

THE GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCING OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN GHANA

INTRODUCTION

This topic is being discussed at a time when we, as a nation, are struggling to properly define our secondary education space, which in my view, is nuancing towards a restricted view of grammar education, despite the spirited efforts Government is making to broaden the narrative and discourse to include Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and other subsidiaries, particularly Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

Interestingly, much of this debate has arisen within the shadows of the government's flagship programme of the free SHS. The excitement and enthusiasm generated in the programme and the contested positions of whether it has benefitted only the poverty reduction and access dimensions, rather than the crucial issue of quality, which is inspired by the 'availability of funds', are proof of our resolve as a people that we are determined to go to every extent to develop our education.

As the policies designed to ensure participation of all school-age children in primary education start bearing fruit, and as a larger proportion of children complete primary education, there has been strong pressure at the higher levels of the education system. How to finance secondary education expansion, how to organize it, and what to teach at that level have become burning issues.

Secondary education is indeed a crucial stage for the education system. This is where most primary-school teachers are trained; it is also where the future students of higher education are selected and taught essential foundation skills. Equally, students with secondary level education form the pull from which middle-level manpower for industry is drawn. Students enter secondary schools as children and leave as young adults. What they experience at that level influence the course of the rest of their lives. It is the level at which young people consolidate their basic knowledge gained at the basic education level, but also, where they acquire the common culture that could allow them to be useful citizens in a peaceful society; where they build knowledge through experience and experiments; where essential subjects such as science, health, education and technology are first taught in a formal way. Finally, this is where young people learn how to think, how to be, how to work, and how to co-operate with others.

In delivering this lecture, I recognize the opportunity that the audience has to delve into further discussion. Hence, I present both official and personal perceptions and expectations on governance, management, and financing of secondary education in Ghana, to chart a path for the discussion, as we look into the future. As the title suggest, we will be looking at:

1. Governance of Secondary Education
2. Management of Secondary Education
3. Financing of Secondary Education
 - a. *Historical development of secondary education funding*
 - b. *Reflections on experiences from other jurisdictions*
 - c. *Reflections on past pro-poor policies*
 - d. *Trends in educational expenditure from 2012-2022*
 - e. *Policy choices that could ensure financial sustainability*
4. Recommendations and
5. Conclusion

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

Under the legal covenant guiding education delivery, a description of ‘Secondary Education’ is offered to provide a sense of what that segment of education is. Section 3 of the Pre-tertiary Education Act, 2020 (Act 1049), includes in its explanation of Free secondary education, a sense of what secondary education is. It presents secondary education as being essentially composed of many forms including technical and vocational institutions. Although it does not mention grammar-type education, a cue taken from the White Paper delivered as the government response to the Anamuah-Mensah Committee’s report, refers to grammar-type schools as an offering for secondary education in Ghana.

Chairman, Ladies and gentlemen, the official governance structure of secondary education is three tiered. First, is the general oversight body, which is the Ministry of Education, followed by the Education Service (ES) formerly known as Ghana Education Service (GES) and then the school system; subsequently then diffused into a sparse arrangement to include parents and guardians, the community in which the school is located, and the past students of the schools. It is worth clarifying here that the participation of learners is in the school system.

Section 1b of the Pre-tertiary Education Act 2020, (Act 1049), states that Secondary Education comprises:

- (i) 3 years of Senior High School
- (ii) 3 years of Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Section 4 (2), (3) & (4) is about the **Management of pre-tertiary schools** and stipulates that:

(2) The Regional Education Directorate shall take responsibility for the effective and efficient management of Senior High Schools.

(3) The Technical and Vocational Education and Training Service shall take the responsibility for the effective and efficient management of pre-tertiary technical and vocational education and training institutions.

(4) Faith-based schools shall enter into Memorandum of Understanding with the Education Service for the effective and efficient management of faith-based schools.

Section 11 of the Act is about the **functions of the Governing Council**. It states as follows: The Council shall

(a) Advise the Minister on policy formulation and the coordination of approved national policies, programmes and standards relating to basic and senior high education;

(b) Ensure the effective and efficient implementation of basic and senior high education system;

(c) Submit to the Minister policy recommendation for basic and senior high education programmes and standards;

(d) Collaborate with the Local Government Service on matters of basic and senior high education;

(e) Ensure the effective and efficient performance of the functions of the Education Service; and

(f) Advise on any other matters relating to basic and senior high education that the Minister may request.

Section 37 of the Pre-tertiary Education Act, (Act 1049) is about the **Management of Public basic and senior high schools**.

37 (1) states that the Education Service shall establish

(a) a School management Committee for the Management of a public basic school; or

(b) a Board of Governors for the management of a public senior high school.

(2) A School Management Committee or a Board of Governors shall ensure that a public basic or senior high school is managed in accordance with the laid down rules and regulations of the Education Service.

Finally, **Section 79** of the Act is about the Management of public technical and vocational education and training institutions.

79 (1) states that the Service shall establish a Board of Governors for the management of each public and vocational education and training institution.

79 (2) A Board of Governors shall ensure that a public technical and vocational education and training institution is managed in accordance with laid down rules and regulations of the service

Some features that pop out so clearly are:

- regulation
- decision-making
- enforcement
- effectiveness and efficiency

In effect, governance of secondary education poses questions about how secondary education is regulated, the types and processes of decision-making, what rules and guides are being enforced, and how these are tuned to ensure effectiveness and efficiency.

In this case, the expectation is that each of the tiers will understand its role, so that when furniture is needed in a school, nobody will call the Minister of Education and put their request or complain to him when at the local level, the Board and the District Director of Education are available.

(may omit)

Closely linked to governance is the management of secondary education. The Education Service is headed by the Director-General, with two deputies, one responsible for Management Services and the other, Quality and Access. Previously, the Education Service had 10 Divisions – Special Education, Basic, Secondary, Teacher, Tech/Voc., CRDD, Supply and Logistics, HRM, Finance and Administration and Inspectorate. A new management structure to reflect the new Act 1049, merges Basic and Secondary Education Divisions into the Schools and Instructions Division and puts Finance and Administration under separate Divisions. It has Education Directorates in all regions and districts throughout the country. The District Director is supposed to have supervisory oversight on all schools in the district, including secondary schools.

The Director-General technically reports to the Governing Council – The Education Service Council. In practice however, it does appear, that instructions and directives from Ministers of Education over the years tend to have more prominence, and sometimes, without the knowledge by the GES Council. This has led to an overbearing influence of the Ministry of Education in the day to day running of the Education Service. This is not good for the development and effective management of our secondary schools. The expectation is that with the governance and management system in place, neither the Director-General nor the Minister of Education will perform the role of a Headmaster/Headmistress.

The lack of clarity regarding clear delineation of some of these roles and the penchant to interfere in the roles assigned to other levels of management have undermined the governance and management structures established by law, and created the impression that every problem should be resolved in Accra. There appears to be a missing link or over-exuberance that is undermining communication between these three tiers.

In 1987, the Government of Ghana embarked on a process to decentralise education management to districts throughout the country as part of a programme of wider social and democratic governance reforms. A vital element of this reform was the prescription of active community participation in the affairs of schools within their localities. The establishment of school management committees (SMCs), at the basic level, the reconstitution of governing boards at the second cycle level and the recognition of PTAs were to create a new school governance landscape based on community participation, as well as devolution of power to the metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies and schools.

The education decentralization, unfortunately has not been allowed to work. As such, the Education Service like all other public service agencies, still operates a rigidly centralised system and the common expression is – only one person in GES has address – the Director General (DG). Centralised systems of management and governance create numerous leadership and management challenges, including delays in disciplinary matters, delays in service delivery, and denies the development of skills.

It is one thing to pass legislation that shifts power, authority, responsibility and influence from one level to the other – such a shift is a change in structure only – but it is another thing to build the capacity at the school level to enable the desired impact on learning, management and leadership at the school level. The need for capacity is no doubt real, but it is sometimes overstretched or used as a facade or an excuse to delay the empowerment at decentralised levels, and thus, delay the devolution of functions to them.

Within the dynamically changing contexts under which schools now operate, school management has taken on a completely different dimension and show marked contrasts in roles and responsibilities. School management now requires the participation and collaboration among members of the school community (board of governors, parents, old students, Missions etc.) the development of skills in leadership management and in decision-making, planning and budgeting, whilst the leadership skills of school administrators, particularly, those of an interpersonal orientation, such as negotiation, consultation, conflict resolution, building ownership of and commitment to decisions, emerge as critical for school heads to contend with.

Some Key Issues on Governance and Management

1. Understanding of roles of various actors and their obligations, respecting the functions of other actors and ensuring compliance as defined by law.
2. Are our secondary schools over regulated in the governance, decision-making and enforcement of rules and procedures, including disciplinary matters which always have to be finally pronounced on by the Director-General?
3. Are School Boards clothed with the authority and space to play its role as a governing body (they are referred to as the Board of Governors)?
4. Capacity of Boards – In the composition of Boards are the requisite mix of skills needed for effective governance form the basis of deciding on who sits on School Boards, including the representatives of interest groups?
5. To what extent does the Education Council appreciate its own oversight role of governance of the Education Service and what should be the nature of engagement between it and the Minister?
6. With the coming into force of the Pre-tertiary Education Act 2020, (Act 1049), and with the creation of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Service, the role played by the Education Service will be replicated by the TVET Service when it applies to TVET.
7. Why have stakeholders been too quiet and allowed Ministers of Education and Director-Generals to run the show. Where are the voices of Parents, the Missions, the Old Students and others?
8. Though schools are of different sizes and varied, a one-size-fit-all approach has been adopted in their regulation and management. Interestingly, all schools are classified, with Class A schools being about 60. Heads of schools, school management, and governing boards have little or no discretion to vary instructions received from the Director-General of the Education Service or the Minister of Education. The Governing Board/GES Council is normally quiet.

FINANCING OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN GHANA

Financing secondary education is currently a hot yam in the mouth. The inadequacy of sustainable financing for secondary education is a major challenge in the running of schools. Indeed, decisions about education financing are necessarily political and with the introduction of Free SHS, spending on schooling especially at the secondary level has become more political than ever.

In this section, my presentation will be guided implicitly by these four key questions on education financing:

1. How much should be spent on schooling, and, what level of spending is reasonable?
2. Who should pay for schooling – parents, government, other stakeholders, and how should the costs be shared?
3. How may resources be distributed and allocated to the constituent parts of a school system?
4. How do we increase education outcomes – access, equity, quality at a reduced (reasonable) cost?

I will relate these questions to financing and sustaining the free SHS.

To put the discussion in context, permit me to start with a historical review of the development of secondary education financing in Ghana, with specific emphasis on policies relating to secondary education financing. Also, the section presents a review of trends in secondary education expenditure, as well as the sources of financing secondary education in Ghana. I also draw on financing models of some selected countries.

Historical Developments of Secondary Education Funding

The introduction of Free and Compulsory Education has historically been a political decision. The colonial administration, headed by Governor Guggisberg did not favour Free and Compulsory Education. This was evident from the 13th Section of the 16 Education Principles of the Educational Ordinance of 1925 which states that; ‘education cannot be compulsory or free’.

A vigorous attempt to expand financing of secondary education by the Central Government started in the early 1950’s. Nkrumah’s administration placed great emphasis and attention on secondary education, since the Government regarded it as the nucleus for educational, human resource and national development (Quist, 2003). Hence, in contrast to the colonial era, the Accelerated Development Plan for Education (ADPE) of 1951, introduced by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah supported the financing policies of free and compulsory education (McWilliam & Kwabena-Poh, 1959).

Notable among its proposals was the call for a six-year basic primary education for all children at public expense and the abolition of primary school fees by 1st January, 1952. The Education Act of 1961 sought to give constitutional backing to the ADPE of 1951. The Act brought into effect, authorisation and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the delivery of compulsory education and educational financing. It further developed the process of rationalisation and legitimisation of a fee-free financial policy, that, essentially, no fee should be charged except for the provision of essential books or stationery. Another very important provision in the Act, is that every child who had attained school going age shall undergo a course of instruction.

The Education Act of 1961 also advanced the cause of equity provision to enable both deprived and privileged groups to benefit from education. However, the Act did not address all problems relating to the management of funds in schools. **For example, the abolishing of the fees varied in different regions of the country. In the North, parents were not made to pay for books while in the South, they had to pay.** Secondly, supporting Mission schools and Private schools to become fee-free was a complex issue which raised questions about the definition of free education for all children and whether the definition was shared by all.

In 1973/74, the GoG's new perspective on educational financing was to increase cost effectiveness, cost-recovery and to reduce misapplication of financial resources. To this end, it was to phase out all residential and feeding subsidies at the secondary and tertiary levels as well as increase textbook-user fees at these levels. **Another aspect was the policy to develop loan and scholarship systems for poorer students. Implicit in this new provision was equity, suggesting that, free education should not necessarily be applied to all children. Thus, for cost effectiveness, parents capable of paying should be made to fund their wards' education.** Furthermore, the policy suggested the need for effective management of education funds.

The 1987 Educational Reform was to contain and partially recover educational costs and to enhance sector management and budgeting procedures. The 1992 Constitution reinforced the funding of education in Ghana, principally, by the government. The provision for Free, Compulsory and Universal Basic Education (fCUBE) to all basic school children was clear. The Constitution stipulated that secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational education was to be made generally available and accessible to all, by every appropriate means (Republic of Ghana, 1992 Constitution).

The fCUBE policy of 1996 extended, the compulsory and fee free education policy. The fCUBE was instituted to also improve, among others, resource allocation and management in education. The strategy was to support universal

education; however, the provisions in the fCUBE according to Kadingdi (2004) rather called for shifting of more resources to the basic level.

In addition, the terminology ‘free’ was debatable; the element of cost sharing was evident in that District Assemblies (DAs) were empowered by the Local Government Act 462 (1993) to institute levies for parents to support education in their districts. This was the main contradiction of the fCUBE policy, a factor which negated the enforcement of free compulsory education. Hence, to some extent, the 1987 Educational Reform Programme was in a sense analogous to the fCUBE as both aimed at partial cost recovery.

The full cost of financing secondary education in Ghana is made up of investment and recurrent costs. The recurrent cost is also made up of salary which constitutes the highest proportion contributed by government and non-salary to be borne by parents. As a result of the general increase in the costs of education due to inflation the recurrent cost also increased together with non-salary contributed by parents.

Some Reflections and other country experiences

In 2018, I published a paper on fee-free secondary education in Ghana: reflections on the past, realities and feasible choices. It was a reflective analysis rooted in both historical and contemporary expressions of education financing in Ghana. It considered the feasibility of the policy; its sustenance and it drew on past policies and practices in Ghana and other country experiences. It reflected on past pro-poor interventions in Ghana and their outcomes. Findings suggested that a universal fee-free policy will be burdensome on government’s limited resources and affect the quality of education delivery. The paper concluded that a gradualist approach or phased implementation of the programme through means-testing and pro-poor targeting could lead to better management and practice of the policy.

Emeritus Professor Keith Lewin who has researched extensively on secondary education financing, contends that systems that adopt selective fee waivers are able to achieve the target of increasing enrolment compared to systems that adopt a completely fee-free secondary system, stressing that there is more equity in systems that adopt selective fee waivers in comparison to fee-free systems.

In a study in 2008, Professor Kwame Akyeampong pointed out that boarding fees alone constituted about 60% of total student cost of the Ghanaian secondary school student. Per the details of the 2022 FSHS budget, the cost of boarding fees alone for the combined cohorts (SHS1-3) is 81.2% of the total cost of a student.

COUNTRY EXPERIENCES FROM OTHER JURISDICTIONS

India

In 2007, India attempted to universalise secondary education. Unlike elementary education, the Indian Constitution does not guarantee commitment to making secondary and post-secondary education free.

Prior to the implementation of the universalisation programme in 2007, the highest advisory body on education in India set up a sub-committee in 2004 to prepare a blue print for the programme. At the end of the sub-committee's work, three major recommendations were made:

- i. The Universal Secondary School programme should be guided by certain principles. These included universal access, structural and curricular considerations, social justice and equity.
- ii. The programme should be decentralised with each state developing its own plan.
- iii. The government needed to increase the education budget of secondary and elementary schools which stood at 5.1% of GDP to 6% in order to achieve the target of universalisation of secondary education (CABE, 2005).

These recommendations were thus captured in the policy document that was to guide the implementation of the programme. The Prime Minister at the launch of the universalisation of secondary education succinctly posited:

We are setting out the goal of universalizing secondary education. This is clearly the next step after universalizing elementary education. While the goal is laudable much work needs to be done before we are in a position to launch the Scheme for Universalization of Access for Secondary Education. Its details need to be quickly spelt out and discussed with States so that we are fully ready to launch it from 2008-2009. We must not underestimate the complexity of this task as the principles for universalizing elementary education cannot be easily transferred to secondary education (emphasis mine). The physical, financial, pedagogical and human resource needs are quite different. (Lewin, 2011, p 30).

Clearly, the recognition by the Prime Minister not to underestimate the complexity of the programme is a caution worth considering.

In India, expansion focused primarily on four main groups. These included street children, ethnic minorities, rural settlers and child labourers. Each group had specific programmes that targeted their special needs (Lee, 2002). For rural settlers, the government started by building pace-setter schools. The government encouraged the setting up of residential schools for ethnic minorities and also introduced residential bridge courses for street children and child labourers.

Sri Lanka

Additional contributions are made to school budgets by facilities fees levied on pupils according to guidelines which allow discretion in payment for those unable to pay.

Thailand

Thailand in 1991 targeted expansion. Lower-level education was made free for students in selected villages.

Kenya

In Kenya, education financing is based on the cost-sharing policy of 1988, which requires most costs in education to be met through partnerships between the public sector and Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs), religious organizations, development partners, communities/individuals, and the private sector. Within this funding policy framework, the overall government role includes the professional development of teachers, teachers' remuneration in public institutions, provision of infrastructure, administration and management, and **provision of bursaries and scholarships for needy students**. The Government of Kenya secondary school bursary programme awards financial support to poor and vulnerable children who cannot get alternative support to finance their secondary school education.

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe, at a point in time considered that full financing for secondary education was not sustainable and reviewed how to make better use of existing capacity without unsustainable cost burdens. At a point they explored whether the resources available could be used to contribute to less conventional modes of delivery. Distance and mixed-mode education (formal/on-the-job/part-time, etc.) have played a significant role in the development of their secondary education.

Malawi

In Malawi, a study reported that many government schools have high costs which arose largely as a result of subsidized boarding. Clearly, some secondary boarding schools are justified by location and population density, but not all boarding is justified in this way. **The study further recommended that if non-essential boarding was abandoned, or charged at the full rate, secondary enrolments might be increased without additional expenditure on government schools** through utilizing space released from hostels as teaching space and using the money saved to pay additional teachers.

Uganda

Uganda started a universal free secondary school education in 2007, the first of its kind in the Sub-Saharan Africa Region. **Although tagged as free, government paid only the tuition** while students paid boarding and other scholastic fees.

REFLECTIONS OF PAST PRO-POOR POLICIES AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION.

The FCUBE and matters arising

Ghana's Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE), was introduced in 1996 after the World Education Conference in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 recommended the increased focus on primary education. The FCUBE was aimed to achieve universal primary education by 2005. The programme was also in partial fulfillment of Ghana's 1992 Fourth Republican Constitutional mandate. Although the FCUBE programme managed to reduce fees substantially at the primary level, some fees were still being collected. Akyeampong (2009) argued that until there was a focus on the poor households, monies would be continuously wasted on rich homes that did not need such help. The programme also faced acute shortages of teachers especially in the rural areas. This further worsened the teacher-pupil ratio, academic performance as well as regional disparities. Poor supervision also affected negatively the impact of the FCUBE programme.

The Capitation Grant and matters arising

The Capitation Grant Scheme was introduced in 2004-2005 on a pilot scheme to enhance the FCUBE programme. The scheme was expected to make education at the basic level fee-free by eliminating all fees and levies. It was scaled up nationally in the 2005/2006 academic year. The pilot scheme led to 14.5% increase in enrolment in the 53 pilot districts. The net enrolment was further increased from 59.1% in 2004/5 to 81.1% in 2006/7 (MOE, 2008). Despite the success chalked there were challenges of managing large class sizes, delays in funds transfer to schools, inadequate textbooks and teaching and learning materials, cumbersome bureaucratic procedures and inadequate capacity for accounting by heads of schools (Ampratwum & Armah-Attoh, 2010). The delays in fund release resulted in schools levying pupils through the Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), an action which went contrary to the capitation grant policy (MOE, 2006).

School feeding programme and matters arising

In a study in the southern part of Ghana (Essuman & Bosumtwi-Sam 2013), identified lack of funding from government and payment delays as one of the key problems confronting the School Feeding Programme (SFP) in the study area. They noted that Ghana's SFP had enjoyed the support of the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and some Development Partners (DPs) through budgetary support in the past. They noted however that interventions such as SFP, aimed at advancing schooling goals had in no doubt, come with challenges of funding, which raised sustainability concerns and that given the global economic challenges, such inflows from DPs might not be assumed (ibid). Again, in a study of the challenges and prospects of the school feeding

programme in Northern Ghana, Sulemana et al., (2013) among others made these major findings:

All the schools visited identified the irregular release of funds as one major problem that hampered the smooth implementation of the programme. In all the schools, the matron complained of payments for food supplied being in arrears for two terms and the payment of salaries of cooks and other workers in arrears for almost six months. At one primary school, the matron had not been paid for two school terms (p.427)

Other policies such as free exercise books and textbooks and school uniforms, no doubt, enhanced access to education in Ghana, but had similar challenges with lack of funds or delays in the release of such funds like in earlier interventions.

The next section examines the trajectory of the funding of education in Ghana and secondary education in particular over the years, trends, sources and patterns of education financing. Issues are raised whether such a universal policy could be sustained over time.

TRENDS IN EXPENDITURE BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION

SUMMARY OF RESOURCE ALLOCATION (BASIC, SECONDARY AND TERTIARY): 2012 – 2020

GoG Expenditure								
Level	2012	%	2013	%	2014	%	2015	%
Pre-school	419,370,266	9.1	346,123,252	7.7	454,075,432	8.7	400,098,152	6.8
Primary	1,201,841,472	26.2	1,219,960,251	27.1	1,301,950,310	24.9	1,186,928,317	20.1
JHS	919,462,987	20.0	898,694,253	20.0	1,008,287,838	19.3	1,615,307,342	27.3
SHS	754,154,617	16.4	838,904,968	18.6	793,713,887	15.2	783,938,235	13.3
TVET	42,542,561	0.9	66,306,361	1.5	162,265,664	3.1	60,440,013	1
SPED	17,668,095	0.4	23,447,592	0.5	25,314,268	0.5	20,233,135	0.34
NFED	40,538,896	0.9	31,172,245	0.7	32,084,061	0.6	14,517,722	0.25
Tertiary	659,312,210	14.4	595,471,839	13.2	803,887,515	15.4	1,110,091,267	18.7 8
Management	532,292,108	11.6	483,696,828	10.7	654,353,565	12.5	719,693,925	12.1 7
Total	4,587,183,213	100.0	4,503,777,590.0	100.0	5,235,932,539	100.0	5,911,248,108	100

Level	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2020	%
Pre-school	483,883,680	9.05	15,405,958	1.84	6,330,569	0.48	72,579,444.37	1.38	65,744,035.00	1.2%
Primary	1,388,572,591	25.98	39,915,436	4.78	13,534,702	1.04	191,989,435.37	3.65	171,936,819.00	3.3%
JHS	1,064,290,090	19.91	39,322,595	4.71	8,079,225	0.62	106,255,494.82	2.02	102,653,329.00	2.0%
SHS	785,728,881	14.7	571,067,872	68.36	1,123,279,331	86.00	2,501,362,001.60	47.54	2,618,954,783.00	49.8%
TVET	169,338,121	3.168	27,069,189	3.24	60,780,197	4.65	240,790,141.83	4.58	585,158,896.00	11.1%
SPED	24,130,682	0.451	7,696,508	0.92	39,811	0.00	9,251,724.00	0.18	9,407,860.00	0.2%
NFED	111,631	0.002	275,996	0.03	450,000	0.03	499,999.98	0.01	3,599,766.00	0.1%
Tertiary	1,020,808,279	19.099	99,722,931	11.94	29,426,972	2.25	1,903,378,554.03	36.17	1,513,596,568.00	28.8%
Management	408,079,038	7.635	34,941,153	4.18	64,158,888	4.91	235,542,777.99	4.48	191,704,045.00	3.6%
Total	5,344,942,993.00	100	835,417,637.95	100	1,306,079,695.00	100.00	5,261,649,573.99	100	5,262,756,101.00	100

Resource Allocation (2016 to 2020) – Basic /Secondary

Level	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2020	%
Pre-school	483,883,680	16.477	15,405,958	16.278	6,330,569	22.654	72,579,444.37	19.572	65,744,035.00	19.32
Primary	1,388,572,591	47.283	39,915,436	42.174	13,534,702	48.434	191,989,435.37	51.774	171,936,819.00	50.52
JHS	1,064,290,090	36.24	39,322,595	41.548	8,079,225	28.912	106,255,494.82	28.654	102,653,329.00	3.92
Sub Total	2,936,746,361.00	100	94,643,989.00	100	27,944,496.00	100	370,824,374.56	100	340,334,183.00	100
SHS	785,728,881		571,067,871.68		1,123,279,330.72		2,501,362,001.60		2,618,954,783.00	

1ST YEAR STUDENTS - 1st Semester of 2022 Academic Year (Budget) – Boarding/Day Students

	Day or Boarding	No. of Students	Fee Per Semester	Total Amount	%
SHS	Day	130,310	981.6	127,912,296.00	22.626
	Boarding	304,057	1,438.60	437,416,400.20	77.374
Total		434,367		565,328,696.20	100
GES TVET	Day	12,689	1,108.10	14,060,680.90	43.407
	Boarding	11,713	1,565.10	18,332,016.30	56.593
Total		24,402		32,392,697.20	100
OTHER TVET	Day	17,569	1,108.10	19,468,208.90	51.503
	Boarding	11,713	1,565.10	18,332,016.30	48.497
Total		29,282		37,800,225.20	

2ND YEAR STUDENTS - 1st Semester of 2022 Academic Year Boarding/Day Students

	Day or Boarding	No. of Students	Fee Per Semester	Total Amount	%
SHS	Day	137,009	468.6	64,202,417.40	20.823
	Boarding	264,887	921.6	244,119,859.20	79.177
Total		401,896		308,322,276.60	100
GES TVET	Day	11,805	485.1	5,726,605.50	34.954
	Boarding	11,360	938.1	10,656,816.00	65.046
Total		23,165		16,383,421.50	100

3RD YEAR STUDENTS - 1st Semester of 2022 Academic Year Boarding/Day Students					
	Day or Boarding	No. of Students	Fee Per Semester	Total Amount	%
SHS	Day	138,099	799.15	110,361,815.85	26.269
	Boarding	247,385	1,252.15	309,763,127.75	73.731
Total		385,484		420,124,943.60	100
GES TVET	Day	11,750	798.1	9,377,675.00	39.761
	Boarding	11,356	1,251.10	14,207,491.60	60.239
Total		23,106		23,585,166.60	100
ALL 3 COHORTS (Form 1 – 3) - 2nd Semester of 2022 Academic Year Boarding/Day Students					
	Day or Boarding	No. of Students	Fees	Total Amount	%
SHS	Day	405,418	512.6	207,817,266.80	18.730
	Boarding	816,329	1,104.60	901,717,013.40	81.270
Total		1,221,747		1,109,534,280.20	100
GES TVET	Day	36,244	529.1	19,176,700.40	
	Boarding	34,429	1,121.10	38,598,351.90	
Total		70,673			
OTHER TVET	Day	17,569	529.1	9,295,757.90	41.449
	Boarding	11,713	1,121.10	13,131,444.30	58.551
Total		29,282		22,427,202.20	100

SUSTAINING THE FINANCING OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN GHANA

There is no doubt that the introduction of Free SHS is well intended. However, with the scale of expenditure in the last 6 or so years, funding secondary education may not be sustained without sacrificing allocation to basic education and other higher levels of education. At my last check, capitation grants are no longer being released. Other financial releases unduly delay as a result of priority given to FSHS. Clearly, there is an urgent need for some policy choices to be made to sustain the financing of secondary education.

Some Policy Choices

The following are proposed:

1. Selective cost recovery, with safeguards to protect the enrolment of the poor, could ease the financial burden of expansion, especially in nonessential boarding.

2. Charge fees to those who can afford, provide subsidies and waivers for those who cannot and provide scholarships for low-income students.
3. Use full cost recovery for nonessential boarding.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendations are made for consideration:

MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

1. There should be **better clarity on the governance system** at the secondary level. This would require the delineation of roles and ensuring that it is properly coordinated along the hierarchy of responsibilities at the various levels of governance at the secondary level.
2. Free Secondary Education has led to a significant increase in the number of Secondary school students. Enrolment has increased tremendously. This has brought in its wake many management challenges – teaching and learning, procurement and logistics, financing, management and governance. Most projects/programmes are normally reviewed during mid-term or at the end of a cycle. A critical review ought to be done urgently.
3. As was stated earlier, GES has a rigidly centralized system where the Director -general is the sole decision maker. This ought not to be so. With general guidelines, school management and their respective governing boards should be allowed some discretion to be able to make amendments considering local contexts.

CONCLUSION

Reflecting on the issues raised above, implementing free secondary education in Ghana may have been more desirable if a gradualist approach or a phased implementation of the programme had been adopted. Learning from other country experiences could lead to better management and practice of the policy.

With the problem of inadequate resources and delays in fund release to schools as had been with other safety-net interventions in the past, a strategy for means-testing to target the poor and the vulnerable could have been adopted as an initial phase. Such a strategy, no doubt, will be an arduous task in a country where a lot of income is earned in the informal sector thereby making it difficult to assess real family income levels. I do not think as a country, we have many options.

The argument about free secondary education often focuses on issues about access, and not enough about the content and the outcomes expected. Matters about skill development, teacher re-orientation and training and development as well as new pedagogical approaches are less stressed. Clearly, a fair attention to all these is likely to produce students ready to transition either to the tertiary level or the world of work. The policy of making secondary education free and available to all is a lofty one, but such a goal would be useless and needlessly expensive if all it does is to create opportunities to give young people access without the skills that will make them great assets for the nation's development. Reforming what would be taught, and how they are taught are more important, otherwise the problems are likely to be compounded.

Thank you for your attention.