

THE IMPACT OF POLITICAL TRANSITION ON GHANA'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. A CASE STUDY OF THE 4TH REPUBLIC

¹Owusu-Kwarteng Emmanuel, ²Opoku Prince, ³Dagba Gershon, ⁴Amankwa Mark Opoku

¹Research Scholar, ²Research Scholar, ³Research Scholar, ⁴Research Scholar

¹Department of Political Science,

¹Punjabi University, Patiala, India

Abstract: Education has been accepted as the process by which individuals acquire knowledge, skills and attitude which helps them to expand their mental horizon in full worldwide. It is universally accepted because it has guaranteed the best way of eradicating ignorance. Due to myriads of benefits and opportunities that come with good education, successive governments of Ghana have sought to prioritise education as a trajectory for accelerating the implementation of growth and developmental programmes. The study sought to find out the impact of political transitions on Ghana's educational system, a case study of the 4th Republic. The study dwelled mainly on primary sources of data collected through questionnaires from a multi-stakeholder institutions and groups. The study revealed among others that, successive governments of the 4th Republic have indeed been effecting changes in the educational system. It has led to the establishment of a strong and variable educational system. Thus, one structured to meet the developmental needs of the country. On the contrary, it has allowed politicians to manipulate the educational system to suit their whims and caprices. Again, it has affected the teacher-student contact period.

I. INTRODUCTION

Ghana has since independence recorded significant gains in her effort to reform her educational system. The present educational terrain in Ghana is the culmination of significant policy initiatives rolled out by successive governments. The educational system in Ghana was modeled after the British educational style after independence, although it has gone through several reformations over the last two decades. The history of education in Ghana dates back to 1592 (Atuahene & Owusu-Ansah, 2013). Ghana's educational system was mainly unstructured until the advent of its colonial masters who introduced a formal educational system for the elites in society (Adu-Agyem & Osei-Poku, 2012). Teaching took place in the castles built along the coast by some European traders such as the Danish, Dutch and English. The purpose was to educate their mulatto children birthed to them by native women. In the course of time, the Christian Missionaries took over from the European traders. Besides, the Christian Missionaries needed well educated local assistants to assist them in daily routines. This could be inferred from how education was implemented at the time. Thereafter, in the nineteenth century, it was handled by the British Administrators. However, in 1951, the first Prime Minister of Ghana took office from the British and revolutionized it to the system of Pre-school, Primary, Middle (Junior Secondary) Senior Secondary and Teacher Training to Tertiary.

Education is an institution which human society has established to ensure its survival and continuity. It prepares, trains and orients individual for growth, development and participation in national development. Therefore, it is important and strategic to development, with the basic purpose of producing a population which is functional, literate, knowledgeable and productive. When such capabilities emerge, they are manifested in skills displayed by the educated to produce goods and services that are vital to the growth of a country. In Ghana's education, particularly basic education has been recognized as a basic human right very necessary for every citizen to have access to and for the betterment of the individual and the nation as a whole. In spite of all these, Ghana's educational system has a beckoning wave from the various political transitions since the inception of the 4th Republic. Political Transitions plays a significant role on educational system. The concept of Political Transition as opinionated by Van Gyampo et al (2013) is "a period in a country's development when conscious efforts are made to overcome a political order characterized by institutional disarray and normative incongruence, recurring political instability, institutional breakdown as well as extreme civil disorders by substituting it with one that is institutionally coherent and stable, and above all, capable of responding adequately to the demands emanating from an interplay of social interests and claims". The political transition in Ghana took a quantum leap on 3rd January 1993 when the authoritarian military-based regime was replaced with political democracy. Droz-Vincent (2011) posits that, transition can be from an authoritarian regime into "sometime else". This could be a political democracy, restoration of a new authoritarian rule, revolutionary regime or hybrid regime and Ghana has gone through such transitions.

Generally, the conduct of transparent, free and fair elections and successful transfer of power from one party to the other is thought to be rare in Africa prior to the twentieth century. Further, the end of the Cold War led to some developing countries adhering to democratic governance, a crucial conditionality in the foreign policy directives and development assistance of most

developed countries. There has been a fine line between Ghana's educational system and successive change of government due to incessant reforms.

In 1957, Dr Kwame Nkrumah implemented an Accelerated Development plan on Education to quickly expand enrolment into basic and secondary education. Also, the Kwapong Review Committee addressed the challenge of increasing enrolment in schools by presenting the idea of "continuation schools" which was later condemned as elitist. This was in 1966 after the toppling of the Nkrumah government when the committee helped assimilate majority of pupils into primary schools who generally couldn't obtain entrance into confined secondary schools. These changes were endeavors progressive governments took off with the expectation to reinforce Ghana's educational system. Additionally, the Dzobo Review Committee of 1974 executed the idea of comprehensive Junior Secondary School to impact scholarly and down to earth aptitudes to all pupils. Moreover, military upsets also ushered in new educational transitions in Ghana's Educational System. A precedent was the 1987 Education Act which was proposed to actualizing the report of the Dzobo Review Committee. These reforms were efforts progressive governments took off with the goal to fortify Ghana's educational system. However, the guarantee of Universal access to basic education was not achieved and the vocational programme was likewise considered as a failure. The reform chalked significant success with regards to the introduction of a new education structure, and in addition expanding enrolment and the improvement of infrastructures. The promise of Universal access to basic education was a delusion and the vocational programme was likewise considered as a fiasco. In 1992, there was the return of constitutional rule and the military government metamorphosed into a political party. The government under constitutional rule gave a new impetus to education by introducing Free Compulsory and Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) for all. The local government Act of 1993 made arrangement for education ministry to decentralize by giving power by offering capacity to District Assemblies. The Free Compulsory and Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) started an action plan for the period 1996 – 2015 with the aim of bridging the gender gap in primary school, providing teaching materials and enhancing teacher's living conditions

On January 17 2002, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) of John Agyekum Kuffour set up a presidential committee on Review of Education Reforms in Ghana. The Committee was led by Professor Jophus Anamuah-Mensah who was then the Vice-Chancellor of University of Education, Winneba. The Committee introduced its report in October 2002. A portion of the committee's suggestions include Universal Basic Education which will now be 11 years, made up of 2 years of Kindergarten, 6 years of primary, 3 years of Junior High School. After Junior High School (JHS), the student may further proceed to second cycle institutions comprising of General Education in senior secondary schools or Technical and Vocational School, or Agricultural and Training School, or option for an apprenticeship education with the assistance from the government. The duration for SHS was increased from three to four years and also there was an introduction of ICT literacy in all level of the pre-tertiary instruction in Ghana.

The National Democratic Congress (NDC) government after winning the election in 2009 implemented a new reform in consultation with all partners in the education ministry. The Education Reforms Bill was passed into law in October 2010 paving the way for major improvements in the education framework by reducing the length of Senior High School from 4 years to 3 years. The administration defended the reduction in the duration by saying; the emphasis ought to be on the early years of a child's education, invest resources into education; improve the working conditions of teachers etc. Currently, the Ghana education framework has three components including basic education, secondary education and tertiary education. Basic Education has a long duration (age 4 – 15) which is free and mandatory. The duration for Junior High School and Senior High School are three years each. Upon completion of the secondary schools, students can continue to University for 4 years Degree Programme or Polytechnic for 3 years or Training College for 3 years.

2.1 Definition of Terms

The New English Dictionary on Historical principles defines education as the action or process of drawing forth, eliciting or developing (human and animals) from a state of latent, rudimentary or potential existence". This means that education has the ability to unearth hidden capabilities in people who go through its process. When such capabilities emerge, they are manifested in skills displayed by the educated to produce goods and services that are very vital.

Educational System: Educational system may be viewed as subsystem within social organization, of its own. It has a system of status and roles, a body of skills, values, and traditions. Each school and each classroom within the school forms an interacting group.

Political Transition: is a period in a country's development when conscious efforts are made to overcome a political order characterized by institutional disarray and normative incongruence, recurring political instability, institutional breakdown, as well as extreme civil disorders by substituting it with one that is institutionally coherent and stable, and above all capable of responding adequately to the demands emanating from an interplay of social interests and claims (Ninsin, 1998).

Republic: Blumey (2011), a republic is a state in which almost all offices are open to personal endeavours in a form of competition among rival individuals.

2.2 Educational Reforms In Ghana From Retrospect

In contemporary times, public sector reform has assumed a major focus of policymakers, practitioners and academicians (Lapsley and Wright, 2004 as cited in Poku et al, 2013). Education as an important instrument of public service is not impervious from these reforms. Ghana after the attainment of independence has seen its educational sector undergo several reforms. The key problems that were inherent in the colonial educational system prior to the assumption of office of Dr Kwame Nkrumah as the colonial head of government in 1951 were inaccessibility to the majority of the people. Again, the relevance of its curriculum did not much to their daily life experience of the local folks (Ombati & Ombati, 2012fos).

As part of efforts to make education more relevant, an Accelerated Development Plan for Education was launched in 1951 whose objective was expanding education in all sub-sectors with a more emphasis on increasing enrolment in primary and middle schools by trying to provide equal opportunity in education by abolishing tuition fees (Foster, 1965 as cited in Poku (2013); Nwomonoh, 1998). Dr Nkrumah under the first republic of Ghana also introduced and implemented a fee-free basic education for all, which was the first of its kind in the country and under a democratic dispensation (Poku 2013, Nwomonoh, 1998, and Little 2010).

The overthrow of Nkrumah in 1966 saw another educational reform take place. The NLC government which assumed power after the coup, appointed the Kwapong Educational Review Committee which recommended the bringing into the middle school system a two-year pre-vocational continuation schools dependent on the industrial and farming needs of the country (Poku et al, 2013). However, these innovations made a little impact since there were no qualified teachers. The regime, in general, failed to make teaching attractive, total expenditure on education dwindled with a significant drop both in the school-aged children in schools and trained teachers well into the 1980s (Ahadzie, 2000 as cited in Poku et al, 2013).

The poor performance of the first military regime testifies to the fact that democratic regimes are committed to educational development than authoritarian governments. In 1969, parliamentary elections ushered the pro-capitalist Progress Party (PP) to power with Dr Kofi Abrefa Busia as Prime Minister. The second democratic regime (second republic) also set up the Amisshah Committee to structure and to revamp basic education. In 1971, several proposals for education reform were made by the committee but there was another military coup before they could be implemented (Poku et al, 2013; Nwomonoh 1998; Little 2010).

The NRC administration in 1972 set up the Dzobo Educational Reform Committee to devise a new structure and content for education in Ghana. The committee made several recommendations for the country's educational system. Most significant for the basic educational level was the committee's proposal for a revised structure of the educational structure which made the duration of basic education 9 years (i.e. 6 years primary, 3 years Junior Secondary) as opposed to the former 10 years system. The Committee, therefore, recommended the introduction of a Comprehensive Junior Secondary School, which was to provide the students with skills to work with both their hands and minds (GoG, 1972 as cited in Poku et al, 2013).

Besides, the committee advocated that the curriculum be made more practical and skills-oriented, through pre-technical and pre-vocational subjects in both the primary and junior secondary stage (Little, 2010). The government then after established the Ghana Education Service to execute and monitor the new structure in 1974. However, the overthrow of Acheampong's SMC 1 in 1978 caused a reduction in the driving force behind the reform (Nwomonoh, 1998). In 1979 the third military coup saw Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings clinging onto power as Chairman of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) for a short-lived period after which the third civilian government under Limann came into being only to be displaced two years afterwards (Poku et al, 2013; Nwomonoh, 1998; Little 2010). Conversely, the hostile political environment and economic decadent meant that the existing educational reform could not survive (Nwomonoh, 1998).

The preparation of the country towards another transition meant the need for yet another educational reform. The educational reform in 1987 distinctively positions itself as an incomparable age in the development of the country's education (Nwomonoh, 1998). This new educational scheme commenced in 1990.

The reform truly highlighted transitional principles and perhaps may be judged duly because the country awaited democracy in 1992. The principles that informed this reform included these basic democratic elements which were;

- a. The confirmation of education as a fundamental right for every citizen
- b. That majority of Ghanaians lack the enthusiasm to participate in national development as a result of illiteracy, partial literacy or miseducation
- c. The recognition for cultural identity and dignity (Nwomonoh, 1998)

The constitution of Ghana's fourth republic brought new momentum to the implementation of the 1987 reforms in the form of Free, Compulsory, Universal Basic Education programme (FCUBE). The protection of free, compulsory and universal basic education as enshrined in the constitution underpinned the values of free primary education set out in 1951 and the free and compulsory education clauses as found in the 1961 act. The constitutional status gave citizens of Ghana the legal right to free and compulsory education (Little, 2010). The last educational review took place under the Kuffour led NPP government. In January 2002, The New patriotic Government set up a Committee of Review of Educational Reforms in Ghana. The recommendation for

Educational Reform was implemented in September 2007 i.e. the 2007-2008 academic years, (Acheampong, 2008 as cited in Poku et al, 2013). This Committee was to overhaul education to reflect the current situation in the country. For instance, there was a public outcry that the basic schools were overburdened with many subjects and therefore there was the need to reduce them. The National Democratic Congress (NDC) government upon gaining power in 2009 engaged all stakeholders in the educational sector. This engagement paved the way for the education Reforms Bill to be passed into law in October 2010 making it possible for fundamental improvements in the education system by reversing the duration of Senior High School from initial 4 years to 3 years.

In conclusion, it can be said that the history of Ghana's educational reform has in part, been a product of political transitions and that it is no wonder that the current educational reform have stand out basically because of the democratic dispensation which has ensured political stability.

2.3 The Concept of Political Transition

The concept of Political Transition in the words of Van Gyampo et al (2013) is "a period in a country's development when conscious efforts are made to overcome a political order characterized by institutional disarray and normative incongruence, recurring political instability, institutional breakdown as well as extreme civil disorders by substituting it with one that is institutionally coherent and stable, and above all, capable of responding adequately to the demands emanating from an interplay of social interests and claims". The political transition in Ghana took a quantum leap forward on 3rd January 1993 when the authoritarian military-based regime was replaced with a new one based on the 1992 constitution. Droz-Vincent (2011) said a country can transit from an authoritarian regime into "sometime else". The transition can lead to the establishment of a political democracy, the reclamation of a new form of authoritarian regime which meant that subsequent governments failed to systematize political power, or pervasive brutality, which gives rise to a revolutionary regime like authoritarian rule (O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986).

An authoritarian regime is a regime capable of strengthening the bond between various elite groups, who wield power, characterized by a network of trust, common goals, patronage, comradeships and the wherewithal to exhaust any other alternative to their regime. A strong bond exists between high political class and top-security officers. The army and other security agencies often act as the bulwarks of the authoritarian rule and form the key pillars for the stability of the revolution (Droz-Vincent, 2011 and Cook, 2007).

O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead introduced the concept of transition paradigm in the 1980s. They argued that during this period most South European and Latin American countries experienced political transition paving the way for political democracy. The transition from authoritarian rule to political democracy was characterized by vestiges of the authoritarian rule. However, more rights were granted to individuals and groups by modifying their own rules (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986).

O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) pointed to the fact that the transition paradigm ended when politics assumed 'normality'. This implies that sets of instructions and rules which are to be adhered to in accessing government positions and procedures on decision-making. In a nutshell, political transition refers to the period between the dissolution of the authoritarian regime and the installation of the other regime, being it a democratic, authoritarian, revolutionary or a hybrid one (O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986 Stepan and Linz, 2013).

Unlike most political transitions in Latin America, Southern and Eastern Europe, the political development in the Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) countries were not top-down driven, not elitist and did not start with cracks in the government but were as a result of popular upheavals. These upheavals were characterized by the staging of nonviolent mass protests over several days across principal streets and vantage points and the protection and control of the protestors over public streets such as Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt and the Pearl Roundabout in Manama, Bahrain (Brownlee, Masoud & Reynolds, 2013).

Moreover, most Arab countries' political development does not include prior experience with democracy as most Latin American, Southern and Eastern European countries had. There was little tolerance for Mass-based political parties, labor unions and free press. Besides, Colonial supremacy, rather than self-determination (Bellin, 2004 and Cook, 2007), was the prominent feature of democracy in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). However, democratization has been observed to be possible in some countries like Romania in 2005 and in Kyrgyzstan in 2010, though they lack prior experience with democracy and strong civil society. Another precedent is Portugal, where participation in public life was low before the transition (Miller et al., 2012).

In a nutshell, Ninsin (1998) summarized it by explaining that political transition does not necessarily culminate in a democratic order. Rather, it marks an important beginning of a journey of a long and difficult process.

2.4 Ghana's Political Transition into the Fourth Republic

Ghana attained independence in 1957 and the following period up to present has been characterized by many years of military coups, gross human rights infringements. (Gyimah-Boadi, 2004). Apart from the First Republic under Nkrumah (1960-1966), the periods of civilian administrations under the Second (1969-72) and Third (1979-81) Republics have been short-lived with regimes not able to survive for up to three years without being overthrown in a coup d'état.

CIA world fact book (Ghana), points to the fact that the major concern of the country as it prepared to move toward constitutional rule was how to ensure a relatively smooth and peaceful democratic transition. This sentiments and worries were felt by the

opposition, the activists who were under stern surveillance by the national security agencies, and by the ruling PNDC, under pressure to present a clear, firm timetable and program for the installation of a constitutional government.

Van Gyampo et al (2013) describe the transition process as having unsavoury features that many Ghanaians opined could trigger brutalities. Strong mutual mistrust and antagonism existed between the PNDC leadership and the opposition as a result of the June 4, 1979, uprising and the stringent measures implemented by the AFRC. In one instance, Rawlings and the PNDC believed that the opposition leaders not as individuals were not genuinely interested in real democracy but as elitist, corrupt, self-aggrandizing and self-seeking cabals who were bent on fighting to the bitter end to undo the gains of the revolution and to re-establish the old system of corruption and exploitation. This is because the PNDC came to power at a time when there were devastating and unenviable economic and social indicators. Gyimah-Boadi (2008:1) emphasized that “in the late 1970s and early 1980s Ghana had become a typical symbol of the “failing” and/ or collapsing African state; government was in wanton profligacy and decadent society.

The economy assumed a nosedive, it was stagnant, the fiscal situation could pass for bankruptcy; there was an acute shortage of foreign exchange, debilitation of public infrastructure, shortage of essential consumable items and spare parts, exodus of skilled manpower in droves to seek greener pastures abroad from key sectors such as education and health.

The Rawlings-led PNDC, upon assuming power in 1982 became reluctant to return the country to multiparty democracy, as the regime was characterized by long ban on the activities of political parties. However, by the early 1990s, the regime was under intense pressure from diverse pro-democracy groups to lift up the ban on political parties, open up the political space and allow democratic participation, as well as ensuring the protection of human rights (Ninsin 1998).

Other writers like Yeebo (1991), Shillington (1992), and Folson (1993) argue the fact that the Rawlings-led PNDC did not have the genuine interest in returning the country to democratic rule. Ghana's transition to democracy could instead be attributed to conditions attached to donor assistance. Coupled with this is the internal agitation by various civil society groups who mounted pressure on government to accept democracy. The worsening economic conditions of the nation compelled the PNDC government to yield to external pressures, at a time in the late 1980's when major donors or development partners had attached conditionality to aids. These external pressures in the form of conditionality resuscitated and re-energized the hitherto emasculated, enfeebled and uncoordinated pressure groups and civil society organizations, whose struggles for political democracy before then had been occasional and inconsistent (Boafo-Arthur 1998).

Ghana's struggle to return to democratic rule at this time came in twofold: the struggle for economic recovery from decades of economic depression and improved living standards for the ordinary Ghanaian; and the struggle for "true democracy". (“Ghana: The Transition from Military Rule to Democratic Government”). As a result of both external and internal pressures for democratic rule the PNDC government adopted several measures to end its dictatorship and return to democratic rule.

Among these measures are:

- The holding of District Level elections in 1988 and 1989.
- The setting up of the National Commission for Democracy (NCD) to collate views on the democratic fortunes of the country.
- The declaration of a law on May 17, 1991 initiating a nine-member Committee of Experts (Constitution). The mandate of the Committee was to draw a draft proposal (constitution) considering past constitutions of Ghana since the attainment of independence and any other relevant constitution(s) as well as other matters that may be referred to it by the PNDC.
- The inauguration in August 1991 of a 260-member Consultative Assembly (CA) to draw a draft constitution (in accordance to the work of the Committee of Experts) for the country.
- The CA forwarded the draft constitution to the PNDC on March 31, 1992 paving way for the setting up of an Interim Electoral Commission.
- The submission on the draft constitution was held, referendum held in April 1992 with 92.6% of qualified voters casting a ballot for the draft constitution.
- The ban on political party activities came to an end in May 1992 and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) was formed by the Chairman of the PNDC, Flt. Lt. Rawlings to contest the Presidential and parliamentary race.
- The conduction of the presidential race on November 3, 1992 and the parliamentary race on December 28, 1992.
- With Rawlings as the first president on 7th January, 1993 mark the commencement of the Fourth Republic.

Jebuni and Oduru argued two significant factors that affected the transition process- a political and economic factor. The interplay of the two factors in the transition process raises the rather controversial question of the relationship between political liberalization and economic liberalization. The proceeding analysis of the issues in Ghana's transition has so far proceeded on the assumption that the process of political reforms was pushed forward by autonomous internal social forces; that, indeed, the process itself was autonomous.

Jebuni, Oduru, Boafo-Arthur, and Ninsin provided a different perspective on transition. They expatiate on the role of external forces in propelling the transition process forward. Also their contributions agree on the important role played by the donor community in precipitating the crucial phase of the transition process and keeping it on course against internal odds, particularly

the military regime's antipathy towards democracy. They further argue that the significant inflow of foreign financial resources and the fact that the government became extremely dependent on crucial external economic resources exposed the government to the political conditionality of the donor community so much that it could not ignore the possibility that economic sanctions might be applied against it should it renege on the demands for political liberalization.

In sum, it was evident that the price of returning the country to authoritarian rule would be far greater than the price of living under an imperfect democratic order and learning patiently to purge it of imperfections and abuses.

I. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study engineers a quantitative research design and a descriptive methodology for various reasons; descriptive methodology is simpler to administer. Furthermore, Reliable questions reduces variability in the results that may be caused by differences in respondents and enhances reliability and validity of the responses and descriptive methodology is practical and versatile, because of its ability to identify present phenomena and its simplicity in coding, analyzing, and interpreting of data. Descriptive research design makes use of questionnaires to gather data from large number of respondents (Creswell, 2014). For the validity and reliability of this study, the paper gathered from both primary and secondary data for the research.

3.1 Population and Sample

In gathering data for the study, questionnaires were administered using purposive sampling. In all, forty respondents from lecturers, teachers, students, administrators, parents, politicians, staffs at the education office, heads of department in some selected senior high schools and ordinary Ghanaians who have the requisite knowledge concerning the chosen topic

3.2 Data and Sources of Data

The paper examines some existing literatures involving articles of scholars, books and peer reviewed journals on the topic. Statistical Package for the Social sciences (SPSS) was then used to analyze the data. Tables, frequencies and graphs were further used to analyze and interpret the data collected.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings of the research based on the analysis of data collected from the study. The chapter presents the results and discussions of this study under the following Subheadings; Presentation of demographic data, Analysis of data and Research questions and Detailed analysis of findings from respondents. The findings were presented using tables, charts and narratives.

Presentation of demographic data

A total number of forty (40) questionnaires were administered. From the table, 23 respondents representing 57.5% of the total respondents were males while 17 respondents representing 33.5% were females. Majority of males participated in the research because the females were feeling reluctant to attend to the questionnaire.

Table 1: Gender distribution of respondents

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Male | 23 | 57.5 |
| Female | 17 | 42.5 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Fieldwork 2016

Perspectives on Education

According to the results of the survey from table 2, 32.5% viewed the meaning of education as the process by which a person learns the values of his society. Their responses affirmed the definition given by Sarfo and Adentwi, (2011) as a process by which individuals born into a society learn the ways of life and values that include knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the society so that they can function effectively as members of the society. 25% also viewed education as all the ideas that a person acquires as he/she grows while 20% expressed their view on education as going to school. This buttressed the point of Farrant, (1980) that schooling is one form in which education is provided. Again, the ability to speak and write English representing 17.5% was the opinions of others. The reason had been that our society tags an educated person as someone who can express him/her in the English language. 5% of the respondent had their own views on education. Some of them were education is what you remember when you have forgotten everything you learnt, the total process of human learning by which knowledge is imparted, faculties, trained and skills developed, as effecting change in society as a result of one's experience and learning in school.

Table 2: Views of respondents on education

| Views on what education | Frequency | PERCENTAGE |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Going to school | 8 | 20 |
| All ideas that a person acquires as he grows | 10 | 25 |
| Ability to and write English | 7 | 17.5 |
| Learning values | 13 | 32.5 |
| Others | 2 | 5 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Fieldwork 2016

Educational Trends since the Fourth Republic

Majority of the respondents representing 52.5% of the total respondents affirmed that the educational system of Ghana since the 4th Republic is one that is structured to meet the developmental needs of the country. 35.5% of the respondents also described the educational system as an educational trend that changes and finally, 12.5% of the respondents affirmed that the educational system is one of a consistent trend.

Table 3: Respondents' views on Ghana's educational trend since the Fourth Republic

| Ghana's educational trend since the 4 th Republic | Frequency | PERCENTAGE |
|---|-----------|------------|
| One of a consistent trend. | 5 | 12.5 |
| An educational trend that changes | 14 | 35.5 |
| One that is structured to meet the developmental needs of the country | 21 | 52.5 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Fieldwork 2016

Changes in the Educational System since the 4th Republic

According to the survey, the majority of the respondents representing 82.5% had heard of educational reforms in Ghana while 17.5% of the respondents had not heard of any educational reforms since the 4th Republic. Some of these reforms included the FCUBE, four (4) years Senior High School, and School Feeding Programme among others.

Table 4: Educational reforms in Ghana since the inception of the Fourth Republic

| Heard of educational reform in Ghana since the inception of the fourth republic | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 33 | 82.5 |
| No | 7 | 17.5 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Fieldwork 2016

Best Educational Reforms

In soliciting for the educational reforms that the respondents had notice of, 5 respondents (14.29%) were aware of the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE), 7 respondents (20%) were aware of the School Feeding Programme (SFP), 9 respondents (25.71%) were aware of the 4 years Senior High School programme, 8 respondents (22.86%) knew of the 3 years Senior High School Programme and finally, 6 respondents (17.14%) were aware of all the educational reforms since the inception of the Fourth Republic.

RESPONDENT VIEW ON BEST EDUCATIONAL REFORM

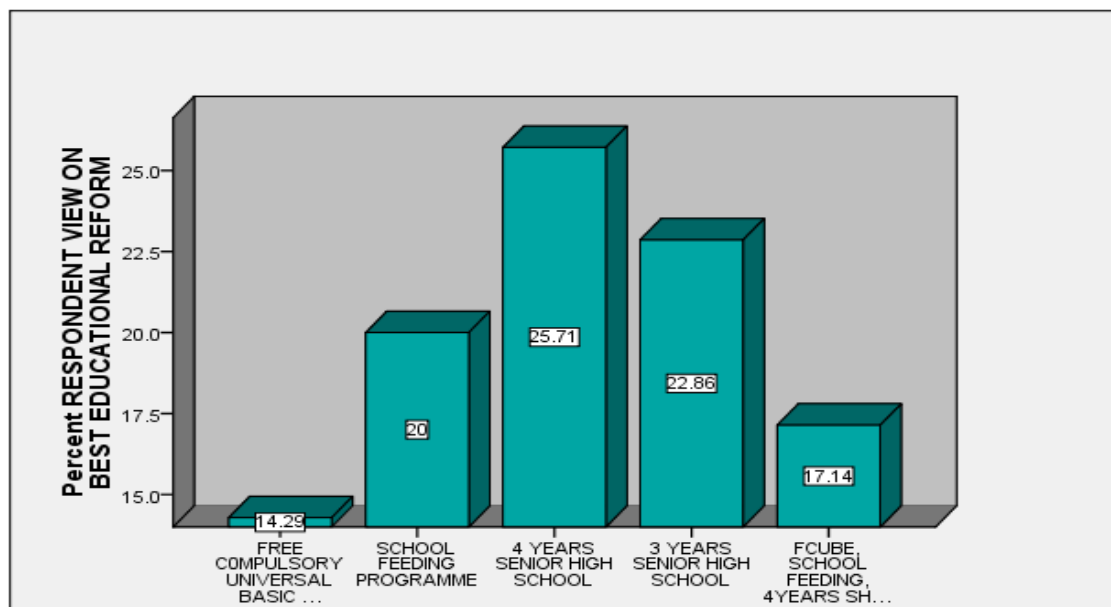


Figure 1.0
Source: Fieldwork 2016

Table 5: The relevance of the recommendations from Educational Reform Committees

| The recommendation (s) of these educational reform committees really relevant | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 34 | 85 |
| No | 6 | 15 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Fieldwork 2016

Among the respondents, 34 of them representing 85% agreed to the fact that the recommendations by the educational reform committees were relevant whilst, 6 respondents indicated that the recommendations by these committees were irrelevant.

Table 6: Respondents' views on the effectiveness and implementation of their recommendations

| Were the recommendation(s) effectively implemented | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 18 | 45 |
| No | 16 | 40 |
| Not certain | 6 | 15 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Fieldwork 2016

From the table above, 18 respondents (45%) indicated that the recommendations were effectively implemented, 16 respondents (40%) indicated that the recommendations were not effectively implemented and finally, 6 respondents (15%) were not certain about the implementation of these recommendations.

Table 7: The role of private entrepreneurs in education

| Should private entrepreneurs own and manage schools | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 27 | 67.5 |
| No | 10 | 25 |
| Not certain | 3 | 7.5 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Fieldwork 2016

From the table above, 27 respondents (67.5%) indicated that private entrepreneurs should own and manage schools, 3 respondents (7.5%) indicated that private entrepreneurs must be exempted from the owning and management of schools and finally, 10 respondents (25%) were not certain as to whether private entrepreneurs must own or manage schools.

Table 8: The educational system respondents attended

| The educational systems did you attended | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Ordinary level | 8 | 20 |
| Advance level | 7 | 17.5 |
| Senior Secondary School | 17 | 42.5 |
| Senior High School | 8 | 20 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Fieldwork 2016

Among the total respondents, 8 respondents (20%) were products of the Ordinary level system, 7 respondents (17.5%) were products of the Advance level system, 17 respondents (42.5%) were products of the Senior Secondary School system and finally, 8 respondents (20%) were products of the Senior High School system.

RESPONDENT VIEW ON BEST EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM TO BE PRACTICED

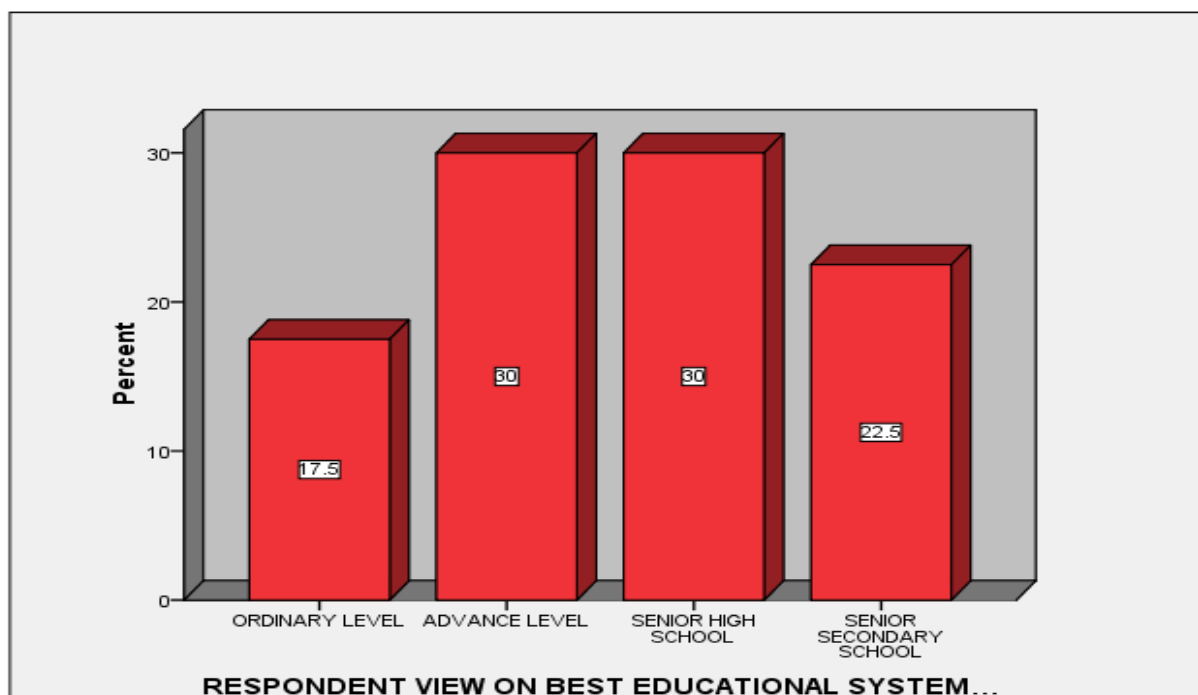


Figure 2.0
Source: Fieldwork 2016

From figure 2 above, in accessing the best educational system to be practised, 7 respondents representing 17.5% indicated that the Ordinary level system must be practised in Ghana, 12 respondents (30%) indicated that the Advanced level must be practised in Ghana, 12 respondents (30%) indicated that the Senior High School system must be encouraged and finally, 9 respondents (22.5%) indicated that the Senior Secondary School system must be practised in Ghana.

Table 9: Respondents' view on the nine (9) year Basic education and three (3) year second cycle education

| Agree with the current nine (9) year Basic education and three (3) year second cycle education. | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
|---|-----------|------------|

| | | |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Agree | 24 | 60 |
| Disagree | 13 | 32.5 |
| Not Certain | 3 | 7.5 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Fieldwork 2016

From the table above, 24 respondents (60%) agreed with the current nine-year Basic education and three-year second cycle education, 13 respondents (32.5%) do not agree with the current educational system and finally, 3 respondents (7.5%) were not certain which of the educational system to be implemented.

Table 10: Respondents’ view on the composition of subjects in the curriculum

| Would you support the idea that some subjects should be deleted from the curriculum? | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 20 | 50 |
| No | 14 | 35 |
| Not certain | 6 | 15 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Fieldwork 2016

From the table above, 20 respondents (50%) supported the idea that some subjects should be deleted from the curriculum, 14 respondents (35%) do not support the idea that some subjects should be deleted from the curriculum and finally, 6 respondents (15%) were not certain whether some of the subjects should be deleted.

DOES NUMBER OF SUBJECTS STUDIED AFFECT STUDENT PERFORMANCE

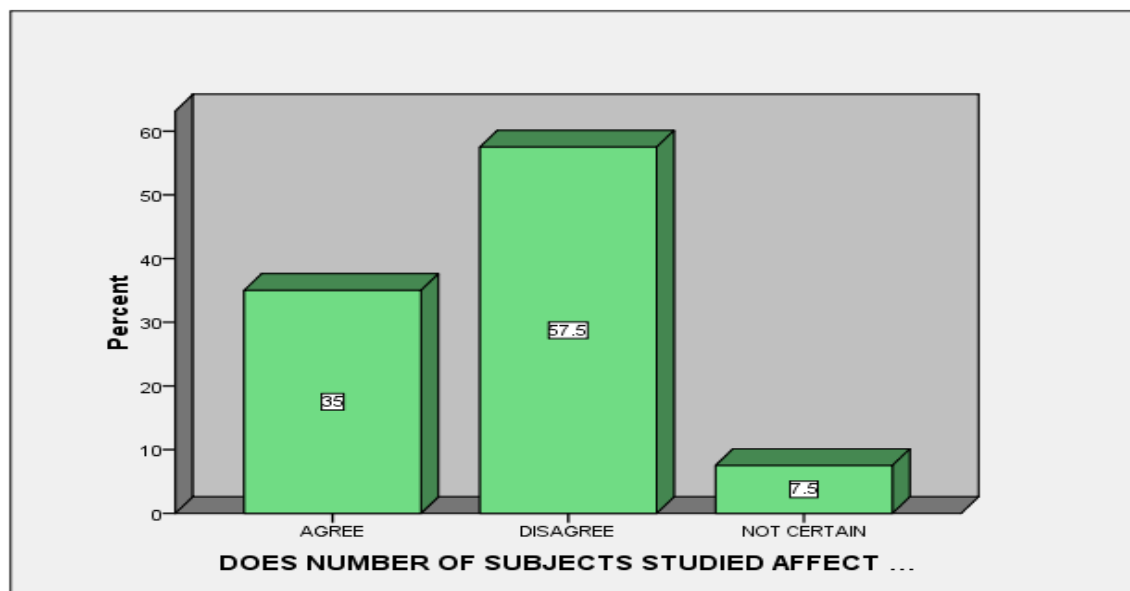


Figure 3.0
Source: Fieldwork 2016

From the table above, 14 respondents (35%) supported the idea that the number of subjects studied is a contributing factor to students’ performance in examination, 23 respondents (57.5%) do not support the idea that the number of subjects studied affect students’ performance and finally, 3 respondents (7.5%) were not certain about the effect of the number of subjects on student performance.

Table 11: Suggested subjects to be taught in the Ghanaian Schools

| Suggested subjects to be taught in | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
|------------------------------------|-----------|------------|

| the Ghanaian schools | | |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Technical and vocational kind subjects | 20 | 50 |
| Philosophical subjects | 3 | 7.5 |
| Linguistics | 5 | 12.5 |
| Moral kind of subjects | 12 | 30 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Fieldwork 2016

From the table above, 20 respondents (50%) suggested that much emphasis must be laid on technical and vocational subjects, 3 respondents (7.5%) suggested that attention must be drawn to philosophical subjects, 5 respondents (12.5%) indicated that emphasis must be laid on linguistics and finally, 12 respondents (30%) suggested that the attention of educators must be channelled to Moral kind of subjects.

Table 12: The impact of the education reforms on teachers

| Teachers also affected by these frequent educational reforms | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 30 | 75 |
| No | 8 | 20 |
| Not certain | 2 | 5 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Fieldwork 2016

From the table above, 30 respondents (75%) agree that teachers are also affected by frequent educational reforms, 8 respondents (20%) did not agree that teachers are affected by frequent educational reforms and finally, 2 respondents (5%) were not certain about the effect of the frequent educational reforms on teachers.

Table 13: How the educational reforms affect teachers

| How does it affect teachers | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Make their teaching methodology outmoded | 6 | 15 |
| It makes teachers less equipped with some subjects | 7 | 17.5 |
| It affects the teacher-student contact period | 27 | 67.5 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Fieldwork 2016

According to the table above, 6 respondents (15%) indicated that, educational reforms affect teachers by making their teaching methodology outmoded, 7 respondents (17.5%) indicated that it makes teachers less equipped with some subjects and finally, 27 respondents (67.5%) indicated that, frequent change in educational reforms affect the teacher-student contact period.

Table 14: The impact of the actions of politicians on education

| Politicians are juggling with our educational system? | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 31 | 77.5 |
| No | 9 | 22.5 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Fieldwork 2016

From the table above, 31 respondents representing 77.5% of the total respondents indicated that politicians are juggling with the current educational system while 9 respondents 22.5% indicated that politicians are not juggling with the educational system. In assessing the effect of the various reforms on the educational standard in Ghana, the results of the survey indicated that, it has allowed politicians to manipulate the educational system for their political gains, others put it that the trend has led to the establishment of a strong and viable system and most importantly, some of the respondents posited that it has produced students without the necessary skills and values. This finding was consistent with the report from Prof. Anamuah Mensah on the Educational Review Committee. According to him, these committees who worked assiduously spent many hours to come up with good ideas to help elevate the standard of the system. And upon submitting their report, the government will manipulate the report to bring out the things that will favor and enhance their perpetuity in power. He gave an example as, even though members of the Review Committee settled for the maintenance of the three (3) years Senior High Senior programme after deliberation. It was nonetheless pushed to four (4) years.

5. Conclusion and Policy Recommendation

In summary, the paper concludes that the situation where politicians are allowed to manipulate the Ghana's Educational system leads to educational retrogression. Thus, it creates a case where future governments do not build upon the successes of their predecessors but undertake policies that undermines policies of previous governments on the educational system due to their egoistic gains. In this regards, the study suggests that the establishment of an educational system free from political interference will be a prerequisite for the growth and development on Ghana's education system. The study makes the following recommendations based on its findings. The researcher recommends that much attention should be given at the basic level so students will not find any difficulty in the second cycle and tertiary level. Ghana's educational system should as possible be devoid of partisan politics. The government should adopt collaborative governance where all stakeholders including teachers, politicians, parents, non- governmental organization are allowed to take part in decision making to boost the quality of education in Ghana. Again when educational committees are set up to probe into our educational system, reports from the committees should as far as possible be strictly adhered to.

REFERENCES

- [1] Adu-Agyem, J. & Osei-Poku, P. (2012: November). *Quality education in Ghana: The way Forwards*.
- [2] Atuahene, F., & Owusu-Ansah, A. (2013). A descriptive assessment of higher education access, participation, equity, and disparity in Ghana. *Sage Open*, 3(3), 215824401349772.
- [3] Bluwey, G.K.(2011). *Political Science: An Introduction*. Accra: Sundel Publication.
- [4] Bellin, E. (2014). *The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective*.
- [5] Boafo-Arthur, K. (1998). *Democracy and Stability in West Africa: The Ghanaian Experience*. Uppsala University and the Nordic Africa Institute (NAI).
- [6] Brownlee, J., Masoud, T. & Rayholds, A. (2013). *The Arab Spring: Pathways of Repression and Reform*. Oxford Press.
- [7] Creswell, J. W. (2014). *A concise introduction to mixed methods research*. Sage Publications.
- [8] Droz-Vincent, P. (2011: June). Authoritarianism, Revolutions, Armies and Arab Regime Transition. *The International Spectator*, 46(2).
- [9] Duncan, I., Miller, A., & Jiang, S. (2012). A taxonomy of virtual worlds usage in education. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 43(6), 949-964.
- [10] Farrant, S. (1980). *Georgian Brighton, 1740-1820* (No. 13). Centre for Continuing Education University of Sussex.
- [11] Fobih D.K. and Koomson A. .K.“Ghana's Education Reform: Historical perspectives”. In *Education and development in Africa; a contemporary survey*, cited in Nwomonoh J (1998); pg155-169. International Scholars Publications, San Francisco-London-Bethesda.
- [12] Foster, P. J. (1965). The vocational school fallacy in development planning. *Education and economic development*, 7, 19-78.
- [13] Ghana: A Review. *Global Research Journal of Education Vol.3 (2) pp. 20 – 31 June 2013*. Retrieved from <http://www.globalresearchjournals.org/journal/grje/archive/june-2013-vol-3-2/poku-et-al> Date accessed; 19th January, 2015.
- [14] Ghana: The Transition from Military Rule to Democratic Government http://www.photius.com/countries/ghana/government/ghana_government_the_transition_from~123.html Sources: The Library of Congress Country Studies; CIA World Factbook.
- [15] Gyimah-Boadi (2004). *Ghana: Democracy, Economic Reform and Development*. Accra: Symposium Book Publication.
- [16] Gyimah-Boadi, E. (2008). Ghana's Fourth Republic: Championing the African Democratic Renaissance?'. *Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-GHANA) Briefing Paper*, 8(4), 56-74.
- [17] Lapsley, I., & Wright, E. (2004). The diffusion of management accounting innovations in the public sector: a research agenda. *Management Accounting Research*, 15(3), 355-374.
- [18] Little, A. W. (2010). Access to Basic Education in Ghana: politics, policies and progress.
- [19] Nwomonoh, J. (1998). *Education and development in Africa: A contemporary survey*. Intl Scholars Pubns.
- [20] Ninsin K.A (1998). **Ghana Transition to Democracy**. Dakar: CORDESRIA Publications.
- [21] O'Donnell, G., Schmitter, P. C., Whitehead, L., & Lowenthal, A. F. (Eds.). (1986). *Transitions from authoritarian rule: Southern Europe* (Vol. 1). JHU Press.
- [22] Ombati, V., & Ombati, M. (2012). Gender inequality in education in sub-Saharan Africa. *JWEE*, (3-4), 114-136.

- [23] Poku J, Aawaar G. M, &WoraeT. A,(2010).Educational Sector Reforms in Little A. White, Access to Basic Education in Ghana; politics, policies and progress. *Create pathways to access; A Research Monograph No. 42* (2010). Retrieved from <http://maps.cersgis.org/nipportal/POLICIES/Consortium%20for%20Research%20on%20Educational%20Access%20Transitions%20and%20Equity.pdf> Date accessed; 19th January 2015.
- [24] [Sarfo, F. K., Amartei, A. M., Adentwi, K. I., & Brefo, C. (2011). Technology and gender equity: Rural and urban students attitudes towards information and communication technology. *Journal of Media and Communication Studies*, 3(6), 221-230.
- [25] Shillington, K. (1992). *Ghana and the Rawlings Factor*. MacMillan Publication
- [26] Stapen & Linz (2013). *The Transition towards Revolution and Reform: The Arab Spring Realised*. Edinburgh University Press.
- [27] Van Gyampo, R. E., Ofori-Mensah, M., & Owusu-Mensah, I. (2013). Ghana's Presidential Transition Act and the 2013 Transition. *JL Pol'y & Globalization*, 20, 1
- [28] Yeebo, (1991). *Ghana, the Struggle for Popular Power: Rawlings, Savior or Demagogue*. New Beacon Book Publication.

