



## Beneficiary knowledge and prioritization of problems of the free senior high school education policy in Ghana

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### Abstract

The Free Senior High School education policy was introduced in Ghana as an intervention by the government of Ghana to make education accessible to all Ghanaian children. The policy intervention sought to bridge all cost barriers that limited access to education in second cycle institutions in Ghana.

This national cross sectional study therefore sought to determine the knowledge of beneficiaries of the policy and prioritize its challenges in Ghana. A sample of 504 parents with ward(s) in senior high school and 231 Administrators were purposively selected for the study.

The research revealed inadequate knowledge on indicators of the policy by its beneficiaries. In prioritizing problems of Free SHS, inadequate classroom infrastructure and dormitory space were ranked the most pressing priority problem of the policy implementation.

In view of the findings of this research, we recommend; increased engagement of stakeholders of the policy to enhance their knowledge and build their capacity to contribute to its success, building more classroom infrastructure and dormitories and abolishing the double track educational system.

**Keywords:** knowledge, prioritization, beneficiaries, free senior high school policy

### Introduction

The latest of educational policy reforms in Ghana was the Free Senior High School (FSHS) education policy introduced in 2017, in place of the pre-existing Progressively Free Senior High School (PFSHS) Education Policy (Adu-Gymfi *et al.*, 2016) [2]. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana states that “Secondary education in its different forms including technical and vocational education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular, by the progressive introduction of free education” (Free SHS Policy, 2018) [7]. In line with this and in fulfillment of a campaign pledge to the people of Ghana, the New Patriot Party (NPP) led government which won the 2016 elections, introduced the free senior high education policy in the 2017/2018 academic. This is also in line with goal four, target one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) also states that “by 2030, all boys and girls complete free equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes” (UNCG/CSO, 2017) [17]. The FSHS policy was introduced in place of the pre-existing Progressively Free Senior High School (PFSHS) Education Policy implemented in 2015, which provided partial funding to senior high education (Adu-Gymfi *et al.*, 2016) [2]. Both policies aimed to increase enrollment, improve quality through academic performance and most importantly to reduce the burden on parents from paying their children fees (Asumadu, 2019) [4].

Under FSHS policy, “government was required to foot all

bills - including feeding fees, tuition fees, library fee, boarding fee, science laboratory fee, examination fee, utility fee, free meals for boarders and one hot meal for day-students, Parents Teachers Association (PTA) fee, and free textbooks for all at the senior high level (Free SHS Policy, 2018) [7]. Also, the policy redefines basic education to include Senior High School (SHS), covering vocational, agricultural and technical schools, and makes it available for free on a universal basis to all Ghanaians” (Asumadu, 2019, P. 19) [4].

Starting from the 2017/2018 academic year, all qualified first-year students admitted into senior high schools and subsequent year groups, shall benefit from the programme throughout their studies. According to the Free Senior High School Secretariat, the policy is aimed at removing all cost limitations to secondary education by absorbing all fees approved by GES council such as tuition fee, admission fee, textbooks, library fees, science center fees, fees for ICT, examination fee, payment of utility fee, boarding and meals (Free SHS Policy Secretariat, 2018) [7].

According to the Free SHS Policy Secretariat, the policy is anchored on four main pillars/targets. First, removal of cost barriers to secondary education. This means that, the cost of educating a child at the senior level is absorbed by government and no parent would have to pay school fees or utility bills for their wards at the senior high school, throughout the three years of senior high school education in Ghana. Therefore, it was the responsibility of government to absorb all fees payable by parents and avail resources for running

senior high schools. Secondly, expansion of infrastructure in secondary schools; including facilities to accommodate the expected increase in enrolment. By this, government is expected to provide buildings such as classrooms, dormitory blocks, office spaces etc. free of charge, to all secondary schools in Ghana. Thirdly, the policy is to improvement in quality and equity through provision of core textbooks and supplementary readers, teacher rationalization and deployment, to ensure that, every senior high student is given equal opportunity to be properly educated, irrespective of one's economic status. Finally, the policy is also hedged on development of employable skills to improve competitiveness of Ghanaian Students to match the best in the World (Free SHS Policy Secretariat, 2018) [7].

The Free Senior High School Education Policy in Ghana though perceived by some section of Ghanaians and civil society as appropriate, is challenged with some setbacks which impedes its smooth roll out. According to kyeremanteng (2016) [10], the FSHS policy is challenged by inadequate resources, limited knowledge and commitment on the part of key stakeholders to contribute effectively towards the policy formulation and implementation. The study observe that, misplayed criticisms by political opponents and inadequate involvement of stakeholders in the FSHS policy formulation and implementation processes hamper the success of the policy.

Adu-Ababio and Osei (2018) [11], a major challenge of the FSHS policy programme is in agent need of elementary infrastructure such as “desks, beds, classrooms and learning equipment” to ensure smooth operation of the programme. According to Asumadu (2019) [4], the FSHS policy programme is faced with challenges of limited infrastructure, insufficient supply of instructional materials, inadequate teachers, delays in payment of grants and inadequate consultation of stakeholders of the policy. A study also identified “inadequate stakeholder consultation, inadequate provision of logistics and funds by the government, quality of education being compromised, possible incompletion of syllabus owing to increased number of holidays and maintenance of school facilities becoming a problem” as the implementation challenges facing the double track senior high school system in Ghana (Mensah, 2019, P.47) [11].

Furthermore, the Northern Network for Education Development (NNED) in appraising the FSHS policy highlighted several challenges of the policy. They criticize the policy for being “need blind” since beneficiaries from low, middle and high income households are given the same sponsorship; when some parents could afford to cater for the education of their children (Ibrahim, 2018) [8]. This according to them, results in increasing economic inequalities. They report that in the maiden year of the FSHS programme, it's challenged with infrastructural deficit, overcrowding and inadequate furniture for students and staff. According to Ibrahim (2018) [8], another major constrain of the policy is the absence of a dependable and sustainable source of funding; hence raising concerns about sustainability of the policy, arguing that the oil revenue used in funding FSHS is not a reliable source of funding. Also, the research reports that, there is limited citizen involvement in the implementation of the policy because the policy document on FSHS is silent on how citizen could help monitor resource allocation, disbursements and use of

resources (Ibrahim, 2018) [8].

Challenges of FSHS according to Salifu and Ayamba (2018) [16] who assessed the impact of FSHS on science education in Ghana include; increased load on school amenities such as laboratories, dormitories, dining hall and classroom space, difficulties in feeding students, increased utility bills, increased workload on teaching and non-teaching staff, increased indiscipline and reduced interest in teaching and learning activities by students. Studies conducted outside Ghana have identified a number of challenges facing the provision of free secondary education (Aluko and Adan, 2015; Kalunda and Otanga, 2015; Morojole, 2012) [3,9].

This study therefore sought to determine the knowledge of beneficiaries of the the Free Senior High School education policy and prioritize its challenges in Ghana.

## Material and Methods

### Study Design

The study was a national cross sectional study. This design is suitable because the variables of interest such as knowledge were assessed at a point in time. The study population consisted of beneficiaries (parents and student) of FSHS education policy and School Administrators involved in the implementation of FSHS education policy, in Ghana. Therefore, to be included in this study, you needed be a student benefiting from free SHS or a parent who had his/her ward currently benefiting from FSHS education policy or a school administrator in a FSHS education policy beneficiary school in Ghana.

### Sampling Procedures and Data Collection Tool

Five hundred and four (504) parent respondents and two hundred and thirty one (231) administrators were sampled for the study. The purposive sampling techniques was employed to select and assess the views the parents and administrative staff of schools since they were better placed in providing such information. Structured questionnaires for students, parents and school administrators, were used as tools/instruments for data collection.

### Data/Statistical Analysis

Data on knowledge of beneficiaries on the Free Senior High school education policy indicators were generated, variables recoded and imported into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software and analyzed.

However, in prioritizing the problems, the sum ( $\Sigma$ ) of total scores of each problem and mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) score of each problem were computed. Since one (1) was ranked/scored most pressing, problems with smaller means or sum of scores, were considered most pressing.

### Ethical Issues

Participation in this study was voluntary. Respondents read the consent form had a choice of participation. Also, the study ensured confidentiality of information and anonymity of respondents.

## Results and Discussion

### Knowledge of Beneficiaries and Administrators on the Free Senior High School Education Policy in Ghana

Results on knowledge of beneficiaries (students and parents) and administrators involved in FSHS implementation were represented on *Table 3.1*. In assessing knowledge as a

variable, three measures were used namely; awareness of respondents on the FSHS policy, knowledge on the targets/aims of FSHS and knowledge on kind of bills/fees paid under FSHS.

Regarding awareness of the FSHS education policy by students, parents and administrators, the study discovered that, 96.6% of students and 96.8% of parents had heard (an indication of awareness) of the introduction of the policy. Also, all administrators (100%) were aware of the existence of the policy. This meant that, the policy was very popular among its beneficiaries (i.e. students and parents) and its implementers; the administrators. This may be attributed to the fact that, it was a campaign pledge to the people of Ghana, by the New Patriotic Party (NPP) led government, and introduced in place of the Pre-existing Progressively Free Senior High School (PFSHS) Education Policy implemented in 2015, which provided partial funding to senior high education (Adu-Gymfi *et al*, 2016) [2].

Regarding knowledge of FSHS educational policy, 12.1%, 28.6% and 30.3% of students, parents and administrators respectively were able to identify all targets/aims of FSHS on the questionnaire; indicating the administrators were relatively more knowledgeable of the targets of FSHS, followed by parents, and lastly students. However, 26.7% and 34.9% of students and parents were able to identify a least one target of FSHS respectively. Comparatively, students and parents had knowledge on only target/aims of FSHS. However, the administrators had more knowledge on all targets compared with the students and parents. Also, worth noting that, 21.6% of students, 1.6% of parents and 12.1% had no idea of the targets of FSHS. According to the Free SHS Policy Secretariat, the policy is anchored on four main pillars/targets (Free SHS Policy Secretariat, 2018) [7]. First, removal of cost barriers to secondary education. This means that, the cost of educating a child at the senior level is absorb by government and no parent would have to pay school fees or utility bills for their wards at the senior high school, throughout the three years of senior high school education in Ghana. Therefore, it would be the responsibility of government to absorb all fees payable by parents and avail resources for running senior high schools. Secondly, expansion of infrastructure in secondary schools; including facilities to accommodate the expected increase in enrolment. By this, government is expected to provide buildings such as classrooms, dormitory blocks, office spaces etc. free of charge, to all secondary schools in Ghana. Thirdly, the policy is to improvement in quality and equity

through provision of core textbooks and supplementary readers, teacher rationalization and deployment, to ensure that, every senior high student is given equal opportunity to be properly educated, irrespective of one’s economic status. Finally, the policy is also hedged on development of employable skills to improve competitiveness of Ghanaian Students to match the best in the World (Free SHS Policy Secretariat, 2018) [7]. Though the administrators were relatively more knowledgeable of the targets, the knowledge of students, parents and administrators on the targets was generally very low. The results however reveal that, students and parents had increased knowledge on at least one target/pillar of FSHS; since every student or parent was able to identify at least one aim of FSHS. It’s appropriate that beneficiaries of FSHS (i.e. students and parents) and the policy implementers; the administrators, know of these policy targets or aims in other to contribute effectively towards their success (Brigitte, 2005) [6]. Therefore, the low knowledge on the policy targets recorded in this study is not healthy for its success.

Under FSHS, bills payable by government include; “feeding fees, tuition fees, library fee, boarding fee, science laboratory fee, examination fee, utility fee, free meals for boarders and one hot meal for day-students, Parents Teachers Association (PTA) fee, and cost free textbooks for all at the senior high level” (Free SHS Policy Secretariat, 2018) [7]. On knowledge on kind of bills/fees paid under FSHS by government, 24.1%, 33.3% and 48.5% of students, parents and administrators respectively were able to identify all fees of FSHS in the questionnaire. Again, this can be described as low since less than fifty percent of both beneficiaries and the policy implementers knew of the fees payable under the policy. It also suggest that, the administrators were again more knowledgeable of the fees paid by government under FSHS, followed by parents, and lastly students. However, most students (29.3%) were able to identify at least one fee item. Most parents (34%) were able to identify a least three fees paid by government under FSHS. Also, worth noting in the results is the fact that, 29.3% of students, 19.0% of parents and 21.2% had no idea of the fees payables. Knowledge of policy indicators by its beneficiaries and implementers is a key determinant of the success of the policy implementation (Brigitte, 2005) [6]. For this study, knowledge of the fees is therefore important for transparency and accountability, and success of the policy; especially for important stakeholders of the FSHS such as students, parents and school administrators.

**Table 1: Knowledge of Beneficiaries (Students & Parents) and Administrators on FSHS Policy**

Variable	Students		Parents		Administrators	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Aware of FSHS:						
Yes	1008	96.6	488	96.8	231	100
No	36	3.4	16	3.2	0	0.0
* Knowledge on Targets of FSHS:						
Knowledge on all targets	126	12.1	144	28.6	70	30.3
Knowledge on three targets	225	21.6	120	23.8	49	21.2
Knowledge on two targets	189	18.1	56	11.1	42	18.2
Knowledge on one target	279	26.7	176	34.9	42	18.2
No idea on targets	225	21.6	8	1.6	28	12.1
C Knowledge on Fees covered by FSHS:						
knowledge on all bills	252	24.1	168	33.3	112	48.5
Knowledge on three bills/fees	261	25.0	176	34.9	21	9.1
knowledge on two bills/fees	81	7.8	16	3.2	28	12.1

knowledge on one bill/fee	144	13.8	48	9.5	21	9.1
No idea on fees	306	29.3	96	19.0	49	21.2
Total	1044	100.0	504	100.0	231	100.0

**Key:** \* Targets/Aims of FSHS: Removal of Cost Barriers, Expansion of Infrastructure, Improvement in Quality and Equity and Development of Employable Skills

© Fees covered by FSHS: Feeding fee, Tuition fee, Examination fee and Cost textbooks

**Prioritization of Free Senior High School (FSHS) Challenges/Problems by Ghana Education Service Administrators**

Prioritization of challenges/problems of FSHS is presented on Table 3.2. Two hundred and thirty-one (N= 231) Administrators; Non-teaching staff of Ghana Education Service (GES), involved in the implementation of FSHS, were asked to rank implementation challenges of the Free Senior High education on a scale of One (1): Most pressing problem to Ten (10): least pressing problem: i.e. the biggest problem was ranked/scored 1st, second bigger problem 2nd, up to 10th.

The Minimum value (Mi) and Maximum value (Max) of each identified problem of FSHS were 1 and 10 respectively as indicated on the table; since the ranking/scoring scale was from one to ten.

The problems ranked were pick or identified in literature as challenges faced by senior high schools operating free senior high school education policies or programmes in Ghana and some African countries such as Kenya, Lesotho and Malawi. In ranking the problems, the sum ( $\Sigma$ ) of total scores of each problem and mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) score of each problem were computed. Since one (1) was ranked/scored most pressing, problems with smaller means or sum of scores, were considered most pressing. In discussion the findings under this section, reference is made to the problems identified because there was no literature on ranking of FSHS problems or challenges. The ranking as contained in this study, is therefore the first of its kind and would form the base line literature for future research.

The results indicate that, inadequate classroom infrastructure and dormitory space were ranked the most pressing; since it recorded the smallest mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) of 3.58 or smallest sum of score ( $\Sigma$ ) of 826, of the ten identified problems. This indicates that, it is the first priority problem faced by senior high schools, operating free senior high school education programmes. This was identified by Adu-Ababio and Osei (2018) [1], who found that, a major challenge of the FSHS policy programme is in agent need of elementary infrastructure such as classrooms. Also, limited infrastructure was reported by Ibrahim (2018) [8] and Asumadu (2019) [4], as a major challenge the FSHS policy programme. Furthermore, Salifu and Ayamba (2018) [16] who assessed the impact of FSHS on science education in Ghana identified dining hall and classroom space as major challenges.

The second priority problem was overcrowding of students recording a mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and sum of score ( $\Sigma$ ) of 4.27 and 987 respectively. Overcrowding ranked as a second priority problem has not come as a surprise because it has a link with inadequate classroom infrastructure and dormitory space; which was ranked first. This is because, limited dormitory or classroom space results in overcrowding. The Northern Network for Education Development (NNED) in

appraising the FSHS policy highlighted several challenges of the policy, reported that in the maiden year of the FSHS programme, it was challenged by overcrowding (Ibrahim, 2018) [8]. Similar to some reported challenges of free secondary education in Ghana, Okumbe (2001); as cited by Asumsdu (2019) [4], found that, in Kenya, there was congestion in classrooms senior high schools operating free education policies.

The third priority problem identified was inadequate provision of teaching and learning materials, and equipment such as textbooks, desks and furniture; which recorded a mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and sum of score ( $\Sigma$ ) of 4.36 and 1008 respectively. Also, Adu-Ababio and Osei, (2018) [1], identified limited learning equipment as a major challenge of the FSHS policy programme that require agent attention. According to Asumadu (2019) [4], the FSHS policy programme is faced with a challenge of insufficient supply of instructional materials. In addition, Mensah (2019) [11] identified inadequate provision of logistics as an implementation challenges facing free senior high school in Ghana. The NNED also identified inadequate furniture as a problem of FSHS. Also in Kenya, Kalunda and Otanga (2015) [9] identified shortage instructional materials as a major challenge of free education programmes. Also in Kenya, Okumbe (2001); as cited by Asumsdu (2019) [4], found that, most furniture for free secondary education were in bad shape; instructional materials such as text books for teaching and learning were inadequate. Furthermore, in Malawi, though free education led to increased school enrolments, there was a corresponding challenge of increased demand for material for teaching and learning, which resulted in increased recurrent expenditure on instructional material (Inoue. and Oketch, 2008). In view of the above, it is obvious that, inadequate provision of teaching and learning materials and equipment is the most identified problem of free education.

The fourth priority problem identified in this research was inadequate stakeholder consultation or involvement recording a mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and sum of score ( $\Sigma$ ) of 4.42 and 1022 respectively. According to kyeremanteng (2016) [10], the FSHS policy is challenged inadequate involvement of stakeholders in the FSHS policy formulation and implementation processes hamper the success of the policy. Also, Asumadu (2019) [4] reported the FSHS policy programme is faced with challenges of inadequate consultation of stakeholders of the policy. In addition, a study identified “inadequate stakeholder consultation” as the implementation challenges facing the double track senior high school system in Ghana (Mensah, 2019, P.47) [11]. Furthermore, also, the research by Ibrahim (2018) [8] reported limited citizen involvement in the implementation of the policy because the policy document on FSHS was silent on how citizen could help monitor resource allocation, disbursements and use of resources.

Operational difficulties in implementing the Double Track Educational System was ranked the fifth priority problem identified in this research; recording a mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) of 4.42 and

sum of score ( $\Sigma$ ) of 1023. A study also identified “inadequate stakeholder consultation, inadequate provision of logistics and funds by the government, quality of education being compromised, possible incompleteness of syllabus owing to increased number of holidays and maintenance of school facilities becoming a problem” as the implementation challenges facing the double track senior high school system in Ghana (Mensah, 2019, P.47) <sup>[11]</sup>. Also, the Double Track Education, attracted the displeasure of policy think tank such as IMANI and right-based public policy research and advocacy organizations like the Integrated Social Development Center (ISODEC), and Teacher unions like the National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT) at its introduction. (Atilego, 2018) <sup>[5]</sup>. Also at its introduction, it is on record that, the Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC) even called for it to be put on hold for extensive engagements with stakeholders (Atilego, 2018) <sup>[5]</sup>. Though some Ghanaians in academia such as Professor G. A. Bokpin of the University of Ghana Business School, described the FSHS as a bold decision requiring commendation from Ghanaians, an Educationist and senior research fellow at the University of Education, Winneba, Dr. Daniel Yielperier, said the double track system “could cause social crises” such as teenage pregnancies and could cause students to engage in vices due to the long vacations associated with it (Nettey, 2018) <sup>[13]</sup>. Therefore the Double Track Education System has been a controversial subject from the inception. Delays in payment of grants or release of funds recorded a mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) of 4.48 and a sum of score ( $\Sigma$ ) of 1036 respectively, making it the sixth priority problem of the policy. Delays in payment of grants was reported as an implementation constraint of FSHS by Asumadu (2019) <sup>[4]</sup>. This has raised questions on whether there was a sustainable source of funding for the policy programme. Ibrahim (2018) <sup>[8]</sup>, raised reservations about sustainability of the policy, arguing that the oil revenue used in funding FSHS is not a reliable source of funding because of its instability. The delays in payments could also be a result of top-down operations of FSHS. According to Morojole (2012); as cited by Asumadu (2019) <sup>[4]</sup>, the introduction of free secondary education in Lesotho resulted in a centralized school management; where central government took charge of financing and operational decisions of schools, excluding of key policy implementers or stakeholders at the local levels. Therefore implementation of the programme became a challenge because the stakeholders were unable to contribute significantly to improving the policy programme for its beneficiaries; because of their minimal involvement in the policy formulation and implementation processes, including decisions on financial disbursements. The seventh priority problem identified was the policy being “need blind” which recorded a mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) of 4.73 and a sum of score ( $\Sigma$ ) of 1092. This problem was identified by NNED who felt only students from poor backgrounds should have been supported (Ibrahim, 2018) <sup>[8]</sup>. They criticize the policy for being “need blind” since beneficiaries form low, middle

and high income households are given the same sponsorship; when some parents could afford to cater for the education of their children (Ibrahim, 2018) <sup>[8]</sup>. This according to them, results in increasing economic inequalities.

Inadequate Teachers and increased Teacher workload was identified and ranked eighth priority problem by the 231 administrators of GES involved in this study. It scored a mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) of 4.91 and a sum of score ( $\Sigma$ ) of 1134. According to Asumadu (2019) <sup>[4]</sup>, the FSHS policy programme is faced with a challenge of inadequate teachers. Increased work load on both teaching and non-teaching staff has also been reported by Salifu and Ayamba (2018) <sup>[16]</sup> in Ghana. Also in Kenya, free secondary education resulted in increased school enrolment which led to increased teacher work load. In Malawi, though free education led to increased school enrolments, there was a corresponding challenge of increases demand for teachers (Inoue and Oketch, 2008).

The ninth priority problem identified in this research was reduced interest in teaching and learning activities by students recording a mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and sum of score ( $\Sigma$ ) of 5.45 and 1260 respectively. According to Salifu and Ayamba (2018) <sup>[16]</sup> who assessed the impact of FSHS on science education a challenge of FSHS in Ghana include reduced interest in teaching and learning activities by students. In Kenya, a free education programme resulted in parents relinquished other responsibilities of paying fees not covered by the free education programme and were less committed to the educating their wards (Aluko and Adan 2015) <sup>[3]</sup>. This could be a results of inadequate education of the parents on what is require of them regarding fee payments or inadequate citizen engagement (Ibrahim, 2018) <sup>[8]</sup>.

Difficulties in feeding students was the least priority problem (10th) according to the GES administrators, with a corresponding mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and sum of score ( $\Sigma$ ) of 5.79 and 1337 respectively. Challenges of FSHS according to Salifu and Ayamba (2018) <sup>[16]</sup> who assessed the impact of FSHS on science education in Ghana included difficulties in feeding students. The difficulties in feeding students may be a result of the increased number of students due to the increased enrolment under FSHS. It may also be because the sponsor (government) was not providing adequate resources for proper feeding of all students. As reported by Poku, Aawaar and Worae (2013) <sup>[14]</sup>, educational reforms in Ghana over the years do not achieve the needed results, because they are mostly not well thought through or implemented inappropriately mostly due to times due to inadequate resource provision or socio-economic and political constraints. Another study that evaluated educational policy documents in East African countries, to determine the implementation success of free education programmes or policies compared to their original intent, was of the perception that, most of them are either not implemented at all, or implementation outcomes are below expectations because they are mostly stated without an implementation financial plan or policy itself was poorly formulated (Psacharopoulos, 1989) <sup>[15]</sup>.

**Table 2:** Prioritization of Free Senior High School (FSHS) Challenges/ Problems by GES Administrators

Challenges of FSHS	N	Mi	Max	$\Sigma$	$\bar{X}$	R
▪ Inadequate classroom infrastructure and dormitory space	231	1	10	826	3.58	1 <sup>ST</sup>
▪ Overcrowding of students	231	1	10	987	4.27	2 <sup>ND</sup>
▪ Inadequate provision of teaching and learning materials, and equipment e.g. textbooks, desks/furniture e.t.c.	231	1	10	1008	4.36	3 <sup>RD</sup>

▪ inadequate stakeholder consultation or Involvement	231	1	10	1022	4.42	4 <sup>TH</sup>
▪ Difficulties implementing the Double Track Educational System	231	1	10	1023	4.43	5 <sup>TH</sup>
▪ Delays in payment of grants or release of funds	231	1	10	1036	4.48	6 <sup>TH</sup>
▪ The policy is “need blind”; only students from poor backgrounds should have been supported	231	1	10	1092	4.73	7 <sup>TH</sup>
▪ Inadequate Teachers and increased Teacher workload	231	1	10	1134	4.91	8 <sup>TH</sup>
▪ Reduced interest in teaching and learning activities by students	231	1	10	1260	5.45	9 <sup>TH</sup>
▪ Difficulties in feeding students	231	1	10	1337	5.79	10 <sup>TH</sup>

**Key:** N= Total; Mi = Minimum value; Max= Maximum values;  $\Sigma$ = Score Sum;  $\bar{X}$ = Mean; R= Rank of challenge or problem

**Source:** Field work data (2020).

### Conclusion

Regarding the FSHS policy, the policy appeared popular among its beneficiaries (students and parents) and implementers as it recorded a very high level of awareness. However, except the implementers of the policy (Administrators) who had relatively superior knowledge on the policy programme, knowledge of the policy was generally inadequate among its beneficiaries.

In prioritizing problems of FSHS, inadequate classroom infrastructure and dormitory space was ranked the most pressing priority problem, followed by overcrowding of students in schools and thirdly inadequate provision of teaching and learning materials. The fourth to tenth priority problems included; inadequate stakeholder consultation, operational difficulties implementing the Double Track Educational System, delays in release funds, poor targeting to the needs beneficiaries, inadequate Teachers and increased worked load; reduced interest in teaching and learning lastly, difficulties in feeding students being the least pressing problem.

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