

The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in Basic Education Delivery in Ghana: Implications for Theory, Policy, and Practice

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Abstract

Non-Governmental Organizations play an indispensable role in the development process in Sub-Saharan Africa. This is evident in the educational sector where most major donor organizations have increased the resources apportioned through NGOs to implement their educational programmes. However, it is sad to indicate that these interventions appear either not to have had significant impact on quality education or the contributions of the NGOs are misplaced in view of the abysmal performance of school children especially at the Basic Education Certificate Examinations in the Tamale Metropolis. The purpose of this current research is to find out the contribution of Non-Governmental Organizations activities in basic education delivery, spotlighting on Action Aid Ghana in Tamale Metropolis. This mixed method study is guided by Oregon's Quality Education Model. Using a collective case study design, a sample size of 114 respondents comprising actors selected through purposive sampling technique engaged in basic education delivery was used for the study. The data gathered in the form of questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics while the interviews conducted were analyzed qualitatively through content analysis in codes, themes, and sub themes with the NVivo10 software. The result showed infrastructure development, provision of teaching and learning materials, capacity development of teachers, provide learning needs to students and school community sensitization as Action Aid support activities to basic education delivery in Tamale Metropolis. These activities have contributed to improved quality teaching and learning, enhanced the availability of teaching and learning materials. However, the support activities were inadequate to improve students' performances in Basic Education Certificate Examination. In view of the findings, it was recommended that; Action Aid Ghana should set up a supervision and monitoring center in collaboration with the Education Directorate to ensure effective supervision of teaching and learning.

Keywords: basic education, non-governmental organizations, rural teachers

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduce the Problem

During the most recent decade NGOs have progressively been associated with executing development programmes (Dilevko, 2018). They play a critical role in service delivery and have been deemed as strategic affiliates of the public sector (Brophy, 2020). It is no doubt that a lot is required to explain such a sudden shift of attention from the state apparatus to NGOs as the panacea for alleviating our development challenges (Bano, 2019). It is worth noting that the sudden recognition of NGOs role in development could largely be attributed to the global recognition of the urgent need to eradicate poverty. This provided for the emerging activities of NGO across most parts of the third world countries in the world of which Ghana is no exception (WHO, 2011). Over the past few decades, Tamale Metropolis is noted for the existence of Non-Governmental Organizations that operate within as development partners and agents. Most of these NGOs existed since the 1990s and have reported several interventions including the area of educational development. Among these NGOs is the Action-Aid Ghana that operated in the Tamale Metropolis since 1998 to date (Action-Aid, 2016). It is no doubt that many of these NGOs implement activities geared towards enhancing the quality of education in the Metropolis. However, it is sad to indicate that these interventions appear either not to have had significant impact on quality education or the contributions of the NGOs are misplaced in view of the abysmal performance of

school children especially at the Basic Education Certificate Examinations in the Tamale Metropolis.

1.2 Importance of the Problem

Those pupils in the Tamale Metropolis have, for seven years, been performing poorly at the Basic Education Certificate Examination (Iddi, 2016). The statistics showed that in 2015 the Metropolis was 60th on the BECE league table and in 2015 and 2016 it was the 180th and 157th respectively. In 2017 and 2018 it placed 166th and 171st. In the 2018/19 academic year, out of a total of 5,199 candidates who were presented for the BECE, only 1,511 candidates (29.06%) passed with aggregates between 6-30 in the Metropolis of only 28.77% of them were girls (Ghana Education Service, 2019). Since Action-Aid Ghana started operating in Northern Region, the district in 1998, it seems to be making interventions aimed at contributing to the field of basic education (Crescent Educational and Volunteer Service, 2019). However, the extent of its contributions has not been satisfactorily highlighted (Sadick et al., 2019). One tends to wonder, what could have been the contributions of Action-Aid-Ghana in the area of basic education such that performances of pupils in Tamale Metropolis over the past few years are abysmally persistently consistent? Also, it is interesting to know that for over the period of Action-Aid's operations in Tamale Metropolis, no academic research has been done to bring to light the contributions of Action Aid-Ghana to basic education in the Tamale Metropolis (Eliasu, 2017). There have been most studies which are skewed towards quantitative methodology (Jagannathan, 2014). This current study adopted the mixed methodology approach to investigate the issues. The persisting abysmal performances of pupils in BECE coupled with the lack of research on Action-Aid's contribution to basic education in the Tamale Metropolis underscore an investigation of the nature of the educational activities of Action Aid-Ghana and its contribution towards the provision of quality basic education in the Tamale Metropolis.

1.3 Relevant Scholarship

1.3.1 Conceptual Framework

The importance of inputs is seen in the Oregon's Quality Education Model (2002) for the 21st century (Monto, 2019). Dunn et al. (2014) allude to attempts by Wall (2007) to draw the correlation between standards for students' performance and high levels of accountability for schools and district. They came out with a Quality Education model, which provides a 'roadmap' for getting there. In their Quality Education model, they conceptualized Quality Education like a tree, continually developing, growing new leaves and fortifying itself. The roots are the educators. They give strength and support to the tree and feed the leaves. The trunk of the tree is the school facilities. This strong solid basis supports the tree. If this is weak, nothing better can be expected from the school. Finally, the leaves are the students or pupils. They are taken care of and sustained by all aspects of the tree. Each part of the tree is vital, because each part would not function without others. The soil is very essential to the tree as it grows. Inadequate soil will not help the tree to grow well. The financial resources from government and other stakeholders may be equated to the soil (Aboagye, 2005). Quality Education model suggest that just as sound footing of the economy of a country is determined by the quality of the underlying infrastructure, so does the soundness of an educational system depends on its underlying physical and intellectual structures, physical learning environments or the places in which formal learning occurs (Kooli, 2020). The poor condition of many schools is thought to contribute to poor behaviour and limit learning opportunities (Aboagye, 2005).

1.3.2 Contribution of NGOs to Basic Education Delivery

Kooli (2017) studied the governmental investment in education and its impact on Human Capital Development. He concluded that the decision of the Omani government to invest in the education physical environment contributed to increase the quality level of education and improve the effectiveness of educative institutions. Imam (2017) also revealed that there exists empirical data to support the significance of school infrastructure on the well-being of students in the Belgian region of Flanders. Similarly, the entire unattractive physical structure of the school building could de-motivate learners' academic achievement (Oselumese, Omoike, & Andrew, 2016). As part of Bangladesh Education Sector Review, Groundwork Inc (2002) revealed that NGOs in Bangladesh responded very positively and swiftly to the Education for All (EFA) declaration. These NGOs have also supported the development of supplementary reading materials for the primary school children. The Bangladesh Government has also acknowledged the impact of the NGOs in the field of education has handed over some challenging and ineffective state funded public schools to some of the renowned NGOs to resuscitate them to serve its sense of purpose of providing quality basic education (Roy et al., 2017). Frempong (2011) concluded that insufficient study materials to a large extent a core factor that contributes to poor performance of students in Basic Education Certificate Examination. In addition, Okyerefo et al. (2011) undertook a comparative assessment of selected high performing private schools and public schools that are known with their poor

performance in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The study highlighted that teaching and learning materials are rarely available in its adequacies in public basic schools. It is sad to indicate that teaching and learning materials are among the critical factors that affect the performance of students at the basic levels Shit and Duary (2012) also commenced. a study in India on Assessment of School Infrastructure at Primary and Upper Primary Level. However, the results of the study proposed that the readiness of infrastructure elements such as availability of library, electricity, toilets, computers, type and condition of classroom is very of great importance for enhancing the learning environment. According to UNESCO (2013), other studies done in Botswana, Nigeria and Guinea corroborated these findings. As indicated by Nyarkoh and Intsiful (2018) that factors such as on-site availability of toilets and clean water supply, classroom maintenance space and furniture all have an impact on the critical learning factor. Additionally, schools with poor infrastructural facilities find it difficult to attract teachers, especially qualified ones, because of absence of adequate staff bungalows, classrooms and other teaching and learning facilities (Arhin et al., 2018). A number of international Non-Governmental Organizations have taken more groundbreaking and judicious approaches to provide strategic directions to NGOs. Brophy (2020) identified Save the Children alliance is geared to promote Early Childhood Development (EDC). A study by Roy et al. (2017) indicated that PLAN International has introduced a Community Learning Assistance Program (CLAP) to strengthen the school-based education through community involvement to increase contact time and support quality improvement in education. In addition, information on some of the innovative programmes of Action Aid International Ghana such as the Shepherd Schools and the Rural Education, a new program to promote leadership in adolescent girls. Accordingly, Zwalchir (2008), upon a study of determinants of quality appropriate education indicated that even though human resource is very central to the success of education delivery, availability of teaching and learning materials are equally indispensable. Thus, school teachers require the appropriate quality materials to facilitate effective and efficient imparting of knowledge to the school children. Bano (2019) also revealed that the quality of the physical facilities is positively related to student performance. Supervision is yet another variable that is relevant to enhancing quality teaching and learning in schools (Frempong, 2011). Typically, Esia-Donkoh and Baffoe (2018) indicated that instructional supervision is required for effectiveness of school teachers and pupils' commitment to task at the school environment. Likewise Atuahene, Yusheng and Owusu-Ansah (2019) establish that poor involvement of education governance structures and parents in supervision of teaching and learning in Ghana has affected the performances of several barges of students at the basic schools especially the public sector. Similarly, Kooli (2017) identified that the Omani Higher Education Institutions perceive quality assessment programs as strategical imposed tool made under the constraint of accountability, rather than an effective mechanism of development. Frempong (2011) has in that direction established that the mechanisms for effective supervision are very weak at the public schools thereby compromising the teachers' commitment and responsibility to duty attributable to lateness and absenteeism. Prominent among the issues is the differences in supervision and leadership commitment (Abonyi & Sofu, 2019). As Bonsu (2016) stated there is clear manifestation of the weaknesses of the governance system in our public schools in Ghana. Governments have become more sensitive regarding the role and the contributions of these institutions in the development of the society in general and students' skills in specific. Community engagement has also become an important part of the quality accreditation framework in several countries (Kooli et al., 2019).

1.3.3 Social and Political Context of This Research

The Tamale Metropolitan Assembly began enjoying the services of these Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the early 1990s (Action Aid, 2008). Action Aid Ghana began operations in Ghana in 1990s, extended its activities to the Tamale Metropolitan in 1998. It is an international Non-Governmental Organization with its headquarters in the United Kingdom, In Ghana; the headquarters is in Accra, with branches in other parts of Ghana including the Tamale Metropolis. Apart from educational development, Action Aid Ghana (AAG) is also involved in the development of agriculture and poverty alleviation in the Metropolis. Action Aid Ghana works through local partners like the Ghana Education Service for the implementation of its programmes to support communities' basic needs and improve their access to services. The vision of Action Aid Ghana is, "A world without poverty in which every person enjoys their right to a life of dignity". Its mission is, "To work with the poor and excluded people to eradicate poverty and injustice." One clear indicator of poverty is the fact that education development in Northern Ghana lags behind the rest of the country which has its roots in Ghana's colonial past (Adatuu & Gyader, 2019). Adjei (2010) established that although the 1992 constitution has sought to address the historical, social and economic inequalities by declaring a commitment to equal opportunities for all Ghanaians, inequalities are still pervasive in the Northern part of Ghana. As Thomas (2004) stated that the colonial educational policy negatively affected the entire development of Northern Ghana. This resulted in marked disparities in the quantitative expansion and quality of education between southern and northern Ghana. It is

therefore not surprising that researchers like Nyaaba and Bob-Milliar, (2019) revealed that the past colonial regime tended to biasedly favour few social minorities to then neglect of others. It is with such negative mentality that the colonial regime developed discriminatory educational policies that affected the quantitative expansion and quality of education in northern Ghana to the extent that not even the free education policy for the area and the Northern Scholarship Scheme instituted by the Nkrumah regime after independence could adequately address the problem (Selhausen, 2019). This is borne out by the fact that the northern regions have the highest adult illiterate female and male populations in the country (Anabila, 2017). These comparisons by no means suggest that the quality of education either in the northern regions or in the southern regions is satisfactory (Yaro & Hesselberg, 2010). For instance, the result show that the percentage of pupils in public schools reaching the mastery score of 60% in but an indictment on the quality of education in the country (Wilson & Somhlaba, 2017). Further, Cogneau and Moradi (2014) indicate that the differences between educational development in the south and that of the north calls for serious concern. As noted by Frankema (2012) the northern part of Ghana is still struggling to shape its educational development owing to the long-standing neglect from successive governments. As Moradi (2008) indicated the colonial educational policy, negatively affected the entire development of Northern Ghana resulted in marked disparities in the quantitative expansion and quality of education between southern and northern Ghana. Further observations have revealed that the past colonial regime tended to biasedly favour few social minorities to then neglect of others (Kwankye et al., 2009). This was attributed to the differences in economic resilience of some parts of Ghana, hence, Northern Ghana treated as a region with no clear opportunities for economic exchange but rather a source of cheap labour. The availability of cocoa, timber, gold, manganese and diamonds made educational investment attractive in the Southern Sector more attractive and justified to the colonial regimes (Foster, 1982). This is borne out by the fact that the three northern regions have the highest adult illiterate female and male populations in the country (GSS, 1998).

1.3.4 Summary of Literature Findings and Gaps Identified

The study reviewed that despite the huge investment of Non-Governmental Organizations which have contributed fairly to basic education development; little attention has been paid to monitoring and supervision of teaching and learning in the Tamale Metropolis, leading to the persistent abysmal performance of students in B.E.C.E, notwithstanding the enhanced capacity of teachers in the Action-Aid support schools. The study also found that NGO support does not contribute to improving performance due to social factors such as lack of parental involvement, parental discipline, broken family and parental expectation and attribution. This is suggestive that the problem of poor performance in basic education in the Tamale Metropolis has more to do with these social factors.

2. Research Methods

This article focuses on three research questions that aimed at assessing nature of the educational activities of Action Aid-Ghana and its contribution towards the provision of quality basic education in the Tamale Metropolis in view of the persisting abysmal performances of pupils in Basic Education Certificate Examination. The study adopted the collective case design and mixed method approach to bring to light the contributions of Action Aid-Ghana to basic education in the Tamale Metropolis.

2.1 Research Design: Collective Case Study

The design of the study is a case study, and explicitly, a collective case study. The collective case study is a design which considers multiple cases or situations when conducting a research. Creswell (2013) posits that collective case study draws similarities which these cases provide to answer the question in a study. Therefore, within the context of this collective case study design, the applied methods in the collection and analyses of data were both qualitative and quantitative methods (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009, p. 13) posits that mixed method provides strengths that offset the weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative research and capture the strengths of both paradigms. The combination of the qualitative and quantitative methods helps to understand the assumptions underlying each research method. Based on this assumption, a robust foundation for providing an evidence-based research that would contribute significantly to literature in the area of study was assured (Saunders et al., 2009; Farhuqar, 2012). The study used an exploratory sequential design; a sequential mixed method which first used a quantitative research approach and later, a qualitative approach to support (Creswell & Clark, 2017; Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Under such a circumstance, the initial use of qualitative approach is the most appropriate due to its robustness in drawing out the nuances among the relating factors (Najmaei, 2016). The quantitative approach serves as a complement to the qualitative nature helped to affirm explanations to the qualitative approach provided.

2.2 Participants and Sampling Procedures

The Tamale Metropolis is made up of 14 circuits with 14 circuit supervisors (Government of Ghana, 2018). Out

of the fourteen circuits, 10 circuits were used for the main data collection namely Aboabo, Gumbihini, Lamashegu, Sakasaka, Changni, Bamvim, Kpanvo, Hospital Circuit, Kaladan, Salaga Road Circuit. The target population of the study included; staff of Tamale Metropolitan District Directorate of Ghana Education Service (GES), Head teachers of twenty-six (26) Action-Aid supported schools and SMC/PTA of each of the supported schools from the ten circuits of Ledzokuku Municipality. Action Aid's interventions are limited to only public schools in the Tamale Metropolis. So far 26 schools have benefited from one form of intervention or another from Action-Aid. The schools were selected purposively because only Action-Aid supported schools were identified, head teachers, SMC/PTA chairpersons were also purposively selected because they have relevant information on the substantive variables of the study.

Table 1. Sample frame of study population

Categories of Population	Sample frame	Sample size
Staff of Metro-GES	28	26
Head teachers of Action-Aid supported Schools	26	25
SMC/PTA of Action-Aid supported Schools	26	25
Circuit Supervisors of Action-Aid supported Schools	26	25
Staff of Action-Aid	13	13
Totals	119	114

Source: Field data, May 2019.

The application of this mathematical model was required by its scientific approach to social research and permits for margin of error and the distribution of the sample over the frame.

The mathematical model used is as given by Miller and Brewer (2003). The sample size of this unit of analysis was determined using the following statistical formula

α =Margin of error.

N=Sample Frame.

The Sample frame (N) =119

Margin of error (α) = 0.02

Sample size (n) =?

Therefore, sample size (n) = $\frac{119}{1 + 119(0.02)^2}$

$$(n) = \frac{119}{1.0476}$$

$$(n) = 114$$

The sample size for the entire study = 114 respondents. The sample size of respective categories of potential respondents was determined proportionately. The margin of error depends on the assumed confidence level of the study. The sample size for the entire study = 114 respondents. The sample size of respective categories of potential respondents was determined proportionately

2.3 Data Collection

Two research instruments, namely questionnaire and interview guide was used for the data collection. The questionnaires were used to collect basic descriptive statistics from the respondents. A likert scale from 'very adequate' to 'inadequate' was used as contained in the questionnaire. The responses were valued as follows: 5='very adequate', 4='adequate', 3='fairly adequate', 2= inadequate and 1='extremely inadequate'. The second instrument that was employed for data collection in the study is interview guide. Contextually, the interview guide was directed at the Staff of Action Aid Ghana because in the context of the study their responses pertain to their experiences in the various schools to illicit responses on the limitations of Action-Aid in their activities towards contributing to basic education in the Tamale Metropolis.

2.4 Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected was analyzed using appropriate descriptive statistics in percentages, frequencies

and cross tabulation which allowed the researcher to use numerical values to represent scores in the sample. For qualitative data, interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder (Olympics VN-713PC) then translated verbatim. Interview transcripts were uploaded to NVivo10 software (QSR International Pty Ltd). Different codes were identified into potential themes and all-important coded extracts were collated within the identified themes. The research instrument was subjected to a validity and reliability test. The instrument was given to a specialist to find out whether it meets the condition of face and content validity. The suggestions by the specialist aided the research instrument that was deemed reliable. The data collected in the pre-test was analysed by using SPSS Statistics Software of version 20 to test for validity and reliability. Items that were not well understood by the respondents were reframed to make them clear. After the pilot testing, a Cronbach reliability co-efficient alpha of 0.916 was obtained as a measure of reliability using SPSS Statistics Software of version 20. The results obtained from the adopted test was reliable to be used for this study, since many experts in research methodology recommend a minimum α coefficient between 0.65 and 0.8 (or higher in many cases); α coefficients that are less than 0.5 are considered as unreliable. This meant that the instrument was internally consistent and was therefore appropriate for the study.

3. Results

The presentation of the findings is done according to the themes of the study research questions.

3.1 What Are the Types of Activities of Action-Aid That Supports Basic Education in Tamale Metropolis?

Table 2. Which of the following are basic education support activities of action-aid Ghana?

S/No.	Education Support Activities	Responses of Yes		Responses of No	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1	Infrastructure development	38	33%	76	67%
1	Provision of teaching and learning materials	94	83%	20	17%
1	Curriculum development	0	0	114	100%
1	Capacity development of teachers	114	100%	0	0
1	Sensitization of school communities	3	3%	111	97%
1	Provision of basic school needs for school children	43	38%	71	62%

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Results emanating from the study revealed that the capacity development of teachers is the dominant support activity that is provided by Action-Aid towards enhancing basic education in the Tamale Metropolis. This result was supported by whooping (100%) responses from across all the actors who were identified as respondents in the study whilst 83% acknowledged that Action-Aid supports the provision of teaching and learning materials, 38% supported provision of basic school needs for school children. Hence, Action-Aid dominates in their support activities in terms of capacity development of teachers in the metropolis contrary to that curriculum development.

3.2 How Do the Education-Related Activities of Action-Aid Contribute to Basic Education in Tamale Metropolis?

Table 3. Significant changes of basic educational situation

Variables for Assessment	N	Mean
Significant positive changes in infrastructure situation	114	3.11
Improved quality of teaching and learning	114	2.97
Performance of school children	114	2.74
Adequacy of teaching & learning materials	114	3.23
Enhanced skills of teachers	114	4.15
School governance	114	4.04
Valid N (listwise)	114	

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

As indicated in Table 3, the mean values represent the average scores on each of the variables for assessing

significant changes that result from the contributions of the support activities of Action-Aid to basic education delivery in Tamale Metropolis. Interestingly, the outstanding changes acknowledged by the respondents are the enhanced skills of teachers through capacity development programs of Action-Aid and school governance in their support schools in the Tamale Metropolis. This was supported by the average mean values of 4.04 and 4.15 respectively indicating that the outstanding contribution of Action Aid to basic education in Tamale Metropolis is fairly adequate in terms of enhancing the capacity of teachers and school governance. The implication of this is that despite the fact that the support activities of Action-Aid have contributed fairly adequate to basic education in the metropolis in this regard; the reverse was the case in terms of infrastructure situation, quality teaching, and learning, the performance of school children and adequacy of teaching and learning materials.

3.3 What Are the Limitations of Action-Aid in Their Activities Towards Contributing to Basic Education in the Tamale Metropolis? Challenges Identified by Staff of Action-Aid

In addition to the views of stakeholders involved in basic education delivery, further qualitative information was gathered from the staff of Action. The results in this context entirely qualitative gathered through face-to-face interviews using an interview guide.

Table 4. Themes, sub-themes and codes on limitations identified by staff of action-aid

Theme	Codes
Limitations Identified by Staff of Action-Aid	Improve performance of basic school children.
	Infrastructural development in Basic schools.
	Provision of teaching and learning materials.
	Capacity building of teachers
	Lack of continuity of Action-Aid support.
	Poor commitment from school community.
	Ineffective SMC/PTA role in school development.
	Sustainability of support interventions made by Action-Aid

Field Data, 2019.

From the analysis of the interview results, it was a general opinion of the staff of Action-Aid that Action-Aid’s contribution to children’s performance at the basic schools in Tamale Metropolis is extremely inadequate.

Staff commented that:

“We have made significant breakthroughs in basic education in the Tamale Metropolis. Action-Aid has contributed to improved quality teaching and learning, enhanced availability of teaching and learning materials enhances capacities of teachers at the supported basic schools but however, there are extreme inadequacies in terms of our contributions to improved performances of school children at the basic schools. The poor involvement of education governance structures and parents in the supervision of teaching and learning has affected the performances of several barges of students at basic schools in Tamale Metropolis. As partners in the development of students’ performance, we hardly control, monitor and supervise school management and administration.” (Staff 5)

Another remarked that

“The implication of this is that despite the fact that the support activities of Action-Aid have contributed fairly adequate to basic education in the district, the interventions are inadequate to effect significant changes in the situation of basic education in the Tamale Metropolis’. It is as a result of lack of supervision of teachers gives the teachers ample room to do as they please by compromising the time and contact hours for students. Action-Aid does not control the management of teachers and instruction.” (Staff 2)

It was revealed by the staff of Action-Aid that there were many concerns about minor repairs, low-cost, poor management and high technology requirements by Action-Aid for infrastructural development. During the interview with the Staff of Action-Aid, one remarked that:

‘Many of the schools within the action aid intervention are well over one fifty years old. Due to neglect, poor management and cost cutting, many of these buildings are falling apart and action aid is giving it urgent attention. The ultimate problem is that technological advances are making demands that school buildings, libraries cannot meet. For example, installation of adequate wiring for computers and

insufficient phone lines of internet connections which entail major construction cost.’ (Staff 6)

Additionally another staff remarked that:

‘Minor repair is an example. It was a constant challenge for Action-Aid to effectively guide communities to comply with the low-cost, low technology requirements by Action-Aid for minor repairs. Local aspirations were for Action-Aid to become an infrastructure project. Communities rarely gave priority to the idea of locally-managed repairs on schools as a vehicle for improved basic education’. (Staff 7)

This issue of high degree of uncertainty was of great concern to the staff of Action-Aid as a threat to contribute their quota towards infrastructure development.

One of them commented that:

“Action-Aid in the study area work with a high degree of uncertainty and inadequacy of external funding because the commitment and support in terms of funding are not stable. In fact this uncertainty decrease the extent to which staff engage beneficiaries for fear of change in donor policy that will not allow resources to cover areas where interventions had been initiated. ‘In real sense, there is lack of continuity of projects as a result of delay in the release of funds from our partners.’” (Staff 3)

One other staff added up that:

Inadequacy of external funding and poor commitment on the parts of beneficiaries is increasingly another major challenge that affects interventions of Action-Aid in infrastructural development. (Staff 1)

This perspective was confirmed by another staff who sounded demotivated as she says:

‘Lack of inadequacy of funds to support infrastructural development has thwarted our commitment to support basic education in the district. In line with our effort towards eliminating schools under trees over the medium-term, the total number of projects under construction in most of our intervention schools at the end of 2013 was 122 could not be completed. In addition, 3 boreholes, 9 gender-friendly lavatories and 5 urinals could not be completed in communities like Gumbihini, Lamashegu, Sakasaka. We continued with the rehabilitation and refurbishment of libraries in selected junior high schools within our intervention zones in the district. 3 teacher bungalows in 7 intervention schools were not completed and handed over to the schools as a result of lack of external funding.’ (Staff 11)

The study revealed that Action-Aid greatest challenge in its efforts to adequately provide teaching and learning materials is due to poor maintenance culture on the part of beneficiary schools

Another staff also made the following comment that:

‘Due to poor maintenance many tables have broken down resulting in pressure on the existing ones. The average dual desk to pupils is in the ratio 1:2.5, that is, 1 dual desk to 2.5 pupils. The ratio of dual desk to pupils is 1:4 and 1:3 in Gumbihini Primary and Dabokpa respectively. This has resulted in overcrowding in classrooms. Schools with adequate furniture are Kulpine, Duori and Nyimbale. The furniture situation at the JHS level is even severe because teachers have not been able to control the proper use of furniture and the broken once have not been repaired by school management.’ Efforts have not been made to use the capitation grants for maintenance of furniture.’ (Staff 10)

As another teacher recounted that:

‘Action Aid has also supplied schools with teaching and learning materials including exercise books, text books, library books, playing equipment, cupboards and furniture but due to poor maintenance, the teaching and learning could not be sustained to match with the ever-increasing enrolment. (Staff 13)

During the interview with the Education Coordinator, She remarked that:

‘In some schools once a facility requires maintenance; the school administrators normally wait for Action-Aid to come and repair it. In some schools kitchen facilities supported by Action-Aid were not in use (no lunch services) for reasons that parents were not able to contribute money for buying food. The process of involvement and ownership seemed not to exist among school administrators and managers.’ (Staff 12)

Despite a long list of achievements recorded in terms of capacity building of teachers in the study areas in connection to Action-Aid support, a number of challenges were recorded. The head of training and advocacy at Action-Aid also made the following comment that:

‘Poor delivery of lessons by untrained teachers who reported after Action-Aid training have difficulty in delivery in class. Moreover, methodology and knowledge of newly introduced subjects such as phonics, Information Communication Technology (ICT) and Creative Arts remain a challenge.’ (Staff 8)

One other staff during the interview mentioned that:

‘During most of our interactions and evaluation of training programmes...the participated teachers indicated that the training in methodology for the various subjects was inadequate. Most of the teachers were newly-qualified teachers from the Colleges of Education, who lack classroom pedagogy. The principal reason for this was that Action-Aid training concentrated more on content instead of methodology. The pedagogical knowledge of most subjects especially English Language, Mathematics and ICT is lacking. Teachers have to feel part of the programmes so methods like brainstorming, projects and discussion will be useful.’ (Staff 9)

Another participant said:

‘The content of our training programmes are valueless. One reason is that the contents of the courses have no bearing on their work so something has to be done about them.’ (Staff 4)

4. Conclusion

The study revealed basic education support activities of AAIG in Tamale Metropolis to include, infrastructural development, provision of teaching and learning materials, capacity development of teachers, provision of basic schools needs for school children, sensitization of school communities. However, these contributions are not adequate to generate significant improvement in B.E.C.E in the Tamale Metropolis, notwithstanding the enhanced capacity of teachers in the AAIG support schools because little attention has been paid to monitoring and supervision of teaching and learning in the Tamale Metropolis leading to persistent abysmal performance of students in B.E.C.E notwithstanding the enhanced capacity of teachers in the Action-Aid support schools. The study also found that NGO support does not contribute to improving performance due to social factors such as lack of parental involvement, parental discipline, broken family and parental expectation and attribution. inadequacy of external funding is yet another major challenge of Action-Aid International Ghana. Monitoring and supervision mechanisms put in place to supervise teaching and learning by the Tamale Education Office was inadequate. This study recommended that AAIG should set up supervision and monitoring center in collaboration with the Education Directorate to ensure effective supervision of teaching and learning, the need for Action-Aid openness and maximum networking with communities through community sensitization and engagement and having a regular source of unrestricted income is essential for infrastructural interventions targeted at addressing problems of basic education

5. Discussion and Implications

The present study was an assessment of the impact of NGOs activities in basic education delivery, using Action Aid Ghana in Tamale Metropolis as a case study. The result showed infrastructure development, provision of teaching and learning materials, capacity development of teachers, provide learning needs to students and school community sensitization as Action Aid support activities to basic education delivery in Tamale Metropolis. These activities have contributed to improved quality teaching and learning, enhanced availability of teaching and learning materials. However, the support activities were inadequate to improve students’ performances in BECE, inadequate infrastructure development and school governance as well. The contributions of Action Aid had brought about significant changes in terms of enhanced skills of teachers through capacity development.

5.1 Theory

The study used the Oregon’s Quality Education Model (2002) to inform data analysis. This theory positioned me to think of quality basic education from the standpoint of its product – the outputs. Quality education can be conceptualized from the inputs criteria. These include teaching and learning materials, teacher certification and professional development of teachers, funding levels, school infrastructure, school governance, monitoring and supervision. The effects of these inputs on learning outcomes are, however, unclear. The Oregon’s Quality Education Model sufficiently describes my findings. As in modern times, educators prefer looking at quality education from both the output and input criteria. It is on the basis of the arguments above that prioritize human being as a pivot of social development and that the quality of the human being rest on the quality of education. From this view point, this study is made relevant because of its concentration on the private sector role in contributing to social development as well as the focus of it being on human capital development. As a result, findings of the study address the how human capital development in the Tamale Metropolis would be enhanced towards developing quality human resource for national development.

5.2 Policy

In terms of policy, it is important to understand that education in general and basic education in particular is very important for the development of any country especially countries in the global south such as Ghana. The role of Non-Governmental Organizations have played and continue to play in supporting government in ensuring quality education at the basic level cannot be underestimated. Secondly, on policy relevance, the study makes credence to the decentralization concept of Government in supporting and coordinating local initiative and mobilizing Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil Society Groups, Community Based Organizations and Faith Based Organizations to support government efforts. Basic education for citizens is a constitutional requirement and mandatory for all capable Ghanaian children. That is, Free Compulsory Basic Education for all (FCUBE).

5.3 Practice

First, from a practice perspective, the findings of this study provided detail guidelines to the major partners of Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service, Action Aid Ghana and the District Assemblies to identify and improve on areas of their intervention that need improvement. The findings of the study will provide information that could lead to the avoidance of duplication of efforts and wastage on the part of local (District Assemblies) and central governments. For instance, Knowledge of areas where Action Aid is providing adequate inputs could assist the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service and the District Assemblies to allocate resources and inputs to areas that are not catered for to help improve efficient delivery of education at the basic level in Tamale Metropolis. This will enhance effective resource management within the education sector would assist in providing a reference resource that will inform government and Non-Government Organizations and donor agencies on the services which Action-Aid provides to the basic education sector in Ghana.

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