

Situating Ghana's Policy Making and Reform Strategies on Basic Education in the MDG2 and EFA Strategies; what is the Interplay between National and International in Policy Making?

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Abstract

Over the years Ghana has made significant commitments towards achieving universal basic education in line with the MDG 2 and EFA goals. These commitments are reflected in several policy reforms documents, reports and programmes she has implemented since 1951. This article, examines Ghana's educational policy making and reforms process particularly, on basic education. Using the MDGs and Education for All (EFA) Framework of Action as benchmarks, and the human rights as a theoretical lens, it tries to explore the intricacies between the global and the local in policy making in education. It concludes that for individual nations like Ghana to benefit sustainably from this interplay, there is the need to strike a balance and two way channels of communications between local and international interests groups in the formulation and implementation of policies on education. This will whip up the needed support to drive the implementation of education policies and programmes to maximize the needed outcome in access, equity, quality and relevance in education. Also, given the inequalities that still exist in her basic education, there is the need for the nation to continue to commit herself to the human rights approach to education.

Keywords: globalization, universal basic education, educational policy, educational strategies

Introduction

Over the years Ghana has made significant commitments towards achieving universal basic education in line with the MDG 2 and EFA goals. These commitments are reflected in several policy reforms documents and reports. This article examines Ghana's educational policy making and reforms processes particularly, on basic education. Using the MDG2 and Education for All (EFA) Framework of Action as benchmarks, and the human rights as a theoretical lens, it tries to explore the intricacies between the global and the local in policy making in education. It seeks to unravel the following questions; how is global policy making paradigm shaping educational policies and reforms strategies on basic education in Ghana? In what ways do Ghana's educational policies mimic or contradict that of the Dakar Framework for EFA? And what can be done in order for Ghana to achieve the overall targets of free universal, accessible, exclusive, quality basic completion by her new timeline of 2020.

This paper, apart from exploring the reciprocity between the national and the international in policy making, also seeks to enrich the debate for human rights approach to basic education policy making. Its main hunch is that policies borne out of wider consultations and deliberations of all stakeholders, both at the local and international level, including minority groups, tend to enjoy popular support which is key to successful outcomes. The article is structured into five sections. The first section takes a cursory look at the concept of policy and the interplay between local and international in the policy making process. The second introduces a theoretical framework which views policy making in basic education from the lens of the human rights. It also seeks to draw a linkage between policy making in Ghana and the EFA Framework of Action to the human rights approach. The third highlights background of basic educational policy reforms in Ghana, and how it seeks to address the issue of access, equity and quality which is at the heart of human rights. The fifth leg is a comparative analysis of the policy making process in Ghana vis-a-vis that of the international level. It compares Ghana's Education Strategic Plan to the UNESCO EFA strategies to see the similarities or the differences, if any, between international and national policy making processes. The paper concludes by making suggestions on how Ghana could achieve positive outcomes in the policy making on education in the face of intense globalization.

Method

This study is a theoretical examination of existing education reform and policy making strategies whilst drawing further theoretical linkage with human rights approach to education discourse. The paper does not claim to challenge the authority and the credibility of their findings, but it tries to consolidate them in the context of Ghana as how to achieve the overall targets of free universal, accessible and equitable quality basic education.

The Concept of Policy Making and Policy Making Processes

Haddad & Demsky (1995), defined policy as "an explicit or implicit single decision or group of decisions which may set out directives for guiding future decisions, initiate or retard action, or guide implementation of previous decisions" (Haddad & Demsky, p.8). Haddad & Demsky (1995), therefore, posited that in designing educational policy or initiating successful educational reforms, planners need to be abreast and take into cognizance the dynamism and the complexities between policy formulation, implementation and evaluation procedures and processes. This is also due to the fact that educational policies exhibit constant dynamism in scope, complexity, decision milieu, choices, and decision criteria (Haddad & Demsky, 1995).

Ball (1994), also posits that policy can be a text or discourse. As a text it encodes particular set of arguments and counter arguments and which invariably lead to compromises. As a discourse, however, it embodies the totality of forces, interests, ideas, and perspectives shaping policy production overtime. This suggests that there could be missing links between the intended policies (the text on paper) the implemented policy (what is actually implemented) and even less to the attained policy (the actual targets or goals achieved). Therefore to minimize this possible disconnects demands that the policy making and planning and the implementation processes are holistic, all encompassing, all involving, and well thought out.

Haddad and Demsky (1995), identified seven policy making and planning processes. They include: analysis of existing situation; the generation of policy options; evaluation of policy options; marking the policy decision; planning of policy implementation; policy impact assessment; and subsequent policy cycles. Educational policy making process can therefore be said to be an endless interchange of ideas, interests, strategies, goals, pooling of resources among all stakeholders with the view of achieving a desirable outcomes that are consistent with

the developmental aspirations of the society at any particular time. The education policy making process, therefore, marries and socializes competing and diverse interests groups in education both at the global and the local levels.

The Interplay between National and International in Educational Policy Making

Educational policies are shaped at the national level through public consultations, parliamentary debates, governing parties, commissions and councils, trade union representatives, employer organizations, professional associations, sectors of civil society, bilateral cooperation and international organizations (Dale, 2007). At the international level the major players are the UN and its technical and specialized agencies, The World Trade Organisation (WTO), The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, multinational corporations/organizations, regional and professional organizations, International NGOs, bilateral cooperation, national governments, research institutions, and individuals (Crossley & Watsson, 2003). Comparison of these two levels suggests that there is a reciprocal relationship between the national and the international as each has a stake and interest in the other. However, the global seems to have the upper hand as it can amass resources more than the local. For example being the first UN agency, UNESCO through its long standing in championing the course of universal basic education and functional literacy, has had a profound influence on global educational policies and thinking, especially as a right issue (Crossley & Watsson 2003). Crossley & Watsson (2013), further identified a strong collaboration among donor organizations concerned with educational development. For example the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), which was founded as Donors to Africa Education, brings together national, international and private donor agencies to formulate policies and these policy directions are then disseminated through several publications. Globalization, therefore, plays an important role in national level policy making in terms of funding and technical expertise as nations respond to the global changes in order to become competitive and also (in the case of developing countries) to attract more funding from donor agencies (Jacobi 2012; Carnoy, 1999).

Dale (2007), suggests that the national education policy makers and planners interact with the global through two main general policy mechanisms. These are the traditional approach to policy making and planning which includes: Policy borrowing and Policy learning. The second one is externally induced mechanisms such as Policy Harmonization as evident in the EU- Bologna declaration; Policy Dissemination as seen in the OECD indicators- PISA; Policy Standardization as exemplified in the UNESCO EFA goals; Policy Interdependence as evident in the global commitment in fighting climate change, global warming and terrorism. The last one is Policy Imposition as seen in the IMF and the World Bank's structural adjustment policies such as cost sharing, full cost recovery and privatization in education. The mechanisms of influence of the global on the local come in the form of policy advice, technical assistance, common policies and architecture for educational system, indicators, ranking, declarations, recommendations, guidelines, conventions, regional agreements, loans linked to programmes and policies and conditioned aid (Jacobi 2012; Dale, 2007).

Background to Ghana's Educational Reform and Policy Making Strategies for Achieving Free Universal Quality Basic Education

Formal education was introduced in Ghana in the 16th Century by Merchants and Christian Churches. The colonial government- British Crown authorities took control of the education system by financing a number of government schools, including one for girls. Both government and church-funded schools co-existed and were based on the public 'monitorial' schools system then in England (Foster, 1963). Education then was reserved for the elites and the overall

demand for education was very low. This was due to the fact that the indigenes were yet to embrace the importance of education. For the period 1911 to 1937, the enrolment of pupils in basic education increased from around 18,000 to 44,000 (Foster, 1993) as a result of public campaign on importance of education. The type of education introduced was not relevant to the context of Ghana as it placed much emphasis on literacy and numeracy at the expense of vocational and technical which was much needed to make use of her vast natural resources (Adu Boahen, 1975). It can therefore be argued that from the genesis, education in Ghana has serious problem equity, access, quality and relevance as public participation of the local people was low (Anlimachie, 2014).

The major education policy dubbed Accelerated Development Plan for Education (ADPE) was introduced just before independence in 1951. It focused on expanding access in all sub-sectors of education, particularly, at the basic education level. The main goal was to expand access through investment in infrastructure and investing in technical education. This was also to make educational relevant to the Ghanaian context. Many schools including basic, secondary teacher training, College of Science and Technology, Polytechnics and Technical were established to trained high technically skilled manpower for industry. In the late 1960 a revamp reform was lunched which promulgated the Education Act of 1960, Act 87 to give legal framework and impetus to the ADPE after independence. This Act guaranteed tuition free compulsory primary schooling with effect from September, 1961. However, the Act places responsibility on parents to foot the other cost such as the provision books, stationary, and other materials needed for academic work. Ghana's educational system was one of the shining examples in Africa in the mid-60s. The country achieved enrolment of 75% (for pupils aged 6-14 year) and overall enrolment at the basic level increased by approximately 150% (Kay & Hymer, 1992). These successes can be attributing to the fact that there were a strong participation and ownership in the policy formulation and implementation prices by both local and international stakeholders as well as strong financial and administration couple with good governance practices. Notwithstanding there were a number of setbacks. First, there were inadequate numbers of teachers to cope with the rapid increase in enrolment in basic schools and the enrolment also outpaced the level of infrastructural expansion this affected the quality of education. Also most of the schools were located in the core towns and places closer to the coast, denying the masses in the hinterland opportunity of education (Foster, 2006). In the late 60s, deliberate efforts were made to improve quality and equity through the training of more teachers, introduction of the 'Teacher Trainee Allowance to attract best candidates into teaching and free supply of text books. Others include fair distribution of model secondary schools countrywide, and the introduction of special scholarship for northern Ghana which is more deprived (Kay & Hymer, 1992). All these strategies and programmes were linked to the human rights approach which seeks to create quality education opportunities for all.

In 1966, the first military government (NLC) through the Kwapong Educational Review Committee undertook a reform which attempted to revamp technical and vocational education in order to make education more relevance to the needs of the country. The reform introduced a 2-year pre-vocational continuous vocational education into the Middle School system. The vocational policy was linked to the industrial and the agricultural potentials of the country (Poku, Aawaar , Worae, 2013). It was envisaged to prepare the Middle School leavers for the world of work. However, this policy failed woefully as the students did not embrace the concept. They were keener in pursing secondary academic path education as a conduit for future higher education so as to get white color job rather than the vocational schools. The reasons for the failure have links to the low level of involvements of the stakeholders in the policy making planning and implementations processes. Others include the lack of resources, unstable political atmosphere, and the failure of government to cooperate with the international players. It can also

be linked to the elitist white colour colonial legacy that is embedded in the education system of Ghana (Poku et. al, 2013).

By 1978, Ghana started to introduce structural adjustment policies such as full cost recovery and cost sharing in her education supported by the Bretton Woods institutions. Public funding to education was massively cut and there was an increasing burden on parents to fund education. The effects were further drops in enrolment and quality. For examples, the 75% enrolment figure for 6-14 years olds and the 91% of trained teachers in basic schools recorded in 1965 dropped to 67% and 72% respectively by 1979 (Poku et. al, 2013). The decline has link to economic crisis the country was plucked into as a result of four different military interventions. The introduction of cost recovery policies in education between the 70s and 80s increased the inequity and decreased the quality of education in Ghana (Adu Boahen, 1975; Pimpong, 2006). During this period the type of policy interaction between the country and her foreign partners was that of policy imposition with little consultations and participation of local stakeholders.

In 1986/87 another reform occurred in Ghana. It changed the structure of basic and secondary education from 17 to 12 years. It included a 6-year primary education, a 3-year Junior Secondary School (JSS), and another 3-year o Senior Secondary School (SSS). This means basic education was reduced from eleven (11) to nine (9) years (Poku, et. al, 2013). The main goals of the reforms were to improve the quality of teaching and learning by increasing school hours and teacher professionalism. It was intended to make education planning and management more efficient and effective (Akyeampong, 2005). The reforms therefore focused more strongly on the issues of adaptability or relevance. The reform was to prepare JSS graduate for technical and vocational training, and further education base on self-determined path it was seen as a way of preparing students with varied skills and competencies so as to play a meaningful roles in all sectors of the economy (Ministry of Education, 1996). All JSS where given workshops and technical and vocational courses were included in the curriculum and teacher where trained in these areas. The reform suffered a setback for want of sufficient resources and TLMs for practical work at the JSS level (Ministry of Education, 1996). The level of participation of the communities in the initial stage was fairly good but it plummeted in the course of the implementation process and this may account for the very little impact.

In 1992 a comprehensive programme dubbed Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) policy was introduced and it has since been the main policy driver of basic education in Ghana. Its main goals are to improve access to quality equitable basic education, especially of girl, and also to improving school management through better planning, monitoring and evaluation; and to promote active participation of communities in school management (Little, 2010). Abolition of tuition fee, school feeding and nutrition, supply of school uniform poor communities and development of teacher professionalism and efficient teaching and learning among, community participation among others are some of the policy implementation strategies of addressing access and quality in basic education (Ministry of Education, 2010). The policy has chalked modest successes. There has been a sustained increase in enrolment rates at the basic level since 1997. For example the GER in primary education prior to the FCUBE was 73% in 1995 and by 2001 it had increased to 80% (Little, 2010). The most unique impetus injected in basic education by the FCUBE is that it has laid a stronger case for participation of stakeholders. It recognizes the role of the community, and strengthened the role of the School Management Committees (SMCs) and Parent Teachers' Association (PTAs) in the management of the schools. These account for the modest successes chopped by the program.

Notwithstanding, some challenges still persist as regard to accessibility, availability, adaptability and acceptability. For example about 40% of children of school going age were still out of school by 2003. This is because people were still being denied access due to cost since the FCUBE does not mean entirely free education (Little, 2010). Parents were to pay for other levies such as those

for school repairs, cultural and sporting activities. Some parents, particularly, in the rural and urban slums poor could still not afford to pay these levies (Little, 2010). In her quest of achieving universal access in line with the Education for All (EFA) goals, the Capitation Grant Policy was introduced in 2004 with the support of the World Bank. This policy further abolished these other forms of levies. There was an immediate impact as gross enrolment during the 2005/06 academic year increased by 10%, peaking the total primary enrolment at 92%. The overall enrolment in basic school increased by 17% in the 2005/06 academic as compared to of the 2004/05 academic year (Adamu-Issah, et al). The School Feeding Programme was introduced in 2005 as a complementary to the FCUBE and the Capitation Grants with the support of international partners to further boost access and captures the excluded children. It basically targeted poor communities, especially, the rural areas and urban slums. The programme further pushed the enrolment figure up (Ministry of Education, 2010). The FCUBE and its attendance strategies are very much ingrained in the human rights approach to education and also in line with the EFA goals of giving access to quality education to every child and the post 2015 agenda of leaving no one behind.

In 2004, the government instituted the Anamuah Mensah Educational Review Committee which undertook a comprehensive reform that culminated into the Government of Ghana White Paper on Education Reform. The objective of the reform is to link schooling to the job market through forming alliances with private sector. The new reform gave a new structure of basic education to include a 2- year Kindergarten, a 6- year primary education and three (3) years of Junior High School (JHS) (Ministry of Education, 2004). The innovation of the reform was the inclusion of Kindergarten (KG) Education to the main stream of basic education in Ghana in line of the EFA strategy on improving early childhood education and the use of KG as sustainable tool of addressing the problem of access, equity and quality in Ghana. It is envisaged that KG will improve equity, access and quality of education. The reform also proposes that the medium of instructions in Kindergarten (KG) and Lower Primary were to be Ghanaian language complemented by English, where necessary as this is believed to impact on quality and relevance (Ministry of Education, 2005). This is also in line with the EFA action plan and the 2008 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous people which advocate for the rights of indigenous people and children to be taught in their mother tongue at least in the early stages of their education. The implementation of the 2004 reforms therefore gave birth to the most comprehensive educational policy strategy in recent times in Ghana dubbed the Education Strategic Plan (ESP).

Success and Challenges

After decades of reform and policy strategy experimentations, Ghana had made some modest gains in basic education, especially, in access and gender parity. The gross enrolment rate (GER) for primary school increased from 76% in 1987/88, to 95% in 2008 (Ghana Statistical Service-GSS, 2010). Gender inequities have also reduced as the GER in favour of boys decreased from 10% in 1996/97 to 7% in 2012 (UNICEF, 2013). The literacy rate has also increased from 54% in 2000 to about 72% in 2010 (GSS, 2010). Also the figure of children (aged between 6 to 11 years) who have never attended school before dropped by 46% between 2006 and 2011 (Government of Ghana, 2013). The completion rates also increased at both the Primary and the JHS levels with current figures of 112.4 and 70.1 respectively by the end of 2013. Gender parity (GPI) at the primary level stands at 0.99 by the end of 2013. This means that gender parity has been achieved at the Primary level (Government of Ghana, 2013). Overall Ghana has attained the EFA on gender parity in primary education and is on the verge of attaining that of the access by the end of 2015. These improvements are attributed to the strategies adopted in line with the EFA and MDG2 which are rooted in the human rights approach. However, as

mention earlier there is still problem of access and a huge problem as regard quality and more grievously rural– urban inequity.

With respect to the challenges, Ghana is currently, facing a general problem of access and quality in education. At the basic level, notwithstanding the progress made with regard to access, many children (about 23%) [of the population aged three (3) years and older] have never been to school (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2010). In terms of quality there are problems of resources and infrastructure constraints and availability of teachers, poor monitoring and evaluation, and lack of proper governance. For example, the number of core textbooks per pupil stands at 1.2 and 0.9 for Primary and JHS public schools respectively, far less than government target of three [3] (Ministry of Education, 2013). Also student performance in standard national tests is dwindling. For example, pupils' performance in the Basic Certification Examination (BECE) dropped from 60% to 47% for the period 2001 to 2011 (Ministry of Education, 2010). More gloomily there are inequalities in access and quality in basic education in Ghana. The urban centres have more schools which are relatively better equipped in terms of infrastructure and teachers than the rural areas (Anlimachie, 2014). Attendance and completion rates are higher in the urban areas than in the rural areas. There is marked difference between males (9.1%) and females (14.3%) who have never attended school.

Theoretical/ Analytical Framework

The rights approach to education has become one of the most fashionable development policy paradigms dictating the pace of educational reforms and policy strategies both at the global and the national levels. Its generally accepted nature is the fact that it is rooted on the principle of inclusiveness, fairness, and relevance. It seeks to include everybody, especially, the most marginalized and vulnerable who may be excluded from education. The human rights recognize education as the biggest tool of achieving all other rights as it frees the individual from ignorant, hopelessness and marginalization by empowering the person to realize his or her full potentials in life.

The rights perspective to education argues that every person, no matter the race, socio-economic background, or origin has the rights to a decent education (Tomasevski, 2004, 2006). It is premised on the view that education prepares the learner for responsible citizenry position and social, economic and political participation. This enhances social cohesion and socializes the young that rights are naturally and sacredly inherent in the individual and it is the individual's greatest (Tomasevski, 2005). The provisions on the rights to equitable accessible quality education, is enshrined in several international treaties such as the 1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education, the 1966 international Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Others include the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 2007). The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for example, states among other things that:

Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages... Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms... (UN, 1948 Article 26)

The 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child also entitles every child to receive free and compulsory elementary education without discrimination on any ground. More significantly, it advocates for a special provision for vulnerable children such as those with special needs, ethnic minority, and the poor and rural dwellers to be included in education. In the Africa context, the Lome Convention; and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights as well as the ECOWAS Protocol on Education and Training are all relevant impetus toward the rights approach to education. The ECOWAS Protocol, for example, seeks to eliminate all forms of

discriminatory against females as it aims at equity and full access to, and achievement in all levels of the educational system among girls.

In Ghana, the rights approach, especially girls education, has been championed by local NGOs like the 31st December Women's Movement and Federation of International Women Lawyer (FIDA) - Ghana chapter. Through seminars, workshops, fora, discussions, and lectures these organizations have rallied support from all segment of the society including professional groups, policy makers, local and international NGO's, trades union, religious groups, women's groups, market women, indigenous groups, traditional rulers for the rights approach to education (FIDA- Ghana, 2014). These activities culminated into the 1992 Constitution granting Free Compulsory Basic Education for all.

Tomasevski (2006), argued in her famous four-fold (4-As) schema of the right- based approach to education that any educational policy that espouses human rights principles should capture four key indicators of availability, accessibility, acceptability, and adaptability. These four concepts are interlinked and they form a complex web of intricacy hence any educational policy or reforms must take into consideration these intricate relationships as any policy which focus on one or more of them to the detriment of the other (s) will invariably affect the other(s). The cue from this is that any educational policy strategy must be comprehensive in their approach in order to strike a balance between them.

EFA Framework & the Ghana Education Strategic Plan and the Right - Based Approach to Education

Viewing the EFA framework and the Ghana Education Strategic plan from the rights - based lens to education, it clear from their policy objectives, strategies and targets are pivoted on human rights approach to education. The EFA framework take into cognizance the important elements that are necessary, specific, unique and appropriate to the rights - based approach to education. These include assessment and analysis to define claims of human rights in education and the corresponding obligations of governments and the causes of the non-realization of these rights. It also includes assessing the capacity of individuals to claim their rights and the ability of the state to deliver. Others include developing strategies to build capacities to realize these rights and; proper monitoring of the outcomes and the processes. All these should be guided by human rights standards and principle (UNICEF, 2007). Therefore, the EFA framework and Ghana ESP recognize that human rights approach to education become meaningful when there is a deliberate effort on the part of government to empower the citizens, especially the minority groups through equitable education. They seek to rally support at the national and the international levels into achieving these goals.

The World Declaration on Educational for All (Jomtien, 1990 & Daker, 2000), lay a strong policy strategies for achieving universal primary education by 2015 and its new mantra of leaving no one behind in the Post-2015 agenda. The rights-based approach to EFA is holistic and all-encompassing. It seeks to holistically improve access, equity quality and relevance in education based on human rights principles (UNICEF, 2007). The EFA movement is geared towards providing access to education for all, especially, traditionally marginalized groups (UNICEF, 2007). The rights-based approach to education plays a key role in overcoming the complex barriers of discrimination on any grounds and all forms of violence that can impede educational for all (UNICEF, 2007). Also Ghana Education Strategic Plan like the EFA framework is an elaborate comprehensive policy and framework for achieving access, equity and quality of education for all, especially expanding early childhood education and free universal basic and inclusive education that hinge on human rights norms and values. The EFA framework and the Ghana ESP are both ingrained in the human rights approach to education in terms of their

policy making process, goals, and objectives, targets and implementation strategies as they are both pivoted on the principle of equity, fairness inclusion and participation.

Discussion of Basic Education Policy Making Process

According to (UNESCO& UNICEF, 2007), the rights-based approach to policy making recognizes that the processes of development of policies largely determines the outcome. Hence it advocates for principles of participation and accountability in the planning, design and implementation of policies. The significance values of these principles are that the policy acquires moral, political force and popular support that are essential for the success of the programme. This is important, given that the people who may benefit from the application of these policies are of diverse background including the poor and marginalized. This section is therefore, juxtaposes the Ghana's Education Strategic Plan with the MDGs and EFA Framework of Action as it seeks to discover the interplay between the national and the international in policy making in terms of how various interests are married together in the policy making processes.

Policy Option: Setting targets and Adopting Strategies

The Dakar (2000) Framework of Action and the Johannesburg (1999) Regional Conference on EFA reaffirmed the objectives of the declaration of education for all (Jomtiem, 1990). The globally agreed educational goals of EFA aim at meeting the learning needs of all children through strategies and programmes that seeks to: widen and improve early childhood care and development, especially for the most vulnerable; ensure at least every child everywhere, especially, the disadvantaged will have access and complete the full cycle of free compulsory quality basic education by 2015; eliminate gender disparities in primary education by 2005; and achieve gender equality in basic and secondary education by 2015. (UNESCO, 2000).

Comparatively, Ghana educational policy and reform goals are greatly influenced by international and sub regional policy frameworks and declarations. The country's participation in and signatory to several international treaties like the EFA declaration, the Declaration on the Right of the Child, the Beijing Declaration on Women's Rights; the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and; the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the ECOWAS protocols on Education and Training have greatly shaped her educational policy strategies and goals. This means that the government tries to draw a balance between local interests and bilateral and multinational negotiations she had participated in, as a guide to her policy making. The broad policy goals of Ghana's ESP laid strong emphasis with regard to access, equity, quality and relevance in education. The specific strategic goals relating to basic education include: to provide equitable, accessible quality child-centered universal basic education. It seeks improve educational opportunities for all children in at least basic education (Government of Ghana, 2010). The specific targets stated in the ESP 2003-2015 include the following; that all children irrespective of background, gender and region will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015; to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2015(Government of Ghana, 2003). From the above, we can say that education is viewed by both the global and Ghana's policy makers as welfare and human right issues as they are premises on expanding access, equity and quality and hooking everybody into the educational process.

In term of strategies the Ghana's ESP and the EFA share similar guiding principles. The UN seeks to achieve the MDG2 & EFA targets through promoting EFA policies within a sustainable integrated broad sectorial framework link to poverty elimination strategies by ensuring the following: constant engagement and participation of civil society and other stakeholders in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of educational programmes; developing responsive, participatory and accountable systems of educational governance and management; implementing an integrated strategies for gender equality in education and;

enhancing the status, morale and professionalism of teachers in order to achieve the MDGs (UNESCO, 2000). Similarly, in the Ghana's Education Strategic Plan the guiding principles and strategies on basic education include; uprooting all kinds of gender and other and exclusion from education; improve the quality of teaching and learning, and to promote lifelong learning at all levels and for all ages. Others include the development of effective and rewarding teaching profession; devolution of the delivery and fiscal systems of 1st and 2nd cycle of education to Local Government to ensure accountability and local participation. It also seeks to strengthen monitoring, accountability management and planning in the education sector (Government of Ghana, 2010).

Decision Making: Consensus Building among Diverse Interests

International policy making is a complex process that seeks to include regional interests and views of all major stakeholders in international education, including businesses and private institutions (Verger, 2014). It involves several underground preparation and consultations. As evident by the deliberations of the UN Secretary-Generals's High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons who are working on the Post-2015 Development Agenda:

The deliberations of the Panel were informed by the broad consultative process ... This includes national and global thematic consultations under the aegis of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), regional consultations undertaken by the Regional Commissions, consultations with businesses around the world under the guidance of the UN Global Compact, and the views of the scientific and academic community as conveyed through the Sustainable Development Solutions Network ... more than 5000 civil society organizations and 250 chief executive officers of major corporations who shared their valuable ideas and views during a series of consultations, both in person and online (UN, 2013)

Also, the Dakar Framework of Action (2000) was birth out of amalgam of ideas and reaffirmation of international stakeholders to commit themselves to the ten (10) EFA goals. Likewise in Ghana, base on her democratic decentralization participatory system, the policy making process is underpinned by high level of consultations and consensus building. Major policy making and reform process starts with initiation of policy by Government (Ministry of Education). This is followed by District and Regional consultations to gather inputs from the local people. This is followed by national forum where all stakeholders including international players converge to discuss and make inputs. An improved draft is then approved by cabinet. The president laid it in parliament. The Speaker then refers it to Parliament Special Committee on Education for their suggestions. The document goes back to cabinet for their final inputs before a white paper is issued for it to become the final document. According to Government of Ghana:

The two volumes of the ESP are the outcome of year-long discussions and consultations between numerous stakeholders in the education sector, particularly those in District education offices, those in NGOs and our development partners. This interaction has provided assurance and confidence in the strength and probity of the plan (Government Ghana, 2010: ESP 2010-2020, p.6).

Further, in 1999 there was a National Educational Forum. This forum identified the major challenges of education in Ghana and recommended the need to carry out a new reform in education. This culminated into the institution of President Education Review Committee in 2002 and the subsequent drawing up of the ESP (Government of Ghana, 2004). Therefore, as Haddad (1995) observes education policy making process in Ghana like that of the international level takes into account the interests and inputs of the various stakeholders in education both at the local and the international level. Hence the policies tend to enjoy high level of popular support which is key to its successful implementation.

Policy implementation Process and funding

At the International level, UN specialize agencies like UNESCO and UNICEF and other international NGOs play a complementary roles in supporting the implementation of educational programmes globally. UNESCO, for example, provides support to national governments to develop and implement comprehensive educational policies and programmes that are relevant to local context. The support includes the provision of technical assistance in policy analysis and design of education sector development plans. The supports also include the facilitation of mobilization of donor supports for national educational plans implementation. The support can include building the institutional capacity of national agencies in educational planning policy dialogue and monitoring and of educational programmes (UNESCO, 2014). The UN specialized agencies fund their programmes through the receipt of compulsory and voluntary contributions from member countries as well business and individuals. They also impress upon developed nations to increase their aid to education. In Ghana, the implementation of educational policies are highly supported and dependent on aid and technical support from the UN specialised agencies, donor countries and the IMF and the World Bank. They therefore dictate the direction of the policy making in Ghana. Perhaps one of the positive impacts of globalization on education in Ghana has been the inflows of funds and technical assistant into the education sector (Anlimachie, 2014). However, there seem to be overreliance on external support at the expense of prudent local initiative in raising the needed resources to fund education in Ghana. The evidence is that any time there is a delay or a withdrawal of such funds it triggers a stunt in the implementation of educational programmes in Ghana. As noted by Samoff and Carrol (2013) perhaps there is an internalisation within Africa countries, including Ghana that improvement and change can only flourish on external support. This does not sustain make the outcome of policy implementation sustainable. The donor organizations and countries therefore have vested interest and expectations. For example, the over liberalization of the Ghanaian economy through Structural Adjustment Programmes(SAPs) was as a result of conditionality attached to grants and aid accessed by the country (Pimpong, 2006). This has led to the influx of foreign goods and the gradual the collapse of local industries due to unfair competition from the West, as well as privatization of key state- own industries most of whom are now controlled by foreign and multinational companies. One of the effects is the current problem of graduate unemployment in Ghana due to the shrinking of the industrial sector. Another concern as observed by Pimpong (2006) is that most often the country use the funds from aids and loans in such a way that fulfil goals agreed by the loaning agency or donor countries. These goals may not be aligned with the goals of the nation. The impact of the global on education policy in Ghana is therefore very real when it comes to funding of education, even to the extent that donor partners have to make inputs into the national budget of the country. As observed by Meyer, J. W. et al. (1997), the local is indeed gradually ceding its power and sovereignty to the global.

Policy Evaluation, Impact Assessment and Recycling of Ideas

One of the seven processes of policy making and planning identified by (Haddad and Demsky 1995) includes analysis of existing situation so as to guide the current the future. For example, The Dakar Framework of Action for EFA was influenced by previous experiences and revolves around several UN declarations such UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child, the Beijing Declaration on Women's Rights s among others. Dakar (2000) is a follow up to Jomtien (1990) Declaration of Education for All. Similarly, the Ghana's ESP (2010-2020) builds upon its four predecessors, especially, the ESP (2003-2015) and upon earlier visionary strategies such the FCUBE, Education Sector Review Report (2002); 2002 Education Sector Review (ESR) and; Meeting the Challenges of Education in the 21st Century (The report of the President's Committee on Review of Education Reforms in Ghana, October 2002) which covers a long period up to 2010 (Government of Ghana, 2010).

According to (Haddad & Demsky, 1995), policy making processes also include policy impact assessment and subsequent policy cycle. This means that strategic planning is continuous developmental process which link past challenges, current situations to future projections. Comparatively both the global and Ghana have similarities as regard to policy adjustments base on identified pitfalls. Although significant successes have been chalked globally with regard to the attainment of the MDGs within the EFA strategies, the UN likewise Ghana missed the specific targets on education. The target on UPC was first scheduled by the UN to be attained by 1980, but this never materialised. A new deadline of 2000 was fixed by Jomtei 1990. This target was further reviewed to 2015. Available data so far indicate that the target has been missed. The UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the post-2015 Development Agenda has proposed a more flexible timeline of by 2030. With respect to Ghana, the ESP 2003-2015 sets 2015 as the target year for UPC, but this deadline has been revised to 2020 by the ESP (2010-2020).

As regard to impact assessment for possible adjustment into existing policy in the policy making process as identified by (Haddad and Demsky, 1995), the Ghanaian experience mimic that of the international community. Example, having recognize the challenges of the EFA strategies of attaining the MDGs by the given deadlines, the international community, although not reinventing the wheel is seeking to strengthen its strategies toward 2030 in his new propose post-2015 agenda. The new strategy is 'Leave No One Behind' through the formation of stronger global partnership for sustainable Development (UN, 2013). The focus is to provide fair equitable inclusive quality education and life-long learning opportunities for all (UN, 2013). The UN High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda opined that the amalgam and consolidation of the goals, targets, strategies and indicators under the MDGs was a powerful instrument for the mobilization of resources and motivation led action and must be maintained and strengthened toward 2030. They recommended that going forward the new goals and targets must be pivoted on the respect for universally accepted human rights, in order to fully complete the mission started by the MDGs which is eradicating extreme poverty from the face of the earth by 2030 (UN, 2013). The Panel identified and recommends a multi-stakeholder partnership as exemplify by the composition, the structure and the practice of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) as the way forward in delivering quality education (UN, 2013). Comparatively, in Ghana the way forward toward her 2020 vision of achieving free compulsory basic education and life-long learning for all as outlined in the ESP(2010-2020) is to increase capacity and accountability and participation through; decentralised planning, financial management in the implementation of policies and programmes; promoting public-private partnerships in an integrated school programs; develop an open mutual-accountability scheme for parents, teachers, schools, community and Districts; and developing an effective operational School Management Committees in Basic Schools, while forming a stronger partnerships at the international level (Government of Ghana, 2010).

Discussion of Findings

From the background account and discussions, Ghana policy can be said to be undergoing continuous transformation mostly motivated by international education policy paradigms, change in governments, and donors' influences. These forces interact and compromise their original discourses and intentions into constructing a policy document that is acceptable to all interested parties. Another feature is that policy making and reforms in Ghana are ingrained in the human rights approach as most of her policies seek to widen the frontier of education by hooking the marginalized, into at least basic formal education. The Accelerated Education Plan of the 60s and the FCUBE show that even before Jomtiem (2000), Ghana had committed herself to universal access to equitable quality education. However, the issues of equity, quality and relevance/adaptability which are also pertinent to the rights approach to education have not been sufficiently addressed for want of sufficient resources, efficient monitoring and evaluation

mechanism and governance in education. In order to address equity, quality and relevance issues in education in Ghana requires the need for increasing government expenditure on education by adopting appropriate revenue generation strategies such as efficient tax mechanisms and ceding a percentage of the new oil revenue on education. These will inject the needed funds for funding quality education in Ghana. The paper also recommends Private Public Partnership in the monitoring and evaluation part in basic and secondary education in Ghana as a way to inject efficiency and discipline needed for increasing performance. Also, curriculum reforms that response to individual, local and national needs; refurbishment of school facilities, efficient school governance, and management systems as well as the development of teacher professional will all contribute to quality and make education more relevance to the need of the individuals and the country at large.

Another issue that also emerged from the historical account and the discussions is that policy making and reform process in Ghana in the past was greatly influenced by global stakeholders through policy imposition and borrowing. However, in recent times, policy dissemination from the UN and its specialized agencies and other bilateral and multinational partners' base on wide sectorial approach seems to be the main driver. Hence Ghana education policy making and implementation process mimic that of UN specialized agencies on education in terms of objective, target setting, strategies hence her policy implementation tend to attract a lot of funding and technical support from donor countries and agencies. However, this seems to be a contributory factor for the unsustainability of most of the gains. This is because whenever there are a withdrawal of aid or grants for certain education projects or programmes they suffer setbacks. In order to ensure the sustainability of such programmes require a long term plan, commitment and financial sustainability mechanisms to ensure a lasting impacts of such programs and policies.

The policy making process in Ghana is found to be underpinned by wider consultation of international and local stakeholders. Base on her participatory democratic and freedom and justice principles. However, the balance of power is tilted more to the global as the global tend to hold the power of the purse. Her history points to the fact that there are likelihood of greater successes in policies that were based on wider consultations and inclusion of all interest groups at the grassroots level. This suggests that the government must struck balance of two channels of relationships between the global one hand and the grassroots on another hand. This will help to whip the necessary funds and popular support for the success in the implementation of educational policies and programmes.

Conclusion

In conclusion, policy making is not an event but process which links the past to the present whilst charting a new path toward the future. This article has highlighted that successful policies are outcomes of deliberate and relatively long deliberations encompassing all stakeholders both at the national and the international level where a compromises are reached between all competing interests. Policy making process on education is therefore seen as a human rights issue as it has far reaching effects on all segments of the society, including minority groups. Further, the article recognizes that globalization has fueled that need for new global partnerships in policy making process on basic education due to the increasing interconnectedness of global challenges. As exemplify by the Ghanaian experiences on policy making vis-à-vis EFA Framework of Action there is indeed an intricate, but perhaps reciprocal relationship between the goal and the local when it come to policy making. However, the balance of power seems to be tilted towards the global as it holds the power of the purse (Crossley and Watsson, 2003). The implication is that for individual nations like Ghana to benefit sustainably from this interplay, there is the need to strike a balance and two way channels of communication between local and

international interests groups in the formulation and implementation of policies on basic education. Also, given the inequalities that still exist in her basic education, there is the need for the nation to continue with human rights approach to education. This paper call for further studies into how educational policy making and strategies can be made more appropriate to the rural-urban contexts of Ghana in order to reduce rural-urban inequities in access, quality and also make education more relevant to these two milieus.

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