



## THE ROLE OF CAPITATION GRANT IN PROMOTING BASIC EDUCATION IN AKATSI NORTH DISTRICT

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### **Keywords**

Basic education, Capitation Grant, Effective teaching and learning, Human Capital Development, Policies, Primary education, Quality education

### **Abstract**

The objective of the paper is to examine the contribution of capitation grant in ensuring effective teaching and learning, its contribution to access to quality education at the basic school. The paper further assess the influence of capitation grant on the key indicators of education.

### **Introduction**

Many countries believe that education is vital in the human capital development, as a result, decision to improve quality and quantity of education is important on their including Ghana. Education has also been seen to play important role in adoption of new agricultural technology development and a means of reducing health and reduce fertility. (Strauss and Thomas, 1995). In view of this, governments initiated policies to meet both the demand and supply needs of basic education. One of these policies is capitation grant policy. The capitation grant was introduced in Ghana in 2005 to facilitate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal of primary education for all. It is also to ensure that basic education is free for all – no payment of school or tuition fees. The subsidy is paid by the government of Ghana per student per term to cover general stationery and management, office machinery, first aid, building maintenance, sports fee, culture fee, sanitation fee, furniture maintenance and tools, textbook user fee, practical fees as well as machinery for technical schools and institutions. The amount disburse is Ghc1.50 per student multiplied by 3 terms is Ghc4.50 per student per year (Daily Graphic, 2009).

Thirteen years after its implementation, this paper assesses the contribution of capital grant to basic school education in the Akatsi North District. The district supervises 50 basic schools; i.e. 7 private and 43 public schools, however capitation grant are paid to only public schools. The paper is assessing the contribution of the capitation grant in all the 43 schools.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Education Reforms in Ghana**

In 1957, Ghana's educational system consisted of six years of primary education, five years of secondary education, Ordinary Level Certificate ("O" – Level), two years of sixth form and finally Advanced Level Certificate ("A" – Level) which was required for admission into university. Until middle of 1980, nine attempts were made to reform Ghana's educational system but all prove futile.

The Dsobo Review Committee of 1974 introduced the concept of comprehensive Junior Secondary Schools to teach academic and practical skills to all pupils whereas the 1987 education reforms brought a nation – wide implementation of the Junior Secondary School concept. Critics of the 1987 reforms, however, argue that it brought about failure in public education in Ghana in terms of coverage, quality, equity and utility to the economy.

In the 1990s, a free Compulsory and Universal Basic Education (fCUBE) policy and Basic Education Sector Improvement Project (BESIP) were implemented which led to the creation of Girls' Education Unit (GEU) at the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the appointment of District Girls' Officers, and a Director of Basic, Secondary and Girl Child Education. In 2002, a 29-member committee headed by Professor Jophus Anamuah-Mensah was tasked to assess the structure of education and discuss issues affecting the development and delivery of education in the country. Based on the findings of the committee, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in 2004, took steps to enhanced gender equity at all levels and programs of education. The goal is for the country to achieve universal basic education for children between the ages of 4 to 15 by 2015, and universal secondary education by 2020. The public universities introduced affirmative action plans into admission policies for gender balance.

In 1995, Ghana Education Service structure was reviewed to involve communities in education management. The School Management Committee to arouse the interest of the communities in education in their locality taking into consideration their problems. In addition, District Education Oversight Committee was established to strategies the involvement in education and raised local involvement (World Bank, 2004)

### **2.2 Ghana's Education Policy**

Three year Education Strategic Plan (ESP) spanning a period of 2003-2005 was initiated under the Poverty Reduction Strategy to adopt Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) for achieving the education related Millennium Development Goals of equitable access, education management and science and technology and vocational education.

The ten goals of ESP are increasing access to and participation in education and training, improving the quality of teaching and learning for enhanced pupil/student achievement, promoting good health and environmental sanitation in schools and institutions.

Under the Government of Ghana White Paper on Education Reform, basic education was expanded to include 2 years of kindergarten as well as the existing 6 years of primary education and 3 years of Junior High School education. The entire basic education will continue to be free and compulsory and will receive the highest priority of all sub-sectors. The White Paper also pledges the government's full support for basic education funding. The central target is to reach 100 percent completion rate for both males and females at all basic levels by 2015.

### **2.3 Overview of Capitation Grant**

As part of the efforts to expand access and improve quality of education, the Capitation Grant Scheme was introduced in 2003/2004 academic year to provide funds to cater for school levies covering school repairs, cultural and sports activities. The grant aims at enhancing the decentralization process through the involvement of the community level actors in order to improve efficiency leading to quality education. The education decentralization policy also aims at ensuring sustainability.

The grant is for only public basic schools under the Ghana Education Service.

### **2.4 Guideline for Implementation of Capitation Grant**

- i. Selection of Beneficiary Schools
- ii. Number of Pupils
- iii. Eligible Expenditures
- iv. Grant Management
- v. Bank Account
- vi. Grant Disbursement
- vii. Grant Disbursement Process
- viii. Management Control
- ix. Reporting Process
- x. Monitoring Mechanisms
- xi. Audit Process

Source: Ghana Education Service, 2016. Guidelines for the distribution and utilization of Capitation Grants. Reprinted Copy.

### **2.5 Some Challenges of Capitation Grant Policy**

Conducting quantitative and qualitative analyses, we discover that particular interest by government should also be geared towards increases in enrolment, teaching-learning materials and teacher-learner ratios, and improvement in physical infrastructure in our schools.

The studies identified crippling factors confronting the implementation of the policy are the delay in the release of the grant, misuse of funds by some heads of institutions, increasing workload on implements, lack of transparency and poor book keeping skills and knowledge in financial accounting.

## **3. Methodology, Data Analysis and Discussion of Results**

### 3.1 Methodology

#### Data Source and Sample

The data were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The secondary data were collected from newspapers, websites, articles, etc. The primary data was collected from the Akatsi North district education office and head teachers of various schools in the district. The data was input in the Microsoft excel for analysis to produce classified data. There was 100% coverage of all the schools in the district.

The major indicators that were employed for the primary data collection are school community participation, District Education Oversight Committee participation and teacher participation. The school participation was measured in terms of the participation of the Parent Teacher Association (PTAs) and School Management Committees (SMC) in the program. As part of the educational reforms, School Management Committees (SMC) and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) were introduced in mid 1990s to help stir the interest of the community in education in their locality taking into account their peculiar challenges.

### 3.2 Data Analysis and Discussion of Results

A data collection guide containing semi- structured questionnaires was used. Data were gathered on the effects of the Grant and key determinants of sustaining the Grant. Specifically, data were collected on the degree of awareness of the existence of the Grant. Respondent's knowledge about the amount of the Grant allocated to each school was assessed with emphasis on the amount of Grant received by each school and its use.

#### Enrolment

The enrolment of the school is 4, 746 in 2013 and increased to 10,142 in 2017. The district office established in 2012 and became effective in 2013. The capitation grant payment started in the later part of the 2012 hence the increment in the enrolment in the subsequent years. This is shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Enrolment at various Circuits In Akatsi North District

<b>NAME OF CIRCUIT</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Agormor-Agado	740	961	1,123	1,220	1,712	<b>5,756</b>
Ave Xevi	1,060	1,463	1,675	1,853	2,641	<b>8,692</b>
Ave Afiadenyigba	1,005	1,144	1,295	1,446	1,938	<b>6,828</b>
Ave Dzalele	544	675	808	910	1,375	<b>4,312</b>
Ave Dakpa	1,397	1,666	1,816	1,936	2,476	<b>9,291</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,746</b>	<b>5,909</b>	<b>6,717</b>	<b>7,365</b>	<b>10,142</b>	<b>34,879</b>

Source: Akatsi North District Education Office, 2018

#### Capitation Grant Receipt and Disbursement

Tables 2&3 showed the receipt of capitation grant from the Ministry of Finance to the district education office. It is clear from the table that the ministry does even remit the account of the district education office with the grant commensurate with the enrolment. The district office also does not disburse all the grants to the school due to lack of fund to run the office.

Table 3: Capitation Grant Disbursed in GHC

NAME OF CIRCUIT	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	TOTAL
Agormor-Agado	2,880.00	3,874.50	4,603.50	5,040.00	7,254.00	<b>23,652.00</b>
Ave Xevi	4,320.00	6,133.50	7,087.50	7,888.50	11,434.50	<b>36,864.00</b>
Ave Afiadenyigba	4,072.50	4,698.00	5,377.50	6,057.00	8,271.00	<b>28,476.00</b>
Ave Dzalele	1,998.00	2,587.50	3,186.00	3,645.00	5,737.50	<b>17,154.00</b>
Ave Dakpa	5,836.50	7,047.00	7,722.00	8,262.00	10,692.00	<b>39,559.50</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,107.00</b>	<b>24,340.50</b>	<b>27,976.50</b>	<b>30,892.50</b>	<b>43,389.00</b>	<b>145,705.50</b>

Source: Akatsi North District Education Office, 2018

#### 4.1 Findings

The capitation grant has increased the enrolments and improvement in the availability of the teaching and learning materials.

There was undue delay in the release of the grant, according to the head teachers.

The head teachers complained about the frustrations they have to go through before accessing the fund can collapse the scheme.

It was identified that parents still charge the examination fees, and sports and culture levies.

The head teachers misapplied the fund because most teachers do not understand the use of the fund.

There was no proper record keeping

Challenges such as teacher motivation and attitudinal factors to education still persist

Various literature concluded that capitation grant per head was inadequate and need to be increased. The same issue was raised by the head teachers, teachers and the SMC chairmen. However, at the time of

submitting this paper the District Accountant confirmed that the government has increased the capitation grant per pupil from Ghc4.5 per year to Ghc9.00 and they have credited the account of the schools already.

#### **4.2 Recommendations**

Since the capitation grant is to lessen the burden on the parents and also create access to education, appropriate steps have to be taken to address the bottlenecks. The paper recommends the following suggestions

- I. The appropriate centers should submit enrolment data timely to the headquarters
- II. The head teachers should be trained for the purpose of the fund and also be monitored to make effective use of the fund.
- III. The district assemblies should be proactive in building classroom blocks to meet the increasing demand of the enrolment
- IV. The SMC chairmen must be elites so that they can understand the education system in order to perform their oversight function effectively.
- V. Ministry of Finance and Ghana Education Service should publish in newspapers and on their website, the capitation grant allocation to various districts and schools.
- VI. The Banks should see vetted SPIP before releasing the fund to the schools.
- VII. There is the need for continuous monitoring support and improvement in the internal management and implementation processes of the grant.
- VIII. The education sector policy makers and stakeholders must undertake cost impact assess of the capitation grant scheme with other education sector policies such as school feeding program and free school uniform, etc. to the long term viability and financial sustainability of these programs.
- IX. Effort should be made to simplify the SPIP form to reduce workload on heads of school.
- X. There is the need to review the submission date for the enrolment figures.

#### **4.3 Conclusion**

It is concluded that capitation grant is vital for promotion of free, compulsory basic education for the achievement of the equitable access to basic education, improve the availability of teaching and learning materials. The challenges should be addressed and the grant per student be increased from the current Ghc4.5 to Ghc9.00.

#### **Acknowledgement**

The author is grateful to all the respondents to the questionnaires, authors of secondary data and the Global Scientific Journal for accepting to add our work to their journal to showcase of findings to the world. This research was funded by the author.

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