the increase in school enrolment in both schools and districts corroborate or mirror similar research outcomes by Lynch (2013) and Drake *et al* (2016) who also found that by virtue of the GSFP roll out, enrolment and attendance figures have significantly shot up in the beneficiary schools.

### **5.3 Objective Three: Challenges Facing the GSFP in the Selected Districts/Schools**

The implementation of any public policy within human settings is bound to encounter one form of challenge or the other (Creswell, 2013; Buabeng, 2015). It is the acknowledgement of the existence of some problems or challenges associated with the implementation of the GSFP at the local level that this study aims to highlight those and proffer remedial measures as well as to bring policy makers' attention to same.

The study in capturing the challenges that the implementation of the GSFP has been facing resorted to face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions as well as direct observation during the fieldwork in both the Atwima Mponua District (Adupri Basic Primary School) and Atwima Nwabiagya District (Mfensi Methodist Primary School). The face-to-face interview

was basically carried out on individual basis and the focus group discussion took place with the assembly of relevant respondents at a common location.

In both districts, through both face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions, a number of issues that confront the implementation of the feeding program were brought to the fore.

### **5.3.1 Non-Purchase of Foodstuffs Produced from the Local Economy**

In a focus group discussion comprising of key community opinion leaders, some parents of the pupils in beneficiary schools, the assemblyman for the electoral area where Adupri Basic Primary School is located, one major challenge of the implementation of the GSFP in the Atwima Mponua District that they pointed out was the non-purchase of their produce by the implementing agencies. A discussant had this to say:

*“Madam, we can attest to the fact that the GSFP that has been brought to our community here has really helped us a lot. I for one, I am a poor peasant farmer with five children with the last two of the kids all in the school [Adupri Basic Primary School]. As poor as I am if my children are going to school and I manage to get breakfast for them, at least I am certain that the school will serve them lunch which will keep them in school till they close at 2:45 to 3:00pm before they come home. While they are in school, I will be on my farm working and return late in the evening. The District Assembly assured us that we the smallholder farmers in this community should rejoice because our farm produce such as ‘kontomire’, yam, vegetables, fruits etc will be bought by the caterers but that promise has not been fulfilled yet. We produce and there is no demand for it and it is making us lose interest in fully getting involved in the feeding program. At least if they buy, we are able to get some money to help our children buy books and other necessary materials that they may need in school so that we can responsibly discharge our duties as parents or guardians. This*

*issue is a bother to us here in this village so if you could speak to officials in the cities, we would really appreciate it''.*

The challenge that has been highlighted above is partly attributable to the adoption of the caterers' model of procurement where the caterer is at liberty to purchase food items from sources other than the farmers in the local area. This deprives these expectant farmers of some income that would have helped improved the local economy and create wealth in the process.

### **5.3.2 Dearth of Basic Infrastructural Development**

Another challenge that came to light is the lack of basic infrastructure at Adupri Basic School needed for the smooth running of the feeding program. The community through the discussants lamented about deficits in terms of infrastructure such as a properly-built and enclosed kitchen. There is a make-shift kitchen that accommodates the cooks during school sessions. The discussants revealed that the makeshift kitchen was even built through communal labour. The temporary kitchen, through direct observation, did not have a door and was not protective enough of the cooks who spend time cooking there. The sticks or woods that have been used as pillars are loosely hanging and any least touch may lead to the kitchen caving in. In face-to-face interview with the cooks, they shared similar sentiments about having a real block-built kitchen instead of this weak wooden kitchen so that they can be safe and not perilously be working here as I have come to meet them.

One of the cooks rhetorically asked, "*madam if rains should fall right now as we are talking where are we [the cooks] to go for shelter and to provide meals for the school children?*" In bringing the interview to a close, she remarked that '*the situation is quite challenging but there is hope*'. Access to potable water is lacking as they relied on the near-by stream to

cook food for the children. One of the cooks stated that “*sometimes they had to employ the services of the school children to fetch water from the stream*” – a fact which was corroborated by the school coordinator of the GSFP. According to the headteacher, “*this phenomenon oftentimes disrupts teaching and learning*” and therefore made an appeal to me to reach out to the power that be to come to their aid by providing cisterns for water storage and also the construction of a permanent and ‘proper’ kitchen for the school.

Another challenge of the implementation of the GSFP in both districts was the lack of dining hall facilities for the children to eat their lunch. Through direct observation, these pupils were loitering around the schools’ compounds with their food in their hands. Others were also seen taking their meals in their classrooms. This reality fundamentally does not bode well for the health of the pupils in terms of both environmental and personal hygiene.

In the Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School in the Atwima Nwabiagya District, the situation was quite different. Although the school does not have a permanently-constructed kitchen but with the support of the headteacher, three old classrooms have been converted to a kitchen with proper storage spaces. In addition, very close to the school is a dug borehole which provides clean and potable source of water to the school children, the teaching staff and the kitchen staff. What was remarkable in this school as I observed was the non-interruptions in teaching and learning because the pupils did not have to be called upon to go and fetch water before their meals were prepared. Unlike in the Atwima Mponua District where mainly firewood is used in cooking for the school kids, here in the Atwima Nwabiagya District, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) was the source of fuel in cooking food.

It is noteworthy that, pupils of Adupri Basic School were sometimes told to come to school with a stick of firewood when the school runs out of firewood. According to the Assemblyman in the Adupri area, he tries as much as possible to rally the small-knit

community on the need to support the feeding program hence almost all the school children are given firewood by their parents or guardians to take to school when they are requested to do so – a move that was highly praised by the caterer, cooks and school authorities. The headteacher of the Adupri Basic School observed that, the down side of his pupils being sometimes called upon to bring firewood to school is that they (pupils) get to school already tired with some of them drenched in sweat and appearing dirty thereby losing concentration during contact hours. Nonetheless, the head teacher praised *‘the level of the local community’s involvement in and the public’s dedication towards the running of the GSFP in his school as quite commendable. They [local people] make available to the school the community natural resources such as orange, banana, pineapples which are seasonal in nature and we in turn provide it as desserts to our pupils’*.

### **5.3.3 Issues of Food Quality and Quantity**

Another challenge that the implementation of the GSFP in both districts and schools is facing is the quality and quantity of food that is served to the pupils at lunch. All the school children I interviewed expressed their profound happiness about the feeding program however majority of them wished the quantity and quality of the food they are served should be increased. Almost all the pupils pointed to, for example, the quantity of rice that is served them. They pleaded that *“instead of the one and half (1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>) scoops of rice that is currently given to them, two (2) scoops of rice will be better and make them full and happier”*. In pointing to the quality, the pupils’ collective expectation was that *‘eggs or chicken and sometimes fish should be added to their meals to make the meals nutritious, rich and balanced’*. This they concluded if done, *“will not only make them healthy but boost their academic performance in school”*. The headteachers in these schools admitted that the

quality of the food in particular needs improvement but they added that it all boils down to the government raising the daily feeding rate (amount) per child – a position which the caterers in an interview fully endorsed.

### **5.3.4 Political Interference (Partisan Influence)**

In the Atwima Nwabiagya District, one of the major challenges that was hotly raised during the focus group discussion was in regards to local politics that has characterized the operations of the feeding program at the Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School. The discussants revealed that political interference by the political heads in the district and local area affects the smooth running of the feeding program. Two key and respected opinion leaders had this to say:

*“There was a caterer who was efficiently working and cooking for our wards in Mfensi Methodist Primary School before the 2008 general elections. Not long after the elections had been done and there was a change in government, the caterer was summarily dismissed. In the immediate period that the caterer was sacked, there was back and forth between the political authorities and the caterer and threats of legal action by the caterer about the propriety of her dismissal, the children in the school were not fed because from what we gathered the caterer was psychologically down and felt very bitter. Madam, the whole dismissal episode was untidy. If for nothing at all, strict procedural arrangement should have been taken to relieve the caterer off her duty other than the short and (as we learnt) verbal notice that was given. We were so concerned because the ‘political turf war’ at play was affecting our children and grandchildren who are the future leaders of this country and particularly distracting them of their studies and attendance in school”.*

They opined that they could not sit unconcerned for such an important national intervention to be derailed by petty local partisan squabbles. They continued their submission:

*‘It was this shared concern that moved us [opinion leaders] to make inquiries from the District Assembly what has necessitated this whole needless saga. Our deep-throat sources at the district assembly, which madam unfortunately we cannot reveal to you, told us that the dismissed caterer was perceived to be a member of the political party (NPP) which lost power and that it is time the now ruling party (NDC) also rewards their members in the district. It is unconscionable for the dismissal of a key GSFP actor like that good caterer to be based solely not on a performance index but rather on politically-tainted grounds’.*

In ending the presentation of their response or views, they underscored that:

*‘A dismissal in that manner may be justified if the caterer has been ineffective in her delivery and performance... the good testimonies we have heard in the community about the former caterer should not have warranted her sack. Madam, we can tell you without any equivocation that the current caterer holds an elective position in this district. In fact, she is the Women’s Organizer for the ruling NDC here in Atwima Nwabiagya constituency. Dear, you know how sometimes vindictive our politics is, your guess can be as good as ours when there is also a change in government in the pending general elections in December 2016’.*

The narration above confirms the terse response from the Ashanti Regional GSFP coordinator when I sought to inquire whether politics plays any role in the selection of caterers. Clearly, politics has had an influencing effect on the implementation of the feeding program in the Atwima Nwabiagya District. As evidenced by the above responses of the opinion leaders, to the extent that there were some school days meals were not cooked and served the school

children as a result of political inference in the wake of the dismissal of the caterer on purely political grounds makes local political dynamics an adverse factor on the program's implementation.

### **5.3.5 Undue Delays in Release of Feeding Funds/ Payments of Caterers' Services**

The caterers assigned to each of the two selected schools cited the issue of excessive delays in the release of feeding grants and the payment services. They acknowledged that even though, they are supposed to pre-finance the feeding of the program but a prompt payment by the government will a long way to lessen the unbearable financial pressure on them. For the caterer in charge of Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School, this is what she had to say:

*“For me, my greatest source of fund is bank loan. I rely on my bankers so much in procuring food items and cooking for the children. My bank has been of immense help to me and in many instances, been patient with me when I miss the deadlines of servicing of my loans based on the agreement we have entered into. I am much concerned about maintaining my credit worthiness status with my bankers. This whole business thrives on trust. I can only hope that the government quickens its steps in release monies due us. As we speak, I have only received only one out of the three tranches of money government owes me. I have employed cooks that I need to pay them and all their wages are built up into what the state pays me. It is not easy at all here, my dear”.*

The caterer who has the feeding responsibilities towards the pupils at Adupri Basic Primary School in the Atwima Mponua District echoed similar sentiments of her counterpart in the other district. Below is an excerpt of she said about the untimely payments by officials.

*“I procure almost all the foodstuffs and necessary logistics on credit. When I am lucky and payments are made on time, I without hesitation go and settle my debts and*



*pay off any outstanding bills. Fortunately, therefore, my creditors do not worry me much when I seem to be behind time or defaulting on retiring the debts I owed them if there are delays on the part of the government in releasing monies due us (the caterers). Let me hasten to add that, this is however not a justification for the excessive delays that accompany government payments and disbursements of funds. The cooks I am working with are all natives of this community so they sacrifice so much towards making the feeding program succeed. When monies from the government delayed, sometimes the cooks also have their remunerations held up but they least complain and keep working hard... I really get encouraged by my cooks' commitment and sense of communal duty towards this feeding program in spite of all the present challenges we face. I can only hope things will change for the better going forward''*

### **5.3.6 Low or Zero Community Involvement**

Again, on the evidence of the data gathered, community participation in the operations of the feeding program in the Mfensi Methodist Primary School is extremely minimal. The assemblyman for the area where the school is sited made the observation below:

*“The decision about the implementation and day-to-day affairs of the school feeding program in my area has entirely been left in the hands of four people, namely, the District Chief Executive (DCE), the District GSFP coordinator, the caterer and the headmistress. We the elected representatives of the people and the opinion leaders here in the community are rarely consulted... we have been indirectly removed from actively getting involved in the management of the GSFP. My sister, if you take a closer look at the School Implementation Committee (SIC), on paper I am supposed to*

*be playing a central role in the running of the GSFP but as things stand, I don't even know whether the SIC is functional or not''.*

He summed up his submissions by saying:

*‘No meeting, no correspondence and what have you [sic]. I am supposed to serve as a liaison person between the school and the community as far as the running of the GSFP is concerned and where possible present and articulate the concerns we have here at a general assembly meeting at the District level. I am only called upon when there are problems to be fixed... you know, the school had a problem with the borehole pump which serves the school and the caterer solely depends on to cook, I was called to intervene to help fix it. Sometimes, we here [sic] are hesitant to offer any help because we feel side-lined... it is frustrating for [us] ...but we will give our best to the community which voted us [me] to serve their needs''.*

Interestingly, in the Atwima Mponua District data pointed to evidence of community involvement in the operations of the feeding program while data points to the contrary in the Atwima Nwabiagya District. A key thematic pillar for the effective implementation of the GSFP as contained in the 2011 GSFP Operating Manual is community ownership of the feeding program at the grassroots. It is important for the community and its people to actively participate in the local affairs of the GSFP because community participation or involvement engenders and promotes local ownership of the feeding program (GoG, 2011; Lynch, 2013). In Mfensi Methodist Primary School in the Atwima Nwabiagya District, basic infrastructure is well in place and support the smooth implementation of GSFP while Adupri Primary School in the Atwima Mponua District woefully lacks basic infrastructure such as kitchen and potable water.

The above challenges that have been identified in this study are largely symptomatic of the many implementation problems associated with the GSFP elsewhere in Ghana and these findings confirm other empirical findings by World Food Programme (2007); De Carvalho (2011); Lynch (2013); Mohammed & Sakara (2014); Atta & Manu (2015); and SNV (2016). For example, Lynch (2013) found a deplorable state of infrastructures in Ntranoa Basic Primary School in the Central region of Ghana while SNV (2016) also established a neglect or lack of inclusion of local farmers in the GSFP supply chain at the decentralized levels.

Inputs from those at the local level and top echelon of society regarding the challenges of the program are important and this finding draws from the theoretical perspectives of both Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) and Winter (1990). Specifically, the interests of the implementing actors have been factored as evidenced by this finding relative to how the policy challenges may impact on the output of the implemented GSFP (*ibid*).

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The study's goal is to assess the implementation of the GSFP in two selected schools and districts. Three objectives were set out in the study. The study's first objective was to ascertain the procurement mechanism(s) under the GSFP being used in the beneficiary schools and districts. The second objective of the study was to investigate the gross effect of the GSFP on school enrolment, pupils' attendance and retention in Adupri and Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary Schools and lastly, third objective was to discuss the challenges facing the GSFP in these selected districts/schools.

For objective one, the findings revealed that the caterer model has been adopted and effectively used in running the feeding program in both MMBPS and ABPS in the Atwima Nwabiagya District and Atwima Mponua District respectively. The results showed that the

caterer model offers a sustainable source of funding as caterers before being selected and awarded with the feeding contract are required to among others have the financial capacity which enjoins them to pre-finance the GSFP before government releases feeding grant and payments of their services.

On the second objectives, findings showed that across both schools and districts, enrolments have risen as a result of the running of the feeding program. However, school retention at the Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School was low at the initial stages of the implementation of the GSFP. Pupils attended school, got served lunch, ate and afterwards left school before closing time. Findings revealed that unwholesome attitude change changed after the school instituted some measures leading to an improvement in pupils' retention at school. The situation, per the findings, was quite different at Adupri Basic School as there was no such school retention problems recorded. On the reverse, official attendance among some of the pupils was fluctuating as some only showed up during lunch times and after getting served or fed, went back home – a practise that has since been minimized by the school authorities.

On the final objective, challenges that the GSFP faces varied across the two schools and districts. In Atwima Mponua District the challenges ranged from lack of basic infrastructure to inadequate or no demand for the produce of local farmers by the caterers among others. In the Atwima Nwabiagya District, local politics was found to be a challenge as it influences the selection and dismissal of contracted caterers. Additionally, there is zero or very minimal community involvement in the operations of the GSFP at MMBPS. Interestingly, government's delay on release of feeding funds and payments of caterers' services was found to be a common challenge or problem across the two schools and districts.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, THEORETICAL RELEVANCE AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

The study under this chapter, presents the summary, conclusion, theoretical relevance and policy recommendations. Like any social science empirical study, one form of limitation or the other encountered in undertaking this academic exercise is outlined here. The study proposes a research area relative to the implementation of the GSFP for further empirical investigations.

#### **6.2 Summary, Theoretical Relevance and Conclusion**

Ghana as a developing nation is undoubtedly faced with myriad of developmental problems in the education, health, economic, agricultural etc sectors. Ghana has made some strides in addressing these mounting problems however there are a lot to be done in lifting her citizens from the doldrums of poverty and diseases unto the path of growth and prosperity.

In 2001, the nations of Africa through its continental union (the AU) to quicken the pace of their development developed a development blueprint known as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in Zambia. NEPAD was to serve as development vehicle for all AU member states to work towards implementing workable policies and projects in order to reduce poverty levels and raise standards of living among others. As a signatory to the NEPAD agreements, the government of Ghana as part of its efforts to create wealth in the local economy, boost agriculture and arrest the problems of general illiteracy, school drop outs, low enrolment and attendance therefore rolled out a major pro-poor social intervention called the Ghana School Feeding Program (GSFP) in 2005.

The GSFP has three (3) main objectives. These objectives include the reduction of hunger and malnutrition; the increase in school enrolment, attendance and retention and finally the boosting of agricultural production of foodstuffs in the local communities. This all-important national program is one of the key social interventions such as the LEAP, Free Maternal Health, NHIS etc that government had implemented. The GSFP has been implemented across the nations in some selected schools in all the administrative districts of Ghana. The study reviewed literature on the GSFP and its implementation. The study therefore identified that no empirical investigation had been conducted into the operations and implementation of the feeding program at the local level in the Atwima Mponua and Atwima Nwabiagya Districts.

Thus, the study was motivated to broadly assess the implementation of the GSFP at Adupri Basic Primary School and Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School in the Atwima Mponua District and Atwima Nwabiagya District respectively. The study employed both primary and secondary data that was obtained during field work in carrying out its comparative analysis.

The study is largely qualitative in nature in that its findings are analytically rather than statistically generalized. The study adopted both the Winter and Van Meter & Van Horn Implementation Models which led to the formulation of its analytical or conceptual framework and models. The study again relied on the mixed approach – a hybrid of the traditional top-down and bottom-up approaches – in bringing the concept of GSFP implementation at the local level into proper perspective and better understanding.

The study sets out three (3) specific objectives. In the first objective which is ascertaining the procurement mechanism(s) that has/have been adopted in the selected districts, the study found that the caterer model was the most preferred of all the three models of procurement and hence its adoption in both the two selected schools and districts. A major strength of the caterer model as evidenced by the data is that it guarantees stability in funding against the backdrop that caterers are required to pre-finance food items procurement and the school

children's feeding. This pre-financing requirement prevents any interruptions in the feeding program particularly when the government of Ghana unduly delays in releasing feeding grants and the payments of caterers' services. An essential principle of getting children to enrol in schools and not to miss school attendance with the introduction and continuous running of the feeding program keenly informed the choice of the caterer's model (GoG, 2015). This decision reflects a general trend in organization studies where institutions tend to move in the direction of where operational success criteria show they will be assessed. In this instance, school enrolment and attendance may be evaluated in the light of the adoption and operation of the caterers' model.

The second objective was to investigate the gross effect of GSFP on school enrolment, pupils' attendance and retention in both Adupri and Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary Schools. The findings of the study showed that the implementation of the GSFP has increased the overall school enrolment, attendance and retention in the two schools and districts. The study also found that at the initial implementation of the GSFP, ABPS recorded low school attendance rate while pupils' retention rate at MMBPS was also low. These schools later took separate measures to curb the low school attendance and retention rates and data showed a vast improvement in same in the succeeding academic years.

The third and last objective was to identify and discuss the challenges facing the GSFP in these districts/schools. The study through the data collected found basic infrastructure such as a built kitchen and lack of access to potable water to be used for cooking by the kitchen staff among others was lacking in the Atwima Mponua District. Another challenge identified in this district was the little or no demand for the produced goods of local farmers by the caterers thereby denying the local economy of wealth creation. In the Atwima Nwabigya District, basic infrastructure was not a problem as kitchen and dug-borehole were in place, however, the study found that there is zero or very minimal community involvement in the

operations of the GSFP at MMBPS. This finding is in sharp contrast to evidence of community ownership of the GSFP at ABPS where the community was actively involved in the implementation of the local feeding program. Again, while the collected data pointed to evidence of politics as an influencing factor in the activities of the local GSFP and also who is chosen as a caterer in Atwima Nwabigya District, no evidence was established in the case of Atwima Mponua District. Remarkably, the time lag on the part of the government in releasing of feeding funds and paying caterers for their services was found to be common challenge across the two schools and districts. In addition, dining facilities were non-existent at both MMBPS and ABPS in the Atwima Nwabigya District and Atwima Mponua District respectively.

The variations in the socio-economic circumstances prevailing in each district and school may explain how they (socio-economic variations) have separately shaped the implementation process of the GSFP. For example, the Atwima Mponua District is poorer than Atwima Nwabigya District in terms of economic socio-economic development, what might have accounted for the increase in the school enrolment and attendance is the high sense of communal spirit in the close-knit Adupri community as well as its willingness to own the feeding program and educate its school-going natives and inhabitants. As farming community, most parents or guardians shy away from going to farms with their children but rather send them to school. To the parents and people of this community, the feeding program was brought to ameliorate their plight so they are much committed to ensuring that this program succeeds. Besides, they have advocated for the establishment of Adupri Basic School for decades and true to their expectation, the local government played a facilitating role to see the school structure being put up. Hitherto to the founding of the school, the children had to walk miles to the Atwima Mponua District capital (Nyinahin) to attend school.



Now, with a school at their doorstep, the community feels morally and socially obligated to support the school's cause thus the rise in pupils' enrolment and attendance among others. For Atwima Mponua District, socio-economic progress raises literacy levels and this reflects how being richer than Atwima Mponua District, people in the Mfensi and its surrounding areas enrol and attend school in their numbers. All things being equal, having a more educated or literate people in this district are more likely to influence their decisions to sending their wards to school. Compared to Atwima Mponua District where the people are predominantly subsistence farmers and voluntarily offer their farm or community produce (e.g. banana, pawpaw, pineapple etc) to the school as desserts therefore making pupils happy during lunch, Atwima Nwabiagya is a less farming district as significant number of the people work in the services sector, parents or the general public have the wherewithal to financially contribute to dig a borehole to serve the school and community as a whole thereby improving the running of the feeding program.

In overall, the study's assessment of the implementation of the GSFP in the two selected schools and districts, in spite of some identified challenges and observed socio-economic difference highlighted above, points to a largely successful and effective implementation of the GSFP at the local level.

The general findings of the thesis feed into the two theoretical models adopted for the study. The first objective was achieved by relying on some of the interacting variables contained in the Van Meter and Van Horn framework. To Van Meter and Van Horn, the prevailing economic, social and political conditions dictate the course of action to be taken. That is, the caterer's model was chosen with explanation by GSFP officials to the effect that resources and economic condition (delays in release of feeding funds) primarily accounted for the choice. Winter also emphasizes decision-making within a socio-economic context or conditions.

Again, the findings on the school enrolment and attendance were done by employing the two theoretical models. In assessing how the GSFP has impacted on school enrolment, the study relied on the proposition of Van Horn and Van Meter framework where factors such as organizational interdependence, policy standards and objectives serve as guides. The study used the vertical hierarchical of the GSFP structure by interviewing officials at the regional, district and school levels. This finding theoretically relates to the Winter framework which espouses the engagement of local-level public servants or what Winter's called *Street-level Bureaucrats* in the implementation process. Ryan (1996) revealed that the role played by street-level bureaucrats is crucial and may have a significant impact on systematically distort the implementation of public policies hence any analysis of their roles or inputs in the implementation process is in the right direction. Thus, the head teachers of the two basic schools as well as district coordinators were heavily involved in realizing this objective.

The feedback, comments and suggestions of people and community who are directly or indirectly affected by the implementation of a public policy are useful in improving or modifying the implementation process. In collating the challenges facing the implementation of the feeding of the program in the two districts and schools, the study incorporated the target group behaviour through discussions to make its findings which fed into Winter's theoretical framework of factoring in the opinions and behaviour of the target group.

Differences in socio-economic backgrounds, educational levels and general perspectives on education, target group's responsiveness and cooperation in line with acceptable societal norms and behaviour – according to Winter framework – theoretically influence, shape and feed into the behaviour of the target towards the program and incorporating same during the data collection and subsequent analyses of the GSFP implementation challenges have proved practically relevant. The element of unity of purpose, consensus building, collective interest

and the harmonisation of thoughts exhibited by the study's target groups also feed into the theoretical model of Van Meter and Van Horn.

In spite of the usefulness of these models, the study proposes that the Winter model should be modified to include resource endowment or allocation. Resources – both human and physical – are lifeblood and a vital factor in the implementation of public policies. The incorporation of resources into the model will make the model much relevant within the African context because Africa is a natural resource-abundant continent. When the Winter model is used as a stand-alone model for a study, no proper or thorough assessment of an implementation of public policies could be made when 'resources' are missing in the model hence the need for the proposed modification.

For the Van Meter and Van Horn model, beyond the emphasis on performances of official policy actors, the study proposes modification of the model by integrating a component of output appraisal or evaluation. Performance should be measured in terms of implementation outcomes against some standard benchmarks and objectives to track the level of progress made. This will help the African cause so that non-performing officials can be assessed and if possible sanctioned while appropriate rewards are offered to those delivering good outcomes. Additionally, where results are not achieved by virtue of logistical challenges etc same can be addressed because, for example, enrolment figures alone do not give a holistic measure of the impact of the implemented feeding policy.

### **6.3 Contribution to Literature**

The study has contributed to implementation literature through its findings. The study has provided evidence of the suitability of the caterers' model of procurement in both the Atwima Mponua and Atwima Nwabiagya Districts given the prevailing circumstances where the release and disbursement of government funds as feeding grant and payment for the services

the caterers render. The study also made findings on how the implementation of the GSFP at the local level has affected school enrolment, attendance and retention. The study subsequently highlighted the problems of low school attendance and retention rates recorded at both the ABPS and MMBPS at the initial stages or years of the implementation of the feeding program and how these schools tackled such problems. Finally, the study identified and found the challenges that these two schools and districts are facing in the running of the GSFP. This is aimed at drawing policy makers and stakeholders' attention for the necessary action to be taken and the needed assistance expedited upon. All these findings have helped in the assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation of the GSFP at the Adupri Basic Primary School in Atwima Mponua District and Mfensi Methodist Basic Primary School in the and Atwima Nwabiagya District.

#### **6.4 Policy Recommendations**

Guided by the findings in this scientific research, the study recommends the following policies for the consideration of policy makers and all stakeholders of the GSFP. First, there should be a periodic performance appraisal of caterers in all the beneficiary districts especially Atwima Nwabiagya District and schools to be carried out by competent professionals in order to avoid arbitrary and politically-motivated dismissal of caterers. Secondly, the Atwima Mponua District assembly should use part its internally generated funds (IGFs) or solicit corporate sponsorships in putting up basic infrastructures such as Kitchen at ABPS. Thirdly, Atwima Nwabiagya District assembly should embark on community sensitization about the GSFP to whip up the Mfensi community's interest and ownership of the local feeding program. Lastly, the government should cut down on its excessive delays and promptly pays the caterers.

## **6.5 Suggested Area of Further Study**

In any social science study, it is practically impossible to cover all areas of a subject under a particular study. It is in this light that this research piece acknowledges the limit of the scope of this study. The study therefore suggests that further scholarly and empirical investigation is undertaken by linking the implementation of the GSFP directly to the local economy. It is anticipated that the findings of such study will be able to establish the nexus between localized GSFP implementation and rural wealth creation.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **I. Interview Guide**

#### **GSFP Procurement Mechanism at the Local Level**

- I. What kind(s) of procurement mechanism(s) is/are in place in the selected districts/schools?
- II. What criteria do you use to select the schools for the programme?
- III. How many schools in the district are currently enrolled on the GSFP?
- IV. How are the caterers for the beneficiary schools selected?
- V. Does politics play a role in the choice of caterers?

#### **Organizational or Implementation Structure**

- I. What constitute the structure for implementing the GSFP? Does the structure have any effect on how the programme is carried out?
- II. How effective are the structures and procedures in GSFP? Do you suggest a modification or should the existing structures and procedures be maintained?
- III. Please how long have you been in the position you currently hold, what role do you perform in relation to the implementation of the GSFP?
- IV. What kind of co-operation and co-ordination take place among the various implementing-units within the structure of the GSFP?
- V. Please what are the main challenge(s) in carrying out the programme?
- VI. How does your district relate with the national and regional level of the GSFP?
- VII. How would you describe the relationship among the implementing officials? What is your collaboration and working coordination with other stakeholders? What impact does it have on the implementation of the programme?
- VIII. How significant is the role of donor partners?

## **Political Dynamics**

- I. Please in the process of implementing the GSFP do you experience any external interference of political nature?
- II. From what source(s) do these interferences emanate from?
- III. How do these interferences affect the implementation process?
- IV. In which way or manner do they interfere in the implementation of the GSFP?
- V. Does the success of the programme have anything to do with which party is in office?
- VI. Do the district politicians have any influence on how the programme is carried out?
- VII. Do these influences sometimes impede the effective implementation of the GSFP?
- VIII. Please what role does the Member of Parliament (MP), District Chief Executive (DCE) or the assembly men and women play in the implementation process of the GSFP?
- IX. Please what criteria are used in selecting the caterers? Does the political affiliation of the person matter?

## **Resource Endowments**

- I. Please what are the financial sources for funding the programme?
- II. How timely are these funds made available?
- III. Please are the funds provided sufficient or otherwise for effective implementation of the programme?
- IV. How does it affect the implementation of the programme?
- V. Please how is payment to the caterers done and is it done on a monthly basis?
- VI. Please do you encounter any problems as far as payment of cash to caterers is concerned?
- VII. What is your view on the human resource (staff) capacity in terms of training, experience, number and performance for implementation of the GSFP at the district level?
- VIII. Can you explain how both human and financial resources affect the implementation of the GSFP?

## **Caterers**

- I. Please what procedure do you go through before getting contract as a caterer?

- II. Please when and how do you get the financial resources to prepare the food?
- III. Do you face any difficulties as far as getting funds for the preparation of the meals are concerned?
- IV. Please what is the menu for the programme?
- V. How many times in the week do you prepare the meals?
- VI. How and where do you procure the food stuff?

### **Authorities of Selected Districts and Schools**

- I. Since the inception of the GSFP at your local area or school, have there been changes in enrolment, attendance and retention in beneficiary schools?
- II. Can you please explain the nature of changes, if any?
- III. Please, can you provide the statistics of the changes that have happened or occurred?

### **Beneficiaries (Parents and Guardians) and the Community**

- I. Please what is GSFP?
- II. Do you give him/her feeding money to school?
- III. Please has the programme been beneficial to your family? How beneficial has it been?
- IV. Do you contribute anything in terms of food stuff, helping construct a kitchen for the programme or money to the success of the programme?
- V. Please do you anyway interact with the implementing officials?
- VI. Do you have avenues to influence their operations?
- VII. Would you say the programme is also a reason why your child will stay in school?

### **School Children**

- I. Do you like the GSFP? Why do you like the programme?
- II. Do you come to school with feeding money?
- III. Do you like the food they give you?
- IV. Do you often come to school?
- V. Do you now attend and remain in school because of the programme?

### **Assemblymen**

- I. Please what is your role in the implementation of the GSFP?

- II. How active are you in the affairs of the GSFP?
- III. What is your overall assessment of the programme so far?

## **Key Opinion Leaders and Ordinary Members in the Beneficiary communities**

- I. What are your general impressions on the GSFP here in your area?
- II. Has it been beneficial or otherwise to the community?
- III. What role do members of the community play in the implementation process?
- IV. In your opinion, does the GSFP need improvement or modifications etc? Explain

## **II. Authorized Letter of Consent**



**UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN**  
*Department of Administration and Organization Theory*

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### LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

#### To Whom It May Concern

This is to introduce Rosemond Serebour, a student at the Department of Administration and Organisation Theory, University of Bergen, Norway. She is currently pursuing an MPhil degree in Public Administration and as part of the programme requirement; she is to conduct a research which would be submitted as her final thesis work at the end of her study.

Her topic of interest for the research is: ASSESSMENT OF THE GHANA SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME: A CASE STUDY OF SOME SELECTED SCHOOLS IN THE ATWIMA NWABIAGYA DISTRICT OF THE ASHANTI REGION.

As an important part of this exercise she has to interview various persons and collect relevant documents. I kindly implore you to give her the necessary help she needs to make the data collection exercise a successful one. The information provided to her is for academic purposes only. Any assistance given to her is highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

*Jan Froestad*  
Professor Jan Froestad  
Supervisor

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### III. Some Pictures Taken with Consent During Fieldwork

Pupils of Adupri Basic Primary School queue for their food in front of the school's kitchen (a small wooden structure)



One of the cooks getting ready to serve meals to pupils waiting in line for their lunch in front of this wooden structure which houses the school's kitchen



A cook serves pupils of Adupri Basic Primary School during lunch break



Pupils of Adupri Primary Basic School sitting and eating lunch behind a classroom block





Acting headmaster and substantive assistant headteacher of Adupri Basic Primary School explaining a point.



Some selected Adupri Pupils freely expressing their opinions on the feeding program



Cooks at Mfensi Methodist Primary School preparing food at the school's kitchen



Pupils of Mfensi Methodist Primary School queue up for lunch, 2016



Happy Time! Pupils enjoy their lunch meals. Behind them are the headmistress (left), GSFP school coordinator/ class teacher (middle) and the assistant headteacher (right) of Mfensi Sch.



Some selected pupils of Mfensi Basic Primary School sharing their views and concerns about the GSFP.



Headmistress of Mfensi Methodist Primary School busily stressing on a point as she supplies some relevant and important information about the implementation of GSFP in her school



A community resource (borehole) sited very close to Mfensi Methodist Primary School that provides potable water for cooking under the GSFP

