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SPECIAL ISSUE
ON FOSTERING   INCLUSIVENESS AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

School of Social Sciences,
University of Ghana, Legon

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## SPECIAL ISSUE ON FOSTERING INCLUSIVENESS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

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# Ghana Social Science Journal

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# EDITORIAL
# INCLUSIVENESS: THE MISSING LINK IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA – WHERE ARE WE NOW AND WHAT MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE?

## Joseph Atsu Ayee (Guest Editor)[1]

## Introduction

Inclusiveness is an old concept or notion of the discipline of Political Science. The "good society" at the heart of politics, which was envisaged by the Greek philosophers (Socrates, Plato and Aristotle - regarded as the father of Political Science as opposed to Plato who is sometimes classified as the first political philosopher) implies the "incorporation of all citizens into the process of their own governance" (Chazan 2015: 1). Consequently, in exploring politics one gains a better understanding of "what is – and what is not – in the public interest" (Magstadt 2013: 18).

Inclusiveness has its roots in human rights, inequality, redistribution, rural development, entitlements and capabilities concepts (Sen 1999; Thorbecke 2006; Easterly 2007; Gupta and Baud 2015) and has been expressed in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Collier 2007). It has been a long-standing feature of human rights based approaches (HRBAs) to development as represented in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), UN Declaration on the Right to Development (1986), UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) (Arts 2017). In addition, inclusiveness has gained prominence in general international development fora, most notably as a central element of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (specifically Goal 16) that are the heart of the global United

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Nations (UN) development agenda for the period 2016–2030 (UN General Assembly 2015; Gupta et. al. 2016).

Inclusiveness is sometimes used as an adjective to development. Consequently:

> Development can be inclusive – and reduce poverty – only if all groups of people contribute to creating opportunities, share the benefits of development and participate in decision-making. Inclusive development follows the United Nations Development Programme's human development approach and integrates the standards and principles of human rights: participation, non-discrimination and accountability (UNDP, n.d.).

Okafor (2008) has pointed out that inclusiveness is a multi-level challenge. At the global level, it implies accounting for the least developed and developing countries and post-conflict societies, which can be done by encouraging meaningful participation in UN processes, adopting equity principles, capacity building, technology transfer, and financial support. At the regional level, it implies taking the issues of the more vulnerable countries into account and equitable sharing of transboundary resources. At the national level, it implies taking account of marginalized sectors, places, and communities. At the local level, it would imply accounting for specific individuals and groups (Gupta and Vegelin 2016).

Gupta et. al. (2014) have identified five principles of inclusiveness. They are (a) adopting equity principles to share in development opportunities and benefits; (b) including the knowledge of the marginalized in defining development processes and goals; (c) ensuring a social minimum through a higher level of protection for the most marginalized; (d) targeted capacity building to help the poor benefit from opportunities since they may not be able to otherwise use such opportunities; and (e) engaging the marginalized in the politics of development and governance.

Inclusiveness has been justified on the following seven grounds:

- (i) Humanitarian and normative concerns for the most vulnerable (Sen 1999; Sachs 2004a;b);
- (ii) Legal reasons call for the protection of the dignity and human rights of people (Arts 2017);
- (iii) Economic reasons aim to promote social well-being and participation of the poor in labour and consumption markets (Pouw and McGregor 2014);
- (iv) National security reasons justify meeting the needs of humans (UNDP 1994);
- (v) Democratic and communist discourses require sharing the results of prosperity with all (Gready and Vandenhole 2014*)*;
- (vi) Public health reasons require investing in the conditions in which the poor live to prevent the spread of poverty related diseases such as cholera, typhoid and others (UNICEF 2015); and
- (vii) International reasons to ensure sustainable societies both within and across borders (where investing in crises affected countries, not only ensures sustainable societies in situ, but can also pre-empt the mass exodus of refugees for ex situ rehabilitation) (Sachs 2012; Dugarova 2015).

In short, inclusiveness aims at empowering the poorest through investing in human capital and enhancing the opportunities for participation. It is non-discriminatory and is age, gender, caste, sect and creed sensitive in terms of income, assets and the opportunities for employment. It aims to reduce the exposure to risks such as natural disasters and civil conflict that exacerbate vulnerability (Rauniyar and Kanbur 2010; Huang and Quibria 2013).

In spite of its tremendous importance to development, Chazan (2015: 1) has cautioned that inclusion has "always been a double-edged sword". This is because:

> On one hand,…inclusion of diverse sectors of the population is
> critical to the consolidation of democracies: regimes which

systematically exclude certain individuals and groups invite ongoing attacks on their legitimacy and hence on their durability. Indeed, many, even veteran, democracies are not really inclusionary: they limit, in one way or another, access to certain citizens to power and all that it entails. They thereby promote ongoing friction, running the risk of explosion. On the other hand, constant preoccupation with inclusion breeds, by its very nature, social tensions. It exacts tremendous energies and – in extreme cases – may induce policy paralysis. If these byproducts persist, they can lead to implosion, with widespread implications for the resilience of the state and its institutions (Chazan 2015: 1).

## Dealing with Inclusion: Where are we now?

The practice of inclusion has always been problematic in Africa. African countries have sought to promote inclusion through constitutional and legal provisions on prohibiting discrimination and prejudice on the grounds of place of origin, circumstances of birth, ethnic origin, gender, religion, creed or other beliefs, providing opportunities for all citizens to participate in government and national life and making appointments based on regional or gender balance, reflecting the unitary or federal character of the countries.

The countries have also signed international conventions relating to inclusiveness such as human rights, rights of the disadvantaged, initiated gender sensitive policies or others on diversity including those relating to children, youth and people with disabilities. Furthermore, policies and strategies such as power sharing, decentralization, poverty reduction, social protection programmes and MDGs have been implemented. Even though some progress has been made in reducing exclusion, there is still more room for improvement resulting in the description of the record of implementing the MDGs as mixed. Consequently, the practice of the opposite of inclusion, that is, exclusion, has rather led to skewed and imbalance development and growth, conflicts and tensions and exacerbated political, economic and social cleavages and distortions that are considered inimical and counterproductive for the progress of the African continent (UNDP 2000; Sen 1999).

The individual incorporation strategies, group empowerment strategies and mainstreaming strategies pursued in African countries have not been able to incorporate diverse social categories into the political, economic, institutional, distributive and societal arenas largely because of the executive presidential system of government adopted by most of the countries which has perpetuated exclusion, the winner-takes-all, widening inequalities and rural poverty, ethnicity, regionalization, polarization, politicization, tension, conflict and poor public service delivery (Chazan 2015).

## Dealing with Inclusion: What more needs to be done?

The little progress made towards promoting inclusion in African countries has led to the design of two important development blue-prints, which are aimed at promoting inclusion and eradicating exclusion. They are the United Nations', *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the African Union Commission's Agenda 2063: *The Africa We Want*.

Agenda 2030 embodies a comprehensive substantive vision of development, consisting of economic, social and environmental dimensions that all require attention and ultimately will need to be integrated (target 38). Accordingly, it introduces itself as a "plan of action for people, planet and prosperity" which "also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom" (target 4). Building on the experiences with the MDGs (target 39,7), the SDGs clearly recognize the importance of realizing inclusive development. It is thus for good reason that the slogan "leave no one behind" is increasingly being used in relation to the SDGs and translated into a priority for reaching "the furthest behind first" [target 40,31,32,41). SDG 10 focuses on reducing inequality within and between countries. According to target 10.2 this should lead, by 2030, to the "social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status". Target 10.3 requires states not only to 'ensure equal opportunity' but, interestingly, also to go a step further and "reduce inequalities of outcome".

The consequential need to address both the manifestations and structural causes of inequality has resulted in a more tangible emphasis on combating discrimination and violence than was the case before, especially as far as women and children are concerned (targets 42,43). In addition, greater attention emerged for governance aspects (targets 44 – 47,7) and for elements of process such as meaningful participation (targets 48,49) and accountability (target 50). The latter extends to evidence-based monitoring of performance in realizing the SDGs and access to justice (included in SDG 16). However, at present and overall, the monitoring and accountability mechanisms of Agenda 2030 are weak as they are entirely voluntary and country-led (Arts 2017).

Agenda 2030 is also conceptually based in human rights. This comes out strongly in the Preamble which articulates that the "17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets….seek to realize the human rights of all" [UN General Assembly 2015: 4). Contrary to the earlier MDGs, which applied to the South, the SDGs apply to both 'developing' and 'developed' States (UN General Assembly 2015: 4). It has been emphasized that this is a path-breaking recognition of the fact that human rights and development challenges both exist and require action in all parts of the world (Arts 2017).

On the part of the African Union Commission's Agenda 2063, all the seven aspirations are geared towards inclusiveness at all levels. They are: (i) a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development; (ii) an integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance; (iii) an Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law; (iv) a peaceful and secure Africa; (v) an Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics; (vi) an Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children; and (vii) Africa as a strong, united and influential global player and partner (African Union Commission 2015: 2).

What more needs to be done? First, there is no point "re-inventing the wheel" as there already exist two development blue-prints, Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063. These blue-prints should be implemented to the letter even though some adaptations may have to be done to suit country specific context. This entails more political commitment and support, prioritization of policies, strategies and programmes, judicious use and management of both human and financial resources and the involvement of the citizens and above all, the promotion of the public interest by all the stakeholders. Politics should not be seen as a zero-sum game but one that will promote inclusiveness, dismantle the winner-takes-all proclivity, reduce tension and conflict and be development-oriented, with the aim of realizing the goals of Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063. It also implies that effective and efficient institutions should be created, their capacity developed through adequate budgetary support and filling them with competent and highly professional personnel, whose recruitment should be based on meritocracy and not partisanship. In short, there is the need to challenge the "business-as-usual" approach to inclusive sustainable development.

Second, inclusiveness needs to be unpacked and leadership must be encouraged and supported to think outside the box. In this connection, inclusiveness requires that growth benefits all segments of society, including – or, in some definitions, focusing on – the poor. It is increasingly accepted that economic growth that advances development must be both socially inclusive and ecologically sustainable (Lerch, 2015). A stronger emphasis therefore has to be placed on the need to redistribute wealth and for growth to serve as a means of combatting poverty, exclusion and improved public service delivery.

Third, the fight against corruption should be more vigorous and concerted while resources should be used efficiently. The debilitating effects of corruption have been underscored in the literature and no country can effectively promote inclusion without dealing with corruption. Combatting corruption therefore will also promote the proper use of resources which will eventually lead to improved service delivery, inclusion, equality, equity and development.

Fourth, there should be a broader definition of poverty that encompasses not only income but other measures of progress and wellbeing. Accordingly, there is the need to monitor the extent to which the needs of the most deprived and vulnerable groups are being addressed and whether wages remain in line with increases in productivity. This is one way of reducing inequality, promoting pro-poor growth and sustainable and inclusive growth which are seen as the cornerstones to improved human development (Gupta et. al. 2014).

Finally, the prevalence of exclusive, social injustice and inequalities in Africa requires not only sensitivity to diversity but the design and implementation of more pragmatic, coordinated and aggressive policies, strategies, interventions and attitudinal and behavioural changes. Leadership at all levels and more commitment to address inclusion are necessary.  In this connection, fundamental adjustments in political, economic and social structures need to be undertaken, which will take into consideration tangible differences and the values of pluralism, freedom, justice, tolerance and respect for the other, institutional re-engineering and, above all, the public interest.

## The Articles and their Contribution to Inclusiveness and Sustainable Development in Africa

Against this backdrop, the articles in this Special Issue of the *Ghana Social Science Journal*, 14(2), December 2017 on the theme, "Inclusion and Sustainable Development in Africa", should be viewed as contributing to the debate on inclusive sustainable development. They are meant to complement and extend knowledge in inclusiveness and the sustainable development goals (SDGs). The 17 Goals of the SDGs are contained in Box 1. The overall objective of the articles is to examine progress thus far made in some areas of inclusiveness and sustainable development in Ghana and Nigeria. All the eight (8) articles in this Special Issue with the exception of those of Gyampo and Graham and Ohemeng and Adusah-Karikari were presented at an international conference on the theme, "Fostering Inclusion in Sustainable Development in Africa", which was organized by the School of Social Sciences, University of Ghana on 5th and 6th April 2017.

## Box 1: The 17 Sustainable Development Goals

| | |
|---|---|
| **Goal 1:** | End poverty in all its forms everywhere |
| **Goal 2:** | End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture |
| **Goal 3:** | Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages |
| **Goal 4:** | Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all |
| **Goal 5:** | Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls |
| **Goal 6:** | Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all |
| **Goal 7:** | Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all |
| **Goal 8:** | Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all |
| **Goal 9:** | Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation |
| **Goal 10:** | Reduce inequality within and among countries |
| **Goal 11:** | Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable |
| **Goal 12:** | Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns |
| **Goal 13:** | Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts |
| **Goal 14:** | Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development |
| **Goal 15:** | Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss |
| **Goal 16:** | Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels |
| **Goal 17:** | Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development |

**Source:** UN General Assembly (2015), *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. New York: UN, UN Doc; A/RES/70/1, 21 October: 2015.

The first two articles, which are related to Goals 5 and 16 of the SDGs, deal with two groups which have been disadvantaged in politics, economy and society in Ghana. They are the youth and women. The article by Azure on "Social Media and Youth Political Participation in

Ghana'' examines the level of political participation in Ghana and the extent to which social media has contributed to the capacity of the youth to participate in politics. The article found that even though traditional media such as radio and television is the preferred media of youth engagement, users of social media have a more positive outlook toward political participation than non-users. For more of the youth to engage in political participation, the article recommends the optimization of social media.

The article on "Promoting Sustainable Development in Communities: The Role of Female Traditional Leaders (Queen mothers)" by Boateng laments that even though queen mothers have engaged in community development through children's education, women's work, community projects, women and children's rights, leadership and empowerment issues, their contribution has received little or no attention unlike their male counterparts (the kings and chiefs). Their contribution to sustainable development is also limited by financial constraints and "oppressive behaviour" by some of their counterparts (chiefs/kings). She therefore recommends that the queen mothers should be physically and financially supported by stakeholders including governmental bodies, NGOs, and benevolent organizations in their community's sustainable development efforts while some assertiveness from the queen mothers towards their work is also required.

Jabik and Bawakyillenuo's article on "Adopting and Sustaining Green Electricity Energy Technologies in Ghana: A Review of Policy Perspectives" is linked to Goal 7 of the SDGs as its realization requires countries to reorient policy directions towards green approaches and initiatives including green energy initiatives. There is a review of the policy options and lessons from countries which successfully promoted green energy market and how Ghana could adopt such policies to develop her green electricity energy market. For an effective and efficient green electricity market to be developed in a country, the article recommended a wide range of policy instruments such as promoting voluntary green electricity schemes, establishing a renewable energy fund, providing tax incentives, promoting green certification schemes

and feed-in tariffs using participatory approaches. In addition, effective institutions must be created to implement the energy production policies and their capacity developed from time to time to monitor, evaluate and provide the necessary feedback to the policy designers and implementers.

The article on "Household Preventive Practices and Diarrhoea Prevalence in Urban Slums, Southwestern Nigeria" by Umego and Salami is the only one outside Ghana and makes a contribution to Goals 3, 6 and 13. Using two urban slum areas in South-western Nigeria (Beere in Oyo State and Ilaje in Lagos State), the article focuses on the susceptibility of urban slums to diarrhoea due to poor water and sanitation facilities and the emerging local/indigenous household responses to diarrhoea prevention especially in this phase of climate change. It found that water and sanitation are the key drivers of diarrhoea and water quantity and quality are some of the areas affected by climate change through current changes in sea levels, rainfall and floods. The article found a high level of knowledge for diarrhoea, its symptoms, causes and indigenous methods for diarrhoea treatment. It recommended that water treatment practices and safe drinking water are key elements in preventing diarrhoea in the household while education and awareness creation are important. It also highlighted some indigenous treatment methods for diarrhoea that can be replicated especially for low income households.

Abrah's article on "Juvenile Sentencing and Re-offending in Ghana: Implications for Law and Practice" is a contribution to Goal 16. It deals with the criminological issue of explaining how sentencing periods affect adult re-offending. Using 23 juvenile delinquents sentenced by magistrate courts across the districts in Ghana, the article shows how the adjudicative decisions and processes carried out by the courts reinforced or changed their criminal tendencies in adulthood. It found that long sentencing periods per se may not necessarily decrease the likelihood of re-offending. Some of the critical elements that worked to reduce levels of involvement in crime are the individual's willingness to change, support received from family and institution, the kind of friends they

selected and more importantly, what they made of the correction period. It therefore recommends that strict adherence to sentencing formalities and procedures without concomitant interest in the social contexts in which juveniles reside will have limited impact on reducing adult re-offending.

The article on "Portfolio Optimization Using Minimum Variance Line Approach: A Case Study of the Social Security and National Insurance Trust", by Nkum, Lotsi, Chapman-Wardy, and Doku-Amponsah, is about profitable investment with minimum risk and falls within Goal 8. Using data spanning 2010-2014 from the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT), the article shows that the amount to be invested in various assets depends on the expected returns of the portfolio the investor wishes to achieve at the end of the day. In the case of higher returns, the investor is required to invest higher proportion of his/her total wealth in both Investment Properties (IVP) and Loans Receivable (LR) and smaller proportion of his/her total wealth in Investment to Maturity (IVM), with this scenario the investor's risk on the portfolio will be very high. The ratio of the investor's total wealth to be invested in the asset IVM decreases with increasing expected returns on the portfolio. It concludes that the asset IVM is not a good combination of the other asset, that is, IVP and LR when the investor wants to achieve higher returns on total portfolio. The recommendation is that portfolio optimization approach in allocating funds to various investments actually maximizes the investor's returns while minimizing risk of investment and it is the best approach for asset allocation. Those interested in investment and business may find this article interesting and may therefore like to try some of the recommended options.

The last two articles deal specifically with Goal 16, with emphasis on building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels as an important ingredient to the success of the SDGs. The article by Gyampo and Graham on "Reviewing the Extensive Appointment Powers of the President as Solution to Winner-Takes All Politics in Ghana" revisits some of the deficits of the 1992 Constitution with special emphasis on the extensive powers of the Executive President, which

promote exclusion, winner-takes-all, clientelism and lack of professionalism and meritocracy in the public sector. It recommends some constitutional and structural changes aimed at reducing the powers of the President and thereby promoting inclusiveness and professionalism in the public sector.

The article on "The Rise of Executive Agencies and their Effects on the Civil Service in Ghana" by Ohemeng and Adusah-Karikari, assesses the creation of executive agencies in the 1990s outside the civil service to enhance the performance of public service institutions through the reduction of bureaucratic red tape and ensure effective and efficient service delivery. The article challenged the assumption that the creation of such autonomous organizations will increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and the quality of service delivery. It rather found that there is a feeling of despondency among civil servants, which continues to affect their morale, as well as their overall performance. This in turn has affected the capacity of the service with respect to the implementation of its core functions. In addition, the government's failure to fulfill its mandates is problematic largely because of the weaknesses of the civil service: the lack of sufficient trained technical and professional staff, compressed wage scales, insufficient salaries, and lack of incentives for increased productivity. Finally, "agencification" or the creation of executive agencies was seen as a way to get around the problems in the civil service, by removing the agencies in question from the central government and allowing them to set their own wage and employment policies apart from the strictures of the civil service. However, there is anecdotal evidence in Ghana to show that excessive autonomy of agencies can lead to problems of agency compliance and create distortions in public sector pay and benefits, as is the case in differential wages between the agencies and the civil service.

These articles have, no doubt, shed light on some aspects of the SDGs. Some of the articles cover inclusiveness while others deal with some of the other Goals. Even though the articles have not said it clearly, the commitment to the achievement of the SDGs is crucial. It is instructive and reassuring to note that the SDGs seem to have "mobilized scholarly

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communities, communities of practice and social movements around them to demand relational change and accountability by those implementing the SDGs. This effort can be enhanced with a commitment to the principles of inclusive development by all stakeholders" (Gupta and Vegelin 2016: 447). The mobilization of academe around the SDGs has perhaps goaded the School of Social Sciences at the University of Ghana to take on the burden of organizing two international conferences in 2016 and 2017 on some of the thematic areas of the SDGs. It is hoped that this initiative will continue to generate debate over the appropriate ways and means to attain the SDGs and, possibly, the African Union's *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*.

Fostering inclusion in sustainable development is a Herculean task because it involves redistribution of power and resources and the promotion of empowerment, justice and equity. Obviously, resistance will surely come from those who are already benefiting from the existing arrangement. In the words of Niccolo Machiavelli (originally published 1513) (1961), Chapter 6: 9):

> We must bear in mind, then, that there is nothing more difficult and dangerous, or more doubtful of success, than an attempt to introduce a new order of things in any state. For the innovator has for enemies all those who derived advantages from the old order of things, whilst those who expect to be benefited by the new institutions will be but lukewarm defenders. This indifference arises in part from fear of their adversaries who were favoured by the existing laws, and partly from the incredulity of men who have no faith in anything new that is not the result of well-established experience. Hence it is that, whenever the opponents of the new order of things have the opportunity to attack it, they will do it with the zeal of partisans, whilst the others defend it but feebly, so that it is dangerous to rely upon the latter.

It is therefore up to leaders, academe, civil society organizations, citizens and development partners guided by the public interest to forge a

common front to deal with the resistance and move forward Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063.

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# SOCIAL MEDIA AND YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN GHANA

## Victor Nsoh Azure[1]

## Abstract

The development of Social Media (web 2.0) in the early years of the twenty-first century has had a dramatic impact on the way people interact, especially across long distances. With social media, barriers of distance and cost have been overcome with some remarkable ease and this ease in interaction has permeated various facets of human activity. This study adopts a mixed method to collect and analyze data to ascertain the impact Social Media is having on youth political participation in Ghana. Conceptually underpinned by the Resource Model of political participation, this study assesses the level of political participation in Ghana and proceeds to measure to what extent Social Media is making up for factors known to inhibit the capacity of the youth to participate in politics. The paper mainly finds that Social Media is not widely used by youth towards issues of politics and participation in civic life. The paper also notes the continued dominance of traditional media such as radio and television as preferred media for youth engagement. However, it is also observed in this study that although Social Media is hardly the dominant mode of youth participation in Ghana, users of Social Media show a more positive outlook toward political participation than non-users. Crucially, the study reveals that a lot needs to be done to optimize Social Media use towards political participation among Ghanaian youth.

**Keywords:** social media, political participation, prodiences, youth

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# Introduction

After more than two decades of practicing democracy, much of the debate on Ghana's political landscape revolves around ideas and proposals for democratic consolidation—the strengthening of political institutions and the creation of a democratic culture by and large. From the nascent stages of democracy in ancient Athens to the modern advanced democracies in the United States of America and Western Europe, there has been a direct emphasis and correlation between effective political participation and the strength of democracy and by extension the responsiveness of the state apparatus to the interest and welfare of its citizens. In ancient Athens for example, people who did not participate in the judicial, deliberative and administrative activities of the city-state were scorned and regarded as unambitious and useless (Pericles). To sustain democracy in contemporary times, it has become important to order state-citizen relations in a way that enhances the legitimacy of the democratic order by ensuring that the state represents all the interests in the state and is also capable of delivering on its purpose. To this end, the youth, generally the dominant group in the demographic profile of many states constitutes an indispensable bloc. Operating with this premise, and within the context of social media, this paper explores whether social media is having an impact on the political participation of Ghanaian youth. The paper starts with a discussion of democracy, political participation and the role of information in political participation and how it causes social change. It further delves into the discourse on the impact of New Media (social media) on politics. It also traces the history of the relationship between Ghanaian youth, power, and decision making in Ghana. It includes an analysis of the results of the Afrobarometer Round 6 survey 2014/2015, specifically the aspects involving political participation and social media and traditional media usage in Ghana. Finally, the paper discusses the impact of the results of the survey on youth participation in Ghana seeking to answer three crucial questions; whether social media has increased youth participation in Ghana, whether the youth regard social media as an important and credible tool for political engagement, and whether social media has been effectively used by Ghanaian youth towards participation in

politics, in overcoming the barriers to political participation like mobilization.


## The Rise of New Media and Politics

The emergence of social media and its interface with political activity from the United States to the Arab spring has generated quite a substantial amount of literature and discussion on its efficacy as a political tool. What can be easily noticed in that discussion is that scholars and political actors alike disagree on whether social media has been, or can be, an effective facilitator of political activities and whether its sudden emergence and potential to dominate political activity is good or bad. Some optimists (Shirky, 2011; Tolbert & McNeal, 2003; Lampe, Obar, & Zube, 2012; Lim, 2009) insist that social media is reshaping mass political movement by helping them overcome the barriers of mobilization and cost of organization and is fast replacing traditional modes of political activity or participation. Eltantaway and Wiest (2011) stress that social media was instrumental in the Egyptian revolution and to some extent is broadening the scope of resource mobilization. However, Morozov (2011) and Gladwell (2011) throw doubt into the altruism of social media optimists. Morozov (2011) stresses that social media can actually be the tool with which authoritarian regimes clamp down on political participation by identifying and stifling dissenting views. Gladwell (2011) argues that the proposition that social media is responsible for the surge in political activity from Europe and the USA to North Africa is unlikely and not supported by the facts. Susser (2012) in a similar vein argues that the roots of Egyptian revolution cannot be traced to social media posts. Beyond the optimism and scepticism debate, studies like Linders (2012) show the prospects of social media in recalibrating the relationship between citizens and their governments. In West Africa where glimpses of the potential of social media can be seen in recent times, Gyampo (2017) argues that in Ghana, social media cannot simply replace traditional media and traditional modes of political activity.

In general, the scholars on the sides of the Utopian/Dystopian dialectic (Marichal, 2012), for the most part, proffer theoretical bases or

generalize from few instances. It is the position of this paper that, to be able to gauge the extent of the ubiquity or otherwise of Social Media in political participation it is imperative to look at empirical evidence of the kinds of uses people put social media. Again, there is scant literature on Africa concerning state-citizen relations aimed at articulating interests or influencing policy or giving young people a stake in the politics of countries in Africa. Given the overwhelming use of New Media in Africa and globally, this study seeks to contribute to the knowledge on social media and political activity discourse by examining how social media is interfacing with political activity in a sub-Saharan African country like Ghana.

## Democracy, political participation and the role of information in political life

Politics is the means by which differing interests and the competitions that emanate from such interests are resolved. In a democracy, these interests are represented by parties which are in turn undergirded or influenced by people's political views, demography, ethnic origin, religious affiliation among other characteristics. It is in the nature of democracy to ensure that each view is equally represented (even though this is not always the case everywhere), and to ensure that requires not just representation of people, but opportunities for them to participate in shaping the outcomes that affect them.

Political participation is a state of affairs where citizens in a democracy have the opportunity to communicate information to government officials about their concerns and preferences and the capacity to put pressure on them to respond (Brady, Schlozman, & Verba, 1995) and the means to hold them accountable. Political participation in this sense goes beyond discussing politics or following political news, participation requires a voluntary commitment to affect policy making either directly by getting involved with the processes of policy making or indirectly by ensuring that people who represent one's policy preferences are put in the right positions to act on them (Verba et al, 1995).

According to Robert Dahl (Coglianese, 1990), a good democracy should meet the following requirements; effective participation, voter equality, opportunities for people to understand civic issues as well as gain control over matters that reach the decision making agenda. Dahl's conception hinges on a fundamental notion of intrinsic equality of all persons and that no single individual or a group of individuals possess any unique trait for governing, thus all men are the best judges of their interests (Coglianese, 1990). With democracy thus conceived, anything short of full participation will be inadequate to ensure the equal consideration of everyone's interest. In Dahl's estimation, therefore, "a democratic government provides an orderly and peaceful process by means of which, a majority of citizens can induce the government to do what it most want it to do and avoid doing what they most want it not to do" (1990). Dahl's conception of democracy fairly captures the primary focus of democracy which is the 'people' (*demos)* flowing from this notion is the fact that the effectiveness of any democracy, largely relies on the role of the people, that is, how effective their participation is.

As a matter of fact, the issue of political participation is not new, the subject has been contemplated from ancient times, Aristotle and others in ancient Athens held strongly that citizens were only those who had the right of sharing in the deliberative and judicial functions of the state (Scaff, 1975). Aristotle thus puts participation at the centre of political life. Scaff notes that in modern times, however, participation has taken a secondary position in theorizing political life as concepts such as liberty, equality, sovereignty, and democracy are seen as deeper concepts in addressing the issues involved in political life. Thus, participation is seen as a derivative of one or more of these concepts. But, Scaff again notes that in recent times there has been a renaissance of participation in political discourse, especially in advanced democracies. He posits that this discussion is centred on how participation can help overcome excessive bureaucratization and alienation, and mobilize citizens for political and economic development. For a burgeoning democracy like Ghana, the effective and full participation of all citizens in the consolidation process can help it to avoid the phase where special interests hijack the political process.

For the most part, the media is the primary source of information in many democracies. However, research conducted in the United States of America by Tolbert and McNeal (2003), for example, reveal an ambivalence in the role of the media in promoting participation. For some studies, people were not turning out to vote because they were put off by media coverage whereas in others it enhanced voter turnout. In line with this, the media is viewed as a two-edged sword—on the one hand, it can enhance political involvement and participation and facilitate its decline on the other.  The outset of new media (Social Media) has changed the face of traditional media and also added on a new phase of faster and wider information flows while facilitating interactivity and personalized content sharing among people. As Dahl (1990) notes, understanding the issues is part of fostering effective participation and for that matter, the role of the media in providing information is critical in political participation.

Indeed, technology has found strong connections and usefulness in political activity at various times, but Shirky (2011) notes that the first time a regime was taken down with the help of new media was in the Philippines where President Joseph Estrada was removed through the mobilization of over one million people via text messages to converge and put pressure on their Parliament to use the evidence available to impeach him in 2001. The Arab-spring that culminated in the collapse of two long regimes in Tunisia and Egypt was largely facilitated by social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter). In Ghana, there have been glimpses of the potential of Social Media in campaigns such as #Occupyflagstaffhouse[2] and the #dumsormuststop[3] protests on Twitter. In Nigeria very notable in recent times has been the #Bringbackourgirls[4]

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[2] #Occupyflagstaffhouse was an online protest hashtag that created momentum for an actual protest by the Ghanaian middle class who were dissatisfied with erratic power, water shortage among others.

[3] #Dumsormustop was a protest hashtag against erratic electricity supply in Ghana. The term 'dumsor' is a Ghanaian word used to describe power outages.

[4] #bringbackourgirls was a twitter hashtag in protest of the Boko Haram capture of 200 Chibok girls in Norther Nigeria in 2014. The hashtag started in Nigeria and gained global recognition.

twitter campaign. In Ghana, one unmistakable feature of these two online protests is that they were championed by young people. For example, the #Occupyflagstaffhouse online campaign and actual protest were largely described as representative of a growing middle class of young professionals who were protesting against utility tariff hikes as well as the erratic supply of electricity and water in many neighbourhoods. The #dumsormuststop campaign was a Ghanaian celebrity-led protest with youth participation for the most part. Two important developments are embedded here, first, that these largely youth-led actions show perhaps that the youth are the more technologically savvy and capable of using new media for political action. Second, it vaguely hints to a realization of the potential of new media in overcoming barriers of mobilization and perhaps a departure of young people from conventional ways of interest articulation.

In comparison, young people in the 21st century face unique challenges going into the future—climate change, growing global insecurity posed by the rise of terror activities and more generally, the fissures and instabilities of a more interconnected and globalized world. In Ghana, the youth face several challenges ranging from access to quality education, unemployment, inadequate opportunities to participate in decision-making to environmental sustainability (Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2010). This makes it imperative on youth anywhere in the world and Ghana, in particular, to seek to be part of the political processes in their countries to help shape policies and activities in a manner that will not jeopardize the future. Quite to the contrary, many young people appear to be laid back, indifferent and cynical of the political system and its ability to change and bring about progress. This is more so for African countries where political institutions are not very open to young people and where young people really do not have a strong voice in the political system beyond voting. Against this backdrop, Social Media to the African and Ghanaian youth creates two scenarios; on the one hand it can help create new avenues for effective participation by sharing ideas, engaging in debates and proselytization or on the other hand it can become a haven out of the reach of politics; a haven provided through access to information and activities in the areas of entertainment, religion

or sports, activities that can be interesting and engaging thus providing a break from the hurly-burly of politics which many youths see as dishonest and unattractive.

The debate within democratic theory has in recent times revolved around participatory and deliberative democracy. Antonio Florida (2013) in a paper "Participatory Democracy *versus* Deliberative Democracy: Elements for a Possible Theoretical Genealogy. Two Histories, Some Intersections" argues that to some extent the debate has been about the adjectives "deliberative" and "participative" and that largely the two concepts are still in the space of indeterminacy. This paper also comes to the discussion on democratic participation from a participative democracy perspective as espoused in the Port Huron statement that identifies the following as the tenets of participatory democracy; a rejection of the notion that human beings are incompetent and unable to govern themselves and approach issues with a view of the long-term, one that upholds the ideal of self-determination autonomy and independence and fraternity as the dominant form of social relationships and also upholds the idea that decision-making processes on issues having social implications and consequences must be conducted in public and in participative ways.

## A Discourse on Social Media and Politics

### The Evolution of Social Media

Social Media refers to applications that allow information sharing and interoperability and has a user centred design facilitating collaboration on the World Wide Web. They include Blogs, Wikis, Social Networking Sites, and Video Sharing Sites among others. Social Media is a product of web 2.0, a term used to describe the second phase of the development of the internet marked by a change from static web pages to platforms that are looser and dynamic, allowing user-controlled content (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

The development of social media is part of an evolution in internet based communications spawned by the launch of the email in 1971 through the

work of Ray Tomlinson who was making improvements on single-computer electronic mail system that had been in existence since the early sixties known as the SNDMSG[5] (Patil & Sajithra, 2013). The next phase of the evolution occurred in 1979 with Usenet, invented by Tom Truscott and Jim Ellis, it adapted the email model with an enhancement that allowed messages and posts to be sent to multiple categories known as "newsgroups". Then came Listserv in 1984, a technology which made it possible for one message to be sent a group of people on an electronic mailing list. In 1988, the Internet Relay Chat (IRC) which introduced chatting both on a one-on-one basis and among groups is arguably the first digital communication tool to find a direct connection with politics. It was used to report on a coup attempt in the Soviet Union in 1991 leapfrogging a media blackout that was supposed to keep the public in the dark. It was again used in a similar form during the Gulf War. The years 1995 and 1997 ushered in Social Networking Sites *classmate.com* and *sixdegrees.com* respectively, although some scholars insist that *sixdegrees.com* is the only proper Social Networking Site (SNS) by strict definition because whereas *classmate.com* created a platform to find and reunite old school mates, the launch of *sixdegreess.com* allowed users to create profiles and list their friends for the first time. The launch of SNSs also opened the way for blogs, wikis, and podcasts where individuals could create and share content with their friends. (Patil & Sajithra, 2013) This phase lasted between 1998-2004, paving the way for web 2.0 applications from 2005 onwards (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Web 2.0 resulted in the emergence of Social Media giants like Facebook with about three billion people currently and others like Twitter and WhatsApp.

**The Utopian/Dystopian Dialectic**
The debate surrounding Social Media and political participation has revolved around two broad themes namely its ability to create a political culture of high political consciousness and participation (Optimistic/Utopian view) by decentralizing information access and

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[5] **SNDMSG** was an early electronic mail program, notable because it was used to send what is considered the first networked email.

expanding the field for content creation and sharing on the one hand, against on the other hand, its potential to roll back the progress made in political participation by promoting exclusive participation—a situation where people only engage in platforms and with ideas they already agree with which eventually leads to intolerance of divergent and opposing views. The potential for Social Media to cause a 'creative destruction' to existing modes of political participation is held up by critics as a contributing factor to the decay of traditional modes of political participation, leading to what is called 'armchair activism'(Skeptical/Dystopian view).

On the front of the growing literature on the subject, there is some unity between the findings of Lim and Shirky for example. Lim notes that Online Social Movements (OSMs) are fast replacing Traditional Social Movements (TSMs) (2009). Shirky (2011) also finds that New Media (Social Media) helps loose organizations overcome the logistical and financial burdens of mobilizing and thus Social Media is fast becoming the tool of choice for many activists and Social Movements. The findings of Obar, Zube, and Lampe (2012) give more impetus to the assertion that Social Media is on the rise as the tool of preference for social movements, their study of Advocacy Groups in the USA revealed that up to 98% of them used Facebook and 96% used Twitter. The findings of Doris Graber (1996) are also in sync with those of Tolbert and McNeal; Graber posits that New Media has ended the 'tyranny of the time clock' by making news available at the convenience of the public. This dovetails with Tolbert and McNeal's position that New Media is helping to meet the information needs of people in a more cost-effective way.

Contrary to these optimistic views of Social Media is a strong opposition or skepticism along what can be described as the Utopian/Dystopian dialectic of social media. Morozov as a skeptic of New Media refers to the optimists as delusional and points to the possibility that the tools of New Media rather than propel social movements gives governments especially authoritarian regimes the advantage to repress them (2011). Gladwell's (2011) opposition to Shirky that there is no proof that the movements propelled by Social Media will not have either occurred or

succeeded without them will perhaps require time and more case studies to resolve. Grabber's findings that New Media tends to widen the gap between classes and gives the financially endowed an undue advantage is mostly a valid observation.

Beyond the theoretical debate, societies, governments, and individuals continue to use Social Media to varying degrees and with varying results. In Arlington USA, both citizens and the government are using it to good effect. Maldini (2012) finds that New Media as a tool takes the form of the social context in which it is used. But Guerero and Restrepo (2012) continue to show that Social Media is invariably recalibrating the contours of political activity.

**Social Media and Politics**

Linders, (2012) in 'From E-government to We-government: Defining a typology for Citizen Coproduction in the Age of Social Media' develops a typology that shows how Social Media has revolutionized government-citizen relations. He argues essentially that with Social Media the citizen has changed status from consumer to partner in governance. He points to the emergence of a new form of social contract in which society places greater trust and empowers the public to play a more active role in the functioning of their government. He concedes that in this arrangement government will continue to provide the rules, platforms, and access whereas citizens will strive to take on more responsibilities in exchange for a greater say.

Adding to the discussion from an analysis of the Arab Spring, Eltantawy and Wiest (2011) in their article "Social Media and the Egyptian Revolution: Reconsidering Resource Mobilization Theory" show extensively how social media was a tremendous resource in facilitating the revolt. Among the uses they cite is coordination of efforts with their counterparts in Algeria. Through social media, activists in Egypt exchanged information with Algerian activists and help set up the right environment for the Egyptian uprising. Notable among the social media platforms were "We are Khalid Said", "Voice of Egypt Abroad" #Jan25 and ElBaradei's Facebook page. These platforms helped to whip up

interest and participation as well as coordinate activities during the revolt such as responding to SOS calls by protesters, sharing information on how to survive tear gas and police brutality among others.

In contrast, Asher Susser (2012) in an article 'The Arab Spring': Competing Analytical Paradigms, holds that the role of Social Media is exaggerated as far as the Egyptian revolution is concerned. He argues that what was at play were clashes of various societal interests competing for control of the Egyptian state, they were latent and more nuanced than Facebook posts or Twitter characters. It was not about democracy, and the claim that Social Media is liberalizing the Middle East is the folly of Western media and scholars. This he argues is evidenced by the fact that the liberal elements in the revolution have since struggled to come close to the corridors of power, showing clearly that the issues in the Egyptian revolution had more depth than was televised by Western media.

## The Resource Model of Political Participation

The analysis in this paper is situated within the Resource Model of Political Participation. The foremost proponents of this framework are Henry E. Brady, Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman (1995). This model seeks to go beyond the Socioeconomic Status (SES) framework of explaining political participation. Brady, Sidney, and Schlozman in this model sought to uncover the latent differences masked by the 'SES' model in what accounts for participation or non-participation among people.

The Resource model holds that political participation depends on the resources available to people, resources herein refers to time, money and civic skills at the disposal of people. It inverts the question "why do citizens participate in politics" to "why do citizens not participate in politics". For Brady et al the answer to this inverted question flows naturally, it is either "they cannot", "they do not want to" or "nobody asked them to". The answer that 'they cannot' shows a lack of necessary resources—time to take part in political activities or the money to make contributions or lack of civic skills (the communication and

organizational skills that facilitate effective participation). "They don't want to" points to a lack of interest in politics, a psychological disengagement to public issues, and a sense that activity makes no difference[21]. "Nobody asked" points to an isolation of people from the networks through which citizens are rallied for political action. (Brady et al, 1995).

## Time and Money

Time refers to the number of hours in a day that is available to an individual after they go to work, school, and sleep and performs all other sorts of activities they have to. Such time can be spent on political campaigns or understanding political issues. Money here refers to the amount of money available to the individual after all necessary expenses are made out of his income. This money can be donated or contributed to a political cause. (Brady et al 1995).

## Civic skills

Civic skills refer to the communication and organizational skills that are essential to effective participation. These skills are learned from childhood to adulthood. They are honed in school and other nonpolitical environments such as homes, churches, and workplaces. (Brady et al 1995).

# Limitations of the Resource Model of Political Participation

The Resource Model has been criticized for ignoring the role of identities in political mobilization and participation. In a paper, Political Participation Is More Than Just Resources; A New Approach to the Study of Civic Engagement, Ines Levin (2012) points out that the assumptions of the resource model are violated whenever significant heterogeneities in individual behavior remain due to differences in the factors that affect their motivation to participate in politics, these include issue positions and personal concerns.

In spite of the limitation, it is posited that the Resource Model of Political Participation is relevant in gauging the extent to which social

media is helping young people overcome the barriers of participation i.e. lack of time and money and civic skills identified by the Resource Model of Participation.

## Youth Political Participation in Ghana

To start with, the youth of Ghana as a bloc has had an uneasy relationship with power and the state. In pre-colonial times, the youth were engaged in what is known as the Asafo Companies in Akan societies for example (Asante, 2006). The Asafo Companies wielded some power and were relied upon by Chiefs to accomplish policies and projects. The colonial era brought about multi-ethnic youth groupings such as the Boys Scouts and Girl Guides under the patronage of the colonial administration. The rift in the relationship between youth and authority, according to Odoom and Gyampo (2013), started forming when the colonial administration introduced the policy of Indirect Rule, which significantly increased the power of chiefs and made them sometimes authoritarian which in the process put them and youth groups on a collision course.

Arguably, the first time the youth emerged at the forefront of shaping political events were in the last decade of the struggle towards independence. The Committee for Youth Organization (CYO) which broke away from the UGCC[6] with Nkrumah anchored the liberation struggle from 1949 onwards. From the time of the attainment of independence to the fourth republic however, the role of the youth in the political system (affecting policy making and governance saw a steady decline). The youth once again were made to assume a role akin to the Asafo Companies in the pre-colonial epoch, only vocal and active in times they felt really threatened by government policies as it was with the student boycotts under Acheampong when fees were being introduced in tertiary education for the first time.

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[6] UGCC was the United Gold Coast Convention the first political party formed in the Gold Coast in 1947.

Within the fourth republic again, Gyampo (2012) argues that youth participation is ineffective because of the following factors: the political elite lack commitment to ideals of popular participation, time frames for decision making makes broad consultation which will include the youth an unnecessary hindrance, and the fact that development planning in Ghana is skewed against effective participation. On representation, Ahwoi (2006) identified a more drastic decline in youth participation as was evidenced by the increase in the average age of government officials from 35 in 1960 to 55 in 2007 (cited in Gyampo, 2012).

In view of the above, Ghana appears to be falling short in participatory democracy and its requirements as espoused by Dahl (Coglianese, 1990). As far as the fourth republic goes, the youth have been relegated to the background, crowded out by older people in government and told to wait their turn. There are no opportunities for youth to understand civic issues neither do they have control over the matters that reach the decision making agenda. Thus, it is important to explore in Ghana, a connection between the potential of social media to bridge the gap in the political landscape and the levels of participation in the country relative to the youth. The potential of social media is seen in other places by the changing status of citizens from passive consumers of information from governments to co-creators of content referred to by Guerrero and Restrepo (2012) as 'prodiences'[7]. Given the rise to prominence of social media as a medium for interaction across all societal groups, how it is affecting participatory politics is the goal of this study.

## The Challenge of Social Media and Political Participation in Ghana

Africa is one of the fastest-growing markets for mobile phones and telecommunication services in the world ("Sub-Saharan Africa's telecoms market", 2014). Data from the Internet World Statistics (2015) reveal that the Internet has seen a monumental growth rate of 6,839.1%

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[7] Prodiences is a neologism that serves as a contrast to audiences. Whereas audiences are passive viewers of an act prodiences are actively involved in shaping the outcome of an activity.

between the year 2000 and 2015 in Africa. The growth of the Internet and its allied facilities such as Social Media around the world and in Africa is contributing to reshape and create new forms of social interaction. In Ghana, about 5,171,993 people use the Internet as of June 2015 according to preliminary data from the World Internet Statistics. Very notable people such as the President, Ministers of State and Opposition leaders as well as some Members of Parliament keep active Social Media accounts on Facebook or Twitter. Political parties, the traditional media, Civil Society Organizations and the general public have all found in Social Media, a useful platform for interaction. Essentially, Social Media has bridged the gap between some of the very high-profile political actors in Ghana and the ordinary person. For example, through Twitter anyone can send a message to the President simply by mentioning his twitter handle in their post, likewise, Social Media provides an avenue for the President and others such as Ministers of State and other actors to listen and respond to input that will otherwise not have reached them. Social Media also makes it easy for them to put out information and exchange ideas and help people understand their position on any given national issue. It is now more likely that a politician will reach more people in a Social Media campaign than he or she would in a field campaign rally. The foregoing depicts the potential of Social Media as a political tool. Also, what is real, is the potential for abuse of this tool in spreading false information, and other mischievous practices due to the room it allows participants to interact anonymously and impersonally—a characteristic which also limits the capacity to make and enforce rules on Social Media.

In a 2016 study of political parties' use of social media in Ghana, Gyampo (2017) reported that Ghanaian political parties regard social media as an important tool in reaching out to the youth who constitute an important electoral bloc usually referred to as 'swing voters' on the Ghanaian electoral map. Ghanaian political parties have also used social media to communicate party positions, soliciting people's views, organizing and fund raising. He reports further that, in spite of the advantages of social media, it still faces challenges which undermine its effectiveness and doesn't make it a feasible substitute for traditional

media. Challenges such as destructive participation, the use of insults and the spread of false information and the lack of accountability owing to the anonymity of members of social media platforms continue to take away the credibility of social media as any serious political platform in Ghana.

## Methods and Methodology of the study

The study utilized analysis of quantitative data to arrive at some conclusions on social media and youth political participation in Ghana. The study used secondary data, specifically the Round 6 Afrobarometer survey in Ghana, section on political participation conducted in the year 2014/2015 (2015). The analysis was mainly based on a cross-tabulation of results of the Afrobarometer survey. The Afrobarometer 2014/2015 survey is currently the most comprehensive data available on social media use and political participation in Ghana. The survey was conducted using national probability samples aimed at getting a sample that was representative of a cross-section of all the citizens who were fifteen years and above. The specific methods included random selection methods at every stage of sampling, sampling at all stages with probability proportionate to population sample size. The survey excluded persons in institutionalized settings such as schools, hospitals, and prisons.

The sample size used was between 1200 and 2400 people across Ghana in line with standard practice. A sample size of 1200 with sampling error of not more than +/-2.8% at a confidence level of 95% and a 2400 sample size gives a +/- 2.0% margin of error at a 95% confidence level. For Ghana, the data captured in the survey that is relevant to this study had a sample size of 2400. The survey used a varied design which included clustered, stratified, multi-stage and area probability sampling (Afrobarometer, 2015). For example, the study was stratified according to the main sub-national unit of government and then into the urban or rural location. Further, primary sampling units, start points, households and individuals were all randomly selected. There was also alternation in each household to ensure gender balance. Although the Afrobarometer study sample encompassed all demographics in the country, the focus of

this study requires that specific attention is paid to the data on youth. This paper adopts the definition of youth found in the Ghana youth policy i.e. 15-35 years, however, the challenge is that the categorizations as done by Afrobarometer are 15-29, 30-49 and 50+. Given that the 15-29 category is the closest and most representative of the objective of the study that category is analyzed in this paper.

## Social Media Usage in Ghana: A report on Afrobarometer Survey

## Social media and general political participation

The tables below present a summary of the Afrobarometer findings that this study is interested in. Table 1 reports on the level of interest youth participants have in politics and public affairs and their general use of social media. Table two presents a report on how social media is comparing with traditional media forms, it also presents a cross-tabulation of actual acts of political participation and how both users and non-users of social media react to them in comparison.

Table 1: Interest in Public Affairs and Social Media Use[8]

| Issue | Level of Interest/Participation | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| General Interest in Public Affairs | Very interested | Not at all interested | Somewhat interested |
| | 32.1% | 28.4% | 38.8% |
| Discuss Politics | Frequently | Never | Occasionally |
| | 27.1% | 34.6% | 37.9% |
| Social Media Use | Frequently | Never | Occasionally |
| | 30.4% | 62.2% | 4.5% |
| | | | |

Source: Afrobarometer Survey.

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[8] The tables (1) & (2) presented in this paper are a summary of part of the findings of the Afrobarometer survey that border on youth, social media and political participation. The full survey findings can be accessed at the Afrobarometer website; a full reference is provided in the references section of this paper.

Table 2: Social Media, Traditional Media and Political Participation

| Social Media versus Traditional Media Usage | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Social Media Users | Non Social Media Users |
| Ownership of radios | 65% | 85% |
| Ownership of Mobile phones | 95% | 79% |
| Patronage of Newspapers | 24% | 11% |
| Social media and party affiliation | 59% | 56% |
| Voted in election (2012) | 68% | 68% |
| Membership of voluntary groups | 35% | 30% |
| Understand Democracy | 92% | 44% |
| Political activism | 52% | 52% |
| Willingness to Protest and Demonstrate | 33% | 32% |

Source: Afrobarometer Survey.

## Results and Conclusion

This section concludes the paper. It distills the major findings and discusses the meanings, impact, and relevance of the findings to aid deeper understanding of the phenomenon of social media and its impact on political participation among Ghanaian youth.

On the question of the extent to which social media has increased political awareness and participation among Ghanaian youth, it can be concluded from the Afrobarometer data that social media is not a widely

used medium among Ghanaian youth and its impact on youth participation is far less dramatic compared to other countries although youth social media users outshine non-users on some of the very critical indicators of actual political participation. Non-social media users amounted to 61.2% of youth participants compared with 22.2% who use social media on a daily basis, others fall in between i.e. occasional users. What is interesting is the rate of political participation among those who use social media although they constitute a rather small minority. Here are some of the interesting indicators; 59% of those who use social media feel close to a political party compared to 56% of those who never use social media, 92% of those who use social media every day indicated that they understand democracy compared to 44% of those who never use social media.

Similarly, on whether Ghanaian youth regard social media as an important and credible source to obtain information on public issues in Ghana, the data show that traditional media such as radio and television are still predominant. The figures show that 78% of those who use social media everyday watch television news every day while just 30% of those who never use social media never watch television news, 65% of non-social media users and 85% of social media users own radios. The only form of traditional media that is largely shunned by the youth is the Newspaper, which recorded a patronage level of 24% and 11% of social media users and non-social media users respectively.

The study was also interested in finding out, the willingness of youth social media users to participate in offline political activities. The figures show that a significant 68% of youth social media users, for example, voted in the 2012 election and the same 68% was recorded for non-social media users. Also, 48% was recorded for both social media users and non-social media users' willingness to engage in a protest march. Whereas 28% of non-social media users indicated they will never engage in a protest only 18% of social media users shared that sentiment.

Further, the study ascertained whether social media is seen as an effective political tool among the youth in Ghana. The fact that only

22.2% of youth aged 15-29 are using it shows quite clearly that there are other forms and forums of participation that are more convenient or preferable to young people in Ghana. As indicated earlier, traditional media such as the radio and television are still dominant in the Ghanaian public space. This takes nothing away from the potential of social media but rather it is telling of the willingness and efficiency to which the youth put social media as Shirky (2011) pointed out.

## Implications of Low Social Media Usage in Political Participation in Ghana

In spite of the fact that Ghana is in a region (Africa) with the fastest growth of mobile and telecommunication services, according to World Internet Statistics, the phenomenon of social media is still ironically yet to catch on relative to political participation. What is interesting, however, is that, those who use it show very impressive tendencies towards actual political participation. This raises questions as to the differences between those who use social media and those who do not. Issues of internet access still linger in many parts of Africa including Ghana. Thus the ability of social media to be put to full use as is the case in other countries is challenged by the fact that not everyone has access or is capable of using the internet. The figures show that 94% of those who never use social media never use the internet whereas 86% of those who use social media everyday use the internet every day.

Also, general youth participation level is not very impressive in Ghana. Although there is a high interest in public affairs many actual acts of participation record low interest and involvement. For example, 67% and 62% of non-social media users and social media users respectively did not attend a political rally even though 56% and 59% respectively indicated they felt close to a political party. Further as high as 72% of youth surveyed indicated they did not attempt to persuade other people to vote for any candidate or party. Interestingly, the data on Ghana rehash the question, whether social media facilitates mass participation or reinforces existing social cleavages such as differences in wealth and education as alluded to by Grabber. The point is evidenced by the fact

that 94% of social media users understand democracy whereas only 44% of non-social media users indicated that they understand democracy. Contrary to what might be expected, unlike youth in countries like South Africa, Tunisia, Egypt among others, the youth of Ghana are strongly reliant on formalized structures of interest articulation i.e. when consulted by government and through political party platforms to the extent that not much is being done to leverage the power of informal tools like social media in a manner similar to Arlington VA, USA. On this score, it is important to note that #dumsormuststop and #occupyflagstaffhouse are positive developments.

More so, the predominance of radio and television point out that the Ghanaian youth are still largely audiences instead of 'prodiences' as contended by Guerrero and Restrepo (2012). In view of this, it is clear that the youth of Ghana in terms of participation has been largely stymied by centuries-long practices as it was in the Asafo companies to organizations of patronage under colonial rule which has not changed significantly throughout independent Ghana. The youth, having been engaged on the part of the implementation of decisions they were not part of making for a long time have adopted a laid-back posture towards public affairs and only participate when called upon to do so or when their interests are severely and adversely affected. Clearly, social media users show slightly more impressive tendencies towards political participation than non-users as the data shows. Social media users understand democracy way better, they own more radios, use the internet more and at the very least just as likely to vote or protest as non-users. However, it is prudent to point out that social media is yet to gain the credibility and accessibility that can make it ubiquitous and the tool of choice for political engagement among the youth in Ghana. Also, it is clear that the power of social media is not being fully tapped by Ghanaian youth.

In relation to the Resource Model of Political Participation, which posits that people who do not participate in public affairs lack resources (time and money), are not interested or are left out of the networks within which interest aggregation and articulation are carried out, the data from

the Afrobarometer survey show that the youth of Ghana are not uninterested in participating in politics. The figures show that 56% of non-users of social media feel close to a political party and 59% of social media users also feel close to a political party but actual acts of political participation beyond voting record very low interest. For instance, even though a significant percentage of them feel close to a political party, the Afrobarometer data also reveals that 72% of all the participants did not attempt to persuade anyone to vote for any party. Also, 59% of those who don't use Social Media said they will never join a protest and 53% of social media users also indicated they will not participate in a protest even though 70% of all participants have some interest in public affairs.

The data shows that in Ghana, the problem with youth participation is not a lack of interest in public affairs and going by the Resource Model, the problem lies in a lack of civic skills or a lack of time and money. In other words, it's not because the youth don't want to participate, but because they cannot and nobody is asking them to; youth don't have the time and resources and also few are within the networks for political action.

Finally, the paper explored whether the structural barriers to youth political participation in Ghana is being leap-frogged through the use of social media—by reducing costs of mobilization and information flow. Given the underwhelming usage of social media by Ghanaian youth towards public affairs and in participating in them, the paper concludes that social media has not made much of an impact in overcoming the barriers to political participation and the youth of Ghana remain largely 'audiences' and not 'prodiences' in the public space as categorized by Guerrero and Restrepo (2012).

## Recommendations

Internet access should be expanded to bring more people online; this includes providing IT literacy and addressing issues of cost. Against the background that Africa is the fastest growing region in telecom, serious attention ought to be paid to why such a global phenomenon as social media is so severely underutilized by the youth of Ghana relative to their

involvement in politics. Also, government strategy towards engaging the youth will also have to change; a lot more attempts at leveraging informal tools like social media to bring the youth on board through information access and interactivity should be given serious consideration. But, Ghanaian youth themselves will have to acquire the skills to be able to use social media as a tool to mount a presence in public affairs and affect policy making as much as they are affected by it. It is only in their political interest and not in the political interest of any other group that they develop this power and capacity.

Further research is required into what kinds of activities the youth of Ghana put social media and strategies for shifting that towards political participation. Because, between the growing numbers of Ghanaians online and the minimal usage of social media towards civic life, there is a wide disconnect. Such research should also delve into some of the issues raised by Grabber such as income, the level of education, geographic location among others and their effect on a person's capacity or willingness to use social media as a tool for participating in civic life.

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# PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN COMMUNITIES: THE ROLE OF FEMALE TRADITIONAL LEADERS (QUEEN MOTHERS)

## Alice Boateng[1]

## Abstract

The traditional role of queen mothers, seeking the welfare of community members, especially women and children, is widely recognized and respected. However, their effort toward empowering women for sustainable development of their communities is not given much attention. If anything at all, the contributions made by their counterparts (kings/chiefs) are given more attention. This paper explores the contributions of queen mothers to sustainable development of their communities, and as agents of change. It also highlights specific challenges queen mothers encounter in the performance of their roles. Twenty queen mothers in the Akyem Abuakwa District of Ghana were selected for the study. Two focus group sessions of 10 participants in each group were used, as the design. The queen mothers' contributions focused on gender related issues in community development such as children's education, women's work, community projects, women and children's rights, leadership and empowerment issues. Findings indicated that the activities of the queen mothers towards sustainable development are limited by financial constraints, including oppression by some of their counterparts (chiefs/kings). The paper concludes that there is a need to involve queen mothers in the planning and implementation of community development projects, and in any decision-making, that affects the community as a whole. The paper recommends that queen mothers should be physically and financially supported by stakeholders including governmental bodies, NGOs, and benevolent organizations in their community's sustainable development efforts and that, queen mothers must be more assertive towards their work.

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**Keywords:** queenmothers, sustainable development, roles, Akans, Ghana.

## Introduction

Ghana is among the countries in Africa, where traditional leadership runs parallel with the western (colonial) form of governance, and where female traditional leaders (queen mothers) play a crucial role alongside their male counterparts (chiefs/kings). Prior to British colonial rule, chieftaincy was the main form of governance in Ghana, and queen mothers exercised enormous power and authority in their communities. As her traditional role, a female ruler/queen mother selects and nominates a candidate to be a chief/king, serves as the chief's principal advisor, custodian of culture, and defends the rights of kinship. As a role model, the queen mother provides education on the history of the royal lineage, on initiation rites, and seeks the welfare of women/girls, children in the entire community. Having her own court, she serves as a councillor, and mediates in domestic disputes, that involve marriage, divorce, child care, and child custody (Boaten 1992; Manuh 1988; Odotei 2006). However, in spite of these clear roles, queen mothers were conspicuously absent from local governance under colonial rule (Manuh 1988).

In contemporary times, Ghanaian queen mothers continue to expand their leadership roles by undertaking projects or efforts that seek to empower women and foster sustainable development in their communities. However, roles/achievements of traditional leaders continue to focus on the males. The queen mothers' role in this endeavour has not been given much recognition. There is therefore a knowledge gap on the activities of female traditional leaders/queen mothers, especially towards sustainable community development, as their activities are overshadowed by their male counterparts. Additionally, little is known about the challenges/barriers to their role performance. Also, there is no literature on Akyem Abuakwa queen mothers, who are the focus of the current study. It is in line with these problems that this study explored the role of Akyem Abuakwa queen mothers in promoting sustainable development in their communities.

First, the study discusses the concept of sustainable development, reviews literature on traditional leadership in Africa and Ghana, the Akan socio-political system, and traditional roles of the Akan queen mother. It then discusses the methodology employed, followed by analysis and discussion of findings under emerging themes, highlighting the extent to which the activities of the queen mothers foster sustainable development in their communities, and the barriers that confront them.

## The Concept of Sustainable Development

Sustainable development (SD) is a complex and multidimensional concept with various definitions. For instance, in economics it is defined as development which ensures that the per capita income of future generations is not lower than that of the present generation, and in sociology it refers to development that supports close social relationships in communities, and thus preserves the community (Ciegis, Ramanauskiene & Martinkus, 2009, p. 31). The 1987 Brundtland Commission's Report also defines sustainable development as the kind of development that satisfies current needs without ruining the future. In other words, it is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. For development to be sustainable then, it must create the possibility for achieving overall wellbeing of both the present and future members of a community. The concept supports strong economic and social development, especially for people with poor living standards. It also highlights the importance of protecting natural resources and the environment. According to the concept, social and economic wellbeing cannot be improved with measures that destroy the environment (UNECE 2004-2005). For example, in some communities in Ghana, including Akyem Abuakwa, where the current study was undertaken, illegal mining has become the order of the day, and its activities are damaging the environment (land, rivers, farms), as people dig for particles of gold. Such people are more contented with the short-term gold money, than the cost involved with the environmental destruction. In such a case, sustainable development efforts would explore alternative projects that would replenish and preserve the land for unborn members to also benefit. Sustainable development also sees intergenerational

solidarity as crucial, and that all development efforts in a community must take into account its impact on opportunities created for future generations (Barbic 1997; UNECE 2004-2005).

## Traditional Leadership in Africa and the Queen Mother

Traditional leadership has been rooted in the African society since time immemorial, and the institution is an integral part of the social, cultural, and political establishment of African communities. Traditional leaders (kings and queen mothers) are not elected by popular vote, but imposed on the basis of ascription and lineage; they are noted for their role in fostering democratic governance and socio-economic development in their communities. In pre-colonial times, the chief/queen mother was a nucleus of tribal life, and worked with the subjects in the governance of the community. In many parts of Africa, pre-colonial political systems were decentralized with social control, law making, and allocation of resources, carried out by local entities, such as lineage groupings, and village communities. During the colonial era, traditional authorities entered into alliances with the colonial authorities, who imposed their own value systems in relation to new forms of government and administration. As a result, the institution subjected itself to manipulation, since traditional leaders became the instruments of the divide-and-rule method of the colonial masters (Gilfford and Louis 1982; Ntsebeza, 2004). Queen mothers are important in the socio-cultural, political, and economic lives of Africans, particularly in the rural communities. Generally, they play a significant role in local government and exert social power and influence. As 'mothers' of the community, queen mothers have always been shown great respect from their community members because of their power, wisdom, and devotion to their people. The innate tendency that women have for caring and nurturing their own renders them loyal citizens of their communities. As a result, queen mothers readily contribute towards the development of their communities, and in some instances, go the extra mile to sustain such communities (Adu 2003; Odame 2014). They are closer to the people, have influence in the community, and are acknowledged as agents of social and economic change. Queen mothers are a crucial part of the Akan tradition of Ghana.

# Traditional Leadership in Ghana

Traditional leadership in Ghana can only be understood in its proper phases as it mutated from pre-colonial to colonial and into post-colonial era. Traditional leaders in the precolonial period were the political, social, economic, legal and military heads of the traditional state. It is on record that traditional leaders, especially the females, exercised enormous power and authority over their lands and people during pre-colonial times. In the colonial times, the British colonial leaders applied indirect rule; governing the people through male traditional leaders, thus, submerging the power and roles of the female traditional leaders, known as queen mothers (Aidoo 1981; Owusu-Mensah 2015). Thus, ccolonial policies undermined women's traditional leadership, thereby eroding women's traditional authority, and thus, circumventing tradition (Boaten 1992; Stoeltje 2003). Other factors noted to erode the queen mother's authority included the usual male domination or patriarchy, and political leanings. Then in post-colonial times, the power and authority of traditional leaders depended upon the government of the day. Studies have shown the dynamism of Ghanaian female traditional leaders across these three eras (Brobbey 2008; Odotei 2006).

# The Socio-Political System of the Akans of Ghana

Social organization in the Akan kingdom is based on matrilineal descent; one's family and clan are explained through the mother's line, and if a person is to become a chief or a queen mother, that person must have descended from a royal ancestress through the mother. The basic group within the kingdom is the clan, of which there are eight in total, with members often occupying Akan towns and villages. Each town or village has a royal family (that first settled on the land), and from this royal family are the chief and the queen mother selected. The Asona clan for instance, said to have originated from Sodua in Adanse, descended from a woman who was said to have emerged from the skies (Daaku 1968; Boahen 1966). Since the Akan lineage is matrilineal, these women leaders came to be recognized as heads of the clans, or female traditional leaders, whose primary responsibility was to serve as 'mothers' to their clans, and communities, especially women and children (Drah 2014). Since women are noted to be the founders of the various clans, the queen

mother's prominent political stature is recognized by the society, because the female serves as the nexus of generations, as compared to, for instance, Volta Region queen mothers, who are recruited into the ethnic group through male genealogy. Among the Akans, the queen mother is the female counterpart of the king, and often times, are related to each other; and the queen mother may be his mother, sister, or niece (Drah 2014; Brempong 2007). In this matrilineal society, all women are important, but the queen mother is especially so because she serves as a model for women generally, and she provides the link that defines who are members of the royal family. It is clear from this discussion that the chieftaincy position is not a public office, but for a particular royal house (Asona, Ayokoo, Aduana, etc. clan) in a city, town or village.

The political hierarchy of the Akan traditional leadership comprises the paramount chief, and his female counterpart, the paramount queen mother. Below them are the divisional chief and his female counterpart, the divisional queen mother. Under these divisional leaders are the sub divisional chiefs. Each chief or queen mother has jurisdiction over a specific town, village or hamlet. The roles and functions of the chiefs and queen mothers are basically the same. The chief is the 'father' of the land and of the people, and the queen mother is the 'mother' of the land and of the people (Drah 2014). Additionally, there are other sub-chiefs in every town or village, who are the chiefs of other clans, who work together with the main chief in stool matters. In modern Ghana, the chieftaincy hierarchy works alongside the democratic structure (Odotei 2006). In other words, Ghana practices dual governance, where the democratic form of governance inherited from the colonial masters runs parallel with the traditional governance in every city, town or village. Chiefs and queen mothers are therefore involved in all domains of custom, while at the same time are engaged in adapting to postcolonial society (Stoeltje 2003).

# Traditional Roles of the Akan Queen Mother

## Enstoolment Role

The queen mother played and continues to play a major role in enstooling a chief. It was her singular prerogative to nominate or select a candidate to be made a chief. As the mother and head of the matrilineal lineage and as the stool mother, the queen mother is expected to know people who have the pure royal blood to mount the stool. She performs this function in agreement with the family head (*abusua panin*) (Arhin 1983; Boaten 1992; Odotei 2006).

According to Boaten (1992), in the olden days, queen mothers commanded so much respect and honour that their nominees consistently were accepted to become chiefs, unless the candidates had criminal records or were social misfits, such as thieves, drunkards, etc.

## Conflict Resolution and Mediation Roles

The greatest responsibility the queen mother bears is the resolution of conflicts. A queen mother is involved with her traditional court, to hear cases involving women, children, domestic affairs, or everyday life issues in her community. A 2012 study by Takyiwaa Manuh on *Asantehemaa's* (Asante queen mother's) court and its jurisdiction, observed that the queen mother practised legal pluralism, a situation in which the imported colonial law interacted with customary law (p. 50). For instance, a divorce case could be sent to the queen mother for out of legal court settlement, with the queen mother's court reporting back proceedings to the legal court. There is therefore an attempt by the law courts to preserve marriage, and to respect traditional authority and values enshrined in the chieftaincy institution.

## Serves as Counselor/Advisor

The queen mother serves as the chief's principal advisor. In every community where there is a cordial relationship between the chief and his female counterpart (the queen mother), the chief cannot take any decision without consultation with the queen mother. In the olden days, whenever there was an issue, the people would go and consult the queen

mother, noted to be the good wise woman, hence the saying, *yeekobisa abrewa (*we're going to consult the old lady) (Boaten 1992). When she was consulted, as a woman of wisdom and of traditional knowledge, she was able to provide wise council. Hence, the chief could not take decisions without consulting the queen mother, the custodian of the stool, and of the culture. Her position as the mother of the chief upon her installation, gives her the right to reprimand the chief when he acts contrary to the norms of the state, and is the only person who can reprimand the chief in public (Boaten 1992). The queen mother, thus, serves as a counselor for all, and when she speaks, her words are final.

**Keeps the Royal Lineage Intact**
As custodian of the culture, she ensures the royal lineage remains intact. She knows the family tree, of ancestors who have passed, as well as the living descendants. She provides the living generation with knowledge of the history of the clan, of the ancestors, and the need to uphold the culture and traditions of the clan. She also helps to maintain the family unit by preserving family property, and by strengthening family relationships. She is charged with the responsibility of performing various traditional rituals and rites, which in the past included nubility rites, to initiate girls into adulthood. Every six weeks, during the *Akwasidae* festival, she is in charge of the mashed plantain (*oto*) preparation for the stools. She sees to the continuity of the lineage, by ensuring that females in the lineage marry from good homes to ensure quality progeny into the lineage, and procreate, to ensure the continuous existence of the royal lineage (Boaten 1992).

**Welfare role**
Equally important is the queen mother's responsibility for the welfare of women and domestic affairs in her community. A queen mother is recognized as a leader and a role model for girls and women, overseeing their transition from youth into adulthood. Her doors are open to all, and so when people are in need, they go to her for various assistance, both in cash and in-kind. She serves as a counselor, a care giver, and as a host to some guests that visit her town. Much of the cost incurred in these services may be from her personal savings, given that the queen mother

position comes with no formal salary. She also uses her influence as a community leader to educate, and advocate for children/youth and women's rights in divorce, child custody, and property ownership, for the less-privileged (Manuh 1988; Owusu-Mensah 2015; Stoeltje 2003). As Manuh (1988) observed of the Asantehemaa's court, it dealt with matters affecting women, especially matrimonial issues of divorce and maintenance, and interpersonal matters among women.

## Methodology

Akyem Abuakwa is one of the three independent states along with Akyem Bosome and Akyem Kotoku that form the Akyem Mansa (three Akyem states), located in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The Akyem Abuakwa state comprises seven districts (Abuakwa North, Abuakwa South, Atiwa East, Atiwa West, Fantiakwa, Kwaebibrim, and Denkyembuor), with Kibi in the Abuakwa North district as the state capital. Participants for this study were selected from the Akyem Abuakwa queen mothers who attend queen mothers' association meetings at Kibi. Akyem Abuakwa was selected as the study area because it has an active queen mothers' association that meets once a month at Kibi, and because of the participants' convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher. Thus, participants were conveniently available to participate in the study. First, an informational meeting was held at Kibi to explain the study, and to seek consent. Convenient sampling was used to select twenty women who participated in two focus group sessions, with ten participants in each group, using an interview guide. These women were recruited during the Association's meeting day at Kibi. The second focus group session was undertaken a month's interval from the first, that is, the next association meeting day. Each focus group session took place at one of the palace halls, and lasted for about one and a half hours. Data was recorded through audio tapes and note-taking.

# Analysis and Discussion of Findings

## Background information of the Queen Mothers

Socio-demographic characteristics of the queen mothers covered in the study were age, educational background, and number of years enstooled as queen mothers. Of the 20 queen mothers in the study, the majority (twelve) were between the ages of 50-59 years, five were between the ages of 60-69, and three between ages 40-49. This confirms the assertion that traditional positions seek elderly individuals because of experience, maturity and advisory positions (Mensah et. al. 2014: 211). In modern times, a person's level of education has become one of the criteria for selection of a king or queen mother. This is because knowledgeable leaders contribute greatly in moving their communities forward. The majority (11) of the women had completed basic education, two had completed tertiary education, five had completed secondary and vocational education, and two had no formal education. This supports the study by Mensah et. al. (2014), that found that majority of the queen mothers studied had basic level education. Additionally, as observed by these authors in the Akan society, and other societies in Ghana, the queen mother's position is a monarchy that she occupies till death, and as such many queen mothers sit on their thrones for a long time. Majority (14) of the queen mothers in the current study have occupied their stools between 12 and 15 years, three have ruled between 6-10 years, two have ruled for four years each, and one participant has ruled for 40 years. This suggests that the queen mothers in the study have acquired experience and are set to lead their communities. Additionally, majority (16) of the queen mothers perform dual roles in either formal or informal work spaces in their villages and other cities. This shows a changing trend in modern traditional leadership.

# Queen Mothers' Roles in Sustainable Development

As community mothers, queen mothers in this study are involved with various development efforts.

## Leadership and Education

The women indicated that they carry the workshops they undertake at the Associational meetings into their own communities. For example, they do clean up and educational awareness campaigns, to address health, water and sanitation problems in their communities. Three women speak:

> Just last month, we did a workshop in my community on reproductive health, and invited a midwife and two nurses as resource persons. These professionals have come into our territory, and so the women were brave to ask questions and share concerns that they couldn't have talked about if they had visited the clinic.

> With what we learned at the Koforidua workshop, we organized clean-up campaign and educational awareness. … My village looks cleaner now, and we undertake communal labour once a month, with me leading the community.

> Through workshops, we have received knowledge and skills on leadership, child care, family planning, nutrition, human rights, entrepreneurship, and many more.

The women in both focus group sessions also agreed that water and sanitation are huge problems in the Akyem Abuakwa community, especially as a result of illegal mining. So, they organize seminars to educate people, especially the miners polluting water bodies and the environment, and provide guidance and counselling to the women who wash the muddy sand/waters for left-over gold (kolikoli). A group of them have also been trained to undertake vegetable farming on their mined lands to meet their current needs, which is at the same time, an effort to restore and sustain the land for future use:

> I lead our farming group in vegetable farming. We have planted various vegetables (cabbage, onions, pepper). We are also into crop rotation on the filled-up pits, thus reclaimed the land for another purpose.

Providing a platform for such educational and economic activities empower women for positive change. As Odame (2011) observed, building the capacity of queen mothers, sensitising other women to fight for their rights, acting on viable alternatives, providing access to credit facilities, fighting poverty and illiteracy, are all efforts to foster development in communities, and the nation as a whole.

## Assisting to maintain the family unit

The sustainable development concept also emphasizes support and maintenance of social relations (UNECE 2004-2005). The women indicated that as 'mothers' of the stool and of the community, they are consulted in family matters. They had success stories of healing broken marriages:

> With some marriage cases, we as queen mothers of the town work with the elders to settle such cases, to avoid divorce, and other family issues. We do workshops in our towns to teach women things like child care, parenting skills, cultural values to teach their children.

The queen mothers expressed concern about modernism and some cultural changes it has brought, the phasing away of the extended family unit and loss of traditional values. Issues of concern discussed included: the way young people dress, their failure to greet when they meet the elderly, school dropout, and teen pregnancy. The family unit is considered a fundamental building block of society, and the participants agreed that something needs to be done to promote the extended family, and prevent its extinction. A few of them indicated that, they do school visits and follow that up with home visits, to work with families, to get children back to school. As research observes, education on family values and family traditions add to the personal identity of

children/youth (Brett & McKay 2013). Regardless of the type, all families need to be nurtured and strengthened from time to time; cultural values and positive parenting should be carried on to children. This assertion is in line with the concept of sustainable development – transferring traditional values to future generations.

## Collaborating with Government and NGOs

One area that contemporary queen mothers are aspiring higher in their roles is partnering organizations to move their communities forward. The queen mothers in this study indicated that their roles are expanding. This particular group has done workshops with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection on the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty Programme, and on Women's Reproductive Health. One woman sums it up:

> Our traditional role of improving lives of all people in the community is currently being done with government agencies, NGOs, and some individuals, including UN agencies, such as UNICEF. Chocho Industries has for instance been of enormous help to some of our communities. The financial support and education of these agencies go a long way to help, since many of us lack the resources.

The role of queen mothers to seek the welfare of people in the community, especially women and children is recognized and respected (Drah 2014; Odame 2011; Mensah et. al. 2014). This multi-faceted central role in the community is what UNICEF is exploring as another communication channel to affect social and behavioural change, and enhance sustainable development in Ghana (Drah 2014). Queen mothers have come to the attention of NGOs and international agencies, including the UNDP, USAID, who are engaged in sensitisation activities to increase women's participation in communities. Due to such efforts, the queen mothers' role as leaders of their communities has taken new dimensions to meet current challenges including, poverty, illiteracy, diseases, and to effect positive change and sustainable development.

## Handling school-related problems

One of the major problems confronting the Akyem Abuakwa district is illegal mining (galamsey). The queen mothers stated that it has been on the agenda for their meetings because of the many negative effects it brings, including truancy, school dropout, teen pregnancy, and other environmental issues. They have become concerned, since the education of the children and the youth is at stake. In their own words:

> Hmm, we here are at a very losing end. … I don't see how children here are going to benefit from the President's free high school education. They are dropping out of school, and choosing illegal mining, which means they can't reach high school to be educated for free. It's sad!

> So, some of us are doing the little we can, by going to some schools in our villages, and working with the teachers and parents to get the children back to school. But it is not very easy. Both some parents and children don't see the importance of education. Imagine a student telling me: Nana gyae yen ma yentu, na okom ade yen akye! (Queen mother, leave us to dig for the gold, because we have been hungry for a long time!)

The queen mothers agreed that though they are unable to persuade all children/youth involved to return to school, they are seeing some improvement, and hopefully if the government's ban on illegal mining becomes effective, they will be happy. As Adu-Gyamfi, Brenya and Abakah (2015) observed, illegal mining has negative effects such as poor school attendance, and poor academic performance, and there is the need for parents to be made aware of their responsibility to bear the cost of their children's needs Having educated people in a community, of course, fosters sustainable development.

## Participation in queen mothers' associations

The sustainable development concept also stresses the importance of social networks. The participants in this study indicated that there are two main queen mothers' associations that they belong to: Akyem Abuakwa and Eastern Regional Queen Mothers' Associations. They attend meetings at Kibi and Koforidua respectively. These meetings offer them the opportunity to do workshops, to learn from each other, to meet other people, including politicians, and NGO officials. It is also a time to socialize and make friends. They collect monthly dues, some of which is used to support each other during funerals, and other celebrations. As they put it:

> This is of course a good place to acquire knowledge and learn what other queen mothers are doing for the wellbeing of their people. During these meetings, we share ideas; resource persons come in to teach us, we socialize, and assist each other in various ways.

Through interactions and relationship building, these women are able to access networks or resources that might otherwise remain hidden. The sustainable development concept emphasises that decision-making in the community is interdependent, and stems from a rich civic life and shared information carried among various community members. Reviewed literature on queen mothers did not explore associations they join, and their importance to the women (Barbic 1997). This is innovative.

## Advocates for change

According to the queen mothers, as much as they want to preserve culture, they believe that cultural practices that are harmful should be discarded:

> There are certain cultural practices in my town that I abhor, and have been advocating for them to stop. These include child marriage, and pouring sheep's blood on people's feet, as pacification. To discard harmful cultural practices is a process. It needs much educational

> awareness, for people to understand why we should do
> away with them. Because someone will see it a practice
> handed down by our ancestors and should be practised.

In fact, educating people on this issue is crucial, and the education
should include that of human rights instruments ratified by Ghana, such
as the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, the UN Convention on the Rights of
the Child, 1998 Children's Act, and the Convention on the Elimination
of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The queen
mothers stated in addition that experts have taken them through some of
these laws, including the Chieftaincy Act, 2007, and they manage to
enlighten others about these laws. They indicated further that they
advocate for vulnerable populations in their communities:

> We take care of orphans, widows, the aged, and work
> with the District Assemblies, and churches to help these
> vulnerable populations. When we see that some of them
> qualify for LEAP or NHIS, but don't have it, we push for
> them to be included in the beneficiaries…It is so
> fulfilling, when we are able to do this.

> Some of us are on District Assembly committees, such as
> the government's school feeding and the one district, one
> factory projects, advising, and advocating for their
> effective implementation in our respective towns.

Collaborating with traditional leaders for effective governance is noted
to be crucial to sustainable development (Arthur and Nsiah 2011).

## Sustainable livelihood projects

Responses further indicated that some of the queen mothers were
engaged in sustainable development projects that seek to empower
women and children in their communities. One woman stated that she
and her women have established a bakery in their town. They bake bread
once a week, and also have started vegetable farming for other women
who are interested in that. Others were into soap-making with their

women, while others were learning vocational skills, including how to do wedding and funeral decorations. According to the queen mothers, these are projects to empower the women, and to make them self-sufficient. One of them said that they all come together to prepare liquid soap and parasol. After bottling, they give them to some of the women to go and sell with commission. The initial seed money comes back to their fund, and the interest is shared among the women soap makers. Another queen mother indicated that her community is building a structure to be used as a cold storage room for the women to engage in selling fresh fish, beef and chicken. She indicated that an individual has bought a refrigerating plant for them, another person has promised them three deep freezers, and they are pursuing fund-raising activities to support this project. Two of the women said they are undertaking joint grant writing to solicit grants for their community projects, which include developing a computer centre and a library for the children and youth. One of the women said she has established a queen mother's educational fund, though with small money, they are into fund-raising activities to increase the money to support the vulnerable in her society. The few women undertaking these empowerment projects were noted to be the highly educated ones in the sample. Thus, educated queen mothers are bringing new dimensions into the roles female traditional leaders perform. As Stoeltje (2003) observed, a shift is occurring, since many male leaders in the chieftaincy hierarchy appreciate the importance of education and have started to seek women who are both educated and qualified by lineage to occupy the stools.

## Barriers to Sustainable Development

### Economic, Cultural and Social
Participants were of the view that poverty is a major problem for their inability to pursue empowerment projects that could sustain their communities. Of the twenty participants in the study, only four were employed in the formal sector, the remaining were into petty trading, and into petty farming. Some of these women have been on the stool for more than ten years, and have limited formal education, since in times past, they only needed an education concerning matters of custom. As a

result, many queen mothers, as Stoeltje (2003) further observed, have limited education, or are not literate. This is a serious challenge for them, especially in working with their chiefs, since it makes it possible for the chiefs to exclude the queen mothers easily from stool affairs. As one queen mother in the study said:

> There's virtually no communication between my chief and I. I am not given my share of any money or anything the chief receives, and since I have no meaningful job, it's difficult for me to lead the women into pursuing development projects, because it needs start-up funds. Some of us don't often attend meetings, because we may not have money for lorry fare, and for association dues.

This response is in agreement with Stoeltje (2003) that the pre-modern economic system gave the chiefs control over stool resources and most of the times 'greedy' chiefs refused to share the monies with the queen mothers, so they could support themselves and their households. One difference between the Ashanti queen mothers Stoeltje studied and the Akyem queen mothers in this present study is that majority of the women in the present study were engaged in some kind of job to earn some money to support themselves. This shows a shifting nature of the queen mother's ceremonial position, where in times past, they were not allowed to work, but were to be served. Some of the participants stated that they are rather serving their people, employing leadership by example.

Majority of the queen mothers agreed that they are oppressed and marginalized by both their chiefs and government. For instance, when government officials or some guests visit the chief at the palace, in most cases, the chiefs do not invite the queen mothers to sit in to discuss their mission. After the visit, some chiefs may or may not even tell their queen mothers what happened. One queen mother stated:

> In most cases, my chief doesn't invite me to the meeting. But I live at the palace, so whenever I hear he is having a

meeting with some guests, I dress up and go to sit in, and
nobody drives me away.

This attitude of the chief is of course undermining the role of the queen
mother discussed earlier, as 'mother' and main advisor of the chief.
Some queen mothers were receiving no economic support, nor enough
support from stool money and royalties from lands and investments,
which according to custom, they should receive from the chiefs. This
behaviour has created a strained relationship between some queen
mothers and their chiefs. One wonders why it is the chief who controls
stool royalties and resources, and not the mother and custodian of the
stool. This shows the extent to which patriarchy has seeped into the
society, and into a matrilineal system, which somewhat contradicts the
assertion by Odame (2014) that women's participation in decision
making in matrilineal societies is encouraged. It must be added here that
some stools do not have many resources, and so the queen mothers may
not have sufficient resources from the stool monies/royalties, which may
have the potential to compromise their authority. In such cases,
according to the participants, they try hard to succeed as queen mothers:

> Under normal circumstance, the queen mother does not
> do any hard work. She is there to be served by others. But
> when you don't have the means, you need to do any hard
> work that would bring money. When you do, people
> question. So what should we do?

Another barrier to sustainable development the participants discussed
was gender issues in local leadership. From the responses, women were
not given equal opportunity for participation in local leadership in their
communities like their male counterparts. They attributed this to factors
such as lack of respect for women, cultural barriers, and entrenched
gender stereotypes. Participants sum it up as follows:

> The way we queen mothers are side-lined by our male
> counterparts, is the same way other women are side-lined
> in local leadership. For instance, during district assembly

> elections, when women apply, they are discouraged by men, and dropped. Also, undertaking community projects, male local leaders, including the chiefs and assembly men team up and support any project at all, without involving us the women, or a task force of cross-section of the community, to identify the exact projects the community needs; as if some of us don't matter. Then when such a project is abandoned, sometimes, because of lack of interest from the community members, then those implementers begin to complain.
>
> Additionally, when we attend state council meeting, and some of us want to contribute or ask a question, we are ignored. One time, when I persisted, my own friend (a queen mother) pushed my hand down, saying, I didn't know how the system works, and if I didn't take care the chiefs would bar me from attending such meetings. So how does the system work? The system doesn't allow women to talk?

A 2006 study by Ajayi and Otuya also found that majority of women were culturally, socially, and politically prevented from participating in community development planning and decision-making processes.

Another concern of the queen mothers was inaccessibility of government's social protection programmes by eligible persons, such as aged people, and persons with disabilities. They were not sure of the government's eligibility criteria, since they have many people in their communities among the poorest of the poor, who qualify.

> I have this 97 year-old blind woman, who was given the LEAP package once (in 2012), and no more. I have been to the district assembly office several times, with letters, on this and other cases, but nothing has been done.

On another note, those queen mothers who are in estranged relationships with their male counterparts indicated that some of such cases were reported and the cases are still pending with the traditional Judicial Council:

> The case between my chief and I have extended over 12 years. We don't sit together during durbars or at funeral grounds. There's no communication between us, and he doesn't give me my part of royalty monies. It's very worrying. This case is still pending at the Judicial Council.
>
> There's this chief, who was serving as regent in our palace to take oversight of responsibilities, when our chief died. At a traditional meeting, this chief wanted to sit on the deceased chief's stool. I rejected, because it is against tradition. This has brought a misunderstanding, which is yet to be settled at the Judicial Council.

## Surmounting the Barriers: Women and the SDGs

In this section, I examine the women's suggestions/recommendations in line with specific UN Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030) that address structural barriers to women's empowerment.

> On 25 September 2015, the 193 Member States of the United Nations adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a set of 17 aspirational objectives with 169 targets expected to guide actions of governments, international agencies, civil society and other institutions over the next 15 years (2016-2030). … The 17 SDGs aim at ending poverty and hunger while restoring and sustainably managing natural resources (FAO 2015, pp. 4).

Though the SDGs are indivisible, there are specific goals that address structural barriers to women's empowerment. One of them is Goal 5:

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. This goal recognises the fact that women's oppression is grounded in structural forces and institutions, associated with deeply embedded power inequalities and discriminatory norms which cut across social, economic, and political spheres. From this study, it is clear that some queen mothers are marginalised, and discriminated against by their counterparts (the chiefs). This same goal calls an end to all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere, including queen mothers and their subjects. Furthermore, Goal 5 calls for women's effective participation, leadership, and decision making at all levels. It also calls for the elimination of all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage. How do we achieve gender equality? One of the participants in the study stated that she confronted her chief on one of the harmful cultural practices in her community, and asked for its abandonment. The chief told her that if she can't be a queen mother, she should abdicate the stool. The issue is how do we reconcile these traditional practices with the human rights instruments Ghana has ratified, and with the sustainable development goals? The basic reason why gender equality has not been achieved in every realm is that women and girls' voices are most often excluded from local, national and global decision-making processes. For instance, in designing the MDGs were grassroots women consulted? Programmes and policies should be designed with women's needs being considered. Though female education has seen much progress, it is still slow, and should be encouraged. When women are educated and empowered, they will enable their daughters to go to school. From the study, a woman's voice and her ability to become educated, a mentor, a role model, and a leader in her community is fundamental to empowering women for sustainable development.

Empowering all women, include empowering the queen mothers as well. The women therefore suggested that the government should look into providing some monthly salaries to all stool queen mothers, since many of them have no support from stool monies. This is because many of them use their own resources to help community members – people consult them for chop money, food, school fees, funeral expenses, clothing; guests are brought to their homes to be hosted; they travel for

functions, workshops and seminars meant to empower their women, etc. If queen mothers are economically, socially, and politically empowered, as mothers of their communities, they stand to move forward sustainable development.

Additionally, Goal 8 of the SDGs is to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. This, of course, is what the queen mothers in this study ask for, in their suggestion that the government creates an environment that fosters unity and inclusiveness between chiefs and their queen mothers. For instance, when government officials are coming in to have a meeting with a chief, the queen mother too should be informed, so she can contribute to the discussion, which may hover around the community's development and progress. As Ajayi and Otuya (2006) observed, majority of women in developing countries are socially, culturally and politically prevented from participating in community development planning and decision-making processes (pp. 191).

The women also suggested that traditional leaders, including the women should be involved in the Government's one district, one factory project in every district, as they identify needed projects, and resources/assets to support and sustain projects. In their view, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, and for that matter, the social welfare department must closely work together with queen mothers, since their target is to address the welfare of the same clients. According to the women, inputs of traditional leaders and grass-roots people should be sought before development projects are institutionalized. To meet goal 8, and to promote development-oriented policies, decentralization of welfare services is thus crucial, instead of every request being sent to the Regional or National levels. Goal 8 also emphasises educational training. It was found in the study that the queen mothers have gone beyond their ceremonial roles, and are engaging in development projects with their subjects. To the women, government must provide education and awareness of its social protection programmes, and that these programmes must be expanded to cover qualified persons in their communities as well. They further suggested that government, NGOs,

and civil society should come to their aid to support them financially, including their skills training efforts.

Goal 16 of the SDG is to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. In line with Goal 16, the women recommend that queen mothers be included in the planning of projects, and in any decision-making processes that affect their communities, and themselves. They stated for instance, that only chiefs are assigned to adjudicate the chieftaincy disputes at the Judicial Council, and that the women should also be given the opportunity to be on this board, not forgetting the old-age adage of going to ask the old lady, who is noted to possess wisdom in settling disputes.

The queen mothers also charged the government and NGOs who visit their communities, to be gender-sensitive in dealing with traditional issues, and working with community members, since this would go a long way to build effective, accountable, peaceful, and inclusive institutions. As the paramount chief of New Juaben and the United Nations Commissioner on International Civil Service Commission, Daasebre Emeritus Professor Oti Boateng, observed,

> the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), though laudable, lacks the basic community development substratum to attain implementation efficiency and sustainability (GNA 2017).

According to him, the well-crafted agenda of 17 goals lacks a functional community development process mechanism to support its implementation and sustainability. Thus, communities which are the legitimate owners of development must be deeply involved in the planning and implementation to ensure its success. This is exactly in support of the queen mothers' stance in this study. These communities are headed by traditional leaders, including queen mothers. As Arthur and Nsiah (2011) observed, traditional leaders as heads of their communities are accorded enormous respect, due to the power and authority they possess, which is far above that of state authority, and are

therefore crucial in governing and controlling communities. Involving traditional leaders is in line with achieving sustainable development, since they live with their community members, are able to supervise and ensure that their directives are respected and carried out.

## Conclusion

Contemporary Akan queen mothers, in Ghana, continue to perform most of their traditional roles. They are expanding their traditional functions by incorporating new roles that seek to empower women and to foster sustainable development in their communities, hence creating hope for the future. Though patriarchy and socio-economic conditions threaten their authority, the study indicated that some queen mothers hold on to their voice and are visible in the midst of barriers confronting them, which include poverty, discrimination, marginalisation, oppression, and lack of resources. To enhance their community development efforts, queen mothers should be supported with individual, group, and institutional assets. Additionally, queen mothers and their community members should be included in the planning and implementation of community development projects, and in any decision-making, that affects the community as a whole. The significant contributions of queen mothers in protecting and supporting women and children in their communities must be backed by a purposeful effort to empower, inspire and strengthen their positions to enable them provide leadership to local initiatives that aim at promoting wellbeing and sustainable development in their communities. As the United Kingdom Secretary of State for International Development, Justine Greening stated: 'When women get extra earnings, they will then reinvest that back in their families and back in their communities. It is therefore a 'double' win for development' (Department of International Development 2015).

Of course, any community development effort will be retarded if there is no peace among the leaders. From the focus group discussions, conflicts exist between some of the queen mothers and their chiefs. Much has got to do with oppression, marginalization, greed, and power. Contemporary Akan queen mothers need to be more assertive, especially if they are traditionally recognized as custodians of their lands and stools, and as

mothers of their clans, and communities. If they are the custodians, why then do stool monies, for instance, go to their male counterparts? And why do some chiefs refuse to share such royalties with their female counterparts? These seem controversial, since in the Akan traditional system, ancestral property belongs to the females and not the males. All these boil down to patriarchy - rule of the father; men tend to dominate in society through their positions of power (Qasim, Mehboob, Akram and Masrour 2015). Nevertheless, these Akan queen mothers could do some reflection on their pre-colonial political obligations and their respective roles in legislative and judicial processes, as reflected in the actions of Queen Yaa Asantewaa of Ashanti when she called upon her women and led the Ashanti rebellion known as the War of the Golden Stool, against British colonialism (Agyeman-Duah 1999). The queen mothers could surely return to their roots, to be more assertive in order to move forward sustainable development in their communities.

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# ADOPTING AND SUSTAINING GREEN ELECTRICITY ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES IN GHANA: A REVIEW OF POLICY PERSPECTIVES

## Benjamin Bilalam Jabik[1] and Simon Bawakyillenuo[2]

## Abstract

As an effort to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), countries need to reorient policy directions towards green approaches and initiatives including green energy initiatives. Energy from renewable sources contributes to environmental protection, security of energy supply, employment generation, promotion of sustainable development and reduction of greenhouse gas emission. Though Ghana is much endowed with renewable energy resources only 0.6% of the energy supply (excluding hydropower) is from renewable sources. This paper reviews policy options and lessons from countries which successfully promoted green energy market and how Ghana could adopt such policies to develop her green electricity energy market. The review reveals that, for effective and efficient green electricity market to be developed in a country, a wide range of policy instruments such as promoting voluntary green electricity schemes, establishing renewable energy fund, providing tax incentives, promoting green certification schemes and feed-in tariffs must be developed and implemented using participatory approaches. These policies must proceed research and development which will stimulate clear policy objectives, cost effective considerations and long term visioning. Institutions must be designated for policy implementation and must receive capacity building for effective monitoring, evaluation and provision of feedback on the implementation process. This implies that green energy production can be improved in a country when effective policies are implemented.

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**Keywords:** Green energy, sustainable development, policy, adoption, capacity building.


# Introduction

Green energy technology (GET) also known as clean energy, renewable energy or sustainable energy technologies are non-depleting energy generating sources (Republic of Ghana, 2011). GET is a technological advancement that supports wealth creation, more resource-efficient use, clean and resilient growth through cleaner energy supply (Dutz and Sharma, 2012). GET is very key for the achievement of sustainable development. This assertion has been acknowledged by goal seven of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which requires energy supply to be affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). For sustainable energy supply to be achieved there is the need to diversify energy sources and change from the dependence on non-renewable and polluting hydrocarbon fuels to renewable energy sources (Brunnschweiler, 2010). Also, in an era of climate change, low-carbon technologies such as green technologies are relevant for effective reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emission (World Bank, 2008) as well as creating green jobs, which are very key to the achievement of the SDGs. Green energy sources include wind, solar, marine energy, biomass, hydropower, waste-to-energy, and hydrogen fuels (Brunnschweiler, 2010; Dutz and Sharma, 2012).

Though green energy technologies are relevant to the achievement of sustainable development, they still account for only a modest proportion of global energy generation (Brunnschweiler, 2010). GET market is very expensive to operate and therefore requires policy support to make it effective. In Ghana, GET accounts for only 0.6 percent (excluding hydropower) of the energy supply in the country (Energy Commission, 2016a). The major challenges of promoting green energy technologies in the country include inadequate institutional capacity, inadequate knowledge of the benefits of green technology, the cheaper cost of conventional energy technologies in the short-run, lack of clear direction for implementation and enforcement of policy frameworks, inadequate funding sources and cumbersome licensing procedures (Prasad and

Visagie, 2005; Brunnschweiler, 2010; Berry *et al*. 2011, Energy Commission, 2015a). This paper reviews policy options necessary for green energy technology adoption and development in Ghana with reference to other countries that have promoted clean energy technologies and have achieved energy sufficiency. The analyses focused on green energy policies that enhanced the adoption and development of green energy technology adoption in those countries and how green energy technology can be promoted through policy formulation, implementation and the expected outcomes in Ghana. The paper is structured into five sub-sections: background to green energy development, green energy development in Ghana, policies for promoting green energy development, benefits of GET adoption to Ghana and the conclusion.

## Background and Relevance of Green Energy Technology

Energy serves as one of the key requirements for growth in industry, transport, comfortable homes, effective workplaces and the safety of a nation (EU, 2017). However, energy sources are also of major concern for the sustainability of the growth and the safety of the nation. Energy from non-renewable sources such as the fossil fuels are often imported and are subject to external price fluctuations as well as carbon emissions, which constitute one of the main causes of GHG emissions (World Bank, 2008a). Besides, the non-renewability of these resources implies they would be exhausted in the long-run.

Interests in green approaches to development date back to the 1960s when people started raising concerns about the consequences of the brown approach to development and eventually resulted in the promotion of green approaches to development. The concerns surged in the 1970s and 1980s due to the then energy crisis, which necessitated the promotion of renewable energy sources as alternative energy sources (Gan *et al*. 2005). The report of the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 established a strong case for development to encompass environmental components. Since then, the term sustainable development has become a common term, stipulating the need for development to promote change that meets the needs of the present

without compromising the needs of the future generation (World Bank, 2008a).

Interest in green energy increased over time due to widespread concern in sustainable development leading to adoption of global treaties, including the publication of Our Common Future by World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, The Agenda 21 of the Rio Declaration of 1992, The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change of 1992, The Kyoto Protocol of 1997, the Montreal Protocol of 1997, The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change of 1998, The Millennium Development Goals of 2000 (UN, 1998; Gan *et al*. 2005; World Bank, 2008) and the Sustainable Development Goals of 2015, amongst other treaties. These treaties and protocols became global agreements aimed amongst other things to protect the stratospheric ozone layer by phasing out the production and consumption of ozone-depleting substances (ODS) as well as developing environmentally sound developmental technologies that reduce GHG emissions and increase use of renewable forms of energy (UN, 1998) gave renewable energy technology a strong momentum (Gan *et al*. 2005). Also, climate change has become a vital driving force for clean power development, as such integrated approach in national energy policy adoption and implementation have become a global concern (Gan *et al*. 2005).

The key objectives of promoting renewable energy technologies are to contribute to environmental protection through a reduction in GHG emissions, achieve energy security for industrial development in a sustainable manner and create green jobs (Gan *et al*. 2005; Energy Commission, 2015a). Green energy technologies (GETs) such as hydropower technologies, wind, solar, biomass and biofuel technologies (Brunnschweiler, 2010; Dutz and Sharma, 2012) are climate-friendly technologies which promote low-carbon growth path for sustainable growth (World Bank, 2008a). This is because they are obtained from a natural and recurring outflow of energy which does not depend on fossil fuels (World Bank, 2008a; Brunnschweiler, 2010; Barry *et al*. 2011; Eurostats, 2014). This implies that investing in renewable energy technology coupled with energy savings and efficiency would promote

sustainable energy supply in a country thereby contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Also, investing in green energy such as solar and wind has become necessary because climate change threats such as drought and dry spells have reduced the potential of the hydropower sources while the over-reliance on the thermal plants also increases the consumption of fossil fuels, thus increasing the extent of GHG emissions which further complicate the climatic condition. Other benefits of green energy technology include green employment opportunities, reduction in dependence on energy import, increased energy efficiency levels and reduction in energy transmission losses (TEPTCEC, 2009; Brunnschweiler, 2010).

## State of Green Electricity Energy Technology Development in Ghana

The energy crisis in Ghana in recent times has necessitated the development of the green energy market. The frequency of the crisis as well as the magnitude and effects since 1984 coupled with the increasing demand for energy have resulted in the search for alternative energy sources for electricity generation. The demand for electricity in Ghana has been growing at 10% per annum which requires approximately 200 MW additional power annually (Ministry of Energy, 2009). For a short term solution to the crisis, the country has expanded the installation and generation of thermal energy sources which depend on fossil fuels to power the plants thereby creating an unsustainable approach to addressing the challenge. The thermal energy source accounts for over 50% of the energy supply in the country while energy from renewable sources excluding hydropower accounts for only 0.6% of the installed capacity (Energy Commission, 2016a).

Efforts to promote green energy technologies in Ghana date back to 2009 when an energy policy was passed in the country. The policy amongst other efforts aimed at increasing the proportion of green energy sources in the total national energy mix to 10% by 2020 (Ministry of Energy, 2009). However, lack of clear direction for implementation of the

framework and subsequent policies for GET adoption as well as low level of private sector participation in the development of green energy infrastructure (Energy Commission, 2015a) has resulted in low adoption of GET. Achievement in GET so far is less than one percent of the national energy mix. Also, 82 Provisional Wholesale Electricity Supply Licences have been issued to potential Independent Power Producers (IPPs). These IPPs are proposing to develop a total of about 5,547 MW of electricity from various renewable energy sources. The proposed sources include solar photovoltaic (PV) (2,749 MW), wind (951 MW), Hydropower (208.62 MW), Biomass (68 MW), Waste-to-energy (570.81 MW) and Wave (1,000 MW). Other efforts include the implementation of a Rooftop Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Programme aimed at providing 200 MW peak load relief on the national grid (Energy Commission, 2016b). The inability to sustain a progressive achievement in the GET adoption since the promulgation of the energy policy in 2006 is due to challenges of institutional capacity, research and development, licensing and financial capabilities amongst others (Energy commission, 2015a).

Hydropower, which previously dominated the electricity sources in Ghana, is susceptible to dry spell, drought, high temperature and low rainfall (Government of Ghana, 2010) leading to low water levels in the reservoir resulting in a decline in energy supply from this source. As depicted in Figure 1 below, the contribution of the hydropower to the Ghana energy mix has been declining since 2009. Currently, about 44% of the electricity consumed in the country is generated by renewable energy sources with the hydropower sector dominating the supply. Energy from solar source constitutes only 0.6 percent of the energy mix. Before 2014, the solar energy source contributed 0% to the total energy mix in the country. However, there are small-scale remote stand-alone power supplies for domestic use, street lights and community water pumping schemes dotted across the country which have not been captured in this study (Energy Commission, 2015a; Energy Commission, 2016b).

The continued decline of the hydro power generating source to the national energy mix has resulted in a regular increase in the installation

of thermal plants to meet the country energy needs. The constant increase in the installation of the thermal plants also requires the importation of natural gas, Light crude oil (LCO), diesel and Heavy fuel oil (HFO) for firing the generating plants (Energy Commission, 2016a) resulting in more pressure on the financial resources of the nation. In 2015 for instance, the total cost of fuel for powering the thermal plants was estimated at US$1,185,600,000.00 (Energy Commission, 2016a) representing about 1.2% of the country GDP. The frequent dependence on the thermal plants to meet our energy need does not only come with a huge financial cost to the nation but also contribute significantly to the depletion of the non-renewable energy sources globally.

**Figure 1: Trend of green electricity energy supply in Ghana from 2006 – 2016**
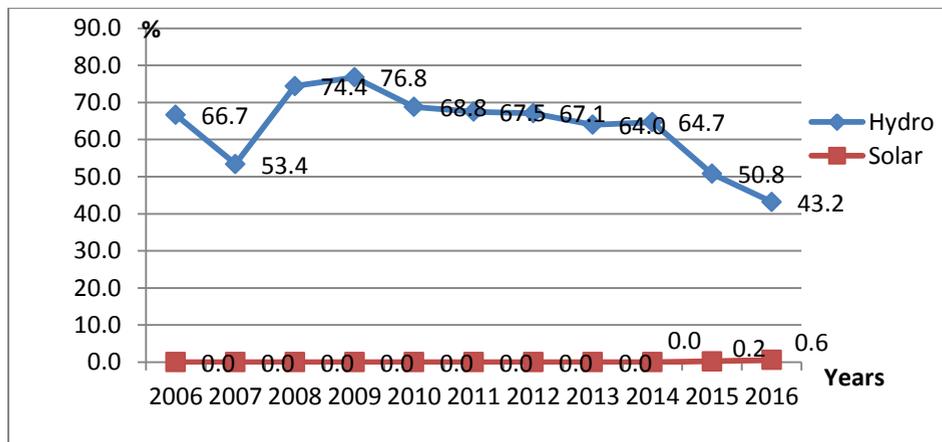


Source: Researchers' estimates with data from Energy Commission 2016a and 2016b

# Renewable Energy Potential, Policy and Regulatory Framework

Ghana is well endowed with solar, wind, hydro, waste-to-energy and wave energy resources (Energy Commission 2016b). Solar radiation level is estimated at 4-6.5 kWh/m$^2$/day which has the potential of generating about 167,200GWh of electricity annually. Also, the average

wind speed along the coastal areas is estimated at 5 m/s (Ministry of Energy 2009; UNEP, 2015). This implies that both solar and wind energy potentials can be harnessed for power generation in the country. Waste energy could also be developed which have the potential to reduce national sanitation problems and improve energy security (Ministry of Energy, 2009). Other potential sources for renewable energy technology in Ghana include hydropower, wave and biomass.

Policy and regulatory landscape have been initiated to promote the development of renewable energy technology in the country in recent years (UNEP, 2015). This process started with the 2006 Strategic National Energy Plan (SNEP) which metamorphosed into the 2009 National Energy Policy (NEP), aimed at facilitating the development and effective management of the energy sector, with a significant contribution from renewable energy technology. The renewable energy sector was further given a boost by the promulgation of the 2011 Renewable Energy Law (Act 832), which mandated the Energy Commission to promote the adoption of renewable energy technology to achieve sustainable, low-carbon energy, reliable power supply and green jobs economy. The country also developed a Public Private Partnership (PPP) policy in 2011 aimed at encouraging a wide range of efficient, high-quality public-private infrastructure and services for green energy development (Energy Commission, 2012; UNEP, 2015).

However, there exist a number of policy gaps leading to low GET adoption in the country. These gaps include lack of clear directions in the frameworks to direct GET adoption, cumbersome procedures in renewable energy infrastructure development, weak institutional capacity to implement the policies, poor financing of renewable energy investments, high duties and taxes on renewable products and no interest in research and development on GET (Prasad and Visagie, 2005; Brunnschweiler, 2010; Berry *et al.* 2011; Energy Commission, 2015a). This paper addresses these challenges by making reference to other countries where the proposed approaches have contributed significantly to GET adoption. Implementing the proposed approaches will transition Ghana to a sustainable GET adoption and therefore contribute to a

reduction in GHG emission, improve energy supply and efficiency, create green jobs, and thereby lead to the achievement of the sustainable development goals.

## Policy Options for Green Energy Technology Development

GET development promotes the development of an economy in a sustainable manner. However, effective policy directives must be promoted to play a vital role in the development and diffusion of GET in every country. Policies are used to correct market failures such as imperfect markets, environmental externalities, underinvestment in environmental research and development and incomplete information which slow down the development and diffusion of green technology (Popp, 2011). This is because the green approaches are implemented with concerns on the environment that reduces or eliminates the negative consequence on the environment. These gains range from environmental sustainability to economic gains such as sustained job creation which can support the country to achieve the SDGs in a sustainable manner. For instance, without appropriate policy intervention to address pollution and emissions, a market for technologies that reduce these externalities will be limited thereby affecting the SDGs adversely.

Green energy policies are a mix of policies that affect different stages of technology development and influence both the supply-side and demand-side of the green energy market (Hallegatte *et al*. 2013). Broadly, green energy policies could be grouped into three policy areas (Dutz and Sharma, 2012) and a wide range of policy instruments (Gan *et al*. 2005; Dutz and Sharma, 2012; Hallegatte *et al.* 2013). The policy areas include 'sunrise' (Hallegatte *et al*. 2013) or frontier innovation policies, catch-up innovation and absorptive capacity policies (Dutz and Sharma, 2012). The policy instruments are considered based on the objectives of the policies and cost effectiveness which is often formulated through wide consultation and negotiation among key stakeholders (Barry *et al*. 2011). This section reviews these three policy areas and indicates how Ghana could promote green energy technology development by adopting such policies, effectively implementing the policies, improving monitoring

and evaluation and, using general broad-based stakeholder involvement to achieve sustained adoption.

## Promote 'Sunrise' or Frontier Innovation Policies

Policies in this area are designed to help develop new technologies or grow new sectors and are often aimed at addressing market failures related to knowledge and returns on investment (Hallegatte *et al*. 2013). The policies have both supply-side technology-push and demand-side market-pull, thereby enhancing returns on investment (Dutz and Sharma 2012). Policy instruments under this area include government funding for research and development (R&D), promotion of public-private partnership, provision of grants, soft loans and subsidies to private firms (Dutz and Sharma, 2012; Hallegatte *et al*. 2013). Some specific "sunrise" policy instruments relevant for Ghana under this area are discussed below.

## Promote Research in Green Technology Development

Green energy technology development is enhanced if attention is devoted to green research and development. This is because research and development inform the policy options and objectives of the policies which are either producer or consumer focused. Research and development could be promoted by both the public and the private sectors. However, it is relevant that support for research and development shift towards support for green energy technologies that are increasingly marketable and cost-effective. It is also necessary that policy support for research and development 'graduates' as individual green technologies graduate (Dutz and Sharma 2012). Ghana is currently faced with inadequate support for research in green energy technology development. There is the need to develop this aspect in order to arrive at policy options that will be relevant for adoption in the country.

To achieve this policy objective in Ghana, funding of green energy research must be engineered by the government who should provide resources to energy research institutions and universities as well as provide grants, soft loans and subsidies to private and foreign research institutions for innovative green energy technology development. This

approach will reveal the relevant GET that must be promoted in the country. Germany, Sweden and Netherlands, for instance, started promoting research and development for green energy technology as far back in the 1970s after the first global energy crisis by establishing research institutions and providing funding for research which has been graduating over the period (Dinica and Arentsen, 2003). This approach allows coordination of research efforts with little or no duplication and also allows easy dissemination and efficient use of technology once produced (Barry *et al* 2011; Dutz and Sharma 2012). Ghana can do same by establishing a research unit that will coordinate the research works of the various private and public institutions that will be supported to conduct research on green energy development.

## Consistent and Coherent Policy Objectives

Though policies play a significant role in the achievement of green technology development and adoption, the consistency and coherency of those policies in the local as well as the international environment are very relevant. Unfortunately, some policies in Ghana lack consistency and coherency leading to disjointed and fragmented policy objectives (Sarpong and Anyidoho, 2012). For instance, the 2006 Ghana's Medium Term Energy Strategy set the target of the proportion of the renewable energy to the national energy mix at 10% by 2015, while the Strategic National Energy Plan (2006-2020) and the Energy Sector Strategy and Development Plan, (2010) set the year for the achievement of the target at 2020 (Energy Commission, 2015a). For green energy technology to be successfully adopted there is the need to ensure that policies in the country are consistent and coherent nationally and are in conformity with international treaties. Though Ghana is a signatory to international treaties, not much of the requirements of the treaties are reflected in our practices. For instance, while Ghana has adopted the Kyoto Protocol to reduce emissions and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals which aim at transitioning countries to a green approach to growth, the energy sector, for example, has continued to increase the energy supply using thermal plants which contribute to GHG emissions. One clear lesson from Germany and Netherlands on the promotion of GET through policy is the consistency and coherence of

the policies that are adopted to promote GET. Germany, for instance, has consistently devoted resources to policy formulation and implementation which has improved the green energy source from 5.8 percent in 2004 to 12.4 percent in 2013 (EU, 2015). The policies are also coherent with treaties such as the Kyoto Protocol to reduce emissions, the Montreal Protocol to reduce the depletion of the ozone layer as well as regional supportive policies such as the green energy roadmap (Gan *et al*. 2005).

Also critical in policy outcomes is the preparation of strategies and action plans to implement the policies. In Ghana, though a target of 10% of the country energy mix is expected to be generated by green energy in 2020, there is ineffective implementation of the policy focus due to institutional weaknesses, low level of research and development and inadequate resource allocations amongst others (Energy Commission, 2015a). There is the need for effective implementation strategies as well as action plans to kick start the implementation in order to achieve this target. This approach and continuous assessment of their operational procedures minimize risks and maximize policy effectiveness (Stankeviciute and Criqui, 2008).

In Europe for instance, in 2007 the European Energy Commission designed a roadmap for the EU member states aimed at building a more sustainable future commonly known as 20/20/20 or 20/20/10 (Stankeviciute and Criqui, 2008; TEPTCEC, 2009; Eurostats, 2014). The objective of the strategy is to achieve resource efficiency and low-carbon economy for sustainable growth (EU, 2012). This roadmap demonstrates that by 2020 there should be (1) a 20 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) (2) saving of 20 percent of the European energy consumption and (3) a share of 20 percent of renewable energies in the overall energy consumption (Stankeviciute and Criqui, 2008). It also demonstrates that by the same period, the transport sector would use about 10 percent of energy from renewable sources. The roadmap was accompanied by Action Plans by each member country which was endorsed by the European Council and by the European Parliament in 2008 (TEPTCEC, 2009).

Adopting "sunrise" policies in Ghana will contribute significantly to achieve reliable, efficient and sustainable energy supply which promotes economic growth in a sustainable manner (NDPC, 2011; UNEP, 2015). Currently, a little over 43% of the country energy supply is generated from the hydropower, which is susceptible to climate change (Government of Ghana, 2010) and not sustainable in the long run. This susceptibility resulted in acute electricity supply load shedding in the country since 2012 which has adversely affected productivity in the country. Promoting research in GET development, formulating and implementing consistent and coherent policies will enhance GET adoption and development since the energy sources will be diversified to a more sustainable approach and ensure sustainable energy supply thereby, contribute to the achievement of the sustainable development goals in the country. The research will also lead to a discovery of more efficient and effective approaches which would be promoted and result in more sustainable energy supply in the country.

## Promote Catch-up Innovation Policies

Catch-up innovations are policy approaches that promote diffusion and adoption of technologies rather than the creation of new technologies (Popp, 2011). This approach is often adopted by developing countries which open up to the developed world where there exist well-established technologies which could be adopted and contextualized for the developing world (Dutz and Sharma, 2012). The policy instruments for promoting this policy area for green energy development in the developing world must aim at facilitating access to green energy technologies by addressing existing distortions and weaknesses in the green energy business environment. The policy efforts could permit technologies to be adapted from the more advanced countries and the absorptive capacity of the domestic economy strengthened for successful implementation (Hall and Helmers, 2010; Barry *et al*. 2011).

Policy options could cover a wide range of options such as, improving investment climate and technology transfer, open foreign trade, improving access to finance, strengthening skills and capacity development, reducing domestic barriers to firm entry and exit, and

implementing more demand-side policies such as public procurement, regulations and standards (Dutz and Sharma, 2012; Hallegatte *et al.* 2013). Most of these policy options can be promoted in Ghana by the central government playing a facilitative role to improve access to green technologies and also stimulating the absorption of the green energy technologies. Some specific policy instruments that could be promoted in Ghana under this area are discussed below.

## Stimulate Access to Green Energy Technology Absorption

Globally, technology is transferred through openness to international trade, joint ventures with local partners and foreign direct investments (World Bank, 2008a; World Bank, 2008b: Hall and Helmers, 2010: Popp, 2011: Dutz and Sharma, 2012). In Ghana, this approach could be used to stimulate green energy technology adoption by improving on imported green energy capital goods, machinery, equipment and knowledge-based processes or business models (Dutz and Sharma, 2012). Tariffs, subsidies and removal of non-tariff barriers have a direct effect on the importation of these technologies (World Bank, 2008a). For instance, tariffs on fossil fuels and subsidies for renewable energy technologies do more to improve technology transfer of clean technologies (Hall and Helmers, 2010; Barry *et al.* 2011) since this reduces the cost of transferring the technology from other parts of the world.

Ghana can further improve on the adoption of this approach by waiving taxes as well as removing non-tax barriers such as cumbersome licensing procedures on green imported technology. There is currently low adoption to green energy technology due to the high cost of green energy production (UNEP, 2015). For instance, while there is a zero rating on imports of complete Solar Photovoltaics (PV) systems in Ghana, some system components receive value added tax (VAT) up to 15% as well as high tariffs to system components which have a negative implication for the prospects of a domestic manufacturing Solar PV industry (UNEP, 2015). Removing the VAT and relaxing the tariffs on companies that are producing Solar PVs systems locally will reduce the cost of establishing green energy infrastructure thereby increase the adoption of GET.

This policy approach will open up the economy to private sector participation in the GET development thereby creating green jobs and improving on energy supply. People will be engaged in the installation, servicing and provision of consultancy services in the green market. Also, adopting policy options that stimulate GETs development will reduce the reliance of the country on the thermal plants for our energy needs which increases the emission of GHG since they rely on fossil fuel for generating power. These fossil fuels further increase the intensity of climate change effects like the increase in the incidence and severity of extreme weather events such as drought, floods, rising sea level, pest infestation and shortened rainy season (Government of Ghana, 2010; UNESC, 2011). GET could contribute to reducing the emissions since the energy will be generated from renewable sources and therefore serve as a mitigation approach to climate change.

## Develop Smart Grid Technologies

This approach computerizes the electric utility grid devices with two-way digital communication technology with sensors to gather data on incoming power from wind, solar and other renewable sources to ensure a two-way flow of electricity and information between all power plants and consumers (Dutz and Sharma, 2012). In Ghana, promoting smart grid technologies will contribute to a higher achievement of Article 46 (1) of the Renewable Energy Law (Act 832) of 2011 which entreats the Energy Commission and the Public Utility Regulatory Commission (PURC) to integrate renewable energy power projects into the power systems. If green energy technology is promoted, smart grid technology can promote effective implementation by capturing the energy inflow from the various energy sources that will be developed.

## Establish Feed-in Tariffs (FITs) Schemes

FITs permit producers of green electricity to sell the energy at a fixed price per kWh and are usually above the market price and guaranteed for a number of years (Meyer, 2002; Stankeviciute and Criqui, 2008; Dutz and Sharma, 2012). The FIT approach is very effective for promoting renewable electricity because it enables a marked growth by ensuring guaranteed market access for green electricity producers to the grid for

the electricity produced for a period of time (Stankeviciute and Criqui, 2008; Dutz and Sharma, 2012). It also enables green energy developers to obtain bank financing for investment (Meyer, 2002) since there is a market guarantee for the products. Feed-in-tariffs are typically needed to stimulate both creation and diffusion of green technologies (Dutz and Sharma, 2012).

There is the need for Ghana to establish FIT schemes that will guarantee the sale of energy generated from renewable sources. For this to be successful, there will first be the need to promote the production of green energy technology through either Public-Private Partnership (PPP) or liberalizing the market for private producers. PURC and Energy Commission can regulate this process and authorize electricity distribution companies like Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) to procure a proportion of its total energy needs from green energy sources. The FIT rate should be determined in a participatory manner involving energy producers, sellers and consumers. This approach will boost producers/investors' interest and participation since it will allow different technologies to be taxed differently. For instance, in Germany, feed-in tariffs have helped increase the market share of the green energy technologies such as wind, solar PV, and biomass (Gan *et al*. 2005).

## Establish Renewable Energy Fund

Establishing a renewable energy fund is one of the effective approaches for funding green energy technology development. Resources are mobilized from various sources to provide a reliable revenue base with a predictable fund structure for green energy development. The fund could be used to support capital subsidies, financial incentives, research and development, demonstration of green energy projects, and public campaigns with NGOs' participation (Gan *et al*. 2005; UNEP, 2015).

Though article 31 of the Renewable Law (Act 832) of 2011 requires an establishment of a renewable energy fund with the objective of providing financial resources for promotion, development, sustainable management and utilization of renewable energy resources, this fund is yet to be established. Establishing the fund will serve as a source of funding for

GET and promote investor confidence in green technology promotion. The fund could be supported by setting up environmental taxes and budgetary allocation from the government. The non-availability of the fund does not only prevent the promotion and adoption of renewable energy technologies but also indicates the wide gaps existing between laws that are enacted and how those laws are implemented. Also, this practice could lead to the disjointed and incoherent policies in the country (Sarpong and Anyidoho, 2012).

Establishing green energy funds and giving it the mandate to mobilize resources from various sources for funding green energy technology development will promote GET adoption by cushioning potential investors in the sector in various ways. In the Netherland for example, the government introduced an environmental levy to finance investment in green energy. Also, in 1996, the government introduced a regular energy tax (the ''ecotax'') which was used to stimulate green electricity consumption by exempting green electricity and granting subsidies to producers (Gan et al. 2005). These levels of support motivated investors to venture into the green electricity market in the country.

## Promote Voluntary Green Electricity Schemes

Voluntary green electricity schemes allow consumers of electricity to voluntarily opt for green energy technology as an alternative or a supplement to other energy sources to meet their energy need. The approach uses lesser government resources and relies on consumer motivation (Gan *et al*. 2005). Voluntary green energy schemes could be promoted in the country where individual firms or households are incentivised to independently use green energy such as solar PVs to supplement their daily energy need. The approach could also be promoted by sensitizing energy users on the potential of green energy alternatives, benefits as well as subsidizing the cost of installation to the consumer. Liberalizing the green energy market and improving on investment climate such as addressing the cumbersome licensing procedures as well as providing subsidies to green energy products would motivate foreign direct investors in the green energy sector in the country.

Policy options that promote voluntary green electricity schemes would not only contribute to a reduction in dependence on power from the national grid, but also increase the use of private independent energy producers in the country. This will reduce government's burden on importing fuel to power the energy plants in the country and save some resources which could be channeled to other sectors of the economy for development. Promoting green electricity schemes also increases the potential for green jobs and promotes economic stability since people will be engaged in the marketing, installation, servicing and consultancy services.

## Develop Absorptive Capacity

A firm's absorptive or learning capacity is the ability of that firm to innovate and understand, adopt and use technologies effectively (Popp, 2011). This is enhanced through research and development and is necessary for all policy areas. Practically, this focuses on stimulating the generation of new technologies, improves firm's ability to search for and adopt existing technologies, and allow firms to understand and assimilate the discoveries from others (Dutz and Sharma, 2012). Policy options to enhance absorptive capacities include strengthening of education and skills (Popp, 2011) for green innovation, facilitating experimentation and quick market re-entry following failure, facilitating collaborative learning by workers and firms from leading global firms, and helping to attract and retain talent in firms (Dutz and Sharma, 2012).

### Build Capacity for Policy Implementation

Capacity development is very relevant for the successful implementation of policy. Strengthening the capacities of institutions enables the formulation of efficient policies, effective policy implementation and effective monitoring and evaluation of decisions initiated for green energy development. For Ghana to effectively promote the development of green energy technology there is the need to go beyond the renewable Law (Act 832) to strengthen capacities of implementing institutions such as the Ghana Energy Commission and Public Utility Regulatory Commission that are mandated to oversee the implementation of green energy initiatives in the country. The capacity development should

include capacity in green technology, effective implementation and resourcing of institutions to deliver on their mandate. In Germany, capacity development to promote GET focused on training the staff of the institutions on relevant programmes for green technology which resulted in effective coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the key policies initiated to promote green energy technology (Gan *et al*. 2005; Karan and Kazdagli, 2011).

Harnessing the huge renewable energy power generation potential of solar and wind resources (Ministry of Energy, 2009 and UNESC, 2011) would drive economic growth with significant job creation and environmental gains. GET development will encourage technological advancement and national development through the establishment of green industries (Energy Commission, 2015a). Manufacturing firms in solar and wind, for instance, will expand vigorously in order to meet the demand for green energy that will be created. For instance, China's solar PV power sector generates an average of 2,700 direct and 6,500 indirect jobs while the wind-power industry creates approximately 40,000 direct and 51,500 indirect green jobs annually (Wang et al., 2011 as cited in Energy Commission, 2015). If Ghana promotes the GET adoption, people could gain employment in the provision of GET services such as the installation and servicing of the equipment, offering consultancy services and regular services in the distribution channel of the technology.

Also, by producing energy from the renewable sources, Ghana would reduce its dependency on fossil fuel imports and contribute to ensuring the stability of energy prices (UNEP, 2015). Energy from renewable sources coupled with policy reforms would also free financial resources of the government which could be used to fund other initiatives. Also investing in renewable energy assets such as waste-to-energy plants would shift the dependence on thermal energy to more reliable sources of energy which are more sustainable and improve environmental management.

# Conclusion

Green energy technology is generally expensive in the short-run and needs policy support to improve its adoption. The huge green energy potentials of Ghana can be harnessed through policies that can liberalise the green energy market and promote flexibility in market conditions. The policies will have to address the challenges encountered by potential developers and promote private sector participation thereby improving sustainable energy supply in Ghana. Currently, major challenges for promoting the adoption of Get are related to policy weaknesses which are not motivating the private sector to engage in the GET market. A key policy area that may speed-up the adoption of green technology is formulating and implementing catch-up innovation policies that have the potential of benefiting from knowledge spillovers from the developed world at a lower cost. Also, as a developing country, there is the need to adopt strategic policies that have proven successful in other countries and can enhance green energy adoption. These policies should be adopted with key stakeholders in the green energy market which will contribute to overcoming the difficulties of adopting green technologies in the country. Using a review of other countries, we conclude that the formulation and implementation of green energy policies in a participatory manner would contribute significantly towards the long-term sustainability of green energy technology efforts in Ghana.

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# HOUSEHOLD PREVENTIVE PRACTICES AND DIARRHOEA PREVALENCE IN URBAN SLUMS, SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA

## Nneka L. Umego[1] and Kabiru K. Salami[2]

## Abstract

Diarrhoea is one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality worldwide. Prevention of diarrhoea is hinged on access to safe water and sanitation, two basic facilities that are lacking among slum dwellers. Climate change exacerbates diarrhoea disease through changes in temperature and rainfall. This descriptive and exploratory study was carried out in two urban slums in South-western Nigeria. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection was employed among 508 household heads. Descriptive, inferential and content analyses were carried out on data gathered. Mean age of the respondents was 36.9, with more females (50.8%) than males (49.2%). More than half (54.5%) of the respondents had no formal education, 37.8% were traders and 59.4% earned a monthly income of 32–64 USD. The study recorded a high level of knowledge for diarrhoea, its symptoms, causes and indigenous methods for diarrhoea treatment. Water treatment and source of drinking water in the household was significantly associated with the experience of diarrhoea (P<0.05). Diarrhoea prevention level in the household was significantly associated with diarrhoea experience and the perception of diarrhoea was not associated with the experience of diarrhoea. Educational level was the only predictor that influenced the prevention of diarrhoea in urban slum households (P<0.05). Water treatment practices and safe drinking water are key elements in

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preventing diarrhoea in the household. Proper awareness is therefore needed especially in urban slums to bring this to light.

**Keywords**: Climate change, Household production of health, Home management, Disease prevention, Diarrhoea, Urban Slums.

# Introduction

Diarrhoea, which is the passage of three or more loose/liquid stools per day, or more frequently than is normal for an individual (WHO, 2008), is transmitted through the faecal-oral route and is spread through contaminated food and drinking water or from person to person as a result of poor hygiene and sanitation. It is a leading cause of childhood death and second most common cause of death worldwide (Walker, Rudan, Liu, Nair, Theodoratu, *et. al*., 2013). The prevention of diarrhoea remains one of the major public health problems in developing countries. Approximately 1.5 billion episodes of diarrhoea are reported every year in developing countries, and the figure has remained more or less constant over the last 20 years. The situation in Nigeria is equally serious especially among children as diarrhoeal diseases are the third leading cause of death in children below 5 years, accounting for 16% of the Nigerian under 5 mortality rate (FMoH, 2007).

Diarrhoea disease shows a seasonal pattern and is therefore sensitive to climate. This is why floods and droughts are each associated with an increased risk of diarrhoea (Stanke, *et. al.* 2013). Drought conditions can reduce the availability of clean water and heavy rainfalls wash contaminants into water supplies. However, lack of availability of safe drinking water alone does not account for diarrhoea prevalence; social factors such as hygiene practices and poor sanitation are also contributory factors (Pande, *et. al*. 2008). Safe drinking water and sanitation are indispensable to sustaining life and health. Unfortunately, over 884 million people globally, do not have access to safe drinking water, while 2.5 billion lack access to improved sanitation facilities (UNDP, 2008). The root causes of this problem can be traced to poverty and unequal power relationships and it is further exacerbated by social

and environmental challenges, rapid urbanization, climate change, increasing pollution and depletion of water sources (UNDP, 2006).

Around the world, rapid urbanization experienced in many places has resulted in a situation where other aspects of the society outgrow public infrastructure. The mismatch in urban growth and public infrastructure in those places have led to the emergence of urban slums characterised by poor access to water and sanitation. In those urban slums, residents reportedly experienced high rates of diarrhoea and economic burden due to illness (Patel, et. al. 2013). Those slums, globally, are characterized by dense population with poor access to sanitation and clean water due to non-existent/ poorly developed basic infrastructure (Madhiwala, 2007; Harpman, 2009; Bartram and Cairncross, 2010). Plausibly given the deficient infrastructural situation of urban slums, diarrhoea has been identified as one of the leading causes of death among slum dwellers (Adebayo and Iweka, 2014). An important explanation for this situation is that untreated human excrement and household waste water easily find their way into rivers and ditches, on which the disadvantaged people in the society depend for accessing water, thereby constituting major health hazards. Given this situation, improved sanitation and safe domestic water will go a long way to reduce the burden of diseases that arise as a result of poor sanitary environment. This study, therefore, focused on the preventive behaviours adopted by urban slum households against diarrhoea, especially in the context of the growing threats of climate change.

Diarrhoea, though preventable, is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality. Globally in 2010, there were 1.731 billion episodes of diarrhoea in children younger than 5 years while in 2011 about 700,000 of those episodes of diarrhoea led to death (Walker, *et. al*. 2013). Diarrhoea has its major impact in developing countries where there is lack of safe water, improper means of disposal of human faecal waste, intense crowding in rudimentary houses and often poor standards of personal hygiene. In Nigeria, diarrhoeal diseases are the third leading cause of death in children below five years (Okoh and Alex-Hart, 2014). Some of the factors that contribute to diarrhoeal infections are increased

rainfall, high temperature and low access to clean water. The resultant effects of climate change such as increased heat waves and poor water supply systems also contribute to diarrheoal infections. Urban slums are more vulnerable to diarrhoea as they are faced with poor water supply systems, exacerbated by inadequate planning and poverty. The available water in those places often becomes contaminated as a result of atmospheric changes, industrial activities and heavy rainfall.

Studies on diarrhoea have focused on the epidemiological aspects (Komarulzaman, Smits and Jong, 2014; Nordquist, 2015; Musengimana, Mukinda, Machekano and Mahomed, 2016), perception of caregivers on prevention and treatment (Asakitikpi, 2010; Ansari, Izham and Pathiyil, 2011; Gbasemi, Talebian, Masoudi and Mousavi, 2013; Tobin, Isah, and Asogun, 2014), and variations in the prevalence rate, especially among under-five children (Okolo, Garba and Stephen, 2013; Oloruntoba, Folarin and Ayede, 2014). As diarrhoea remains a major household health challenge, adequate knowledge of its causes, treatment, and preventive best practices is still recognised as a crucial concern in several studies (Asakitikpi, 2010; Gbasemi, et. al., 2013; Etea, 2014). Nevertheless, household practices geared toward diarrhoea prevention in urban slums in this age of climate change has not received sufficient consideration. This study seeks to understand the preventive behaviours which urban slum households adopt against diarrhoea. In order to achieve this objective, the study explored how urban slum households perceive diarrhoea and document attempts to prevent the disease.

## Materials and Methods

This was a descriptive and exploratory study carried out on 508 household heads in two selected urban slums in southwestern Nigeria. Respondents were drawn from households which had members who experienced diarrhoea in the last three weeks prior to the survey. Beere slum located in Oyo State and Ilaje slum located in Lagos State were selected. Oyo has its capital as Ibadan; the biggest city in West Africa, and Lagos is the economic hub of Nigeria. They are both cosmopolitan in nature with different Nigerian ethnic groups and foreigners living within the cities. While the indigenous ethnic groups in Ibadan are the

Yoruba, Yoruba and Egun constitute the indigenous ethnic groups in Lagos. Their major occupations are farming and fishing. The urban nature of both states has caused the influx of people from all over the country. All households with members who had experienced diarrhoea in the last three weeks preceding the survey and who gave their consent were included in the study. Sample size estimation was determined using the Leslie Kish formular to sample 422 household heads from both states, giving rise to 844 in total. The study started with a household census which screened members of the household with diarrhea experience in the last three weeks prior to the study. Overall, 508 households matched the study critera.

Quantitative data was collected using a structured, pre-tested questionnaire. The questionnaire was interviwer-administered. Qualitative data was collected through the conduct of four focus group discussion among the young adult and analysed through content analysis. Quantitative data were cleaned, coded, entered into computer and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 18. In addition to descriptive statistics including frequency, inferential statistics was carried out including chi-square and linear regression. Chi-square was employed for testing the significance of associations between categorical variables. Linear regression analysis was carried out for multivariate analysis. The level of significance for the analysis was set at p<0.05.

## Results

A total of 508 household heads from households that had members who had experienced diarrhoea in the last three weeks prior to the survey were recruited into the study. Table 1 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. Socio-demographic characteristics include variables of age, sex, religion, family type, educational qualification, occupation, income and location. The mean age calculated was 36.9 with a greater majority falling within the age brackets of 30 – 49 years. A slim margin exists between sexes, as male respondents were 49.2% and females were 50.8% of the total respondents. The data also revealed that there were more male respondents in Ilaje (56%) than in

Beere (39.2%). Majority (85.8%) of the respondents practised the nuclear family type while 14.2% of the respondents practised extended families. Also, there were more extended families (16.1%) in Ilaje than in Beere (11.3%) area. Over half (54.5%) of the respondents had no formal education, a good number (49.4%) of which reside in Ilaje area, as only 1% had senior secondary level education. Also, about 5% of the respondents from Beere had a higher education. On the occupation of the respondents, a good number (37.8%) are traders, closely followed by fishing (23.4%)—all of which was in the Ilaje area. The occupational trend was not unexpected as the Ilaje people lived in the coastal region where fishing is the chief occupation. Also, those who work in the formal sector (12.3%) resided mainly in Beere area. Above half (59.4%) of the respondents earned an actual income ranging from 10,001 – 20,000 (56.3% for Ilaje and 64.2% for Beere). The income pattern is typical of those who reside in slum areas (low income earners).

**Table 1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (N=508)**

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **Age** | | |
| 25 – 29 | 93 | 18.3 |
| 30 – 34 | 190 | 37.4 |
| 35 – 49 | 156 | 30.7 |
| 50 and above | 69 | 13.6 |
| | | |
| **Sex** | | |
| Male | 250 | 49.2 |
| Female | 258 | 50.8 |
| | | |
| **Family Type** | | |
| Nuclear | 436 | 85.8 |
| Extended | 72 | 14.2 |
| | | |
| **Highest Educational Qualification** | | |
| No formal education | 277 | 54.5 |
| Primary education | 98 | 19.3 |
| Junior secondary education | 24 | 4.7 |
| Senior secondary education | 84 | 16.5 |
| B.Sc. | 7 | 1.4 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| OND | 14 | 2.8 |
| HND | 2 | 0.4 |
| NCE | 1 | 0.2 |
| Quranic education | 1 | 0.2 |
| | | |
| **Occupation** | | |
| Artisan | 104 | 20.5 |
| Medical workers | 4 | 0.8 |
| Agriculture (livestock/crops) | 5 | 1.0 |
| Agriculture (fishing) | 119 | 23.4 |
| Trading | 192 | 37.8 |
| Civil servants | 2 | 0.4 |
| Corporate organizations | 23 | 4.5 |
| Private businesses (unspecified) | 40 | 7.9 |
| Labourer | 13 | 2.6 |
| No work | 6 | 1.2 |
| | | |
| **Monthly Income** [3] | | |
| 1,000 – 10,000 | 152 | 29.9 |
| 10,001 – 20,000 | 302 | 59.4 |
| 20,001 – 30,000 | 47 | 9.3 |
| 30,001 – 40,000 | 6 | 1.2 |
| 40,001 and above | 1 | 0.2 |
| | | |
| **Location** | | |
| Beere | 204 | 40.2 |
| Ilaje | 304 | 60.0 |

## Perception of Diarrhoea

The description of diarrhoea differs from place to place and among populations. In this study, urban slum dwellers described diarrhoea mainly as when the infected individual is experiencing frequent watery stooling and vomiting (39%). Other descriptions indicated by the respondents are stomach disorder (6.9%), germ infection (1.2%), consumption of dirty water (16.3%), and vomiting and fever (1.6%). These are all important descriptions because they also suggest the symptoms observed by the respondents and the sources/causes of diarrhoea infection. The respondents displayed a good level of awareness

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[3] USD Conversion rate: ₦ 305 – 1 US Dollar

about the nature of diarrhoea as majority of them gave adequate descriptions as marked by watery stool, vomiting, stomach disorder and germ infection. In Beere area, there were few respondents who had poor knowledge of diarrhoea. Those respondents equated diarrhoea with fever alone (2.9%). Those who had no knowledge of diarrhoea at all were 15.7%.

**Table 2: Descriptions of Diarrhoea by Respondents' locations**

| Diarrhoea Description | Household Location | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Ilaje – Bariga | | Beere | | | |
| | No. | Percent | No. | Percent | No. | Percent |
| Watery stooling | 9 | 3.0 | 61 | 29.9 | 70 | 13.8 |
| Stomach disorder | 34 | 11.2 | 1 | 0.5 | 35 | 6.9 |
| Vomiting | 36 | 11.8 | 31 | 15.2 | 67 | 13.2 |
| Frequent watery stooling and vomiting | 148 | 48.7 | 50 | 24.5 | 198 | 39.0 |
| Germ infection | 6 | 2.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 6 | 1.2 |
| Consumption of dirty water | 66 | 21.7 | 17 | 8.3 | 83 | 16.3 |
| Fever | 1 | 0.3 | 6 | 2.9 | 7 | 1.4 |
| Vomiting and fever | 2 | 0.7 | 6 | 2.9 | 8 | 1.6 |
| I don't know | 2 | 0.7 | 32 | 15.7 | 34 | 6.7 |
| **Total** | **304** | **100.0** | **204** | **100.0** | **508** | **100.0** |

Responses on the perceived causes and symptoms of diarrhoea were also sought from the respondents. Table 3 indicates that food intake (sugary foods, spoilt food and contaminated water) and environmental factors (unsanitary environment) (47.2%) topped the list, especially from Ilaje community. Respondents in Beere community indicated that food intake factors (18.1%) were solely responsible for diarrhoea. Respondents also reported that the major symptoms associated with diarrhoea infection were fever, stooling, vomiting and dullness (92.5%).

**Table 3: Perceived Causes and Symptoms of Diarrhoea by Respondents' Location**

| Response Categories | Household Location | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Ilaje – Bariga | | Beere | | | |
| Perceived Causes | No. | Percent | No. | Percent | No. | Percent |
| Germs/infection | 1 | 0.3 | 21 | 10.3 | 22 | 4.3 |
| Food intake factors | 12 | 3.9 | 54 | 18.1 | 66 | 13.0 |
| Environmental factors | 4 | 1.3 | 26 | 26.5 | 30 | 6.0 |
| Food intake and environmental factors | 206 | 67.7 | 34 | 12.7 | 240 | 47.2 |
| Food intake and human factors | 80 | 26.3 | 32 | 16.7 | 112 | 22.1 |
| I don't know | 1 | 0.3 | 37 | 15.7 | 38 | 7.1 |
| **Total** | **304** | **100.0** | **204** | **100.0** | **508** | **100.0** |
| **Perceived Symptoms** | | | | | | |
| External symptoms (fever, stooling, vomiting and dullness) | 294 | 96.7 | 176 | 86.3 | 470 | 92.5 |
| Internal symptoms (headache, stomach ache and dehydration) | 10 | 3.3 | 24 | 11.8 | 12 | 2.4 |
| I don't know | 0 | 0.0 | 4 | 2.0 | 4 | 0.8 |
| **Total** | **304** | **100.0** | **204** | **100.0** | **508** | **100.0** |

Excerpts from focused group discussions also revealed that the discussants had similar ideas of how an individual infected with diarrhoea can be identified. The common factor they indicated is that the individual will be uncomfortable throughout the diarrhoea episode. A young male discussant in Beere noted that *"The affected person becomes very weak and light since she/he has lost so much bodily fluid, which also makes her/him dizzy. He will not have the strength to do anything on her/his own".* Another factor which the discussants indicated is change in temperature and atmosphere. They explained how changes in temperature influence diarrhoea experience. In Beere, a discussant described how hot temperature could facilitate stomach upset, dizziness and vomiting: "*First of all, once the weather is hot, it upsets the stomach*

*and disorganizes it. It also makes people dizzy and run temperature, sometimes occasioned by vomiting and purging in the case of children".*

## Climate Change and Influence on Diarrhoea Infection

Concerning how the effects of climate change make households susceptible to diarrhoea, Table 4 indicates that the respondents in Ilaje area asserted that low temperature (35.2%) and dirty water (22.4%) increased the incidence of the diarrhoea episode experienced in their households. In Beere area, respondents opined that high temperature (30.4%) was responsible for the diarrhoea episodes experienced. The respondents who mentioned that climate change was not responsible for the diarrhoea episodes gave their perceived causes as consumption of dirty food/water (27.8%), teething (9.3%), and dirty environment (10.2%) as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Respondents' Perception on Climate Change as the Cause of Diarrhoea Episodes by Location**

| Climate Change as the cause of Diarrhoea | Household Location | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Ilaje – Bariga | | Beere | | | |
| | No. | Percent | No. | Percent | No. | Percent |
| High temperature | 23 | 7.6 | 62 | 30.4 | 85 | 16.7 |
| Dirty water (Flooding) | 68 | 22.4 | 1 | 0.5 | 69 | 13.6 |
| Low temperature | 107 | 35.2 | 2 | 1.0 | 109 | 21.5 |
| Shortage of water (Drought) | 2 | 0.7 | 3 | 1.5 | 5 | 1.0 |
| I don't know | 104 | 34.2 | 136 | 66.7 | 240 | 47.2 |
| **Total** | **304** | **100.0** | **204** | **100.0** | **508** | **100.0** |
| | | | | | | |
| **Other causes of Diarrhoea** | | | | | | |
| Consumption of spoilt food/fruits | 14 | 14.3 | 6 | 5.1 | 20 | 9.3 |
| Teething | 14 | 14.3 | 6 | 5.1 | 20 | 9.3 |
| Consumption of dirty food/water | 44 | 44.9 | 16 | 13.6 | 60 | 27.8 |
| Playing in a dirty environment | 10 | 10.2 | 12 | 10.2 | 22 | 10.2 |
| I don't know | 16 | 16.3 | 78 | 66.1 | 94 | 43.5 |
| **Total** | **98** | **100.0** | **118** | **100.0** | **216** | **100.0** |

# Preventive Practices Related to Diarrhoea Infections

Concerning the practices that exposed households to diarrhoea episodes, information on sources of water and water storage were gathered from the respondents. Majority (76%) of the respondents from Beere reportedly utilized improved sources of water comprising public stand pipe and borehole while respondents in Ilaje utilized more of unimproved sources (64.1%) of water comprising water vendors, tanker trucks and rain water.

Access to safe drinking water is another important factor in the diarrhoea preventive discourse. Different sources of drinking water were accessed by the respondents; mostly borehole (31.1%) and water from vendors (25.8%). The use of borehole water was more reported in Beere area (43.1%) while water from vendors (43.1%) was reported as being the major source of drinking water in Ilaje.

Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents by Source of Drinking Water
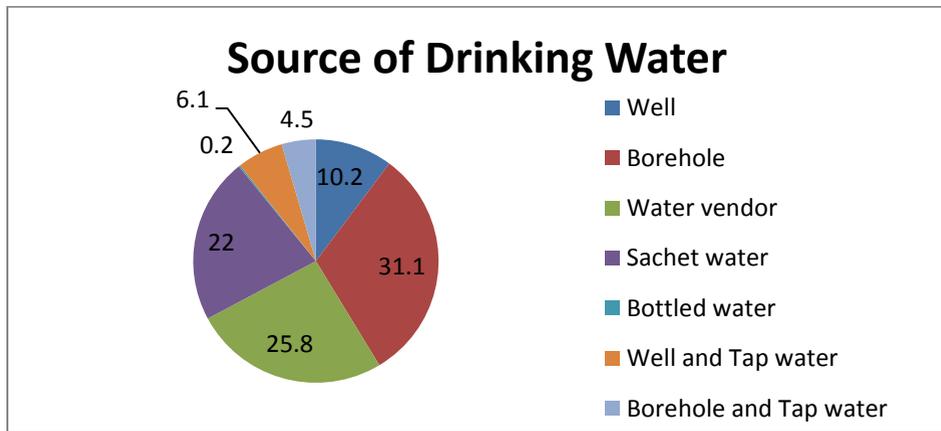


Access to adequate sanitation facility is a rare infrastructure in urban slums. This is confirmed in this study as more than half (55.7%) of the respondents in Ilaje had no other toilet facility than the nearby river as major toilet facility. In the case of Beere where toilets were available,

they were either not safe or unimproved as 29.9% utilized shared flush toilets and 40.2% used uncovered pit latrines.

Respondents sought treatment for the diarrhoea episode in their households from various sources. A good number of the respondents treated the diarrhoea episode at home with brewed remedies (40%); most of these respondents reside in Ilaje. Hospitals (32.7%) were the next major source for treatment and it was followed by Chemists (24.5%). Other sources include medicine vendors (1.8%) and local herbs (0.8%). Only one (0.2%) respondent utilised the wait and see method as diarrhoea was considered an ailment that could be treated at home.

Figure 2:  Distribution of Respondents by Type of Treatment Sought
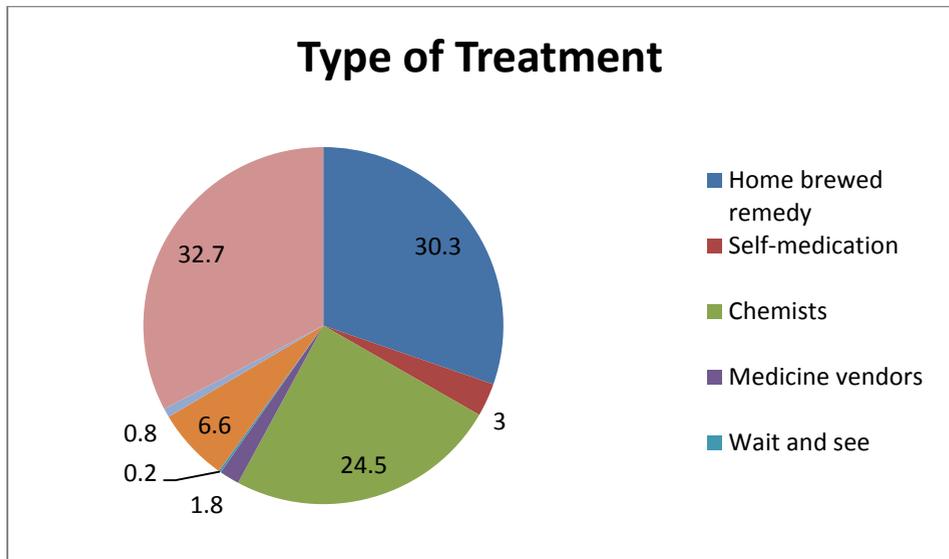


Discussants favoured the home treatment of diarrhoea but acknowledged that hospital is the final resort once the situation seemed out of hands. In Ilaje, a female discussant expressed that; *"Yes, we can treat it at home, but go to hospital when it is getting out of hand"*.  In Beere, an elderly male participant described the use of oral solution in the treatment of diarrhoea:

> If one has ORS in the house, of course he can use the solution, especially where there is no health centre around. Once you drink it consistently, it will replace the water that is being lost in the body through stooling and vomiting, and also stop the diarrhoea eventually". (IDI, Elderly Male, Beere).

However, other participants were against treatment at home and felt that diarrhoea should only be treated by a qualified health practitioner:

> I don't believe so. The person must be taken to the hospital. The major cause of such problem is that people eat too many things these days that they find it difficult to understand which one is good for their body and which one is not. Water is another major cause. Some borehole water is only good for washing, not drinking. We must boil water before drinking it. There is also something in one small bottle (water guard), that is also good for purifying water before drinking". (IDI, Elderly Female, Beere).

## Bivariate Analysis on Diarrhoea Preventive Practices and Diarrhoea Experience

Preventive practices carried out in urban slum households are presented in Table 5. Preventive practices consider source of water supply, water storage facilities, source of drinking water, water treatment practices, type of toilet facility, storage of leftover food and refuse disposal methods. Source of household water were categorized into internal sources (piped to dwelling, standpipe, borehole /tube well, covered dug well, sachet and bottled water) and external sources (water from vendors, rain water and tanker trucks). Majority, 242 (94.5%), of the respondents utilized internal sources of water. This was followed by 214 (94.3%) who utilized external sources. Internal sources were utilized most by residents in Beere and external sources of water supply were utilized most by respondents in Ilaje slum area. Also, water storage systems were

grouped into safe (closed narrow-mouthed containers and all closed containers) and unsafe (open wide-mouthed, open narrow-mouthed and all open containers) storage facilities. A large number, 290 (57.1%), of the respondents practised safe storage for their household water. Nevertheless, they all reportedly experienced diarrhoea recently.

Also Beere slum utilized more of safe sources and Ilaje more of unsafe sources. The source of drinking water was categorized into three sources: safe (covered tube well, borehole and tap water), unsafe (water vendors) and packaged (sachet and bottled water) sources. It was found that the respondents used combination of drinking water sources. Out of the respondents who experienced diarrhoea three weeks prior to the survey, majority, 237 (93.3%), got their drinking water from safe sources, 123 (93.9%) from external sources while 120 (97.6%) utilized packaged sources. Also, internal sources of water, 17 (6.7%), was utilized most by respondents who had experienced diarrhoea more than three weeks before the survey. More than half (64.2%) of the respondents did not treat the water they used in their households. Even though 167 (91.8%) of the respondents reportedly treated their water, they still had an episode of diarrhoea.

The type of water treatment utilized by the respondents offered an explanation for this finding as the respondents who treated their water in Beere indicated that they made use of 'stand and settle' method. The table also showed that 286 (56.3%) of the respondents made use of the river as their toilet facility. This was also more rampant in Ilaje area, as residents virtually lived on water. Unsafe food storage practices was carried out by 294 (86%) of the respondents. Also, 337 (66.3%) respondents burnt their household refuse as means of disposal while 148 (29.1%) disposed their household refuse in the river. In all the preventive practices carried out in slum households, the source of drinking water ($p<0.05$) and water treatment ($p<0.05$) practices showed a significant relationship with the experience of diarrhoea as shown in Table 5.

# Table 5: Diarrhoea Preventive Practices by Experience of Diarrhoea

| Preventive Practices | Diarrhoea Experience | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Source of Household Water** | **3 weeks ago** | **More than 3 weeks** | **Total** | **X$^2$Value** | **P.value** |
| Internal sources | 242 (94.5%) | 14 (5.5%) | 256 (50.4%) | .131 | 0.937 |
| External sources | 214 (94.3%) | 13 (5.7%) | 227 (44.7%) | | |
| Internal and external sources | 24 (96%) | 1 (4.0%) | 25 (4.9%) | | |
| **Total** | **480 (94.5%)** | **28 (5.5%)** | **508 (100.0%)** | | |
| **Water Storage Systems** | | | | | |
| Storage facilities | 271 (93.4%) | 19 (6.6%) | 290 (57.1%) | 2.999 | 0.223 |
| Closed storage | 75 (97.4%) | 2 (2.6%) | 77 (15.2%) | | |
| Opened storage | 134 (95%) | 7 (5%) | 141 (27.8%) | | |
| Opened and closed storage | **480 (94.5%)** | **28 (5.5%)** | **508 (100.0%)** | | |
| **Total** | | | | | |
| **Source of Drinking water** | | | | | |
| Internal sources | 237 (93.3%) | 17 (6.7%) | 254 (50%) | 25.241 | 0.003 |
| External sources | 123 (93.9%) | 8 (6.1%) | 131 (25.8%) | | |
| Packaged sources | 120 (97.6%) | 3 (2.4%) | 123 (24.2%) | | |
| **Total** | **480 (94.5%)** | **28 (5.5%)** | **508 (100.0%)** | | |
| **Water Treatment** | | | | | |
| Treated water | 167 (91.8%) | 15 (8.2%) | 182 (35.8%) | 7.503 | 0.044 |
| Did not treat water | 313 (96%) | 13 (4%) | 326 (64.2%) | | |
| **Total** | **480 (94.5%)** | **28 (5.5%)** | **508 (100.0%)** | | |
| **Type of Toilet Facility** | | | | | |
| Shared flush toilet | 72 (91.1%) | 7 (8.9%) | 79 (15.6%) | 2.444 | 0.485 |
| Covered pit latrine | 56 (93.3%) | 60 (11.8%) | 60 (11.8%) | | |
| Uncovered pit latrine | 79 (95.2%) | 83 (16.3%) | 83 (16.3%) | | |
| River | 273 (95.5%) | 13 (4.5%) | 286 (56.3%) | | |
| **Total** | **480 (94.5%)** | **28 (5.5%)** | **508 (100.0%)** | | |
| **Storage of Leftover Food** | | | | | |
| Refrigerator | 30 (96.8%) | 1 (3.2%) | 31 (9.1%) | 1.470 | 0.479 |
| Warmer | 15 (88.2%) | 2 (11.8%) | 17 (5.0%) | | |
| Left in the pot | 277 (94.2%) | 17 (5.8%) | 294 (86%) | | |
| **Total** | **322 (94.2%)** | **20 (5.8%)** | **342 (100.0%)** | | |
| **Refuse Disposal Methods** | | | | | |
| Burning | 319 (94.7%) | 18 (5.3%) | 337 (66.3%) | 6.385 | 0.271 |
| Thrown into the bushes | 2 (100.0%) | 0 (0.0) | 2 (0.4%) | | |
| Public dumping sites | 10 (83.3%) | 2 (16.7%) | 12 (2.4%) | | |
| Dug pit | 5 (100.0%) | 0 (0.0) | 5 (1.0%) | | |
| State dumpster trucks | 3 (75%) | 1 (25%) | 4 (0.8%) | | |
| Thrown into the River | 141 (95.3%) | 7 (4.7%) | 148 (29.1%) | | |
| **Total** | **480 (94.5%)** | **28 (5.5%)** | **508 (100.0%)** | | |

## Indigenous Treatment Practices for Diarrhoea

It was inquired whether the participants adopted indigenous treatment practices in treating diarrhoea. Their responses revealed that the treatment practices adopted for diarrhoea in urban slum households were more indigenous in nature. Once diarrhoea was identified, the discussants indicated that they began its treatment at home using herbal mixtures. The treatment was also monitored in case of need for improvement in the home treatment regimen so as to be able to respond appropriately.　When it was inquired whether the contents of the treatment had been modified over the years, discussants in Beere and Ilaje indicated that the treatment has been sustained to date without any change in the contents.　In the word of a young female discussant in Beere, *"We have not changed any treatment; it is still the same thing we use"*. This same position was also confirmed by participants in the interviews.　The participants demonstrated a high level of trust in the efficacy of indigenous treatment methods for diarrhoea episodes. The methods were used first by the participants in treating diarrhoea. They seek treatment from competent health practitioners in the hospitals only when the symptoms persisted.　In Ilaje, a young female discussant expressed the following view:

> We use traditional means more at home, like I mentioned before, hot drinks, palm oil, agbo and the rest. Yes mostly traditional means, but if it gets worse we go to the hospital.

This was corroborated by a male discussant:

> If anyone has that condition, we can first give him *Ogi* (raw pap) to drink, if it has not deteriorated so much. Such a person can also drink garri without sugar, if he has not purged or vomited more than 2 times. If the frequency is high, the affected person may be asked to drink *aporo epa'jebu* (Ijebu medicinal drink) combined with lime. If he takes it and he feels ok, *eniyen le je ile* (the person can finish a whole house if given to him to eat). But if after all

these, the stomach is still rumbling, he has to go to hospital for treatment, beginning with drips" (FGD, Young Male, Beere).

The common practice as reflected in the narratives is that most households treat diarrhoea episodes at home with local herbs and brews. Except when the symptoms persist, the affected individual may not be taken to the hospital for further treatment.

Cost of treatment serves as a factor influencing the treatment pathway utilised by the respondents. Home brew costs almost nothing to prepare. As a result, it is what people keep at home to use first before the infected individual is taken to the hospital for medical treatment if the symptoms persist. A female elderly participant in Ilaje explained how cost of treatment can influence choice and treatment pathways: *"The reason we use herbs is sometimes because of money, if it gets worse, then we go to hospital".*

## Selected Multivariate Analysis

Perception of diarrhoea and preventive practices scores were analysed to explore the influence that some selected socio-demographic variables have on the experience of diarrhoea. Perception score was calculated using survey questions on diarrhoea description, causes, and symptoms while prevention score was calculated using survey questions on source of water supply, source of drinking water, type of toilet facility, water storage facilities, water treatment methods and refuse disposal methods. The regression result (Table 6) indicates that preventive practices ($P<0.05$: 0.013; $R^2 = 0.299$) in slum households influence the rate at which diarrhoea is experienced in their homes. Perception of urban slum dwellers on diarrhoea, its symptoms and causes had no influence on the experience of diarrhoea in urban slum households ($P>0.05$: 0.098; $R^2 = 0.020$). This further explains the fact that the knowledge of a diarrhoea disease infection and one's susceptibility do not directly lead to adoption of preventive measures against the disease. Other factors that could prompt the need to practice preventive measures could surface.

## Table 6: Perception and Prevention Scores by Diarrhoea Experience

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | .967 | .036 | | 26.856 | .000 |
| | Prevention Score | **-.053** | .021 | -.112 | -2.492 | **.013** |
| | Perception Score | **-.034** | .021 | -.075 | -1.659 | **.098** |

An ordinary linear regression analysis was also carried out on selected demographic variables and their influence on diarrhoea prevention. Family type, monthly income, age and education were tested in Table 7. Education was the only predictor that showed an association with diarrhoea prevention (P<0.05: 0.000; $R^2$ = 0.299). Clearly the more educated an individual is, the more he/she will be knowledgeable about diarrhoea and strive to prevent it. Results also show that diarrhoea affects people of all ages, in both extended and nuclear families, whether they are rich or poor. All these predictors showed no association with diarrhoea prevention (P>0.05: 0.000).

## Table 7: Influence of Family Type, Monthly income, Age and Education on Diarrhoea Prevention

| Coefficients[a] | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.150 | .046 | | 24.836 | .000 |
| | Education | .104 | .007 | .546 | 14.492 | **.000** |
| | Age | .015 | .011 | .053 | 1.402 | **.162** |
| | Monthly income | -1.490E006 | .000 | -.039 | -1.046 | **.296** |
| | Family Type | -.023 | .029 | -.031 | -.816 | **.415** |
| a. Dependent Variable: Prevention of Diarrhoea | | | | | | |

## Discussion

Diarrhoea disease was prevalent in the study areas. Majority of the households visited had a member who had experienced diarrhoea in the last three weeks prior to the survey. This could be because diarrhoea disease is closely linked with conditions surrounding the home such as overcrowding and lack of basic social amenities such as water and sanitation facilities, all of which characterised slums and other deprived environments (Maria, *et. al*. 2013). A large number of those who experienced diarrhoea resided in Ilaje slum. It could therefore be deduced that coastal slum areas are more susceptible to diarrhoea infection than slum areas located on land (Jankowska, Weeks and Engstrom, 2012).

More than half (54.5%) of the respondents in this study were not educated; 82.7% were engaged in unskilled occupations such as fishing, trading; and 59.4% earned a monthly income of between 34 − 64 dollars. These findings on socio-economic factors corroborate the findings reported in Okolo *et. al's* (2013) study that a major factor in diarrhoea causation was the socio-economic status of the population in question. The findings align also with those of Omole's (2010) study where it was observed that squatter settlements are closely associated with poor socio-economic status. Education was found to be an influencing factor in the prevention of diarrhoea, and there were more respondents reporting no formal education in Ilaje than in Beere. This discrepancy in formal education attainment levels in the two locations sheds light on why diarrhoea episodes were more prominent in Ilaje than in Beere. The findings negate that of Omole's (2010) study which indicated socio-economic status as the major factor in diarrhoea causation. As found in the current study, socio-economic status did not have any association ($p < 0.05$) with diarrhoea causation.

Description of diarrhoea by the respondents indicates that there still exist gaps in public knowledge of diarrhoea, especially in poor and disadvantaged households (Ansari, Ibrahim and Shankar, 2011). As found in this study, some respondents still could not describe diarrhoea. Despite that, perceptions on the causes and symptoms of diarrhoea were

moderate as some of the respondents had clear ideas of the causes of diarrhoea (Okoh and Alex-Hart, 2014) and diarrhoea symptoms (Ansari, Ibrahim and Shankar, 2011). However, there were still a few respondents, especially in Beere area, who had no idea about the disease and some others who had erroneous knowledge about the causes. The latter category indicated erroneously that eating sugary foods and teething could result in diarrhoea episodes. The finding was similar to that which was reported in the study conducted by Tobin *et. al*. (2014) on caregiver's knowledge about childhood diarrhoea management that caregivers still considered teething as the major cause of diarrhoea in children. Climate change through changes in temperature, rainfall and flooding has been reported to give rise to diarrhoea infection (Carlton, *et. al*., 2014; Alexander, *et.al*. 2013) and there were more respondents in Ilaje (65.9%) than in Beere (33.4%) attesting to this finding.

Preventive practices in slum households studied were generally poor. Even in Beere where preventive practices was higher, diarrhoea experiences were also reported in many households. This may be due to the fact that diarrhoea has various transmission routes making it impossible for an improved source and safe storage of water alone to prevent its infection. Hedman's (2009) study emphasizes this point that in the diarrhoea prevention discourse, social factors, poor hygiene and sanitation practices are equally important besides access to clean water. Another reason why there were several episodes of diarrhoea in the study areas was the unsanitary nature of the environment where the respondents reside. It has been established that households that lack adequate sanitation facilities and safe water are constantly assailed by disease infections (UN-Habitat, 2007; Hedman, 2009; Katz, *et. al*. 2012). Source of drinking water and water treatment are key to diarrhoea eradication in the household. This study recorded an influence of water factors on diarrhoea episodes in slum households. This aligns with the findings of Komarulzaman *et al.'s* (2014) study that preventing diarrhoea requires an integrated approach in which water and sanitation facilities at household and community level are improved simultaneously.

# Conclusion

This study has established that diarrhoea in urban slums still remains a major public health problem, despite many attempts to eradicate it globally. This is because slum areas have continued to remain in deplorable conditions. Knowledge of the aetiology of diarrhoea and of the influence of climate change in diarrhoea infection is very poor in urban slums due to illiteracy. Diarrhoea is viewed as a normal ailment that can be treated at home, hence the poor attitudes toward its prevention and treatment. Homemade remedies are the main means of treating diarrhoea in urban slum due to a lack of finance to obtain modern treatment. More attention is needed at the household levels, especially in the areas of water supply systems, safe drinking water and adequate sanitation facilities. Cost effective means of treatment should further be explored especially for poor households.

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# JUVENILE SENTENCING AND RE-OFFENDING IN GHANA: IMPLICATIONS FOR LAW AND PRACTICE

## Prince Boamah Abrah[1]

## Abstract

An extensive review of the criminology literature reveals that little research exists to explain how sentencing periods affect adult re-offending. This paper presents the findings from a qualitative study which uses the lived experiences of 23 juvenile[2] delinquents sentenced by magistrates courts across the Districts in Ghana to illustrate how the adjudicative decisions and processes carried out by the courts reinforced or changed their criminal tendencies in adulthood. The findings reveal that all those participants who were in the desistance process experienced a longer sentencing period. Nonetheless, long sentencing periods per se may not necessarily decrease the likelihood of re-offending. The critical elements that work to reduce levels of involvement in crime were the individual's willingness to change, support received from family and institution, the kind of friends they selected and more importantly, what they made of the correction period. The study concludes that strict adherence to sentencing formalities and procedures without concomitant interest in the social contexts in which juveniles reside will have limited impact on reducing adult re-offending.

**Keywords**: Juvenile delinquency, Sentencing, Re-offending and Desistance

## Introduction

The relationship between juveniles' sentencing and adult re-offending is crucial within the context of criminology. Around the world, it is

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[2] The legal definition of a Juvenile as spelt out in the Juvenile Justice Act (ACT 653) is a person under the age of eighteen years who is in conflict with the law.

estimated that more than two million juveniles commit extremely dangerous and serious` crimes (Siegel & Senna, 2000). In Ghana, the crimes committed by these juveniles include murder, rape, defilement, indecent assault, unlawful harm, robbery with aggravated circumstance, drug offences and offences related to firearms (Hoffman and Baerg 2011). Juveniles who commit such crimes are arrested, sent to court, cautioned and discharged or committed to a correctional centre for rehabilitation and reformation. Generally, juveniles are sentenced for a specified number of purposes. The extent to which a sentence achieves its purpose can be assessed by estimating its effect on re-offending**.**

In terms of research, a large number of studies have specifically explored the effect/impact of sentencing in achieving rehabilitation. A consistent conclusion in such research, as echoed by Latessa and Lowenkamp (2006), is that while evidence from a large body of research demonstrates that treatment is more effective in reducing recidivism than punishment alone, not all treatment programmes are equally effective. According to Howells and Day (1999) and McGuire (2002), on average, rehabilitative programmes delivered in the community, produce better outcomes than those delivered within formal institutions.

The study of Seiter and Kadela (2003) who examined prisoner re-entry programmes using the Maryland Scale of Scientific Method to determine the effectiveness of programme categories concludes that many of such categories are effective in aiding re-entry and reducing recidivism. For drug rehabilitation, they found that, graduates of such treatment programmes were less likely than other parolees and non-completers to have been arrested, committed a drug-related offence, continued drug use, or had a parole violation. In evaluating the effects of educational programme on recidivism, the results of Seiter and Kedela (2003) further indicate that during a six-week time period, graduates increased their reading and mathematics competencies up to three levels. However, the educational component did not seem to have an effect on their recidivism rates when compared to nongraduates (Vito &Tewksbury, 1999).  For a halfway house programme, evidence from their study suggest that it does  work in easing the transition from prison to the community as well

as into pre-release centres and programmes which they found to be effective in reducing recidivism rates.

Within the context of Ghana, studies on re-offending such as Antwi (2015), Hagan (2013), and Abrah (2006) are less clear both empirically and theoretically on how sentencing periods help to explain persistence and desistance from crime over an individual's life course. This paper reviews narratives that suggest that the individual's willingness to change and what he/she makes of the correction, the support received from family and institution as well as sentencing length have a differential impact on offenders as they navigate adulthood.

## Juvenile Justice Administration in Ghana

Ghana has legislation which specifically refers to the juvenile justice system, namely, the Juvenile Justice Act and the Children's Act, the Juvenile Justice Act (Act 653) which was enacted in 2003 contains the criminal procedures for the processing of juvenile offences (arrest, court, sentencing, incarceration). When a juvenile is arrested, the first step for the police is to try to determine his or her age. If there is reason to believe that an accused person is under the age of 18, then that person must be dealt with differently from adult offenders. The juvenile is not to be kept in the same cell as an adult offender and must be taken to a remand home within 48 hours. A 'Remand Custody' order is written by the police and given to the social workers at the remand home. This remand warrant can only be valid for 48 hours. The juvenile must be brought to court within that time and a new warrant must be issued: a Warrant on Commitment for Trial or on Remand or Adjournment (Hoffman & Baerg 2011).

## Sentencing and Social Enquiry Report

Sentencing of juvenile delinquents in Ghana requires the preparation of a social enquiry report which informs adjudicative decisions and processes. Whether the offender is found guilty or pleads guilty, a Social Enquiry Report must be completed before sentencing. Social Enquiry Reports are usually prepared by the court social worker who visits the home of the juveniles if possible and speaks to their parents or guardians.

The social worker may also speak to teachers or any other adult that can give pertinent information on the juvenile. The report shall include the past history and the current circumstances of the juvenile, the conditions under which the offence was committed, and a recommendation to the court for sentencing. The report must be made known to the juvenile and his or her attorney. In most cases, the court accepts the recommendations of the probation officer. Sometimes, though, the judge in charge of the juvenile court would discuss the social enquiry report with the probation officer. The ultimate goal is to decide how rehabilitation can be done in the best interest of the juvenile. The judge may wish to give his or her own recommendations on the report, before it is used at trial. Finally, in some cases, the judge may choose to reject the recommendations of the probation officer. If this happens, the judge must, by law, provide a written reason why the recommendations in the social enquiry report are not being followed (Hoffman & Baerg, 2011).

There are maximum sentences at a correctional centre laid out by the Juvenile Justice Act, and these are always followed. These maximum sentences are three months for a juvenile under the age of 16; three months for juveniles between 16 and 17 years of age; 24 months for a younger offender over the age of 18; and three years for offences that the court panel may deem serious. A Juvenile who has committed a serious offence may be sentenced to the Senior Correctional Centre even if such person is 17 years of age or younger. These serious offences include: murder; rape; defilement; indecent assault involving unlawful harm; robbery with aggravated circumstance; drug offences; and offences related to firearms (Hoffman & Baerg, 2011).

## Correctional Sentencing and Adult Re-offending

A large body of evidence such as Abrams (2013), Seiter and Kadela (2003) and Suzanne and Weatherburn (2012) shows that prison sentences and some pre-entry programmes may have a crime-preventing effect, first by incapacitating offenders behind bars, and second, by deterring potential offenders outside prison. With respect to the impact of sentencing on rate of re-offending, the literature is inconclusive. While some studies such as Green and Winik (2010) and Weatherburn,

Vignaendra and McGrath (2009) found no significant effect of sentence or probation length on the risk of re-arrest, others such as Tait (2001) found that sentence type had an effect on re-offending, but that this effect was small, context specific, and varied by type of offence and offender. Still others suggest that the likelihood of re-offending has less to do with what happens within the correctional facility during the period of incarceration and more to do with other social factors.

A study by Yawson (2013) reveals that social support received outside of the prison from family, friends and religious organizations improved inmates' access to jobs, accommodation and social acceptance levels. For those who had no social support, reintegration was very challenging, hence their propensity to re-offend. A study by Craig (2009) also found that forum sentencing which is a community-based programme was more likely to reduce levels of involvement in crime than conventional sentencing. As evident in the pattern of the reviewed literature, a range of social factors come together to determine whether or not   sentencing lengths are effective in rehabilitating offenders. This paper draws on Ghanaian data to fill the gap in knowledge on the kinds of social factors that impact the likelihood of juvenile delinquents to re-offend as adults.

This study is part of a larger qualitative study that sought to examine the transition from juvenile delinquency to adulthood criminality in Ghana. The analysis focuses on two groups of delinquents, namely; those who had persisted in crime and were serving their sentence at the Nsawam Medium Security Prison and those who were in the desistance process living their normal lives outside the prison system.

## Study Site

The researcher used juvenile delinquents who had passed through the Senior Boys Correctional Centre (SBCC) in Accra and were living either within or outside the prison system. The SBCC was established in May 1947 by the colonial administration for young offenders who were in conflict with the law. Unlike the adult prisons where security is the main concern, at the SBCC, emphasis is placed on the juveniles acquiring vocational skills and education. The SBCC houses and gives skills

training and education to juveniles between the ages of 14-19 to enable them transition successfully into adulthood.

A juvenile is sent to the institution only when the juvenile court is satisfied with a social enquiry report of the police and probation officer regarding the offender's conduct, previous crime record and the circumstances under which the crime was committed. Upon arrival at the correctional centre, the juvenile is interviewed on his or her trade interest. A juvenile found to be good academically is also given the opportunity to pursue formal education to the senior high school level. The maximum sentencing period for convicted juvenile offenders ranges from three months to three years.

## Sampling Strategies

To recruit participants for the study, the researcher relied on prisons staff to provide him with a list of contacts of juvenile delinquents who had passed through the correctional facility. Given the few contacts, purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to select 23 juvenile delinquents (13 persistent offenders and 10 desisters).

Ethical concerns were addressed by following all ethical procedures outlined by the University of Ghana Ethics Committee for the Humanities before proceeding with the data collection. Consent of participants was sought in written form, enabling them to affix their thumb prints or signature to consent forms. Consent details were explained to them in both English and local languages. This was done to give them the opportunity to understand the implications of the study as well as the scope and nature of questions they were likely to answer. The participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity as codes and pseudonyms were used instead of their original names. In addressing the issue of sensitivity and avoiding any form of coercion, participation in the interviews was voluntary. The researcher also ensured that interviews were done in a setting which allowed the participants to share their lived experiences without any interruptions.

## Data Collection

The research design was qualitative. A variety of data collection techniques were used. These included in-depth interviews, observations, and discussions with stakeholders. An *interview* guide was used to elicit information on how their sentencing periods and acquisition of vocational skills and education helps to explain their persistence and desistance from crime. The interviews lasted between 60 - 90 minutes for both persisters and desisters. At the Nsawam Medium Security prisons, interviews could not be audio-taped for security reasons. Follow up visits were made at any point that the researcher needed clarifications on the information provided.

# Socio-demographic Characteristics of Participants

A total number of 23 juvenile delinquents in their adulthood participated in this study. They included 13 persistent offenders (12 males, 1 female) and 9 males and 1 female who were in the desistance process. Tables 1 and 2 give the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants used in the study.

Table: 1 Socio-demographic characteristics of the persistent offenders in adult prison

| No | Name * | Sex Age | ** | ***Marital status | Ethnicity | Committing offence in adulthood |
|----|--------|---------|----|-------------------|-----------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Gyemfi | M | 19 | S | Akan | Stealing |
| 2 | Johnson | M | 53 | LWC | Ewe | Defilement |
| 3 | Kumson | M | 20 | S | Akan | Stealing |
| 4 | Rockson | M | 20 | S | Akan | Narcotics |
| 5 | Opoku | M | 50 | M | Akan | Narcotics |
| 6 | Adu | M | 22 | S | Akan | Defilement |
| 7 | Agyeman | M | 23 | S | Akan | Robbery |
| 8 | Mensah | M | 26 | LWC | Akan | Narcotics |
| 9 | Mumuni | M | 35 | M | Akan | Stealing |
| 10 | Adom | M | 38 | D | Dagomba | Possession of arms |
| 11 | Ofori | M | 28 | M | Akan | Narcotics |
| 12 | Nortey | M | 24 | S | Akan | Narcotics |
| 13 | Kyeiwaa | F | 31 | S | Akan | |

*These are pseudonyms ** M = Male; F = Female *** S= Single; LWC=living by  cohabitation: M= Married; D= divorced

Table 3 summarizes the socio-demographic characteristics of the persistent offenders who participated in the study. The table illustrates their names [pseudonyms], age, sex, marital status, ethnic origin, religion, educational level as well as the regions and towns of residence before they were sent to the prison.

Table 2  Socio-demographic characteristics of the desisters

| No | Name * | Sex** | Age | Marital ***status | Ethnic background | Committing offence in adolescence |
|----|--------|-------|-----|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Edem | M | 23 | S | Ewe | Stealing |
| 2 | Abeiku | M | 24 | S | Akan | Defiling a young girl |
| 3 | Hope | M | 22 | S | Ewe | Defiling a young girl |
| 4 | Musa | M | 20 | S | Don't know | Stealing |
| 5 | Alhassan | M | 22 | S | Don't know | Stealing |
| 6 | Owuraku | M | 20 | S | Akan | Defiling a young girl |
| 7 | Mawuli | M | 22 | S | Ewe | Stealing |
| 8 | Kwesi | M | 26 | S | Akan | Assault |
| 9 | Kwame | M | 23 | S | Ewe | Stealing |
| 10 | Akwele | F | 22 | S | Ga | Stealing |

*These are pseudonyms
** M = Male; F = Female
*** S= Single
**** SHS= Senior High School; NVTI= National Vocational Training; ATTC= Accra Technical Training Centre; JHS= Junior High School

## Results and Discussion of Findings

This study examined adjudicative processes, sentencing and re-offending in Ghana using the lived experiences of 23 juvenile delinquents who

have desisted from or persisted in crime through adulthood. This section of the paper illustrates how the adjudicative decisions and processes carried out by the juvenile courts in Ghana reinforced and changed the participants  offending trajectory. The variations in the pattern of their responses and the key concepts emerging from the narrative data are also discussed. In order for the study to contribute to the literature on reformation of the penal justice system, the participants were asked to share the experiences they had during the adjudicative processes, the offences they committed and how their sentencing period played out to explain their persistence in and desistance from crime as they navigate adulthood.

Table 3 presents the patterns and variations in the data as the participants shared their experiences on the impact of sentencing periods on persistence in and desistance from crime.

Table 3: Patterns and variations in the data

| Sentencing Procedures | Persistence Offenders N=13 | Desistence Process N=10 |
|---|---|---|
| Long Sentencing | 5 | 10 |
| Short Sentencing | 8 | - |

As the respondents shared their lived experiences on how their sentencing periods modified their criminal behaviour, two major themes which emerged were the connections between longer sentencing periods and persistence and desistance in crime and the relationship between shorter sentencing and persistence in crime. As indicated in Table 3, both groups (persistent offenders and those in the desistance process) experienced longer sentences, that is, the maximum of three years. However, none of the subjects in the desistance process had a short sentence.  Thus given the 13 persistent offenders who participated in the study, while 5 and 8 of them had longer and shorter sentence respectively, all the 10 participants who were in the desistance process had longer sentence. Under the themes listed below, the impacts of

sentencing periods are discussed in relation to whether these variables strengthened and/or changed their offending paths.

## Sentencing Periods and Modification of Criminal Tendencies Through Adulthood

Studies that have examined the effects of sentencing in achieving rehabilitation, for example Abrams (2013) and Durlauf and Nagin (2011) believed that prison sentences have a crime-preventing effect, first, by incapacitating offenders behind bars, and second by deterring potential offenders outside prison. Others such as Cullen, Durlauf and Nagin (2011) and Weatherburn, Vignaendra and McGrath (2009) argued that imprisonment is criminogenic, which contradicts Becker's (1963) assertion that a person commits an offence if the subjective expected utility (subjective expected benefit) to him exceeds the utility he could get by using his time and resources in legitimate activity. In this sense, imposing a prison sentence on persons caught engaging in criminal activity should reduce the frequency of such activity because it reduces its subjective expected utility.

Within the context of this discussion, these two streams of thoughts frequently occur in the narratives of both the persistent offenders and desisters. As evident from the pattern of responses, longer sentencing had a differential impact on the participants. Those who had a shorter sentence were more likely to reoffend in adulthood as a result of their lack of skills and competencies. Support received from family and institutions was also critical in facilitating desistance from crime. In this section, narratives supporting these major themes are discussed.

To elaborate further, the narratives of participants in the desistance process show the importance of longer sentencing periods for desistance from crime. It was observed that all the ten desisters who had longer sentence were more likely to desist from crime than those who had shorter sentence. Following the case analysis of the narratives of four participants two of them had longer sentences and desisted from crime, while the other two had shorter sentences and persisted in crime. In an interview with Edem and Akwele this was how they narrated their

experiences on how their longer sentencing periods and acquisition of vocational training and education impacted positively on their lifestyle. Here is what Edem said:

> …I went to the SBCC at the age 16 for stealing six (6) bottles of whisky belonging to one of my friend's grandmother who had travelled to her home town…I spent three years there..., when I realized I could advance myself in terms of education and vocational skills, I decided to be focused in life and turn away from my deviant lifestyle.  By the time I left the centre I had both the BECE (JHS) and an NVTI grade II certificate. I had the opportunity to further my education at the ATTC. I now work at a plastic manufacturing company as a casual worker, my salary is GH¢ 250 and am okay now. I live with my parents and they also support me, I go to work and close late, by the time I get home is about 8: 30 pm so I go straight to bed… [Edem, 23 year old desister].

Emphasizing the impact of longer sentencing and desistance from crime, Akwele also remarked:

> ...I went to the Girls Correctional Centre for stealing my grandmother's money, I spent three years and I learnt hair dressing … Being at the institution really helped me a lot …in fact when I got to know I could advance myself, I felt I have to be serious in life... I am now a beautician... I have my own shop and am ok now... I go to work and close late… I have a few friends as well… [Akwele, 22 year old female desister].

After Edem and Akwele realized the need for self-advancement, they took the acquisition of skills and education seriously. These skills and competencies coupled with the social support received from families and institutions changed their deviant pathways.

By contrast, the re-offenders who had shorter sentences could not acquire skills and education within the duration of their sentences. The lack of social support from their families and welfare institutions propelled them to continue in their deviant ways. The narratives of Mensah and Kumson exemplify these connections:

> ...I started stealing at a very tender age… my grandmother used to beat me hard before telling the truth...when I was in the junior high school some of my friends suggested that we should organize ourselves and break into somebody's cold store…unfortunately for us when we attempted, we were caught and arrested … we were sent to the magistrate court… after some few days had elapsed, the panel decided to send us to the SBCC for three months…I spent only three months at the SBCC… I didn't receive any training (educational/vocational) so when I got back home I had no job to do… I was selling on the street… one day I went to our usual place to smoke and unfortunately for me the place was under siege by the police …I was arrested and sent to the prison… [Mensah – persistent offender].

Highlighting the issue of short duration and adult re-offending, Kumson, a 20 year old persistent offender, was also of the view that his short sentence denied him the opportunity to acquire the needed skills and competencies to meet the demanding challenges of the job market, hence his subsequent involvement in crime.  He remarked:

> ...I spent only three 3 months at the SBCC, the environment was friendly… the food was good... there was less restriction… I was interested in plumbing so I started, but since the time was too short … when I got back home, I had no job to do so I joined my friends out there and in the process of our usual robbing activities, we landed into trouble which led to our imprisonment

As indicated from their narratives, those who served three month sentences were not able to acquire the requisite skills and competencies for successful transition to adulthood, as compared to those who had longer sentences. These conditions underlie their re-offending. Commenting on the importance of longer sentencing and re-offending in Ghana, an official at the SBCC believed that longer sentencing is the best treatment for juvenile offenders, depending on their social backgrounds. In an interview with one of the prison officers, this was what she said:

> …The officially mandated term of sentence for juvenile delinquents is between two to three years maximum, depending on the nature of the offence which is normally determined after the social welfare officer has presented his/ her social enquiry reports and a final decision is taken by the court panel. However, we have had instances where juveniles are being sentenced for six months and even three months… I even have had a case here that the juvenile was sentenced for three months… his time is due and we have realized he has not learnt any substantive skill … more so we heard his mother who is the bread winner of the family is also dead, when he gets back the chances of this boy reoffending again is very high … So we have appealed to the magistrate court to review his term of sentence to three years … [A prisons officer at the SBCC].

The officer's assertion concerning all those participants who were in the desistance process shows that their long sentences impacted on them positively. However, we cannot wholly agree with these indications since a section of the persistent offenders (5) had the same length of sentence as well as the opportunities for self-advancement and yet they persisted in crime. The narratives lead us to conclude that longer sentences by themselves do serve to reduce levels of involvement in crime, nonetheless, other factors such as friendship and assistance from families and non-governmental and religious bodies were also critical. The narratives of Abeiku, Mumuni and Opoku are typical. For the desisters, Abeku's lived experience is used to illuminate the discussion

on longer sentencing periods and desistance from crime. The condition leading to his committal at the SBCC, his training experience and his adulthood transition are highlighted in his narrative:

> ...I went to the Borsal in 2006 and the case that took me there was an alleged defilement, we were living at a compound house so one day I was watching television around 10pm with one of my tenant's daughter, while watching, the young girl placed her hand on my thigh and I also placed my hand around her waist, when the mother woke up and saw us in that position, she  raised an alarm and people came around... when I  closed from school the next day the  police  arrested me, sent me to the police station and then to the court.. I was sent to the Osu remand home for six months and later sentenced to the Borstal for a period of three years at the age of 14...at the Borstal I knew I had done wrong and needed transformation and so I took my lessons seriously ... there were very bad friends as well as good friends ... for me, I picked friends who will give me good advice and I was not willing to compromise by learning deviant values and lifestyles... I learnt carpentry, and I wrote the BECE and passed and also wrote the NVTI and passed with a grade two certificate, and after the borstal I went to ATTC to further my education in carpentry. I was sponsored by a NGOs means Non-governmental Organizations (NGO) based on recommendation from the officers. At the final year at ATTC, some company came there and issued some forms that if we are interested to work with them we should fill some form, I filled it and months later, they called me for an interview, I passed and currently work with the organization… [ Abeiku, 24 year old desister].

Despite Abeiku's case, a section of the persistent offenders who had had relatively longer sentences and had acquired the needed skills and competencies still continued with their offending lifestyle. Mumuni a 35

year old persistent offender shared his experience on how he got to the SBCC and how despite his acquisition of skills and competencies he could not stop offending after he had left the correctional facility:

> ...I went to the Borstal in the year 1992... we were living at the military barracks at that time with my parents... one day I and my friends picked old military uniforms belonging to some military officers, wore it and went to the Accra sport stadium...  we looked just like soldiers in the uniform.... when one of the boys annoyed us we fought with him...in the heat of arguments and fighting people came around and upon interrogations they got to know we were not soldiers... we were arrested and sent to the police station, and thereafter to the  court with charges of  impersonation... we spent 3 years    at the Borstal. I learnt carpentry and plumbing... when I came out of the SBCC, I could not stop my offending behaviour... I have committed several offences…and have been to the prisons on two occasions which includes two times stealing and assault among others.

Opoku a fifty-year old persistent offender also spent three years at the borstal institute and upon being released from the SBCC, continued to commit crimes. He shared his story as follows:

> ... I stayed in the borstal for three years and I learnt to become an auto mechanic, I had an NVTI certificate it was a good place because you can learn any vocation that you like and bad in the sense that you can be influenced to do bad things such as stealing and smoking of "wee"... I stopped stealing but starting smoking as a result of the kinds of friends I selected...and I have not stopped smoking till date... I was working as well as selling the wee....    I am currently here on charges of narcotics…

As evident from their narratives, even though Mumuni and Opoku had long training periods, this did not prevent their subsequent offending

behaviour. Abeiku and all those who were in the desistance process had the same length of sentence and were afforded the same opportunity of either acquiring vocational training skills or furthering their education.

During their time in the correctional institution, the kinds of friends Mumuni and Opoku had and their approaches to life were different from those of Abeiku and Akwele.  The latter saw the need for change and took the programme more seriously than Mumuni and Opoku who continued with their deviant lifestyle even within the correctional facility. This evidence shows that long sentencing per se may not necessarily reinforce re-offending. What remains a crucial agent for change in considering a desistance paradigm of crime and delinquency is the emphasis that needs to be placed on the individual's willingness to change, his or her opinion of correction and the social support of all.

Considering the experiences shared by the respondents in relation to how the support offered by social institutions such as NGOs and other religious bodies impacted on their transformation, the researcher made a follow up to the Legon Inter denominational Church (LIC). The purpose of his visit was to find out the kinds of support and services rendered to juvenile delinquents who were committed to the SBCC. In an interview with the church's administrator, he made the following observations about the history, aims and the kinds of support offered to juvenile delinquents aging in and out of crime from the correctional centre:

> …The LIC started in the 1970s on the University of Ghana Campus. During the initial stages of its inception, meetings were held in the hall chapels during the term and whenever the University was in recess, campus residents either make their way to town on Sundays or service was put on hold until the students returned for the next session… the main aim of the founding fathers who established this church was to share fellowship and encourage one another to put their Christian faith into action wherever they found themselves…apart from this broader objective, one of the corporate responsibilities of

> our organization for the past 15 years is to support juvenile delinquents aging in and out of crime at the SBCC…We frequent the centre every week to offer financial and material support to the inmates …we give them food, toiletries, educational material and any other useful things that the inmates might need… for those inmates who did well in their JHS and SHS exams, we make sure that they get schools of their choice.  We also pay their school fees for them….I recalled one juvenile we supported up to the university level few years ago he is now working and leading a normal life … for those who are into vocational training, we purchased the necessary training tools and items they might need in order to start on their own …Just recently we bought a sewing machine for one of the inmates who had completed his term of sentence …We grant this juvenile the support to prevent them from committing further crimes… [The administrator of the LIC].

Over the past few decades, substantial evidence indicates that social support has both causal and collateral effects on a plethora of physical and mental health outcomes, though the psychosocial mechanisms at work are interconnected  and complex (Cohen & Wills, 1985;Thoits, 1995; Travis,  2005; Uchino, 2004; Uchino, Cacioppo & Kiecolt-Glaser, 1996; Umberson & Montez,  2010). In Leverentz (2010), for example, it was realized that positive social support given to female offenders was perhaps more important for achieving behavioural change than severing ties which led to negative influences. With these indications, the findings agree with the bulk of studies (Yawson, 2013; Travis, 2005; Uchino, 2004; 1996; Thoits, 1995; and Cohen & Wills, 1985) that social support reduces levels of involvement in criminality.

## An adjudicative theoretical model of juvenile sentencing and re-offending in adulthood

This section of the paper provides an adjudicative theoretical model of juvenile sentencing and re-offending in adulthood as illustrated in figure

1. The model, which was developed based on the narratives generated by the respondents, illustrates how adjudicative processes and decisions help to stabilize or trigger a turning point in points in criminal trajectories.

As indicative from the model, shorter as well as longer sentencing periods influenced offending behaviour even though all those who desisted from crime had a longer sentencing period.\
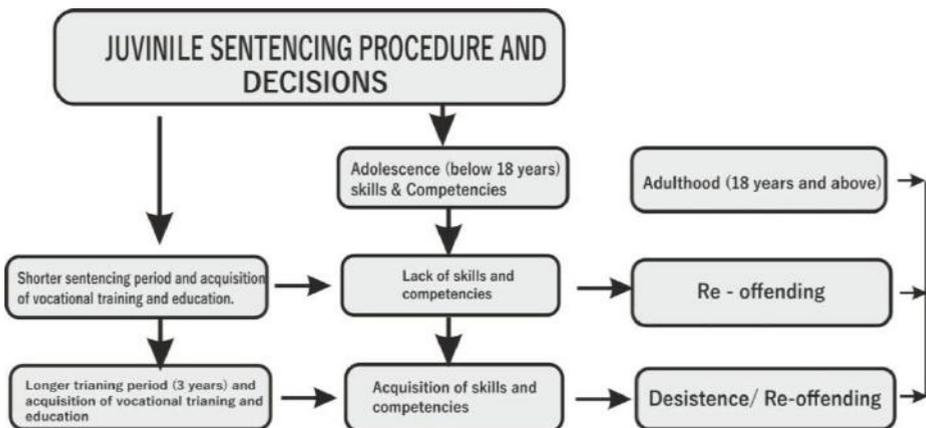


Figure 1: An adjudicative theoretical model of juvenile sentencing and re-offending in adulthood

SOURCE: Author's own construct per the findings of the study

## Conclusion

This paper set out to examine how adjudicative processes, decision (sentencing) and acquisition of vocational training and education impact on the lives of juveniles as they exit the correctional facility. As evident from the narratives, success outside the juvenile justice system depends on not just what happened to the delinquents during their period of incarceration, but also on what happened afterwards. The three key elements found to modify offending behaviours through adulthood were friendship, family support and social support. Sentencing per se does not reinforce reoffending. What remains crucial is what the individual makes of correction, namely, the individual's willingness to change from his offending behaviour, the kinds of friends he/she selects while at correction, his/ her willingness to learn vocation and education as well as

the social support received from family and institutions. These elements combine to reduce levels of involvement in crime through adulthood.

Future research may be needed to investigate the possible causes of re-offending by exploring the juvenile's life experiences in multiple social domains such as marriage, residential change and the socio-cultural context within which the offenders live. The individual differences construct and predisposition to crime will also be another interesting area for future research. In terms of the law or amendment of duration of sentences, it was clear from the narratives that given the three-year sentencing period, one may desist or persist in crime. In this sense, the maximum sentence of three years seems to be ideal to trigger a turning point. In practice, there is the need for criminal justice experts and child welfare agencies to rethink reintegration and aftercare programmes which will ensure successful transition.

More work is needed to develop a treatment plan for young offenders. Aftercare must not end at discharge. Follow up by child welfare agencies is needed to track and monitor the activities of juvenile delinquents in adulthood. The child's best interest should also be paramount in all adjudicative processes and decisions and this requires flexibility rather than strict adherences to sentencing formalities and procedures. Keeping accurate data on juveniles is also crucial; such information ensures successful tracking and promotes life course studies in criminology within the context of Ghana.

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# PORTFOLIO OPTIMIZATION USING MINIMUM VARIANCE LINE APPROACH: A STUDY OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY AND NATIONAL INSURANCE TRUST

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## Abstract

The main motive of investors around the globe is to invest in assets with the idea of maximizing the return with a minimum risk of investment. The management of investment portfolio requires carefully selecting various assets to invest in, as well as managing the proportions of funds to be channeled into a particular investment. The data used in this study was obtained from Social Security and National Investment Trust (SSNIT) covering a five-year period spanning from 2010 to 2014. The data comprised of the prices of Investment Properties (IVP), Investment to Maturity (IVM) and Loans Receivable (LR), out of which the expected return of each asset, the standard deviation (SD) of each asset, the correlation between assets and the covariance between assets are computed. The methodology used here was the minimum variance line approach proposed by Harry Markowitz. The model allowed us to assign weights to various investment classes by transposing the expected returns and risk associated with them. The result showed that, as the expected return of the portfolio increases the various percentage weight to be invested in IVP and LR increase whilst that of IVM decreases. The

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portfolio standard deviation or risk on the other hand also increases with increasing portfolio expected returns.

**Keywords**: Portfolio Optimization, Minimum Variance, Investment Properties, Investment to Maturity.

## Introduction

Investment decision is not simply the kind of securities to own but how to divide the investor's wealth of funds amongst those securities (assets). Investment involves the sacrifice of an immediate and certain level of consumption by a customer in exchange for the expectation of an increase in future consumption. Investment in the security market is a risk in the sense that there is a spread of possible outcomes. The usual measure of the spreads is the standard deviation (S.D) or the variance. Every security asset in the market also has some returns. Also, every investor would want to reduce the variance/risk of his or her investment. Many investors own more than one investment and the problem that comes with it is how to allocate wealth among those alternative investments. Our work tries to find the appropriate proportions of an investor's wealth that should be allocated to various combinations of assets forming the optimal portfolio for various targeted returns, using SSNIT data as a case study.

The Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) is a statutory public Trust charged under the National Pensions Act 2008 Act 766 with the administration of Ghana's Basic National Social Security Pension Scheme and to cater for the First Tier of the contributory three-tier scheme. The Trust is currently the largest non-bank financial institution in the country. The primary responsibility is to replace part of lost income of workers in Ghana due to old age, invalidity and permanent migration of an expatriate contributor from Ghana. The Trust is also responsible to pay survivors lump sum to nominated dependents of contributors in the event of death.

The Pension Scheme as administered by SSNIT as at December 2016 had a registered membership of over 1,295,904 million with

over 168,455 pensioners who regularly receive their monthly pensions from SSNIT. The annual absolute growth of pensioners is over 12,000. SSNIT is mandated to provide income security for workers in Ghana through excellent business practices by investing the funds of the Scheme. The SSNIT Scheme is partially funded, hence there is always the need to invest the funds judiciously for maximum returns. The principles that guide these investments are high yield, safety, liquidity, diversification and harmonization with society's goals.

The Trust is the largest single institutional investor on the Ghana Stock Exchange and the main driver of the development of the Capital Market in Ghana. SSNIT currently holds a significant number of shares in twenty-two (22) out of the thirty-five (35) listed companies on the Ghana Stock Exchange. SSNIT's holdings on the Ghana Stock Exchange was GH¢ 1,764.21 Million as at December 2015 representing 3.1% of the total market capitalization (GH¢57,116.87 Million) and 15.8% of the domestic market capitalization. The Trust has investments spread in seven sectors namely Manufacturing, Finance, Insurance, Distribution, Food and Beverage, Mining and Agriculture.

The Trust also has investments in real estate, commercial properties, students' hostels, energy and services sectors among other areas. As far back as 1974, the Trust committed funds into real estate development. The focus was to provide residential accommodation for the contributing public. The initial effort was low-key. However, this was pursued more vigorously by channeling of more funds into housing from 1987-1998. The vision was a long-term investment which was to form one of the pillars for financing the pension scheme.

The main source of investment funds is workers contributions to the scheme. The Trust is guided by its investment Asset Allocation Policy which indicates how investment assets are apportioned into different asset classes to ensure that investment return is maximized whilst minimizing investment risk. The funds are therefore, invested in Equities, Fixed Income and Real Estate.

Over the past years the trust investment returns have been declining and experts are predicting that if care is not taken SSNIT may collapse in the near future. Therefore, SSNIT's investments require a proper evaluation. Here we applied portfolio optimization using Minimum Variance Line Approach to some selected assets of SSNIT in determining the optimum proportion of funds to be channeled into those investments.

In this paper we aim at using Markowitz Minimum Variance line equation to find the appropriate proportions of investor's wealth that should be allocated to various combinations of assets forming the optimal portfolio for various targeted returns. We also aim at determining the standard deviation of the Portfolio based on the investor's expected returns.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: in section two, we discuss the theory of Portfolio Optimization; section three presents the methodology of the study and the mathematical estimates of basic inputs of the portfolio theory; section four deals with the data analysis; and the final section presents the conclusion, policy implications and possible recommendations.

# The Theory of Portfolio Optimization

### The Markowitz Selection of Portfolio
The Markowitz model is a mathematical formula whose concept is the diversification in investment and aims at selecting a collection of investment assets that have in total a lower risk (Variance) than any individual asset. The Nobel prize winner Harry M. Markowitz derived the "Critical line algorithm" which identifies all feasible Portfolios from a given set of assets that minimizes risk for a given expected return, and/ or maximizes expected return for a given level of risk which is known as "Efficient frontier".

Collections of securities held by an investor are what we call "portfolio". Potential investors who want to invest in financial securities have to choose a security from a huge array of financial assets. Investors

basically take decisions in two ways: some use past experiences, others make decisions based on formulas, mathematical models, simulations and optimization processes. In the latter, a scenario is expressed mathematically with input variables to produce output based on some assumptions. Modern Portfolio Theory (MPT) is one of the quantitative techniques used to make prudent investment decisions. Mean Variance Model was developed by Markowitz to be applied quantitatively in asset allocation processes.

Harry M. Markowitz published an article in 1952 entitled "Portfolio Selection" which was later expanded to a book in 1959 (Markowitz, 1959).There has been other reviews and theories in this regard, which include Ingersoll (1987). Elton, Gruber & Brow (2005) introduced Modern Portfolio Theory. Their paper focused on the Markowitz Mean Variance Portfolio Theory developed to find the optimum portfolios when an investor is interested in return distribution over a single period. The Mean Variance (MV) can be described as a powerful tool for efficiently allocating wealth to different assets in a portfolio (Hiroshi & Ken-ichi, 1995).

Classical Markowitz model on Ghana Stock Exchange was analyzed and applied by Darko (2012). Historically, monthly data of Stock prices, market capitalization and dividend per share from 2007-2010 was used to compute the market indices. According to Darko (2012), it was profitable to invest 83.44% and 16.56% of an investor's capital in non-financial index and in the financial market index respectively. The conclusion from the analysis above is that the Ghana Stock market obeys the tenant of the Markowitz model.

Cofie (2011) examined the risks of six companies in Ghana by determining the proportions to be invested in Portfolio to spread the risk for some expected return. Regression analysis was used to determine the sensitivities of the selected companies by calculating their betas. Real world problems based on daily returns of forty eight (48) different industries was also solved by Ali & Mehrota (2008) using Markowitz Single Index model.

# The concept of Markov efficient frontier

Risk returns can be used to plot possible asset combination where various portfolio collections can be defined in this space. Efficient frontier can be located at the upper edge of the region in the space. Portfolios are represented by the combinations around this line where lowest risks for a given level of return are seen clearly. On the other hand, for a given amount of risk, the portfolio lying on the efficient frontier represents the combination offering the best possible returns. Initially the process of deriving the critical line involved solving for corner portfolios along the line. These corner portfolios included the maximum return portfolios, the minimum variance portfolio and any other number of portfolios in between. However new technology is able to derive this magnitude of portfolios that make up the critical line (efficient frontier).

Figure 1.1 is the entire investment opportunity set, which is the set of all possible combinations of risk and return offered by portfolios, formed by asset A and asset B in different proportions. The curve passing through A and B respectively shows the combination of risk return of all portfolios that can be formed by putting these two assets together. The minimum variance portfolio is identified as point V; since no other portfolio exists that has a lower standard deviation. In figure 1.1., the curve VA represents the entire possible efficient frontier. These are portfolios which offer highest possible expected return rates for each level of portfolio standard deviation.
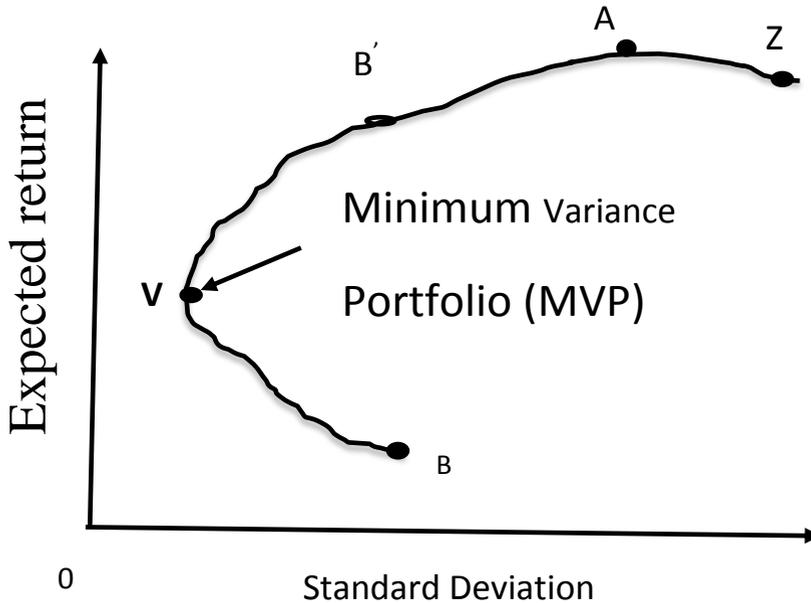
**Figure 1.1: Investment opportunity set for asset A and asset B**

### 3. Methodology

## Mean Variance Approach

Description of the one period modes of the mean variance approach consider a market where $d$ different securities with prices $P_1, P_2, \ldots, P_d > 0$ at the initial time $t = 0$ are traded. The security at the final time t=T are not feasible. Therefore, they are modeled as non-negative random variable on some probability space $(\Omega, F, P)$. The return of the securities is given by

$$R_i(T) = \frac{P_i(T)}{P_i}, i = 1, \ldots, d \qquad (2.1)$$

Assuming we know their means, and covariance

$$E\big(R_i(T)\big) = \mu, \qquad i = 1, \ldots, d \qquad (2.2)$$

$$cov\Big(R_i(T), \big(R_J(T)\big)\Big) = \sigma_{ij}, i, j = 1, \ldots, d \qquad (2.3)$$

Assuming that each security is perfectly divisible, that is we can hold $\varphi_i \epsilon R$ of security $i, \ i = 1, \dots, d$. An investor with an initial wealth $X > 0$ is assumed to hold $w_i \geq 0$ shares of security $i$ with

$$\sum_{i=1}^{d} w_i P_i = X \qquad (2.4)$$

Then the portfolio vector, $\pi = (\pi_1, \pi_2, \dots, \pi_d)$, and the corresponding portfolio return $R^\pi$ are given as

$$\pi_i = \frac{w_i P_i}{X} \qquad (2.5)$$

$$R^\pi = \sum_{i=1}^{d} \pi_i R_i(T) \qquad (2.6)$$

The component of the portfolio vector represents the fraction of wealth which is invested in the corresponding assets or securities. The mean and variance of the portfolio return are given by:

$$E(R^\pi) = \sum_{i=1}^{d} \pi_i \mu_i \qquad (2.7)$$

$$var(R^\pi) = \sum_{i=1}^{d} \sum_{j=1}^{d} \pi_i \, \sigma_{ij} \, \pi_i \qquad (2.8)$$

## Problem formulation of the mean variance approach

The basic idea of the Markowitz model was to look for a balance between risks (portfolio variance) and return (portfolio mean). The problem of maximizing the mean of the portfolio return, $E(R_i) = \mu_P$ under a given upper bound $C_1$ for the variance $Var(R) = \sigma_P^2$ is considered.

$$\text{Maximize the mean } \mu_p$$

Subject to

$$\begin{cases} w_i \geq 0, \ \sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i = 1 \\ Var(R_i) \leq C_1 \\ i = 1 \dots n \end{cases}$$

where $w_i$ represents the proportion (weight) of the investors wealth allocated to asset $i$

The task of minimizing the variance of the portfolio return, $Var(R) = \sigma_P^2$ given a lower bound $C_2$ on the expected portfolio return $E(R) \geq C_2$ is also looked at.

$$\text{Minimize} \quad Var(R_i)$$

Subject to

$$\begin{cases} w_i \geq 0 \\ E(R_i) \geq C_2 \\ i = 1 \dots n \end{cases}$$

## Formulation of the Markowitz one-period model

We consider a market where n different asset with prices $P_1, P_2, \dots, P_n > 0$ at the initial time t=0 are traded. The asset prices at final time t=T are not foreseeable. Therefore they are modelled as nonnegative random variables on some probability space. The returns of the assets

$$R_t = \frac{D_t + (P_t - P_{t-1})}{P_{t-1}} \qquad (2.9)$$

Where $D_t$ =sum of dividednds, $P_t - P_{t-1}$ = Capital gain, $P_t = the\ price\ of\ asset\ at\ time\ t$ and $P_{t-1}$ =the price of asset at time $t-1$. We assume that each asset is perfectly divisible, i.e. we can hold $w_i \in R$ shares of asset $i = 1, \dots n$. We therefore require $w_i \geq 0, i = 1, \dots, n$

The inputs of the single-period Markowitz algorithm are:
- The expected return
- The variance (SD) of each asset
- The correlation between assets

The output of the single-period Markowitz algorithm is the efficient frontier.

# The expected return r

The return on a portfolio as a whole made up of n asset is given as:

$$R = w_i R_1 + \cdots + w_n R_n \qquad (2.10).$$

The $w_i$ represents the proportion (weight) of the investors wealth allocated to asset $i$. It is called the budget constraint or the fully invested constraint. It is required that hundred percent of the budget is invested in the portfolio. $R_i$ is the return on the $i^{th}$ asset, since the expected value of a weighted sum is the weighted sum of the expected values we have the expected return of the portfolio as

$$E(R) = \mu_P = \sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i \mu_i \qquad (2.11).$$

lt is convenient to arrange the weights into a one row matrix $\omega = [\omega_1 \omega_2 \dots \omega_n]$. In matrix form, the weight which adds up to one is expressed as $U\omega^T = 1$. Where U $= [1,1,..1]$ is a one-row matrix with all n entries equal to 1, $\omega^T$ is a one-column matrix, the transpose of $\omega$, All portfolios with weights $\omega$, satisfying $U\omega^T = 1$ called the attainable portfolio is the attainable set.

The expected returns $E(R_i) = \mu_i, i = 1, \dots, n$ can also be arranged into a one row matrix, $m = [\mu_1, \mu_2 \dots \mu_n]$

## The Variance / Covariance

To express the variance, we first define covariance of the return (i.e. $R_1 \: and \: R_2$)

$$C_{12} = \sigma_{12} = E\big[[R_1 - E(R_1)][R_2 - E(R_2)]\big] \qquad (2.12)$$

Hence the covariance between $R_i \: and \: R_J$ is

$$C_{ij} = E\big[(R_i - \mu_i)(R_J - \mu_j)\big] \qquad (2.13)$$

The variance (risk) of the portfolio is expressed as

$$var\ (R) = \sigma_P^2 = \sum_{I=1}^{n} w_i^2\ \sigma_i^2$$

$$+\ 2 \sum_{i=1}^{n} \sum_{j=1}^{n} w_i w_j \sigma_i \sigma_j p_{ij} \qquad (2.14)$$

The Covariance, in terms of the correlation coefficient is given as

$$C_{ij} = \rho_{ij} \sigma_i \sigma_j$$

The covariance between returns is denoted by
$C_{ij} = cov\ (R_1 R_2)$ and they are the entries of the n x n covariance matrix, matrix

$$\begin{bmatrix} C_{11} & C_{12} & \cdots & C_{1n} \\ & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ C_{n1} & C_{n2} & \cdots & C_{nn} \end{bmatrix}$$

The Portfolio optimization problem is a parametric quadratic programming problem formulated as:

$$\min \sum_{j=1}^{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i w_j C_{ij} \qquad (2.15) \text{ subject to}$$

$$\begin{cases} E(R) = \mu_p = \sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i\ \mu_i \\ \\ w_i \geq 0, for\ i = 1,.., n \end{cases}$$

**Preposition:**
The expected return $\mu_p = E(R)$ and variance $\sigma_p^2 = Var(R)$ of the return,

$$R = w_1 R_1 + \ldots + w_n R_n$$

on a portfolio with weights $\omega = [\omega_1 \omega_1 \ldots \omega_n]$ are given by

$$\mu_p = mw^T$$
$$\sigma_p^2 = wCw^T$$

# The Minimum Variance Portfolio

The minimum variance portfolio is the portfolio with the smallest variance (risk) in the attainable set. The portfolio with the smallest variance in the attainable set has weights,

$$w = \frac{UC^{-1}}{UC^{-1}U^T}$$

# The Minimum Variance Line

This is the portfolio with smallest variance among all portfolios in the attainable set whose expected return is equal to a given number $\mu_P$. The family of such portfolios, parameterized by $\mu_P$, is called minimum variance line.

# The weight of the Minimum Variance Portfolio

The portfolio with the smallest variance among attainable portfolios with expected return $\mu_P$ has weights,

$$\omega = \frac{\begin{vmatrix} 1 & UC^{-1}m^T \\ \mu_P & mC^{-1}m^T \end{vmatrix} UC^{-1} + \begin{vmatrix} UC^{-1}U^T & 1 \\ mC^{-1}U^T & \mu_P \end{vmatrix} mC^{-1}}{\begin{vmatrix} UC^{-1}U^T & UC^{-1}m^T \\ mC^{-1}U^T & mC^{-1}m^T \end{vmatrix}}$$

Provided that the determinant in the denominator is a non-zero. The weights depend linearly on $\mu_P$.

# DATA ANALYSIS

## Data Collection

The data used in this section, Table 3.1 in the Appendix was obtained from Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) covering a five-year period spanning from 2010 to 2014. The data was comprised of the prices of Investment in Properties (IVP), Investment to Maturity (I√M) and Loans and Receivables (LR) and their corresponding returns, out of which the expected return of each asset, the standard deviation (S.D) of each asset, the correlation between assets and the covariance between assets are computed. We could also expand the horizon of the data up to the current year.

From the data, the returns of each asset (indicated as 'change') in Table 3.2 in the Appendix are calculated using the formula

$$R_t = \frac{P_t - P_{t-1}}{P_{t-1}}$$

Thus return of Investment in Properties (IVP) from February (2010) to March (2010) is given by

$$R_1 = \frac{161.63 - 167.21}{167.21} = -0.03337$$

The return of Investment to Maturity (IVM) from February (2010) to March (2010) is

$$R_2 = \frac{3276.56 - 3522.10}{3522.10} = -0.06971$$

And the return of Loans and Receivables (LR) from February (2010) to March (2010),

$$R_3 = \frac{790.75 - 782.69}{782.69} = -0.01029$$

**Mean of asset returns**

The returns are calculated using the formula $\bar{R} = \frac{1}{T}\sum_{i=1}^{T} R_t$

$$\bar{R}_1 = \mu_1 = \frac{1}{59}(-0.03371 + \cdots + 0.0000) = 0.003281$$

$$\bar{R}_2 = \mu_2 = \frac{1}{59}(-0.06971 + \cdots + 0.013014) = 0.00186$$

$$\bar{R}_3 = \mu_3 = \frac{1}{59}(-0.010298 + \cdots + 0.004311) = 0.00478$$

**Variance of Asset Returns**

The variance of the returns are calculated using the variance formula,

$$\sigma^2 = \frac{1}{T}\sum_{t=1}^{T}(R_t - \bar{R})^2$$

Variance of IVM is calculated as:

$$\sigma_1^2 = \frac{1}{59}[(-0.03371 - 0..003281)^2 + \cdots + (0.0000 - 0.003281)^2]$$

$$= 0.46516$$

Variance of IVP is calculated as:

$$\sigma_2^2 = \frac{1}{59}[(-0.06714 - 0..00186)^2 + \cdots + \left(0.013014 - (-0.00186)\right)^2]$$
$$= 0.22656$$

Variance of LR is calculated as,

$$\sigma_3^2 = \frac{1}{59}[(-0.010298 - 0..00478)^2 + \cdots + (-0.004311 - 0.00478)^2]$$
$$= 0.15034$$

Hence the standard deviations are:
$$\sigma_1 = \sqrt{0.46516} = 0.6820$$
$$\sigma_2 = \sqrt{0.22656} = 0.4760$$
$$\sigma_3 = \sqrt{0.15034} = 0.3877$$

The covariance matrix is given by;
$$C = \begin{bmatrix} 0.46516 & -0.12354 & 0.25986 \\ -0.12345 & 0.22656 & 0.047059 \\ 0.25986 & 0.047059 & 0.15057 \end{bmatrix}$$

The inverse of the covariance matrix $C^{-1}$ is;
$$C^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} 0.0218 & 0.0021 & -0.0044 \\ 0.0021 & 0.00476 & -0.0152 \\ -0.0044 & -0.0152 & 0.0719 \end{bmatrix}$$

**Correlation between Asset Returns**

The correlation between the asset returns is calculated by,

$$\rho_{12} = \rho_{12} = \frac{C_{12}}{\sigma_1 \sigma_2} = \frac{-0.12354}{0.6820 * 0.4760} = -0.38055$$
$$\rho_{13} = \rho_{13} = \frac{C_{13}}{\sigma_1 \sigma_3} = \frac{0.25986}{0.6820 * 0.3877} = 0.98279$$
$$\rho_{23} = \rho_{32} = \frac{C_{12}}{\sigma_2 \sigma_3} = \frac{0.047059}{0.4760 * 0.3877} = 0.25499$$
$$\rho_{11} = \rho_{22} = \rho_{33} = 1$$

Hence the correlation matrix is

$$\rho = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & -0.38055 & 0.98279 \\ -0.38055 & 1 & 0.25499 \\ 0.98279 & 0.0573 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

## The Weight of the Portfolio

The weight of this portfolio is made of three (3) assets (IVM, IVP and LR.)

We let

$m = (\mu_1, \mu_2, \mu_3) = [0.1836, 0.3235, 0.4929]$, then

$$w = \frac{UC^{-1}}{UC^{-1}U^T} = \frac{[1,1,1]\begin{bmatrix} 0.0218 & 0.0021 & -0.0044 \\ 0.0021 & 0.0047 & -0.0152 \\ -0.0044 & -0.0152 & 0.0719 \end{bmatrix}}{\begin{bmatrix} 0.0218 & 0.0021 & -0.0044 \\ 0.0021 & 0.0047 & -0.0152 \\ -0.0044 & -0.0152 & 0.0719 \end{bmatrix}[1,1,1]\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}}$$

$$w = [0.1836, 0.3235, 0.4929]$$

Hence the expected return of the portfolio is;

$$\mu = mw^T = 0.3813$$

## The Minimum Variance Line

The portfolio with the smallest variance among attainable portfolios with expected return $\mu_p$ has weights,

$$w = \frac{\begin{vmatrix} 1 & UC^{-1}m^T \\ \mu_P & mC^{-1}m^T \end{vmatrix}UC^{-1} + \begin{vmatrix} UC^{-1}U^T & 1 \\ mC^{-1}U^T & \mu_P \end{vmatrix}mC^{-1}}{\begin{vmatrix} UC^{-1}U^T & UC^{-1}m^T \\ mC^{-1}U^T & mC^{-1}m^T \end{vmatrix}}$$

Provided that the determinant in the denominator is a non-zero. The weights depend linearly on $\mu_p$

Now $UC^{-1}m^T = [1,1,1]\begin{bmatrix} 0.0218 & 0.0021 & -0.0044 \\ 0.0021 & 0.0047 & -0.0152 \\ -0.0044 & -0.0152 & 0.0719 \end{bmatrix}\begin{bmatrix} 0.003281 \\ -0.00186 \\ 0.00478 \end{bmatrix} =$

0.0250

$mC^{-1}m^T$

$$= [0.003281, -0.00186, 0.00478] \begin{bmatrix} 0.0218 & 0.0021 & -0.0044 \\ 0.0021 & 0.0047 & -0.0152 \\ -0.0044 & -0.0152 & 0.0719 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 0.003281 \\ -0.00186 \\ 0.00478 \end{bmatrix}$$

$= 0.0215$

$$UC^{-1} = [1,1,1] \begin{bmatrix} 0.0218 & 0.0021 & -0.0044 \\ 0.0021 & 0.0047 & -0.0152 \\ -0.0044 & -0.0152 & 0.0719 \end{bmatrix}$$
$$= [0.0195, 0.0343, 0.0523]$$
$$UC^{-1}U^T = [1,1,1] \begin{bmatrix} 0.0218 & 0.0021 & -0.0044 \\ 0.0021 & 0.0047 & -0.0152 \\ -0.0044 & -0.0152 & 0.0719 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} = 0.1061$$
$$mC^{-1}U^T = [0.0039, -0.0053, 0.0084] \begin{bmatrix} 0.0218 & 0.0021 & -0.0044 \\ 0.0021 & 0.0047 & -0.0152 \\ -0.0044 & -0.0152 & 0.0719 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$$
$$= 0.0250$$
$$mC^{-1} = [0.321, -0.186, 0.478] \begin{bmatrix} 0.0218 & 0.0021 & -0.0044 \\ 0.0021 & 0.0047 & -0.0152 \\ -0.0044 & -0.0152 & 0.0719 \end{bmatrix}$$
$$= [0.0046, -0.0154, 0.0523]$$

Hence the minimum weight in terms of $\mu_p$ is given as;

$$w = \frac{\begin{vmatrix} 1 & 0.0250 \\ \mu_P & 0.0215 \end{vmatrix} [0.0195, 0.0343, 0.0523] + \begin{vmatrix} 0.1061 & 1 \\ 0.0253 & \mu_P \end{vmatrix} [0.0046, -0.0154, 0.0358]}{\begin{vmatrix} 0.1061 & 0.0250 \\ 0.0250 & 0.0215 \end{vmatrix}}$$

Given the above line, it indicates that, at any expected return $\mu_p$, the weight of the three investments can be determined and the corresponding risk (variance or standard deviation) can equally be determined. The expected return in Table 3.3, $\mu_p$ of the portfolio is determined from a simulation study using R software.

**Table 3.3. Table showing various assets or investment weights and $\sigma_P$ as $\mu_P$ changes**

| EXPECTED RETURNS | WEIGHT OF VARIOUS ASSETS | | | STANDARD DEVIATION |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| $\mu_P\%$ | IVP (%) | IVM (%) | LR (%) | $\sigma_P$ |
| 2.5 | 22.94 | 50.71 | 26.35 | 3.4351 |
| 3.0 | 23.13 | 50.27 | 26.60 | 3.4462 |
| 4.0 | 23.52 | 49.380 | 27.10 | 3.4689 |
| 5.0 | 23.90 | 48.50 | 27.60 | 3.4922 |
| 10.0 | 25.80 | 44.50 | 30.10 | 3.6190 |
| 15.0 | 27.71 | 39.68 | 32.60 | 3.7607 |
| 20.0 | 29.62 | 35.28 | 35.102 | 3.9159 |
| 25.0 | 31.53 | 30.87 | 37.61 | 4.0830 |
| 30.0 | 33.44 | 26.46 | 40.11 | 4.2606 |
| 35.0 | 35.340 | 22.05 | 42.61 | 4.4475 |
| 38.0 | 36.49 | 19.40 | 44.11 | 4.5635 |
| 40.0 | 37.25 | 17.64 | 45.11 | 4.6424 |
| 42.0 | 38.01 | 15.88 | 46.11 | 4.7225 |
| 46.0 | 39.54 | 12.35 | 48.11 | 4.8857 |
| 50.0 | 41.07 | 8.82 | 50.11 | 5.0529 |
| 60.0 | 44.88 | 0.00 | 55.11 | 5.4857 |
| 70.0 | 48.70 | -8.81 | 60.12 | 5.9385 |

## Summary of Results

Findings from the analysis show that weight of various investments as well as the portfolio standard deviation changes as the expected returns on the portfolio $\mu_P$ changes. Where the expected returns of the portfolio is 4% ($\mu_P$ =4%) there is a positive increase in the percentage weight of the investments, IVP and LR, that is from 23.13% to 23.52% on the part of IVP, from 26.60% to 27.10% on the part of LR but there is a decrease on the part of IVM, that is from 50.27% to 49.38%. The portfolio variance also increases with increasing expected returns in all cases.

Again it is observed that as the portfolio returns increase there is a an increase in the weight of the IVP and the LR but the increment in the weight of the LR is higher than that of the IVP, Conversely, the portfolio

standard deviation or portfolio risk ($\sigma_P$) increases as the portfolio returns $\mu_P$ increase and decreases as the portfolio returns $\mu_P$ decrease.

## Conclusions

In conclusion the amount to be invested in various assets depends on the expected returns of the portfolio the investor wishes to achieve at the end of the day. In the case of higher returns, the investor is required to invest a higher proportion of his/her total wealth in both IVP and LR and a smaller proportion of his/her total wealth in IVM, and with this scenario the investor's risk on the portfolio will be very high. For instance, considering a higher return of 50% of total wealth, based on our model, the investor needs to invest 41.07% of total wealth in IVP, 8.82% of total wealth in IVM and 50.11% in LR, the investor's risk increases to 5.0529 while achieving a higher return of 50% on the entire portfolio. It is observed that the ratio of the investor's total wealth to be invested in the asset IVM decreases with increasing expected returns on the portfolio. For instance the ratio of the investor's total wealth to be invested in the asset, IVM decreases to 0.00% when the investor wishes to achieve an expected return of 60% on the total portfolio as shown in table 3.3 above. This means that the asset IVM is not a good combination of the other asset, that is, IVP and LR when the investor wants to achieve higher returns on total portfolio.

## Recommendations

It is recommended that the minimum variance line for portfolio weight actually allocate various weight to various assets in the portfolio depending on the investor's wealth. The portfolio optimization approach in allocating funds to various investments actually maximizes the investor's returns with minimizing risk of investment. It is highly recommended to be the best approach for asset allocation. Care should also be taken in determining correlation between different assets in order to determine the optimum proportions of investor's wealth to be assigned to each.

# Appendix
## TABLE 3.1. Prices of Assets

| DATE | IVP | IVM | LR |
|------|------|---------|---------|
| JAN-10 | 167.21 | 3522.10 | 782.69 |
| FEB-10 | 161.63 | 3276.56 | 790.75 |
| MAR-10 | 159.01 | 3089.65 | 842.54 |
| APR-10 | 157.66 | 3221.23 | 828.42 |
| MAY-10 | 163.77 | 3165.75 | 872.47 |
| JUN-10 | 152.87 | 3230.83 | 964.84 |
| JULY-10 | 163.92 | 3229.95 | 987.07 |
| AUG-10 | 175.6 | 3071.71 | 896.53 |
| SEP-10 | 205.84 | 2874.98 | 883.98 |
| OCT-10 | 235.7 | 2927.45 | 921.8 |
| NOV-10 | 238.24 | 2910.31 | 908.15 |
| DEC-10 | 250.63 | 3047.06 | 897.79 |
| JAN-11 | 265.29 | 3164.48 | 949.42 |
| FEB-11 | 293.4 | 3471.10 | 1013.12 |
| MAR-11 | 290.36 | 3392.97 | 994.17 |
| APR-11 | 318.7 | 3113.51 | 1013.47 |
| MAY-11 | 308.47 | 3070.77 | 1022.10 |
| JUN-11 | 310.46 | 3015.64 | 986.31 |
| JULY-11 | 300.8 | 3167.18 | 964.22 |
| AUG-11 | 310.24 | 3064.31 | 960.25 |
| SEP-11 | 296.21 | 2873.88 | 945.5 |
| OCT-11 | 274.78 | 2680.05 | 956.33 |
| NOV-11 | 274.23 | 2527.43 | 959.76 |
| DEC-11 | 258.44 | 2200.61 | 946.76 |
| JAN-12 | 272.85 | 2307.76 | 942.99 |
| FEB-12 | 279.46 | 2356.24 | 1045.12 |
| MAR-12 | 280.66 | 2359.25 | 1151.43 |
| APR-12 | 274.21 | 2266.78 | 1029.33 |
| MAR-12 | 268.79 | 2113.09 | 955.44 |
| JUN-12 | 267.23 | 2265.84 | 956.33 |
| JULY-12 | 332.95 | 2349.82 | 966.85 |
| SEP-12 | 320.72 | 2620.28 | 966.85 |
| OCT-12 | 321.63 | 2463.54 | 959.04 |
| NOV-12 | 321.54 | 2478.16 | 937.34 |
| DEC-12 | 308.72 | 2431.82 | 945.8 |
| JAN-13 | 303.29 | 2275.44 | 933.82 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| FEB-13 | 302.5 | 2197.70 | 925.41 |
| MAR-13 | 309.49 | 2153.36 | 938.57 |
| APR-13 | 280.27 | 2294.72 | 912.23 |
| MAY-13 | 295.29 | 2345.73 | 908 |
| JUN-13 | 297.06 | 2283.58 | 911.6 |
| JULY-13 | 278.93 | 2308.53 | 925.41 |
| AUG-13 | 234.89 | 2483.05 | 937.6 |
| SEP-13 | 207.41 | 2616.05 | 939.23 |
| OCT-13 | 201.73 | 2730.70 | 936.82 |
| NOV-13 | 199.14 | 2755.17 | 922.13 |
| DEC-13 | 197.5 | 2824.54 | 925.41 |
| JAN-14 | 198.72 | 2819.43 | 928.42 |
| FEB-14 | 209.32 | 2992.76 | 946.13 |
| MAR-14 | 222.33 | 3041.67 | 966.85 |
| APR-14 | 222.36 | 3050.61 | 945.5 |
| MAY-14 | 216.92 | 3030.00 | 916 |
| JUN-14 | 202.56 | 3174.31 | 926.07 |
| JUY-14 | 182.23 | 3196.04 | 930.82 |
| AUG-14 | 176.43 | 3270.27 | 961.59 |
| SEP-14 | 163.06 | 3221.27 | 925.41 |
| OCT-14 | 163.31 | 3100.83 | 922.41 |
| NOV-14 | 178.67 | 2909.09 | 904.7 |
| DEC-14 | 178.67 | 2946.95 | 908.6 |

## TABLE 3.2. RETURNS ON ASSETS

| DATE | IVP | IVM | LR |
|---|---|---|---|
| | $R_1\%$ | $R_2\%$ | $R_3\%$ |
| FEB-10 | -3.337120986 | -6.971409103 | 1.029781906 |
| MAR-10 | -1.620986203 | -5.704458334 | 6.549478343 |
| APR-10 | -0.849003203 | 4.258734808 | -1.675884824 |
| MAY-10 | 3.875428136 | -1.72232346 | 5.317351102 |
| JUN-10 | -6.655675643 | 2.055752981 | 10.58718351 |
| JULY-10 | 7.228363969 | -0.039618302 | 2.304008955 |
| AUG-10 | 7.125427038 | -4.887368209 | -9.172601741 |
| SEP-10 | 17.22095672 | -6.404575953 | -1.399841612 |
| OCT-10 | 14.50641275 | 1.825056174 | 4.278377339 |
| NOV-10 | 1.077641069 | -0.585492493 | -1.480798438 |
| DEC-10 | 5.200638012 | 4.698812154 | -1.140780708 |
| JAN-11 | 5.849259865 | 3.853550636 | 5.750788046 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| FEB-11 | 10.5959516 | 9.689427647 | 6.709359398 |
| MAR-11 | -1.036128153 | -2.250871482 | -1.87045957 |
| APR-11 | 9.760297562 | -8.236441819 | 1.941317883 |
| MAY-11 | 3.209915281 | -1.372727244 | 0.851529892 |
| JUN-11 | 0.645119461 | -1.795315182 | -3.501614323 |
| JULY-11 | -3.11151195 | 5.025135626 | -2.239660959 |
| AUG-11 | 3.138297872 | -3.247999798 | -0.411731762 |
| SEP-11 | -4.522305312 | -6.214449582 | -1.536058318 |
| OCT-11 | -7.234732116 | -6.744540482 | 1.145425701 |
| NOV-11 | -0.200160128 | -5.694669876 | 0.312653582 |
| DEC-11 | -5.757940415 | -12.93092192 | -1.309260726 |
| JAN-12 | 5.575762266 | 4.869104476 | -0.398200177 |
| FEB-12 | 2.422576507 | 2.100738378 | 10.83044359 |
| MAR-12 | 0.429399556 | 0.1277459 | 10.17203766 |
| APR-12 | -2.29815435 | -3.919465932 | -10.60420521 |
| MAY-12 | -1.976587287 | -6.780102171 | -7.178455889 |
| JUN-12 | -0.580378734 | 7.228750314 | 0.0931508 |
| JULY-12 | 24.59304719 | 3.706351728 | 1.10003869 |
| SEP-12 | -3.447030135 | 4.299714202 | 1.257802354 |
| OCT-12 | 0.283736593 | -5.981803471 | -0.807777835 |
| NOV-12 | -0.027982464 | 0.593454947 | -2.262679346 |
| DEC-12 | -3.987062263 | -1.869935759 | 0.902554036 |
| JAN-13 | -1.758875356 | -6.430574631 | -1.266652569 |
| FEB-13 | -0.260476771 | -3.416482087 | -0.900601829 |
| MAR-13 | 2.310743802 | -2.017563817 | 1.422072379 |
| APR-13 | -9.441338977 | 6.564624587 | -2.806396966 |
| MAY-13 | 5.359117993 | 2.222929159 | -0.463698848 |
| JUN-13 | 0.599410749 | -2.64949504 | 0.396475771 |
| JULY-13 | -6.103144146 | 1.092582699 | 1.514918824 |
| AUG-13 | -15.78890761 | 7.584046991 | 1.317253974 |
| SEP-13 | -11.69909319 | 5.332560265 | 0.173848123 |
| OCT-13 | -2.738537197 | 4.382561495 | -0.256593167 |
| NOV-13 | -1.283894314 | 0.896107225 | -1.568070707 |
| DEC-13 | -0.823541227 | 2.517811968 | 0.35569822 |
| JAN-14 | 0.617721519 | -0.180914414 | 0.325261236 |
| FEB-14 | 5.334138486 | 6.14769652 | 1.907541845 |
| MAR-14 | 6.215364036 | 1.634277389 | 2.189973894 |
| APR-14 | 0.013493456 | 0.293917486 | -2.208201893 |
| MAY-14 | -2.44648318 | -0.675602584 | -3.120042306 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| JUN-14 | -6.619952056 | 4.762706271 | 1.099344978 |
| JUY-14 | -10.03653239 | 0.684558219 | 0.51292019 |
| AUG-14 | -3.182790978 | 2.32256167 | 3.305687458 |
| SEP-14 | -7.578076291 | -1.498347231 | -3.762518329 |
| OCT-14 | 0.153317797 | -3.738898012 | -0.324180633 |
| NOV-14 | 9.405425265 | -6.183505707 | -1.919970512 |
| DEC-14 | 0 | 1.301437907 | 0.431082127 |

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# REVIEWING THE EXTENSIVE APPOINTMENT POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT AS SOLUTION TO WINNER-TAKES ALL POLITICS IN GHANA

## Ransford E.V. Gyampo[1] and Emmanuel Graham[2]

## Abstract

The 1992 constitution of Ghana gives the Executive President of Ghana enormous and extensive powers of appointment. This over the years has led to the manifestations of the Winner-Takes-All (WTA) politics. As a result, Executive Presidents of Ghana have exercised their powers of appointment to the benefit of only party apparatchiks and loyalists without recourse to appointment based on apolitical or non-partisan meritocracy. In this regard, many Ghanaians, irrespective of their competence, experience and expertise, are denied the opportunity to serve their country simply because they do not belong to the ruling party. We argue that, the 1992 constitution of Ghana gives the Executive President so much power in appointing state officials, which promotes WTA politics and deepens clientelism. The paper reviews the extensive powers of appointment of the President and practically examines how the exercise of these powers promotes WTA politics and clientelism. It discusses previous attempts at promoting inclusive government through appointments and the challenges encountered. The paper finally proffers policy recommendations on how the powers of appointment could be exercised in a manner that promotes inclusivity and, to some extent, meritocracy.

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# Introduction

The powers of the executive President of Ghana have been the subject of debate by many scholars (Boafo-Arthur 2003; Debrah 2005; Ninsin 2008; Prempeh 2003). Some have argued that the President's powers of appointment are too extensive and ought to be diffused.[3] Others have opined that such powers ought to be exercised with recourse to meritocracy and in a manner that promotes inclusivity and cross partisanship (Gyampo 2015a, 2010; Gyampo and Graham 2014; Boafo-Arthur 2003). Scholars including Prempeh (2003), Oquaye (2013), Ahwoi (2011), Anebo (2006), Debrah (2005), Boafo-Arthur (2003), Saffu (2007), Ninsin (2008), and Gyampo and Graham (2014) have discussed and highlighted the dangers of the extensive and the virtually unbridled powers of Ghana's Executive President, particularly in the areas of appointment. These scholars have succinctly argued that the unbridled exercise of such appointment powers could breed dictatorship, undermine constitutionalism and weaken important state institutions expected to play a countervailing oversight over the powers of the executive.

Indeed, as a result of such debate and the potential negative impact of institutional arrangements in the 1992 Constitution, the President J.E.A Mills administration set up the Constitution Review Commission (CRC)[4] to review the 1992 constitution of Ghana. As part of the CRC review on

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[3] Generally, in the presidential system of government, unlike the parliamentary system, the powers of the President are quite extensive and not diffused. Ghana, combining the features of the presidential and parliamentary systems into a neo presidential/hybrid arrangement appears to have borrowed more of the features of the presidential system than the parliamentary system.

[4] The Constitution Review Commission was a presidential Commission of Inquiry, set up in January 2010 by President John Atta Mills. It was mandated to consult with the people of Ghana on the operation of the 1992 Constitution and on any changes that need to be made to the Constitution. The Commission was also tasked to present a draft bill for the amendment of the Constitution in the event that any changes are warranted (CRC-Report 2011).

the appointment of the Executive President it recommended the appointment of certain key officials of state including the Chairperson of the Electoral Commission (EC), the Commissioner of the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and Auditor-General to be made by the President in consultation with the Council of State and with the approval of Parliament (CRC-Report 2011).[5] This proposal, which attempts to inject some scrutiny and cross partisanship into the appointment process, was accepted by the Government in its White Paper (2012) published thereafter (CRC-Report 2012).

It is from this background that this paper contributes to the discourse on the dangers of the extensive powers of the executive by highlighting how the exercise of such extensive powers of appointment by the Executive President also promote WTA politics and lead to needless dissipation of national brains, talents and expertise in a manner that undermines the quest for national development. For the sake of responsiveness and political accountability, it may not be a sustainable proposal to call for 'a purely all-inclusive governance system' where virtually 'everybody across the political divide' is included in the governance process.[6] Nonetheless, the feeling of exclusion from the governance process by those who are not members of the party in power often associated with WTA politics cannot also be part of good governance (Abotsi 2013; Gyampo 2015a, 2015b; Gyampo and Graham 2014; Linton and Southcott 1998). Unfortunately, the WTA phenomenon has characterized all the regimes of Ghana's Fourth Republic. Even though the 1992 Constitution itself promotes WTA politics, the framers of the Constitution never anticipated the current divisive situation (Abotsi, 2013). While the 1992 constitution has in it checks and balances on the various arms of government, the concept of constitutionalism is beyond

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[5] The 1992 Constitution did not give Parliament any role in the appointment process of these key officials

[6] We are grateful to Professor Aaron Mike Oquaye, Political Scientist and current Speaker of Parliament of the Republic of Ghana for this view. According to him, it would be difficult to locate who is responsible for what and who must be accountable to Ghanaians when all across the political divide are made part of the ruling government.

norms creating executive, judicial, and legislative powers. Constitutionalism imposes significant limitations on the powers of government in order to ensure that the interests of citizenry are upheld (Barber, 2010). In this regard, Ghana's constitution review process may have to be re-opened to accommodate more proposals for dealing with WTA politics.

Incoming governments have used their victory to signal a new "era" and the fact of their control over power and state resources. As has oftentimes been the case under all regimes in the Fourth Republic, the assumption of political authority has been used as means of demonstrating control and the consequent marginalization of perceived political opponents from access to key resources and occupation of certain offices (Abotsi 2013; Linton and Southcott 1998). This has been seen as problematic by many well-meaning Ghanaians across the political divide.[7]

In effect, two key features of WTA are the feeling of marginalization from governance and decision making process by those who do not belong to the ruling party and the needless dissipation of brains and talents that could have otherwise been harnessed for national development (Dennis 2007; Dyck 2006). To achieve inclusive politics and national development, appointments by the President must be guided first by Max Weber's conception of meritocracy.[8] In this regard, while party functionaries who qualify and merit appointments ought to be considered, non-party functionaries and, indeed, talents and experts from across the political divide who are willing to serve the nation should also be given the opportunity to do so through appointments by the President.

Against this backdrop, the research question is how has the appointing powers of the Executive Presidents in Ghana's Fourth Republic encouraged WTA and clientelism? The paper reviews the powers of

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[7] See Report of a nationwide public consultations by the IEA on WTA politics available at www.ieagh.org

[8] See details at http://dpb.bitbucket.org/max-weber-on-meritocracy-in-academia-1918.html

appointment of the President of Ghana and argues that the 1992 Constitution gives such powers to the President and that such powers have been exercised in a manner that promotes two key features of WTA politics, *i.e*., a feeling of marginalization and waste of talents, expertise and experience.  It demonstrates the linkage between WTA politics and clientelism and shows how the two influences appointments in Ghana. It discusses previous attempts at promoting inclusive government and the challenges encountered. The paper also proffers policy recommendations on how the powers of appointment could be exercised in a manner that promote inclusivity, apolitical and non-partisan meritocracy as well as ensure that the right calibre of personnel is appointed. Data for this paper was generated from a series of nation-wide public consultations on WTA politics held by the Institute of Economic Affairs between 2013 and 2014. Other secondary sources were used to augment information from the public consultations.

The paper is organized as follows, the introduction and problem statement; the theoretical and empirical underpinning which shows the link between WTA and clientelism. This is followed by a review of the powers of appoint of the Executive President in Ghana's fourth republic and finally some policy recommendations are given on how the powers of appointment could be exercised in a manner that promotes inclusivity and meritocracy.

## Theoretical and Empirical Underpinning: Linking Winner Takes All and Clientelism

### Winner Takes All (WTA)
WTA is not merely an electoral formula for determining winners in elections as some scholars have argued and defined it to be (O'Neill 2006; Hill 2003; Ball and Peters 2005; Dyck 2006; Nicholson 1992; Ayelazuno 2011). It is also a political mechanism for facilitating the inclusion and exclusion of individuals, groups and classes of persons from the spoils of political power, national governance, as well as the conferment of economic advantages to only those who win political power (Hacker and Pierson 2010a; Attafuah 2013; Hacker and Pierson

2010b Abotsi 2013; IEA 2014). Viewing WTA politics purely from how it creates inequality and confers economic advantages to those in power, Hacker and Pierson (2010b) argued that WTA politics occurs when the ruling class undermines workers' rights and ability to unionize in a manner that reduces wage equality, creates economic insecurity among people, as well as down-plays the well-being of the poor. One way to curb the situation where the ruling class undermines their followers is the kind of utilitarian reforms that ensures that the interests of as many citizens as possible are reflected in public policy (Hacker and Pierson 2010b). Contrary to conventional wisdom, the dramatic increase in inequality of income in some developed countries like the United States has not been the natural and inevitable result of increased competition from globalization, but rather the deliberate work of political forces (Hacker and Pierson 2010a). Those at the very top of the economic ladder tend to develop and use political muscle to dramatically cut their taxes, deregulate the financial industry, keep corporate governance lax and labour unions hamstrung (Hacker and Pierson 2010b). Therefore, instead of a rising tide lifting all boats, "yachts are rising, but dinghies are largely staying put" in the US, and "there is reason to suspect that the dinghies are staying put in part because the yachts are rising"(ibid: 20). Hacker and Pierson (2010a) argued that governments over the past thirty years have "abandoned the middle class" in the US in favour of making "the rich richer" by cutting taxes (estate and capital gains taxes) and tax rates for the wealthy, and eliminating or preventing any countervailing power or oversight of corporate managers. This for them epitomizes WTA politics in the US.

The experience of WTA politics in many African countries, however, goes beyond the conferment of economic advantages to only the rich. Generally, post-electoral political transitions have been the most stressful moments for many countries in Africa. Victorious political parties after elections quickly "sweep the political and economic stakes" of the state as they consolidate themselves in power (Abotsi 2013). The process of state capture moves in tandem with the ruthless perpetration of a regime of victimization and recrimination against political "enemies" in

opposing political parties and their associates in business, industry and commerce (IEA 2014).

The Ghanaian experience of WTA politics is akin to what pertains in some developing countries particularly in Africa (Dennis 2007). It entails "state capture" or the partisan monopolization of state resources, facilities and opportunities, as well as the exclusion of political opponents from national governance (Attafuah 2013; Abotsi 2013; IEA 2014). Given extreme executive control and influence on the Ghanaian parliament since 1992, even the opposition in parliament is unable to assert itself and play its full role as a countervailing authority to the powers of the executive (Oquaye 2013; Abotsi 2013). Since the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1992, the WTA politics has been a divisive syndrome that confers certain exclusive rights on top party echelon and apparatchiks after elections to the neglect of the rest of the citizenry (Gyampo 2010). The history of Ghana's Fourth Republic is replete of several stories relating to unequal access to job opportunities, contracts, and many other prospects simply because of change of government. The right to equal access to job opportunities is enjoyed in many instances by members of the ruling party and those who contributed to its electoral victory (Gyampo 2010; Oquaye 2013). The key effects of this anti-democratic and inhumane system of political transition include compulsory retirements; dismissals (for instance, Apollo 568 under the Busia government); termination of appointments; cancellations and withholding of entitlements; forcible ejections from duty-post accommodation; wanton seizure of state vehicles and property in the care of political opponents by party apparatchiks without recourse to due process of the law; reckless abrogation of contracts; and malicious persecution of some real and perceived political opponents. These negative tendencies are what many Ghanaians perceive as symptoms of WTA politics.

It is also a political sub-culture that excludes all other Ghanaians who are not part of the ruling party from national governance and decision making in a manner that polarizes the nation and dissipates the much needed talents and brains for national development (IEA 2014). In effect, one omnibus feature and result of the WTA politics is the "dangerous

feeling of exclusion" from the governance process by those who are not part of the ruling party/government (Attafuah 2013). It has been aptly argued by Attafuah (2013) that for the sake of responsiveness and political accountability, it may not be a sustainable proposal to call for "a purely all-inclusive governance system" where virtually "everybody across the political divide" is included in the governance process. Nonetheless, the visible and palpable feeling of exclusion from the governance process by those who are not members of the party in power often associated with the WTA politics cannot also be part of good governance. Unfortunately, this phenomenon has characterized all the regimes of Ghana's Fourth Republic (IEA 2013; Attafuah 2013). For instance, political parties that have won elections have monopolized all state resources; there have been compulsory retirements of people suspected to be "political enemies"; termination of appointments; cancellation of contracts that has resulted in needless judgment debts and unnecessary financial loss to the nation; and forcible ejection of public officials from duty-post residence (IEA 2014). Indeed, incoming governments have used their victory to signal a new "era" as a result of their control over power and resources. As has oftentimes been the case under all regimes in the Fourth Republic, the assumption of political authority has been used as a means of demonstrating control and the consequent marginalization of perceived political opponents from access to key resources and occupation of certain public offices (Abotsi 2013). This may be blamed on the nature of governance characterized by WTA politics. Unfortunately, the problem is deepened by the fact that in Ghana and perhaps other developing countries, everyone sees the government as the fat cow that must or should be milked. Hence, you find the opposition crying because they do not have the chance to milk the cow as they would have liked. This creates semblances of polarization that cannot be tolerated in a nation fighting poverty and underdevelopment.[9]

There could be several factors responsible for the WTA politics in Ghana and in the view of some Ghanaians, the root cause lies in the nation's

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[9] We are grateful to the anonymous reviewer for this view.

Constitution (IEA 2013; IEA 2014; Attafuah 2013). However, the 1992 Constitution of Ghana cannot be fully culpable for the promotion of the WTA politics. At least in the UK, Canada and France, where the WTA electoral formula is used, there is no serious evidence of public complaint about the WTA politics and the feeling of exclusion by those who are not part of the ruling party (Dyck 2006). Even though there are complaints about WTA politics in countries like the US, the works of Hacker and Pierson (2010a & 2010b) show that its causes and manifestations are quite different from what pertains in Ghana.

Ghana's 1992 Constitution, just as those of some advanced countries, provides some countervailing checks against the WTA politics. For instance, the legislature is expected to play an oversight role over the exercise of power by the executive. Whether these checks are being rendered ineffective or not would be a subject for another discussion. Suffice it to say however, that parliamentary effectiveness in Ghana's Fourth Republic is a chimera as the legislature serves merely as rubber-stamp of the executive decisions (Oquaye 2014; IEA 2014).[10] Nevertheless, it is a truism that parliamentary checks have been provided for by the 1992 Constitution and the selection of the WTA as an electoral formula was never meant to be translated into a divisive political problem after elections. Indeed, the choice of WTA as a formula for selecting leaders lies in its capability of providing a stable and workable government; and providing, in the waiting, an alternative government capable of being strong and stable (Afari-Gyan 1995; Committee of Experts Report 1991). In addition, "it has the further advantage of simplicity and is relatively inexpensive to operate" (Committee of Experts Report, 1991:92).

What ought to be pointed out is that in a fledgling democracy like Ghana, politics tends to be a zero-sum game. Whoever wins an election can easily monopolize the use of all resources of the state which confers

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[10] This is so because under WTA politics, the executive takes it all also at the parliamentary level and completely brings parliament under its control. How this happens has been adequately explained in Gyampo, R (2015) Dealing with WTA Politics: The Case for an Independent Parliament available at www.ieagh.org

wealth, fame, prestige and makes winners of elections very powerful. Indeed, political power grants Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) on the verandas of those who gets them. Power, wealth, and fame are what many political elites, more especially, in poor and developing countries clamour for (O'Neill 2006; Handelman 2006). Consequently, there is often the desire on the part of politicians to strengthen their hold on power through a variety of compensatory schemes and tactically systematic means of depriving and excluding political opponents of all resources, entitlements and positions and ultimately weakening them (Abotsi 2013; Linton and Southcott 1998). Through this, incoming governments are able to fulfil electoral promises of providing for their followers and flexing state power against opponents (Abotsi 2013). This is the crux of the matter.

**Clientelism**

Clientelism can be described as transactions between politicians and citizens whereby material favours are offered in return for political support at the polls (Wantchekon 2003: 3). It is also seen as a political exchange where a politician (i.e., a "patron") gives patronage in return for the vote or support of a "client". It refers to a multifaceted chain of personal bonds between political patrons or superiors and their individual clients or followers. These bonds are established on common material rewards where the patron supplies many resources to their clients or dependents and accomplices in return for their rigid support and cooperation (Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith 2004, 165). The patron has uneven power and consequently enjoys wide latitude about how to distribute the assets under his or her control. In modern states, most patrons are not independent actors, but are links within a larger grid of contacts, frequently serving as middlemen who organize exchanges amongst the local level and the national centre (Kettering 1988).

The patrons disregard the long-term national interest and focus on supporting their clients hence anyone who is not a client receives nothing from the government. Clientelism tends to thrive in unreliable political and economic environments at the rural and urban areas making it an arena for the politics of survival for both patrons and client. Therefore,

the poor and disregarded members of society are drawn into these linkages as the only solution to their daily survival due to limited access to official assistance (Auyero 2000). A precarious economic system compels people to focus on immediate consumption and to forsake more long-term and abstract gains. Variability of income may be more important than poverty alone in driving the demand for clientelism. Contemporary clientelism consequently tends to survive in an insecure political and economic environment, be it rural or urban, and is central to the "politics of survival" for both patrons and clients (Migdal 1988).

Under clientelism, jobs are exchanged for votes in a manner that distributes state-funded benefits to party loyalists (Kusche 2014, 208). Apart from such benefits, employment in the public sector, administrative decisions concerning concessions, fines, public contracts and many other aspects of state regulation and activity are turned into personal favours within a clientelistic relationship where the public bureaucracy does not decide according to universalistic criteria. In the context of a democratic political system, the main service clients can offer in return for such favours, apart from deferential behaviour and diffuse loyalty, are their votes in political elections (Kusche 2014).

Substantial studies have investigated the nature of patron-client relationships, the inefficiency of various forms of clientelistic redistribution and conditions for its decay (Scott 1972; Bratton and van de Walle 1994; Wantchekon 2003; van de Walle 2003; Van de Walle 2007, 2009; Kusche 2014). Stokes (2005) stressed that the efficacy of clientelistic electoral appeals is less a product of the income, education, or other characteristics of voters than of the ability of politicians to monitor electoral behaviour. Therefore, the supply of public jobs to supporters who gather information about voters and address their material needs is critical to this capacity. It is exactly for this reason that patronage politics is often used synonymously for patrimonialism, a Max Weber (1947) classic formulation that represents a form of governance in which bureaucratic or office appointment is based on personal connections, informal rules, and the distorting of the public and private realms which neglects meritocracy.

Clearly, the shared deduction by many scholars is that clientelistic politics is most attractive in conditions of low productivity, high inequality and starkly hierarchical social relations (Robinson and Verdier 2013). Some analyses have focused on the construction of political reward networks through the distribution of public sector jobs and resources and how it has continually led to deficit spending, public sector inefficiency, resistance to market-oriented reform, macroeconomic instability, state predation, and reduced economic growth (Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith 2004; Keefer and Vlaicu 2007). Furthermore, other works have deliberated the political consequences of clientelism, which comprises electoral manipulation, ethnic voting, political inequity, in cohesive political parties politicized bureaucracies, corruption, consolidation of incumbency advantage, attenuated forms of citizenship, fragile or weak political institutions and fragmented civil societies (Fox 1994; Wantchekon 2003).

Undeniably, clientelism has both political and economic consequences, which hinders both economic and democratic development in developing countries. However, Wantchekon (2003) argues that though investigation on social and economic determinants of clientelism aids us to comprehend its origin and get some broad conditions in which it declines, they are not useful in explaining some inconsistency in the strength of clientelistic linkages within developed countries and the preponderance of clientelism in sophisticated and well-off democracies. On the contrary, (Kelsall 2011) uses evidence from Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire, Malawi and Rwanda to argue that neo-patrimonialism or clientelism in the long term can be harnessed for developmental end only when there is a mechanism of centralization of economic rents and management. This centralization permits the leader to put some limits on rent-seeking and play a managing role by directing rent creation into economically high potential areas or sectors that need to be resourced for political stability (Kelsall 2011, 79).

WTA politics and clientelism are inextricably inter-woven into each other. They tend to be the two major considerations that shape appointments by Presidents in Ghana. Therefore, in this paper, we try to

show how WTA politics and clientelism have influenced the exercise of appointment powers by Executive Presidents in Ghana. We argue that all other Ghanaians, regardless of their competence, experience and expertise, are denied the opportunity to serve due to WTA and clientelism. We review the extensive powers of appointment of the President and examine how the exercise of these appointment powers promote two key features of WTA politics, specifically, a feeling of marginalization, and waste of talents, experience and expertise.

## A Review of the Powers of Appointment of the Executive President in Ghana's Fourth Republic

This section examines the research question – how have the appointing powers of the Executive Presidents in Ghana's Fourth Republic encouraged WTA and clientelism? It answers this question by reviewing the powers of appointment of the President of Ghana and argues that the 1992 Constitution gives such powers to the President and that such powers have been exercised in a way that promotes two key features of WTA politics, *i.e.*, a feeling of marginalization and a waste of talents, expertise and experience. It further shows the nexus between WTA politics and clientelism and how the two influences appointments in Ghana. It finally discusses previous attempts at promoting inclusive government and the challenges encountered.

In Ghana the President under the 1992 Constitution has the power to make several appointments. This is because the President is the Head of State, Head of Government and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces (Government of Ghana 1992). He therefore has the executive power and authority to make such appointments. Sometimes, such appointments are made in consultation with or with the advice or approval of some other bodies. Some of the key appointments are listed in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: List of Presidential Appointees**

| Constitutional Provision, 1992 Constitution | Types of Presidential Appointment |
|---|---|
| Article 70 (1) (a-e); Article 74 (1); Article 86 (2) (i); Article 183(4) (a); Article 185(3); Article 189 (1) (a) | **1. Appointment in Consultation with the Council of State**<br><br>(a) Commissioner for Human Rights and Administrative Justice and his Deputies;<br>(b) The Auditor-General;<br>(c) The District Assemblies Common Fund Administrator;<br>(d) Chairmen and other members of -<br>(i) The Public Services Commission;<br>(ii) The Lands Commission;<br>(iii) The governing bodies of public corporations;<br>(iv) A National Council for Higher Education howsoever described; and<br>(e) The holders of such other offices as may be prescribed by this Constitution or by any other law not inconsistent with this Constitution – with the President acting in consultation with the Council of State. |
| Article 70 (2); Article 232 (2) | (f). Persons to represent Ghana abroad<br>(g). The Chairperson of the National Development Planning Commission<br>(h). Governor of the Bank of Ghana<br>(i). The Government Statistician<br>j. The Chairman and four other Members of the Audit Service<br><br>**2. Appointment on the Advice of the Council of State**<br>a. Chairperson, two Deputies, and |

| | |
|---|---|
| | other members of the Electoral Commission<br><br>b. Chairperson, two Deputies, and other members of the National Commission for Civic education |
| Article 78(1); Article 79 (1) | **3. Appointments with Approval from Parliament**<br>a. Ministers of State<br>b. Deputy Ministers of State |
| Article 144 (1-5) | **4. Appointments in Consultations with Council of State and Approval of Parliament**<br>(a) Chief Justice, in consultation with Council of State and approval of Parliament.<br>(b) Other Supreme Court Justices, on the advice of the Judicial Council, in consultation with the Council of State, and with the approval of Parliament. |
| Article 86(2) (vi); Article 89 (2) (a) (i-iii); Article 89 (2) (d); Article 153 (n); Article 166(1)(c) | **5. Appointment with no Consultations or Advice from Council of State and with no approval by Parliaments**<br>(a). Members of the National Development Planning Commission, having regard to their roles pertaining to development, economic, social, environmental and spatial planning.<br>(b). Council of State (Appointees)<br>(i) one person who has previously held the office of Chief Justice; (ii) one person who has previously held the office of Chief of Defence Staff; (iii) one person who has previously held the office of Inspector-General of Police, (iv) Eleven other Members of the Council of State |

| | (c) judicial Council<br>- Four persons who are not lawyers to serve on the Judicial Council.<br>(d) National Media commission<br>- Two persons to serve as members of the National Media Commission. |
| --- | --- |

**Source**: Constitution of Ghana's Fourth Republic, 1992 (Government of Ghana 1992)

Table 1 shows the extensive powers of appointment of the President of Ghana. It must, however, be pointed out that there are certain key positions of state that do not fall within the appointing powers of the President. For instance, the Vice Chancellors of all public universities in Ghana are appointed by their own respective Governing Councils with no approval from the President.[11] There are other powerful bodies whose heads are also not appointed by the President. For instance, the President does not appoint the chairman of the National Media Commission. In spite of these limitations, the fact, however, remains that offices and positions that are not directly under the appointing powers of the President are few.

## The Challenges of Wielding Such Enormous Powers of Appointment

To begin with, the 1992 Constitution of Ghana gives extensive executive powers to the president in a way that makes the office very powerful. In the Fourth Republic the Executive President has the overwhelming power of appointment and patronage and appoints 'virtually everybody' in Ghana. The president has a say in the nomination and appointment of officers he does not appoint directly. From ministers, heads of boards, agencies, commissions, mayors, and members of the council of state, he is the appointing authority (Frempong 2007; Gyampo 2013).

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[11] We are grateful to Professor Atsu Ayee, Senior Adjunct Fellow of the IEA, for this contribution.

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Another challenge, however, is that some of the bodies that advise or are consulted by the President in making appointments, particularly the Council of State, are of doubtful independence and their capacity to act effectively in the discharge of their mandate has been questioned in recent times (IEA 2014; Oquaye 2013).[12] Therefore, under the WTA politics, all these appointments are made to benefit party supporters and loyalists to the exclusion of real or perceived political opponents and in a manner that deepens clientelism. Whether such party loyalists and cronies merit such appointments or not is not really the consideration in a WTA politics infested country like Ghana. This, therefore, leads to the selection and placement of "square pegs in round holes" with its disastrous consequences for development (IEA 2014; Abotsi 2013). It also confers exclusive right of appointment to only some partisan apparatchiks and marginalizes the rest of the citizenry who did not actively support the electioneering campaign of the ruling party (Gyampo 2010). Ghana's Fourth Republic is full of such examples of appointment of Ministers of State, Chief Executives of Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) and heads of several state corporations who were appointed based on their contribution to the electoral victories of their political party (Bob-Milliar 2012a; 2012b; Gyampo 2010, 2015a, 2015b). Indeed, in an interview with the General Secretary of the National Democratic Congress, Johnson Asiedu Nketiah in Accra on 8th September 2013, he noted that *"it is normal for the President to reward those who supported his bid to be elected by appointing them as ministers and deputy ministers and on boards and committees."*

Similarly, the NPP administration led by President Akufo-Addo appointed 110 ministers and deputy ministers within 100 days of his administration after taking over power from the Mahama led-NDC administration on 7 January 2017. These appointments received many

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[12] This is a serious WTA issue. Under WTA politics, the executive, through appointments, also takes it all at the level of the Council of State, making the latter virtually toothless and subservient to the former. This has also been adequately explained in Gyampo R (2016) Dealing with WTA Politics: The Case for Effective Council of State available at www.ieagh.org

criticisms from civil society organizations and the many stakeholders. For instance the Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) in a statement on the President's appointment was deeply disheartened for the following reasons; first of all, it was the largest ministerial team gathered by any president/head of state of Ghana since independence and this clearly demonstrates the desire to reward party supporters. Secondly, the appointments reflected inadequate sensitivity to Ghana's weak fiscal condition and contradicted the President's promise to protect the public purse. Thirdly, it undermined Ghana's already weak state bureaucracy. Placing a team of politician ministers on top of the existing hierarchy of the ministries leads to needless duplication of senior personnel and eventually undermines the authority of the specialised senior civil and public servants (principally, chief directors and directors) in the same ministries, and also encourages the politicisation of the bureaucracy. Finally, the appointments did not help address the structural weakness of Parliament vis-à-vis the Executive (CDD-Ghana 2017).

Another challenge is that according to the constitution the president is required to appoint a majority of his ministers from parliament and this appointing power has been exercised to the disadvantage of the legislature (Gyampo & Graham, 2014). The arrangement weakens the oversight role of parliament and leaves the executive unfettered in the sense that parliamentarians who are also ministers cannot question colleague ministers on the floor of parliament as required because they serve in the same government. Again, parliamentarians who are also ministers owe collective responsibility for all government decisions and hence are unable to criticize the government on the floor of parliament. The few MPs who are not ministers also join their colleagues in singing the praises of the government so they can also benefit from ministerial appointment. This is because 'being made a minister is regarded as promotion and a logical step in political career advancement'. This practice does not only undermine constitutionalism but also weakens the representative role of MPs and sacrifices the peculiar interest of their constituents for that of the ruling government. In February 2010, President Mills appointed the Majority Leader, the Majority Chief Whip,

and the Deputy Majority Chief Whip who were the front-benchers of the majority side in parliament, as ministers. These were seasoned and experienced MPs who constantly criticized the Mills administration for its slow pace in fulfilling campaign promises. Soon after they were appointed, they ceased to keep the government on its toes. The implication of this is too obvious to warrant protracted comment. Suffice to say, however, that it was parliament and constitutionalism that suffered.

Again, the history of Ghana's Fourth Republic shows that it is difficult for MPs who are also ministers to timely attend to parliamentary matters. These MPs are absent from the floor of parliament virtually at all times because of Cabinet meetings, travels, as well as ministerial policy formulation and execution. In this regard, they are also unable to attend Committee meetings, which are 'the actual workshops of parliament'. Those who strive to attend parliamentary sessions also face punctuality issues. There is generally a lack of punctuality and regularity in attending parliamentary sessions on the part of the MPs who are also ministers. Hence, forming a quorum to start sessions at 10 am becomes a problem for the legislature. Speakers of parliament since 1992 have had cause to complain and issued several warnings to MPs on this (Gyampo & Graham, 2014).

A major challenge of wielding so much power of appointment by the Executive President of Ghana is the pressure to appoint only party loyalists and the brazing show of disapproval by party apparatchiks, foot soldiers, activists, loyalists, youth groups and vigilante groups, when their preferred choices are not appointed. For instance in the run-up to the 2008 parliamentary elections the NPP vigilante groups embarked on immense protests in an attempt to make known their displeasure with the imposition of some individuals as candidates (Gyampo 2010, 563). Moreover, in 2013 after the 2012 elections some NDC youth group in the Lower West Akyem threatened to demonstrate against the Mahama-administration due to neglect by the party after the 2012 elections. In an interview on *Citi News,* the Chairman, Samuel Abeka Annoor said:

> They (NDC-government) told us if NDC loses the election we being the polling agents will be held responsible because we did not perform well enough, now that we have won the elections, they have neglected us…after we won the elections we the polling agents have been neglected and they are fighting on the job. If we hadn't done our work well, the NDC party will not have won and they (NDC-government) would not have gotten the opportunity that they are enjoying now (Citifmonline 2013).

Again in April 2013, some NDC foot soldiers numbering about 50 on motorbikes invaded the Ashanti Regional Office of the NDC to violently resist the appointment of Mr. Eric Opoku as the Kumasi Metropolitan Chief Executive (MCE). They accused the regional executives of influencing the nomination of Mr. Opoku who was not known to the party foot soldiers (Asare, 2013). Similarly, in April 2017, over 200 members of the Delta Force (NPP party foot soldiers) attacked the president's appointed Ashanti Regional Coordinator Mr. George Agyei by physically hounding him out of the office. According to the Force, Mr. Agyei was 'not part of the struggle' to win power from the NDC during the general elections in December (Myjoyonline.com 2017).

## Previous Attempts at Promoting Inclusive Government and Challenges Encountered

It must be noted that an attempt has been made in the history of Ghana's Fourth Republic in appointing people from other political parties to serve in the public service. Indeed, under the desire for an 'All Inclusive Government', President J.A. Kufuor appointed three people from the minor opposition parties to serve in his government (Table 2).

**Table 2 List of Appointees by President Kufuor Outside the New Patriotic Party**

| Name | Political Party | Portfolio |
|---|---|---|
| Mallam Issah | People's National Convention | Minister for Youth and Sports |
| Papa Kwesi Nduom | Convention People's Party | Minister for Energy and later, Public Sector Reform |
| Moses Dani Baah | People's National Convention | Deputy Minister for Health |

**Sources**: authors' own compilation

President John Atta Mills also appointed Dr Kwabena Duffuor of the Convention People's Party (CPP) as finance minister and Hajia Hajara Ali of the People's National Convention (PNC) as a member of the Council of State. These gestures were largely described as a façade in order to create a veneer of inclusivity as the majority of appointments were offered to party sympathizers and there was no genuine political will to bring others on board. Politicians in Ghana have perpetuated the practice of WTA politics to the extent that the phenomenon is so deeply ingrained in the psyche of the ordinary party supporter. Consequently, when President Mills appointed a technocrat, Mr. Henry Martey Newman as his Chief of Staff, he received several criticisms from both the top echelons and party foot-soldiers because in their view he was not an active party supporter and was nowhere during the electioneering campaign of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) (Gyampo 2010). Such sentiments expressed by some party foot soldiers and apparatchiks have tended to undermine efforts to ensure that emphasis is placed on competence and meritocracy in public appointments.

## Discussion/ Recommendations

As argued, the powers of appointment by the President under the 1992 Constitution are too extensive. The exercise of these powers in a manner that benefits only some party supporters, without recourse to

meritocracy,[13] facilitates the WTA politics as it deepens the feeling of marginalization among a cross section of the population who do not belong to the ruling party.[14] This invariably leads to a waste of manpower as it deprives and drains the nation of the needed human resources for development. Appointment of only party loyalists as heads of institutions and ministries without recourse to meritocracy has the potential of adversely affecting the independence, professional competence and performance of these institutions, particularly those established under the constitution to protect citizens and act as agents of restraint on executive power.

The Constitution Review Commission (CRC)[15], perhaps, for good reasons, recommended that the Commissioner for Human Rights and Administrative Justice and the Deputies; the Chairperson and other members of the National Commission for Civic Education; the Chairperson, Deputy Chairpersons and other members of the Electoral Commission; the Auditor General; and the Chairperson and members of the Independent Emoluments Commission be appointed by the President in consultation with the Council of State and with the approval of Parliament (CRC-Report 2011). Prior parliamentary approval of such appointees, which hitherto, did not exist, is useful in ensuring consensus and boosting support, legitimacy and meritocracy in the appointment of such high-level officials of state (ibid).[16] These recommendations were accepted by the President in a White Paper (CRC-Report 2012, 12).

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[13] Max Weber's conception of meritocracy as indicated earlier in this paper is what is being referred to.

[14] Even though the 1992 Constitution itself promotes WTA politics, the exercise of power by a true leader and statesman may serve to douse the divisive flames of the phenomenon.

[15] The CRC was set up in 2010 to review provisions in Ghana's 1992 Constitution that were hindering the nation's drive towards democratic maturity. It submitted its report in 2011.

[16] The argument is appointment based on meritocracy and inclusivity. This does not in any way suggest that party loyalists should not be appointed. Party loyalists who merit such appointments must be given the chance as much as those who are not loyalists of the party.

There were no recommendations on other equally important areas of appointment of the President.

The challenge as pointed out by Oquaye (2013), is that the Council of State is not only perceived as a "lame duck" whose advice is not binding on the President but also incapable of providing independent advice to the President, given its partisan composition and the fact that the President has a hand in the selection of majority of its members. The Council of State is a twenty-five-member body with the President directly appointing eleven members. Apart from the eleven the President appoints, he has enormous influence in the selection of ten representatives on the Council from the ten regions of the country, who are elected by an electoral college consisting of two representatives from each of the districts in the region nominated by the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in the region (IEA 2014). If there are two or more former Inspector Generals of Police, Chief Justices and Chiefs of Defence Staff, the president has the prerogative to appoint one each from among them.[17] In this regard the president wields enormous power and control over the Council of State (Oquaye 2013). In addition, executive control over Parliament as a result of Ghana's constitutional hybridity and its attendant excessive partisanship that tends to characterize debates on the floor seem to have rendered Parliament ineffective in ensuring that the right calibre of persons are appointed.

It is therefore recommended that while appointment to constitutional bodies should remain under the President, recommendations for these appointments should emanate from certain clearly designated bodies that have the capacity to identify suitable persons using clearly pre-determined criteria. These constitutional bodies and institutions include

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[17] As already argued, no Chief had a hand in selecting members of his Council of Elders. More importantly, the history of Ghana's Fourth Republic shows that appointees tend to dance to the tune of the executive irrespective of how qualified and competent they are. This is a serious manifestation of WTA politics as earlier indicated in Gyampo, R (2016), Dealing with WTA Politics: The Case for Effective Council of State (available at www.ieagh.org).

the Electoral Commission (EC), Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), Chief Justice, Supreme Court Judges, Governor of the Bank of Ghana, National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), Economic and Organized Crime Office (EOCO), and the Inspector-General of Police and Auditor-General.[18]

A duly constituted body comprising professional bodies, institutions, political party representatives and identifiable groups shall recommend appropriate individuals of at least five persons from among whom the President shall make a nomination to Parliament. This process ensures broader acceptance and legitimacy of the appointees. For instance, in appointing the chairperson of the EC, the body could comprise:
A representative of the following:

- Political Parties with representation in Parliament
- Judiciary
- Ghana Bar Association
- National House of Chiefs
- Trades Union Congress
- Civil Society in the areas of Governance and Democracy
- Christian Council, Catholic Bishops Conference and

Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council
- Muslim Council and Ahmadiyya Mission

Similarly, in appointing the Inspector General of Police, the body may comprise a representative of the following:

- Political Parties with representation in Parliament
- Security Agencies apart from the Police Service
- Ghana Journalists Association
- Ghana Bar Association
- Trades Union Congress
- Governance and Human Right Civil Society Organizations

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[18] These were the direct recommendations of the IEA-WTA Advisory Committee following their nation-wide public consultations on WTA Politics in Ghana between 2013 and 2014.

Again, in appointing the Chief Justice / Justices of the Supreme Court, the body may comprise a representative of the following:

- Judicial Council
- Ghana Bar Association
- National House of Chiefs
- Trades Union Congress
- Political Parties with representation in Parliament
- Christian Council, Catholic Bishops Conference and Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council
- Muslim Council and Ahmadiyya Mission

Similar arrangements could be put in place to recommend appropriate individuals to serve as heads of the other constitutional bodies. As indicated earlier, allowing representatives of the various bodies to play a role in the appointment process ensures ownership of the process, consensus building, acceptance and legitimacy of the appointee. Moreover, parliamentary vetting and approval of the President's nominees shall be by two-thirds majority of all Members of Parliament as against the current practice of simple majority. These stringent and elaborate appointment measures are intended to help check the practice of WTA politics as they promote inclusivity and ensure that the right calibre of persons are appointed to positions for which they are best suited.

Another key recommendation is that the practice of appointing chief directors by the President to head the public service must be halted as it compromises the efficiency and neutrality of the public service. It undermines the role of the public service as an administrative machinery of the state and renders them as pliable and manipulable tools in the hands of the executive (Oquaye 2013; Prempeh 2003). A strong tenure-track and technocratic public service must be established. This should be an efficient body staffed by competent people that can manage the affairs of the country in the absence of an elected government or coalition.

Furthermore, appointments of Chief Executive Officers of public corporations and institutions and other analogous positions should be

transparent, competitive, well-advertised, inclusive, bi-partisan and based on competence. Nominations may emanate from the State Enterprises Commission/Public Service Commission and appropriate recommendations made to the President for appointment. This would also entail revisiting the legal instruments, which have set up these enterprises or institutions and possibly reducing the role and influence of the President in their composition.

Finally, the President must be encouraged to reach out to the main opposition political parties in search of competent people to help govern the country. The goal of national development must be a shared one and in this regard, the opposition must also be willing to serve the interest of the country when called upon to do so. In May 2014, a National Economic Forum was convened by the NDC government to discuss the economic challenges plaguing the country with a view to reaching a consensus on the way forward and finding solutions to the challenges.[19] Even though a former minister of finance, Yaw Osafo Marfo was invited and he had actually confirmed his participation to share insight and expertise at the forum, he was prevailed upon by the then opposition New Patriotic Party to rescind his decision.[20] This was certainly a great disservice to the national interest. It is recommended that such overtures from the ruling party must not be disingenuously interpreted as a lack of personnel to govern; it must not be interpreted as bankruptcy of ideas on the part of the ruling party. Rather, it must be seen as a call and opportunity to serve the country and promote national cohesion.

## Conclusion

The exercise of the extensive appointment powers of the President to the benefit of only some party apparatchiks and foot-soldiers, does not only promote WTA politics. It deepens clientelism and also undermines meritocracy by placing "square pegs in round holes" in the public service. In this paper we have argued that, the 1992 constitution of

[19]For more details, see http://graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/22828-speech-what-president-mahama-said-at-national-economic-forum.html
[20]See more details at http://graphic.com.gh/news/politics/22848-npp-s-boycott-of-economic-forum-unfortunate-nyaho-tamakloe.html

Ghana gives the Executive President enormous power in appointing state officials, which has led to WTA politics and clientelism. The paper also reviewed the extensive powers of appointment of the President and examined how the exercise of these powers promotes WTA politics and clientelism. Our recommendation is that there is the need to exercise such appointment powers in a manner that promotes inclusiveness and meritocracy in the public service. This would relieve the President of the work load as well as the burden to appoint so many people into office. With this relief, the President can focus on other critical issues and areas of governance

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# THE RISE OF EXECUTIVE AGENCIES AND THEIR EFFECTS ON THE CIVIL SERVICE IN GHANA

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## Abstract

Since the early 1980s, the Ghanaian government has continued to undertake public sector reforms with the view of enhancing the performance of public service institutions. In the early 1990s, it adopted the idea of creating autonomous executive agencies from the civil service with the notion that such agencies will lead to the reduction of bureaucratic red tape and ensure effective and efficient service delivery. The objective of this study was to examine impact of these creations on the civil service. The study challenged the assumption that the creation of such autonomous organizations will increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and the quality of service delivery. Rather, what is being witnessed is the feeling of despondency among civil servants, which continues to affect their morale, as well as their overall performance. This in turn is affecting the capacity of the service to implement its core functions.

**Keywords:** Agencification, Civil Service, Executive Agencies, Ghana, Performance.

## Introduction

Since the 1980s, the role and institutional character of the state have been questioned and the public sector, in particular, has been under pressure to adopt private sector principles to rid itself of the label of

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being inefficient, ineffective, and unaccountable (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992; Wallach, 2016). Consequently, both developed and developing countries have embarked on public sector reforms highly influenced by the New Public Management ideals (Hood, 1993; McCourt and Minogue, 2000). The reforms have focused on the nature and division of responsibility within and beyond government, but more importantly, on the extent to which service delivery should be undertaken in a more efficient, effective, and accountable manner.

In the mid-1980s, when structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) began to take hold in Africa, the public sector became the main target of reforms by the Bretton Woods institutions. The sector was considered overly bloated, inefficient, and distortionary. It was seen as the fulcrum for "neo-patrimonial" and "clientelist" relationships and the source of the deficit spending that fuelled inflation (Bach and Gazibo, 2012; Pitcher et al. 2009). For these reasons, it was thought that the economies of African countries could not be structurally adjusted without a radical rationalisation of the sector in terms of its mandate, role, and modus operandi. There was thus a call to curtail the long arm of the state from development (Owusu and Ohemeng, 2012).

Since the mid-1990s, however, the pendulum has swung back. A number of scholars and developmental practitioners have acknowledged that an important variable affecting development in Africa is the quality of the public sector (Kararach, et al. 2015; World Bank, 1997). As a result, there has been the need to find alternative ways of organizing and managing the public services and to redefine the role of the state in development. This comes after the nightmare experience of the "hollowing out the state" in the 1980s and the early 1990s to enhance development (Kajer, 2014). The alternative vision has sought to create a decentralized, customer-oriented, and managerial public sector (Caulfield, 2006; Larbi, 1998).

This new vision has led to a focus on the creation of autonomous agencies as single purpose bodies that are specialized in specific task, leading to a "shift from a centralized and consolidated public sector,

including the disconnection of policy design, implementation, and evaluation" (Verhoest et al. 2012: 3). The creation of such agencies is seen as a way of building the capacity of the sector by creating a more flexible and performance-oriented sector (Overman and Thiel, 2016). This process of "agencification" has resulted in the removal of some key parastatals, such as revenue and tax offices, utility corporations, etc. from the mainstream of the public service in a number of African countries such as South Africa, Uganda, Tanzania, and Ghana (Joshi and Ayee 2009; Caulfield, 2006; Ohemeng and Owusu, 2011; Painter, 2012; Sulle, 2012).

Although some African governments are doing this at an increasing pace, there remains a lack of empirical proof of the benefits to the public sector. There has not been scientific evidence offered to prove that such agencies are increasing public sector performance. Furthermore, no systematic studies have been done on the overall effect of agencification on the rest of the public sector, especially the civil service in the developing world. This is the same with studies on agencification in developed countries despite what Pollitt et al. (2001) has described as the "agency fever" that has gripped the entire universe of the public sector.

In short, there has been very little research that explores the effects of the creation of executive agencies on the capacity, motivation, and performance of the civil service in countries that have adopted this model for reforms in the public sector. The failure to research and assess the impact of the creation of agencies on the civil service has created a significant gap of knowledge on public sector reforms, which must be filled. Doing so, we believe will help reformers and scholars to be able to rethink about the kind of reforms needed to make the public sector an effective instrument for development. Thus, in this paper, we will address this research deficit by examining the extent to which, and the way in which, the creation of autonomous agencies has affected the civil service in Ghana. The paper attempts to answer two questions: What is the effect of agencification on the functioning and performance of the civil service? Has the adoption of executive agencies really addressed the failures and shortcomings of the civil service?

This paper challenges the assumption that the creation of such autonomous organizations will increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and the quality of service delivery. Rather, what is being witnessed is the feeling of despondency among civil servants, which continues to affect their morale, as well as their overall performance. This in turn is affecting the capacity of the service with respect to the implementation of its core functions.

Ghana is an interesting case to study because it was the first country in sub Saharan Africa (SSA) and among the first few countries in the developing world to embark upon agencification in the civil service. This was done with respect to the creation of the National Revenue Secretariat in the 1980s (Mamdou 1996; Ohemeng and Owusu 2011) and was later extended to the water and health, as well as other sectors from the early 1990s (Larbi 1998; Ofosu-Adarkwa 2000; Sakyi 2008). The idea of agencification, according to Mutahaba and Kiragu "was in search for alternative options for improved public service delivery of services" (2002: 63), in particular, the promotion of efficiency in government (Dodoo 1997). In spite of this, no systematic study has been done on the Ghanaian experience in general and specifically, its impact on the civil service as a result of the slimming of the latter, especially its capacity to render policy advice and service delivery effectively or authoritatively.

The paper is structured along the following lines: after this introduction, we will review the literature on agencification and then follow it up with discussion of the Ghana Civil Service and its problems which brought about the reforms that led to the slimming of the service through the creation of agencies. We will also look at the emergence of the executive agency idea and what has been done so far in Ghana. The next section will then examine the impact of the creation of agencies on the civil service as a whole and propose what should be done to take it out of its predicament, while the section that follows concludes the paper.

## Understanding the Agencification Idea

The rise of executive agencies or agencification worldwide in the 1980s and 1990s stemmed from the strains noted by governments such as work

overload to the civil service and ministries, over bloated civil service, insufficient attention given to the service delivery, the pressure to restrain spending and make services to citizens more responsive and accountable, the rising citizens' expectations with respect to the quality of public services, and a lack of clear lines of responsibilities and accountability (Christensen and Lægreid, 2007; Pollitt et al. 2001). In addition to the search for solutions for dysfunctional civil service, the rise of executive agencies was prompted by 'democratic renewal' and 'legitimacy' on the part of elected officials (Pollitt et al. 2004; Pierre, 1993).

In the light of the above, executive agencies were seen as a panacea to the weaknesses in the delivery of public services both in developed and developing countries (Pollitt et al. 2001; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). What then is agencification? One thing that is certain when it comes to defining the concept is that there seems to be a general consensus among academics what the idea means notwithstanding what Thiel (2012) considers as the controversy over the definition (see also Moynihan, 2006).

Generally, agencification refers to agencies as organizations that operate independent of the government to carry out public tasks, implement policies, regulate markets and policy sectors, or deliver public services. Furthermore, it is agreed that such agencies are structurally disaggregated from their parent ministries, are said to face less hierarchical and political influence on their daily operations, and have more managerial freedom in terms of finances and personnel, compared to parent ministries or departments (Verhoest et al. 2012). As noted by Egeberg and Trondal, an "agency," is:

> An administrative body that is formally and organizationally separated from a ministerial, or cabinet-level, department and that carries out public tasks at a national level on a permanent basis, is staffed by public servants, is financed mainly by the state budget, and is subject to public legal procedures (2009:674).

Pollitt et al. have provided a more comprehensive definition of the concept, which is adopted in this paper. To them agency as an organization which:

> [h]as its status defined principally or exclusively in public law (though the nature of that law may vary greatly between different national systems); is functionally disaggregated from the core of its ministry or department of state; enjoys some degree of autonomy which is not enjoyed by the core ministry; is nevertheless linked to the ministry/department of state in ways which are close enough to permit ministers /secretaries of state to alter the budget and main operational goals of the organization; is therefore, not statutorily fully independent of its ministry/department of state; and is not a commercial operation (2004: 10).

The importance of this definition is that it highlights the characteristics of an agency including its functionality and relationship with the government in general and in particular, the ministry or departments.

Based on this definition and for analytical purposes, we may distinguish three main types of agencies; executive agency; statutory body, and the corporate form of the agency. By executive agency we mean a semi-autonomous agency that is formally and organizationally separated from a ministerial, or cabinet-level, department and that carries out public tasks at a national level on a permanent basis and is staffed by public servants, financed mainly by the state budget, and is subject to public and legal procedures (Pollitt and Talbot, 2004). The second type of agency is known as a statutory body because it has gained legal independence through law or other type of legislation. It is worthy to note that statutory agencies have more autonomy than executive agencies regarding personnel and financial decisions. The third type is the corporate form. This type of agency has the highest degree of autonomy. Often, it is charged by the law to execute a particular task, but they operate under private law or market conditions. Our focus in this paper will be on the executive agency.

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## The Need for Agencification in the Public Sector:

Agencies are established for four main reasons: management or managerial autonomy; the notion of efficiency; the idea of effectiveness; and accountability. The most common reason for the creation of executive agencies is to improve the performance of the public sector or to make public decision more credible by separating it from direct political interference (Laegreid and Verhoest, 2010; Pollitt 2004; Platteau, 2000). Management autonomy refers to senior management's ability to make decisions concerning the overall organization, financial and personnel management of an entity without the constant involvement or need for approval by the line minister or ministry (Laking, 2002:13). In this case, governments give agencies relative management autonomy or policy autonomy to interpret or decide policy specific cases (Gill, 2002). Thus, the autonomy in this perspective refers to "the level of decision-making competency discretion of an organization" (Laegreid and Verhoest, 2010: 4).

Managerial autonomy is said to have a number of advantages, which include allowing managers to have greater authority to manage their operations. In other words, managerial autonomy may enable managers to use operating resources as they deem fit to enhance service delivery (Pollitt, 2004); ensures effective performance than those with multiple or unclear objectives and limited managerial freedom (Laking, 2005); helps to clearly identify mission and outputs for which managers are accountable and allow the agency to focus more on outputs than inputs unlike the main stream civil service (Christensen and Laegreid, 2007); promotes the notion of organizational arrangements which mimic the private sector and encourages competition and, in some cases, bring about improvement in service delivery (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004; Hood 1993; McPake, 1996), while the separation of policy and operation increases transparency to the extent that tasks and responsibilities are clarified. In addition, managerial autonomy enables principals to maintain pressure on managers for organisational and service delivery improvement (Cook, 2003). Furthermore, through managerial autonomy, agencies are expected to bring service providers and users/consumers within each other's easy reach (Kaul, 1997; Verhoest et al. 2012).

The second factor for the justification of agencies is to improve the efficiency of government and make public service more viable and responsive (Kickert, 2001). Efficiency generally denotes the better utilization of resources, especially in service delivery through a more managerial culture that allows for specialization of functions and better focus on clients' needs, the strengthening of the policy capacity within government, and forestalling cumbersome administrative and financial rules thereby improving the quality of service offered to the citizens (as consumers), as well as helping to revamp the system for the procurement of goods and services (Myers, 2005)

Thirdly, it is believed that public sector effectiveness would be enhanced with autonomy and control, that is, providing sufficient independence for the performance of tasks, and simultaneously demanding accountability. Effectiveness can be achieved because agencification allows for policy continuity for some government functions as the head of the agency is insulated from the political cycle, thus allowing for effective policy implementation in achieving outcomes (Hogwood et al. 2000). Also, agencification is said to lead to good customer care in terms of quality of service rather, fostering a performance-oriented culture in a less centralized public sector which is characterized by a closer focus on results in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and quality service (Caulfield, 2006; Janjua, 2007).

The fourth reason is that agencification will lead to effective accountability in the sector. Accountability here focuses on bureaucratic accountability (Romzek and Dubnick, 1987), which deals with the performance of such agencies in relation to the level of autonomy granted to it. Agencification has, therefore, been argued to allow for the following in its accountability regime: (a) the formal legality of expenditure (both in terms of conformity to purpose and probity and avoidance of corruption); and (b) the accurate reporting of expenditure and other information, including issues of whether a policy is being properly conducted (Hogwood et al. 2000). It is further argued that agencies can improve accountability through performance contracting, as such contracts whether formal or semi-formal contracts, are based on

specified roles, responsibilities and explicit performance targets, which enables principal (ministries) to hold them accountable (Moynihan, 2006; Valsecchi, 1996). Thus through such contracts, the principal ministry, the legislature and the general public are able to measure the performance outcomes of agencies against their performance targets (Moynihan, 2006).

## Methodological Approach to the Study

The study was part of a larger research on public sector reform in Ghana. We employed the qualitative research methodology to understanding the impact/effects of agencification on the Civil Service. We found this research design more appropriate for the study because our main goal is not to generalize about agencification but to demonstrate with in-depth evidence the impact of agencification on the Ghanaian Civil Service. The fieldwork was carried out in Accra, where all the agencies and civil service departments are located. Data was collected through interviews at different points in time between 2011-2015. Qualitative inquiry typically focuses in-depth on relatively small samples selected purposefully and unique cases, which are informative (Creswell, 2014). Our sample comprised a number of groups of people: senior civil servants, *i.e.,* chief directors, who are the most senior, and therefore, run the various departments, some directors and deputy directors, and some retired civil servants. We employed the nonprobability sampling procedure to ensure that the most appropriate respondents were selected for our interviews. This sample was purposefully selected because we could learn a great deal from them about the issues of central importance to the purpose of inquiry – agencification. These individuals had worked in the public sectors for not less than 20 years and had risen through the ranks and therefore could bring in a lot of perspectives. Additionally, they had also witnessed the establishment of these agencies.

In all four Chief Directors, 10 directors and deputy directors from 14 ministries[3] and two directors from two agencies were interviewed. In

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[3]Our intention was to interview personnel from the then existing 23 ministries, with the exception of the Ministries of Defence, Interior, and Attorney-General and Justice.

addition, three directors and two deputy directors from the Office of the Head of Civil Service and two retired Heads of the Civil Service were also interviewed. Two officials each from the Public Services Commission (PSC) and the Fair Wages and Salary Commission (FWSC), and one official from the Public Sector Reform Secretariat were interviewed, as well. These individuals were interviewed in their offices for a period between 45 minutes to an hour. The interviews were later transcribed for analysis. Rubin and Rubin (2012) advise that the exploration of multiple perspectives of the same issue through interviews leads to more thoughtful and nuanced conclusions.

## The Civil Service: Development, Crisis and the Rise of Executive Agencies in Ghana

Similar to many other Sub-Saharan African countries, Ghana's civil service was established by the colonial authority during the formalization of colonialism of the then Gold Coast. The civil service was, therefore, modeled under that of the British system and its main purpose was to serve the colonial government in order to meet the objectives of the "Pax Britannica" through the maintenance of law and order, the regulation of individual behaviour, and the provision of infrastructure for implementing imperial policies, which by and large went against the larger interest of Ghana (Adu 1965; Ayee 1994; Haruna 2001; Ohemeng and Anebo 2012). Dia (1996: 32) has succinctly described the civil service in Africa at the post-independent era as follows:

> At independence, most of the African countries inherited a hybrid and disconnected system in which modern governance and public administration systems were superimposed on the traditional institutions and the indigenous management system of civil society...The administration's position of absolute power encouraged a

These are unique ministries in terms of what they do. Furthermore, it is difficult to obtain permission to interview officials here because of the various protocols one has to go through. For the sake of anonymity, we will use "interviewees" to indicate where we quote someone.

> lack of responsibility and accountability to the people to
> be served. Its isolation bred a lack of responsiveness and
> legitimacy toward civil society...Through the power of the
> purse, the central government maintained strong
> economic leverage on local government...The distance
> between the citizens and the administration—and the
> personal politics that permeated the latter—bred distrust,
> further alienation, and lack of indigenous legitimacy.

In Ghana and other parts of SSA, expatriates occupied the civil service, especially the upper echelons, with the indigenes at the clerical levels. No systematic attempts were made to develop the civil service to meet the needs of the colony. Consequently, the indigenes were not trained in policy formulation, which is a basic function of a civil service institution. It is based upon this institutional foundation that Ghana under Kwame Nkrumah embarked upon the policy of the "Africanization of the civil service," which was a deliberate and systematic attempt to replace all expatriates with indigenes, especially in the top echelons of the Civil Service. But while this policy transformed the civil service into a Ghanaian institution, the core values of the old bureaucracy remained (Adu 1965).

In addition to the policy of Africanization, numerous public services institutions including ministries, departments, and agencies were created and expanded in order to undertake and support different developmental efforts. The expansion of the state through these institutions did not only take place during the Nkrumah era, but continued throughout the decades under both civil and military regimes until the 1980s when Ghana embarked upon IMF/World Bank backed SAP. While the first two decades after independence saw the expansion of civil service institutions, the SAP period focused on limiting the state's role in the economy and the reduction of the public sector through policies such as economic liberalization, the privatization of state institutions, especially state-owned enterprises, debureaucratization, which included the breaking up of the civil service institution, decentralization (both political and administrative), with the latter dealing with the transfer of

administrative functions to the regional and local levels, and democratization. According to Haruna (2001), these policies reflected the moving away from the bureaucratic approach toward liberal or laissez-faire capitalism.

The movement reflected the long decay of the civil service institutions both in terms of policy advice and service delivery. During the intervening decades, the Ghanaian economy suffered significantly and the civil service in particularly bore the brunt of the deteriorating economy. The decay of the economy eroded significantly the infrastructure and human capacity of the service (Appiah, 2006; Nti, 1980). In terms of the infrastructure, basic equipment could not be provided for basic undertakings leading to the eroding of the technical capacity of the civil service. With respect to human resource, a significant number of personnel left to join either the private sector or went abroad to seek greener pastures. Remuneration of those who remained in the service suffered as it continued to deteriorate due to the rapid rise in inflation. The overall effect is deeply reduced capacity of the service leading to institutional despondency and atrophy. Moonlighting became the order of the day as survival became the norm at the expense of civil service values such as honesty, respect, responsibility, loyalty and accountability (Ayee, 2001).

The immediate response to these problems was a Civil Service Reform Programme (CSRP) undertaken as part of the SAP (Ayee, 2001). The reforms unfortunately focused on retrenching the civil service rather than building its capacity. The approach was in line with the thinking of its sponsors, the IMF and the World Bank, which believed that the service was over-bloated and suffered from what Goldsmith (1999) calls "bureaucratic elephantiasis." To this end, the service was reduced in numbers from about 140,000 to about 93,000 by the end of the 1980s (Haruna, 2003; Hutchful, 2002; Larbi, 2008).

Unfortunately, and as already mentioned, capacity issues were not tackled as part of the reforms. Similarly, there was no attempt to change the bureaucratic culture, as well as the bureaucratic web in which the

service operated during this phase of the reforms. It is, therefore, not surprising that Haruna (2001) aptly asserts that during this period, "Ghana was then unable to extricate itself from bureaucratic administration" (40). It is this view of the failure of the CSRP, which led to the adoption of a new Civil Service Law in the early 1990s and the implementation of a Civil Service Performance Improvement Programme (CSPIP) as part of the government's overall attempt in institutional renewal, under the National Institutional Renewal Programme (NIRP). A significant discussion on the CSPIP has been undertaken in the literature and there is no need to encapsulate it here. It must however, be noted that the CSPIP and for that matter the NIRP were shaped by the neoliberal thinking; but this time from the NPM perspective.

A key component of the NPM, which had its foothold in the United Kingdom, was the creation of executive agencies. It is not surprising that with the enormous support of the British government and perhaps as a former colony, Ghana had to follow what its former master was doing. Thus, the executive agency model in Ghana followed that of the UK one with the basic idea of altering organizational culture change in the state bureaucratic apparatus (Dassah, 2017).

It must, however, be acknowledged that the emergence of the executive agency idea was part of the government's attempt to revamp the public sector, especially the civil service under the reform programme, the Civil Service Performance Improvement Programme (CSPIP), which began in the early 1990s. Under the CSPIP, the government intended to separate policy and operational issues with respect to the civil service in order to focus on operational effectiveness and efficiency. As conceded by Dodoo (1997: 120),

> It is important to emphasize that our Ministers should confine themselves to setting a few overall strategic targets and would delegate to the chief executives of the Implementing Agencies the day-to-day operational targets required for effective management of the Agency. This

`tight-loose' system of management supervision of the implementing agencies by the Ministries is intended to ensure that our Ministers do not get involved in routine operational decisions. They can then concentrate on policy and strategic issues.

From this perspective, it can be said that through agencification, the CSPIP would "attain its ultimate goal of promoting and sustaining efficiency to adequately support all sectors of the economy to the satisfaction of the citizenry" (Ofosu-Adarkwa, 2000: 88). Hence, it was upon this notion and perspective that the executive agency idea became a fundamental reform strategy in the Ghanaian public sector. This period was the emergence of the New Public Management (NPM) philosophy in Africa in general and has been described as the second generation of reforms (Dassah, 2017), with emphasis on the adoption of models from the NPM adherent countries (Polidano, 2001). Since this period, agencies continued to be created not only in Ghana but Sub-Saharan Africa in general, and in Ghana today, the executive agencies have grown and continue to grow in size in the public sector.

Unlike other countries that have adopted the agency model in reforming their public sector, however, Ghana did not, and has still not developed a systematic legislation, which calls for the creation of such agencies in the public sector. Rather, such agencies have been created based on individual legislations. For example, the most well-known agencies, the Ghana Health Services (GHS), the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA), the Local Government Service (LGS), and the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) were all created by their own individual pieces of legislation. The GHS, for instance was established in 1996 by an Act of Parliament, Act 525 as part of reforms in the health sector as outlined in the Medium Term Health Strategy, while the CWSA was established in 1998 by an act of Parliament (CWSA Act 564) to provide the institutional base for the implementation of the National Community Water and Sanitation Programme. Similarly, the GRA was established by Act 791 of 2009 as part of the overall tax administration reforms with the view to promoting efficiency in tax administration. The LGS was

also established in 2003 by Act 656. This Act was repealed and placed under the Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936), as part of reform of the Ghana decentralization process.[4]

In view of the haphazard way in which agencies are set up in Ghana and without proper documentation, it is difficult for one to accurately point out the number of such agencies in Ghana. Be that as it may, the civil service continued to be slimmed down with the creation of such agencies. As maintained throughout this paper, despite the messy field in which agencies find themselves in Ghana, they now occupy a major portion of the public sector landscape in Ghana.

# The Effects of Agency Creation on the Civil Service

In this section, our objective is to analyse the effects of agency creation on the Ghanaian civil service. We examine these effects in four main areas: the capacity to develop and implement public policy (as a result of the autonomy granted these agencies), incentives and motivation, autonomy, and political insulation. It must be acknowledged that these four areas are not mutually exclusive as they reinforce each other in how agency creation impacts the civil service.

## Capacity to Develop and Implement Public Policies

Capacity issues substantially underpin public sector reforms in both developed and developing countries. Under the NPM, there was a fundamental distrust of the ability of state institutions to deliver adequate solutions to modern policy problems. In other words, public bureaucracies were seen to be inefficient, self-serving and unresponsive to the needs of both their political masters and citizens. Hence, to curtail these problems, ideas such as privatization, contractualisation and agencification were promoted with the view that the public sector could emulate private sector practices in encouraging greater efficiencies and a better customer focus (Gains, 2003).

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[4]Currently, there are more than 20 of such agencies in the public services and can be found in almost every sector of the service including Water, Health, Electricity, Revenue, Airport, Local Government, etc.

In the developing world, capacity discussion has focused on four main dimensions: administrative, technical, regulatory, and extractive (Brautigam, 1996; Gyimah-Boadi, 2004; Ohemeng and Owusu, 2012; Owusu and Ohemeng, 2012). We are more interested in the administrative capacity of the civil service as it affects the service's ability to advise, design, and implement government's policies. Administrative capacity is "the ability to cope with the duties of strata of specific organizational post" (Billis, 1977: 113) and it focuses on the extent to which an organization will be able to undertake its assigned duties. Two forms of administrative capacity have been noted, namely, indicative and effective administrative capacities (Nelissen, 2002). The former denotes the potential governing bodies have to execute certain tasks, while the latter deals with the capability of governing bodies to act and the context within which that action occurs. Be it indicative or effective, administrative capacity allows public managers to manage all their resources, including human resources, in a transparent, effective, and efficient manner in the environment in which they operate (Ohemeng and Owusu, 2012).

Capacity issues concern the thinning of the civil service through the transfer or secondment of civil servants to the newly-created agencies. In other words, it is noted that when an agency is created, government does not recruit people from outside the civil service but rather take out the cream of civil servants from the ministry to form the agency. Thus the creation of agencies is not necessarily accompanied by the employment of new personnel to such agencies. What has become the norm is that once an agency is hived-off from the parent ministry, the existing personnel performing the functions the new agency is taking over is also shipped to the new agency. This is what happened with the creation of the National Revenue Secretariat, where the finance arm of the Ministry of Finance, was hived-off and all the personnel taken to the secretariat. This approach did not only affect the capacity of the Ministry to formulate finance policies, but created what one interviewee described as a turf-war between the ministry and the secretariat (Ohemeng and Owusu, 2011). Similar experiences occurred in the creation of the Ghana Health Services and other agencies.

It must be said that capacity issues are not new in the public sector in Ghana. In fact, during the early phase of the adoption and implementation of SAP the problems that were encountered, which led to the initial limited success were simply attributed to the inability of the public sector to help in the design, as well as the implementation of the programme (Hutchful, 2002). In short, existing institutions and staff were not adequate to handle important assignments under the programme as their problem-solving capacity had eroded during the period of economic doldrums. Hence, as noted by Ravenhill (1993: 18), the limited bureaucratic capacity caused the programme to be drawn up in Washington and presented to the Ghanaian authorities with little input from the civil service, as in many African countries, such as Uganda, Tanzania and others (Bayliss and Fine, 2008; Proff, 1994).

The transfer of the cream of civil servants, therefore, affects the overall performance of the civil service in the sense that those taken out have already been provided with the necessary capacity training and tools to assist the parent ministry in its work. Their transfer, therefore, created a huge vacuum, which may take a long time to replace. A subsequent problem with this is that the immediate replacement of such personnel is normally not readily available to managers of the ministry. Hence, the remaining 'competent personnel' are forced to take additional workload without any additional compensation. This significantly affects their morale and ability to perform. It is, therefore, not surprising that the lack of capacity is forcing government to rely more on private consultants in the development of public policies, something that should be the preserve of the civil service.

**Incentive Structure**
Another significant issue that affects the civil service compared to agencies is the incentive structure. According to Rainey (1979: 441), 'an incentive can be regarded as a positively or negatively valued object or situation which a person seeks to attain or avoid." Incentives are, therefore, external measures that are designed and established to influence motivation and behaviour of individuals, groups or organizations. They may include hiring, pay, promotion, job security,

recognition from the organization, and the altruistic value of serving the public interest (Boyne and Hood, 2010). How do these incentives differ in the autonomous agencies and the civil service? Manning and Shepherd (2009) have noted that in order to attract qualified staff, autonomous agencies are often given exceptions from the government personnel regime to offer higher salary scales, as well as other attractive benefits.

This is the same in the Ghanaian case. Hiring in the civil service is centrally administered. Chief Directors who are the senior bureaucrats have no input in terms of who is hired and for what job. According to Ohemeng (2009: 123),

> in the civil service, administrative officers are not under the direct control of the chief directors. The OHCS manages the human resources of the civil service, and may decide to transfer staff who have been trained by a chief director to perform specific duties relevant to a particular ministry. In addition, the OHCS does the recruiting and posting of staff in the service.

Consequently, managers are forced to accept staff that they may deem unsuitable for them. Such poor performers cannot also be fired for the lack of performance. The only tool left in the hands of the manager is to grieve to the relevant hiring authority, i.e., either the OHSC or the PSC. When this is done, the poor performer may either be transferred to another ministry or any of the civil service departments. On the other hand, autonomous agencies do not face this constraint. In other words, these agencies are not subjected to the strict hiring processes as found in the civil service. Managers or chief executives of these agencies are given the leeway to hire whoever they deem fit to perform the task at hand. As a result, these managers are able to hire competent people to their organizations.

Another most important incentive is the pay structure and the bonus system in the civil service and the autonomous agencies. Until recently in Ghana, the idea of 'equal pay for equal work' did not exist in the civil

service. It must be noted that since the 1970s, government has attempted in various ways to address the pay issue but has not been successful. Thus, considerable pay disparities exist among the various public service institutions. An analysis of the pay and other remuneration incentives are worse when the civil service is compared with the autonomous agencies (GoG, 2010). Agencies have almost unfettered opportunities to design and develop salary structures and other incentives for their employees. This has led to distortions in the structure and remuneration in the public sector (GoG, 2010).

In addition to the different salary structures, autonomous agencies have well-furnished offices, with all the necessary equipment to enable them to perform their functions in what may be described as a very suitable 'working environment' compared to that of the civil service. Our interactions with autonomous agencies reveal that most, if not all, possess modern information technology gadgets, are housed in well laid out offices in modern buildings, with individuals/staff occupying single offices, and therefore, enjoying more privacy. This is not the same as that of the civil service where three to four staff members share offices, which are ill-equipped and located in dilapidated structures. Indeed, some of the structures have not seen a single coat of 'paint' for decades.

Some of these offices do not have telephones and staff have to go to other offices to make any work-related calls. Also, some offices may be equipped with not more than two computers, compelling the occupants who often outnumber the available computers to share access to them. In a nutshell, modern tools such as computers, telephones, fax machines, and copiers that are supposed to aid civil servants in their work are lacking while in some cases, the autonomous agencies have more than necessary, as described by interviewees.

The consequences of the uneven incentive structures within the public sector (Cavalcanti, 2009; GoG, 2009), therefore, makes it difficult to lure competent individuals to the civil service, more so retain those who join the service. Also, those remaining are so unmotivated that they are not interested in performing their assigned duties and, in some cases, they

rather find alternative sources to supplement their incomes, and are more susceptible to corrupt practices (Ayee, 2001; GoG, 2010; Haruna, 2003). A concomitant effect of this is that, majority of civil servants in Ghana have become so resentful of these agencies especially since the personnel may have the same qualifications, and in some cases, were colleagues until some of them were moved to an agency to work. Consequently, morale in the civil service has been greatly affected by this uneven incentive structure in the public service (ECA, 2010).

## Agency autonomy and the civil service

We noted elsewhere in this paper that a fundamental characteristic of agencification is the relative autonomy from parent ministries and hence the absence of direct political involvement/interference in the day-to-day agency's activities. The autonomy is most directed at operational issues including human resource management and budget. How is the Ghanaian civil service affected by this autonomy?

First, the civil service is constrained in terms of budgetary allocation. In view of the many criticisms leveled against the civil service as unresponsive, bloated, its activities are well scrutinized by the political authorities and through other regulatory bodies such as the auditor and accountant generals. Furthermore, whatever the civil service does is subjected to the oversight of the PSC including the appointment of chief directors, as well as other senior managers.

In the UK, it has been noted that the "Next Step" idea, which led to the creation of a number of agencies, also contributed to the diminishing of equal opportunities in the civil service, which had "a strong influence on the formulation and implementation of equality policies in other major public sector organisations" (Cunningham, et al. 1997: 54). We can say that Ghana had and continues to experience this problem too. Equal opportunities can manifest itself in a number of ways but of particular concern is enhancing the capacity skills of workers in general. In order to make the autonomous agencies more successful, capacity initiatives have been more directed to them than their counterparts in the civil service. Government continues to expend more resources in this endeavour. The

weaknesses in capacity development are much more serious at the district or local level, says an interviewee. District assemblies that are supposed to implement government policies participate less in capacity development training initiatives than their colleagues in semi-autonomous agencies such as that of the health sector (Sakyi, 2010). The consequence is that the civil service at the local level, for example, undertakes fewer policy initiatives that are to draw local participation.

Furthermore, under the direction of the World Bank, training resources for the civil service have continued to decline over the years while those of autonomous agencies have increased, laments an interviewee. Hence, the training needs of civil servants, for example, continue to be relegated to the background of civil service reform initiatives with attention more focused on attrition exercises than training of the crop of personnel working in the service. Consequently, many civil servants are of the view that progression to higher levels of the service through skills development, is being impeded compared to their colleagues in the agencies. Furthermore, training of agency officials is not attached with any strings and can take place anywhere around the world while that of the civil service is now more restricted to the civil service training school in Accra or if one is fortunate, get to go to the Ghana Institute of Public Administration and Management, also in Accra, says one interviewee. More so, for one to get this opportunity, there are significant bottlenecks or hurdles to be cleared in the civil service while the agencies have more flexibility in dealing with issues related to training says another official.

## Agency, Civil Service, and Political Interference

The literature on agencification has noted how agencies are given greater degree of protection from political interference to manage their operations and budget, as well as the normal bureaucratic bashing, which has been the norm for politicians over the last three decades. This is not surprising since excessive political interference in the activities of public organizations has been blamed for the poor performance of the public sector, more so in Africa. According to Monyihan (2006: 1034), "agencies were seen as a way of professionalizing the public service, reducing the negative influence of politics, and limiting centralized

power." A careful examination of the landscape in Ghana reveals that while agencies continue to receive political protection and are also insulated from extensive media scrutiny, the same is not applied to the civil service. Indeed, agencies are not well known in the political environment compared to the civil service. This is because it is difficult to alienate agencies from the parent ministries; hence stakeholders and citizens are not necessarily conscious about the arms-length relationship between the two and thus lay every problem at the door post of the ministry, when it does not have much control over the activities of the agency. The general perception therefore has been "every problem is that of the civil service, when agencies do not report to the ministry as they had direct relationship with the political authority rather than the ministry or the Office of the Head of the Civil Service," noted another official. Consequently, we are blamed by the politician and the citizen although we have nothing to do with what goes on in these agencies, another interviewee noted.

In all, such unfounded criticisms have affected the morale of the personnel in the service, especially when they know that they are not in the position to defend themselves against the 'sins' of an agency. To overcome this problem, parent ministries must have some level of supervision in these organizations. This will enable the ministry to at least ensure that things are done the right way and that criticisms of operational functions are not directed against innocent but hardworking civil servants, says one interviewee. This is in line with Kirkert's (2001) view that "effective ministerial supervision of executive agencies is the need for accountability that follows from the principles of democratic government" (142).

## Conclusion

Our main research question in this paper has been: What is the effect of agencification on the functioning and performance of the civil service? In Ghana like elsewhere in the world, semi-autonomous agencies were created primarily for two reasons. First, the government's inability to fulfill its mandates is problematic. This arose from the weaknesses of the civil service: the lack of sufficiently trained technical and professional

staff, compressed wage scales, insufficient salaries, and lack of incentives for increased productivity. Second, agencification was seen as a way to get around the problems in the civil service, by removing the agencies in question from the central government and allowing them to set their own wage and employment policies apart from the structures of the civil service. Anecdotal evidence in Ghana shows that excessive autonomy of agencies can lead to problems of agency compliance and create distortions in public sector pay and benefits, as is the case in differential wages[5] between the agencies and the civil service (Cavalcanti, 2009; GoG, 2009; IMF, 2016). Empirical evidence on the civil service pay gap suggests a positive wage differential for agency workers, which led to the idea of introducing a Single Spine Salary Structure (SSSS) for the service by the Kuffour government in 1997 (Cavalcanti, 2009; GoG, 2009). Similarly, pay dispersion was found to be lower in public sector institutions with respect to the agencies. These differences in wages between the civil service in particular and the agencies are both a cause and consequence of civil service capacity erosion (Cavalcanti, 2009; GoG, 2009).

It is also noteworthy that the set of rules governing the terms and conditions of employment and pay are quite different between the civil service and the agencies for the same work (Joshi and Ayee, 2009; Ohemeng and Owusu, 2015). For instance, service conditions in the revenue agencies, are different from other institutions (Joshi and Ayee, 2009). This has created disinterested civil servants, which has negatively affected the government's ability to establish a developmental state to manage Ghana's underdevelopment. This is quite worrisome since it is believed that Ghana can only move from its present state of development to a middle-income country by following the contours of the developmental state with a strong and capable civil service (Gyimah-Boadi, 2008). Consequently, the SSSS was to eliminate multiple pay structures and place all public sector workers on the same spine, with the notion that the policy would help reduce the disparity and distortions in

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[5]See also Bank of Ghana (2007) *Issue of Wages and Labour Market Competitiveness in Ghana*, Accra

the salary of public workers, make it easier to estimate emoluments in accordance to 'equal pay for work of equal value' (Cavalcanti, 2009).

Our research confirms empirically the assumption that incentives matter and that for incentives to be motivational, they have to be closely linked to the notions of what is equitable, just, and fair. But the organizational incentives, defined as the reason for staff to join an organization and the way an organization rewards and punishes staff (UNDP 2006: 8), in the civil service are lower as compared to those in agencies (Cavalcanti, 2009; GoG, 2009). The complexity of incentives is linked to their role in predicting and influencing human behaviour, since what encourages people to change is often a complex abstract mixture of objectives and expectations, with some elements of concern for society at large, but with a heavy emphasis on individual rewards (Lopes and Theisohn 2004:92).

Lastly, our interviews show that the differential resources and supplies in the agencies constitute a negative incentive for motivation in the civil service. This has created an organizational culture, which is detrimental to the development of the country. We conclude by echoing the assertion of Grindle and Hilderbrand (1997: 486) that "organizational culture may constitute the missing ingredient in explaining why some organizations perform better than others despite the similar political, economic, and social context in which they operate." We believe that if the issues discussed here are well addressed in the civil service, then perhaps the country will be able to push towards developing a capable developmental state that will lead to the attainment of a middle income status in the not-too-distant future.

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Yesilkagit, K. and Thiel, S. van (2012), Autonomous agencies and perceptions of stakeholder influence in parliamentary democracies. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 22(1): 101–119.

# BOOK REVIEW

## KWAMENA AHWOI, *DECENTRALISATION IN GHANA: A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS* (ACCRA: WINMAT PUBLISHERS LTD, 2017), ISBN 978-9988-0-4691-0, pp. xv+360.[6]

## Preamble

I deem it a great honour and privilege to be asked by Professor Kwamena Ahwoi to review his second book on decentralization entitled, *Decentralisation in Ghana: A Collection of Essays*, which was published this year. Even though Professor Ahwoi and I had disagreed over decentralization in Ghana in the past, we have found a convergence in our academic thoughts and inclinations. This convergence was demonstrated in the two of us together with Dr. Komla Deku to undertake a Joint Decentralisation Review Mission (JDRM), which was commissioned by the Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee on Decentralization of the Government of Ghana and the Development Partners in August 2014, to review the progress of the decentralisation reform in Ghana, which would inform decentralisation in the next five years, that is, from 2015-2019. The Aide Memoire from the JDRM formed the basis for the development of the National Decentralization Policy Framework and Action Plan, 2015-2019.

## Introduction: the renewed interest in decentralization and some of the scholarship around it

Decentralization has attracted renewed interest and attention among scholars, governments, citizens, students and the development partners all over the world because of the presumption that decentralization is a good thing which goes along with democracy, good governance, a market economy, poverty alleviation and efficiency in public

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[6] Reviewed by: Joseph Atsu Ayee, Professor, Department of Political Science University of Ghana and Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG)

expenditure (Bossert 1998; Olowu and Wunsch 2004; Cheema and Rondinelli 2007; Couttolence 2012). The scholarly interest in decentralization is manifested by a flurry of publications on the subject in Ghana particularly after the reforms of 1988 which were introduced by the policy document entitled, *District Political Authority and Modalities for District Level Elections* (Republic of Ghana 1987) that popularly came to be known as the "Blue Book" and the Local Government Law, PNDC Law 207 of 1988 (Republic of Ghana 1988). Some of the book and monograph publications include Woode, *Making the District Assembly* Work (1989); Ayee*, An Anatomy of Public Policy Implementation: The Case of Decentralization Policies in Ghana* (1994); Ayee, *Decentralization and Conflict: The Case of District Chief Executives and Members of Parliament in Ghana* (1999); Ahwoi, *Local Government and Decentralization in Ghana* (2010); and Arthur, *The Unfinished Business of Decentralization: Political Accountability of Local Government in Ghana* (2017). Some are also edited volumes such as Thomi, Yankson and Zanu (eds.) *A Decade of Decentralization in Ghana: Retrospect and Prospects* (2000); and Amponsah and Boafo-Arthur (eds.) *Local Government in Ghana: Grassroots Participation in the 2002 Local Government Elections* (2003).

Apart from these books and monographs, there are peer reviewed book chapters and journal articles on decentralization in Ghana, which are too many to be cited here. Other publications especially books not devoted to decentralization have also either some sections or paragraphs on the subject. For instance, in Asamoah's book, *The Political History of Ghana (1950-2013): The Experience of a Non-Conformist* (2014: pp. 436-437), he made the point that "The district assemblies seem to have satisfied the aims of the Revolution for participatory democracy, and an electoral process without the involvement of political parties at the local level. The opportunity for the electorate to question candidates on platforms mounted by the NCD took the system out of the control of the political class, while facilitating debate and transparency. The non-partisan nature of the district assemblies is being seriously questioned today, as evidence abounds of indirect involvement in their elections by political parties, and the decentralization process is yet to fully

materialize" (p. 437). Danso-Boafo's, *J.J. Rawlings and the Democratic Transition in Ghana* (2012), (Chapter 7, pp. 160-166) and Oquaye's, *Politics in Ghana, 1982-1992* (2004) (Chapter 5, pp. 249-285) also have sections and paragraphs on decentralization.

Apart from the publications, both undergraduate projects and post-graduate theses have been and continue to be undertaken by Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian students in several universities in Ghana and abroad. These have no doubt contributed to the burgeoning literature on decentralization in Ghana.

## Some of the strengths of *Decentralisation in Ghana: A Collection of Essays*

It is against this backdrop that this book, *Decentralisation in Ghana: A Collection of Essays* written by Kwamena Ahwoi is being reviewed. The book is 360 pages in length and consists of 15 chapters, which cover the policy, legal and institutional framework of decentralization in Ghana. As the author pointed out on p. x, the book is a "collection of lectures, seminar presentations, consultancy reports and conference addresses", which he authored. The book covers what one might call the building blocks of decentralization. It is a worthwhile addition to the existing academic literature on decentralization in Ghana in particular and Africa in general given some of the comparative perspectives offered especially in Chapter 5 on "The District Chief Executive: To Elect, to Appoint, or to Appoint with the Approval of the District Assembly". The book has no doubt updated the literature on decentralization and deepens our understanding of implementing decentralization in Ghana which is a difficult policy to implement because of its cross-cutting nature.

Four chapters each are devoted to political decentralization and fiscal decentralization; three on the theoretical, conceptual and legal-institutional framework, two on administrative decentralization, one each on decentralized planning, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of decentralization and the decentralization issues to be considered by the then Constitution Review Commission (CRC), which was set up by the then President of the Republic of Ghana, late Prof. John Evans Atta

Mills in January 2010. Taken together the 15 chapters deal with the theory and practice of decentralization in Ghana and its balance sheet, that is, the gains and the deficits.

Even though the book is a collection of lectures, seminar presentations, consultancy reports and conference addresses, 10 of the chapters (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 and 15) are well-referenced with Notes at the end of each of them while the remaining 5, that is, chapters 7, 11, 12, 13 and 14 are not referenced probably because of the practical and hands-on nature of the topics being discussed. In some instances, interviews were held with some officials of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to show evidence of field work and originality rather than depend solely on secondary material.

The longest chapters are Chapter 3 on "Institutional and Legal Assessment of Decentralization Reforms in Ghana" (pp. 62-128), covering 68 pages and Chapter 1, "The Ghanaian Country Context of Decentralization" (pp. 1-45), covering 45 pages. The shortest ones are Chapters 6 and 14 which have eight (8) pages each.

Taken together all the 15 chapters have reinforced the point that decentralization is no magic wand, and is a complex endeavor. In order to produce the expected benefits, it requires a correct balance between different elements, including strong leadership, clear vision, policy and strategies, adequate local capacity, and strong information and monitoring systems. On the other hand, decentralization takes many different flavors and features depending on the political, social and economic characteristics of each country as pointed out by Chapters 1, 2 and 3. As the literature on decentralization has noted, there is no one single model or approach that would meet the needs and expectations of different countries, but international experience suggests approaches more likely to be successful and critical elements of the process.

Overall, the book found that Ghana has over the years established several of the building blocks needed for a successful decentralization, but these efforts lack cohesion and unity of purpose. There has been a low level of

collaboration and integration among key stakeholders, even though formal mechanisms have been established. The evidence brought together in this book point to a significant dissociation between policy and implementation, and over-reliance on general legislation at the expense of well-thought implementation strategies and the critical elements that make it work. This dissociation has also been found in other countries.

I consider Chapters 1 and 3 as the flagship chapters because together they deal with the progress thus far made with decentralization, the challenges encountered and the optimism expressed by the author that the creation of the "novelty Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee, chaired by the President of the Republic, is capable of resolving the outstanding issues on decentralization, accelerating the pace of implementation of the reforms, and ensuring that the various stakeholders play their assigned roles in the implementation of the reforms" (p. 126). Chapter Three reinforces the point that the "complexity of joint action" and "implementation as evolution" explain the under-achievement of decentralization in Ghana (Ayee 1994). As the site of implementation becomes dispersed both geographically and organizationally, the task of executing the decentralization programme becomes more difficult, given the number of political, administrative, social and economic interests involved. In addition, the implementation process is not seen as an evolutionary learning process because mistakes are repeated, while original objectives of the decentralization programme are not redefined in the light of information derived (Ayee 1994).

In addition, the book re-echoes the point that decentralization is about redistribution of power and resources and therefore prone to political economy issues and resistance, which are part of any reform exercise. As rightly pointed out by Niccolo Machiavelli:

> We must bear in mind that there is nothing more difficult and dangerous, or more doubtful of success, than an attempt to introduce a new order of things in any state. For the innovator has for enemies all those who

derived advantages from the old order of things, whilst those who expect to be benefited by the new institutions will be but lukewarm defenders. This indifference arises in part from fear of their adversaries who were favoured by the existing laws, and partly from the incredulity of men who have no faith in anything new that is not the result of well-established experience. Hence it is that, whenever the opponents of the new order of things have the opportunity to attack it, they will do it with the zeal of partisans, whilst the others defend it but feebly, so that it is dangerous to rely upon the latter." (Machiavelli, *The Prince* 1513: Chapter 6: 9).

I found Chapter 5 on "The District Chief Executive: To Elect, to Appoint, or to Appoint with the Approval of the District Assembly" equally intriguing. After a historical foray into the position of District Chief Executive (DCE) covering the first, second, third and fourth republics, the author advances the arguments for and against the three options canvassed for, that is, (i) a directly appointed DCE; (ii) a directly elected DCE; and (iii) A DCE who emerges under the constitutional procedure, that is, nominated by the President, approved or elected by the Assembly and appointed by the President. Other options considered by the book are selection by appointment (including a DEC appointed by the District Assembly from outside the Assembly for managerial purposes); selection by election (including a DCE elected by the Assembly from among its members, which blends politics and meritocracy; and selection by combination of appointment and election (including DCE who combines the requirements of competence and central accountability, that is, nomination by the President plus central state institution interview plus appointment by the President (pp. 163 – 169).

The advantages and disadvantages of all the options are also discussed and depending on whatever option is selected, the author proposes that "certain consequential amendments may have to be made to the Constitution, the Local Government Act of 1993 and the Model Standing

Orders for District, Municipal and Metropolitan Assemblies of 1994", which are delineated (p. 175). The chapter also deals with the international best practices which are not uniform as various countries adopted practices which would suit the "country's history, its culture, its politics, its environment, the temperament of its people and above all, its constitutional framework" (p. 171).

This chapter is germane to the current debate on the mode of appointment of Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives (MMDCEs). In a speech on $5^{th}$ July 2017 at the orientation for MMDCEs, President Nana Akufo-Addo said that the MMDCEs would be the "last batch of chief executives to be appointed under the current system" (Ghanaian Times 2017). He gave the assurance that the process for the amendment of the 1992 Constitution to facilitate the exercise was underway. My position on this matter, which has also been advocated by the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG) since 2010 is that if the entrenched Article 55(3) is amended it will open up the local governance system for the participation of political parties which will lead to the election of MMDCEs, Assembly and Unit Committee members. The arguments such as Ghana is not ready, sabotage of the President by MMDCEs who do not belong to his party and further polarization of the Assemblies are not convincing as the system has been tried for close to 30 years and there are several problems. The context within which the current local governance system was designed has changed and therefore the country should be concerned with reform initiatives.

The participation of political parties in local governance has the following benefits: promote inclusiveness; dismantle the winner-takes-all; reduce the threat of violence that has characterized national elections as the parties which have lost national elections may want to capture executive power at the district level; promote local development; change the dynamics of local politics as alliances would be formed in case of no clear winner; increase voter turnout in district level elections; improve the quality of MMDCEs and Assembly members; deepen democracy; and ensure better accountability. It is farcical that the Constitution prohibits the participation of political parties in local governance but, in

reality it is not the case as elections of MMDCEs, Assembly members and Presiding Members are in one way or another influenced by party considerations. The participation of political parties in local governance may be seen therefore as "a small change but with a big impact". It is strategic and transformational (Institute for Democratic Governance n.d).

## Some of the weaknesses of *Decentralisation in Ghana: A Collection of Essays*

There is no perfect publication in my over 35 years of academic life. Even peer-reviewed publications still have some weaknesses, which assessors of promotion applications point out. Accordingly, the book on *Decentralisation in Ghana: A Collection of Essays* has some weaknesses.

First, because it is a collection of addresses, conference papers and consultancy reports, information in some of the chapters should have been updated. For instance, on p. 19, Table 1.3 on the voter turnout of district level elections, 1994-2006, the table itself shows the turnout up to 2010 even though it could have been updated to 2015. Similarly, in Table 1.4 on voter turnout for national level elections, 1992-2008, the figures for 2012 are missing even though there is a column for them. The table too could have been updated with the turnout for the 2016 presidential and parliamentary elections.

Second, the book could have been better structured. It may have been divided into six parts with a short introduction to each of them to link the chapters together. The six parts being suggested are as follows: (i) Part 1: The Context, Concept and Legal and Institutional Framework of Decentralisation; Part II: Political Decentralization; Part III: Administrative Decentralization; Part IV: Decentralized Planning; Part V: Fiscal Decentralization; and Part VI: Some Outstanding Issues for the Consideration of the Constitution Review Commission". In addition, there is an imbalance in the length of the chapters, with the longest being 68 pages and the shortest 8 pages. There is also only one chapter on decentralized planning perhaps due to the fact that the country has made

very little progress in this area of decentralization and economic decentralization as a whole.

Third, it does not take into account some of the current legislation on decentralization, for instance, the Public Financial Management Act, Act 921 of 2016 (Republic of Ghana 2016a) and Local Governance Act, Act 936 of 2016 (Republic of Ghana 2016b) because the "lectures, seminar presentations, consultancy reports and conference addresses" on which the book is based predated some of the pieces of legislation.

Fourth, there are a few typographical errors, which may be attributed to the printer's devil.

## Conclusion

Notwithstanding these weaknesses, *Decentralization in Ghana: A Collection of Essays* is a timely contribution and addition to the literature on decentralization. I am sure it will benefit academics, practitioners, students and the general reader. It has no doubt contributed to addressing three key questions in examining decentralization processes across countries.  These are:

i.    Why was decentralization undertaken? What were the main objectives it sought to achieve?
ii.   How was it designed? What model was adopted? Particularly, what responsibilities were decentralized, to whom, and with what degree of autonomy?
iii.  What was the impact of decentralization? Were its stated objectives achieved? What were the main issues and challenges? (Bossert 1998; Dickovick and Wunsch 2014).

Moreover, the book has emphasized the point that there is no such thing as an ideal model or arrangement for decentralization. The choice that a country makes depends on political, historical, cultural, and economic factors that are peculiar to that country. A model that works well for one country may not work as well for another. However, experience suggests that once the model is chosen, its success depends on the correct balance and arrangements between the key elements of decentralization. In other

words, the success of decentralization depends more on the consistency between objectives, design and implementation of the process, than on the theoretical model itself (Dickovick 2011).

Finally, decentralization has often been seen—and implemented—as an end to itself. However, Kwamena Ahwoi's book, *Decentralisation in Ghana: A Collection of Essays*, has highlighted that decentralization is not an end in itself but rather a journey or process which should be designed and evaluated for its ability to achieve broader objectives. The particular objectives of decentralization—and even their lack of clarity—tend to influence the design, implementation and practice of the process, as well as its impact. It is my hope that this book will further deepen decentralization in Ghana and "make democracy a reality" as stipulated in Article 35(6d) of the 1992 Constitution (Republic of Ghana 1992).

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