
Effects of 2010 Educational and Curriculum Reforms on Senior High School Textile Training in Ghana

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of Ghana's 2010 educational/ curriculum reform on senior high school textile training. The study employed descriptive survey design. The sample size for the study was 22 (16 textile teachers, & 6 HoDs of visual arts department). The research instruments used for the study were semi-structured interview and documents analysis. The study found out that the students were interested in studying textiles but the 2010 curriculum review, which led to new policy on the visual arts subjects' combination has resulted in the collapse of textile training in most senior high schools which used to offer textiles. The study recommended that the policy on visual arts subject combination which forces learners to pursue visual arts subjects they were not interested in studying should be abolished to enable the students' who are interested in studying textile pursue it and any other visual arts subjects they intend to study. Also, Ministry of Education in collaboration with Ghana Education Service and textile industries should institute scholarship package for creative and excel textile students as a means of attracting more students to study textiles.

Keywords: Visual Arts, Textile Training, Educational Reform, Curriculum Reform

1. Introduction

Educational reform implies revising the number of schooling or training years, curriculum, instructional approaches, school system monitoring and assessment of the performance of educational systems. Educational reform is an indispensable measure for reformation the content of the educational system to meet the rapidly changing developmental goals of a country [1]. Educational reform is any strategic changes in the manner a school or training system functions, from instructional strategies to administration procedures [2]. Educational reform involves changes and transformations in the school system in relation to factors such as learning philosophy, student policy, curriculum, pedagogy, management, financing and links with national development [3].

Ghana after achieving political independence from Great Britain in 1957, embarked on several educational reforms to

meet the modern developmental needs of the people. The first educational reform after independence was Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's Accelerated Development Plan (ADP) in 1951 and the Education Act of 1961 [4]. This reform led to speedy expansion of educational infrastructure and enrolment of pupils into primary, middle and secondary education. Unfortunately, the aims of APD was not achieved due to a decline in the standard of education at pre-tertiary levels [4]. The setbacks of APD led to the constitute of the Professor Alex Kwapong, the first African vice -chancellor of University of Ghana, Legon's educational review committee in 1966 to formulate new educational policy that should address the challenges that came with APD educational reform.

Professor Alex Kwapong committee recommended the introduction of the continuance school system which made Ghana educational system one of the best until the middle of 1970 when the education standards began to fall. To revitalise the educational system in Ghana, Professor Kofi

Abrefa Busia after becoming Prime Minister in 1969 formed an education review committee chaired by Mr. Allotei Konuah, a former headmaster of Accra Academy. Mr. Allotei community suggested a number of short-term and long-term measures to rectify the problems of our educational system. One of the long term measures in their report was to replace the "O" level and "A" levels system inherited from Britain with the junior secondary school and senior secondary school. The four year middle school was to be replaced by the three years Junior Secondary school (now called junior high school) [5].

Colonel Acheampong assumed political power in 1972, the era that our educational system was seriously ailing. Colonel Acheampong in order to find solution to the falling standard of education in Ghana instituted the renowned professor Dzobo education review committee to ascertain the roots of the ailing educational standards and to acclaim a revitalisation plan. Professor Dzobo commission in 1972 recommendations led to massive and most ambitious 1987 educational reforms in sub-Saharan Africa under the regime of former president Jerry John Rawlings. The 1987 education reforms were part of a National Economic Recovery Plan (NERP) which started with a reformation of the school system, a process authorised and speeded by the global agenda of education for all following the Jomtien Conference in 1990.

In the year 2001, there was change of government in Ghana. As such, the new government under the leadership of former president John Agyekum Kuffour set up educational review committee which was chaired by Professor Josephus Anamuah-Mensah to look in the relevant, content and structure of education in Ghana. Professor Josephus Anamuah-Mensah committee recommended continuous stages of education which included; two (2) years of kindergarten education, six (6) years of primary education (class 1-6), 3 years of junior high school education, four years second cycle education, three (3) years polytechnic education for HND, three (3) years of colleges of education where graduates will obtain diploma in basic education to enable them teach in basic schools and four (4) university education for under graduate programmes [4].

The kindergarten, primary and junior high school educations formed what is called basic education in Ghana. The basic education is designed to offer unbiased access to good-quality, child-friendly universal basic education, by providing opportunities for individual children in the earliest phase of education at kindergarten, primary, general junior high school levels and special primary and junior high schools [4]. The second cycle education is to provide opportunity for junior high school graduates to access a 3-year advance education [4]. The second cycle education is also to provide efficient foundational knowledge as well as skill training to prepare high-ranks manpower in order to make available highly skilled prospect tertiary graduates [5]. The tertiary education comprises university, polytechnic and colleges of education accredited by National Accreditation Board [4]. Professor Josephus Anamuah-Mensah committee

report led to another major educational reform in the year 2007 in Ghana.

In 2008, there was another change of government in Ghana. The new government led by late professor John Evan Atta Mills through a majority vote in parliament amended the Education Act in August 2nd, 2010. This new Act had reversed the duration of the second cycle education from four years to three years but maintained the duration of basic school and tertiary educations. To make the reform effective, the four years second cycle education curriculums were also reviewed to suit the three years second cycle education. The amended act was largely based on the argument that an additional year would be costly for government and parents. The objective of the educational reforms was to create well-balanced (intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, physically) individuals with the requisite knowledge, skills, values and aptitudes for self-actualisation and for the socio-economic and political transformation of the nation [6].

Another major purpose of the reforms was to lay much emphasis on technical and vocational education in order to make our educational system relevant to the world of work so that graduates can establish their own industries after leaving school [4]. But in contrast, senior high school textile training which used to get massive enrolment students over the years than other visual arts subjects began ailing after successful implementation of the reform in the last quarter of 2010. This has resulted in the closure of most textiles departments or units in both pre-tertiary and tertiary levels of education in Ghana.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Ghana senior high school textile training is designed to equip textile students with employable skills to enable them create jobs for themselves and others especially the vulnerable to boost the informal sector of the economy. The programme after its introduction into the senior high school system used to receive massive students enrolment over the years due to job avenues it create for textile students and vulnerable in the society. However, after successful implementation of the 2010 senior high school educational and curriculum reviews, the textile programme has started ailing. To date, not much study has been done to explore the effects of 2010 educational and curriculum reforms on senior high school textiles in Ghana. Therefore, very little is known about the effects 2010 educational and curriculum reviews on senior high school textile training. The studies that are available on the cause of gradual collapse of textile training in Ghana seem to concentrate on the tertiary textile training and textile industries (7; 8). This study therefore, aims to assess the effects of 2010 educational and curriculum reforms on Ghana senior high school textile training and also to recommend means to revitalise the senior high school textile training in Ghana.

1.2. Research Objectives

- i. To identify the mandates and benefits of Ghana senior high school textile training.
- ii. To discuss the effects of Ghana's 2010 educational and curriculum reforms on senior high school textile

training.

1.3. Research Questions

- i. What are the mandates of Ghana senior high school textile training?
- ii. What are the effects of Ghana's 2010 educational and curriculum reform on senior high school textile training?

2. Research Design

In this study, the descriptive research approach was employed to collect qualitative data. This design was deemed necessary because enquiries were involved. Descriptive research is normally used to describe a phenomenon and its physiognomies [9]. The qualitative type of data collection deals specific techniques of amassing in depth data about what people ponder and what are their feelings [10]. Qualitative method of data collection permits a better comprehension of the attitudes, beliefs, reasons and behaviours' of the beneficiary population. Qualitative research discovers data from the perspective of both individuals and groups and creates case studies and summaries rather than lists of numeric data.

2.1. Target Population

The target population for the study were textile teachers and heads of visual arts departments in Volta, Oti, Ashanti and Northern regions' senior high schools which used to run textiles but ceased to offer the subject due to the 2010 educational and curriculum reforms.

2.2. Sampling Techniques

This study employed purposive and snowball sampling techniques to obtain relevant information for study. The purposive sampling was used to select only heads of visual arts department in the target population. Purposive sampling comprises recognition and selection of participants or groups of participants that are expert and up-to-date with a phenomenon of interest. Snowball sampling technique was employed to trace senior high schools which used to offer textiles in the target population [11]. The snowball sampling technique was employed because getting information about the senior high schools which used to offer textiles was difficult for the researcher. Snowball sampling is a technique of collecting data to access specific groups of people when the target population cannot be found in a particular place [12]. In this sampling technique, the researcher asks each subject to give him or her access to his colleagues from the same population [13].

2.3. Sample Size

The sample size was obtained by tracing textile teachers in senior high schools which used to offer textiles in Volta, Ashante, Oti and Northern regions. At the end, the researcher was able to obtain 22 respondents (16 textile teachers & 6

HoDs) as the sample size for the study.

2.4. Instrumentation

This study used semi-structured interview guide and documents analysis to collect qualitative data. Research instruments are the tools that aid a researcher to collect his or her data and they include questionnaire, interview guide, focus group discussion, observation and document analyses [14]. Research instruments are what a researcher use for collecting information (data) to answer his/her research questions [15].

In this study, interview was arranged and conducted with textile teachers in senior high schools which used to offer textiles. Interviews are face-to-face oral interactions in which one individual (interviewer), tries to obtain data from and gain comprehension of other individual (interviewee) [16]. Fundamentally, interviews aim at collecting credible qualitative data that help out the investigator to comprehend the respondent's building of information and societal realities.

Documents analysis another instrument used as a critical tool in this research because it permitted the researcher to analyse textiles textbooks, syllabus and other relevant documents to obtain data on the mandate and benefits of Ghana senior high school textile training. The educational review reports were also analysed to unearth Ghana policies on senior high schools visual arts training in Ghana. Documents analysis is a systematic process of scrutinising and analysing documents to obtain deeper comprehension and to develop practical knowledge to answer the predetermined research question [17]. Documents analysis form part of most system of triangulation in which the researcher employs secondary sources of data to confirm the results.

3. Discussion

Objective 1: To identify the mandates and benefits of Ghana senior high school textile training.

3.1. Mandates of Ghana Senior High School Textile Training

The study discovered through document analysis that one of the mandates of textile training was to enable younger generations to acquire love for the cultural and aesthetic values in textiles. The textile was to diversify the textile industry so as to create more employments and eradicate poverty. The textile training was to assist the learners to develop the creative skills and potentials in textiles in order to contribute to the growth and significance of science and technology [18]. Training in textiles was also to develop textile manufacturing, the economy, social status of people, culture and as well as the proud history of Ghana. The textile training was designed to prepare skilled and industrial labour-force that is required to generate wealth and help curtail poverty in Ghana. The course was to help equip

learners with appropriate skills and knowledge current needed at the textile industries and possibly in the future [18].

3.2. Economic Benefits of Ghana Senior High School Textile Training

The research revealed that, textile training plays a vital task in the human resource and economic intensification and progress of Ghana. The training in textiles offers an opportunity for the textiles graduates to be employed in the textile industry, self-employed and an opportunity to be self-sufficient in developing themselves and others contributing their part to the growth of Ghana. The textile training is tremendously imperative in improving and growing the textile industries in Ghana whilst providing a competent labour-force for the industry [18]. The textile training if adequately structured can to a great extent curtail high unemployment rates by giving individuals useful, income generation skills that will aid create income for both individuals involved in textile production and the nation [18].

The textile training can also help to improve efficiency in other industries and can lead to gleaming innovation. The global competitiveness of indigenous Ghanaian textile industries also depends on the skills textile graduates received in school. The textile training is identified as one of the vital promoter of productivity in the textile industries. Depending on societal effectiveness theory, textile training institutions ought to prepare and provide prospect textile labour-force with requisite skills and information to improve their output and, therefore, promote fiscal development [18].

3.3. Social Benefits of Ghana Senior High Textile Training

The study of textiles leads to the social benefits such as social integration, improved quality of life, reduction of crime, increase in self-esteem and self-confidence and provision of social amenities. Social integration is described as the inclusion of vulnerable or marginalised groups of society into its mainstream. Social integration is seen as the key return on labour market participation [18].

Findings from the textile textbooks and syllabus analysed indicate that the study of textile at the senior high school level helps to provide jobs for vulnerable especially women, and physically challenged who are excluded or face labour-market exclusion. The study of textile improves the living standard of the learners and during and after the training. The study of textiles helps shape the learners for profession and personal development [18]. These will provide wealth for the students and future family to have access to quality health, good meals, better accommodation, clothing, security and safer environment.

The study of textiles also helps to prevent injurious behaviour, such as rural urban migration, smoking, alcoholism, drug addiction, armed robbery, prostitutions in the society. Other delinquency in the society such as child trafficking and drug trafficking since textile graduates will provide employment for themselves and other unskilled

jobless youth in the society [18]. The study of textiles also increases self-esteem and self-confidence of the learners. Through the study of textiles, learners psychological state is improved thereby increasing their self-esteem and self-confidence. When a textile graduate is in full employment, his or her economic conditions also improve. The change in economic status leads to acquisition of respect in the society satisfying individual and family needs, developing a sense of freedom and reduction of social exclusion [18].

Objective 2: To discuss the effects of Ghana's 2010 educational and curriculum reforms on senior high school textile training

3.4. Effects of Ghana's 2010 Educational and Curriculum Reforms on Senior High School Textile Training

The study found out that the students were interested in studying textiles but the 2010 curriculum review, which led to new policy on the visual arts subjects' combination had denied them the opportunity to study textiles hence the collapse of textile training in most senior high schools which used to offer it. It was found that the 2010 visual arts curriculum is structured such that every visual student offer one 2-dimension subject (picture-making, textiles and graphic design) and one 3-dimension subject (sculpture, basketry, ceramics and jewellery) in addition to General Knowledge in Art which is a compulsory subject for all visual arts students.

Because of this policy on visual arts subjects' combination, most senior high schools which used to pursue textile and other 2-dimension visual arts subjects had replaced textiles with a 3-dimension subject students were forced to study when the policy was implemented in 2011. The motive of replacing textile were that the subject is too expensive in terms of tools, equipment and materials for practical works; textiles is too difficult to study compared to other visual arts subjects; textiles practical lessons consume much time than other visual arts subjects and finally, there is no job since most of the large-scale textile industries are collapsing.

4. Conclusions

This study sought to find out the effects of Ghana's 2010 educational and curriculum review on senior high school textile training. Based on the results of the study, the study concluded that the new visual arts subject combination introduced after full implementation of the 2010 curriculum reform was the cause of the ailing of the senior high schools textiles training in Ghana.

5. Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the results and conclusions of the study conducted on the influence of pedagogical content knowledge of Ghana senior high school textile teachers on the modernisation of indigenous textile industry:

- i. The policy on visual arts subject combination which

forces learners to pursue visual arts subjects they are not interested in studying should be abolished to enable the students' interested in studying textiles to do so.

- ii. The Ministry of Education in collaboration with Ghana Education Service and textile industries should institute scholarship package for creative and excel textile students as a means of attracting more students to study textiles.

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