




Non-Governmental Organization/Nonprofit Organization Impact on Education Policy in Ghana

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Abstract

Non-Governmental Organizations/Nonprofit Organizations (NGOs/NPOs) are progressively becoming an essential source for government agencies in education worldwide. Developing countries such as Ghana have opened the way through regulations and policies for NGOs/NPOs to contribute to the educational system. Nevertheless, perceived threats and confrontations hinder their ability to support the Ministry of Education (MoE) and partner leaders to fulfill their duties in assisting the government in realizing comprehensive universal primary education. This qualitative case study responded to stakeholders' perceptions of NGOs/NPOs influence on Ghana's educational system to better comprehend the dynamic and power of NGOs/NPOs on education in Ghana's rural communities. The study used the Advocate Coalition Framework; advocacy coalition theory brings together sub-systems and political actors interested in policy changes or shifts for a common goal to organize effective ways for the changes or shifts. Ten volunteers participated in the interview focusing on schools in rural Ghana. The findings indicated NGOs/NPOs are a complementary authority to MoE and partner leaders. According to the data analysis and findings, MoE and partner leaders need to form an intentional coalition with NGOs/NPOs for interventions to define the role descriptions and functions of programs and projects to achieve the interventions. NGOs/NPOs resources for MoE and partner leaders are necessary to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Decision-making bodies of MoE and partner leaders may benefit from this study in policymaking for interventions of programs and projects supervision, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation for positive social change.

Keywords: education, universal, Advocate Coalition Framework, ACF, NGO, NPO, Ministry of Education, MoE, partners, leaders, children, coalition, rural, advocacy

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Introduction

Primary education is a tool for training children to grow into responsible adults. It helps children to aspire to

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higher learning in different career areas. Children's rights to education are essential to United Nations (UN) Conventions to access education in their respective geographical locations. Hence, quality primary education worldwide prepares children for their career choices. Quality education is item 4 of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (Cornu, 2016; Bruchner et al., 2021). It is all-inclusive access and equitable in harnessing joy and prosperity in life for children when they grow into adults. Ghana is one of the developing countries where education is essential, specifically from early childhood to adulthood. Sustainable Development Goals' Item 4 declarations came after Millennium Development Goals for continued access to quality education for development and economic growth to reduce poverty, targeting developing countries such as Ghana for economic development (Cernev & Fenner, 2020). Ghana's education regulation and policy implementation focus on formal education for children's careers and general development.

Although the World Bank and International Monetary Fund's global monetary report 2011 indicated that Ghana had achieved universal primary education, the report contradicts the country's education state. The report stated that Ghana had met the expectation of Millennium Development Goals' Item 2. However, there are children in rural communities with little to no access to quality education due to a lack of infrastructure and resources. The Ministry of Education (MoE) is responsible for policies impacting education and providing infrastructure and resources across the country; the government is the primary stakeholder regarding public education. Though charged with the mandate, the government faces challenges in providing quality education to rural communities that remain and persist. Foreign and national NGOs/NPOs, such as World Vision International, School for Life, and Girls Education Units, exist to assist the MoE in meeting its mandate. Due to the education sector's inability to provide adequate resources for the urban and rural schools, NGOs/NPOs support infrastructure and provide resources to ensure quality education in the country (Pasqua, 2014).

World Vision, School for Life, and Girls Education Units operate in rural Ghana to assist the MoE by building infrastructure and providing teaching and learning interventions. The supporting organizations, such as United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations, United Nations Children Fund, Danish International Development Agency, and Department for International Development, are not NGOs/NPOs in Ghana. They are partner leaders to the MoE for policy decision-making, unlike World Vision, School for Life, and Girls Education Units. Additionally, Ghana Education Service is neither a member of the partner leaders' group nor NGOs/NPOs but a branch of the MoE. Ghana Education Service supports the MoE by interpreting and implementing policies developed by the MoE, including monitoring and evaluating programs and projects to accomplish MoE policies in the country. The stakeholders in this study are the MoE, Ghana Education Service, partner leaders, and NGOs/NPOs (Robinson et al., 2020; Agesinyale & Aikins, 2016).

NGOs/NPOs as stakeholders indirectly influence policymaking and rulemaking in education. This study focused on how NGOs/NPOs policies influence access to free compulsory primary education by children aged 4–15 years. The children's ability to access and receive quality primary education is the benchmark tool in fulfilling the worldwide mandate of children's rights to education. Again, Sustainable Development Goals' Item 4 is a socio-economic development tool for families and communities, encouraging them to view universal primary education as a solid and grounded foundation for higher learning and preparing children for their careers (Enslin & Tjiattas, 2017; Bermeo-Zambrano et al., 2020).

Education in Ghana is essential in pre-independence and post-independence, with regular primary education regulations and policies reviewed to facilitate changes in curriculum development. The MoE and Ghana Education Service focus on emerging new regulations and policies for innovative curricula that the sector updates to new teaching and learning methods. Achieving universal primary education requires regular infrastructure supplies and teaching and learning materials, including school feeding, uniforms, sandals, and sanitary pads in rural schools to increase attendance. The government and the partner leaders cannot meet these requirements, hence the need for NGOs/NPOs' existence. NGOs/NPOs exist in the country by law and regulation, and they help in the health and education sectors; but this study focuses on education. NGOs/NPOs

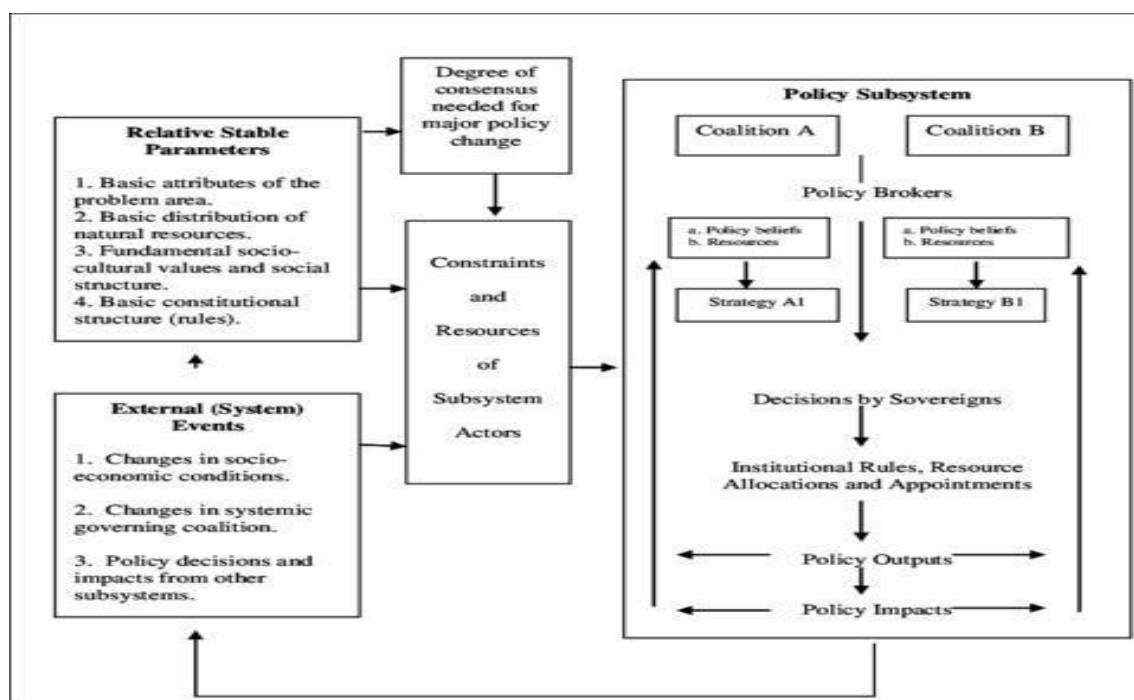
help fund infrastructure and resources for primary schools. Several are in rural communities to assist in providing infrastructure and quality teaching and learning to schools (Chapman, 2018; Boyer et al., 2019).

Quality teaching and learning equip children to a) focus on universal primary education for higher learning to build careers, b) perform well in the national examination, and c) adopt the use of technology. However, children in rural communities and the hinterland are not in school. They are on the streets and farms instead of in classrooms and schools. The children's activities on the streets and farms encourage low school attendance, teenage pregnancy, delinquency or misdemeanors, cybercrime, and armed robbery. This research addresses the influence of NGOs/NPOs on education policy in Ghana in supporting K–11 education, specifically in rural Ghana, focusing on stakeholders' collaboration and accountability (Dewal & Ansari, 2021).

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Paul Sabatier and Hank Jerkins Smith introduced the Advocate Coalition Framework in the late 1980s to refine the theoretical and methodological tools available to study the public policy process. The Advocate Coalition Framework has three principal theoretical domains: advocacy coalition, policy system, and policy change; it helps to bring political actors, sub-systems, and civil society groups together for policy change or shift in support of positive social change. The theory posits that advocacy coalitions and sub-systems are the most effective ways of organizing policy actors interested in policy changes or shifts. The theory domain selected for this research is advocacy coalition to explain the benefits of stakeholders' coalition with the same causal normative beliefs to achieve a common goal (See Figure 1; Sabatier et al., 1993). Currently, the MoE, partner leaders, and NGOs/NPOs as stakeholders exist but are working separately to accomplish policy changes and shifts in achieving the common goals stated in the Ghana Education Planning Strategic 2018–2030 for universal primary education. Therefore, the role of the theory is to explain the importance of coalition in the complex context situation of accomplishing universal primary education in Ghana. The Venn diagram in Figure 2 explains the conceptual framework illustrating the need for collaboration policies between the actors, showing the interconnection of the three variables (Wiley, 2022).

Figure 1. Advocacy Coalition Framework



Literature Review

There is an inter-dependency between education and social change. On the one hand, education changes living conditions and on the other hand, education influences social change, hence interdependence. Once people receive education, it changes their outlook and approaches towards social and economic issues; therefore, in rural communities in Ghana, where very few have access to quality education, it impacts their community's development and economic growth. NGOs/NPOs help communities develop and grow economically through education in rural communities, assisting the marginalized (Pretorius et al., 2019). They help public agencies facilitate policies to overcome challenges that confront goals and achievement. NGOs/NPOs' primary support is education and health in Ghana. However, the focus of this study is on education. NGOs/NPOs use projects and interventions to assist the government in providing universal primary education (Pasqua, 2014; Baykan, 2021).

Education System and Strategic Planning

The constitutional structure for education is 2-6-3-3-4, (early childhood, primary school, high school and tertiary). The mandate is in the 1992 Constitution, Article 25(a), 38(1), and 38(2). The structure for education starts from kindergarten through universal primary education to high school to college or a bachelor's degree. Junior high school learning replaced the elementary school system. The council of Ghana Education Service oversees the management of the sector. It alerts decision-makers about limitations arising from policies and implementation, policy gaps, and outcomes (Poppe et al., 2020). The sector's responsibility to follow a systemic process through Education Planning Strategic 2018–2030 is to (a) expand quality education accessible to the children, (b) improve quality teaching and learning, and (c) introduce innovative and creative teaching and learning skills using science and technology. The Education Strategic Plan stakeholder's membership includes NGOs/NPOs to assist in achieving universal primary education.

Non-Governmental Organizations/Nonprofit Organizations

The existing literature shows that NGOs/NPOs help governments address quality teaching and learning issues in developing countries for rural communities' development through good health and quality education. The organizations' mission and vision statements drive the work they do. They ensure fundraising, community mobilization, and empowerment, encouraging communities to improve their living standards through primary education. In 2016, 746 organizations were operating in Ghana regions to support the MoE and partner leaders. Therefore, this study focused on the impact of NGOs/NPOs activities on K–11 education (Agesinyale & Aikins, 2016).

The right of citizens to access public goods is essential; privatization of public goods brings advocacy and concerns for rejection of the idea and sparks public debate to maintain the government as the sole provider of public goods. The research done in several parts of the globe showed that public goods privatization would affect the marginalized in society; hence, the MoE mandate to ensure universal primary education. Kuehn (2019) explained that the impact of water privatization on the marginalized can introduce severe hardship and suffering to the people. The viewpoint of the research was to reject the privatization of public goods to avoid discrimination between the haves and have-nots. In Africa, communities struggle to enjoy public goods such as clean water and primary education. NGOs/NPOs defend such situations to provide services to deprived communities.

NGOs/NPOs' interventions are essential in Ghana. The organizations impact knowledge and skill in the household in communities for development. NGOs/NPOs use advocacy to bring government attention to inadequate infrastructure and resources provided in the schools to raise awareness of poor teaching in the schools (Nyikadzino & Vays-Doorgapersad, 2020). They ensure that communities hold the government responsible for structure and mechanism for accountability on decision-makers for development and

sustainable growth through education. Several schools in Africa depend on the advocacy of NGOs/NPOs to ensure that agencies adhere to the responsibility of their mandate. For example, they use interventions to create awareness of the benefits of universal primary education to the communities, specifically to public agencies and parents, to appreciate the importance of literacy against illiteracy. They help the villages mitigate against gender discrimination at home, where only males are allowed to go to school.

The assumption is that educating every child in the family helps and promotes better social living standards and prosperity. NGOs/NPOs use advocacy to drive decision-makers to adhere to principles to help communities and parents drive activities in education. The essence of a policy relationship helps members with common interests define roles and functions of the relationship to achieve the mission-driven purpose. For example, a policy-driven relationship is a tool to help NGOs/NPOs and stakeholders accomplish objectives and goals. It helps identify the purpose of the stakeholders in achieving a socially positive change in the community (Zivkovic, 2019). Economic performance and education move in parallel. Therefore, community happiness is associated with quality teaching and learning for a change of outlook for development. For example, economic progress in Ghana's Volta and Northern regions on new shea butter and gari packaging styles as a result of education attract more foreign buyers. Primary quality education provides the learning skills for using technology to upgrade their knowledge and skills on the market.

Community Development

Education is valuable and critical in lifting and changing the approach of economic activities in areas with low-income earners. Developing marketing activities in these areas are non-negotiable, as farming in low-earning societies is their source of sustenance and livelihood. For example, villages in East Maprusi, Denkyira, and Akatsi rural communities are areas with low-income earnings burdened with poverty in Ghana. These villages require vigorous market activities to boost their profits for a change of livelihood, starting with quality teaching and learning in public primary schools to change their mindset in approaching activities. Grant et al. (2021) explained that economic activities as a driving force for community development improve the entire lifestyle in rural areas. It reduces illiteracy because the high illiteracy population affects government income and revenue. It leads to the minimum provision of public goods, making the community unhappy, attributed to poor education and low-income earners. Keiller et al. (2022) conceptualized rural development as encountering remote areas coping with just what is available without fostering community confidence and changing the role of economic strategy for activities to adapt new forms of participation to recognize the community values.

The members' skills are the source of knowledge for their development. The members would understand group initiatives for participation and engagement to help develop plans and strategies to overcome poor economic activities. Otherwise, poor strategic planning of economic activities impeding community development would continue to flourish to challenge growth. Successful economic activities would promote high esteem in individuals. Investing in universal primary education (Licumba et al., 2016) is essential to helping reduce poverty in Africa. NGOs/NPOs' role in complex situations is to provide advocacy, funding, and interventions to support the community in realizing the importance of quality primary education. The benefits of universal primary education are the means to overcome poverty to create a sustainable economy. The government's inability to help the community with quality education creates a gap for NGOs/NPOs to assist the communities through interventions. For example, the district directorate, the headteachers, the teachers, and the children should have access to Information Communication Technology (ICT) in the schools.

ICT is vital in administrative management in the 21st century to effectively manage information to facilitate activities to help accelerate information flow transactions and progress between stakeholders.

Decentralization concept and practice in sub-Sahara introduced new ideas of governance to allow the people of the community access to their political leaders. ICT is the tool stakeholders use for communication in the

21st century to acquaint and engage people in activities on development. And it encourages people to relate to and trust each other to transact business and resolve issues through shared information. People fix issues confronting them using ICT because it is an effective communication tool for updates on progress on development (Clara Inés & Alexander, 2021). The people defined their purpose to work to achieve their objectives. For example, World Vision and Girls Education Units support the community at the local level to foster activities on Universal Primary Education, creating awareness for compulsory primary education as the appropriate tool to over poverty and low social living standard through communication (Phelps & Fullerton, 2022).

According to Lutwama et al. (2021), decision-making bodies help the community thrive in development through their actions. It controls and reduces rural migration to urban communities. Leadership encourages community engagement on issues and provides assurance to the people's safety and well-being, trust built to hope for a better future. NGOs/NPOs advocate policymakers to provide infrastructure and resources to schools, putting structure in place for regular supplies to help the children enjoy their time in school. The stakeholder's ability to ensure that goal accomplishment is associated with the accountability of the actors promotes community development. It is the opportunity to recognize the importance and influence of collaboration when an advocacy coalition is in place to drive the sub-system to be accountable. The groups' activities are grounded in regulation for defining roles to help accountability within the policy framework (Bakir, 2017). The collaboration and responsibility between the stakeholders help achieve the objectives for community development and economic progress to close the gap between the haves and the have-nots in the urban and rural communities.

Purpose of the Study

This study focused on examining NGOs/NPOs activities in schools in rural Ghana to understand the impact of their interventions and programs on (K–11) education. Ten participants took part in the interview of those involved in program decision-making for primary education. The interview site was constructive and flexible, allowing free conversation and avoiding manipulations (Schröder et al., 2022). The participants' stories contained NGOs/NPOs influencing and impacting K–11 policy. The beneficiaries of this study were policymakers and agency administrators in creating awareness of collaboration policy between MoE, partner leaders, and NGOs/NPOs, developing a democratic practice in the system for stakeholders' intellectual and service contributions.

Research Question

How do the Ministry of Education and Partner Leaders perceive the influence of NGOs on the K–11 education system in Ghana?

Methods

The purposive sampling technique was used to recruit participants for the study at the beginning of the recruitment. IRB reviewed the face-to-face to virtual interaction and telephone conversation because of changing the purposive sampling strategy to snowball to adhere to the COVID-19 pandemic protocols and restrictions. The snowball sampling was the appropriate choice and helpful with locating participants with expertise for the rigorous work. I contacted the volunteers by telephone to explain the research topic and the importance of the study. The recruitment targeted between 5 and 30 volunteers with rich knowledge and experience willing to participate in the interview (Busarow, 2016; Timmons et al., 2021). The participants who had received the consent form and had not signed to indicate their consent before the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in the country to prevent the spreading of the virus communicated their consent through electronic and social media before the date and time scheduled for the interview.

Participants

The participants were informed that the data collection approach was qualitative, which required an interview with them as decision-makers who influence policy in the sector on Universal Primary Education. Because their contributions would help us better understand how they perceived the influence of NGOs/NPOs on K–11 education policy. Each interview was case-specific to answer the research question, and collecting multiple cases was appropriate for the study's rigorous data analysis. I made 48 contacts to recruit participants, and 17 volunteers responded to the invitation to be part of the study. However, seven discontinued within 72 hours after the announcement of the mysterious nature of the COVID-19 virus on human health. Seven volunteers stopped participating in the research because of the information they received through the media about severe respiratory conditions and death of those who contracted the virus, lockdown panic and emotional stress, poor internet network, and unreliable communication cable connections. The 10 interviewees who continued were between the ages of 32 and 66.

Instrumentation

The literature review helped compose the semi-structured interview questions and introduced flexibility for the participants to tell their stories in a relaxed atmosphere. The conversation was open-ended, allowing probing and follow-up questions for in-depth answers to the questions (Busarow, 2016).

Data Collection

The new data collection strategy amid the pandemic was to observe COVID-19 restrictions. Data collection was through face-to-face, virtual, and telephone conversations. Three participants signed the hard copy of the consent form, and seven participants consented to participation through electronic and social media. Interviews were open-ended conversations to obtain responses from participants' rich knowledge and experience from their stories (Sah et al., 2020). Examples of the questions were:

1. Why do NGOs/NPOs need to play a role in education in Ghana?
2. In your view, what is quality education?
3. What guidelines are used to introduce programs and projects?
4. What policy framework do the stakeholders employ?
5. What procedure are used for supervision, monitoring, and evaluation?

Participants answered 15 main questions with sub-questions. There was no scheduled date for follow-up and probing after the interview conversation because the responses were direct answers to the research question. The interviews were conducted in greater Accra in English and conducted flexibly to reduce bias. Each interview lasted for an hour and 30 minutes. The data collection was between February 2020 and June 2020.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed immediately after data collection. I transferred audiotape recordings from Zoom H1n handy recorder to MacBook Pro 2018 laptop and repeatedly listened to the respondents' answers and transcribed them. I reviewed my handwritten notes, selected the salient points after several readings, and created matrix coding to form the themes from the salient words and phrases to address the perception of the MoE and partner leaders of NGOs/NPOs' influence on the universal primary education system. The second coding was using NVivo software. The software helped to bring out the complex conversations clearly to refine the themes. Before the second coding, the matrix coding was sent to participants for member checking. This allowed reorganization, reconfiguration, synthesizing, abstracting, and conceptualizing through the lenses of the theory and the study purpose statement (Saldana, 2016).

Each participant received the data transcription version to confirm their responses to the questions and ensure the trustworthiness of the information collected. The change of data collection from in-person interviews to technology due to the COVID-19 pandemic was communicated to participants to allow virtual and telephone communication, which situated the interviewer at a particular location and participants in different locations. The study's trustworthiness was to promote future studies.

Ethical Approval

Walden University Institution Review Board approved study #02-13-20-0616495. Backing ensured that participants were not at significant risks that outweighed their daily stress. The respondents signed a consent form that assured them of the privacy and confidentiality of the information they provided, that their participation was voluntary, and they could withdraw from the study at any time.

Results

Fifty percent of respondents were between 32 and 44, 30% were between 45 and 56, and 20% were between 57 and 66. The importance of children's education was the primary theme before the secondary themes in the discussion. Nine participants agreed that NGOs/NPOs support MoE and partner leaders with their interventions, projects, and advocacy. In contrast, the 10th participant stated that NGOs/NPOs were part of the mandatory core group to provide universal and quality education in Ghana.

Figure 2. *Conceptual Framework.*

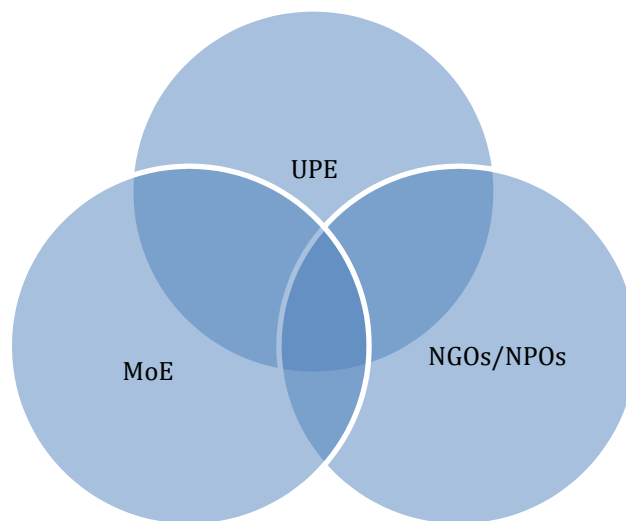


Table 1. *Breakdown of Results*

Themes	#Participants	% of Participants
Children's ability to read and write	9	90%
Majority of schools are in rural districts	7	70%
NGOs/NPOs' influence on education is important	8	80%
MOE and GES operate with limited resources	6	60%
NGOs/NPOs interventions were indispensable	5	50%
NGOs/NPOs use interventions to fill resource gap	8	80%
NGOs/NPOs initiate projects	4	40%

Discussion

Figure 2 shows the interconnection between the stakeholders, drawing from Figure 1 with the assumption that collaboration policy would address the center point of the Venn diagram where the stakeholders connect. The findings presented empirical responses from face-to-face and virtual communications of decision-making officers in universal primary education with rich knowledge about the activities and operations of NGOs/NPOs. The participants attributed the poor performance structure and lack of accountability of NGOs/NPOs operations in the rural schools to a lack of collaboration between stakeholders, allowing the bureaucracy to compound the issues. Table 1 represents the themes from the audiotape transcription, member checking, and Nvivo software analysis (Howard-Grenville et al., 2021).

Primary Theme: Education Was Children's Ability to Read and Write.

The participants had diverse views about delivering quality education with different strategies to address issues within complex and contextual lenses (James, 2021). According to the respondents, steps for collaboration would help improve the quality of teaching and learning in the rural schools. For them, compulsory universal primary education should give the children proficiency in English reading and writing skills. Monitoring and evaluation of NGOs/NPOs interventions were lacking, in essence, generating an inclusive communication link for NGOs/NPOs to play their roles with a practical management approach (Alex, 2022). Implementation with collaborating activities would give higher achievement to interventions than in the present situation. They believe that the cause of the school's poor performance was a breakdown of supply of infrastructure and resources including poor communication between the schools and the district directorate.

According to the participants, universal primary education includes children with disabilities' access to teaching and learning. Most children were not given the opportunity in the schools because of a lack of facilities to take care of their needs, such as toilet and canteen/cafeteria facilities, even though NGOs/NPOs provided resources for their well-being in the schools (Makhado et al., 2022). These children stayed at home, and some of the parents took them to shrines and healing places for cure as they believed that the cause of their disability was more spiritual than clinical. Children worked as beggars and were employed to beg on the streets for a fee. Participants stated that the children's ability to pass quizzes and perform credibly in their examinations remains in the capacity of policies to collaborate. The belief that MoE did not recognize the contributions of NGOs/NPOs was a concern to the partner leaders. Finally, participants stated that they played the role of mediators between MoE and Ghana Education Service and NGOs/NPOs for supervision of their projects, which was expensive and an additional cost to their expenditure (Baykan, 2021).

Secondary Theme 1: Primary Schools in Rural Communities in Ghana

Participants explained that teaching and learning resources are available in most schools in urban areas. Some schools' geographical locations make it impossible to reach and serve. However, the final examinations were not different from urban and rural schools. Resource discrimination was affecting the rural school's academic performance (Dirsuweit & Mohamed, 2016). Misappropriate resources because of a lack of collaboration skills for coordination harm actors' efforts. For example, World Vision and School for Life operated according to their mission statement and the ability of their finances only without consideration to MoE and partner leaders. Projects were sometimes abandoned and uncompleted in schools, creating more severe problems. This action continues to harm future generations and leaders we are bringing up. According to the participants, stakeholders' engagement would unveil steps for applying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis. Issues of the haves and the have-nots would not play significant roles in the children's education, creating educational inequality. Teachers' absence introduced a teaching and learning gap in the

schools. Sustainable development through universal primary education remains since the rural schools continued to remain behind and produce school dropouts (Scheibe et al., 2017; Woerheide, 2020).

Secondary Theme 2: NGOs/NPOs Help MoE in Providing Primary Education

The participants explained that MoE did not follow or adhere to policy statements in Education Strategic Plan. Therefore, the NGOs/NPOs operated separately and randomly without system order. The existing NGOs/NPOs coalition was a disjointed community in its operations (Bouët et al., 2018). Schools in the Northern region, such as Palika, Yendi, Central Gonja, and East and West Mamprusi, experienced being deprived of teaching and learning resources. Afram Plains provided trained personnel, textbooks, exercise books, pens, and pencils to the schools. When financing was impossible to supply the resources, they halted until they raised funding to take care of the supply. According to the participants, realizing universal primary education in Ghana would depend on collaboration in promoting coordination, specifically, for the continuous flow of resources.

According to participants, UNICEF and UNESCO occasionally requested services of NGOs/NPOs for specific program executions to join their distribution team in the Northern regions for teaching and learning. Some projects were a 5-year reading project and advocacy in Asewewa and Many Krobo. The partner leaders sometimes introduce collaboration to coordinate their projects. Participants stated that Education Strategic Plan was only a source of government-fund raising documents and resources. Crown Agents helped improve institutional efficiency to reduce the number of children dropping out of school and mobilized early-aged (12–15 years) mothers for 9 months of intensive training for reintegration into formal schooling. Most mothers were from rural and hinterland communities (Powell & Mwangi Powell, 2017; Odijie, 2020).

Secondary Theme 3: Ghana Education Service Procedure is an Inadequate Resource for Policy Implementation

Participants stated that the MoE mandate is to ensure that universal primary education policy serves the schools and the children nationwide, expecting that family backgrounds would not significantly play a role in the children's performance. Literature showed that most children who attained higher learning were children from the homes of the haves, whose parents have either a bachelor's degree or degrees. MoE has not paid attention to this significant problem to promote a holistic approach to collaborating with stakeholders to close the gap (Li & Xie, 2020). MoE needed to design criteria to recognize NGOs/NPOs and their contributions using their mission statements to harness their value to impact the sector. Mathematics and science performances in rural schools were poor compared to the schools in urban areas. However, models exist worldwide that MoE could copy or learn from to ensure implementation specifics and address the diverse needs in the schools to overcome some of the situations.

Secondary Theme 4: NGOs' Resources to the Sector Were Indispensable

Participants expressed that NGOs/NPOs' interventions were indispensable to the sector, and, with collaboration on projects, MoE could navigate through some of the complex teaching and learning situations. Networking with NGOs/NPOs to help create a system structure for World Vision and School for Life, MoE could understand each school's needs and budgets to address the need to avoid repetitions and complete projects without delays. Funding was substantial to project execution, and NGOs/NPOs did not do a cost-benefit analysis before program commencement (Steinert et al., 2017). They needed a library database for knowledge, information, and communication to connect to the regional ministers and district directorates on projects for resource allocation and distribution. Participants stated that there were over 1600 primary schools in the country. Therefore, an electronic database system would assist the flow of information and communications.

NGOs/NPOs involved parents in motivating their children to attend school. The connection to parents in the community helped motivate the children to appreciate schooling. NGOs/NPOs organized town hall meetings with chiefs to discuss issues confronting the communities to boost and increase enrollment and attendance

in school. According to the participants, teachers who were posted to the schools stayed and taught for a short period and then left to pursue their academic interests, introducing a teaching, learning, and classroom management gap. NGOs/NPOs would realize this from their research and would provide help before the MoE or partner leader was aware of the problem (Hepsiba et al., 2021). NGOs/NPOs continued to fill the gap to address these interrelated problems.

Secondary Theme 5: NGOs Fill the Resource Gap in Providing Quality Education

Participants stated that NGOs/NPOs provided the schools with buckets, hand-washing bowls, dusters, sweeping brooms, and scrubbing brushes quarterly to keep a clean environment. ICT training was not in the schools due to a poor electrical connection or no or inadequate computers. According to participants, collaboration was crucial to high financial investment projects for ICT equipment and training. MoE district offices did not comply with procedures of the Education Strategic Plan with NGOs/NPOs (Taleb et al., 2014). Therefore, it was more complex to address the needs in the schools. The NGOs/NPOs provided story books and exercise books for school homework, yet rainwater washed some of the books away because there were no windows and doors on the classroom blocks (Chagunda et al., 2016). The local NGOs/NPOs worked with the Parents–Teachers Association/Organization (PTA/PTO) to provide windows and doors to classrooms that had none. They provided vehicles and fuel temporarily for distributing teaching and learning resources to schools in the hinterlands, including examination papers. Savana Signatures, NORSAC, Afram Plains, Curious Minds, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) individually provided resources according to their missions and financial capacity.

Secondary Theme 6: Individual Stakeholders Initiated and Carried Out Projects

According to the participants, NGOs/NPOs initiated projects to supply teaching and learning materials to the schools through discussions with headteachers. Several NGOs/NPOs in the villages operated without the guideline and timeline of the Education Strategic Plan, so there was a disconnection between them, which introduced a disjointed approach to their resource contributions to the school and did not improve attendance at the schools. Poor academic performance persisted. According to the partner leaders, the sector required the implementation of SWOT analysis to influence the organizations to address the distributions approach and the strategy for analysis outcome (Gracelli et al., 2020). MoE and partner leaders required an engagement approach to guide NGOs/NPOs to address internal and external coalition problems. It was essential to collaborate with social welfare, law enforcement agent, and the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection to help some of the children who were in an early sexual relationship and were physically abused or raped by their partners. However, there was no channel to collaboration with authority to approach to ensure that justice is served (Robinson et al., 2020).

Summary

The findings and analysis were the responses of the 10 participants. Nine participants stated that World Vision, Girls Education Units, USAID, and School for Life interventions supported the schools according to their financial capacity and organizations' mission statements. Collaboration to ensure stakeholders' engagement remains an important matter in achieving universal primary education. SWOT analysis would enable the sector to deal with complex situations, such as a lack of orderly teaching and learning resource distribution as MoE used 80% of the budget on salaries, creating a resources acquisition and distribution gap.

Integration Into the Current Literature

The focus on quality education drove this analysis as the primary theme was the children's ability to read and write. According to the findings, the objective of World Vision, Girls Education Units, and School for Life in Ghana was to help MoE and partner leaders fulfill universal primary education objectives and goals. For example, Borisova et al. (2020) held that formal education was classroom training that shapes children's

thinking process as they grow up to become responsible citizens to themselves and their nations at large. Universal primary education promises quality teaching and learning to children in developed and developing countries without discrimination. For Ghana, the disparity between the haves and the have-nots continues to play a significant role in universal primary education in the schools. The goal of universal primary education to overcome and reduce poverty through education remains. NGOs/NPOs' existence was crucial in reducing universal primary education pupils dropping out of school (Cochrane et al., 2018) as quality education provides critical thinking and innovative skills to address life problems.

Limitations

The study limitations were:

1. The study population did not cover the perception of the entire education system in Ghana
2. Seven volunteers withdrew from the study because of COVID-19. Their responses would have expanded the knowledge of the study.
3. The study focused on K–11 in a rural community, not the entirety of education in Ghana.
4. COVID-19 changed the method of data collection impacting the in-person interview
5. The responses of the data collection were participants personal experiences about the phenomenon (Power et al., 2021).

Implications for Theory and Practice

The findings resonated with the importance of children's ability to read and write when they graduate. The participants spoke confidently about their belief that the time was right for MoE and partner leaders to collaborate with NGOs/NPOs on interventions and appreciate and recognize the importance of collaboration policy within the advocacy coalition. All participants shared sentiments about the children's poor teaching and learning conditions. They pointed out that NGOs/NPOs, MoE, and partner leaders should enhance communication for information dissemination to accomplish universal primary education. According to the findings, several primary schools in rural communities were facing inadequate teaching and learning materials even though there was representation of MoE, partner leaders, and NGOs/NPOs (Bullivant, 2022).

Conclusion

The findings showed a disjointed and disconnected relationship between MoE, partner leaders, and NGOs/NPOs, even though NGOs/NPOs complement the educational sector for realization of universal primary education. According to MoE and partner leaders, strategies for accountability between the stakeholders were not available to adhere to on NGOs/NPOs operations and interventions. Collaboration for stakeholders' partnership remain (Van Dongen et al., 2019; Ali et al., 2021). The stakeholders' ability to develop policy for cost evaluation structure on projects to promote cost-benefit analysis was not available. The findings showed that the annual academic performance of the rural schools was poor, emanating from inadequate and poor infrastructure and lack of resource provisions encouraging the teachers and children accessing and receiving quality teaching and learning, despite that several NGOs/NPOs were operating towards achieving quality teaching and learning. MoE and partner leaders' supervision on NGOs/NPOs' interventions implementation, monitoring, and evaluation for accountability on projects was not implemented. Therefore, MoE and partner leaders require an intentional collaboration policy with NGOs/NPOs to accentuate strategies for connectivity on operations (Bolaji et al., 2016). This study has positive social change on intellectual community from participants shared knowledge and experiences and the role of the theory for adding new knowledge to the existing scientific knowledge on NGOs/NPOs' impact on education policy in Ghana (Resh et al., 2014).

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