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Impact of Decentralisation Policy in Education Provision in the Amansie – East District in Ashanti Region, Ghana

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Abstract:
The study aimed at ascertaining the impact of the decentralisation policy on education provision and the lives of the people in the Amansie East District. The case study design was adopted for the research. Simple and systematic random sampling techniques were used in attaining the sample size of 568 respondents. The study discovered that the decentralisation policy has impacted positively on education delivery in the district; it has ensured active participation of all stakeholders in education; also, the process of decentralisation has brought government closer to the people and has enabled them to take decisions that correspond to their educational needs much more effectively. It was recommended that members who constitute the implementation units should be non-partisan and have the requisite qualification and training. It was concluded that education provision is a shared responsibility so the level of participation should be fully decentralised.

Keywords: Decentralisation, policy, education, stakeholders, participation

1. Introduction

1.1. Background to the Study

The quality of citizens of any nation depends largely on the quality of education it offers. The educational system must therefore, provide adequate resources to ensure quality education at all level (Republic of Ghana, 2002). Ghana has witnessed several policies enacted to improve its educational systems and the life of the citizens. One of such policies is decentralisation, which must be implemented in all sectors. Unfortunately, public policies often do not get implemented in many countries, and those that get through the process of implementation sometimes look different from what the framers originally intended to.

Ghana as a country is not an exception to this since past governments intended to enhance the educational system but was bedevilled with lot of inefficiencies and weaknesses such that it could not ensure the desired impact in development. The need for reformation became prudent hence the adoption of decentralisation policy in 1988. The introduction of decentralisation concept in Ghana brought about diverse relationships among the central and local governments, and state-owned agencies. These relationships can be classified into political, administrative, financial and developmental planning.

The Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) government set up the Kuffour and Sowu committees. Upon their respective reports, the Public Administration Reform and Decentralisation Implementation Committee (PARDIC) task force was established in October 1983. The PARDIC was to assist government in the actual implementation of the reform programme.

Upon the recommendations of the committee, 110 districts were established under PNDCLaw 207 to give meaning to the government decentralisation policy. The hub of the programme was to ensure mass participation in decision-making processes and planning, efficiency, effectiveness, probity and accountability, responsiveness, stability and an integrated approach to development. The 1992 Republican Constitution finally gave the policy a final seal. Throughout all these changes, efforts were focused on political decentralisation and not on ministerial decentralisation. It is worthy to note that the purpose of the decentralisation is to tailor development to the needs of the people and to ensure good governance in the country.

Conversely, the result of the implementation process in the Ministry of Education (MoE) has proved otherwise. The initial complaints were lack of qualified personnel at the decentralised units to facilitate decision making and planning, lack of effective integration into the district assembly structure, lack of cooperation, under-utilisation of some of the professional staff, and resistance to change. Low staff morale due to poor remuneration and condition of service and its resultant effect on the staff are also considered pivotal to the failure of the policy. In addition, there seemed to be an

information asymmetry; a problem with the communication channels, relationships and the need to manage the system efficiently. There is therefore the need to investigate such implementation problems and challenges to allow appropriate recommendations to be made to ensure effective and efficient management of the decentralisation policy.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Decentralisation, awidely `accepted policy is one of the most efficient and effective strategies for accelerated development has been implemented in Ghana since 1980 with the view to ensuring a broad base participation in administration for improved performance at the ministerial levels (Ayee, 1994).

Ministry of Education (MoE) is part of the Ministries in Ghana that was enrolled in the implementation of the policy with a view to improve administrative services, increase the quality of education, share power with the district education directorates and advance the pace of national development in Education generally. Amansie East District like all other districts of education has participated in the implementation of this decentralisation policy in the country, since its inception. However, its success or otherwise has always been left with the people to guess. There has not been any proper research work in the district to identify and explain the fundamental issues, goals, processes, and strategies that determine success or otherwise of the implementation of educational decentralisation policy in the district.

Questions that stakeholders in education within the Amansie East District have not answered are   'what is the degree of participation in terms of decision-making, planning and management, supervision and general provision of education available in the District? And 'what has been the impact of since the implementation of the decentralisation policy?" These questions are critical because there has not been any study on these specific subjects. It is this gap that necessitated this research work to firstly, evaluate the implementation process of the Decentralisation Policy in providing Education and also, to examine the impact of the implementation of the Decentralisation Policy on educational provision and that of the life of the people of the District.

1.3. Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study were to evaluate the education decentralisation process in the Amansie-East District. Specifically, the study sought to:

- Examine the degree of participation in terms of decision-making, planning and management, and general provision of education in the Amansie East District.
- Ascertain the impact of the decentralisation policy on education provision and the lives of the people in the Amansie East District.

1.4. Research Questions

The following were the research questions that guided the study:

- What is the degree of participation in terms of decision-making, planning, management, and general provision of education in the Amansie East District?
- What impact does the implementation of the decentralisation policy have on education provision and the lives of the people in the Amansie East District?

1.5. Significance of the Study

The decentralisation concept in education is an area that has not been given much attention. The results from the study will help in creating the framework within which we can observe the decentralisation concept and the Education systems from one level to the other; and to compare and observe the operations of the decentralisation structures and how these operations can be effectively and efficiently applied in the education industry.

The study enhanced in constructing concept for comparing phenomenon and developing an environment based on the decentralised structures in the education industry for innovation and improvement when it comes to planning and management, and the general provision of education to the citizens of Ghana at all levels.

The findings of the study will help policy makers to plan and make well informed decision regarding educational decentralisation.

1.6. Delimitation of the Study

This study, though applicable to all districts in Ghana, is delimited to the Amansie East District in the Ashanti Region only. The research outcomes can however be applied to other districts to effect change.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Decentralisation and Education Provision

2.1.1. Concept of Decentralisation

Decentralisation is the transfer of government authority and resources to a lower organisation. The term decentralisation is used differently, and it is said to be in a continuum. According to Garrison and Noreen (2003), decentralisation is the delegation of decision-making authority throughout an organisation by providing managers at various operating levels to the authority in order to make decisions relating to their responsibility. It can also be described

as delegating and spreading of decisions among relatively departmental and divisional managers (Maher, Lanen&Rajan, 2006).

There are some distinct structures that exist in both vertical and horizontal levels and Conyers (1984) on his part identifies two types; the functional and territorial responsibility from government agencies or non-governmental organisations (NGOs). However, this could be in the form of divestiture of state interest in business activities and viable public services. The territorial decentralisation talks about the transfer of authority and responsibilities to a territorially defined local authority. Based on the foregoing, eight types or models of decentralisation could be identified: the centralisation model, deconcentration model, devolution model, delegation model, principal agency model, hybrid model, dispersal model and privatisation model.

2.1.2. Decentralisation in Education Provision?

Decentralisation is necessitated in providing education as it nurtures participation in providing education in terms of decision-making, planning and development process right from the grassroots. Providing education at the decentralised levels, according to institutionalists, is not just a concept of constitutional law, it is a way of life through democracy and a mechanism to unearth one's potential and creative powers (UNESCO, 1984). The concept of decentralisation in providing education for the basic framework is ensured facilitates productivity and growth through popular participation (Afful-Broni, 2004; Mullins, 2002). The decentralisation concept in education provision, if well implemented, would serve as a remedy to the alleged shortcomings and inefficiency that centralised system encountered in most countries (Mankoe, 2002).

2.2. Implementation Units of the Decentralization Policy in Providing Education

The Ministry of Education (MoE) is solely responsible for the overall education sector policy, planning and monitoring (Government of Ghana, 2003). Under the decentralization concept, education delivery and implementation are devolved to institutions, Districts and Regions through various agencies of MoE (Government of Ghana, 2003). Consequently, the Ghana Education Service (GES) is the agency that implements the Basic and Senior Secondary education components, including Technical and Vocational institutes; whereas the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) and the Non-Formal Education Division (NFED) are important sub-sectoral areas with their respective responsibilities regarding education delivery (Government of Ghana, 2003).

In order to ensure quality education (developing pupil's mental, physical and social competencies), the community in which the school is located should work in harmony with the school in the upbringing of pupils. The school, like any other facility in the community such as Health facility, Food and Agriculture, belong to the community. The community maintains, sustains its existence and keeps it running for the direct to the benefit of all children in that community. This is called 'popular participation'. The District Director of Education with the help of the heads of departments, scheduled officers, the circuit supervisors and head teachers should see the members of the community as partners in the educational development of the child (Ministry of Education, 2003). Accordingly, District Education Oversight Committee (DEOC), District Education Planning Teams (DEPT), School Management Committee (SMC), Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA), and Unit Committee and Old Students Associations, together with religious bodies and traditional rulers were established and strengthened by the Ghana Education Service Act, 1995 (Act 506) to effect smooth implementation.

DEOCs are appointed by the Ghana Education Service Council to oversee Education at the district level and to work closely and harmoniously with the SMCs to promote effective teaching and learning in schools. The establishment of DEPT was to strengthen the management of Basic Education at the district and local levels; and to enhance the capacity of districts to generate education action plans. Other functions such as Community sensitisation, training of community structures like SMC, PTA, and Unit Committee are among the major activities carried out by DEPT (Ministry of Education, 2003). The School Management Committee is expected to work closely with all other bodies which assist the school to function effectively. The SMC, is to serve as the Board of Governors of second cycle school at the basic level. It is a school-community based institution aimed at strengthening community participation and mobilisation for education resources and delivery. It is authorized to implement the general policies of basic school and to assist the head teacher and staff to run the school effectively (Ministry of Education, 2003).

2.3. Decentralisation and Development

The decentralised approach to development emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s as an alternative to the failed centralised development approach. The guiding principle of decentralised development holds that, development of territorial units should be primarily based on the full utilisations of their natural, human and institutional resources. Decentralisation promotes good governance through genuine popular participation in public decision-making and spreads political power more widely to reduce undesirable effects of weak, corrupt or unconcerned central government. It is the devolution of central administrative authority to the district level in order to ensure grassroots participation in the administration of the various areas concerned from the stand point to improve the living conditions of the people and the orderly, fairly and balance development of the whole country (Nkrumah, 2000). This is because development is a shared responsibility among central government, local government parastatals, NGOs, the private sector and the people who are the ultimate beneficiaries. Decentralisation is also seen as a way of creating better accountability process in the public sector for good governance, since the local authority is subject to democratic controls. This is because good governance implies a focus on accountability for performance and results in an efficient, effective and responsive manner (Appiah,

1999). It must, however, be mentioned that political decentralisation depends on the central government's willingness to all for differences in service levels.

Decentralisation concept places more emphasis on local (urban or rural) development to ensure both suitable social and spatial development. Nkrumah (2000) state that the message which is being clearly conveyed is that the people themselves must be primarily responsible for initiating and implementing the development efforts desired by them. Their active involvement must be obtained in all aspects of the development planning process, project identification, resource generation, project implementation and monitoring. Conyers (1984) observes that, decentralisation helps to reduce social and regional inequalities. The impact of decentralisation on inequality however depends on the degree and form of inequality; the form of decentralisation and the composition and policies of the central and local government authorities. Decentralisation offers an effective mechanism for expanding local level capacity for development (Mankoe, 2002).

The policy ensures that all government agencies, in any given district/region, are brought together into one administrative unit through the process of institutional integration, manpower absorption and provision of funds. Appiah (1999) believes that the main object of decentralisation for increased development is to improve the public sector functions and thus contribute to the quality of life. It has, in so doing, been an important method of tackling many of the challenges of the nation such as increasing demand on public service, their quality and influence on the services by the users.

Conyers (1984) is of the view that effective participation requires some decentralisation of the decision-making process.

The concept of popular participation is also an integral component of the basic needs approach to development and has therefore led to an interest in decentralised planning. Decentralisation is seen as an essential strategy for development by facilitating the implementation of development policies affecting local needs. According to Treveh (1998) the prioritisation of projects based on the local needs of the people, help to reduce the over dependence on the outside inputs and the attendant backwash effects.

Decentralisation can also be viewed as a means of strengthening, rather than weakening nation unit. According to Conyers (1984), decentralisation is a positive step towards building genuine unity and nationalism based on the recognition of regional, cultural and ethnic diversity. It is a means of achieving unity based on frank and positive acceptance of the diversity of the people. To achieve the various objectives of popular participation, distribution of political power and national unity, there must be some decentralisation of control over allocative and implementation decisions. Decentralisation of too much control over allocative decisions could however result in the fragmentation of the nation (Conyers 1984). In summary, decentralised approach to development is particularly suitable for many areas, specially, sub-national or district levels. This is because the districts are basically homogenous spatial units, socio-culturally and hence, have their own spatial unit identities, which would not under normal circumstances benefit from the traditional, centralised development approach.

2.4. Summary of Literature Review

The following findings were discovered through the literature review. Education is the only bedrock through which individuals, society and nations can be developed. It is a means that harness the human capital and value, and thus effectuate the tangible and intangible resources that a country needs for development. However quality education can only take place through proper planning, formulation, implementation, control and evaluation of well-defined strategies. But the only approach to ensure this is through popular participation whereby the relevant stakeholders are brought together to provide education; hence, the adoption and implementation of the decentralisation policy by the government of Ghana. Decentralisation has diverse forms or models and with careful application and utilisation of the models, good governance through accountability, probity and effective management of resources at all levels and sectors is assured. District Directors of Education with the help of the relative stakeholders should ensure smooth implementation. Lack of qualified personnel to constitute implementation committees, funds for the implementation of their activities, times for the meetings, absenteeism on the part of some members, and regular transfer of some members and lack of motivation affect the implementation process.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study adopted the case study design. Among the various research designs, case studies are frequently regarded as using both quantitative and qualitative research and a combination of both approaches. In this study, both primary and secondary data sources were used, which were considered to be more appropriate for this study. The method has the advantage of the possibility of providing in-depth information about behaviours and attitudes of the key players in education (Mankoe, 2002).

3.2. Population

The total population for the study was 5675. This comprised study respondents from the District Assembly personnel, and organisations/institutions such as PTA, SMC/SBG; and NGOs, Traditional Rulers, Religious leaders, and Old Students Associations together with AEDA Staff/Assembly members and GES Staff/Teachers in the Amansie-East District of the Ashanti Region.

3.3. Sample and Sampling Procedure

The researchers adopted the systematic random sampling technique to sample 10% of the study population to participate in the study. This resulted in a sample size of 568 participants. The Systematic random sampling helped to gain insight into the phenomenon hence, the need to choose personnel who were well versed with the history and development of the service and in the education sector for that matter.

3.4. Research Instruments

Structured Interview and questionnaires were used to collect data from the respondents. The researchers prepared three separate sets of questionnaires for the personnel at the GES (directors and senior staff, teachers and supporting staff); the public (PTA, SMC/SBG, Religious leaders, Traditional rulers, and opinion leaders) and the AEDA/DEOC members respectively. We also interviewed schedule officers to collect data from the district assembly staff.
The questionnaire for Education personnel consisted of thirty (30) items made up of both open ended and closed-ended questions, and the Likert scale (type). It was divided into two parts. The first part (1-10) was to elicit the bio-data of the respondents and to ascertain their intellectual readiness for decision making, planning and management of educational facilities/system. The second part had four sections; section A (11-20) was captioned degree of participation. That is to say this section dealt with the degree of participation, major objectives of education to individuals and society and how education could transform individuals and societies.

Section B (21-30), was captioned impact of educational decentralisation; this section was to identify measures to improve education systems in the district. It was to access the corrective measures that could improve teaching and learning and the entire education system. Each item had Likert Scale type of responses or ratings: 1, 2, 3, 4 where 1 means 'Strongly Agree', 2 means 'Agree', 3 means 'Disagree', and 4 means 'Strongly Disagree'. It must also be noted that strongly agree and agree are positive values, which imply' yes' it is done, or I support, while disagree and strongly disagree are negative values that imply 'no' it is not done, nor I do not support. Hence in rating, it can be said that one (1) is more valuable than two (2), and in that order.

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

To facilitate the distribution and retrieval of questionnaires the researchers made some visits to some selected schools, the District Education Office, the Office of the District Assembly, the seat of the Traditional Council, some selected churches and missions, and to some selected communities to meet the respondents. During social gatherings such as workshops, forums and seminars the researchers, with permission, attended. Circuit supervisors and some officers in GES and other organisations in the formal sector (who had knowledge in research) also helped in administering the questionnaire. The researchers made sure every circuit, or town/area council was covered. The respondents were selected at random. The questionnaires were given to them and were allowed up to 3 days to answer the questions after which they submitted the questionnaires to the researchers. This was done with the permission and support from the administration and staff/ leaders of the various institutions or the target groups.

The District Assembly, the Traditional Council, Religious Leaders, the District Directors (present and former) and Heads of Department of GES, Headmasters /headmistresses and those with key positions in their outfit were   given up to one week to submit the questionnaire. In all, 751 (i.e., 350+400+1) questionnaires were distributed and 691 (93%) were returned. Besides, interviews were conducted. The respondents were made up of chief executives, directors, heads/ deputy heads of schools or departments, chiefs and elders, opinion leaders, religious leaders and some few individuals to get their impressions, on education provision, especially at the decentralised level. Again, with the help of the heads /directors' researchers were allowed to audit and analyse some office documents that were related to the study (education).

3.6. Data Analysis

For the purpose of extracting new information from the collected data, scientific methods, such as, percentages, graphs, tables and measurement of central tendency like modes were employed. In addition, figures were converted to the nearest whole number in order to make the outcomes easier for readers.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Biographic Data of the Respondents

This section tries to answer the research question 1:'Who constitute the implementation units and what are the qualifications of the stakeholders of education in the decentralised units in the district. The Figure below provides the summary of their respective qualifications. Figure 2 gives graphical presentation for easy comprehension.

It is obvious from Figure 2 that, majority of the stakeholders in education delivery in the district has the requisite qualifications for education with regards to the implementation of decentralisation policy. According to Article 38 of Ghana's Constitution, the minimum acceptable level of education for literacy is one's ability to graduate or successful completion of the basic level (i.e., completion of Junior High School) and with quality education, the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) results is the major indicator used to assess one's ability to make an informed decision (Constitution of Ghana, 1992).
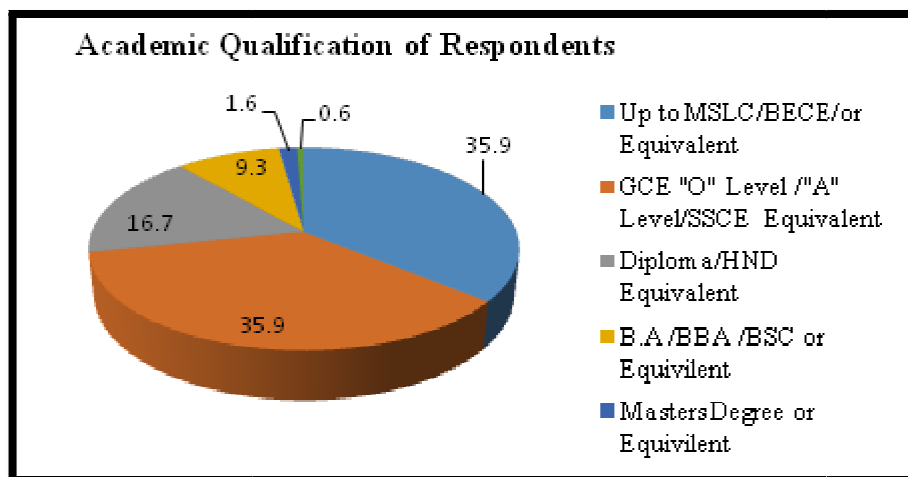
Figure 1: Academic Qualification

It could be seen from figure 1 that, the least academic qualification of the respondents was 35.9% and one could possibly infer that, the sampled population may be well informed and may possess the requisite knowledge that could be harnessed for quality education delivery with regards to decentralisation in the Amansie East District.
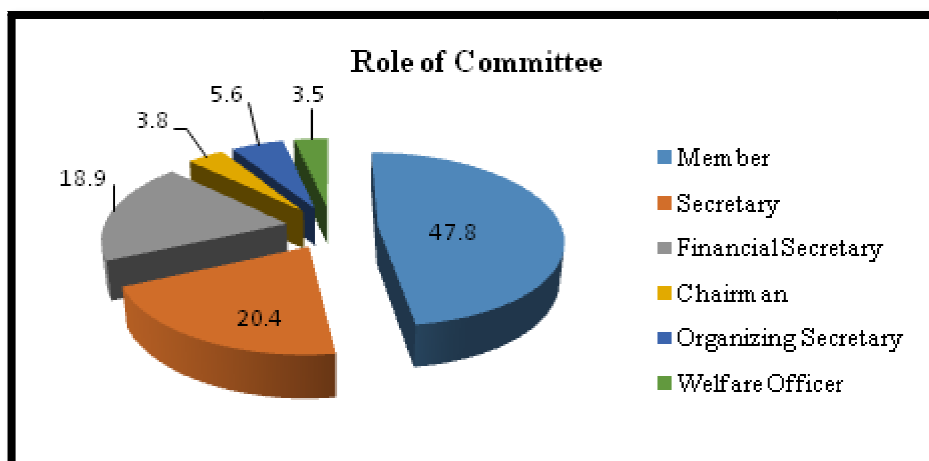

Figure 2: Role on Committee

With respect to their roles on the committees, it could be seen from Figure 2 that, each member of the committee has been assigned a responsibility. 47% were members, 20.4% were secretaries, 18.9% financial secretaries, 3.8% were chairmen, organising secretaries were 5.6% and 3.5% were welfare officers. This implies that their capacity should be built by the Education directorate in order for them to make meaningful contribution towards the sector.

Respondents	Population	Sample
Relevant Public	4500	450
GES Office Staff/ Teachers	1000	100
District Assembly Staff/Assembly	150	15
DCE, DDEs, Headmasters/mistresses	25	3
Total	5675	568

Table 1: Population and Sample Distribution of Respondents

Table one gives us the distribution of population and sample of participants for the study.

4.2. Degree of Participation in Decision-Making

The research examined the degree of participation in decisions relating to the provision of education in the district. This unit sought to answer research question two. Item 11 was to investigate how often the committees (Assembly) meet to discuss issues affecting Education in the District. But it was realised that the Assembly did not have any specific meeting time/times scheduled to discuss matters affecting education in the District. The committees only convened meetings to discuss education issues when the need arises. Sometimes education issues are tabled among the Agenda of the Assembly's regular meetings. Figure 3summarises how often the communities, PTA, SMC/SBG, etc. meet to discuss issues affecting education in their respective areas or schools. From Figure 3 we could identify that most

committees meet quarterly and monthly. This is followed by those whose meeting is based on the situation. But there are a few who meet annually.
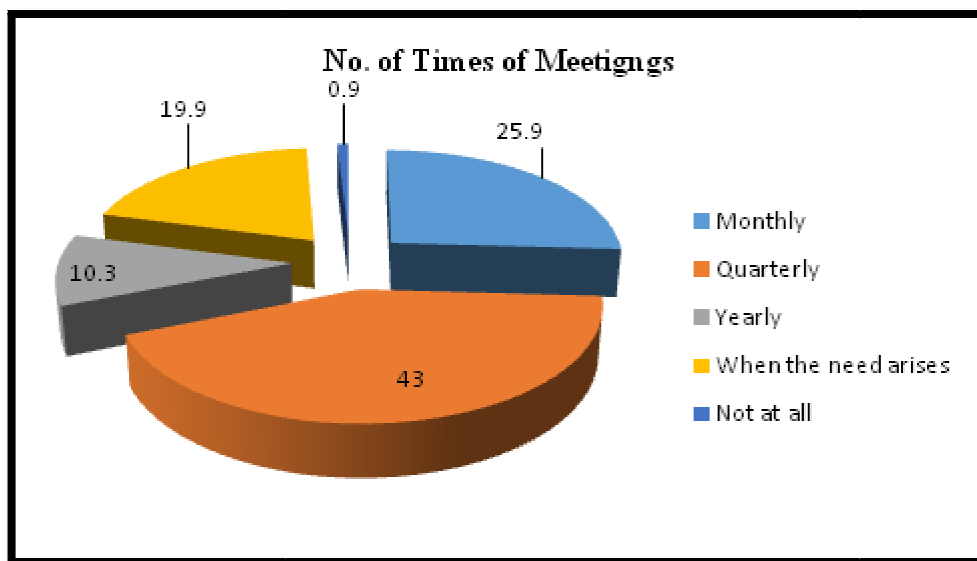

Figure 3: Meeting Times to Discuss Matters Affecting Education

The figure indicated that 43% of members met quarterly, 25% met monthly, 19.9% met when the need arises, 10.3% met yearly and 0.9% did not meet at all. This gives an indication of active participation of members in the educational decentralisation processes in the district.

4.3. Impact of Decentralisationon Education Provision in the Amansie East District

Research question two (2) was to examine the impact of decentralisation on education in the district. Most of the key respondents (DCE, DDE, Headmasters/mistresses) interviewed agreed that it has been very helpful in the sense that it has given the stakeholders in the district the opportunity to decide and provide what is best for the schools and students in terms of quality education delivery. This is a very good thing because these stakeholders at local level know the problems of the institutions in the locality and could therefore provide for their needs better than someone deciding for them in Accra (Central government). The involvement of the local people in discussing matters that affect education has led to progress and sustainability of programmes.

An Officer of the Amansie East District Assembly indicated, '*the process of decentralisation has led to some form of collaboration with the DA and most decentralised departments leading to undertaking major projects in the District'*. Another respondent added that '*the decentralisation has led to the massive provision of infrastructural facilities and rehabilitations in some basic schools in the district'.*

An Officer of Education in the study area alsostated, '*the implementation of the decentralisation has made some positive strides in education delivery in the District. The policy has resulted in the involvement of some major stakeholders such as SMCs, PTA executives, DA, and NGOs to undertake projects and programmes to enhance education delivery.*
A sample of the interviewees indicated*, 'This decentralisation has led to creating awareness of their active involvement and responsibilities towards education delivery of their wards'.*

These stakeholders' participation in education delivery in the district has also helped correct some misconceptions of some parents on education as they are of the perception that government bears all cost that is associated with educating the individual.

5. Discussion Findings

The research revealed several issues that are relevant to the implementation of the decentralisation policy in education provision.

5.1. Constitution and Qualification of Stakeholders in Educational Decentralisation

The members that constituted the implementation unit in education delivery are seen as elected members of the Assembly, the SMCs/SBG, PTA and the DEOC, who are in charge of planning and implementation and monitoring of programmes. Even though 64% of the stakeholders that collaborate with the DEOC in education delivery have an appreciable level of the requisite qualification (above MSLC/BECE), their capacity for planning, implementation and monitoring of educational programmes is a bit weak. This could be attributed to lack of periodic capacity building workshops/trainings for members to implement such programmes effectively.

5.2. Degree of Participation and Decision-Making Process

With regards to decision making processes, it was realised that though the Assembly did not have any specific meeting scheduled to discuss matters affecting education in the District, the committees however, convened meetings to

discuss education issues when the need arises. However, the PTA, SMC/SBG meet at quarterly to discuss issues affecting education in their respective areas or schools.

Though the DEOC has been entrusted with the power to plan and implement issues pertaining to education, the decision-making processes in the GES like most of the other decentralised departments seems a bit bureaucratic and takes unduly long time as they at times need to contact/consult the Regional and National which are also bogged down with matters of national significance and thus unable to react quickly enough to problems referred from the local level thus causing the tempo of activities to be slow.

The decentralisation policy especially in the Amansie East District has seen some level of participation among the major stakeholders like the Parents, Traditional Authorities, SMCs, PTAs, Cooperate bodies and NGOs in education delivery, none the less, the framework for participation seems to be weak in view of its top-down approach regarding decision making. This, thus, confirms findings of Killick and AdinaAbugre (2001), saying the process hinders the performance of most departments at the local level.

The AEDA has been using portions of its Common Fund in the provision of toilet facilities, school buildings and classroom furniture, teachers' bungalows and scholarship schemes for the needy but brilliant students in the District. The SMCs, PTA and the entire community members likewise, through their self-supporting programmes have been helpful in the provision of land for education projects, construction of toilet facilities, school building and teachers' bungalows in most school communities this confirms the work of Maher, Lanen&Rajan, (2006) and Killick&Abugre (2001).

5.3. Impact of Decentralisation Policy in Education Delivery

From the study, the process of decentralisation has brought government closer to the people and has enabled them to take decisions that respond to their educational needs much more effectively; decentralisation has resulted in creating awareness to all stakeholders of their roles and responsibilities towards education delivery; the process of decentralisation to some extent built the capacity of stakeholders to demand accountability and the need to demand value for money in education delivery in the district; the process has also seen participation of the private sector in complementing efforts of government in ensuring access and quality education delivery in school communities by providing educational infrastructure; there has been high enrolment with its attendant effects of overcrowding and pressure on infrastructure facilities in some schools as a result of interventions such as School Feeding Programme, Capitation Grant, QUIPS, EQUAL and GAIT through decentralisation; and the process has resulted in effective collaboration of all stakeholders in promoting quality education delivery in the District in particular and the nation as a whole. These impacts are in line with the studies of Mankoe, (2002); Afful-Broni, (2004); and Mullins, (2002)which concluded that the decentralisation concept in education provision, if well implemented, would impact positively to serve as a remedy to the alleged shortcomings and inefficiency that centralised system encountered in most countries.

5.4. Conclusions

Education provision is a shared responsibility, in that the level of participation when deepened and widened (i.e., decentralisation) to eliminate stubborn resistance, the issue of power interests, fear to take responsibilities, and conflicting values would be minimised. Again, widening the spectrum of decentralisation through active participation of major stakeholders in education delivery in turn brings innovativeness and the requisite experience in managing the educational system in the District and the nation as a whole. This would ensure value for money regarding quality education delivery.

It is believed that the effective implementation of the fiscal decentralisation policy would fast track the decision-making processes in the District and would ensure effective implementation of programmes and projects in educational institutions. Again, the processes would empower the AEDA to 'hire and fire' and thus ensure high performance of workers for the development of the district.

5.5. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are offered for effective implementation of the decentralisation policy in education provision to take place:

The members that constitute the implementation committee or unit should be non-partisan and for that matter there is the need to ensure that those that have the requisite qualification should be selected. Organising regular training workshops for the committee, SMCs/SBG, PTA Executive and DEOC would ensure effective planning and implementation of quality education delivery in the District in particular and the nation as a whole.

As a way to strengthen the decision-making process and degree of participation, there is the need by the DEOC to ensure periodic organisation of meetings (at least quarterly) of stakeholders to share challenges and success chalked regarding education delivery. Effective implementation of DPCU (Heads of Decentralised Departments in the District) meetings organised quarterly to address implementation challenges with regards to their specific department programmes should also be encouraged.

In order to promote active involvement of all stakeholders in education delivery in the district, it would be prudent to educate management and staff in various education institutions to open their doors to parents, NGOs and various monitoring teams in the DEO. This would go a long way to instil in stakeholders the need to demand value for money in education leading to quality education delivery in schools.

The District Assembly must have a composite budget of which funding and all fiscal resources for education provision can be allocated and managed at the decentralized level.

5.6. Suggestions for Further Research

The focus of this study *Implementation of the Decentralization Policy in Education Provision in the Amansie –East District of the Ashanti Region* was to investigate and evaluate the process of implementation of this policy in the Education sector so as to identify the degree of participation and impact of decentralisation. Since Amansie – East District was considered as the case study, it is therefore recommended that other districts or regions, or even the entire nation is studied to ascertain the true reflection of the process.

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