CONSISTENCY BETWEEN POLICY AND PRACTICE:

AN EVALUATION OF HOW TWO BASIC SCHOOLS IN SEKONDI-TAKORADI, GHANA, HAVE APPLIED CURRICULUM POLICY IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES IN SOCIAL STUDIES AND RELIGIOUS AND MORAL EDUCATION.

By

Kobina Pra-Annan

Student's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in any institution.

Kobina Pra-Annan

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               Signature   Date

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the Norsk Lærerakademi

Professor Stein Wivestad
(Supervisor)

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Signature   **Date**

Dedicated

to my children

Ama Tweba Annan
Efua Nketsiaba Annan
Kojo Annan
Praba Annan

CONTENTS

Abstract

In 1987, a new education policy was implemented. The policy was the outcome of the works of two education commissions - Dzobo Commission of 1972; and Evans Anfom Commission of 1986. The new policy introduced two new programs – Social Studies (SS) and Religious and Moral Education (RME). According to the policy, the SS program is Citizenship Education. The general expectation of the Ghanaian public was that together, the two subjects would go a long way in helping to develop and sustain acceptable moral values and enhance civil awareness and good citizenship.

Almost twenty years after the introduction of the two programs, public opinion indicated a consistent fall in moral values and civility in the country. It was generally felt that, given the attention and resources devoted to the new programs, the situation should have been more assuring that it had been. The public felt that perhaps teachers of the two subjects were not teaching them in accordance with the official guidelines that accompanied the programs, thus leading to poor learning, and consequently, ineffective practical application. Also basic schools in general were suspected of not employing organizational practices and ethos that provide opportunities for pupils to take active part in school organization and to apply knowledge, principles, and skills in morality and citizenship that they learn in class, as demanded by the official guidelines. Teachers and schools were accused at Parent and Teacher Association meetings, at public forums, and by the media. The allegations were however not based on verified facts. Moreover, such allegations have the potential to undermine confidence in teachers and schools as well as the commitment of these subsystems within the wider education system of Ghana. This challenge gave me the impetus to undertake the study. The study set about to find out the extent to which the teaching of SS and RME in two schools in Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana has been consistent with official guidelines; and whether school management practices and ethos of the two schools provided opportunities for pupils to take part in school organization and be able to learn roles and also apply knowledge, skills and principles learned in class, as officially expected

Six specific questions were asked to generate data to answer the main research question. Findings of the study revealed, among others things, that schools and teachers were discharging their duties in consistency with the provisions of the official curriculum implementation guidelines. It was noted that even though schools and teachers might be doing their jobs as required, it was possible that children might not be applying what schools taught them. It is hoped that policy makers, researchers, and the general public would find the study useful.

Acknowledgement

"At long last the battle is ended, and Ghana, our beloved country is free for ever." These were the words of the late, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, first President of Ghana. The occasion was, an address to the nation on the eve of the political independence of Ghana from British colonial rule.

The occasion at which I am recalling these words might not be comparable to Ghana's independence, in context, but the statement is recalled here to mark my relief, after successfully braving through seemingly insurmountable encumbrances to complete this project and to bring to completion, my studies for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Educational Studies. I

For some reasons this project could not be completed on schedule. Even then, completing the project would have been a bit more difficult had it not been for the benevolence of God and the support of some individuals. My first thanks goes to God for sustaining me and making it possible for me to live to complete this milestone of my education. My next appreciation goes to my project supervisor, Prof. Stein Wivestad. I am short of words to thank him for his direction, and encouragement, and most especially, the extra concern he showed for my computer skills in formatting. Also, my heartfelt thanks go to Birte Eikanger Kvalø, a colleague student of NLA, whose family home I stayed in the last few months of my thesis writing. I am indebted to Dr. Atta of the University of Cape Coast, and the Public Relations section of the Metropolitan Directorate of Education, Takoradi for assisting me with data for the study. Also I thank my brothers Reverend Ebenezer Annan, Ghana, and James Annan, Denmark for their support. I cannot forget the following friends and families whose verbal encouragements were a constant source of inspiration to me: Emmanuel Ofori(Canada); James Gyasi-Addo and family (London); Debrah and wife (Oslo). I also thank all lecturers and staff of Norsk Lærerakademi, Norway, who contributed in diverse ways to make this project in particular and my studies in general, a success. Finally, my deepest appreciation goes to my children, for bearing with me throughout the period that I have been away from home.

1.   BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In 1987 the Government of Ghana implemented a new curriculum reform policy that introduced two new subjects: Religious and Moral Education (RME) and Social Studies (SS). The implementation of this policy in the twin-city of Sekondi-Takoradi formed the subject- matter of this study. In this introductory chapter, I shall define the research problem, review past studies related to the problem and discuss the justification for, and the significance of the study. A brief account of limiting factors will be given, followed by an outline of the structure of the study.

1.1.   Defining the Research Problem

In 1957 the Gold Coast, then a British colony in the west coast of Africa, attained political independence and adopted the name Ghana. The young country, Ghana, comprised of the Northern Territories, the Ashanti Kingdom in the middle belt, the coastal lands that have been under British protection until then, and the former German-controlled colony of Trans-Volta Togoland (which decided to become part of Ghana by a plebiscite). Studies indicate that there are about 100 languages and dialects in Ghana (U S Library of Congress).

Over time, the influx of Arab and Asian merchants as well as economic migrants from other parts of Africa increased the trend of racial, ethnic, cultural and religious plurality. Certainly the nation needed to be unified around a set of democratic values such as justice and equality that balance unity and diversity and protect the rights of diverse groups. Also, with the onset of globalization and the communication revolution, Ghanaian children and young people began to spend much time watching films, television shows, and playing video games that were based largely on foreign cultures. The cultural arena was soon contaminated by beliefs and practices that did not promote positive values in terms of Ghanaian standards. The situation was exacerbated by years of political mismanagement and dictatorship, civic agitation, and military interventions that greatly influenced people's ways of perceiving democracy and morality, and left lasting impressions on the minds of children and young people. At some point the perception became rife that the nation faced a youth citizenry that was gradually becoming disengaged and lacked the necessary knowledge, skills and dispositions to grow into a participating reflective adult citizenry that would be able to carry out their civic duties as expected. It was necessary, therefore, to instill in the population, the essence and tenets of moral uprightness. In this regard, it is pertinent to remark that

Ghanaians, generally, acknowledge the phenomenon of moral weakness – the situation whereby individuals act contrary to what they believe to be the best (Cahn 1997, p. 110). But they also uphold the biblical injunction to "train up a child in the way he should go," which is compatible with the Aristotelian tradition (Noddings, 1995, p. 150). The urgency of citizenship and moral education consequently, became a sine qua non in the national reconstruction effort.

From my Ghanaian background, I know that Ghanaians generally recognize the fact that, in addition to formal education, other factors, such as family life, religion and culture influence behavior. For instance, before the formation of the country Ghana, and the introduction of formal education, the indigenous ethnic groups that lived in Ghana educated or socialized their young ones in their own environments of the family, social structures and cultural traditions, like other African societies. With the attainment of nationhood, people began to look at education beyond the confines of traditional thought. Now, formal schools have come to be accepted as extensions of society that are specially designed for teaching and learning. Ghanaians have developed confidence in the role formal education can play in promoting behavioral changes and enhancing critical thinking. Since attaining political independence in 1957, substantial portions of our national resources have been sunk into education. Ironically, attempts by various governments to review and revitalize the education system that was inherited from the colonial era had consisted largely in minor revisions. Much of the curriculum continued to be based on the ethos of the colonialists. As George Bishop (1989, p.176) points out, in his discussion of education in post-colonial Sub-Saharan Africa, it was like pouring new wine into old bottles. By 1972, government was spending about 25% of the national budget on education. People began to question the relevance of education to the Ghanaian society on the grounds that problems of elitism, and alienation from traditional society, among other socials vices, were becoming exacerbated. It came as a relief therefore, when in 1986, the Evans Anfom Education Committee which was set up to review and advise on the implementation of the proposals of an earlier committee, the Dzobo committee of 1972, stressed the centrality of citizenship and moral education to the development of "a new Ghanaian who will be sound in mind, body and spirit" (Evans Anfom Committee Report, 1986, p. 5). The Committee included in the national aims of education, the need to develop national consciousness and unity, as well as the need to instill political consciousness. It stated that children should be taught how the country functions, and their rights and responsibilities as citizens. Also children are to be educated to develop an appreciation for good morals. The introduction of citizenship and moral education as national curriculum subjects at the basic school level, brought with it such high expectations, and reinforced our national conviction, that basic education is the fundamental building block for an empowered, morally upright, informed, participatory citizenry (Evans Anfom Committee Report, 1986, p. 5-8). The decision to introduce these subjects at the Junior Secondary School (JSS), which is the final level of basic education in Ghana, was crucial. This is because the JSS is terminal as well as continuing, with a significant percentage of children ending their formal education at this level. Available statistics indicate that about

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sixty percent of Junior Secondary School pupils do not progress to the Senior Secondary School (SSS) level (Lugg, Morley & Leach, 2007, pp. 21-23; Duncan-Adanusa, 2006, pp. 3-4). With more than half of children ending their formal schooling at this level, the necessity to equip them with the desire for moral "excellence" and democratic ideals, as well the fundamentals of critical thinking, in a young pluralistic democracy, becomes critical. The introduction of Social Studies, which is an integrated subject for citizenship education, and Religious and Moral Education (RME), was seen by many as a right policy. As Pecku (1994) explains, the Social Studies program aims at ensuring that students attain a sense of personal, social, and civic efficacy. In addition to the tuition given in these subjects, it is expected that the involvement of pupils in the day to day organization and management of schools, and their other co-curricular experiences would provide an integrated school-life experience which effect would extend beyond the boundaries of the school into the communities. These expectations raised hopes for an emergent generation of Ghanaians who are not only knowledgeable in science and commerce, but also responsible, reflective, and honest: A Ghanaian capable of overcoming the moral and civic challenges of nationhood in the contemporary postmodern world. Against this background, people have been very expectant of positive outcomes in the twenty years that the Reforms have run. On the contrary, however, indiscipline seemed to be widespread, and moral degeneration appeared to be on the increase among the youth in particular, and the society in general. Political intolerance, inter-ethnic tension, fraud and robbery, and cases of rape and defilement involving very young victims have been on the increase. Even more disturbing, was the fact that personnel of state security and other sensitive public services had been caught in the quagmire of moral degeneration and unpatriotic behaviors. For instance, a police officer was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol (Ghanaweb.Com, 2006, Jan 31), and two officers of the Bureau of National Investigations (BNI), stationed at the Kotoka International Airport, Accra, were arrested for allegedly facilitating a Nigerian suspect to transport a substance believed to be cocaine (Ghanaweb.Com, 2006, Jan 25,). Wealth appeared to be the main consideration for decision and action among many Ghanaians in these times. In the Health sector, migration of medical officers and nurses to developed countries in search of "better life" had seriously affected effective operations of hospitals and clinics in the country. A report by the UN indicated that migration had created a health-care specialist vacancy rate of 72% in Ghana (UN News Service, 2005, Sep 28,)

    At the time of writing my research proposal, medical officers and some categories of health workers, as well as teachers and education workers were on industrial strike over wages. And as I wrote this final report, senior staffs of the Central Bank of Ghana were on industrial strike. Newly-trained teachers and other categories of graduating students, educated at the expense of the public resisted posting to rural areas for national service. The Ghana Education Service, for instance, at some point, had to resort to sanctions to get newly trained teachers to comply with the conditions for their training (Ghana Review International, 2006, June 29,). Factional fighting among tribal kingmakers,

widespread cases of land tenure litigation, and widespread corruption in high places, among others, have fuelled ethnic suspicion and rivalry, and undermined trust and confidence in both the security and legal systems, as well as in politicians and the political system. The loss of confidence in the security and legal systems had led to the rampant administration of instant mob justice on suspected criminals. A notion of "get rich quick" has gradually being nourished in the citizenry, driving many to attempt to migrate to more developed parts of the world in search of, often non-existent jobs. A lot of young people who do not make it out of the country engage in social vices such as drug peddling and use, fraud, armed robbery, and prostitution, among others. It was no surprise that some Ghanaians felt at some time, that the country was gradually becoming lawless (Ghanaweb.com, 2004, June 4,). All these were taking place in spite of increased efforts over the years at promoting good citizenship and morality, through education.

In view of the above situation, there had been mounting skepticism about the effectiveness of the implementation of the new policy on citizenship and moral education especially, in schools in the twin-city of Sekondi-Takoradi, the capital of the Western Region of Ghana. At Parents and Teacher Association (PTA) meetings that I convened, while serving as a headteacher of a basic school in the twin-city, statements by parents appeared to put the blame on schools and teachers. Also, general comments by people in the city as well as media publications, created a similar impression, that perhaps, schools and teachers might not be doing their job as expected. People were aware of the introduction of moral and citizenship education, and they acknowledged the appropriateness of the aims and objectives of the new programs. What people did not appear to be sure about, however, was how the policy was being implemented in basic schools in the country in general and Sekondi-Takoradi in particular. The skepticism of the public was founded on the grounds that there had been instances in the past, when fall-outs between education policies and their implementation had led to policy failures. For instance, the Evans Anfom Education Commission Report (1986, p. 55) noted that the inability to implement new education policies successfully was partly due to the suppression of the push of reforms by the pull of old practices. Even though the skepticism among sections of the population was still without proven basis, it was potentially undermining public confidence in schools and teachers, especially in the twin-city of Sekondi-Takoradi, and thus presented a problem worthy of investigating. The lack of knowledge about whether or not there was consistency between policy and practice thus became a national issue that needed to be investigated in order to provide the Ghanaian public as well as education policy makers with reliable feedback that would enable them to make a more informed assessment of the existing situation. The resultant problem that the study set out to investigate was: Is the implementation of the 1987 curriculum reforms policy on Social Studies and Religious and Moral education, in basic schools in Ghana, consistent with the official guidelines? However due to reasons stated in section 1.6, the investigation was limited to Sekondi-Takoradi and the following research question was investigated: **To what extent is the organization of teaching and**

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learning in Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education, and the co-curricular activities that children engaged in, in some basic schools in Sekondi-Takoradi, consistent with the guidelines for the implementation of the 1987 curriculum reforms policy?

1.2.   Research Questions

In order to undertake an effective investigation of the research problem the following specific questions were posed:

1. What are the aims and objectives of the Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education programs?

2. How are the subjects organized to fit into the curriculum of basic education in Ghana?

3. What guidelines accompanied the implementation of the policy?

4. Are the guidelines clearly stated?

5. To what extent do teachers apply the guidelines when they are planning and teaching the two subjects?

6. Do schools provide other opportunities that advance the aims and objectives of the new policy, besides normal teaching-learning activities?

1.3.   Past Studies related to the Problem

From 1951, when the Accelerated Development Plan for Education Act was promulgated (Haizel, 1993, p. 57), to the present, the system has undergone tremendous changes. Various education review commissions have come and gone, all in the effort to increase accessibility, improve the mode of delivery and enhance the relevance of education to the recipients in particular and the nation in general. Some of these educational reviews have consisted largely in minor revisions. Others have involved complete overhaul of the existing system. In all the instances, the review committees put forward proposals that resulted in the formulation of new educational policies that were subsequently implemented. It was usual for such education review commissions to investigate also, any implementations problems associated with previous reforms, and then propose guidelines for effective implementation of their recommendations. This was

precisely what the Anfom Commission of 1986 did, when it was set up. It reviewed the records of previous implementation failures and interviewed persons long acquainted with the educational sector. According to those interviewed, one main cause of past implementation failures was that most of the time the measures upon which successful implementation of reforms depended were unduly delayed, creating a situation where the push of reforms got suppressed by the pull of old practices (Evans Anfom Committee Report, 1986, p. 55). Giving their assessment of the situation, the Anfom Committee identified the following as the problems that caused the drag in past implementation efforts:

- Lack of commitment to, and understanding of proposed changes;

- The unpreparedness of the system to effect the change;

- The absence of the teachers to effect the change; and

- The lack of financial resources to support the change.

The Committee was of the view that the availability of adequate number of quality teachers was a prerequisite for the success of any curriculum reforms and innovation diffusion process.

Since the introduction of the 1987 Reforms, based upon the recommendations of the Anfom Committee and advice and support of international organizations, various enrichment programs and interventions have been implemented as part of the effort to attain the objectives of the reforms. The following are some of the interventions:

- Quality improvement in Primary Schools (QUIPS). This program was supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was meant to produce competent teachers. Train education managers and planners, and to promote a supportive leaning environment, among others;

- Performance Monitoring Test and School Performance Appraisal Meeting (PMT/SPAM). This was introduced in 1998 to monitor teaching and learning outcomes in Basic schools. The PMT is administered in only English Language and Mathematics. The results are discussed at School Performance Appraisal Meetings (SPAM) with parents, at which meeting targets are set and strategies are mapped out to enhance performance (Ghana.gov.gh Education, 2007)

1.4.   Justification for the study

As has been stated above, studies have been conducted in the past to determine the causes of education policy implementation failures before the commencement of the 1987 reforms. In the early stages of the development of Ghana's educational system, after political independence, most of the reform programs were aimed at large-scale expansion of access to education. Investigations into the early reform failures, such as the one conducted by the Anfom Committee, were usually extensive sector wide projects, often involving either content and, or structure of the whole education system or some of its subsystems. It is this extensive nature of previous investigations that makes them different from the present study. Factors identified as contributing to policy implementation failures in the previous large-scale investigations may be irrelevant in the specific situation of the current study. On the other hand, issues relevant to the present study may have been overlooked. This study was limited to a segment of the curriculum: Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education. With the study concentrated in a much smaller area, the investigation was more focused and it was possible to look at the implementation process in these areas in much more detail.

Furthermore, although monitoring activities have been on-going since the beginning of the 1987 reforms, to the best of my knowledge, these have not been comprehensive enough to cover all subject areas. Emphasis has been on selected subject-areas that were usually dictated by international organizations and agencies that provided the funding for the projects. For instance, the Quality Improvement in Primary Schools (QUIPS) project, and the Performance Monitoring Test (PMT) in Mathematics and Science were sponsored by USAID and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) respectively. With the existing priority bias in favor of so-called "more important" subjects, any attempt to undertake investigative studies in other subject areas, such as the present study, was a worthy effort.

1.5.   Significance of the Study

It is a common knowledge that we live in an era of constant change, and the fact that education in general, and citizenship and moral education in particular, is vital for national survival and reconstruction, cannot be overemphasized. In order to make education more relevant to the needs of society there is the need for the structure and content of education to be reviewed periodically, and policy implementation constantly monitored. The curriculum is a key document in this regard. Evaluating policy implementation processes is a normal activity. This study is part of the monitoring process. Findings of the study may provide information to educators and the general public and policy-makers in Ghana. It may also serve as basis for further studies by persons and organizations

interested in the basic education curriculum of Ghana. Though the Ministry of Education may have its own monitoring arrangement to ensure consistency between policy and practice, studies like this one provide supplementary feedback to the system.

1.6. Limiting Factors

The subject of this Project was not what I intended to do originally. I had planned originally to critically review the relevance of the Junior Secondary School (JSS) Curriculum to the socio-economic development of Ghana. The impetus for the original proposal had been provided by persistent public criticisms of the JSS program. Also, a report by the Economic Commission of Africa, which was based on an empirical study, had indicated that the Education Reforms of 1987 had contributed very little to the efficiency, quality and relevance of education to the socio-economic development of Ghana. And results of OECD-sponsored performance monitoring tests had portrayed Ghana as one of the worst of several countries tested in grade eight mathematics and science. These foreign reports provided additional impetus. However, I found out that the new government had set up a review committee to review the education system. Among its terms of reference are:

- Examine the goals and philosophy of the present education system with a view to ensuring their relevance to the development of human resources for the nation, in the light of new challenges facing the country;

- Examine the emphasis given to vocational and technical education and the links to polytechnics and the world of work.(Ministry of Education: White Paper on the Report of The Education Reform Review Committee 2004, pp. 7-8)

This development actually took the wind out of my sail because my study was subsumed in the work of the new review committee. Since my original topic had lost its significance, I had to pick a new topic. The circumstance of the change and the need to do another semester in the autumn effectively reduced the time available for reading and preparation for data collection. This was compounded by the fact that the period for data collection coincides with the time when schools in Ghana are writing examinations ahead of the Christmas holidays. Under these circumstances I had to make some revision of the original data collection strategy. Any limitations in the study, especially in the area of data collection, need to be seen in the light of these constraints.

Also the research project should have covered the whole country, but that would be too much for one person to undertake, given the constraints of time and resources. The study was therefore limited to the twin-city of Sekondi-Takoradi.

1.7.   Outline of the structure of the Study

The project has been divided into five chapters. The first chapter introduces the research problem and the significance of the study. Chapter two discusses the theoretical framework that provided guidance for data collection and analysis. It opens with a discussion of the relationship between society and education, highlighting especially, on the important role that education, and for that matter schooling, play in facilitating socialization and enhancing social change. The place of the curriculum in this process is put in perspective. The need for reforms and innovations in a fast-changing society is discussed. Problems of reforms implementation are reviewed. The chapter closes with a discussion of a framework for data collection and analysis. Chapter three discusses the methodological issues in relation to the study. It opens with a discussion of the reasons for employing the qualitative research design for the study. The criteria and the technique used to select schools for the study are also discussed. The chapter ends with a discussion of the data collection process. The main findings of the investigations are presented and discussed in chapter four. Chapter five, the final chapter, presents a summary of the study and discusses the implications of the findings.

2.   TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATING CONSISTENCY

The purpose of this chapter is to develop a framework for the evaluation of the consistency between the new curriculum reform policy and its implementation. The chapter opens with a discussion of the relationship between Education and Society and the place of the Curriculum in this relationship. This is followed by a discussion of the essence of curriculum reforms and innovations.   A brief review of selected perspectives on policy implementation is made. The chapter closes with a discussion of the framework on which data collection and analysis was based.

2.1.   *Society and Education*

The term 'Society' has many applications. Etymologically, the concept is derived from the Greek words *socus locus*, and implied a social contract between members of the community (Wikipedia, online Encyclopedia). Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary defines 'Society' as "a community, nation, or broad grouping of people having common traditions, institutions, and collective activities and interests."   Implicit in the meaning of society is the fact that its members share some mutual concern or interest, a common objective or common characteristics. Humans are known to be gregarious. In other words, they are social beings, living in groups or communities. In the early forms of community life, people lived in groups that were relatively culturally homogeneous. As James Fulcher and John Scott (2003, p. 11) point out, these early forms of community life were very simple. They were small; relatively self-sufficient and almost everyone knew everyone else. These early communities provided the foundation for the large communities and complex societies we have today. Although people continue to live in small communities, the small communities form part of larger communities or societies. The most remarkable development of this natural urge of humans to live in groups, however, is the development of the nation state. Whether one looks at society from the level of the community or the nation state, all societies have the basic defining characteristic of shared interests or concerns. Thompson (1983, p. 7) remarks, that the acceptance of communal responsibility by interdependent individuals and groups was crucial to the survival of the group. This was so because, in the early times of human

history, groups that lived in small communities, for example, were especially vulnerable to external attacks. Internal stability was crucial for external security. The maintenance of security and stability of the community thus remained a communal responsibility.

Throughout the evolution of societies, institutions like marriage, trade, education and religion, and their associated organizations like schools, markets and churches, have operated in different ways, but in close corroboration, to give order to different aspects of life in society. These institutions are perceived by Fulcher and Scott (2003, p. 10) as "the established practices that regulate the various activities that make up social life." They describe society as a complex of interdependent institutions.

Talking about social life, established practices and the need to maintain social security and stability, education is one social institution that has played and continues to play a key role in this regard, from classical times to the present. The concept of Education has attracted the attention of philosophers, sociologists and educators, among others, for a long time. Many ideas have been expressed over the years about what education attempts to achieve. One dominant conceptualization that has characterized both classical and contemporary discussions about the concept, "education," is its conceptualization as a social process – a process of passing on of knowledge from one generation to the other in order to promote social stability and coherence. Sociologists use the term "socialization" to refer to this process. It is a process by which individuals developed the capacities and commitments that are considered pre-requisites for their roles in the society. For instance, Schrader (2007) writes that in ancient Sparta, collective education was a compulsory prerequisite for citizenship. According to her, the principal goal of education in Sparta was to raise good future citizens defined by their military readiness and physical endurance, among others.

In his conception of education, Plato, for instance, believed that Man consisted of a "body" and a "soul", and that, we could not be truly happy if we did not acknowledge and satisfy the needs of the two parts of our being. The only way people can get along with one another and co-exist peacefully, is first, to bring peace and harmony between their body and soul – between their passions and their reason, between their thoughts, their words, and their acts. By analogy, there can be no order in a state unless all citizens contribute their share, to the best of their ability (Hooker, 1996). To empower citizens to be able to contribute their quota in the organization and maintenance of the state, Plato opined that people should be given equal opportunity to develop their innate capacities (Noddings, 1998, p. 9-10). Plato perceived education in terms of the need to lead the Individual from ignorance to enlightenment, resulting in each person performing his task in a society which, according to him, should consist of three levels of citizenship based on innate intelligence, strength, and courage (Hooker 1996). Plato argues that, the best and the brightest citizens, a very small and rarefied group that he referred to as "Guardians," are those qualified to rule in his ideal state. The "Auxiliaries," who were responsible for the security of the state, were made up of the middle class of society, a smaller but still large number of

people, who are somewhat bright, strong, and especially courageous. Plato referred to the lower end of human society, which consists of an overwhelming majority of people in a state, as the "Producers," since they are most suited for productive work. Each group receives the education that enables them to perform their assigned roles effectively. Plato asserts that the philosopher is the only one capable of ruling the just state, since through his study of dialectic, he understands the harmony of all parts of the universe in their relation to the "Idea of the Good." Each social class happily performs the function for which it is suited; the philosopher rules, the warrior fights, and the worker enjoys the fruits of his labor. According to him, a state may be said to be just if the Auxiliaries obey the Guardians, and the Producers obey the Auxiliaries and Guardians, and each group plays its role willingly. On the basis of Plato's reasoning, it is justifiable that those in authority determine what should constitute "Good", and how it should be diffused in the society through education.

Contributing to the socialization process debate, Kant presents an educational view that is greatly influenced by his convictions about morality. According to him, a creature is said to be behaving morally or immorally only if that creature is capable of understanding reasons for and against doing something. Therefore, morality is a possibility for rational creatures only. Kant believes that people differ in their judgments and often advance arguments to justify the validity of a particular judgment. This, according to him, implies that people are unanimous on the fact that a really good reason commands accent. He also posits that a valid reason is universally valid, that is, if it is right for one person, it should be right for the other. In other words, what is good for the goose is equally good for the gander. Or better still, to use the biblical injunction, 'to do unto others what you would like others to do unto you.' By implication, it means that just as the empirical world is governed by scientific laws which have universal application, so the moral world is governed by moral laws that apply universally, meaning that morality is founded on reason, as science is founded on reason (Magee, 1998, p. 137). From this perception, he came out with his ideas of Categorical Imperative. By this formulation, a person faced with a moral decision-making is enjoined to act in a way that he can, without contradiction, insist that all others who find themselves in similar situations should also act in the same manner (Noddings, 1998, p.141). Since humans are capable of rationality, and since rationality can be nurtured, Kant opines that education should be used to constantly improve human nature. Thus to him, education, albeit moral education, should be founded on the need to facilitate the development of individual rationality and the procedures that grow out of purely logical processes (Noddings, 1998, pp.141-142). Kant stressed the notion of autonomy and individualism. He stressed that individuals should be accountable for their decisions and actions.

Another educator whose conception of education is worthy of note in this study is the Paulo Freire. He believed that there is similarity between school and life. He relates education to the social, political and economic situation of the people. He was concerned about how education could be used to improve society, that is, create a world where it is easier to love. He believed that through

education, people's consciousness about the stark realities of life are raised; they become aware of the structures that make it difficult for people to love, and become very conscientious of the need to improve society. To him, love is not a feeling but doing good to others. He criticized oppressive functions of schools. According to Maria de Lourdes, B. Serpa, and Caetano Valadao Serpa (de Lourdes et al., 1997, 1998), Freire articulated three important concepts that have become central to the teaching profession. First he posits that there is no teaching without learning. Secondly, he rejects the idea of "banking" education. He claims that, teaching is not a matter of transferring knowledge to passive recipients, who reproduce such knowledge at a later period when required. Rather, it is a 'constructivist' process owned by the learner and facilitated by the teacher in interaction with the student.

Nel Noddings, a contemporary author, is another educationist whose educational ideas appear to reinforce the clarion call to apply education to improve society. In her book *Philosophy of Education* (1998, p. 189), she sums up her conception of education with the question: "Which sort of experience and which moral thought will improve the condition of humankind?" Noddings approaches the issue of education from a philosophical standpoint of Ethics of Care, a formulation that greatly emphasizes the role of the cared-for in the caring situation. This formulation is founded on the conviction that our goodness and growth are inextricably bound to that of others we encounter (Noddings, 1998, pp.186-196). Moral education plays a pivotal role in this formulation. Noddings contends that teachers should seek to enhance the growth of the cared-for or learner. This objective, according to her, is not achieved simply by imposing a national curriculum, but could be best attained if educators genuinely engage the purposes and energies of those being educated. The best way to do this, to her, is to build relationships of care and trust, leading to the construction of educational objectives jointly, by the teacher and the learner. By this, she is not in any way advocating for a truly autonomous moral agent. Rather, the philosophy of the Ethics of Care, accepts the reality of moral interdependence (Noddings, 1998, pp.186-196).

From the discussions above, it is clear that Education has played a major role in both state formation and socialization, and that great educational thinkers like those mentioned above, and many more, have contributed and continue to contribute immense knowledge to the growth of the subject. Like other African countries, education in Ghana has undergone considerable influence from Western education. But before the introduction of Western type of formal education, however, traditional Ghanaian communities, in the past, educated their young ones in their own environment of the family, social structures and cultural traditions. This indigenous education was an integrated experience that combined not only manual with intellectual training, but also physical with character training. To sharpen the physical disposition of young ones, recreational events such as drumming and dancing, gymnastics, and competitive individual and group games such as wrestling and tug of war were organized during moonlit nights. Traditionally, Ghanaians cherish character traits such as courage, humility, uprightness, honesty, and respect for seniority, selflessness

and communal spirit. They used stories, folklores and legends as sources of teaching, especially for character training. Riddles, debates and the use of proverbs in speech, recalling and explaining great oaths, were used to enhance oratory and intellectual development. 'Ampe,' a traditional competitive play enhanced people's ability to count, and also improved physical fitness and good neighborliness. Thus education, in its early forms, was a system by which, as Brint (1998, p. 136) puts it, the powerful members of the society, that is, the older generation, sought to shape the behaviors and values of less powerful members of the group, the younger generation.

2.2.   The Place of Curriculum in the Society

Most early forms of education, especially indigenous African education, did not have written documents representing the 'Curriculum.' One reason was that these early traditional systems of education were non-literate. This, however does not suggest that they did not have curricula, for there can be no education without a curriculum.   Just as societies were governed without written constitutions at some point in history, so were schools organized without written curricula. The curricula of these early forms of education were unwritten. The curriculum of most indigenous forms of education consisted of the perennial elements of the accumulated knowledge and practices of the society that were deemed necessary to be passed on to the younger generations of the group, through the process of socialization: These were the common beliefs, practices, and the collective aspirations and communal interests of the group, melted together into a particularly distinctive way of life. In effect, the content was more or less the culture of the group. As Eggleston (1977, p. 2) points out, culture has basis of stored, shared, valid and legitimate knowledge and this constitutes the accepted way of life in a group. He explains that in all societies there are processes that not only ensure the storage and transmission of knowledge but also how such knowledge is defined and internalized by the young. Growing up to be an adult in a society begins with the learning of the essential core elements of the culture. Socialization is a global phenomenon that is present in all societies. As societies evolved and increased in complexity it reached a point when the socialization process became institutionalized in some parts of the world. This marked the genesis of formal education.

With the introduction of Western formal education in Sub- Saharan Africa, and Ghana in particular, the organization and delivery of education changed. Education became more equated with schooling and the process was organized under three sub-systems, each with two components**:**

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Organization-
- Mission. This is the legally established framework   of intention within which particular purposes, goals   and objectives are evolved and pursued;
- Sponsors. These are governments, Religious bodies, and Industrial establishments, among others, that initiate, support and govern schools. Within these operative institutions, schools are established, legitimized and managed

Human Aspect-
- Mentors. These are the personnel entrusted with the responsibility of the process of education.
- Learners. This includes inmates of schools, intentionally selected and classified according to some criteria, and who are legally allowed to partake in the teaching-learning process.

Curriculum. This is the instrument of education: The device through which the range of knowledge and values, skills, and roles that the school offers to learners, are organized, taught and eventually evaluated. It has two components:

- <u>Content</u>. The body of knowledge, skills and practices that learners are expected to learn
- <u>Media</u>. This consists of materials, equipments, and processes through which learning experiences are provided.

Formal education as schooling requires an obligatory curriculum. However, the way a curriculum is conceptualized in theory and then designed and organized for practical implementation depends on a country's philosophy of education: The social, cultural, and developmental aspirations. Curriculum designers however, usually give high premium to cultural values of the society. For as Bishop (1989) points out, an education system that undermines the culture of the society it purports to serve, goes astray: Instead of liberating, the system succeeds rather in alienating Man from Man, and Man from his own culture. The term 'Curriculum' has many applications. However, for the purpose of this study, I found to be particularly useful, two applications described in Eisner (1994, p. 34). Eisner attempts to differentiate between what he calls the *intended curriculum* and the *operational curriculum*. According to him, the intended curriculum is "that body of material that is planned in advance of classroom use and that is designed to help students to learn some content, acquire some skills, develop some beliefs, or have some valued type of experience." The operational curriculum, on the other hand, covers "those activities that occur in the classroom, taking into consideration the materials, content, and events in which students are engaged." In my opinion, when these two applications are put together, the 'curriculum' then refers to the way content is designed and delivered. It accounts for the structure, organization, balance, and presentation of the content in the classroom. It includes both content and instructional guidelines.

2.3. Why the need for Curriculum Reforms and Innovations

Societies continue to support education because of the benefits they get from it. It is a fact that education systems are not always able to meet the aspirations of the parent system or society. In a system of education, such as the early forms of education in Ghana, where the curriculum consisted essentially of the culture of the group, it is not easy to introduce changes into the system. The reason is that although culture is said to be dynamic, most cultures remain fixed and inflexible over a long period. For instance, the contents and methods of early indigenous education in Ghana were less dynamic and relatively inflexible. Indeed, even to date, there are people who still uphold the age-old conception that linked old age with wisdom and forbade young people from questioning the judgment of the elderly on all issues.

Notwithstanding the fact that culture is resistant to change, the evolution of societies is on-going and social change is an ever-present phenomenon. In this era of technological advancement, information boom and increased migration, local cultures are often overwhelmed by alien cultures. Thompson (1983, p.7) identifies a trend that shows that the practice whereby people live in relatively culturally homogeneous communities – whose well-being depends largely upon the acceptance of communal responsibility by interdependent individuals and groups – is giving way to a new order of community life that generates patterns of human interdependence that are more complex and universal. In line with this thinking, it is pertinent to note how the phenomenon of rapidly changing societies has impacted on the concepts and practices of education in all societies over the years, and how the concepts and practices of education have, in turn, affected social change. For instance, when Japan was opened during the Meiji Restoration, the adoption of western learning was seen as a way to make Japan a strong, modern nation. At the same time, conservatives argued for the retention of Japanese cultural elements in the curriculum, to minimize western influence on Japanese society and to strengthen "Japanese values". The rise of militarism led to the use of the education system to prepare the nation for war. After Japan's defeat in World War II, the allied occupation government set in motion education reforms to eradicate militarist teachings and "democratize" Japan. And in Germany, Emperor Bismarck used education to unify the diverse elements within the the empire. During the Nazi era (1933-1945), indoctrination of Nazi ideologies was added to student education. After World War II, however, the Allied powers (Soviet Union, France, Britain, and the USA) made efforts to remove Nazi ideas from the curriculum. They installed educational systems in their respective occupation zones that reflected their own ideas. Similarly, in Africa generally, and indeed in Ghana for that matter, the expansion of communities and the emergence of complex social and political problems, following the attainment of nationhood, have made it imperative to look at education beyond the limitations of traditional thought. In the rapidly changing society of Ghana, typified by pluralism in relation to beliefs and roles, among

others, education must now transmit new national values and must be the medium for incorporating members of the Ghanaian society into a rapidly changing national as well as global environment. There is no gainsaying the fact that the phenomenon of rapidly changing societies has led to a situation in which education and its associated organizations have been called upon to play new roles. It is obvious from the foregoing instances that in most countries education is viewed and used as instrument for promoting and controlling change, and the curriculum is the instrument through which innovative ideas for controlling and promoting change are introduced into the social system. In every society the need to control and promote change calls for constant review and reform of the existing structures and contents of education. For most developing countries, reforms in education became a major preoccupation after the 1990 World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand (Moulton and Mundy, 2002, p. 1). For African countries in particular, however, system-wide educational reforms began to gain prominence through the policy study of two donor organizations: the World Bank and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (Moulton and Mundy, 2002). The study resulted in the publication of the document *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Policies for Adjustment, Revitalization and Expansion*. In recent times, Migration, transition to democracy, and the formation of supra nations, such as the European Union (EU), have resulted in alterations to existing social structures, in the form of changes in social organization, value systems and rules of behavior. These have given rise to widespread curriculum reforms in many countries, especially in the areas of citizenship and character education. Curriculum reforms and innovation have thus become a sine qua non in this era of rapid change. The curriculum reforms of 1987 to which this study is linked, is part of the phenomenon.

2.4.   Why Reforms fail – A Review of some Perspectives

Policy implementation and the diffusion of innovation is an on-going process in both developed and developing countries (Eisner, 1994, p. 5; Moulton and Mundy, 2002, pp. 2, 5). Research shows that, generally, the incidence of fall-out between policy and practice is a phenomenon that is present in most fields of activity but more prevalent in the education sector. Often times, a grandiose plan ends up with limited success. Various reasons have been assigned for the fall-out between policy and implementation.

One viewpoint that is shared by many scholars is the tendency of policy-makers and reformers to regard policy-making and implementation as constituting a rational linear process. This view, however, is challenged by Pressman and Wildavsky (1984, cited in Moulton et al, 2002, p. 5) who claim that

policy-making and policy implementation do not constitute a rational linear process. Rather, they represent events that, in most cases, are highly contested, disarticulated and conflictual, often producing outcomes that are not anticipated. Policy-makers who hold this 'rational linear process' assumption have the tendency to take the implementation stage for granted. Supporting this assertion, John M. Rogan and Diane J. Grayson (2003, p. 1171) cited two studies: P. Porter's from 1980 and A. Verspoor's from 1989. Porter observed that officials concerned with making policy and enacting the relevant legislation for educational change, especially, in the USA and Australia, rarely looked down the track to the implementation stage. Verspoor pointed out in her analysis of twenty-one World Bank supported educational change programs, that large-scale programs tended to emphasize adoption and neglect implementation. According to her, "in nearly all instances, low outcomes resulted from poor implementation of what was essentially a good idea." She expressed concern about how a great deal of time, money and effort may be wasted, when good ideas fail to be translated into classroom reality.

Other scholars are of the opinion that the use of discretionary authority at the implementation stage sometimes causes policies to produce outcomes that are different from the expected. Drawing on evidence from studies conducted by many scholars, Moulton et al (2002, p. 5) assert that the use of discretionary authority, whether legitimate or not, at the middle or local levels, usually lead to fall- outs in official policy expectation. Goodlad et al (1979, p. 63) shed more light on this point in their discussion of the "Curriculum." They point out, that although the formal curriculum stipulates broad national aims and objectives, these are merely statements of aspirations which need to be interpreted and organized into an operational curriculum, that is, what goes on hour after hour, day after day in schools and classrooms. They note that in many cases these curricula are well-designed and the aims they are intended to achieve are laudable. However, all too often the attention and energies of policymakers and politicians are focused on the 'what' of desired educational change, neglecting the 'how.' It is with such understanding that Hargreaves et al (2001, p. 183) explain the inconsistencies between policy and implementation, especially in the area of education. They opine that such fall-outs or inconsistencies may be due to the fact that teachers may not be able to meet the standards and expectations that reformers, who are usually outside the classroom, set for them. It is not uncommon to realize that teacher behavior does not fit the assumptions of systematic change strategies.

Over the years attempts have been made to develop theoretical frameworks to provide guidance for policy implementation, especially in the area of education. Many scholars have put forth various suggestions that, more or less, suggest the need for increased attention to the implementation stage. Moulton et al (2002, p. 6) examine some models proposed by MacDonnel and Elmore, and Sabatier.

The model of MacDonnel and Elmore is based on the following:

- A consideration of the use of cash inducements or incentives to induce policy implementers to put more effort into the implementation process;

- The need to consult with stakeholders in order to reach a consensus on how to manage aspects of the intended change that are of special interest to them;

- Individuals and agencies involved with the change process need to be assigned some measure of delegated official authority to change the current system of education services and resources delivery;

- The need to establish mandates to regulate the actions of individuals and groups involved in one way or the other with the change process;

- The need to build the needed capacity for the change process by investing in material, intellectual, or human resources.

The model of Sabatier is formulated in the form of questions intended to aid the organization of data collection. The questions include the following:

- What is the causal theory of the policy?

- How clearly stated are the goals and strategies of the policy?

- How capable and committed are those responsible for implementing the policy?

- How strong is the official support for the project?

- What changes in the broader political agenda or socioeconomic conditions intrude upon implementation of the policy?

In spite of the availability of various theoretical frameworks to guide policy implementation, evidence still indicates that educational policy implementation, especially in developing countries, continues to register failures rather than illustrate the efficacy of some theory of educational change   (Moulton et al, 2002, pp. 1-2). It is in recognition of this problem that researchers such as Rogan and

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Grayson (2003, pp. 1181-1202) find it compelling to develop and put forth a theoretical model on curriculum implementation which places particular emphasis on developing countries. The proposed framework is based on relationships between three constructs, each of which in turn comprises of a number of sub constructs. The three constructs are discussed below:

- **Profile of Implementation**. Rogan and Grayson share the view that every curriculum has defined aims and objectives which constitute ideals to be attained. They claim that the Profile of Implementation is a construct intended to help understand, analyze, and express the extent to which the ideals of a curriculum are being put into practice. This construct presents a 'map' of the learning area and a number of possible routes that could be taken to a number of destinations. It is envisaged that the profile of implementation would enable curriculum planners at the school level to determine their current strengths, taking into account the context and capacity of their school, and define for themselves how best to adopt a new curriculum. The construct is broken down into subconstructs that are related to the ideals of the curriculum. The subconstructs include the nature of class interaction (what the teacher does and what learners do); the use and nature of practical activities; and the linking of studies with society.

- **Capacity to Support Innovation**. Rogan and Grayson (2003) are convinced that although external factor influence policy implementation processes, greater attention should be paid to school-based factors that have the potential to enhance or hinder the implementation of new ideas and practices. These, according to them, include teacher factors, learner factors, physical resources, and the school ethos and management. Schools differ widely in these factors, and the relative contribution of these four factors make a lot of difference in the implementation process. The construct, "Capacity to Support Innovation" seeks to define and examine these subconstructs in relation to the implementation process.

- **Outside Support**. This construct examines the kinds of actions undertaken by individuals and organizations outside of a school, which influence its practice. Outside support may include material support such as buildings, books, equipments and school feeding programs, as well as nonmaterial support, most commonly provided in the form of professional development. The exponents of this theory delineate two themes from the subconstructs "Professional development." The first theme focuses on In-Service Training (INSET) aimed primarily at providing information about expected changes emanating from the policy and about what teachers are expected to do, as a result, in their classrooms. With time the focus of the INSET shifts gradually from just providing information, to increasing focus on implementation of the change

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and the development of a greater sense of teacher-ownership of the process. The second theme deals with the extent and the duration of support. Professional Development may be in the form of one-shot workshop or continuous, school-based development. Rogan and Grayson (2003) are of the view that an organization can use some kinds of forces as leverage in bringing about change. These forces can be applied as a way of providing support or applying pressure. Pressure can be applied in the form of monitoring and accountability.

In their theory, they noted that the constructs need to be treated as complements. They recognized the benefits to be gained if they are developed concurrently. For instance, attempts to enrich the profile of implementation without attending to the capacity factor are likely to lead to a situation of diminishing returns–more effort with less to show for it.

2.5. Assessing Consistency: Issues to consider

The models discussed above, provide valuable information in the search for what works and what does not work in the process of policy planning and implementation. They also attempt to draw attention to factors that are most likely to bring about fall-outs between policy and practice.
From what have been discussed in the previous sections of this chapter, I have put together a framework that will guide the data-collection process of the study. Since consistency with guidelines is the main concern of the study, planning and collection of data for the study will be done with the prime aim of looking for evidence to determine the following:

1. Teachers commitment to, and application of the official guidelines that accompanied the new curriculum policy, in the planning and teaching of the new programs;
2. The adoption of school management practices and ethos that are consistent with the official guidelines for the implementation of the new curriculum policy.

Although the purpose of the study was not to look for explanations of possible fall-outs between policy and implementation, I thought it worthwhile to look for explanations for acts, events or objects of these, as and when it became possible or necessary. In such situations I have been guided by three principles discussed below. These principles have been drawn extensively from the theoretical models discussed in the previous section of this chapter:

- **The need to create awareness**. A change is an alteration in the status quo. An innovation is a change that represents something new. The Reforms of 1987 falls under the category of curriculum innovation. Under these Reforms, completely new subjects areas of study, Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education, are introduced. In the curriculum policy Social Studies is used loosely to mean Citizenship Education By all intents and purposes, the reforms of 1987 have been designed to benefit learners. Since Schools and teachers are indispensable change agents in the implementation process, it is pertinent that they are sufficiently informed about the aims and objectives of the curriculum policy change, as well as the administrative and academic responsibilities entailed in the change. Such awareness is crucial to successful implementation, and relevant to an assessment of consistency between policy and implementation;

- **The need to build capacity**. No matter how good the underlying intentions of a new policy are, very little will be achieved if the requisite capacities for effective implementation are not developed. In the area of education, and for that matter curriculum innovation, it takes a combination of material capacity: appropriate classrooms, furniture, reading and writing materials, teaching and learning aids and playgrounds, among others; and nonmaterial capacities such as teachers' knowledge of content and teaching skills, sound school management practices and ethos, to attain desirable outcomes. It is hoped that when these capacities are sufficiently developed and conscientiously utilized in the implementation of curriculum innovation, there would be a high probability of success;

- **Support for the implementation process**. It is critical for all stakeholders in education, whether at the policy-making level or local implementation level, to come to the realization that they are players in the same team but playing at different positions and therefore differing roles. Teamwork counts very much for success in this wise. Policy–makers need not perceive the implementation process as a routine process of adoption: regarding local level change agents as passive adopters of new ideals from higher authority. On the other hand local level change agents need not act as inertial force in the implementation process: interested more in maintaining the status quo than supporting and promoting innovative ideas and practices. Parents, individuals and organizations that can play any supportive role in the process should be encouraged to do so. All stakeholders in the change process must be mutually supportive. For example teachers, need to be given every necessary support: guidelines, some amount of discretionary authority, cash incentives, non-cash awards, promotions. On the other hand, feedback needs to flow from

classrooms and schools to policy makers to enhance efficient monitoring of the process.

It is my fervent belief that if the above factors are sufficiently addressed during a period of innovation, local level implementers should be well-placed to implement a new policy with an appreciable amount of success.

3. A METHOD FOR EVALUATING CONSISTENCY

This chapter gives account of how the data collecting process of the study was organized and executed. The chapter discusses the study area, the population and the sampling technique, and the research design. Also discussed in the chapter are the construct of "consistency", the research instruments and how they were employed for data collection, as well as a discussion of the issues of reliability and validity of conclusions and inferences.

3.1.   The Study Area

Due to the limitation of funds and time the study could not cover the whole country. The   twin-city of Sekondi-Takoradi was chosen for the study. Administratively, Ghana is divided into ten regions. Sekondi-Takoradi is the capital of the Western Region, and is the third most important city of Ghana in terms of infrastructural development and economic activity.

Sekondi-Takoradi was selected for the study for the following reasons. It was relatively easy to access Christian as well as Islamic schools from the cluster of schools located in the city center; also, the Regional Directorate of Education for Western Region is located in Sekondi, and the Metropolitan Directorate of Education that controls education in the twin city is also located in Takoradi. Access to personnel of these outfits, as well as official data was easy. Finally, public and media criticisms of the new policy were very active in that part of the country.

3.2.   Population and Sample

Any attempt to determine whether schools and teachers were implementing the new policy on curriculum in accordance with the accompanying guidelines required the study of all basic schools. However, as has been stated already elsewhere in this report, including all basic schools in the study was not possible

within the limitations of the study. Therefore, as is usual with most studies with large populations, I worked with a representative population.

Education delivery in Ghana is a shared responsibility between the state (acting through the Metropolitan/District Assemblies), religious organizations, and private school proprietors. Basic schools in Ghana, whether private or public are basically either Christian or Islamic. The study covered only public basic schools. All basic schools in Ghana use a centralized national curriculum. No basic school – public, private, Christian, Islamic or whatever – is allowed to teach anything outside the official curriculum. What differentiates a Christian school from an Islamic school is the content of the prayers and songs they sing in the school, and other co-curricular activities that are linked to religion. As a result of the linkage between morality and religion, I expected that Christian and Islamic schools might have different approaches to the teaching of Religious and Moral Education. There was the need therefore to use a sampling technique that ensured that the two groups were represented in the sampled population of interest. The stratified random method was used. Using the religious factor as the criterion, the schools were first divided into two strata – Christian schools and Islamic schools. There were twenty-six Christian schools and five Islamic schools. Then the simple random selection technique was used to select one school from each stratum for investigation. The Christian schools were assigned numbers from one to twenty-six. The numbers were then written on pieces of paper which were then folded and put in a bowl. The papers were shuffled and with my eyes closed, I picked one. The process was repeated for the Islamic schools. The two selected schools were officially notified about the study with an introductory letter from my institution (see Appendix 1). The headteachers and teachers of the selected schools gave their consent for the study. In each school, the Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education teachers were observed. Thus in the two schools selected, four teachers were observed. Also, the organizational practices and co-curricular activities of the two schools were observed.

3.3.   The Research Design

The research design provides the glue that holds the research project together. A design is used to structure the research, to show how all of the major parts of the research project – the taking of samples or groups, the data collection process, and the measures and methods of assignment, among others, – work together to address the central research questions. The study is an evaluative one.

To the American Evaluation Association," Evaluation involves assessing the strengths and weaknesses of programs, policies, personnel, products, and organizations to improve their effectiveness."(Wikipedia: Definition of Evaluation). And in a documentation entitled *Evaluation: A Beginners Guide*, Amnesty

International defines "Evaluation" as a way of reflecting on the work that has been done and the results achieved.   On his part, William M. K. Trochim (2006) gives two definitions of Evaluation:

1. "Evaluation is the systematic assessment of the worth or merit of some object."
2. "Evaluation is the systematic acquisition and assessment of information to provide useful feedback about some object."

Although he acknowledges that both definitions are not perfect, he opines that evaluations processes involve collecting and sifting through data, making judgments about the validity of the information and of inferences we derive from it, whether or not an assessment of worth or merit results. He contends that the generic goal of most evaluations is to provide "useful feedback," and acknowledges that most people are of the view that the major goal of evaluation should be to influence decision-making or policy formulation through the provision of empirically-driven feedback. Evaluation may be intended to examine the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of what we do. It aims to improve or reorient the policies, strategies or programs examined, as well as to contribute to learning beyond specific cases. When we do an evaluation, we examine the results of our work to determine whether we are doing well in terms of defined standards. The questions we ask help us to learn and make us more accountable to our organizations, and sometimes, to ourselves. For instance, in the classroom, teachers use class tests, assignments and questions, among others, to evaluate the effect of their instructional activities; school inspectors make periodic or routine inspections to evaluate the performance of schools and teachers; and administrators periodically assess the performance of their organizations. The general purpose of evaluation is to improve the effectiveness of goal achievement. In this regard, evaluation relies very much for its objectivity on evidence or data that is systematically collected and critically analyzed and interpreted. For evaluation to be effective, one must be sure of what is to be evaluated and the criteria that are to be used. In the view of Amnesty international, two important questions need to be addressed in the planning of an evaluation: why the need to evaluate; and what is to be evaluated. In other words, whilst thinking about the rationale for the evaluation, we should also be clear about the problem or issue that is to be evaluated

In this study, efforts have been made to clarify the rationale for the study – to review the way the new curriculum policy is being implemented in basic schools. Also, what is to be evaluated has been clearly defined – to find out whether schools and teachers are doing what they are expected to do. The evaluation was not to assess the impact of the new program. Rather, it was an attempt to review how successful or otherwise that the process of implementation, has been, so far. Identifying and reviewing school administration practices and activities of teachers in the teaching learning situation were seen as part of the search for excellence in line with the standards set by the policy guidelines.

Through this, it is possible to distil from experience, what works in schools. Feedbacks obtained from these endeavors assist policy-making and enhance the quality of our activities. This is what this study was all about.

3.4.   Determining what to evaluate and how to evaluate it

From the purpose of the study, it was clear that the construct of interest that needed to be investigated was "consistency" between curriculum implementation and the official implementation guidelines. Not all variables that affected the implementation process were of importance in the study. This was because the mandate of the study was to find out whether schools and teachers were doing what they were expected to do. Reasons for consistency or inconsistency did not constitute a major concern for the study.

Deciding on the particular evidence (such as the specific knowledge, attitudes, or behavior) that would demonstrate that the objectives were being met was crucial. In order to determine how to assess "consistency", it was necessary to define the construct. Charles M. Judd, et al (1991, pp.42-43), point out that, abstract ideas that are discussed in social and behavioral studies, such as "consistency," need to be defined in more concrete terms to enhance evaluation. The authors claim that constructs need to be concretely represented in the form of variables so that they can be estimated with appreciable level of certainty. According to them, variables are rendered measurable when they are given operational definitions, because these definitions indicate how to measure the variables. They point out, however, that for any given problem situation, there are more than one possible explanations. Consequently, they claim that no particular variable tells the whole story about the construct it represents. A variable usually constitutes a partial representation of the theoretical construct it represents. Therefore, when dealing with abstract constructs it is important to identify and bring together as many variables as possible to provide sufficient representation to the construct under consideration. In view of this, attempts were made to identify all the variables that combined to define the construct "consistency," with a fair level of adequacy.

To determine these variables, or the concrete representations that gave indications of consistency with official expectation, reference was made to the official implementation guidelines that came with the policy documents. Clearly, official expectation was that, schools and teachers would, as much as possible, implement the curriculum policy with due regard to the official guidelines for implementation of the policy. In that sense, "consistency" was defined to mean conformity with the provisions of the curriculum implementation guidelines, and the elements of the official mandates or guidelines constituted the variables that combined to define consistency. These variables were then given operational

definitions to provide the yardstick for determining consistency with official guidelines. Activities of schools and teachers were evaluated, using these variables as factors that determined consistency or inconsistency with official mandates. These activities were assessed to be either consistent or inconsistent with official guidelines.

Even if teachers are not made to take part in developing the curriculum, they need to be conversant with the aims and objectives of a curriculum they are supposed to implement. At the same time, they have to understand any written guidelines that are intended to guide the process of implementing the curriculum. In this regard, although the purpose of the study was not to find out teachers' views about the new programs, basic schools and their teachers needed to be reasonably empowered to be able to discharge their responsibilities as expected. In line with the theoretical framework of this study, schools and teachers could be empowered at least in two ways: by making them aware of the contents of the new policy, and what they are expected to do; and giving them the necessary official support. Therefore, in the data gathering process, although the main task was to look for evidence for consistency, some efforts were made to gather information about the issue of empowerment

3.5. *The Research Instruments*

In an article published on the worldwide web, entitled "Introduction to Program Evaluation", David Abrahams (1997) claims that the research design and methods used in an evaluation have a direct effect on whether or not a program is perceived effective. Appropriate instrumentation is a recipe for effective evaluation. Abrahams declares that the phenomenon under consideration influences the type of instruments to employ in a study.

Because of the nature of the design of this study, and the specific research questions asked, qualitative techniques were employed in the investigation. Education policy is developed, passed into law and implemented within a complex structure. Although in this study, local level actors (schools and teachers) were the subjects of interest, generally, the outcomes of education policies become increasingly dependent on the actions of individuals and institutions operating at different, and sometimes multiple, levels of the process of implementation. These, normally include Ministries, regional and local authorities, religious groups, non-governmental organizations, varieties of school management practices, teachers, and parents and other interested groups and individuals. It is therefore important, in such situations, to emphasize on describing, explaining and understanding of complex relations, situations and issues. It involves substantial reading and interpretation of literature and observing actual behaviors, events and practices in schools.

Taking into consideration the foregoing issues, a combination of Interpretation of Documents and the Observation method was used as the main

instruments for data collection. Some of the research questions were answered through the interpretation of documents. Others were answered by using data gathered through direct observation. In some cases a combination of the two instruments provided answers. The two instruments were supplemented with informal interactions with staff and pupils of schools that were involved in the study. Given the focus of the study, the methodologies adopted were designed for depth of analysis as opposed to wide coverage. Case studies of Religious and Moral Education and Social Studies in two junior secondary schools in the Sekondi-Takoradi area were undertaken. Each case study involved observation of teaching sessions and informal interviews with, teachers and headteachers. How the research instruments were used to answer the research questions is discussed in the sections that follow.

3.5.1.   Interpretation of Documents

"Interpretation", like many other concepts, has attracted many and varied definitions
By interpretation is meant not only uncovering of the meanings embodied in the documents and activities of the schools and teachers, but also establishing the significance of these documents and activities (Fay, 2003, pp. 147-148; Kvale, 1996, p. 211). Some philosophers like Gadamer contend that attempts to place the significance of what we interpret invoke some element of prejudice. But as Kvale (p. 88) points out, if the researcher is a professional teacher, he has a common conceptual framework or shared background of epistemic capacity, belief, and principles of reasoning with teachers and education policy makers. I am therefore in a good position to determine the significance of the official curriculum policy, school records, instructional and other school-life activities that I interpret in my investigation.

        Written records constituted a vital component of the study. The documentary sources used in the study fell into two categories:

- The first category consisted of general literature on how to conduct research, and write research reports;

- The second category of documents consisted of existing written records that were grounded in the setting, as well as other relevant data not directly grounded in the context but which provided additional information for the study. These documents were particularly useful in providing insights into the research setting. Interpretation of the documents provided a contextual understanding of the new policy and the environment within which it was expected to be implemented. The documents constituted important sources of reference, in terms of generating appropriate research questions, identifying the construct of interest and the variables that represented it. They also helped to

determine how the variables were to be used to measure the construct of interest.

The documentary phase of the research started with the interpretation of the relevant curriculum reform policy documents and media publications that set the context. This was followed by a review of literature conducted in the Norsk Lærerakademi library. From this initial interpretation of documents, a clear picture of the problem situation emerged, and it was possible to generate questions and identify events to be observed. A month of field work was conducted in Ghana which also involved the review of teachers' written records of instruction, school log books and official educational statistics. A final bibliographic search in the library and on the worldwide web yielded additional data to support the investigation, and also the writing of this final research report.

Documentary Interpretation was used to answer research **questions 1, 2, 3, 4, and part of question 5.** The questions, as stated in chapter one, are reproduced below.

- What are the aims and objectives of the Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education programs?

- How are the subjects organized to fit into the curriculum of basic education in Ghana?

- What guidelines accompanied the implementation of the policy?

- Are the guidelines clearly stated

- Do teachers apply the guidelines when they are planning and teaching the two subjects?

The innovation introduced by the new policy was an officially documented innovation. The official policy documents contained the syllabuses of the two subjects and the guidelines for their implementation. In dealing with the above questions, therefore, it was necessary that these official documents be reviewed. The aim was to:

- identify the aims and objectives of the new policy, in as much as the two subjects were concerned, and find out how familiar schools and teachers were with the aims and objectives;
- find out how the two study areas – Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education – have been organized to fit into the overall curriculum of basic schools;

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- review any official implementation guidelines that accompanied the policy;

- determine whether the guidelines were clearly stated. This is crucial because results of past studies had indicated that the inability of local level implementers to understand the imports of proposed changes was partly to blame for fall-outs between policy and practice in the past (see section 1.3.).

- find out whether teachers applied the guidelines in planning and teaching the subjects.

Any interpretation and attempt to place the documents in their relevant contexts was completely dependent on the right understanding of the simple meanings of the written texts. This demanded the ability to spot technical terms, know their meanings, and also to recognize allusions of all sorts. Towards this end, efforts were made to interpret any obscure, technical, and/or generally difficult words or phrases.

Also, attempt was made to explain the general meanings of both the policy document as a whole, and of its individual sections. However, in carrying out the interpretation of the documents, I have made use of both Intentionalist and Gadamerian hermeneutics (Fay, 2005, chapter 7). In the attempt to locate the intentionality in the aims of the new programs it was necessary to employ Intentionalist hermeneutics. At the same time, Gadamerian hermeneutics had been employed to highlight the significance of the aims and objectives of the policy. This was necessary for the following reasons: There is no argument about the fact that out of the aims and objectives of the policy emerged the content of the subjects, as well as the guidelines for teaching them. For instance, the Social Studies syllabus presents topics in a predetermined learner order and teachers were expected to stick to this order, though they could branch-off and return, under certain circumstances. This official intention may not be appropriate in certain contexts. Since teachers are in direct contact with pupils, they are better placed to determine the experiential readiness of pupils for particular content or suggested activity. Also, we live in a fast changing environment. Knowledge skills and ideas keep changing. If for any reason officially suggested content becomes inappropriate or insignificant, teachers may substitute with appropriate alternative content. After all, the curriculum constitutes an account of part of teachers' and pupils' lives – teachers and pupils live out a curriculum. It is part of their reality. As Robert Chambers (1997, p. 229) claims, realities are socially constructed, complex, dynamic and unpredictable. According to him, when personal responsibility is given primacy, as is the case with teaching, authority need not reside so much in texts or sequence of observances or procedures, but in individual judgments, choices and actions.

Also, in determining the clarity of the guidelines to local level implementers of the policy – schools and teachers – I employed both versions of Hermeneutics because, I considered both the intentionality and the significance of the policy as

crucial. The reason I did that was because, although the official intentionality in the policy guidelines was important, teachers should not be seen as passive implementers of policy. Most often, some educators have made a clear distinction between curriculum as an end, and instruction as a means to that end. Thus, curriculum has been conceptualized as a planned course of action for intended learning outcomes, while instruction has been referred to as an entity dealing with how a proposed curriculum is put into action. Consequently, teachers are often viewed as implementers of externally created curricular and instructional materials prescribed for them by others outside the classroom. However, this appears to be a very limited way of defining the place of teachers in the curriculum development and implementation process. In the area of curriculum implementation, for instance, teachers' reflections on their classroom practices and the feedback they provide, are means of promoting curriculum excellence. They contribute to the knowledge of what works and what does not work in a real classroom. In addition, teachers' practical knowledge of classroom teaching enables them to determine whether the ideas being asserted currently in a particular curriculum policy would work in a classroom teaching or not. Teachers bring pupils' problems and school needs to the surface and help solve curriculum problems as well as acquire important knowledge and skills for classroom application. In the light of these factors, it is no wonder, that sometimes teachers question aspects of official policy. It is not uncommon that some teachers and school managers sometimes put their own interpretations on policy guidelines in the process of policy implementation. Local level implementers may not approach the policy implementation process from the same perspective as the policy makers. In this study therefore, the use of Hermeneutics in the documentary analysis recognized this fact.

In dealing with the above research questions, two important documents – Teachers' Notes and School Log books – were examined. The idea was that, through the review it was possible to get a fair picture of what teachers had been doing since the beginning of the implementation process in 1987. Teachers' notes are part of the history of a school. In Ghana, teachers are required to prepare lesson notes for every topic they teach. This is an establishment requirement. The notes are certified by the headteacher of the school. Some authors, for instance, Loraine Blaxter, Christina Hughes and Malcolm Tight (2003, p.168) share the opinion that lesson plans are potential indicators of what goes into an instructional session, and that they provide a relatively unobtrusive form of research by enabling the investigator to trace teachers' steps in past instructional activities. Ideally, a teachers' note book should provide a written account of past and current instructional activities of the teacher. Teachers' past written records of instruction therefore, constituted a very important source of data in this study. Also, generally, when subjects in a study (in this case teachers) become aware that they are being observed, the tendency is for them to suppress negative behaviors and increase desired behaviors. To minimize the effect of this tendency, written accounts of previous instructional sessions, needed to be examined. These provided vital information regarding the efforts teachers had been putting into their lessons before the current observations

began. In all four lesson notes were reviewed – two in each subject area from the two schools.

In addition to teachers' note books, School Log books constituted another source of record of events in all basic schools. They contain records of major events in a school. These include Open Days, drama, cultural and special events that the school organize, or participate in. They also contain records of special as well as routine visits to the school by officials from the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service. Also, visits to the school by resource persons to assist in the teaching of specific topics in the various subject areas are recorded in this book. This category of visitors was of special interest in the study because teachers were expected to seek the assistance of resource persons in the teaching of the two subjects. These records therefore provided evidence of such category of visitors. Examination of school Log books was made to look for the following specific information:

- Records of participation in In-service Education and Training programs attended by the teachers who were being investigated

- Visits to the schools by subject organizers in connection with the implementation process

- Visits by resource persons invited to assist in the teaching-learning process.

3.5.2.   Observation Method

According to Patricia A. Adler and Peter Adler (1998, p. 80) "Observation" consists of gathering impressions of the surrounding world through all relevant human faculties, such as hearing, seeing, smelling, and touching.   Evaluative observational variables require the researcher to make an inference and a judgment from the behavior. Therefore, although attitudes cannot be observed, it is possible to observe instructional behaviors of teachers and make inferences about whether their attitude to the policy implementation process was positive or negative.

Judd et al (1991, p. 274) contend that observations become scientific if they satisfy the following conditions:

1. If they serve a formulated research purpose;
2. If they are planned deliberately;
3. If they are recorded systematically;
4. If they are subject to the checks and controls on Reliability and Validity.

In the first place, the study was a deliberately planned project with a clearly defined research objective: To find out whether schools and teachers were doing what they were expected to do, as indicated in the purpose of the research (see chapter one). Thus the first and second conditions for acceptance of the use of the technique for scientific investigation were satisfied.

Secondly, in my observations, I employed the systematic observational technique, using a checklist of predetermined categories, and systematically recording my impressions of the behaviors and events of interest. I also observed other relevant extraneous events in the classroom, such as teachers' classroom organization and control, and recorded my observations and interpretations. These provided me with information for my informal discussions with them after the instructional sessions. Finally, I conducted my observations in such a manner that they were subjected to the checks and controls of Reliability and Validity.

The Reliability of a measure "is the extent to which it is free from random error components" (Judd et. al. 1991, p. 51). Robert K. Yin (2003 p. 33) defines reliability as "demonstrating that the operations of a study – such as data collection procedures can be repeated, with the same results." Similarly, Steinar Kvale says that reliability pertains to the consistency of the research findings. From the definitions it is clear that they are all agreed on what reliability is about. It is the extent to which the instrument can be relied upon to consistently measure what it is intended to measure, under given circumstance. This enables the measure to yield consistent results.

As suggested by Yin (1994, pp. 36-37), in order to enhance the possibility to replicate observations made in the data gathering process, I documented the procedures that I followed in the data-gathering process, more opportunities, in terms of settings and subjects, were created to see behaviors occur over and over again in two schools. Though the study was about a single education program – the implementation of a new curriculum policy – the analysis included outcomes from two sub-programs – Religious and Moral education and Social Studies – and also involved two schools. This enhances insights.

The concept Validity has different facets. In this study, the concern is for Construct Validity and External Validity (External Validity is discussed under section 5.3). Judd et al (1991, p. 51) define construct validity as "the extent to which a measure reflects only the desired construct without contamination from other systematically varying constructs." Robert K. Yin (1994, p. 33) defines construct validity as the establishment of correct operational measures for the concepts being studied. On his part, Steinar Kvale (1996, p. 238), argues that this kind of formulation is narrow and restricts validity to measurements. The tendency is to render qualitative research findings invalid if they do not result in numbers. He defines the concept in a much broader way by combining the narrow formulation with a view which is credited to Pervin. Thus, according to him, validity pertains to the degree to which a method investigates what it is intended to investigate, to "the extent to which our observations actually reflect the phenomena or variables of interest to us" (Pervin, 1994, cited in Kvale, 1996, p. 238). Yin (1994, p.34) contends that validity in case study research is

problematic because investigators often use subjective measures to collect data and this undermines the acceptability of their findings. Arguing from a postmodern point of view, Kvale (1996, p. 240, 248) shares the view of Cronbach, that construct validity "is an open process of investigation that goes beyond mere collaboration, to encompass the development of sounder interpretations of observation. However, he goes further to advocate for a pragmatic validation of knowledge. In this connection, he argues that the effectiveness of knowledge is demonstrated by the effectiveness of action that follows from interpretation of our observations. To him therefore, pragmatic validation rests on observations and interpretations, with a commitment to act on the interpretations. Some researchers believe that observational research findings have strong validity. In her article published on the worldwide web, entitled "Observational Field Research," Laura Brown (no date) appears to agree with Trochim (1997) that Validity "is the best available approximation to the truth of a given proposition, inference, or conclusion." The contention is that in an observation, "the researcher is able to collect a depth of information about a particular behavior, "and therefore the technique offers the observer a good chance of getting an objective measure of observed behavior. School and classroom observations are hard evidence, and when these are used to cross check data gathered by other means, such as interpretation of documents, consistency and validity are enhanced.

As has been indicated in the previous section, research question (5) required the used of the method of document interpretation to establish the guidelines to which teachers were supposed to conform. But the determination of whether or not teachers were applying the guidelines required the use of the technique of direct observation. To deal with this question, selected schools were observed. Four weeks of observation was undertaken in two Basic schools in Sekondi-Takoradi. For the purpose of confidentiality the two schools are represented in this study as School A and School B. Both schools are located in Takoradi.

In the first and second weeks, the observation was carried out at School A. In the third and fourth weeks, School B was observed. In each of the two separate observations two teachers were involved—the citizenship education teacher, and the moral education teacher. Each teacher was observed two times in a week. The weekly engagements were as follows:

Week 1 – School A

Subject………………….....................................Citizenship education
First observation……………………………Basic class 7
Topic………………………………………..*Ethnic groups in Ghana.*
Duration of lesson…………………………70 minutes

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Second observation…………………………Basic class 7
Topic…………………………………………*Citizenship*
Duration……………………………………...35 minutes

Subject……………….....................Moral education
First observation……………………………..Basic class 7
Topic………………………………………*Family systems*
Duration……………….......................60 minutes

Second observation…………………………Basic class 7
Topic………………………………………*Manners* (Comportment and Courtesy)
Duration…………………………………..30 minutes

Week 2 – School A

Subject………………………………………Citizenship education
First observation………………………………Basic class 7
Topic…………………. …………………….*The Rights of a Ghanaian Citizen*
Duration of lesson……………………………70 minutes

Second observation….................................Basic class 7
Topic………………………………………*The Responsibilities of a Ghanaian Citizen*
Duration…………………………………………35 minutes

Subject………………………………………..Moral education
First observation……………………………Basic class 8
Topic………………………………………*The moral teachings of Christianity*
Duration of lesson…………………………..60 minutes

Second observation…………………………Basic class 8
Topic………………………………………*The moral teachings of Christianity*
Duration……………………………………..30 minutes

Week 3 – School B

Subject……………………………………………..Citizenship education
First observation………………………………Basic class 8
Topic…………………………………………………..*Our Constitution and how we are governed*
Duration…………………………………………70 minutes

Second observation……............................Basic class
Topic…………………………………………………..*Our Constitution and how we are governed*
Duration……………………………………………35 minutes

Subject…………………………………………..Moral education
First observation……...............................Basic class 7
Topic………………………...............................*The Family*,
Duration of lesson……………………………..60 minutes

Second observation…………………………..Basic class 7
Topic………………………...............................The *Community*
Duration………………………………………...30 minutes

Week 4 – School B

Subject……………………………………………Citizenship education
First observation………………………………Basic class 9
Topic……………………………………………….*Structure of Government*
Duration of lesson…....................................70 minutes

Second observation………………………….Basic class9
Topic…………………………………………………*Structure of Government*
Duration……………………………....................35 minutes

Subject……………………………………………Moral education
First observation……...............................Basic 7
Topic……………………………………………Authority and Obedience*
Duration of lesson……………………………60 minutes

Second observation…………………………Basic class 7
Topic…………………….................................*Authority and Obedience*
Duration……………………………………..30 minutes

Before the observations started, I visited the schools involved, and sought permission for the study, with an introduction letter from my institution (Appendix 1). The headteachers of the schools convened separate staff meetings and introduced me to the staff. Thereafter, I had some interactions with the teachers who were to be observed. Being a teacher myself, I was able to establish an early rapport with the headteachers and the concerned teachers. Arrangements for the release of their lesson notes for scrutiny, as well as the days and times for the observations were made. In all cases the lesson notes were released for scrutiny, some time ahead of the teaching-learning sessions.

In the actual class observations I observed the instructional activities of the teachers and recorded my impressions against the background of the particular teacher's lesson plans and the dictates of the official implementation guidelines. After every observation session I interacted with the teacher. As has been indicated, although the study was not intended to find out teachers' opinions about the implementation process, I considered it worthwhile to elicit their views, albeit informally, on certain issues that I considered relevant to the study (see last part of section 3.4). In my interaction with them we discussed issues that made them give their candid opinions and impressions about the process. The following were some of the questions I asked:

How do you rate your understanding of the policy guidelines?

Do you consider the guidelines as realistic and necessary?

Did you attend any In-Service Education and Training (INSET) workshop on the new policy before the implementation process began?

How many additional INSET workshops programs, if any, have been organized in your subject area since the beginning of the implementation process?

How will you rate the success of these workshops, if any, in enhancing your Instructional ability?

Are teachers given any special incentives for the implementation process?

If teachers are not given any special incentives for the implementation process, would you recommend that this is done?

How supportive have been the Ministry of Education /Ghana Education Service in the exercise?

How do you rate the internal support from the school administration?

Is there any external monitoring program by the Ministry of Education?

In your opinion, do you think the implementation process has been successful so far?

Who do you blame for any fall-out between the policy and its implementation, if any?

Question 6….Do schools provide other opportunities that advance the aims and objectives of the new policy, besides normal teaching-learning activities?

In order to deal with the above research question, I observed school life in the host schools and interacted with the staff and pupils. School organization and how it enhanced the aims and objectives of the new policy was my main area of concern at that time.

3.6.   Appraising the data collection process

The data gathering process in the two schools went on smoothly without any problems. I related very well with the staff and pupils of the two schools. Both schools had similar facilities and were organized along the same lines because they were public schools. They use a common national curriculum that includes a suggested time table. The teachers were highly co-operative and pupils generally, comported themselves in their interaction amongst themselves.
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4. CONSISTENCY BETWEEN GUIDELINES AND PRACTICE

In this chapter, the findings of the study are presented and discussed in sections that correspond with the research questions. The findings for the particular item of investigation are presented and are then followed immediately by a discussion of emergent issues. Data from the two groups of teachers – two Social Studies teachers and two Religious and Moral Education teachers – are treated and discussed as a composite case study. This is because, although slightly different sets of data were collected in the two areas, I found the two study areas to be complementary, in terms of the effort to develop a morally upright and responsible citizenry. In both sets of data, I looked for the following occurrences:

- Evidence of familiarity with, and understanding of the aims or rationale of the new policy;
- Evidence of understanding of the official guidelines for planning and teaching the subjects;
- Evidence of commitment to the application of the guidelines in the planning and teaching of the subjects;
- Evidence of the provision of school-life experiences that aimed at developing appropriate values and skills required for sound morality and responsible citizenship.

4.1. The Aims and Objectives of the new Policy on Social Studies Religious and Moral Education

From the interpretation of the two documents: *Teaching Syllabus for Religious and Moral Education (*Ministry of Education, 1987*)* and *Teaching Syllabus for Social Studies* (Ministry Of Education, 1987), the following aims and objectives were identified. This section deals with the presentation and discussion of findings in relation to the aims and objectives of the two programs.

4.1.1. Findings – Social Studies

The main aims or goals of the citizenship education program are:

    i.   To develop a sense of national consciousness and national identification.

    ii.   To prepare the individual to be able to live and be lived with.

    iii.   To enhance the individual's ability to make constructive contributions to change society for the better.

In order to realize the above aims, the objective of the syllabus of the subject has been

    i.   To facilitate the acquisition of knowledge of basic tenets of citizenship;

    ii.   To facilitate the acquisition of knowledge of political institutions and how they work;

    iii.   To develop the attitude of constructive and critical mindedness needed for personal growth, and peaceful coexistence among peoples of different backgrounds.

Discussion of Findings – Social Studies

Findings from the interpretation of the aims of the programs, and analysis of the views expressed by teachers during the informal interactions with them isolated three main reasons for the Social Studies program. These were: The need to nurture a deep sense of national consciousness; the cultivation of a sense of national unity; and the nurturing of a desire and commitment to positive change in the society.

        National consciousness is essential for national survival. Ghana attained independence from colonial rule in 1957. Before then, the nation consisted of a collection of diverse ethnic groups brought together by colonialism. To continue to survive as a nation it is imperative that national consciousness among the citizenry is stimulated. The essence of national consciousness is to create the awareness that enjoins every citizen to identify himself, at all times, first as a Ghanaian, before membership of any particular ethnic group. It is therefore appropriate that this factor is accounted for in the new program. In this regard, schools have a key role to play.

        National unity emanates from national consciousness. Once people feel genuinely that they belong to the same country, unity should follow as a matter of logical consequence. No Ghanaian should feel like a stranger in any part of the country. This is the only way all can sincerely feel as members of one national

entity, under one flag and with a common destiny. But in many instances unity does not follow naturally as expected. Unity is a natural impulse for togetherness; and togetherness cannot take place in an atmosphere of suspicion, strangeness and insecurity. Ghana is a multi-ethnic country in which about one hundred languages and dialects are spoken (US Library of Congress, 1994). There are five major ethnic groups in Ghana. These include the Akan, Ewe, Mole-Dagbane, Guan, and Ga-Adangbe. Mole-Dagbane is spoken by about 15 percent of the nation's population. Its speakers are culturally the most varied, and include the Nanumba, Dagomba, Mamprusi, Wala, Builsa, Frafra, Talensi, and Kusase (Ghanaweb.com, *Ethnic Groups*). During the pre-colonial and the colonial periods, internecine conflicts were rife among the different ethnic groups that occupied the country. Whereas these conflicts have stopped in most parts of the country, they have persisted in some parts: the Northern part of the country, especially, and lately part of the Volta region. The north has a long history of conflicts, rooted in antagonisms and conflicts among the various sub-ethnic groups. Citing Ghana National Statistics, Sam Mednick (2006) writing about conflicts in Ghana, claims that between 1990 and 2002 there were twenty-three outbreaks of violence between the five indigenous ethnic groups in the northern region. For instance in February, 1994, more than one thousand persons were killed and many others displaced in the north-eastern part of Ghana, during fighting between Konkombas on one side and Nanumbas, Dagombas, and Gonjas on the other. The clashes resulted from longstanding grievances over land ownership and the prerogatives of chiefs. And in 1998, a dispute over the order of succession to the Skin (Stool) of Wa in the north- western part of Ghana, began with the death of the Wa Na ,the incumbent Chief (Wikipedia). Similarly, in 2002, fifty-five people, including Ya Na, the chief of the Dagbon Traditional Area, were brutally murdered in the palace of the chief, in a dispute over succession. Many people fled the area for fear of reprisals from hostile ethnic groups. There is a complete dossier on the conflicts in the north, at Ghana Home page (Ghana web.com, *Dossier: Conflicts in the North*). Besides the conflicts in the north, there have been clashes sparked by simmering land disputes at the Tsito-Peki and Alavanyo-Nkonya areas in the Volta Region, which lies on the southeastern part of Ghana, near the border with Togo.

Furthermore, the results of the review of the aims of the new curriculum policy indicated that the new program aimed at getting people to appreciate the need for change, and commit themselves to work with others to bring about positive change in society. Whereas, it is welcome news that practices such as ritual murders, female circumcision, discrimination against females, idolatry, among others, are fast giving way, the new wind of change is also threatening to blow away certain worthwhile traditional practices. For instance, initiation ceremonies like puberty rites for adolescent girls, and traditional marriage arrangements have succeeded over the years in maintaining chastity among the younger generation. With the breakdown of the family and community "watchdog" role in the sex life of young members of society through puberty rights and customary marriage practices, sexual promiscuity among very young members of society has been on the ascendancy. In Ghana today, there is a state of

apparent cultural confusion. The old is being discarded as no longer appropriate, but the new – an admixture of foreign and local cultures – is often ill-understood and not well-digested. For instance, the practice whereby opinions of the elderly or older people were considered as distilled wisdom to be accepted without questioning, is fast giving way. On the other hand, the young generation of today has developed a tendency of rejecting everything "old." They even refuse to vote for people in their sixties who contest for political offices, as parliamentarian or president. In most cases, at best, it could be said to be a situation of cultural confusion.

It is necessary to begin the march towards a meaningful and enduring national unity, and responsible and reflective citizenship with the younger generation of Ghanaian citizens. And in this connection, the school is an indispensable agent. Through education it is possible to eliminate mutual suspicion, strangeness, and sense of insecurity. One way of doing this is to do away with contents in the school curricula that remind pupils about wars that were fought between various ethnic groups in the past. There is the need for new content that seek to remove ethnic prejudices and create awareness of the positive contributions that various groups have been making toward the development of the country. This is what the new curriculum seeks to attain. For instance, in the Social Studies syllabus, there is a topic on migration of various ethnic groups to present-day Ghana. One of the reasons given for this migration was the search for a place where they could settle down in peace and security. It is the responsibility of teachers to highlight such factors in their lessons, to drive home the need for all groups to co-exist in peace and harmony. This is what official expectation is all about.

What role are schools expected to play in this period of rapid social change: Do schools have to merely follow and reflect the naturally occurring change that is sometimes negative; or lead the change process? The role of the school, as clearly envisaged in the new policy, is not just simply to reflect or follow the cultural muddle. Rather schools are expected to be actively involved in directing and shaping the change process. It is in this spirit that schools are expected to provide school-life experiences that reinforce what pupils learn in classrooms and at the same time integrate them into the society as large. Society is not static; it is always changing. The role of policy makers is to develop new policies to enhance positive change. Given a national curriculum with very general aims; and given the differing social contexts within which the national curriculum is to be implemented, the proper role of the school is to select, and organize content to suit the local context, and structure social forces in the school to provide relevant experiences that enhance change in a positive direction

4.1.2. Findings –Religious and Moral Education

The main aims of the moral education syllabus are:

    iv.   To develop pupils' awareness of a creator (God) and the purpose of their very existence;

    v.   To develop an understanding and tolerance of other people's faith;

    vi.   To develop appropriate attitudes and values that are likely to enhance pupils' capacity to make correct choices and decisions in their growth toward adulthood.

    vii.   To encourage pupils to become good and useful citizens capable of maintaining peace, understanding and order in their lives, and in the lives of their families.

To realize the above aims, the objective of the moral education syllabus has been directed at the following:

    i.   To create awareness in pupils about the purpose of life, from the point of view of the three main religions in Ghana – Christianity, Islam and Traditional Religion.

    ii.   To provide opportunity for pupils to learn about family and community life and the interrelationships that exists within these structures.

    iii.   To develop an appreciation for the need to respect and tolerate people with different beliefs and opinions.

    iv.   To create opportunity for pupils to become familiar with the moral teachings of the different religions, and how they influence peoples' lives.

    v.   To enhance pupils' ability to differentiate between good and bad behaviors and improve their capacity to make right decisions in the many sticky situations that will confront them as they grow to adulthood.

In order to achieve these objectives the syllabus indicated, among others, that teachers discussed the moral teachings of the three main religions in Ghana: Christianity, Islam, and Traditional. One of the teachers was of the opinion that the syllabus gave too much emphasis to the religious basis of morality.

Discussions of Findings – Religious and Moral Education

Findings indicated an intention to produce citizens who are morally upright. But as indicated above, one of the teachers had observed that the contents of the syllabus did not give adequate emphasis to the development of critical thinking. A review of the syllabus showed that most topics on morality were linked to religion and tradition. Well this appeared to be normal since the rationale of the program was to enhance the development of sound religious and moral principles. It is the prerogative of every society to determine what should constitute sound moral values. Every society has social conventions and norms that are peculiar to it. They form the basis of the value system of the society. They constitute part of the perennial elements of a society's store of knowledge that young members of the society are expected to acquire. Some of the principles on which a society's value system is based may not necessarily be logical: To the society, logic may not be the major consideration. Generally, some Christians, Moslems, and Traditionalists in Ghana, believe that morality should not be separated from religion and tradition. The linkage between morality and religion (including traditional values) has been a contentious issue, universally, from classical times till today. Historically, religion and tradition have provided the categories, the narratives, and the worldviews that provided the deep justifications for morality. Although some adherents and leaders of different religions in the world have disrupted peace in society by promoting violence and wars, in reality, the vast majority of believers still hold that true religion, whether Christianity, Islam, Traditional African Religion or Buddhism, is a source and guarantor of individual and societal peace. From within almost any religious worldview, people try to set themselves right with a Supreme Being or God, reconciling them to the basic moral structure of reality, as they perceive it. Writing about *African Traditional Religion and Promoting Community-Living in Africa*, Christopher I. Ejizu (no date) claims that morality is a relevant means through which traditional Africans try to form people and reinforce in them the important idea and value of harmonious community-living. He points out that every social group evolves its distinct ethical code, and every society has its norms of acceptable behaviour, taboos and prohibitions. In the opinion of Ejizu, although religion may be distinct and separate from morality, as many scholars have rightly argued, for traditional Africans, however, the line dividing the two is very thin indeed. He contends that African traditional religion plays a crucial role in the ethical dynamics of community living. In this connection, Godfrey Igwebuike Onah (no date) explains, that the main object of Traditional African Religion is the belief in a Supreme Being or God, other lesser divinities, and ancestral spirits. He points out that the practical aspect of belief in Traditional African Religion is not only to worship but also human conduct. He claims that belief in God and other spirits implies a certain type of conduct that respects the order established by God, and watched over by the divinities and ancestors. He posits that at the centre of traditional African morality is life, and it is believed to

be the greatest gift of God to humans. Individuals are duty-bound to protect and nurture life. The obligation to maintain harmonious relationships with all the members of the community, according to Onah, is, therefore, not simply a social need but a religious obligation: a moral obligation ordained by God, and policed by spiritual beings, especially ancestral spirits. Religion provides the basis on which this life-centered, community-oriented morality is based. He sums up this community living by referring to a popular quotation by John Mbiti, "I am because we are; and since we are, therefore I am." Human conduct, he asserts, is paramount in upholding the delicate balance believed to exist between the visible world and the invisible one.

In her publication entitled *What is Moral Education,* Susan Devine (2006) asserts that "a valid and abiding morality is incomprehensible unless it is grounded upon a living faith in a personal Creator, Law giver, and Guarantor of human aspiration." Without this, she claims, morality is without objective sanction, detached and subject to the whims and fashions of cultural variety and change. She points out that social changes brought about by Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution was so overwhelming that the old ways of doing things gave way quickly. The sweeping nature of the changes, according to her, is captured in a statement she attributes to Marx and Engels: "All that is solid melts into air; all that is holy is profaned." She contends that the linkage between religion and morality, enabled morality to endure the change by clinging to the past and changing slowly in time.

On their part, Atheists criticize what they call "The divine command theory" of ethics; the idea that nothing is right or wrong outside of God's will –"If God wills something, then it's good. If God wills that something not be done, then it's wrong; good and evil are not independent of God and God's will." They query whether this can be accepted as a genuine theory of morality. They contend that if it cannot be accepted, then divine command theory is not only a wrong theory of morality, but also an illegitimate theory of morality in the first place. They also disagree with the perception that any religious morality based upon the commands of any god is vastly preferable to a secular morality that does not take any gods into account. To them, most religious believers tend to connect religion and morality in such a way that one becomes unthinkable without the other. Thus true, genuine religion necessarily makes one a more moral person while being a moral person signifies that one has and requires true religion. They contend that none of this is true and that the connection between religion and morality is at best incidental (Austin Cline, 2006*)*

The religion-morality linkage was especially heightened during the Middle Ages when the Church had considerable influence in Europe (Noddings, 1998, p. 141). According to Noddings, that period was an era of religious orthodoxy – one Church and one faith. She writes that the Church wielded and exercised considerable power and authority over the ethics of everyday life. According to her, this type of ethics or morality "is one of order, obedience, tradition, and acceptance." The authority of the Church in the determination of what constituted good morals was challenged during the period of Enlightenment. One philosopher who played a key role in the introduction of human rationality

into moral issues in particular and the conduct of people's lives in general, was Kant. In the view of Noddings (1998), his 'categorical imperative' (see section 2.1) puts ethics on a logical base. Kant perceived moral decisions as more of duty than act of love. His ethics is thus a form of deontological ethics. According to Noddings, Kant's moral principles enhance the notion of autonomy and individualism, and guides ethics into abstract studies with emphasis on logic. It is the view of many that Kant's postulation, effectively liberated morality from the authority of the church and community, and placed it on the individual's 'goodwill and logic'. But in the opinion of Kant, as understood by Noddings (1998, p. 143), his approach was compatible with traditional Christian ethics. He claims that human reason is God's gift, and if humans use this god-given reasoning capacity properly, the resultant principles would be acceptable to God. In the view of Kant, it is essential that moral agents develop the capacity to act for the sake of the moral law and paying less attention to their feelings and passions. Contrary to the position of Kant, Utilitarianism, another doctrine of the Enlightenment period, contend that in matters of moral decision making, people ought to act individually or collectively to promote the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. To them, the vision of good must precede determination of what is right (Noddings 1998, pp.143-144)

One is tempted to ask whether issues about morality cannot be addressed without recourse to tradition and religion. How do we make sense of traditional and religious accounts of morality? Gabriel Moran (no date) claims that religious education and moral education should be distinct but not separate areas. To him, in a world that has been shaped by western enlightenment, an educational approach to morality cannot begin with religious premises. At the same time, he contends that those who act as if religion were either non-existent or morally negative are just as stubborn as the religious fundamentalists they ridicule. He points out that "many proponents of moral education sound like Voltaire or Nietzsche, fighting to dislodge the control over morality by the Church. He invites both sides of the perceived dichotomy between Religion and Morality to pull forces together in battles over morality. He asserts that it is naive to think that one can possibly teach values without moving into the realm of religion.

I cannot agree more with Moran. In my opinion, values and morals are intended to safeguard and uphold the life of people in their relationship with others. Topics like truth, justice, love, right, wrong, good and evil, decency, respect, crime and punishment, which religion is concerned with, help people to live with one another, to settle differences, among others. Moral education is to help make children virtuous – honest, responsible, and compassionate. It is also to enhance their ability to make mature informed and reflective judgments about important and controversial moral issues. A combination of these two purposes is assumed to help pupils make sense of life. For instance, in Ghana as in many places a teenager is expected to offer his seat to an elderly passenger who has no seat. Some young people may refuse on the grounds that they have paid for the seat. Another person may give up his seat with reluctance, only after being rebuked by other passengers for not recognizing the need to give up the seat to an elderly person. Yet another person may voluntarily give up his seat to an

elderly passenger on account of sympathy, love or respect for old age. Which of these moral agents is right? Which of the acts is likely to attract more social approval? Which of the acts needs to be encouraged more? Those who favor legalities may uphold the decision by teenagers who insist on retaining their claim to their seats. The teenager who refuses to give up his seat is right, logically, since he has paid for the seat and thus has legal right to remain seated. This is logic in morality. In terms of logic he is right, but very few "sensible" people would feel at ease seated while elderly and relatively weak people are standing. The person who gives up his seat on account of public opinion is simply conforming to public expectation under pressure.   Moral acts should not be done under pressure–people must engage in them voluntarily, deriving inner satisfaction in doing so. The person who gives up his seat voluntarily, without any form of reminder or external pressure is also right, since that is his choice. The big question is which of these personal moral dispositions meets immediate social approval; and which of them should be developed by schools? People often use the language of choices and personal values rather than that of morality. Values are ultimately personal, but there must be grounds for assessing the values or choices of individuals as morally right or wrong, since they live with others whose interests need to be equally taken care of. Morality is thus not always a matter of personal choices and subjective values. What counts as moral is usually embedded in traditions and religions, in conceptions of what it means to be human or member of a group.

How we ground and justify moral claims is also very important. It makes a huge difference if we think about morality in terms of, for example, individual cost-benefit analyses, shared traditional values or moral theology. For instance respect of other people's right is not just a matter of cost-benefit analysis. Individuals should act responsibly – they should survey their options, consider the consequences on themselves and on others, and then act in a way that not only ensure their interest, but also safeguard the interest of others. In as much as there is the need to rationalize moral judgments, it is equally important at the outset to remember that morality acquires its meaning and its force by virtue of its location within a worldview. In some cases moral principles can be abstracted. But in other situations there is danger in abstracting moral principles and values from the contexts that make sense of them. For any society or school to exist, its members (pupils, teachers, and administrators) must share a number of moral virtues: they must be honest, responsible, and respectful of one another's well-being. Schools have a vital role to play in nurturing these consensus virtues and values; indeed, a major purpose of schooling is to help develop good persons. If we are to live together peacefully in a pluralistic society, we must also nurture those civic virtues and values that are part of our constitutional tradition: we must acknowledge responsibility for protecting one another's rights; we must debate our differences in a civil manner; we must keep informed. A major purpose of schooling therefore, is to nurture good citizenship. But when we disagree about important moral and civic issues, including the nature of morality itself, then, for both the civic and educational reasons, pupils must learn about the alternatives; and teachers and schools should not take official positions on where the truth lies.

The purpose of a liberal education should be to nurture an informed and reflective understanding of the conflicts.

What shape moral education should take depends on the maturity of pupils. Aristotle, for instance was of the opinion that young people were incapable of practical reason. Perhaps moral education could begin with the socialization of very young pupils into those consensus values and virtues that sustain our communities. As they grow older and become more matured they are gradually initiated into levels of moral reasoning that require them to think in informed and reflective ways about important, but controversial, moral issues. Clearly the moral ethos of public schools must be secular rather than religious; moral education cannot use religious exercises to nurture the development of logical reasoning. But moral education cannot implicitly convey the idea that religion is irrelevant to morality. Moral education employs literature and history to convey moral messages. Some of those stories and history show clearly that people's moral convictions were often grounded in religious traditions. Schools and teachers cannot use such content to endorse traditional and religious answers to all moral questions about life. But they can and should expose students to them fairly, as part of a good liberal study. Pupils may find religious and traditional based moral answers compelling even if their schools and teachers do not require them to. When teachers and pupils discuss controversial moral issues – abortion, sexuality, and social justice, for example – they must include religious perspectives on them in the discussion but those religious interpretations cannot be disparaged or advocated. It is important to remark here that no nation, culture or people exist independent of other nations or cultures. It is therefore necessary that whilst equipping young people with knowledge of a particular value system, efforts are made to enhance also the development of critical thinking for universal application.

Finally, it is important to remark here that generally, educational aims are long-term general ends that direct attention to the final educational experiences that pupils are expected to attain. Curriculum development and implementation begins with the stating of the basic aims, and work toward their realization at more and more determinate levels. The first task is to see what the general aims require of pupils in the way of personal qualities, competencies and forms of understanding. This will yield a more determinate set of objectives. Only then can one turn to means, that is, the vehicles whereby these aims will be delivered. By stating the aims and objectives of the new programs, the Ministry of Education wanted to get teachers to be clear about, and focus their attention on what the new programs sought to achieve. Discussing these aims, as has been done above, is therefore a logical prelude to a review of the delivery or implementation process, which was the main purpose of the study.

4.2. How the Subjects are organized to fit into the Curriculum of Basic Education in Ghana

Findings – Social Studies

In the new curriculum policy, a new integrated subject, Social Studies, has been introduced at the basic education level. According to the document, *Teaching Syllabus for Social Studies* (Ministry of Education, 1987, p. iii) the Social Studies program has three sections: Social Studies are studied at the Junior Secondary School level (Basic 7-9)..

1. Government, Politics and Stability;
2. The Environment;
3. Social and Economic Development.

The program is spread over three years. The syllabus has been structured in such a way that in each of the three years, all the three sections of the Social Studies program are covered. Each section is further divided into units. Although the breakdown of the sections into units have been done in advance by the Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD) of the Ministry of Education, and accompanied the official syllabus, teachers were given the free hand to re-arrange the units to suit their schemes of work. The Social Studies program is allocated three study periods per week. Each period lasts for thirty-five minutes. Schools, however have the option to combine two single periods into one double period. In the two schools where the study was conducted, the periods were organized into one double period and one single period.

Findings – Religious and Moral Education

The results of the investigations showed that Moral education is presented as Religious and Moral Education (RME). RME is a nine year program covering Basic school Level 1 to Level 9. The subject is allocated four periods a week, and each period lasts for thirty minutes. In both schools that I observed, the time table for the subject consisted of one double period of sixty minutes and two single periods of thirty minutes duration per period. At the Junior Secondary School level (Basic 7-9) some of the sections or themes of the Primary School (Basic 1-6) syllabuses are repeated, but in greater detail. Additional topics on

critical issues in today's world, such as sex abuse and substance abuse among teenagers, are introduced. The syllabus is divided into sections which are further split into units.

Discussion of Findings – Social Studies and RME

The investigations revealed that the education reforms of 1987 aimed among other things, at the restructuring of the school system and re-orienting the content. Before the reforms, the practice was that each class was taken by one teacher. He taught all subjects. The subjects that were studied at that time included: English Language; Ghana Language (The main language spoken in the District); Mathematics; History; Geography; and Nature Study. With the implementation of the new policy, class teaching was replaced by subject teaching – a teacher specialized in a single subject or a group of subjects. Initially the curriculum consisted of thirteen subjects. New programs or subjects had to compete for space in a very crowded school time-table. Some of the subjects had to be combined to ease the congestion. Out of these combinations emerged Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education. The rationale for the integrated Social Study is to equip pupils with an integrated body of knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help them to develop a broader perspective of Ghana and the world. Although in the preamble of the syllabus the Social Studies program is construed as representing some sort of "citizenship" education in a broader sense, in this, however, citizenship education referred to the section on "Government, Politics and Stability".

4.3.   The official implementation guidelines

4.3.1.   Findings

A review of the guidelines revealed that they were centered on two themes: The first theme was about the way teaching and learning was to be organized. Under this first theme there were six main official mandates that teachers were supposed to observe in their planning and teaching of the new programs. These included the following:

1.   Method of Delivery of Lessons. The guidelines state that teacher's methods of delivery should not limit self-activity and independent and creative work by learners. Teaching and learning should be participatory. Incentives to learn may lie in the subject-matter itself, or in the opportunity for activity, creativity, and independence. The teacher is expected to create conditions that will make learning interesting and useful.

2.   Statement of Objectives. In the syllabuses of the two programs, general and specific objectives of lessons have been predetermined and stated in action verbs that indicate the dimension of teaching. Teachers are expected, to stick to the new arrangement of stating objectives. Teachers are expected to state both general as well as specific objectives of lessons. Also they are expected to state specific objectives in forms that indicate the skills, knowledge, and/or attitudes that learners are expected to be able to apply in appropriate situations. The aim is to make instruction as individualized as possible so that learners would receive sufficient attention to be able to demonstrate the attainment of the competency the lesson seeks to develop in them.

3.   Assessment. Teachers are free to use oral questions, quizzes, class assignments, essays, structured questions and projects. However, they are to ask questions and set tasks and assignments that will challenge pupils to apply knowledge, generate solutions and develop positive attitudes. Teachers are therefore expected to employ "Criterion-Referenced Tests" in their assessment of pupils. These are tests that are intended to determine whether important syllabus objectives have been attained. The questions are

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therefore based on representative sample of the specific
objectives taught over a period.

4. Resource persons. Teachers are expected to use
experienced resource persons in their instructional sessions.
The objective is to expose learners to people with real-life
experiences to share, and also to minimize monotony and
boredom that goes with familiarity, and to generate
excitement that will lead to valuable learning.

5. Profile Dimension. The syllabuses for the two subject areas
identify six levels of learning that differ is complexity –
Knowledge; Understanding; Application; Analysis; Synthesis;
and Evaluation. Teachers are to use this profile as the basis
for instruction and assessment.

6. Content. The syllabuses of the various subjects present
content for unit topics. Teachers are expected to utilize
provided contents, and where necessary, supplement these
with additional information from other sources;

The second theme was a requirement that schools employed organizational
practices and ethos that provide opportunities for children to apply knowledge
they acquire in class, and also be able to develop new values, skills and
principles that enhance their moral and civil development.

4.3.2. Discussion of findings: Why the Guidelines?

Reasons for embedding mandates in the curriculum policy document are not far-
fetched. As has been pointed out in section 1.3 of this thesis, the
unpreparedness of the system to effect changes introduced by new policies
contributed in no small way to the fall-out between policy and practice in the past.
Curriculum development and implementation is sometimes thought of as "ends"
and "means" situation, where curriculum aims and objectives are seen as "ends,"
and instruction is seen as the means for attaining those ends. Perceived this
way, policy-makers expect teachers to follow official mandates and do what they
are required to do. But policy makers know too well that teachers are not
passive implementers of policy. As has been pointed out by educators such as
John Dewey and Paulo Freire (Noddings, 1998, pp. 68-69), learning takes place
in the context of institutional, social and political realities, and can contribute to
reproduce or transform those realities. Based on this premise, it is safe to assert
that teachers' perspectives and their teaching practices are rooted in a variety of
personal, religious, political and cultural experiences. In other words, 'teacher
knowledge', derives from the interaction between their informal development of
worldviews, beliefs and understandings, on the one hand, and their formal,
professional views on teaching and learning, on the other. A substantial

proportion of teachers' knowledge is however, tacit. This knowledge is a complex set of practically oriented understandings of self, instruction, subject matter, curriculum development and the larger social context. Thus, to a large extent, teachers' life experiences, thinking and knowledge profoundly influence their pedagogical approaches, and constitute the dominant knowledge base that they use in their classroom practices. Obviously, schools and teachers, as local level implementers of curricula play an agency role in shaping and adapting the prescribed curriculum. It is possible for teachers, therefore, to incorporate their personal theories in their teaching. One of the reasons for providing official guidelines, I presume, was to strengthen school administration as a limiting factor on the possibility of excesses on the part of teachers in their attempts to incorporate their personal theories in their teaching.

Moreover, there is evidence that gives the impression that schools have not been quite successful in the area if citizenship education. For instance a worldwide study of 24 countries revealed that there was still a wide gap between the goals for democracy expressed in the curriculum, and the reality of the society and school (Torney-Purta, Schwille, & Amadeo, 1999). Policy makers recognized the need to get schools and teachers to be committed to the ideals of the new policy. As part of the response evoked by the evidences referred to above, the new policy came with guidelines that were intended to improve instructional delivery in particular and the implementation process in general. Traditionally, the school curriculum provides a plan of instruction that indicates structured learning experiences and outcomes for students. It specifies the details of student learning, instructional strategies, the teachers' roles, and the context in which teaching and learning take place. More recently, however, research on teaching and learning, and the emergence of groups that advocate for standards in education, among others, have broadened the scope of curriculum to include everything that affects what happens in the classroom and consequently children's learning. Any decision to integrate guidelines into the curriculum is aimed at ensuring some form of standards in the activities of schools and teachers.   From this perspective, it is not uncommon to find included in a curriculum, not only goals, objectives, and content, but everything that is perceived to enhance the chances of attaining the ultimate goals of the curriculum policy. It is this category of curricular content that the official guidelines of the 1987 curriculum policy fall.

4.4. How clearly stated are the Guidelines?

Findings

After slowly and meticulously reading through the official implementation guidelines I am able to conclude that the guidelines have been clearly stated. The following are the basis of my contention:

- The language is simple and not many complex sentences were used;
- New concepts have been introduced in the new set of syllabuses to help improve instructional delivery and learning. These have been defined and painstakingly explained. Two examples of the new concepts and their explanations are: **Profile Dimensions** – explained as a psychological unit for describing a particular learning behavior. For example, the acquisition of a body of knowledge (say some skill) is one dimension of learning, and the ability to apply that knowledge (that skill) to perform some task is another dimension; and **Criterion-Referenced Tests** – each specific objective in the syllabus is considered a criterion to be achieved by the pupil. When a test consist of items that or questions that are based on a representative sample of the specific objectives taught, the test is referred to as a Criterion-Referenced test.
- Also, key words used in the syllabuses have been appropriately defined. Some of these are Knowledge, Understanding, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation, Receiving, Responding, Valuing and Organizing;
- Instructions as to what teachers are to do are clear and precise. In most cases these instructions are accompanied with diagrams or tables.

Discussions

Prior to the implementation of the new programs, In-service Education and Training workshops had been organized for teachers. The purpose of the workshops was to expose local level implementers to the aims and objectives of the new policy in general, and the specific programs in particular, and other new tasks that the new curriculum policy entailed. The whole country was put into zones. The initial workshop lasted for five days. At the workshop, the participants discussed the aims and objectives of the new policy as a whole. Thereafter, the participants broke up into subject areas and discussed issues that

related to specific programs. After the initial induction program, and during the period of implementation, more subject-related workshops continued to be organized to induct new teachers and to refresh old teachers. The workshops were organized by the Curriculum Research and Development Division of the Ministry of Education. These education and training workshops provided immense opportunities for teachers to exchange ideas and share views, skills and other experiences about the aims and objectives of the policy. On account of these, the investigated teachers demonstrated appreciable familiarity and understanding of the aims and objectives of the policy in general and their specific teaching areas.

4.5.   Do Teachers apply the Guidelines in their Planning and Teaching?

In section 4.3 an attempt was made to delineate the main guidelines that teachers in the two subject areas were expected to observe. In this section results of investigations to to determine the extent that teachers apply these guidelines are presented and discussed.

4.5.1.   Findings – Methods of Delivery

In all the lessons observed, the teachers used a combination of techniques in their teaching. These techniques included discussions, questioning, role play, group activities, brainstorming sessions, among others.

In Social Studies, the instructional sessions invariably begin with the presentation of a scenario by the teacher to set the stage for the lesson. Class discussions were generally democratic and pupils were given opportunity for participation and open reflection.

In the Religious and Moral Education classes, the teachers usually used traditional or religious stories to set the stage for class discussions. Sometimes a class was put into opposing groups to debate an issue. Teachers also used role play or dramatization. In those cases, individual pupils were made to assume certain roles and acted in a prescribed manner so as to make the teacher's presentation more practical. For instance, in School "A", the teacher used the story of the "Good Samaritan" in his lesson on "Love and Compassion." The children were made to act and discuss the story.

4.5.2.   Discussion of findings – Methods of Delivery

In the first place, there is substantial body of evidence that clearly demonstrates a crisis of education quality, and for that matter, quality of teaching, in basic schools in Ghana, despite efforts over the years to improve the quality of teaching. For instance the Evans Anfom Education Commission of 1986 noted that teaching, in the past, had consisted in "frontal" instruction, whereby teachers lectured pupils, asked questions, gave homework and administered tests (Anfom Report, 1986, p. 26). Teachers are also accused of habitually confining pupils to classrooms. There is no gainsaying the fact that teaching plays a key role in the success or failure of any education endeavor. No matter how good intentioned an education system is, or how well planned a curriculum program is, very little would be achieved with poor quality teaching. The purpose of teaching is to help pupils to acquire and retain knowledge, and develop competencies they can use now and in the future. The quest to develop effective teaching and learning, generally, has led to investigations into how learning takes place, resulting in the formulation of various theories of learning and models of teaching. It is no coincidence therefore, that teaching has become the focus of intense academic and public debate in almost every country. Education reforms and innovations have become a regular feature of the contemporary world, aimed, among others, at improving the quality of education delivery. Citing instances in Britain, Australia and Canada, among others, Andy Hargreaves and Michael Fullan (1998, pp. 2-4) attest to this, by claiming that teachers all over the world are feeling beleaguered by reforms and inspections.

Traditionally, teachers have been the "fount of knowledge" in the classroom setting. They have been the ones with all the answers and with the "best ways" to get the results. Their role is assumed to have changed. They are now facilitators. They are still a source of knowledge, but it is not to be volunteered. They are expected to act as "consultants" and cheerleaders, instead of authority figures that pupils follow in lockstep. As has been noted by Seymour Papert, "You can't teach people everything they need to know. The best you can do is position them where they can find what they need to know when they need to know it."(MotivateUs .com). Many teachers still find it so hard to stand by and watch pupils figure out solutions, when they could, with a few well placed instructions, save them time and allow them to get better results. By so doing, however, they deprive their pupils the pleasure of building their own knowledge. Teachers need to be reminded of the need to step up their instructional activities. Teaching techniques that place the pupil in active situation for learning are deemed to be more effective than those that do not. The relationship between pupils' active involvement and effective learning is so strong that the effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy to increase involvement in learning. This was clearly what the guidelines are meant to promote. The guidelines sought to encourage teachers to move away from old practices to a new pedestal in their teaching functions by demanding that teachers encouraged participatory learning which has the potential to enhance pupils' activity, creativity and independence.

Teachers are expected to be able to use their knowledge imaginatively and creatively to promote learning in the classroom. By demanding this from teachers, policy-makers were only re-echoing what have been identified as very effective practices of teaching, by renowned educators that include, Paulo Freire, Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky. Paulo Freire's rejection of "Banking Education" is in reaction to didactic approaches of teaching which he considered oppressive. Piaget's Cognitive Development theory is further developed through Vygotsky's social development theory, which is one of the foundations for constructivism. Vygotsky's theory promotes learning contexts in which students play an active role in learning. Constructivism states that learning is an active, contextualized process of constructing knowledge rather than acquiring it. In this formulation, knowledge is seen to be constructed based on personal experiences and hypotheses of the environment. Learners continuously test these hypotheses through social negotiation, and each person is assumed to have a different interpretation and construction of the knowledge process (Kearsley,. 1994-2008). In this formulation, the learner is not assumed to be an empty slate to be written on, as posited by John Locke and others.

4.5.3.   Findings – Statement of Instructional Objectives

In the area of planning and teaching of their subjects, teachers stuck to the suggested general and specific objectives in the syllabus, and applied the same principles whenever they had to state their own objectives. The General Objective is stated first, followed by a list of specific objectives. An example of this is presented below:

General Objectives:

By the end of the lesson pupils will be able to engage in acts of love toward other people, without regard to their nature and background, and be able to assign good reasons for acting that way.

Specific Objectives:

- Pupils will be able to give individual account of the story of the Good Samaritan **(Knowledge Level)**
- Pupils will be able to explain the special place of Levites in Jewish history (**Understanding Level).**
- Pupils will be able to give reasons why priests hold a special place in society. (**Analysis Level**).

- Pupils will be able to give examples of moral principles that priests are generally expected to uphold in their dealings with people. **(Knowledge Level).**
- Pupils will be able to demonstrate knowledge about Samaritans and explain why Jews had very little in common with them. (**Evaluation Level**).
- Pupils will be able to identify all acts of the Good Samaritan toward the wounded man, which they consider virtuous. **(Analysis Level).**

4.5.4.   Discussion of findings – Statement of Objectives

According to R. F. Mager (1984), "An *objective* is a description of a performance you want learners to be able to exhibit before you consider them competent." An objective, to him, describes the end result of an instructional process, rather than the process of instruction itself. He gives three reasons why it is important for teachers to state objectives. In the first place he points out that clearly defined objectives provide sound basis for the selection of instructional materials, content, or methods. He claims that it is only when you know where you are going that you are able to select a suitable means for getting there. Secondly, he explains that tests or examinations are the mileposts along the road of learning and are supposed to tell, not only teachers but also learners, whether they have been successful in achieving the objectives of the lesson. Consequently, he opines that unless objectives are stated clearly and are fixed in the minds of both teachers and learners, tests are at best misleading; at worst, they are irrelevant, unfair, or uninformative. Test items designed to measure whether important instructional outcomes have been accomplished can be selected or created intelligently only when those instructional outcomes have been made explicit. Lastly, clearly defined objectives provide learners with a means to organize their own efforts toward accomplishment of those objectives. He claims that experience has shown that with clear objectives in view, learners at all levels are better able to decide what activities on their part will help them get to where it is important for them to go.

In his discussion of general and specific objectives, Houghton Mifflin (1998. pp.36-41) gives an interesting analogy. Houghton explains that often times a person who is traveling to a city in an unfamiliar part of a country for the very first time would need first, a road map to show the location of the city, but will not need a road map that specifies every village and creek. But to find a house in the city, he needs a detailed street map of the town. However, if the traveler makes a second visit to the same city after some time, he may be able to locate the city without a road map but may still need the street map to locate the house. After a couple of visits to the same place he may be able to find his way to the city and the house without the help of any map. Comparing this scenario to

teaching, he explains that a teacher who is teaching a subject for the first time needs a general objective (Road map) as well as specific objectives (Detailed street map) to enable him reaching his destination. He claims that statements of objectives act as maps that guide teacher and students. According to him, objectives in any content area can be visualized as forming a pyramid. At the apex is the final or ultimate single goal or target to be attained – the general objective. Within each general objective, teachers may have to develop more specific objectives. The single general objective is broken down into more specific objectives as one gets to the lower rungs of the pyramid. The specific objectives are statements of terminal performance – what the student will be able to do at the end of instruction. They are more precise than general objectives. The teacher, using objectives as a road map must invariably, make decisions about objectives, but it depends on how well the teacher knows the subject. According to him, when teaching content or subject for the first time, the teacher may need much specificity, just as the newcomer to a city needs both a city road map and a detailed town's street map. He points out, however that the teacher (traveller) who has taught the content or subject before (knows the city) may need only specific objectives (a street map) to find his or her way. And the veteran needs neither objectives nor maps. In providing suggested general and specific objectives in the syllabuses to guide teachers, the curriculum policy-makers, like Houghton, did recognize the fact that teachers were new to the teaching of the two new programs and therefore needed road maps–general objectives– and detailed street maps–specific objectives. For most teachers, as they gain experience teaching a subject, the need for reminders reduces and the amount of specificity they need diminishes. But beginners may need specific reminders. It must be understood however that objectives are not for the teacher's exclusive use. Therefore the issue of whether or not a teacher is experienced is not relevant. As has been noted above Learners need to know what they are expected to attain at the end of instructions and how teachers expect them to participate in the teaching-learning activities.

4.5.5.   Findings – Assessment

In their class assessments, the teachers used home works, class exercises, and group tasks, among others. Generally, test questions, set assignments and other tasks used by the teachers indicated a good attempt to challenge pupils to demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge, generate solutions and develop positive attitudes. A review of teachers' assessment strategies in both subjects indicated that teachers more often than not, used Criterion-Referenced Tests are stipulated in the official guidelines.

4.5.6.   Discussion of findings – Assessment

In a document titled *Assessment*, the Clark County School District (2006) defines Assessment as "a process of collecting, analyzing, and organizing information or data for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating student learning." Underscoring the importance of assessments, Charlotte Higuchi (1995) asserts that "school communities use assessment results in a formative way to determine how well they are meeting instructional goals and how to alter curriculum and instruction so that goals can be better met." But unless the content of what schools assess and the format or how schools assess match what is taught and how it is taught, the results are meaningless, if not potentially harmful. Generally, frequent, meaningful testing is required to assess the extent of children's progress toward proficiency. In this era of reforms, student assessment has become the centerpiece of many educational improvement efforts. Policymakers hope to change the trend of instructional delivery by changing the strategies for assessment. It is based on the perception that what gets assessed is what gets taught and that the format of assessment influences the format of instruction

It is pertinent at this juncture to look for reasons why the curriculum policy-makers insisted on teachers employing the Criteria-Referenced Test technique in their assessments Traditionally, Ghanaian teachers, like some their colleagues in other parts of the world, relied on Norm-Referenced Test – which measures an individual learner's performance against a defined group that he is classified to belong. A Criterion measure, on the other hand, assesses the performance of the individual with respect to his or her own learning. The emphasis is on what and how well the student learns, based on a criterion of mastery that is set by the teacher. Therefore, the individual learner's performance is compared to a standard set by the teacher rather than norm standard, with the test items linked directly to specific learning objectives.

This measure has some advantages. From a curriculum standpoint, it can help the teacher determine individual instructional needs and thus provide useful information before and after instruction to help instructional planning and delivery. For instance, it can help the teacher to determine if a student is mastering the curriculum; to identify areas where a student needs remediation; and to determine if a student has attained an established level of competence so he might move to the next level of instruction. From the point of view of the learner, it serves as a measurement tool for his learning process. In this way a Criterion-Referenced Test is a form of functional assessment. Assessment results have important implications for instruction. Criterion-referenced assessments are vehicles for making inferences about how much students know at one or more points of time.

Also, in requesting teachers to use this assessment technique, the guidelines acknowledged that, it was usually not possible for teachers to test all the objectives taught in a school term, and therefore using this technique would encourage teachers to base their tests on a representative sample of the objectives covered. By this, it was expected that equal emphasis would be given to each of the learning dimensions covered. Criterion-referenced assessments

allow for the tracking of a student's accomplishment of individual learning outcomes and objectives. The assessment items relate directly to the outcomes and objectives of the instructional program and are more sensitive to changes in teaching methodology. There is no denying the fact that aligning the assessment with the curriculum and instruction is important for measuring precisely what was taught.

4.5.7.   Findings – Use of Resource Persons

Among the mandates in the official guidelines is the requirement that teachers make use of resource persons in their instructional activities. Entries in the Log books indicated that teachers have been using external resource persons, but the frequency was not very encouraging: Throughout the four weeks of observation, there was only one instance of the use of a resource person from outside the school. This was at School "A" where the Social Studies teacher invited personnel from the district secretariat of the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) to talk about the constitution and the structure of government. The resource person intimated that an excursion was being planned by his secretariat for school pupils to visit the Parliament House, The Supreme Court and the Castle (the President's office), in the capital. He admonished the teacher and his pupils to register for the trip.

4.5.8.   Discussion of findings – Use of Resource Persons

As has been indicated above the frequency of the use of resource persons was rather low. For instance, in my opinion, some of the topics that had been thought already by the teachers should have involved resource persons but there were no references to that effect in the lesson notes of the teachers, neither were there any entries in the school log books. These included topics like *Naming Ceremony* (Christening), *Puberty Rights* and *Substance Abuse*. Some elders from the community could have been invited to assist in the teaching of 'Puberty Rights' and traditional ways of naming babies. Also a medical officer could have been invited to handle the topic of substance abuse. I am convinced that the communities have a wealth of knowledge in these areas that can be tapped to enrich teachers' instructional activities. However from my interactions with them,

I learnt that no funds are allocated to cater for the transport expenses and other incidental expenses for such guests. Headteachers are therefore often reluctant to endorse teachers' arrangements to bring in external resource persons, especially when this was expected to involve some cost. Some of the teachers claimed that the local communities and the public were not adequately sensitized about this aspect of the new program before its implementation. Most external resource persons are of the opinion that although they were supposed to offer such assistance as a matter of community service, at least their transport fares to and from the schools should be borne by the schools.

One advantage of the use of external resource persons is the potential to break boredom. Too much familiarity, it is said, often breeds contempt. Bringing in other people to support teachers provides opportunity for learners to experience other personalities and styles of teaching. This is good for both the teacher and the learner. For learners, the mere variety adds spice to the classroom. For teachers, resource persons offer opportunities learn something new or extra. Teachers can exchange ideas and share experiences with resource persons. Also, they have opportunity to rest.

4.5.9.   Findings – Profile Dimensions

The investigations revealed that teachers made efforts to make the Profile Dimensions the focus   of their teaching and assessment. This was indicated by the way they stated their lesson objectives and taught their subjects. For example in the lesson of the Good Samaritan, the method of delivery of the teacher provided opportunity for the children to acquire knowledge which they could recall; be able to analyze and evaluate behavior; and be able to apply knowledge, skills and principles acquired through the lesson (see section 4.5: *Specific Objectives*). The lesson was planned and delivered in such a way that adequate emphasis was given to more that one dimension of learning as indicated in the particular section or unit of the syllabus. Also the use of Criterion-Referenced Test strategies ensured that the Profile Dimensions was a prime focus of their assessments.

4.5.10.   Discussion of findings – Profile Dimensions

Jennifer Martin (2001), discussing *Bloom's Taxanomy,* states that all learning can been divided into three domains: the *cognitive* domain that emphasizes thinking;

the *affective* domain highlighting attitudes and feelings; and the *psychomotor* domain featuring doing. The Cognitive domain deals with the recall or recognition of knowledge and the development of intellectual abilities and skills. This is the domain in which most of the work in curriculum development has taken place. The clearest definitions of instructional objectives phrased as descriptions of student behavior occur within this domain. This domain is subdivided into six levels. The lowest three levels are: Knowledge, Comprehension, and Application; and the highest three levels are Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation. The Profile Dimensions, referred to in this study, is a model of classifying thinking based on this classification. Throughout the years, the levels have often been depicted as a stairway that enables learners to climb to a higher level of thought. These classifications allow teachers to be better able to organize instruction and therefore provide better structure and improve clarity. Students will be better able to achieve success if they more clearly understand the structure of the instruction provided. It is no coincidence that the new curriculum policy for basic schools in Ghana is encouraging its adoption in schools. The taxonomy is hierarchical, in that each lower level is subsumed by the next higher levels. In other words, a student functioning at the 'application' level has also mastered the material at the 'knowledge' and 'comprehension' levels. One can easily see how this arrangement led to natural divisions of lower and higher level thinking.

Official observation has been that instructions in various subjects in basic schools have, in the past, tended to emphasize the acquisition of knowledge at the expense of other levels of learning. The effect has been that pupils' ability to undertake higher order thinking in school and in life had been greatly affected. To remedy the situation, the appropriate level of learning any given topic in the syllabus has been specified. What teachers were expected to do was to tune the teaching and assessment to these levels, as already noted above. The wisdom in this mandates is not far-fetched. Writing about the topic *Rethinking Assessment and Its Role in Supporting Educational Reforms,* Linda Ann Bond (1995) claims that the present circumstances of our world demands from the average person, life skills that call for more preparation and better knowledge than the low order dimension of knowledge that has characterized teaching and learning for sometime. She points out that in response to these changes, nations are changing content standard – the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed by learners to achieve at high levels. Just like the Ghanaian curriculum policy-makers who have been advocating for multi-dimensional learning in schools, Bond points out that the 21st Century student, will need to understand the basics, but also to think critically, to analyze, and to make inferences. She claims that any effort to help students develop these skills will require changes in assessment at the school and classroom level. She agrees with those who share the perception that changes in assessment for example, will cause teachers and schools to do things differently. When assessment strategies are tied to objectives, – as in Criterion-Referenced Tests – and to instructions, it will engender the setting of more appropriate targets for students and ultimately improve instruction and instructional materials. Generally, this cognitive function

involves the ability to judge the value of something for a given purpose. The teacher should use a combination of different levels of cognitive verbs when writing learning outcomes. The test questions should also reflect the level of the objective.

4.5.11. Findings – Content

Results of the findings showed that teachers used contents and materials suggested in the syllabus and also used other materials and content from their own sources. For instance the Social Studies teacher of School "A" used the following indigenous Ghanaian motifs when he was teaching "Ethnic groups and Citizenship." These motifs are commonly used as emblems by clans, in traditional wax prints, carvings and pottery, among others.

The Heart

Traditionally, this motif represents *Patience and Tolerance*. When a person is said to "have a heart in his stomach," that person is perceived to be very tolerant. The symbol admonishes people to cultivate the virtues of patience and tolerance. The symbol above is commonly used to signify love. Pupils see it in their normal everyday life. It is important to let children know its significance in the Ghanaian society. In character and citizenship education teachers are being asked to facilitate pupils' cultivation of love, patience and tolerance. The teacher could not have chosen a better symbol to represent these concepts.

Linked Hearts

This is a symbol of understanding and agreement. The symbol recognizes the need for cooperation and unity of purpose among members of a group that

strives for a common goal, whether the group is a family, an organization, or a country. This symbol is an extension of the earlier symbol - the single heart. It conveys the same message of love, but with an extended meaning of cooperation, oneness, and unity.


No one should bite the other

This symbol recognizes the fact that when people live together and interact among themselves there are bound to be provocations and strife. The symbol stresses the need to guard against provocation and strife. Humans as we are, we are fallible. Strife is ever present in every department of human interaction. As people living together the symbol reminds us of the inevitability of conflicts. This is why we are being admonished to be on the guard for acts that tend to muddle the waters.

The Teeth and the Tongue

 The teeth and the tongue play interdependent roles in the mouth. Conflicts arise between them but they need to work together. This symbol carries similar message as the one before it. It reminds us to be put conflicts behind us and forge ahead. New meaning should be acquired through a process of personal discovery. The methods used to encourage such personal discovery must be highly individualized and adapted to the learner's own style and pace for learning. The use of stories and traditional artifacts and symbols make it possible for this to take place.
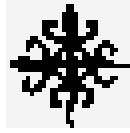
Siamese crocodiles

The Siamese crocodiles share one stomach, yet they fight over food. This popular symbol emphasizes that in-fighting is not necessary for people who are fighting for a common course. The message is self explanatory

4.5.12. Discussion of findings – Content

The teacher explained how past generations of Ghanaians used these symbolizations to constantly remind themselves of the need to cultivate the virtues represented by these symbols. The symbols have been in use for a long time. They are used as motifs for traditional textile prints, decorations on pottery, clan emblems, wood and stone carvings, and as logo for products. For example there is a Ghanaian chocolate brand with the Siamese crocodile as its logo. The issue of content is paramount in education. There can be no education without content and there can be malediction when the wrong content is taught to students. Teaching is a triadic concept involving a teacher, content and the learner. The teacher's authority derives partly from his content and the way he organizes it. As has been noted in section 4.5 (*Methods of Delivery*), you cannot teach people everything they need to know. The world we live in has now been opened up to the extent that there is much knowledge out there waiting to be accessed. Children need not be taught everything they need to know about. They must be able to continue learning after class instructions and after normal school sessions; even long after they end their formal educational experience. Also as children face a lifetime of learning, in addition to learning new knowledge, they will be re-learning and applying old knowledge. Not only is knowledge growing explosively in this contemporary world, but also old understandings are constantly being replaced by new ones. These views are shared by contemporary educators like Maryellen G. Weimer (2002). According to her, in learner-centered schools the content performs two functions: it establishes a knowledge base; and promotes learning. It is thus a means as well as an end of instruction. It becomes the means whereby learning outcomes are explicitly advanced. She explains that children will learn the body of knowledge, but they will also learn about learning. She is of the view therefore that content is not only covered, it is also used to develop a knowledge base. It is in this light that I wish

to put in perspective, the decision by the curriculum policy-makers to encourage teachers to source for relevant content. Evidence from studies by Iris R. Weiss, Joan D. Pasley, P. Sean Smith, Eric R. Banilower, and Daniel J. Heck (2003, Chapter 6) show that in many cases, teachers' choice of content appears to be primarily influenced by their beliefs about instruction and how students learn best. Teachers usually found it worthwhile to incorporate real-world examples to foster the engagement of students with concepts that otherwise might not interest them or would be too abstract for them to understand. They use examples both to provide a hook to engage learners and to provide a bridge between what learners already know and the more abstract concepts to be introduced.

By selecting very common traditional Ghanaian motifs for his lesson, the teacher was able to build a bridgehead from where the children could connect the more abstract concepts like unity, cooperation, patience, in-fighting interdependence. Also, teachers have the opportunity to replace old content with current knowledge.

In connection with content, I reviewed some of the recommended textbooks. This was because sometimes suggested topics in prescribed curricula are too general and not well-defined. Textbooks are perceived as being one of the key factors in the translation into actual teaching practice of this kind of curricular content. Textbooks influence not only what children learn, but also what teachers teach. Since teachers were encouraged to source content from variety of sources, I was curious to find out the type of textbooks available. Findings indicated that there was no single officially prescribed textbook for social studies. Teachers were expected to source information from variety of sources, including Ghana's Constitution, and also to make use of relevant cultural artifacts and community knowledge. Very few good textbooks were available. The main textbook available – the Flamingo Social Studies for Junior Secondary Schools, by Ahmed Ibrahim, published in Ghana by UNIK IMAGE, appeared to be very sketchy. The situation has given me the impetus to explore the possibility of writing a textbook in Social Studies and Moral education for basic schools in Ghana.

4.6.   Do Schools provide Activities and Experiences that reinforce what Learners acquire through Instruction?

As stated above, the guidelines also demanded that schools provided out-of-class-experiences to pupils, to help them develop good morals and to become good citizenship.

Findings

In the two schools that I observed, I found out that school administrators had put in place structural arrangements, routines and other activities to regulate school life and at the same time provide an environment conducive for pupils to enjoy normal life and develop positive democratic attitudes. For instance, in both schools the school day began, every morning, with the hoisting of the national flag, and teachers and pupils recited the national pledge or sang the national anthem. This is good for nurturing the sense of national consciousness.

Also the national "Coat of Arms" and the pictures of the current President, as well as past ones, and other important Ghanaian citizens have been displayed in the head teachers' offices and classrooms. Even group photographs of the national football teams of various periods are on display.

In addition, pupils in both schools were involved in school organization and management through the use of statuses and roles. These included school and class prefects, section leaders, headteacher's office assistants, time-keepers librarians, grounds- work prefects and sports prefects, among others. All the statuses are assigned definite responsibilities in the daily life of the school. The authority associated with the various statuses derived directly from the headteachers and the staff. Through these arrangements, pupils took active part in the day to day organization and management of the schools.

Apart from the roles and statuses, there were clubs and associations that pupils belonged to. Some of these were part of the schools: In School "B", there was *The Green Club* which concerned itself with environmental issues; and the Drama group where pupils learned to act. In School "A", there was *The Scripture Union* that was engaged in the study of scriptures as well as religious drama. There was also a choral group.

Above all, in both schools, pupils freely engaged in various forms of sporting and recreational activities. The schools made efforts to ensure that constraints to children's ability and desire to play and move about in freedom and harmony were minimized. Pupils' complaints were dealt with by teachers and committees appointed to deal with such issues. There was a teacher in charge of every class. Also, most school activities have been put in the charge of teachers. Problems are either reported to a class teacher or any other teacher.

Discussion of findings

There is no doubt that the new programs in Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education had been designed to give pupils the skills, knowledge and understanding to lead confident, healthy, and independent lives, and to become informed, active and responsible citizens. Clearly, the curriculum aims revolved around the well-being of self-directing individuals who are interrelated by bonds of tolerance, equality of respect and fraternity within and across Ghana. However, classroom activities are only one way of developing these values and

skills; and whole school processes – matters of ethos, interpersonal relationships, rules and procedures – is another. If civic aims are to be central, how will they be reflected in the authority structure of the school? If pupils are to become autonomous adults, what opportunities does school life provide for the development of such personality? Do demands made on pupils reinforce traditional principles such as the sanctity of adult reasoning as against the development of critical thinking ability? These are typical issues that call for attention in this regard.

It is pertinent to note that most effective learning occurs when we use knowledge to perform meaningful tasks. For example, children might initially learn about the need to cooperate with others to perform some assigned roles at home or in their communities. However, the actual application of the knowledge takes place when they have the opportunity to work with others. The school, being a microcosm of society, can provide opportunities for children to live what they learn in class and then connect to the larger community. Making sure that children have the opportunity to use knowledge meaningfully in school is one of the most important expectations of the new policy. The school setting, in itself, offers great opportunities for children of different levels and age groups to mix up and interact formally and informally. Children are able to make decisions, solve problems, carry out investigations, and make analysis and even make experimental inquiry through purposeful play. As Froebel claimed, a child is like a plant with a seed of growth within him, the school is a garden and the staffs of the school are the gardeners who tend water and protect the plant to grow naturally. Other educators like John Dewey, and Jean Jacques Rousseau emphasized how children acquire knowledge through self-activity.

It is important to note also that the school, as a social institution, has a social context. The social context of school implies social interaction. Social interaction in schools is not merely a matter of individual choice; rather, it is guided by defined expectations and meanings that enable individual schools to set their respective tones. Generally, every school has a tone, and sometimes the tone of a school served as a distinguishing factor from other schools. It concerns the way members of the school deal with issues about authority, responsibility, general comportment, individual as well as group identity and commitment, among others. The meanings and expectations that guide social interaction in schools invariably reflect societal values and ethos. In demanding that schools provided experiences that enhance good citizenship and sound morals, policy-makers recognized schools as extensions of society that could function as an ideological state apparatus to foster the prescribed ideals of the state, as contained in the curriculum, through the use of suitable organizational arrangements. It is therefore not out of the way for education policy makers in Ghana to demand that schools provided relevant school-life experiences.

Furthermore, schools teach morality in a number of ways, both implicit and explicit. In Ghana, Schools have a moral ethos embodied in rules, rewards and punishments, dress codes, honor codes, student government, relationships, styles of teaching, and in the kinds of respect accorded school children as well as teachers. Schools convey to children what is expected of them, what is normal,

what is right and wrong. It is generally believed that not all values are taught; some values are often caught through school ethos. Thus through the opportunities that school settings provide for teaching and 'catching' of values, schools are able to socialize children into patterns of moral behavior and good citizenship. There is no gainsaying the fact that school children participate in the civic and democratic life of their home and communities. However, the involvement of school children in school organization in this way provides a valuable context in which morality and citizenship can be practised. Encouraging school children to be able to partake in the running of their schools is a great empowerment endeavor. This will help them develop self-belief in their ability to influence and contribute to decision-making. Ultimately, outcomes can help them to develop the skills, confidence and self-esteem they will need for the future. This complements the democratic, participative attitude and skills which citizenship and moral education seek to develop. From the above evidence, it is safe to conclude that school management practices and ethos in the two schools observed were in line with the dictates of the official curriculum implementation guidelines.

5.   SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

This final chapter is divided into three sections. Each section deals with one of the following topics: An overview of the study; summary of the main findings; and the implications of the findings.

5.1.   An Overview of the study

Mounting dissatisfaction with perceived falling standards in morality and good citizenship practices had led to open criticism of schools and teachers. This was taking place at a time when two new programs – Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education had been introduced into the basic school curriculum (Evans Anfom Commission on Education, 1987). This is not to mention the establishment of public parallel institutions like National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) for informal public education in civic responsibility. Public contention had been that given the attention and resources put into the new policy on citizenship and moral education, the overall expected impact on the citizenry, after almost 20 years of implementation, had been negligible. Most members of the Ghanaian public blamed basic schools and teachers for the problem. Teachers were accused of not teaching Social Studies (Character Education) and Religious and Moral Education in accordance with official guidelines that accompanied these two new programs. Similarly schools were accused of not employing relevant school management practices and ethos that provided pupils with school-life experiences to complement what they learn in the classrooms about morality and citizenship. Teachers were accused at various forums – Parent and Teacher Association meetings; Newspaper publications; Radio and Television programs; and at other public forums. Teacher accusations were particularly intense in the twin-city of Sekondi-Takoradi. This public skepticism was however not based on verified facts, since no investigation had been conducted yet. One could therefore not claim with certainty, that schools had not done or were not doing what they were supposed to do. All the same, I found public behaviour on the issue, especially in the twin-city, particularly challenging. My conviction was that such criticisms, though unsubstantiated, invariably, have the potential to undermine public confidence in schools and teachers. Schools and teachers might also be disappointed by these accusations to the extent that it might affect their commitment. It was this

concern about the negative effects of the unsubstantiated criticism of schools and teachers that provided the motivation for this investigation. My research problem was stated thus**: To what extent is the organization of teaching and learning in character and citizenship education, and the co-curricular activities that children engaged in, in some basic schools in Sekondi-Takoradi, consistent with the guidelines for the implementation of the 1987 Curriculum Reforms Policy?**

Sekondi-Takoradi was chosen purposively for the study. The stratified random technique was used to select two schools for the study. Four teachers: two in each school were involved. Since every school is assigned one teacher per subject, the selection of teachers comes automatically with the selection of a school.

A number of specific research questions were asked to gather data that was needed to answer the main research question. They included the following:

1.   What are the aims and objectives of the Citizenship and Character education programs?

2.   How are the subjects organized to fit into the curriculum of basic education in Ghana?

3.   What guidelines accompanied the implementation of the policy?

4.   Are the guidelines clearly stated?

5.   Do teachers apply the guidelines when they are planning and teaching the two subjects?

6.   Do school management practices and ethos provide pupils with school-life experiences that reinforce what they learn in the classroom about morality and citizenship**?**

In all, the study covered five chapters. Chapter One, the introductory chapter, defined the research problem, and discussed the purpose and significance of the study. The chapter also delineated specific research questions that were used in the data-gathering process. In Chapter Two a framework for evaluating the work of schools and teachers was developed. The framework was based on two factors, with three underlying principles. Chapter Three dealt with the Research Method. Among issues discussed are the preparations that were made for the data-collection and the actual process of collecting data. In Chapter four the main findings of the investigations are presented and discussed. Chapter five, the final chapter, presents a summary of the study and the implications of the main findings.

5.2. Summary of main Findings

From the results of the investigations and the discussions that followed, the study revealed the following:

- Schools and teachers that were investigated were sufficiently aware of the rationale of the new curriculum policy that was introduced in 1987 by the Evans Anfom Education Review Commission. Teachers of both Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education were very conversant with the aims and objectives of their respective subject areas. An In-Service Education and Training Program (INSET) to create awareness and build capacity, has been part of the implementation process, from the very beginning of the reforms. Teachers attested to this, and there were attendance records in the Log Books of the two schools to confirm it.

- School administrators and teachers of the two schools were aware of the details of the official guidelines for the implementation of the new policy, and knew what was expected of them in the discharge of their official duties. The guidelines were clearly stated and teachers understood them and claimed they were realistic. The guidelines did not undermine schools and teachers' professional capacities. They were given considerable local autonomy, but were supposed to work within the limits of the guidelines.

- Although in the guidelines schools are required to make use of resource persons from outside the school, no special funds are allocated to take care of the transport fares of such persons, if they have to cover some distance. It appeared that the government expected to count on the magnanimity and cooperation of the public, but the public was not sufficiently sensitized before the policy was implemented

- The two Schools and the teachers conformed to the provisions of the official guidelines in the process of discharging their duties. In the preparation and teaching of their respective subjects, the teachers applied the mandates as best as they could: They employed good instructional delivery techniques; they complied with suggested ways of stating general and specific objectives; they employed criterion-referenced test models; they used external resource persons – though sparingly –; and they sourced relevant supplementary content. Similarly, school organization and ethos of both schools provided opportunities for pupils of both schools to live what they learn in the

classroom and develop additional competencies for future application as they grow from childhood to adulthood.

From the results of the study it is clear that in the two schools that were investigated the activities of teachers of Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education, as well as the school organizational practices and ethos have been consistent with the official guidelines of the new curriculum policy. In other words, they have been doing what they were expected to do under the new curriculum policy.

5.2.1. The Possibility of Transferring Findings

On External Validity, Yin (1994, p. 35) defines the concept as the establishment of the domain to which a study's findings can be generalized. Judd et al (1991, p. 28) also define it as "the extent to which one can generalize the results of the research to the populations and settings of interest." This quality of research findings, variously referred to as Generalizability, Transferability, or External Validity, is the extent that a study's findings would also be true for other people, in other places, and at other times. Critics contend that findings from a single study offer a poor basis for generalization (Yin, 1994, p. 36). Others argue that findings from observations may only reflect a unique population and therefore cannot be generalized to others. In other words some people are skeptical about the possibility to transfer the research results to situations with approximate parameters, populations and characteristics. To enhance the transferability of the findings of this study, the following measures were taken:

In order to enhance the transferability of the observational findings, I used a more inclusive sample, typical of the population of interest. The population of interest comprised of all basic schools in which the two subjects – RME and Social Studies – are taught, and teachers of the two subjects. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample population.

The population is unique in terms of organization and curricular, because schools and teachers, generally, operate under similar conditions and establishments. Teachers undergo intensive prescribed training to qualify them to teach. In situations where non-professional teachers are engaged, regular In-Service Training programs are organized for this category of teachers. Furthermore, with periodic inspection by external inspectors and daily oversight supervision by headteachers, there is a high degree of homogeneity among schools and teachers and considerable uniformity in the nature of their activities.

Also, findings from the study showed that much of the teacher's work have been simplified, under the new policy. The syllabus is more or less a teaching plan. The topics have been broken down into sections and units. General objectives as well as specific objectives have been stated already, and in most

case activities have been suggested. From my point of view, as a professional teacher and a teacher educator, the policy-makers have done a good job by offloading much detail from what used to be teachers' responsibility. I am inclined to believe that all schools and teachers are working as hard as the results of the present study indicate for the two schools. .

In consideration of the above, similar results may be found in other schools within Sekondi-Takoradi and perhaps also beyond.

5.3.   Implications of the Study

The findings of this study have implications for education policy makers, researchers, and the Ghanaian media and public.

The study found out that although much was expected from communities and individuals, by way of instructional support as resource persons, the public was not adequately sensitized on the issue before the new policy was implemented. This study draws the attention of curriculum policy-makers or agencies charged with such responsibilities to take note and forestall recurrence in the future.

Furthermore, findings of the study revealed that the media and the public have been blaming and castigating schools and teachers for the perceived fall in morality. Ironically, the charges for which schools and teachers were being castigated had not been verified. Results of this study indicate that at least some schools and teachers have been discharging their duties in accordance with official expectations. It is important for the people to note that the fact that morality is low does not mean that schools and teachers are not doing their job. Moreover, if activities of schools and teachers are not registering the expected outcomes, the learner, the home and the society at large share in the blame. Schools and teachers may be doing their part, but the learner has a part to play and so are the home and the community. Even if schools and teachers succeed in developing the right attitudes in children, it does not follow that children will always exhibit the right attitude or behave as expected. After all, as Aristotle claimed, it does not follow that a person who knows the good will necessarily do the good (Cahn, 1997, p.110). Aristotle insisted that people acknowledged this, and I insist that Ghanaians do the same, and disabuse their minds that people will always do what they know is good. Sometimes, people's judgments are based more on emotions than reason or facts. What made the blaming of schools and teachers more disturbing was the fact that it was taking place in an era when the attractiveness of teaching as a profession had been fading; a period marked by high teacher turnover rate; and when most of the remaining teachers have been working under very trying conditions and needed public sympathy, to say the least. With the unrestrained public and media swipes at teachers, one could imagine the emotional circumstances under which teachers were working, and the psychological implications to teaching and learning. The

teacher's role constitutes a vital interface between the home and the school. In basic schools, teachers act as parent surrogate – in addition to facilitating learning, they are also expected to provide warmth, love and belongingness to all inmates of the school. They have to contend with well-behaved children as well as children with behavior problems. Public sympathy and not public ridicule and acrimony is expected. It is my hope that findings of this study influence the way people and the media relate to schools and teachers on educational issues.

Finally, the study reveals a woeful lack of indigenous textbooks in the areas of character and citizenship education. This is a challenge to researchers, writers, and students. I will entreat the Ministry of Education to offer support to people who accept this challenge, as well as local publishers.

It is my hope that more studies would be conducted in the area, in the coming years, to add more information to what the present study has yielded.
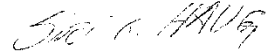
APPENDIX 1

Bergen, 28th January 2008

Norwegian Directorate of Immigration

Postboks 8108 Dep.
0032 Oslo

To whom it might concern

It is hereby confirmed that Kobina Pra-Annan is studying Master of Philosophy in Education at NLA School of Religion, Education and Intercultural Studies. He has registered for the semester and paid the registration fee. Mr. Pra-Annan is about to finish his master degree and his final oral examination has been rescheduled to April because the supervisor is travelling and the external examiner will also need time to read the final thesis. However, his visa expires in February. Mr. Pra-Annan has showed us his bank statement and he has enough money to support himself during these extra months. In terms of accommodation he has already a place to live for free with one of the students of this college. He has a part-time job with Bergens Tidende. We therefore kindly ask you to provide him with an extension of his visa in order for him to finalize his master studies.

Sincerely yours,

Siri Elisabeth Haug
Dean of Intercultural Studies and International Relations

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