PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

THE GHANAIAN EXPERIENCE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Table representing all the participants in the research.

Table 4.2: An example of initial coding for interview data collected from a traditional leader.

Table 5.1: Sample focus group guide relating to the research questions.

Table 5.2: Sample interview guide relating to the research questions.

LIST OF FIGURES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved wife, Gladys Gadoglo. She has been very dear to me. You are, indeed, God-sent partner. You have in many ways, enriched my life. Thank you for the thoughtfulness, the well wishes and above all, the prayers. I deeply appreciate and love you. I also dedicate this work to my cherished son, Enam Paradise Gbadago and my daughter, Zion Elorm Gbadago.

ABBREVIATIONS

AFRC- Armed Forces Revolutionary Council

AMARC - World Association of Community Radio

CDD- Centre for Democratic Development

CHASS- Conference of Heads of Assisted Secondary Schools

CPP - Convention People's Party

CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility

GES - Ghana Education Service

GFBA - Ghana Frequency Allocation Board

MDG - Millennium Development Goals

MMDA - Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies

MMDCE - Metropolitan, Municipal and District Executive

MOE - Ministry of Education

PFM- Public Finance Management

PRO- Public Relations Officer

PTA- Parent Teacher Association

NCA - National Communication Authority

NCTE- National Council for Tertiary Education

NDC- National Democratic Congress

NLC- National Liberation Council

NPP- New Patriotic Party

NRC- National Redemption Council

NUGS- National Union of Ghana Students

RCC- Regional Co-ordinating Council

UGCC - United Gold Coast Convention

SMC - School Management Committees

SMC- Supreme Military Council

SRC- Students' Representative Council

SSSCE- Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination

SHS- Senior High School

TI-K- Transparency International–Kenya

ABSTRACT

This research pursued a better understanding of development communication in a range of Ghanaian programmes in the education sector. Its focus is the nature of engagements between a range of actors during formulation, implementation and evaluation of the chosen development programmes. Provision of access to relevant information for people engaged in all forms of communicative practice around policy initiatives is considered imperative in securing full efficient participation and engagement. Researchers in the field of communication for economic and social development hold the view that such communication is best conducted in a consultative and dialogic fashion rather than the historically top-down approach often employed.

In the wake of increasing concerns about the efficacy of development projects in Ghana, some attention has focused on the kind of communication that takes place around the formulation, implementation and evaluation of such projects. However, a substantial gap in knowledge was identified and addressed in this research. Three key initiatives in the education sector were examined: The Free Senior High School (SHS) Policy, the Community Day SHS (CDSHS) Project and Tigo's Shelter for Education Project.

Empirically, the research focuses on government authorities (funding actors) and community members – youths, traditional and opinion leaders using the case study and qualitative research approaches. These participants were strategically chosen using purposive sampling, allowing interviews and focus groups in data gathering. Results of data analysis undertaken provide evidence of low participation of some stakeholders, especially beneficiaries. There is also evidence of little or no knowledge of the needs and preferences of the direct beneficiaries. The intended direct beneficiaries of the development initiatives were not mostly given the opportunity to get involved in the consultation, engagement and decision-making processes during the formulation and evaluation stages of the initiatives but had little involvement during implementation stage.

The thesis argues that the major contributing factors to this poor participatory communication practice are the domineering activities of government authorities in decision-making, as well as participatory limitations set out in the country's laws where power is concentrated in the hands of those in authority.

To fix the prevailing gaps of inaccessible areas of participation by some development actors and the intended beneficiaries of development initiatives, the thesis develops Methodical Participatory Communication Model as its conceptual/theoretical contribution. This model underscores the logical application of relevant, realistic and appropriate two-way communication activities in the design and execution of initiatives during formulation, implementation and evaluation of education initiatives by all stakeholders including intended beneficiaries. For the desired result, the application of the model specifies seven stages during project implementation following, a systematic procedure.

Key words: Ghana, development, communication, participation, initiatives, programmes, stakeholders, beneficiaries, Free SHS, Community Day SHS, Shelter for Education.

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION: THE NEED FOR STUDYING PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION IN EDUCATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

Chapter one of this research introduces the background to and need for this study, the specific research gap identified, the research questions, aims and objectives and the research design employed in the study. The chapter identifies the contribution to knowledge made in the research and concludes with an outline of the content of each subsequent chapter of the thesis and its role in the development of the thesis.

1.1 BACKGROUND

This research was primarily stimulated by the desire to unravel and find lasting solutions to increased concerns and misunderstandings from people in varied communities including traditional leaders or chiefs (who are custodians of their areas according to tradition) during the implementation of key policies and programmes in the education sector of Ghana. In recent times, the researcher while working at the country's Ministry of Education as Public Relations Officer (PRO) identified this unfortunate development between the education authorities and beneficiaries of development programmes. Petitions and specific reservations from the concerned beneficiaries regarding the misapprehensions could not eventually be managed by mere application of Public Relations principles, techniques, strategies and tactics in dealing with the concerns which revolved, in essence, around the efficacy of the implementation of development initiatives by the Ministry.

Pertinent questions and enquiries began to emerge over attempts in finding a holistic solution or approach since most of these education issues were also regularly discussed in the Ghanaian media thereby creating a problematic image and reputation for the Education Ministry and the results of its initiatives. This led the researcher to think about providing an enriched understanding of the underlying factors at the heart of the problem. It consequently called for the need to interrogate the communication approaches usually adopted in the implementation of key development education programmes from start to finish.

The provision of access to relevant information for local people or beneficiaries is one of the key prerequisites to secure full participation in development activities to deliver success and sustainability of the programmes in question (Dagron, 2001; Lewis, 2001; Huesca, 2002; Morris, 2003; Zakiya, 2014; Waisbord, 2008). In such cases, meaningful communication and understanding by all the stakeholders or parties in the activity concerned is needed to incite members of the group to produce positive outcomes. Achieving meaningful communication can be obtained when every member of the group accepts the pivotal roles being played by one another for its corporate good. Mefalopulos (2008) opines that truly important and substantial participation of stakeholders in projects must be supported by genuine two-way communication principles and procedures as well as broad-based participatory decision-making strategies. In respect of this, it is expected that participation will be enhanced largely through communication using both top-down and bottom-up approaches thereby giving maximum respect and recognition to all stakeholders' participation processes.

All stakeholders in the participation process must also recognize that the decision-making process is needed to be transparent and fair for the participation of all members irrespective of position, status, role or experience. To this end, it is expected that there will be free flow of relevant information and full participation of all kinds of people from all backgrounds in discussions and decision-making processes to achieve a common goal. Schumacher (2000) argues that if development planners and providers do not consider the perceptions and local knowledge of the intended beneficiaries of projects and programmes, the design, implementation, and the results are very likely to be jeopardised.

Whereas it is still admitted that the principles supporting the single Sender-Message-Channel-Receiver model in communication can still be beneficial in the execution of some projects, development communication since its inception has gained more grounds regarding horizontal, two-way model which grants the intended beneficiaries direct participation and dialogue in the project implementation as against the traditional one-way mass media information dissemination style. Due to limited participation of intended beneficiaries in decision-making processes in the implementation of past development initiatives most of them ended in fiasco and the failure of such initiatives can be directly or indirectly linked to the non-participation effect (Mefalopulos, 2008). According to Servaes (2008), institutional obstructions can be an important factor in the processes in question.

Interestingly, it is still perceived and widely assumed that the reverse of the illustration above is what takes place in most developing societies due to the differences in status, class, position and level of education among others. Most countries in Africa including Ghana are facing

varied developmental challenges that need to be tackled to ensure sustained growth and high productivity in their economies. According to Mefalopulos (2003) horizontal two-way communication opens discourse, evaluates risks, finds resolutions, and seeks harmony for action, and it is considered one of the major avenues to the accomplishment and sustainability of improvement efforts in development.

Since the promulgation of the 1992 Republican Constitution, Ghana progressively went through all the successive multi-party democratic national elections to choose members of the executive arm of government and a functional legislature in a free, fair and transparent manner. However, in some parts of the country, various kinds of misunderstandings have erupted in recent times between traditional authorities or communities and governments over the formulation and implementation of development initiatives in their areas. A number of these concerns were made in connection with initiatives in the education sector (stretching from pre-tertiary education to the tertiary level).

This research focuses on the kind of communication processes that take place during the formulation, implementation and evaluation stages of three main initiatives in the education sector in Ghana. This becomes necessary as a result of increasing apprehensions of community people in the manner development initiatives were carried out in their areas. Henning, Badiane and Krampe (2018) suggest that in an answer to continuing policy failures in several emerging nations, participatory and evidence-based political procedures are gradually encouraged as an indomitable apparatus and the way forward for ensuring balanced and efficient sustainable policies for the use of the people.

This research explores three development initiatives - the Free Senior High School (SHS) Policy, Community Day SHS Project and Tigo's Shelter for Education Project to determine the extent of effective development communication that has taken place in them to produce the desired results.

1.2 RESEARCH GAP/ THE NEED FOR RESEARCHING INTO THE PROJECT

Many participatory communication scholars have argued that the call for the implementation of holistic participatory approaches in development initiatives in terms of planning, policy making and shared decision-making in projects in developing nations have remained in theory instead of practice (Rudqvist & Woodford-Berger, 1996; McGee, 2002). Besides, even though many researchers such as Dagron (2001), Bessette (2004), Hickey & Mohan (2004), Servaes (2008), Henning, Badiane & Krampe (2018) have done extensive work in the area of participatory communication, broad-based policy and programme decision-making for

development, there exists a clear gap in the literature related to the role and position of development communication in developing countries emerging from dictatorial regimes. The current scholarly literature has under-addressed the impact of the participatory communication process in education development. This is important since developing nations of today are likely to miss the target of enhanced and sustainable development without appropriate investment in education. This research will attempt to close both gaps in a complementary way by offering policy solutions and practical strategies to deliver more effective participatory communication towards maintainable change and growth in the education sector in Ghana.

Having worked at Ghana's Ministry of Education for three years, there were frequent times the researcher was part of different teams made up of officers from the Ministry that travelled to communities across the country where educational development programmes and projects were taking place. The teams often included officers from the Ghana Education Service (GES) as well as the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) which are implementing agencies under the Ministry. The visits were meant to take stock of progress of work on these initiatives.

On such errands, the researcher, coming from the communication background identified some scenarios in which some of the members of staff of such schools could not wholeheartedly express their opinions and appreciation to government for the policies and programmes being undertaken in the schools. While some of these members of staff were reserved in their opinions regarding the projects, it was interesting to note that some community members were totally not aware of the development policies and projects as well as the purpose for undertaking such projects in their own communities for the benefit of their children. However, some traditional leaders (chiefs) and opinion leaders of some communities were not hesitant in talking about their concerns with the government over their grievances, even to the extent of petitioning the education authorities over those concerns.

Over time, it became increasingly evident to the researcher that while a cross section of the community had issues with the way things were being done, another section was someway uninformed of what was happening in their own community schools. Besides these, some traditional authorities were able to write letters occasionally to the Minister and the Chief Director of the Ministry explaining their reservations about situations they found unpleasant in the implementation of these educational development programmes and demanded to seek audience with the Ministry authorities. Without doubt, there was the need to conduct a comprehensive investigation into these circumstances to find out if there was disconnect in communication activities between the Ministry and the local beneficiary communities since the situation was not conducive for smooth academic progress in the schools and the communities

at large. This research thus aimed to close a gap in knowledge connected to the determination of what might be effective communication and participatory practices to drive education development initiatives for desired results in the Ghanaian educational context.

1.3 EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION FOR IMPLEMENTING DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

In recent times, there is evidence of the growing importance in developing nations towards the need for instituting practical well-designed communication plans and strategies in the implementation of all development initiatives for the desired results. Scholars like Adedokum (2008); Servaes (2008) and Huesca (2002) argue that the most vigorous and sustainable mechanism in achieving success in development projects is allowing practical participatory communication strategies that actively involve the beneficiaries of development initiatives in the communication process. In light of this, Msibi & Penzhorn (2010) advocate for convenient administrative structures and policy directives necessary for the accomplishment of the development objectives.

As part of efforts aimed at achieving this goal, the World Bank (2006) also stressed the need for the growing importance of well-designed communication in project implementation by creating the Development Communication Department to spearhead this agenda thereby allowing participation of beneficiary communities in the critical decision making processes along the length of the participatory communication ladder related to projects the Bank sponsors.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What kinds of participatory communication structures and processes exist for community development initiatives in Ghanaian education sector?

2. Can a reformed model of development communication be created to allow the deployment of innovative measures of participatory communication in the implementation of development programmes in the Ghanaian education sector?

3. What challenges is government likely to face in the deployment of full participatory communication approaches in community development projects in the education sector and how might these be overcome?

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES
The following are thus the objectives of the research:

Objective 1: To undertake a critical analysis of existing academic literature on Development Communication.

Objective 2: To critically explore and evaluate the participatory communication in community development practice in education development in Ghana.

Objective 3: To determine the various challenges the Government of Ghana and other stakeholders face in adopting full participatory communication strategies in implementing development policies programmes and projects in the education sector.

Objective 4: To provide a model of current participatory development communication in Ghanaian education initiatives.

Objective 5: To identify and recommend ways of improving participatory communication practices for community development in Ghanaian education initiatives.

1.6 THE CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE OF THE RESEARCH
The contribution to knowledge of this research is three-fold:

A. The provision of new evidence of the nature and functioning of development communication in Ghanaian development education projects.

B. Through the application of existing academic work on development communication to the empirical evidence generated in the project, the presentation of a model of current development communication in Ghana. This model is termed the "Methodical Participatory Communication Model".

C. Drawing on A and B, to provide a series of realistic practical recommendations that can be implemented to deliver more effective development communication in Ghanaian education projects.

As a result, this research developed relevant information and knowledge on potential comprehensive participatory communication strategies emanating from the distinct cultural perspectives of the people. It is anticipated that the research outcomes will be of value to development planners in the education sector, government institutions, political actors, civil servants as well as beneficiaries of development initiatives in various communities.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN/APPROACH IN BRIEF

This research on participatory communication for community development in Ghana was centred on the education sector of the country's economy. Various key participants and stakeholders in the education sector, numbering 56, were involved in the research participating in both focus group discussions and interviews.

Research design used in studying this topic takes the approach of the qualitative tradition using the Interpretivist epistemological position. The case study strategy has also been incorporated to allow the researcher to conduct thorough examination of three development initiatives from the education sector of Ghana in line with the parameters of the participatory communication derived from the academic literature. The research involved literature search and critique of secondary and relevant primary source materials (documents from the Ministry of Education, articles, newspapers, relevant news items from websites) related to the research topic and analysis of data derived from interviews and focus group discussions.

Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were used for data collection. Purposive sampling was employed to recruit participants for both interviews and the focus groups. Participants for the interviews included Political Actors/Directors of the Ministry of Education, Public Relations Officers of the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service (the government agency responsible for policy implementation at the pre-tertiary education level). Finally, chiefs (traditional rulers) and opinion leaders of relevant communities related to the programmes under investigation were also engaged in the research.

Participants in the focus groups were young adults between the ages of 18 and 30 who were university students (with social and education support record) working with "Keteke Ghana Club" from the Ghana Institute of Journalism. Among other criteria, the membership for the focus group was gender sensitive and secured balanced regional representation. The younger people were sampled in the research to complement the interviewing sampling of the older people interviewed.

1.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Thematic content analysis was used to understand the data collected from interviews while constant comparison analysis was used to produce meaning from the focus group data gathered. Separate transcripts were produced for both the interviews and the focus group discussions. Patterns were identified and meanings derived from the data set through development of codes and from codes into themes. These themes became more important because they said something significant about the research questions or topic. Thematic relationships were then formed where reviewing and refining took place to capture the core of what the themes portrayed.

1.9 THESIS STRUCTURE

The entire research is contained in eight chapters, seven of which follow this Introduction. Each chapter plays a role in the articulation of the research process and its findings as explained briefly below:

a. Chapter 1: Introduction to the context of the research

This chapter highlights the background of the study with emphasis on the gap identified that necessitated for the need to conduct a thorough investigation into reasons why existing and emerging conflicts between the Ghana's Ministry of Education and the beneficiaries of educational initiatives over the formulation, implementation and evaluation of such programmes could not easily be solved through the Public Relations office of the Ministry. This chapter also provides the research questions and the objectives as well as an overview of contribution to knowledge and the structure of this research.

b. Chapter 2: Literature review

Chapter two of the research discusses relevant literature explored from the conceptual areas of community, communication, participation and development. There was evidence to identify the origin of participatory communication, challenges identified from its use as well as consequences for lack of its use in developing countries. This chapter also explores the two cases of participatory communication practice in Kenya and South Africa as guiding cases from the African context. The immense contribution of mass media and community radio system in the promotion of participatory communication for development in developing nations was evaluated using some Ghanaian contextual instances. A critical component of this chapter was the journey into finding a suitable theoretical framework for analyzing the evidence from the research. Different theories were explored, with the researcher finally settling on participatory development communication as the framework for analysis.

c. Chapter 3: Brief Ghanaian history

A succinct historical account about Ghana, the context for this research, is included in this thesis covering pre-colonial, colonial and post-independence eras defining the various political regimes and how such regimes opened the space for citizenry participation and decision-making for development. The Fourth Republican Constitution of 1992 that gives credence to the current dispensation of democratic rule in Ghana was also evaluated with particular reference to the elements such as independence of the media, the chieftaincy institution, decentralisation systems as well as freedoms and expression of the people. The chapter also discusses a number

of participatory communication cases in Ghana using the community radio system as the key determinant.

d. Chapter 4: Research Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology used in this research, arguing the reasons for the use of qualitative tradition and interpretivist approach and also employing the case strategy since the research studies three main development cases in the education sector of Ghana. There was also justification provided for the use of interviews and focus group discussions as tools for gathering evidence using the purposive sampling method. The need for including funding actors, chiefs, opinion leaders and the youth in this study as respondents was also supported. The chapter also took account of the methods for coding and scrutinizing interview and focus group data for analysis.

e. Chapter 5: Notes from the field and description of the three development cases

Preparations before, during and after the conduct of the field work with all issues encountered have been captured in this chapter. In addition, the description of all the three development cases in the education sector - the Free SHS policy, the Community Day SHS project and the Shelter for Education is undertaken in the chapter.

f. Chapter 6: Presentation of results

All the evidences generated from the focus group and interview sessions is presented in this chapter after the raw data were coded and presented in themes. The first part of the results presentation covers the application of participatory communication in the three development cases while the second part deals with the issues that closely emanated from the participatory communication application to the development cases.

g. Chapter 7: Thematic discussion and analysis of empirical evidence

In this chapter, the chosen framework for analysis in this research, the Participatory Development Communication (PDC) model, is used to interpret the implementation of the three development cases in the education sector of Ghana. This is done through (A) presenting a model of what currently pertains in Ghanaian education for development projects through the application of the framework for analysis to the evidence and then (B) criticizing the kind of development communication entailed within it and recommending improvements, culminating in the presentation of the author's own model, the Methodical Participatory Communication (MPC) model which presents a realistic framework which might be considered for deployment

in Ghana. A key feature of this model is that is requires all key stakeholders to take part in the formulation, implementation and evaluation stages of education for development projects.

h. Chapter 8: Conclusion

The concluding part of the thesis re-examined the research questions and produced original contribution to knowledge that is in three folds - practical, theoretical and new evidences. Key proposals or recommendations were also considered under this section.

The following structure in figure 1.1 represents the organization of the whole thesis detailing all the relevant content necessary in answering the critical research questions for the study:

Figure 1.1: The thesis organization

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┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐
│ Chapter 1:       │ ──▶  │ Chapter 2:       │ ──▶  │ Chapter 3:       │
│ Introduction to  │      │ Literature       │      │ Ghana, the       │
│ the context of   │      │ Review           │      │ context for the  │
│ the research     │      │                  │      │ study            │
└──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘
                                                              │
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┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐
│ Chapter 6:       │ ◀──  │ Chapter 5: Notes │ ◀──  │ Chapter 4:       │
│ Presentation of  │      │ and experiences  │      │ Research         │
│ empirical        │      │ from the field   │      │ Methodology      │
│ findings         │      │                  │      │                  │
└──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘
         │
         ▼
┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐
│ Chapter 7:       │ ──▶  │ Chapter 8:       │
│ Discussion and   │      │ Conclusion       │
│ analysis of      │      │                  │
│ findings         │      │                  │
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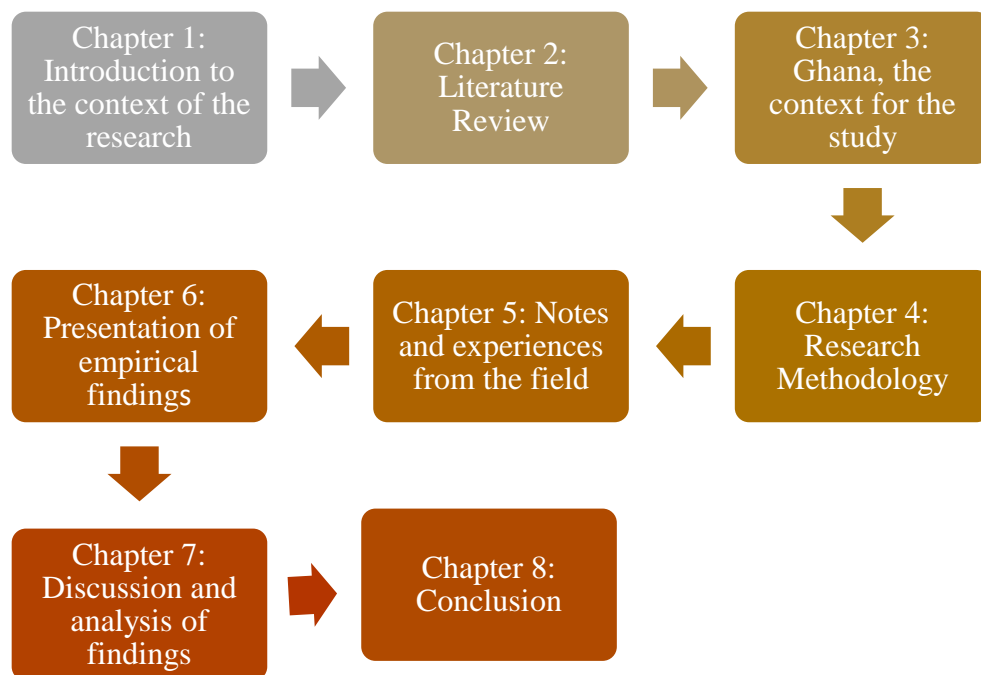
CHAPTER TWO:

LITERATURE REVIEW: THE SEARCH FOR ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVES ON AND ANALYSIS OF PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a critical analysis of academic work in the field of communication, participation and development. It also highlights, in particular, literature on the origin of participatory communication, some challenges identified with the practice of participatory communication as well as the integrated approach as a solution proffered by scholars to the challenges of realising effective development communication. The chapter also analyses development policy processes in Ghana, and other prominent African developing countries, scholarship on group media and mass media in development as well as work on the community radio system as a participatory tool for communication. It concludes with the presentation of a framework for analysis adopted for the study.

2.1 DOING LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Wiersma (1995), a review of literature offers the contextual background for the research dilemma, instituting the necessity for the research and specifies study area and level of knowledge about the specific area of study. To Kombo (2006), literature review provides the researcher better understanding into what has already been done in the selected field, outlining the strengths and weaknesses in a previous investigation or research.

2.2 COMMUNICATION

According to Rayudu (2010), Communication "is a process that uses a set of media to transmit ideas, facts and feelings from one person to another". Communication is a process of constructing good will; continually illuminating those involved in the process with all kinds of media aid to stimulate this process (Srampickal, 2006). To Rayudu (2010), one of the foremost instances on earth where communication has occurred observing Denis McQuail's linear model was in the Bible between Adam and Eve when they ate the forbidden fruit. According to him, the main objective of communication is to share a message and it is to be understood and response provided accordingly because the nature of communication involves exchange of message as well as interaction.

Serveas (2008) observes that communication frequently positioned in inactive state instead of process terms constitute the paramount task for development practitioners. Srampickal (2006) argues that, the various media in the communication process such as radio, television, print and the internet present a clear meaning on issues about development to many people in a definite

26

way as a major agent of development. However, Hornik (1998); Wilkins (1999); Servaes (1989); Jacobson and Servaes (1999) disagree, pointing out that the mass media on its own cannot assist in development for participatory media.

2.3 COMMUNITY

Community may be defined using several determinants and whereas descriptions regarding community are repeatedly contested, various community psychologists settle on the difference between relational communities and geographical communities where relational communities refer to the result of interactions formed from social congregations while the geographical communities refer to the physical boundaries created as a result of people's settlement (Rudkin, 2003). To Delanty (2003), when community applies to persons, it means devout collectivism. It becomes an associated unifying force that is very important to the survival of the people that form the united front with a common goal whereby the success and the failure alike essentially depend on the sincere contributions of all members.

Servaes (2008) suggests that community cannot be forced on people by an external regulation, rather, a community is formed by its allies and such people derive a particular uniqueness from what they have formed. He submits that the same people derive their identity from the societal interaction arrangement they have created for themselves.

Discussions within the context of modernity regarding community have been flooded with the theme of loss as suggested in the work of some sociologists such as Max Weber and Robert Nisbert. They argue that though community comprises all forms of relationships, deep thoughts of togetherness, moral and psychological commitment, the essence of relationship that built community lost value over time while individuality and distinctiveness of man became the contemporary goal. The drop of the institutions of the middle ages culminated into the forfeiture of the sense in community (Delanty, 2003).

In this research, examining the concept of community is of paramount interest because, for communities to see improvements in their lives, a social cohesion characterized by a high sense of intimacy is needed to bring along all stakeholders in the participatory communication process in all the three important stages: formulation, implementation and the evaluation stage. In a situation where the social cohesion loses value, a call to duty towards a communal spirit for delivering effective participatory communication practices for societal growth is expected to be unfavourably affected, especially in the context of the Ghanaian education sector.

2.3.1 The concept of participation and community participation

Mefalopulos (2003) refers to "participation" by relating it directly to the term's "empowerment" and the so-called "multiplicity paradigm". He defines participation as the parallel use of communication activities, using dialogue and evaluating threats to find solutions to problems, and seek agreement for social action. Such participation has been a key contributor to the successful implementation and sustainability of development works.

Significant participation of stakeholders in decision-making is unable to take place devoid of communication and to derive the required significance and meaning, the said participation must be heavily supported by sincere and practical collaborative communication values and applications from the sender and the receiver (Mefalopulos, 2008). Servaes (2008) agrees with the importance of participation in development arguing that partaking in development activities has ultimately crushed organizational barricades, and participatory communication is also helping to create a decisive statement from the people. But, has participation really demolished institutionalised barriers in developing countries like Ghana as well?

Nevertheless, Mefalopulos (2008) was quick to add that too many development projects, comprising community-motivated ones overlook this facet and, while giving emphasis to participation, comparable devotion is paid to communication activities planned as the specialized usage of discourse approaches and tools to endorse change.

It is believed that the traditional way of life, values and beliefs are better preserved and appreciated when people in beneficiary communities are deliberately included in the decision-making processes towards the implementation of development projects (Gunn, 1994; Lankford & Howard, 1994; Linderberg & Johnson, 1997; Mitchell & Reid, 2001; Sheldon & Abenoja, 2001; Timothy, 1999; Wells, 1996 cited in Li, 2006).

Uphoff (1985) demonstrates that participation in development projects and programmes should be exercised procedurally and in complete terms for the needed results. He insists that through the process, there is the need for involvement in decision-making activities (community members initiating, planning and discussing issues of common interest and arriving at consensus for action), implementation (mobilization of people to perform certain tasks), benefit (members taking part in the enjoyment of the successful projects or programmes) and assessment (individuals invited to measure accomplishment or failure of the project holistically). In effect, Melkote and Steeves (2001) assert that participation at all levels especially in development communication culminate in empowerment through knowledge to the community members. For this reason, Srampickal (2006, p.8) declares that, for projects and

programmes to be "durable, development must take into account human factors and make it possible for the communities in question to decide for themselves what objectives they want to aim for and what means they want to use". To him, this process can only be achieved through development communication practices. In taking the same line of argument, Hickey & Mohan (2004, p. 5) strongly believe that "participation has a longer and more varied genealogy in development thinking and practice than is usually acknowledged".

The first President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, who in the 1970s supported the African Socialist Movement acclaimed that development using participatory approaches between development actors and the beneficiaries was the best style as it offered the recipients of the development initiatives the opportunity to do personal evaluation and appreciation of the growth process. According to him, change in the behaviour of the people will not be produced because they were merely instructed to, but because they have undertaken evaluation of their participation and concluded with a certain level of appreciation. Nyerere (1973, p. 60) further articulately proves this argument:

> "People cannot be developed; they can only develop themselves. For while it is possible for an outsider to build a man's home, an outsider cannot give the man pride and self-confidence in himself as a human being. Those things a man has to create in himself by his own actions. He develops himself by what he does; he develops himself by making his own decisions by increasing his understanding of what he is doing, and why; by increasing his own knowledge and ability, and by his own full participation-as an equal-in the life of the community he lives in".

2.3.2 Forms of participation

Participation in any kind of activity occurs in various forms and these forms could make a difference in varied dimensions depending on the nature of the task being performed. In an organizational setting for example, participation is used to solve undesirable responses by creating a conducive atmosphere for employees to be included in policy design or decision-making (Douthitt & Aiello, 2001) and by so doing the people are given a voice that represents an opportunity to take part in decision-making (Robertson, Moye & Locke, 1999). The voice could be seen from two perspectives: instrumental voice, that is providing a positive measurement of power over the result of the participation method in decision-making while, second, a non-instrumental voice refers to being offered just a mere opportunity to express an opinion over an issue without necessarily making any impact on the outcome of the final decision (Korsgaard & Robertson, 1995). From another perspective, Omollo (2011) argues there exists two elements of citizen participation: direct participation and indirect participation.

Direct participation endorses the practice where the citizens become the owners of their own government and are required to be included in all decision-making processes of the State whereas in indirect participation and representative democracy, elected officials are given the opportunity to perform duties on behalf of the people.

The instrumental and non-instrumental voices to participation consequently give rise to two forms of participation: instrumental and non-instrumental participation where the emphasis is on the level of decision-making as well as impact and not limited to only voice. Whereas in instrumental participation the individual has the power to influence the final decision through the active involvement, non-instrumental participation has the chance to engage the individual in the policymaking processes, yet with no influence over the outcome at the end of the day (Sagie & Koslowsky, 1994; Wagner, 1994). As a result, participating effectively to effect a positive change over the outcome of a participation process in decision-making increases the chances of psychological ownership for the participant (Chi & Han, 2008; O'Driscolls, Pierce & Coghlan, 2006).

Relating these two concepts to the study, it is expected that stakeholders including beneficiaries of development initiatives in the education sector of Ghana with meaningful instrumental voice and participation are very likely to cause a significant impact in decision-making processes for sustainable development when involved in all stages compared with those within the category of non-instrumental voice and participation who yield no power and influence even if they are included in the process.

2.4 THE CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT AND DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

Rogers (1975) defines development as a broadly participatory method of societal transformation and material increase consisting of greater parity, liberty and other treasured virtues for majority of the people as they get superior influence around their natural environment and resources. On the other hand, Inayatullah (1967), cited in Servaes (2008) asserts that development can be seen as a significant change towards patterns of society that allows enough good will for human values, with recognised and granted power to control its own environment and political fortunes allowing individuals to access improved regulation over themselves.

Development is also observed as a method of hiring and acquiring a sustained growth of a system's competency to accommodate new variations towards the accomplishment of

enlightened political, financial and societal aims; a process of change geared against hunger, disease, injustice, exploitation and other problems that cause harm to the peaceful survival of segments of the population of the world (Todaro, 1992). Evidently, these definitions above illustrate that development is a multidimensional concept. Its meaning varies depending on the individual viewing it and the same applies to the communication scholar. To this end, Srampickal (2006) is of the view that development workers must be guided to carefully choose communication media for their activities, hence the need to examine what development communication really is.

Srampickal (2006) argues that in the 1970s in the Philippines, the term, "development communication" was found to have been coined for the first time and illustrates the procedures for communicating new knowledge to be used when addressing concerns of rural communities. Quebral (1975, p.2) defines development communication "as the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country and the mass of its people from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfilment of the human potential". To Srampickal (2006), development communication comprises every move for education and distribution of information and powers in social, political, economic and democratization contexts while Agunga (1997) stresses that information transmission plays a pivotal role in development so far as each context is concerned.

According to McPhail (2009), development communication is the process of intervening systematically in solving development problems using media or education for the realization of progressive social transformation and this change could be political, spiritual, personal, economic, social or cultural. Cited in Servaes (2008), Rogers (1976) affirms development communication is the study of societal transformation occurring due to the use of communication investigation, theory combined with technologies resulting in development. To the World Bank, development communication includes generating devices to widen people's ability to receive information on transformations; firming up clients' need to attend to the preferences of intended beneficiaries and exchange ideas with participants, authorizing grassroots communities to attain a more partaking process, and implementing communication processes that are reinforced by research (World Bank, 2006). More importantly, it has been contended that people cannot certainly bring about change to others; however, people can help others to adjust to change on their own accord in a defined enlightened speed (Quebral, 2006). Other scholars like Gwinn and Mody (2001) simply define development communication as the social change that emerges as a result of calculated application of solution-oriented programmes

by either institutions or communities. But all the definitions above could not put more emphasis on participation. Bessette (2004) moves beyond just development communication to explore the participatory nature of the term arguing that, it is a special tool used to engineer the engagement and involvement of community people in local development.

Without the necessary relevant two-way communication system, dialogue and consultation between the centre and periphery, development is practically not possible (Srampickal, 2006). To Manyozo (2006), the definition of the term has changed as a result of time and place ever since Quebral (1975) coined it. As such, other scholars like Kumar (1994) criticised the inability of communication scholars to reach agreement on the definition of the term. In his view, Manyozo (2006, p. 80) assumes that the confusion over the derivation of a common definition for development communication erupted because various scholars wanted to place the definitions within the contexts of "Western development scholarship, post-war aid projects and the dominant paradigm."

Development communication is a concept and at the same time a curriculum proposes some arguments for a curriculum in development communication. It is inadequate to teach only skills. Characteristics such as varied thoughts coming from many foundations of knowledge and the subject/concept also restructured knowledge from the study and practice of development and communication (Quebral, 2006). In this vain, Manyozo (2006) argues further that development communication continuously goes through transformation, responding to changes in development and communication, as well as the environment surrounding both. Approaching this study from the perspective of Quebral (2006) and Manyozo (2006) means that emphasis on the practice of development communication is supposed to be informed by the emerging trends in the evolution of the subject. Therefore, stakeholders with interest for participation and decision-making in this field especially in the Ghanaian context, must be encouraged to constantly update themselves with these emerging trends for more effective results towards development.

Quebral (2006) maintains that development communication is spirited by an idea that identifies the objectives about the growth anticipated and the perfect measures to be accomplished while it also has the prospect of teaching learners to understand the fundamentals of development in general and especially moral, political, cultural, spiritual, social or economic development, imparted in integrative programmes. Quebral (2006), an academic scholar herself at the College of Agriculture, University of Philippines claims that development communication imparts into students the beliefs, standards, and skills capable of grooming them for a vocation of service, of serving other people more importantly the underprivileged and the disadvantaged for the

maturity of their potential because it incorporates information technology into its programme as additional instrument for the training of leading development communication practitioners in the future.

Servaes (2008) proclaims that development and communication have been considered meticulously knotted occurrences, to the extent that one is thought to pledge or promise the other.

He listed the following problems that development communication is capable of producing solution to:

1. Challenges involved in planning projects and programmes that voluntarily accept the perceptions and abilities of the projected beneficiaries.

Servaes asserts that development communication is capable of guaranteeing that the strategy and action plan of a growth initiative considers the societal manners, professed wishes or preferences and capabilities of the people who will eventually benefit from the solution. Many projects of the past were unsuccessful because predictions revealed the unpreparedness and of local people to grip novel experience and improvement structures into their culture. All the way through the negotiation and discussion processes it hires, it basically provokes the contribution of anticipated recipients of a development project.

2. Difficulties in assembling local people for growth achievement and guaranteeing flow of information among all the stakeholders with a development enterprise. Servaes (2008) asserts further that if a community project is designed and executed with intended recipients, it increases their participation and deployment in the process smoothly. Nevertheless, in most cases, communication support throughout execution of initiatives keeps people up-to-date, aids to rally them, and to kindle increasingly the need to take bold steps towards actions aimed at the successful completion of the project. He reiterates that it is particularly the case, after communication (audio-visual performances, for instance) is used to transmit information on effective development programme undertaken by a group of people that are yet to be organised for a similar development action.

Additionally, Servaes (2008) argues that even the best development initiative conceived with the intended beneficiaries cannot be inflexible. As it advances, there will be the need to appraise and improve its pursuits and present modifications of importance. In most cases, a good communication structure can retain a discourse among people in a development project, in preparedness for finding solutions to challenges as they arise.

3. Complications of upgrading the reach and control of local training activities. In recent years, offering training to people at the local level has become a key target as communication

technology has been increasing and enhancing its features and at the same time ever cheaper to be used by rural communities. Using audio-visual media, for example, has solved the problem of education challenges and perplexity - through transmission of concepts and practices in an audio and visual form. More so, audio-visual media by themselves demonstrate new ideas and techniques more commendably than by just a mere talk thereby saving time and space when demonstrations are used (Servaes, 2008).

It is evidently prominent from the discourse on Development Communication by the scholars above that social change as the result, emanating from empowerment and ownership of resources from keen participation in project and programme implementation by the people is the focus to be desired by developing nations. It is to this direction that Servaes (2008) argues that development and communication have been considered as tightly interwoven occurrence, wherever one is thought to pledge the other.

However, it is important to acknowledge that it may not be automatic for communication to deliver development in all cases; there must be a prerequisite. This is done through the creation of an opportunity and enabling environment for the local people to achieve the needed change on their own with the help of advice from experts. This is in line with Quebral's (2006) assertion that the basis of our changed opinion is the understanding received that development communication practitioners cannot totally change perception of others instantly. Instead, they can assist them to fine-tune the change process at their own discretion subject to the enlightened pace and conducive conditions available to them. To this end, the institutions and political structures available in the Ghanaian context, relative to the participatory communication practice in the education sector are expected to be favourable to encourage key stakeholders to contribute their quota through effective decision-making processes, implementation and collective evaluation towards sustainable development.

2.5.1 The World Congress on Communication for Development (WCCD)

The drive towards the campaign for efficient use of development communication strategies in the implementation of development projects and programmes received its foremost consolidation in history through the successful organization of the First World Congress on Communication for Development in 2006 in Rome. The three-day (25-27 October) congress was organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Bank and The Communication Initiative. The Congress was attended by more than 900 participants in the field from around the globe with significant declaration termed as the "Rome Consensus" which

reiterates vital references (outlined in the heading below: 2.5.2) for shaping Communication for Development in critical project and policy implementation (FAO, 2007).

2.5.2 The current status of Development Communications and its relevance

The congress deliberated on the critical role of Communication for Development and its relevance in three broad themes: communication for health, good governance, and sustainable development. Even though there were some differences in the submissions of the participants, clear consensus on many issues, especially regarding the significance of communication in implementing development initiatives emerged after the conference. There was an agreement that communication plays a pivotal role in the realization of development objectives and as such, must be included in the development planning efforts related to poverty reduction, governance and health planning. It was also agreed that Communication for Development is not capable of producing the needed change instantly hence it deserves to be applied to development initiatives on a consistent basis for the eventual desired results. This, according to the participants could be achieved through promotion of wholistic partnerships among critical stakeholders and agents such as the academia, donors, government departments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the people affected (FAO, 2007).

There was also consensus on the participation of beneficiary communities in the Communication for Development processes while emphasizing the two-way dialogic status of the communication process underscoring listening and speaking as essential ingredients. They stressed the need to make determined efforts to move from the act of information dissemination to communicating to the people where feedback is guaranteed. Ensuring purposeful communication through campaigns aimed at tackling diseases and poverty is also expected to be done by recognizing the crucial role culture plays in the process as it is capable of promoting effective communication or serving as a barrier (FAO, 2007).

It is also acknowledged in the Rome Consensus that Communication for Development programmes serve as avenues for holding all stakeholders in the communication process accountable through checks and balances from decision makers and participants. This is possible and easy to achieve as all stakeholders are expected to take part in all stages of the Communication for Development process - formulation, implementation and evaluation. This calls for the urgent need to increase the training of professional practitioners to lead the process in developing countries to reduce the current trend of overdependence on international experts.

It is prudent to acknowledge the importance of Communication for Development as much as outputs and new technologies are valued (FAO, 2007).

For effective implementation of Communication for Development processes, the Rome Consensus stressed the need for public spaces made up of diverse media to be provided for meaningful debate. It underscored the need for the use of responsive community media as well as the use of people to people communication in achieving this objective. In providing the public space, structural and power issues including the actual politics surrounding them are crucial to be addressed. Although the Congress acknowledged that there were significant successes in the field over the years in most parts of the world, it noted that there was limited documentation of these achievements, hence the need for such accomplishments in the field to be comprehensively recorded to serve as reference points for others to follow (FAO, 2007).

2.5 DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT COMMUNICATION (DSC)

Chagutah (2009) has defined Development Support Communication (DCS) as allowing a participatory approach that is focussed on the people in communication for development. Burger (1999) argues that the DSC tends to place more emphasis on small and local media that afford the emerging nations the prospect to collectively generate understanding with assistance from a facilitator. Childers (1976) cited in Melkote & Steeves (2015) suggests that DSC was propagated by practitioners as a response from field workers to the uncertainties in the developing nations. In this sense, Ascroft and Masilela (1994) and Jayaweera (1987) cited in Melkote and Steeves (2015) argue that the term, DSC emerged as a result of change from holistic development to people's self-expression and determination emanating right from the grassroots. FAO (2002) maintains that this concept makes adequate use of all the necessary structures at the local level for information sharing where despite the use of mass media, participatory community media such as theatre, song and dance as well as meeting places of the people namely the community squares, markets, churches and festivals, are used to effect the participatory communication process.

2.6 THE ORIGIN OF PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION

Chambers (1992) claims that the origin of participatory communication started with the works and motivation of the Brazilian educator and media specialist, Paulo Freire, who in his writing, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) illustrated that poor people who have been exploited for long are capable of conducting their own investigations regarding their reality and as such they should be given the opportunity to find lasting solutions to their own problems. Muturi and

Mwangi (2009) recounts that since the 1970s, participatory communication gained dominance in the field of development communication based on the proposal made by Paulo Freire suggesting a spare of the instructive scheme with a novel type of transmitting messages backed by activities that are citizen-driven, community-based, consultative, dialogic and participatory resulting in consensus building when finding sustainable solutions to societal problems.

Consequently, Freire's new design influenced the development communication field based on the argument that in designing solutions to solve problems for a group of people, there is the very need for the change agent and the beneficiaries to identify collaboratively the remedy through dialogue at a horizontal level, giving opportunities to the beneficiaries to choose freely their preferred options thereby relegating the top-down approach to the background (Bessette, 2004).

2.7 CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED FROM THE USE OF PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES

Participatory approaches earned impetus in the 1980s as well as 1990s and have expanded into a strong and promising field serving as a better alternative to theories and models of the first development eras. Researchers have argued that a small number of contemporary development initiatives irrespective of theoretical alignment are performed devoid of some kind of participating element (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 1998; White, 1994; Ascroft & Masilela, 1994; Mato, 1999). There were weaknesses in the approach as a consequence.

On weaknesses of participation, McKee (1992) affirms that all phases have unparallel significance as there is involvement with power inequalities concluding that it is not a true participation. Besides, Arnst (1996) as well as Jacobson and Servaes (1999) claim that even though the concept of participatory communication is used generally, it is subject to imprecise analysis that seems to be inconsistent and challenged and at worst misappropriated and then misrepresented. In recounting some of the challenges in participatory communication practice, Huesca (2003, p. 220) identifies "lack of institutional support, the long-range time-consuming nature of the process and oppressive social relationships" as some impediments. Huesca, however, holds some hope that since participatory communication is an on-going process, it can become a curriculum as Quebral (2006) exactly suggests. Nonetheless, White (1994) outlines three warnings as challenges to look out for, noting that participatory communication practices do not appear to find a universal remedy for development problems. The participatory methods may be inappropriate for resolving all kinds of challenges of all times. He illustrated that a child who is critically ill of diarrhoea will not be subjected to engagements in participatory activities as immediate solutions and interventions are also needed to address societal problems while at the same time holding a strong view that participatory methods uncover fundamental

determinants of poverty as well as power and authority and typically require the use of long-term objectives.

White (1994) also maintains that the antagonistic perceptions about participation and influence may be viewed from different viewpoints. In an attempt to offer solutions to community problems of a group of people, the development actor may be suspected of scheming to introduce some foreign cultural practices for adoption by the people whose problem is to be solved. Alternatively, the participatory communication development actor may enter a community with a set of principles expecting the people to buy into it for the desired development result and this may be termed, manipulation however well-meaning it may sound. He notes that the sacrifice people must make partaking in participatory activities is frequently ignored as it is believed that they do not have anything better to do with their time. White further opines that every hour spent participating in a development activity, has been used at the expense of another important productive activity and this does not mean that the individual fully benefited without a loss.

Clearly, it is irrefutable that right from the viewpoints of scholars to the intended beneficiaries, the participatory paradigm becomes their popular choice because it gives them ownership of all resources despite the challenges acknowledged. The arguments put forward by the various scholars, point to the position that participatory communication has given some hope for the success of development initiatives. As a developing nation, it is appropriate for Ghana to evaluate the importance of development communication for use.

However, the history of development initiatives in the education sector in the country presently is replete with cases of project failures. So, do development actors and practitioners fail to embrace the appropriate development communication approaches when designing and implementing development interventions with intended beneficiaries? Are there major bottlenecks that hamper the promotion of participatory communication model in development processes? These and many more questions remain unanswered in the face of this current research at the initial stage. This study, therefore, attempts to fill this crucial gap. Thus, this research examines Ghana's experiences with participatory communication strategies and how this has impacted on community development over the years with specific reference to the education sector.

2.8 CONSEQUENCES OF LACK OF PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION

Dagron (2001) applauds the practice of promoting indigenous knowledge in participatory communication as a catalyst for social change while admitting lack of adequately trained communicators in this field to carry out the strategies. However, Treven (2003) more optimistically argues that the situation has led to more organisations now allocating budget funds for staff and communication activities. Nonetheless, Riddell and Robinson (1992) point out that lack of effective communication strategies can contribute to failure in projects when local people hesitate to accept what has been offered to them due to their exclusion from critical decision-making processes. Vivian (1994) submits that suspicion about the intentions of the development project and doubts in the minds of the local people become the end results of utilising ineffective communication between implementers of projects and their beneficiaries.

Due to the crucial nature of project successes, practical steps should be taken to provide relevant information to all actors in the participatory and negotiation process to empower them to participate fully and contribute meaningfully to discussions. Project implementers or donors should be able to understand local people's concerns in this situation (Adedokum, 2008). Often, local people are unable to comprehend the operational, management as well as administrative policies of implementers of development projects (Zaidi, 1997).

2.8.1 The theory of change as an organising principle of project design in participatory communication

Social change among beneficiaries of development initiatives is the ultimate effect desired in all projects designed through participatory communication by governments, international donors and funding agencies. Change can best be viewed in two perspectives: the structural change required for the effective implementation of participatory strategies and the social changes emanating from the implementation of the participatory communication strategies to development initiatives. Meanwhile, whereas Servaes, Jacobson and White (1996, p.16) observe that "structural change involves the redistribution of power" among stakeholders in the participatory process, Mowlana and Wilson (1987) argue that structural changes should occur first to pave way for the participatory communication strategies to affect beneficiaries of development initiatives for the desired social change.

Social change in the lives of intended beneficiaries of projects, produces empowerment as a progression to change (Manyozo, 2012) to the grassroots that are well-informed and self-reliant. Gautney (2010, p. 100) contends that "strengthening civil society will cast power back in the hands of self-determined people rather than consolidate it in a state of the ruling class". Nonetheless, Melkote and Steeves (2015, p.410) evaluates the scope and participation of local

stakeholders, describing it as "low and perfunctory". They argue that empowered dialogue through participation must go beyond the grassroots level to question the unequal distribution of power at the central level, calling it a prerequisite for social justice and directed change. In addressing this, Kaye (1990) recommends meaningful social and political action on the part of the marginalized in the process of social change to defend themselves.

2.9 THE INTEGRATED APPROACH AS SOLUTION TO THE CHALLENGES IN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

Singhal, Usdin, Scheepers, Goldstein and Japhet (2004) contend that the use of mass media and by contrast "folk media" or relational communication channels are not communally exclusive, insisting, that integrating the use of both modern mass media and small/community/cultural or traditional media in addressing and driving development projects and programmes is the best permutation to achieve the desired results. Servaes (2008) observes that practitioners of development communication have the target of changing the attitude of beneficiary communities but the approach may differ from one project to the other depending on the circumstances surrounding the problem being tackled, sometimes necessitating use of top-down or participatory tactics. He believes that it is improbable for farmers to react negatively to participatory strategies aimed at introducing new cropping practices compared with mothers committing to lengthy engagements and dialogic processes to pursue treatment for their babies. In view of this, communicators trying to alter the behavioural patterns of local people encountered difficulties in choosing the preferred approach that is capable of delivering good results.

Importunately, development communication activities are able to create awareness regarding development projects but also regrettably fail to produce persistent behavioural changes and reasons for this failure are not certain except that an integrated approach is heavily utilised. Coffman (2002) argues that, one rarely sees public communication campaigns use only media channels. To address these concerns, Bessette (2004) contends that for a more comprehensive and result-oriented participatory development communication strategy to be effective, traditional media, group media, information and communication technology as well as interpersonal communication should always be added to the mass media channels.

In most cases, the mixture of all the necessary available communication channels using interpersonal, community-based communication among others are used so as to derive and pursue practices aimed at effecting positive change and causing development in the target society (Dungan-Seaver,1999) cited in Waisbord (2005); Coffman (2002).

Nonetheless, Servaes (2008) and Huesca (2002) still argue that the use of participatory communication for realising development initiatives is the most robust, convenient and sustainable model developed out of the repercussions of the dominant paradigm of modernization producing a variety of established standards with new encounters, acknowledged difficulties, recognized accomplishments, and progressive theoretical indebtedness.

2.10 DEVELOPMENT POLICY-MAKING AND PARTICIPATION OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Many scholars have questioned the level of participation in development policy processes, especially those that occur in developing countries but Keefer and Khemani (2005) are particularly of the view that participatory development policy processes that occur in developing countries guarantee more effective and efficient policy choices through improved governmental responsibility.

As such, this research has undertaken a critical review of some cases in developing nations to unravel how such development policies (whether sustainable or otherwise) were derived in the spirit of participatory communication.

2.10.1 Citizen participation and sustainable policy making in developing the green plan in Mexico City

Madero and Morris (2016) refer to Mexico City as having received an international reputation because of some critical approaches initiated towards development between 2006 and 2012. Meanwhile, there was a well-designed programme which got aborted as authorities initiated a 15-year plan, policies and measures known as "Plan Verde or the Green Plan" to transform the metropolis to become the most advanced and green city in Latin America. At the start of the plan, active participation of all stakeholders from every sector or level of society was highly anticipated but the project failed to include all the necessary elements of citizen participation envisaged at the outset. This failure in total representation towards decision-making, alongside other factors culminated in the fiasco of the establishment, expansion, and execution of efficient eco-friendly plan in megacities. Interesting as it was from the beginning, the government claimed it was going to make the Plan Verde policy a living instrument, meant to bring together the full involvement and participation of all stakeholders for its development and implementation.

A study resulting in the above-mentioned findings focused on the Monitoring and Assessment Board of the Plan and was aimed at investigating citizen participation approaches put in place within five years of its inception and the extent to which proposals on sustainability were

received by the Ministry of Environment. It also used mixed method in arriving at the results-using extensive literature review on the topic as well as interviews with the Board officers (Madero & Morris, 2016).

The investigation into the public participation in the operation of the Plan Verde was split into two stages. They are public consultation ahead of its commencement as well as continuing participation right through the implementation of the policy in the public engagement. But very little proof was available to suggest that effective participatory communication strategies in the planning and execution of the development plan for Plan Verde were adhered to (Madero and Morris, 2016) and for this reason, Portney (2003) recommended improvements to the public awareness creation strategies that will create avenues for effective participation by interested groups.

Decision-making using the top-down mechanism could be technically good but if it is not combined with adequate public involvement and participation, there is a high tendency to cause passive attention from the public towards projects (Barrutia, Aguado, & Echebarria, 2007). Nonetheless, attempts to provide information on issues to do with environmental problems to the people will not be adequate to attract and increase public participation in development policy making but instead the creation of a broader conducive environment for power sharing between the local communities or beneficiaries and the implementing authorities to produce innovative solutions (Agyeman & Angus, 2003) is warranted.

In the Mexico City project and many other ones, participatory approaches to sustainable development policy making are not without problems as issues of opposing interests, conflicts over unequal participant level of skills or knowledge among others occur resulting in frustration in discussions and conflict rather than deriving decisive solutions (Dieleman, 2013) nonetheless, such issues of sustainable environmental policies must be extended for public discourse (Madero & Morris, 2016).

Increased participation in decision-making typically requires decentralisation of political influence from the central point of authority to local authorities (Larson and Soto, 2008) and, in turn, reaches the local people at the grassroots. However, some politicians strongly believe that engaging and involving local or community people in policy formulations towards development may undermine their legitimate authority and mandate, thereby rendering them either powerless or eventually equating their power with that of the local people (Yetano, Royo, and Acerete, 2010). Therefore, it is often not rare to find authorities limiting involvement of stakeholders in critical policymaking processes to the lowest minimum or entirely abandoning

any move related to participation (Kraft and Clary, 1991). In other instances, some authorities embrace public involvement approaches to promote productivity, responsibility as well as better administrative practices requiring the people to be subjected to principles of transparency, probity and accountability (Yetano, Royo, & Acerete, 2010; Lombard, 2013).

2.10.2 Public development policy making in Pakistan

Khalid, Mushtag, Muhammad and Naveed (2016) conducted research that investigated loopholes in public policy making in developing countries with specific reference to governance in Pakistan. While the causes for the failures in citizen policy design were studied, the need for effective, efficient and citizen-driven participatory communication development policy strategies were also identified in the areas of structure, quality and politics in Pakistan essential for implementing the policies from theory to practice. Every development policy formulation in a country has a direct bearing on the social, economic and political atmosphere existing at the time. Such, developing countries would only develop transparency, excellence and efficiency in the plans of public policies if participation of all concerned stakeholders is incorporated into the decision-making process.

Howlett and Ramesh (2003) cited in Khalid, Mushtag, Muhammad and Naveed (2016) in describing tools of policy as instruments used by governments to transform policies into outcomes argue that due to limited knowledge of some participants in specific areas of policy making, the actors become restricted to the level of public participation practically available to intended beneficiaries and stakeholders in the decision-making process. Haido (2010) cited in Khalid, Mushtag, Muhammad and Naveed (2016) also indicate that some developing democratic countries have started winning transparency and accountability successes in policy formulation as a result of the congenial atmosphere created for inclusivity and participation for both state and non-state actors.

But Bichard (1999) in a sharp rebuttal argues, that historically, Pakistan as a country never developed any appropriate participatory mechanisms for developing its public policies as a developing nation insisting that development policies primarily connected to the benefit of the public were introduced without the consultation, discussion and consent of the various stakeholders that were needed to be involved. What then might be the main reason for initiating development programmes for the benefit of the people when the same beneficiaries would be excluded from the critical decision-making stages and processes during execution of projects?

For this reason, Khalid, Mushtag, Muhammad and Naveed (2016) drew a conclusion from their study on the loopholes and failures in the development policy making processes in Pakistan

citing the following reasons as some of the factors responsible for this anomaly: structure of government, connection of resentment between the academia and government, commitments by the leaders, scarcity of resources, the role of bureaucracy in public policy making, economic, energy and foreign policy failures, district government failures, incompetence and ineptness of civil servants lacking training as well as inter-services' unfocused devotion of civil servants from policymaking. On the commitment level of the leaders in Pakistan for example, Edwards (2001) argues that individual interest of the political leaders and their visionless attitudes led to the domination of the policymaking process becoming top-down instead of introducing broader participatory approaches in finding sustainable solutions to problems confronting the nation. Khalid, Mushtag, Muhammad and Naveed (2016, p. 12) state unequivocally that the Pakistan case holds the lesson that the "best outcomes for the best solution can be attained by policy of various societal actors as well as comprehending and executing the concept of citizen participation".

2.11 PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION IN AFRICAN CONTEXTS

Understanding the participatory communication practice in Ghana can also be asserted through exploration of the experiences analysed in the literature of other states from the continent of Africa. As such, one country was selected from Southern Africa (South Africa), and another from East Africa (Kenya). The case of South Africa was chosen primarily to investigate how participatory communication practice in governance systems emerged shortly after the exit of the apartheid regime and whether such practice is held in high esteem or otherwise. Kenya on the other hand was also selected in order to investigate how participatory communication fared after the country successfully emerged from tribal or civil wars like the Mau Mau uprising (1952-1976) and Shifta war (1963-167) that nearly retarded the democratic participation progress of the country since the battle began for self-rule and independence from the United Kingdom in 1963.

2.11.1 Participatory communication: The case of South Africa

Msibi & Penzhorn (2010), conducting a study in participatory communication for the Kungwini Local Municipality Government in South Africa draws the conclusion that the participatory communication tactic in the province is esteemed as a corrective mechanism towards development and as such stakeholders or authorities are successfully applying the concept in the administration of the area. Throwing more light on the practice in South Africa in general, Tadesse et al., (2006) contend that the development history of the country was initially eclipsed during the apartheid regime, duplicating a governance system that emerged from the

authoritarian administration where the black people of South Africa were particularly denied their rights to take part in participatory governance in the areas of political, social and economic sectors of the nation. Hadland (2015, p.7) depicts a very blurred picture of the apartheid regime with institutions including the media suffering from various setbacks where "parliamentary committees had been closed to the media" but shortly after the introduction of democratic regime, "there was a spirit of accountability and openness". Msibi and Penzhorn (2010, p. 227) describes those affected negatively by the apartheid regime as "passive recipients of development" who had barely any opportunity to influence development work in their own communities. Everett & Gwagwa (2005) indicate that with the emergence of democracy in 1994, a new method of development arrived which centred on participation for all and new laws, policies and programmes were put in place to support the less-privileged that hitherto were poor and variously disadvantaged.

Msibi and Penzhorn (2010) strongly contend that the South African governance system deliberately positioned municipalities or local governments to drive social and economic growth as well as delivery of services at the grassroots level to promote participatory and democratic practice in the entire country. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, and governance system is currently run as a unitary state with decentralised structures made up of three scopes: the national, provincial and local which are totally distinct but interdependent on one another in terms of roles assigned to achieving the final goal of ensuring full participatory system. The local government sphere (the closest to the people) made up of 284 municipalities and is given the main duty of promoting and driving development at the local level in all sectors through participation.

Based on the above structures put in place, Msibi & Penzhorn (2010) maintains that neither development nor development communication can ever occur in a vacuum. Instead, it fosters best when administrative policies, strategies and measures are put in place for the accomplishment of the development objectives. This is exactly what Chapter 4 of the Local Government and Municipal Systems Act, South Africa, (2000) provides by calling for the municipalities to develop a well enhanced structure of municipal governance that works perfectly and simultaneously with representatives of government within a system of participatory governance. In a qualitative study using interviews, observation and focus group discussion in arriving at their findings, Msibi & Penzhorn (2010, p. 235) concluded that "participatory communication plays a significant role in local government development initiatives" though challenges such as unavailability of development communication practitioners, lack of finance and lack of high spirit of empowerment to the local people in

taking up responsibilities were identified as serious treats to the survival of the practice in the Kungwini province.

Another study conducted by Chagutah (2009) on using a participatory development communication approach in improving public awareness for climate related risk disaster reduction in South Africa, provides a sharp contrast to the study above on local government administration using participatory communication. Buys (2005) cited in Chagutah (2009) argues that local mechanisms for communication and in creating public responsiveness towards risk and risk decline possibilities are often very weak and even where such systems sometimes exist, community members are unable to respond positively to early warnings which could either be attributed to poorly constructed messages or lack of choice. This calls for the need to employ development communication strategies. He believes that the participatory approaches embedded in development communication put more emphasis on the cultural distinctiveness of local people which serves as motivation for total inclusion and participation of community people at all levels of development programmes.

Chagutah (2009, p. 123) therefore, calls for "the deployment of participatory methods and strategies of development support communication" at all levels of – in this case – climate related disaster communities to increase and sustain public awareness towards reduction in climate related hazards.

2.11.2 Participatory communication: The case of Kenya

In assessing the case of Kenya in participatory communication, Katiambo and Ooko (2017) conducted research to appraise a civic education project known as the 'Citizen Demand Programme' led a civil society organization, Transparency International–Kenya (TI-K) that was designed to increase accountability through involvement of the people in governance after the coming into force of the 2010 Constitution. The findings of the study, which was centred on reconstructing collective memory through participatory approaches, show that, narratives emerging from participatory backgrounds provide avenues for alternate stories, generating a broader shared memory as opposed to those created from non-participatory strategies with additional benefit of participatory approaches helping to construct other collective memory from the one created by the mass media and the political actors.

Interestingly, Korwa and Munyae (2001) refer to Africa as a continent with collective memory towards its governments being repressive with Kenya as a typical example where political regimes have consistently used the media to construct and promote their ideologies but ended up crushing any alternative voice that emerged to challenge or provide alternatives to their

opinions, equating this to the circumstances that prevailed in the colonial era. Katiambo and Ooko (2017) also argue that fear of reprisal and prosecution felt by semi-educated Kenyans worsened the political climate creating something of a spiral of silence where citizens became totally detached from various kinds of decision-making in governance until the emergence of the 2010 Constitution.

Nonetheless, a study conducted to assess civic education on the provisions of the new constitution mandated by the Taskforce on Devolved Government, TFDG (2012) shows that people in rural areas in Kenyan are yet to comprehend and get involved in the decentralization governance system aimed at promoting participatory decision-making and enhanced accountability in all sectors of the economy. Neiger, Meyers, and Zandxberg (2011) are of the view that despite the new privileges guaranteed in the 2010 Constitution, people are still "glued" to their terrifying experiences of the past with severe limitations on participation in decision-making. But McNeil and Malena (2010) contend that even though regime systems in Kenya and the whole of Africa are changing for the better, the current era is equally challenging, thus requiring constant reappraisal of the governance structures in line with global standards capable of promoting broader participation for national development.

2.11.3 Exploring the 2010 Constitution of Kenya and participatory communication in national development

What then are the key provisions in the new Kenyan constitution that guarantee decentralized participatory communication in decision-making for all sectors, especially at the local level? In Article 35 (1) of the 2010 Constitution, it is enshrined that every citizen has the right of access to information held by the state or either another person which is necessary for the protection of any freedom while the state has the responsibility of publishing and publicising any important information that is in the interest of the citizenry. Clearly, the Constitution has taken steps to offer genuine opportunities to the citizens on how to access information relating to the development of the nation. In order to allow and encourage grassroots participation in the decision-making process for sustainable development, the new constitution also made provision for the practice of devolved government, known as the County Government System, to afford the people the opportunity to manage their own affairs without any imposition from central government. The critical reasons for establishing the decentralized structure of governance as stipulated in Article 174 are to ensure and enhance a democratically accountable system thereby recognising and respecting divergent views and opinions; promoting the rights and interests of minorities and marginalized communities while offering and promoting the exercise of self-governance with maximum participation in making decisions that affect people directly in

respect of economic and social development. This, Katiambo and Ooko (2017) strongly believe, are contrary to the collective memories of the past where discrimination in resource allocation, coupled with lack of transparency breeding corruption from the central governments, were the order of the day.

To ensure that the State remains accountable to the people, freedom of the media in Article 34 (1) and (2) have also been ensured to prevent the State from interfering or exercising control over people engaged in broadcasting, production or circulation of publications through any medium. According to the Constitution, the State shall also not penalise any person for expressing personal opinions through a broadcast or publication as well as through any form of dissemination. Katiambo and Ooko (2017) again argue that among several other provisions in the Constitution as well as other legal provisions, Article 137(1), Article 10, Article 174 and Article 201 of the Public Finance Management (PFM) Act, Article 35(1), Article 35(3,), emphasize broader citizen participation in governance through budgeting and evaluation of county government expenditure for social accountability. These are in line with Omollo (2011) in defining participation to mean a process where all stakeholders are given the needed opportunity to influence the policy formulation, design as well as other management and implementation strategies related to development projects affecting their own communities.

2.11.4 Participatory communication for reduction of poverty in Kenya

According to the Kenya Economic Update (2013) produced by the World Bank, 99 out of every 100 people in Kenya live without electricity and sanitation while 80 out of every 100 people share a living space with two or more people. Besides, 64 out of 100 people gain access to no clean water. This is, indeed, a source of great concern. In a study by Ngumbo (2015) to evaluate the contribution of participatory communication in the poverty reduction drive of the milk coolers project set in train by the government in the Murang'a County, results indicate that top-down communication approaches were used in the implementation of the project instead of the participatory communication approach.

With over 33% of the population in the Murang'a County already stricken by poverty, the project was evaluated to have ended in fiasco with very little positive change in the socio-economic development of the intended beneficiaries. As a result, the study recommended efficient use of participatory development communication strategies to bring on board the intended beneficiaries into the consultative mechanisms and strategies aimed at improving the living standards of the people (Ngumbo, 2015).

2.12 THE POSITION OF POLITICAL ACTORS IN DEVELOPMENT POLICY PROCESSES OF DEVELOPING NATIONS

Participatory communication is expected to be dependent on how development policies, programmes and projects are initiated, implemented and evaluated for the desired results. Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2000) cited in Ohemeng, Carroll & Ayeee (2012, p.6) conclude that "the policy-making process in developing countries has been primarily concerned with implementation rather than the decision-making process itself". This must be a source of concern in respect of development processes, especially in Ghana. Henning, Badiane and Krampe (2018) suggest that in an attempt to address to continuing project and policy failures among various emerging countries, participatory and evidence-based political processes are gradually encouraged as the most effective means and the way forward for ensuring balanced and efficient sustainable policies for the use of the people. In effect, these scholars are suggesting a strong input and active contribution from political leaders to execute the mandate of dealing with what has become a perennial failure of policies and programmes during and after the implementation stages.

But then, how prepared and willing are these political leaders especially those from developing countries in Africa to share power with grassroots people in dealing with this peril? Interestingly, Edwards (2001); Khalid, Mushtag, Muhammad & Naveed (2016) argue that individual interest of the political leaders and their inability to plan into the future lead to the policy making process being predominantly top-down instead of introducing broader participatory approaches in finding sustainable solutions to problems confronting their nations.

In order to reverse the trend, donor organizations operating in developing countries in recent times, became involved in stimulating participatory policy processes as an avenue and instrument for designing efficient and sustainable policy programmes. Participatory development policymaking primarily involves allowing stakeholders' influence, sharing control and management over important policy-making activities (World Bank, 2011). Ensuring participatory development policy processes in developing countries provides more effective and efficient policy choices through increased governmental accountability; meeting the needs and interests of the people in policy formulation (Keefer and Khemani, 2005) thereby reducing political actors and governments' vested interest at the expense of the direct beneficiaries (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2002). More so, it has to do with increasing evidence-based policy processes through broader consultations and contributions from the grassroots other than the mere use of political power in taking decisions. Above all, it means increasing

policy ownership where the beneficiaries become empowered to take full responsibility over the success of the policy framework (Jones, 2013; Chambote & Shankland, 2011).

The World Bank has argued that it is increasingly becoming evident that the shift in ownership of policy programmes occurring as a result of broader and more active participation in development policy initiatives culminates into a better and efficient mechanisms for acceptance, implementation and evaluation for sustainable results (World Bank, 2011). Unfortunately, many developing countries are yet to achieve consistent high-quality inclusion of stakeholders at the grassroots and regional levels as well as engagement non-state actors in critical decision-making (Randall, 2011). Nonetheless, it is believed that the understanding of the influence on participatory strategies in political performance is still in its embryonic stage (Henning, Badiane & Krampe, 2018).

On this note, Sackey, Clark and Lin (2017) are of the view that it is not surprising to detect numerous traces of participatory deficiencies in policy decision-making in Ghana, especially in the health sector. For this reason, Henning, Badiane and Krampe (2018) argue that allowing the citizens to participate in decision-making empowers them to make informed choices based on policy indicators during elections in choosing governments and selecting their leaders.

2.13 CONTRIBUTIONS OF MASS MEDIA AND PARTICIPATORY GROUP MEDIA IN DEVELOPMENT

Atton (2002) contends that people identify mass media or the modern electronic media to be appropriate for dissemination of information and for entertainment, while inexpensive local or cultural media are suitable for awareness creation, education and development. Srampickal (2006, p. 2) argues strongly that mass media on its own can play a role in development especially by being scrutinous of government operations and exposing other forms of corrupt practices but was quick to add that it is "a two-edged sword" that is capable of causing both positive and negative results depending on the approach used. On their part, Bruck and Roach (1993) observe the potential hostile attitude many people develop towards the mass media basically because of its ability to uncover and discuss controversial issues in society. Srampickal (2006) is also of the view that mass media ownership equally poses a significant limit to media's role in development, as such media owners who are from the upper class in the society sometimes fear that solving development problems may come at a cost to them.

Wilkins (2000) expresses his worry over the neglect of national development due to global knowledge thereby putting aside severe challenges including impoverishment, disease,

malnourishment and ecological dilapidation. To this end, Srampickal (2006) argues that development workers ought to be careful when selecting communication media as development needs a media that is emancipating, home-grown, classless and rural to the target people or beneficiaries. Equally, Deacock & van Poelje (1996) and Servaes (2006) argue that using participatory communication techniques required engagement with traditional media- found and associated with the people in their local areas in addition to the mass media.

Okunna (1995) agrees by stating further that a great deal of awareness is created through group interactions, where people come together to discuss, share and debate playing a critical role in awareness creation. This conforms to the idea of Boal (1979) to use theatre as preparatory and motivational grounds in creating the appetite for people to become revolutionized towards community participation for development. Srampickal (1994) reveals that all forms of singing, dancing and performance as well as storytelling have been used on a number of occasions as an appetiser by community members to begin very serious discussions relating to oppression or injustice.

2.14 THE COMMUNITY RADIO SYSTEM-A TOOL FOR PARTICIPATION AND DEVELOPMENT.

Community media have specific role to play in the transformation and social justice system of communities but not intended to perform only auxiliary responsibility to the conventional media (Sanger and Hadland, 2008). Radio forms an integral part of the community media used in harnessing resources for bridging the development gap between the rural communities and the affluent ones. Diedong and Naaikuur (2012) argue that in Africa and many other parts of developing nations, radio plays a very important role in the transmission of information to people, especially those in the rural areas because of its ability to reach masses at different geographical locations. In this vain, governments of many African countries in the process of implementing the modernization paradigm of development decided to invest in the state-owned media (radio, television and newspapers) in order to achieve the results of development through communication.

According to Waisbord (2001), the media were channels and at the same time indicators for modernization as they played a critical role in information diffusion and went a long way to suggest the prerequisites for modernization of a society. But Diedong and Naaikuur (2012) disagree noting that the model of radio is predominantly one way in diffusing information and news to the people, especially those in the rural areas. As such, the dawn of democracy in the early 1990s across the African continent brought some level of participation, which are core

values in democracy as well community radio operation. Alumuku (2006) believes community radio stations send a strong empowering message to all kinds of listeners in the various communities: people from different religions, men and women, young and the old, rich and the poor or marginalized, giving them the opportunity to contribute to the public discussion through keen participation.

To Dagron (2001), community radio emerged as a result of people giving attention to the contribution and importance of media instead of promoting democratic and social rights. Srampickal (2006) argues that citizen's media reflects its local status and as such, the local station proves to be accountable to the community in which it is situated by meeting the needs of the listeners through target-oriented quality programming. In some cases, communication campaigns could be run on these local stations. Snyder (2003) observes that such campaigns are well organised activities for a specified period and aimed at achieving a common goal. McKee (1999) postulates that the most effective way of getting a good outcome from these campaigns is by using group media activities thereby assigning roles to those taking part in the research right from the beginning of the entire process to the end and this according to him will motivate the people as a call to action.

There are still some challenges as according to Srampickal (2006), some community radio stations still find it very difficult to meet their financial, staffing training and management goals as well as to purchase necessary equipment or tools needed for the daily operations of the stations in order to either maintain or improve upon their programming.

2.15 THE JOURNEY TO THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK/APPROACH FOR THE RESEARCH

The chosen framework for analysis in this research is based on Participatory Development Communication (PDC). In the literature review process, different potential explanatory theories (from the field of development and communication) for the chosen development initiatives in the education sector were assessed. Whilst useful, they were judged as being insufficiently capable of illuminating development communication from the perspective of self-organisation and action. The need for a more community approach to communication and development in developing countries became prominent as a result of the criticisms of the earlier approaches in development and communication, such as the modernization, diffusion of innovation and the dependency theories as discoursed below.

2.15.1 Modernisation theory in the development process in third world countries

According to Srampickal (2006), some American universities in the 1960s started work on development communication from a broader perspective as scholars such as Lerner and Schramm (1967), Pye (1963) and Rogers (1962) promoted modernization theory with the view that new technologies (including those of communication) are needed to be adopted by Third World countries to increase production in all sectors and effect the desired development for them. To Serveas (2008), the initial work on development focused on modernization which concentrated primarily on the pursuit of economic growth. While using the Western societies as the main model which the less developed societies needed to strive to catch up with, the central idea in the modernization perspective is evolution, which infers that development is considered as directional and cumulative, pre-determined, advanced, and inherent with reference to the nation-state. Melkote (2003) observes that under modernisation theory which was otherwise known as the dominant paradigm, it was believed that the reasons for underdevelopment were already characteristic of the Third World countries and as such, what was needed for them to do was to catch up with the developed ones. To Melkote (2003), new values and beliefs were basically needed to be transferred from the already developed nations to the less developed ones through communication. Melkote and Kandath (2001) note that this transmission process was carried out mostly through the mass media and extension workers, especially those in the field of health and agriculture. Chagutah (2009) contends that radio was extensively used to spread the message to wider communities more than the change agents as it was meant to multiply the messages through top-down approach straight to the intended recipients. To this end, Bessette and Rajasunderam (1996) argue that theories like the diffusion of innovations was considered pivotal for the realisation of development while the contribution of communication was expected to transmit technical inventions from development partners in the (North) to the developing countries in the South using elitist, vertical top-down models.

2.15.2 The diffusion of innovations model in communication

Many scholars have increasingly argued about the appropriate way to communicate and transfer ideas to people to derive the desired result (Jacobson, & Kolluri, 1999; Melkote, 2003; Singhal, Usdin, Scheepers, Goldstein & Japhet, 2004). To this end, Rodgers (2003) offers a model emphasising the processes that are involved in the adoption of new ideas, products or practice in communication, calling it diffusion of innovation theory. The main argument in the theory is that communication processes do not necessarily culminate in total acceptance of new ideas or products by the masses instantly. Rather, a few people, known as innovators, accept and are

open to its use and as these selected people begin to utilise the ideas/products and propagate the word about the use, and a multiplication effect begins to spread to the masses who would later accept it. Opinion leaders and the early adopters in their communities play a pivotal role in this process of transferring the new ideas from the change agents to the communities, assuming a top-down approach. Progressively, the innovative idea becomes diffused among the masses to an extent where saturation point could be achieved. Figure 2.1 below illustrates the diffusion of innovation model.

Figure 2.1: Diffusion of innovation model
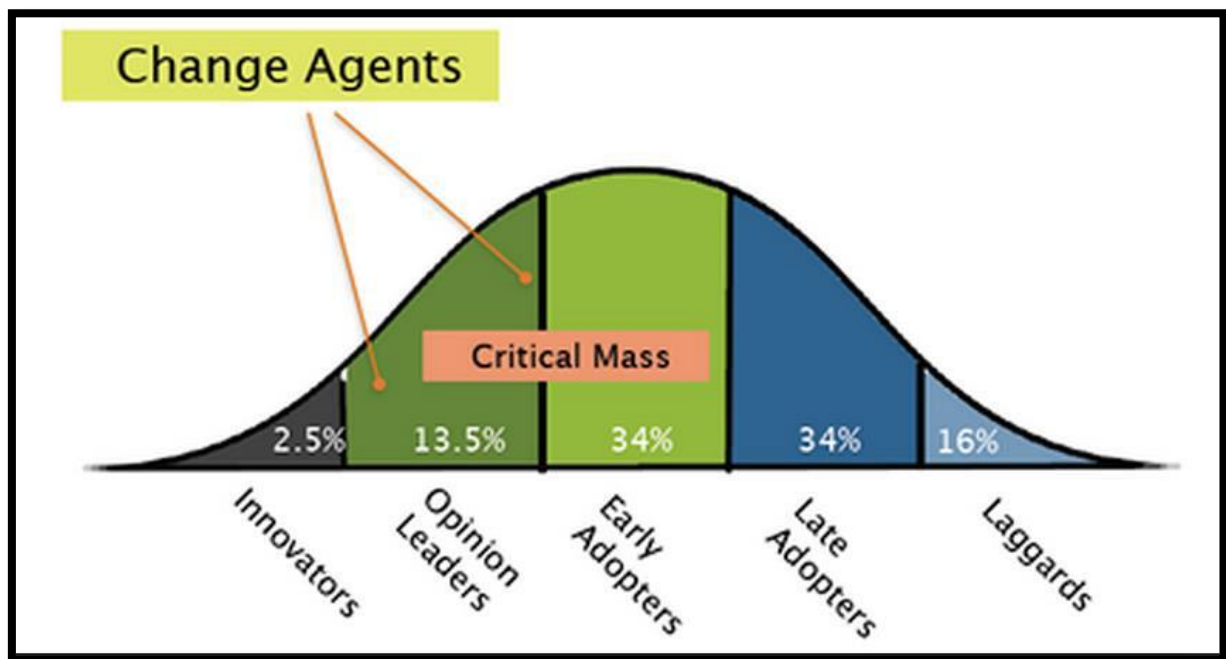
Source: worldhistoryreview.org

Conversely, Servaes (2008) maintains strongly that there is a different appreciation of communication. He argues there is the need for an approach emphasising information exchange. MacBride (1980) also observes that in the late 1960s, modernization theory received severe criticism from many scholars especially those from the developing world to the effect that developing countries became extra reliant on the developed countries at the time these developing countries lacked basic infrastructure such as electricity and good transportation to help execute the modernization development agenda.

Manyozo (2008, p. 32) justifies that the major rationale behind the failure of the modernisation theorists was their "marginalisation of developing countries by accentuating and perpetuating their classification as an economic periphery".

Cited in Huesca (2008), Beltran (1980) contends that the central denunciation of static models of communication led to calls in development studies to abandon the vertical methods of

communication processes and to assume a horizontal approach accentuating openness, negotiation, and participation. As a result, Quarry (2008) strongly proposes the need for managers and decision makers to always consider dialogic communications instead of the one-way type, while Prutt and Thomas (2007) maintains that the space for dialogic communication should be a safe one for all.

Many opponents argue that the modernization perspective was just a mere synonym to "westernization" and described it as an attempt to deposit western mechanisms into the Third World countries and the above criticisms, among others, culminated in the emergence of the dependency theory (Servaes, 2008).

2.15.3 Dependency Theory

Santos (1970) argues that dependence is a training condition in which the economies of a group of nations are acclimatised by the growth and expansion processes of others. As a result, a situation of interdependence was developed among countries of the world in such a way that the development of one country (that is underdeveloped) would depend on another that is already developed. One prominent result is the exploitation of the less endowed countries by the dominant ones that are gifted with technological, commercial, capital and socio-political predominance.

Dependency theory was also denounced for being the pattern of development characterized by researchers whose works are considered as merely a substitute term for one-way, symmetrical communication paradigm used by modernization theory and their mass media model of message dissemination (Servaes, 2005; 2008). In the field of communication, the elementary origin stayed rooted in the linear, one-way model, even though dependency theorists accentuated the essence of the relationship between communication and culture that needed to be observed by giving the beneficiaries of development programmes opportunities in the communication process to make an input (Moemeka, 1994).

Mefalopulos (2008) criticizes dependency theory for failing to offer an alternative to modernization as it appears to pursue the similar model when it comes to the need for development from within. He argues that despite noteworthy dissimilarities between modernization and dependency theories, their communication model was essentially the same. It was a one-way communication movement with the only disparity between the two theories being who was managing, influencing and sending the message and for what intent. This aspect was emphasized by Servaes (2005) who appraises dependency theory as outdated. As such, Servaes (2008) argues that dependency could be considered the contrary of modernization in

terms of an approach to development but at the point of communication, it is in fact a continuation of it since it followed the one-way model. Dependency theory argues that the contemporary events in the advanced as well as emerging world are not a stage in the progress in the direction of development, but then the outcome of enduring transnational structures. In other words, while the modernization standpoint maintains that the foundations of underdevelopment rested largely in the developing nation itself, dependency theory advances that the causes for underdevelopment are principally peripheral to the dependent nation. In the context of this research relative to the perspectives above, the inability of beneficiary communities of development initiatives in the education sector of Ghana to develop could be attributed to factors within their own context under modernization. On the part of dependency theory, the problems of underdevelopment could be dominance of political and development actors in decision-making which is outside their domain and control.

According to Mefalopulus (2008), as the potentials of the modernization paradigm botched to emerge as a strong option, and its approaches came progressively under serious scrutiny, and the dependency theorists were unsuccessful to provide a positive substitute model, then a diverse approach fixing the gaps in people's participation in the implementation of development initiatives started to emerge. This participatory approach was less concerned with the political-economic dimension but further entrenched in the cultural specificities of development. In effect, Hickey & Mohan (2004, p. 9) observe that "several approaches to participation emerged in an era of state failure, panic over top-down modernization approaches, proclamations of the end of grand explanations and a measure of post-colonial guilt".

2.15.4 Participatory Theory

As it became clear that dependency theory had failed to yield its desired result, Twigg (2004) detected a willingness in development workers to accept the need to listen to potential aid recipients as they collectively identified the problems and designed the solutions. According to Servaes (2004), under no circumstance should the communities be made to be passive recipients of information. Walker (2007) posits that participatory communication arose as a critical topic for study within development communication from the 1970s onwards. Jacobson and Kolluri (1999) postulate that there are different conceptualisations of participatory communication, however, Jacobson and Storey (2004) argue that if practised appropriately it should allow for constant dialogical and community-based interactions in operations. To Bordenave (1999), it is a type of communication that allows all the players to work together by feeling free to express their viewpoints, feelings and opinions, while having the same access to information in solving

their problems collectively for the transformation of the society. Based on the above, Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009) identify some critical principles for the survival and effectiveness of the participatory approach, stressing the need for free and open dialogue, voice and strong action in carrying out decisions taken collectively.

Dagron (2001) describes the participatory approach as a communication structure that establishes dialogue collectively with both implementers and beneficiaries of projects during processes of formulation or planning, implementation and evaluation thereby giving meaning and ownership to the local communities to be empowered to sustain the projects beyond the end of the implementation phase. White (1999) suggests that participatory communication can best be assumed to mean socio-cultural process while Waisbord (2008) strongly advocates for all communities to have a say in projects by taking decisions based on their preferred options before such projects are initiated for social change purposes. Dagron (2001) applauds the practice of promoting indigenous knowledge in participatory approaches as a catalyst for social change while noting a lack of adequately trained communicators in this field to carry out the strategies.

Servaes (2006) argues that participation comprises the additional unbiassed distribution of both political and economic power, which frequently declines the benefit of groups in power, while structural change involves the redeployment of authority. Genuine participation precisely focuses on power and its delivery in society as development and participation are inextricably linked.

Based upon the assertion by Servaes (2006) on participation calling for equal distribution of power, Lozare (1994) demonstrates that participation may not be the desired option for those who currently controls power and, as such, they could be anticipated to battle such efforts at reorganisation of additional power to the people. But Servaes (1996) contends that the participatory development paradigm arose in response to an anxious need for a development communication model which underscored human self-respect, reverence for others' cultural multiplicity, free accessible and participatory communication platforms to all stakeholders irrespective of status; not only for those in control of power, but giving the people a voice and the needed empowerment to design solutions and execute their own approaches of development.

Clearly, the journey towards arriving at a more community-based approach towards communication aimed at development produced the above potential approaches yet, they were unable to clearly provide the convincing theoretical framework for analysing the education

related development initiatives selected for this study. Participatory theory nevertheless has resonance with the framework for analysis adopted in this research, known as the participatory development communication.

2.15.5 Justification for the choice of participatory development communication as theoretical framework

Bessette (2004, p. 9) defines Participatory Development Communication (PDC) as

> "a planned activity, based on the one hand on participatory processes, and on the other hand on media and interpersonal communication, which facilitates a dialogue among different stakeholders, around a common development problem or goal, with the objective of developing and implementing a set of activities to contribute to its solution, or its realization, and which supports and accompanies this initiative."

He argues that PDC is a deliberate action from development actors towards the use of communication processes to facilitate community participation in development interventions. He insists that the planned activities of incorporating a community communication approach in the participation of the development programme in question by all stakeholders should not be allowed to assume an accidental mode. In fact, by contrast, it involves strategic and systematic application in each development activity.

Participatory development communication also produces a mechanism for consensus building through community involvement over a common goal by intended beneficiaries. It focuses on facilitating exchanges between different stakeholders to address a common problem instead of a focus on informing and persuading people to change their behaviour or attitudes and this involves three events: approaching the stakeholders, involving the beneficiaries of development initiatives and other stakeholders in the development initiative and collectively designing the communication strategy. For effective implementation and desired results, participatory development communication demands the holistic use of communication tools such as interpersonal, group media, information and communication technology, traditional media and mass media tools (Bessette, 2004).

"People's right to communicate their stories should be at the heart of the participatory strategies leading to empowerment" (Melkote & Steeves, 2001.p, 355). Participatory techniques achieved impetus in the 1980s and 1990s and have evolved into a powerful field positioning itself in disparity to models and theories of the initial periods of growth (Ascroft & Masilela 1994; Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 1998; Mato, 1999; White, 1994).

For effective participation of the local people, Ansu-Kyeremeh (1994: 109) suggests that the communication systems and approaches must be "indigenous to create holistic development

communications". Hamelink (1990) agrees that in organising the community for the use of an effective participatory approach, group media such as songs and theatre have played a pivotal role in bringing the people together.

Servaes (2008) maintains that the participatory communication model incorporates the ideas related to diversity, cultural identity of local communities and participation contributing to sustainable development.

Manyozo (2008, p.32) argues that "the main reason for the failure of the modernisation theorists was their marginalisation of developing countries by emphasising and propagating their classification as an economic periphery". Huesca (2002) also draws the conclusion that participatory communication for development is the most robust and convenient outcome from the challenges to the dominant theory of modernization because it offers a procedural, dialogic and democratic platform for solving community problems instead of the domineering and haphazard elements embedded in modernization.

2.15.6 The participatory development communication (PDC) model

For a development communication actor to achieve a planned, comprehensive, systematic, practical and achievable participatory development communication strategy appropriate for carrying out a development intervention for a group of people in a community, Bessette (2004, p. 36) provides the following 10 steps to be followed while involving all necessary stakeholders in the process:

Step 1: Establishing a relationship with a local community and understanding the local setting, their culture, and doing research to know more about the background of the people.

Step 2: Involving the community in the identification of a development challenge, its dimensions, causes, potential resolutions, and the decision to carry out a concrete initiative in finding a solution to the problem identified collectively.

Step 3: Jointly identifying the different community groups and other stakeholders concerned with the identified problem (or goal) and initiative and gathering support from all of them in tackling the issue.

Step 4: Collectively identifying communication needs, objectives and activities to be carried out in the strategy to execute the implementation of the development initiative.

Step 5: Identifying appropriate communication tools that support two-way communication and appropriate in the context of the community people for easy accessibility and understanding.

Step 6: Preparing and pre-testing communication content and materials together with all stakeholders identified and involved in the process from the beginning.

Step 7: Facilitating partnerships from within and outside all concerned actors in the community, local technical authorities, specialized agencies, and the media in all the activities connected with the design and implementation of the communication strategy at each stage of the process.

Step 8: Producing an implementation communication strategy or plan agreed and fashioned collectively by the development and communication actors, intended beneficiaries of the development programme and other stakeholders.

Step 9: Monitoring each stage of the process and evaluating the communication strategy to determine if the objectives have been achieved or otherwise as well as documenting the development or research process.

Step 10: Planning the sharing and utilization of results to serve as a learning process for the community or other people in a similar activity, especially development policy makers.

Bessette's (2004) ten step process for participatory development communication is simplified in the model below:

The diagram shows a circular cycle with the following stages arranged clockwise:

- Establishing contact with the local people
- Involving the people in a problem idetification
- Identifying community groups and stakeholders
- Identifying communication needs, objectives and activities
- Identifying appropriate communication tools
- Preparing & pre-testing the communication content/strategy
- Facilitating partnerships
- Producing an implementation strategy
- Monitoring and evaluating the strategy
- Sharing and using of results

Figure 2.3: Guy Bessette participatory development communication (PDC) model.

In integrating the above relevant arguments in this research, attention has also been paid to the proposition by Uphoff (1985) that participation should be seen in these four areas: participation in decision making, implementation, benefit and evaluation and this according to Kavinya, Alam and Decock (1994) will give the people a sense of ownership and skills.

Ghana remains a developing country and currently needs a strategic development communication plan to empower people at the community level to gain increased control over their resources while finding solutions to their own problems. The participatory development communication framework used for this study encourages the use of both bottom-up and top-down approaches in communication, open dialogue, consensus building through stakeholder consultations and involvement, greater equality, freedom, and ability to understand one's

potentials and limitations. The research, therefore, seeks to explore the participation and communication levels of the people in the stages of formulation, implementation and evaluation in the development interventions of the education sector in Ghana. Using the PDC as a framework in scrutinizing the implementation of the three development interventions in the education sector is expected to adequately lead to the realization of positive results for answering the research questions and achieving the objectives as well as establishing the journey towards participatory communication in development efforts in Ghana.

2.16 CONCLUSION

Literature search and critique in this research project established a significant link surrounding participation, communication and development, hence the need for development and communication actors to pay key attention to the kind of communication employed in driving development initiatives in developing nations.

The search for a practical, dialogic, community-oriented and democratic approach in participation and communication for development in this literature review chapter led to the analysis of series of potential approaches which were eventually proven deficient by various researchers. Nonetheless, the participatory development communication approach or model designed by Guy Bessette outlining practical steps to be employed in carrying out development programmes was eventually adopted as framework for analysis in this research and it is expected to answer the critical research questions in the context of the evidences obtained from the field. PDC's efficiency in causing meaningful participation among key stakeholders in programmes will be tested with the evidences in the analysis and discussion chapter of this study in the context of the three development initiatives chosen in the education sector for investigation.

The need for all stakeholders, especially governmental actors in the Third World Nations to give meaning to the participation process of citizen involvement in decision-making practices leading to development policy formulation, implementation and evaluation cannot be overemphasized.

CHAPTER THREE: GHANA, THE CONTEXT FOR THE RESEARCH

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an account of the socio-political setting of the research thereby giving accurate contextual meaning to the study. It highlights the background of the country, Ghana from the pre-colonial period, the arrival of the Europeans in Ghana (formerly called the Gold Coast), the slave trade and the colonial rule by the British, the era of the struggle for independence and how self-rule was managed after independence. It also gives an account of the structure of the education system, the constitutional provisions for the practice of participatory communication, some participatory communication cases in the health sector and the area of community radio system.

3.1 BRIEF GHANAIAN HISTORY

Formerly known as the Gold Coast, Ghana became the first sub-Saharan African country to regain independence from the British on 6 March 1957 and later became a Republic on 1 July 1960. As at 2018, it had 10 administrative regions namely Greater Accra, Central, Northern, Ashanti, Volta, Upper East, Upper West, Brong-Ahafo, Eastern and Western Regions with 216 districts and 275 constituencies across the country. In 2019, six additional regions were carved and created from the already existing ones bringing the total number of administrative regions to 16. The additional regions created were: Oti, Western North, and North East, Ahafo, Savannah and Bono East regions.

According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2013) the 2010 National Population Census results show that the country has a total population of 24,658,823 and this figure represents an increase of 30.4% over the 2000 census population of 18,912,079 with an annual average intercensal growth rate of 2.5%.

In terms of ethnicity, the 2010 Population and Housing Census data show that Akans are the major ethnic group in Ghana (47.5%), followed by the Mole-Dagbani (16.6%), the Ewe (13.9%) and Ga-Dangme (7.4%). The Mande forms the smallest ethnic group (1.1%). The results also show that Ghana has a youthful population consisting of a large proportion of children under 15 years, and a small proportion of elderly persons (65 years and older). On religious affiliation, (71.2 %) of the population are Christians, with Islam (17.6%) traditional religion (5.2%) and (5.3%) not affiliated to any religion making up the remainder of the population (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013).

English is the official language in Ghana with the following according to the 2000 Population and Housing Census as the local languages: Asante 14.8%, Ewe 12.7%, Fante 9.9%, Boron

(Brong) 4.6%, Dagomba 4.3%, Dangme 4.3%, Dagarte (Dagaba) 3.7%, Akyem 3.4%, Ga 3.4%, Akuapem 2.9%, other {includes English (official)} 36.1% (Ghana Statistical Service, 2000;2002).

The 2010 Population and Housing Census also shows that the majority (74.1%) of the population, of 11 years and older, is literate. A large proportion (67.1%) of the population can read and write in English. About one-fifth (20.1%) can read and write in the English language only while 53.7 percent of the population can read and write in at least one Ghanaian language (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013).

Ghana's current president, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, was sworn into office on 7 January 2017. After leading the country for nine years, the nation's first president, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, was toppled in a coup d'état in 1966. After the regime of Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana was ruled by a sequence of military dictators with recurrent trials of democratic rule. This current democratic governance started in 1992 and has gained recognition for Ghana as a leading democracy in Africa having held successive peaceful and transparent elections resulting in change of governments since 1992 (Ghanaweb, 2017). Ghana currently practices the Presidential System of Government with the President being both Head of State and Head of Government and assisted by a Vice-President. Ministers are appointed from both within and outside Legislature (Parliament) headed by the Speaker of Parliament while the Judiciary is headed by the Chief Justice.

Ghana is explored in this chapter to set out the context for this research project. It provides information on the people's background by assessing their social, political or cultural practices and participation in development activities. It also provides an overview of the governance systems from the colonial era to independence and beyond and the impact each system has had on the development agenda of the country in terms of democracy or dictatorship.

3.2 GHANA FROM THE PRECOLONIZATION ERA
Historical accounts of how Ghana became a place of settlement by different ethnic groups, how it started, how it continued and how it was sustained long before the days of the arrival of the first Europeans in the Gold Coast (Ghana) has different versions and interpretations.

3.2.1 Ghana (Gold Coast) before the arrival of Europeans
Early Ghanaian societies were believed to have existed in various parts of the present day Ghana but there is much we do not understand and know about the lives of these ancients who made the forests, the coastal and grassland areas their abodes but there is no way to know them with any level of certainty (Konadu & Campbell, 2016). Similarly, Sampson (2016) agrees and

opines that contemporary Ghana had been populated some thousand years ago, however, very little is known about the country's first settlers before the sixteenth century. He however, argues that archaeological remains found in the coastal zone of Ghana suggest the area was occupied in the early Bronze Age (4,000 BC) but since these communities were involved in fishing and other related activities in the sea, rivers and lagoons, only few traces were left. In the central Ghana, north of the forest zone also recorded some evidence of inhabitation as early as 3,000 to 4,000 years ago. Sampson (2016) refers to oral account or history and other sources claiming that some ancestors of Ghana entered the country early in the tenth century A.D and since then, there were series of migrations from the north and east of the country.

Owusu-Ansah (2005) however, was able to provide some accounts on the possible early inhabitation in Ghana as he refers to a town in the modern Ghana's Brong-Ahafo Region called Jaman on River Oti as the earliest evidence of probable human settlement 10,000 BC.

In what appears to be a chronological account of the early settlers in Ghana, the historical account recalls probable human settlement around Lake Bosomtwi in present day Ashanti Region in 8000 BC, some sites around Accra in 4000 BC, Bosumpra Rockshelter in Abetifi (Kwahu) around 3300 BC, the formation of Kintampo culture in 1500 BC, settlement in some areas in Tema in 100 BC, early Iron Age at Kpone in 150 AD, iron technology around Buipe in present day Northern Region in the year 700, iron technology in Bonoso in 1000 and in 1200, one of the ethnic groups (still currently in Ghana) called the Guans started migrating down the Volta River from the Gonja land towards the Gulf of Guinea to look for better settlement. By 1298, the Bono Kingdom was successfully founded while commercial activities increased at Begho in 1400. Before the first Europeans (the Portuguese) arrived in the Gold Coast in 1472 and began trading for gold, the Guans had reached the coast west of modern Accra in 1450 (Owusu-Ansah, 2005).

3.2.2 The arrival of Europeans, trade and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade

Among the first Europeans to arrive on the coast of modern Ghana were the Portuguese who had so much interest in the gold deposits in the land and referred to it as Costa da Mina (Coast of the Mines). The Portuguese interest in trade with the indigenous people along the coast culminated in the establishment of forts. While the Portuguese approached the local people with sophisticated cultural and commercial knowledge of experience, the indigenous people latter advanced the encounter with the Portuguese and other Europeans with caution (Konadu & Campbell, 2016). After the arrival of the Portuguese in 1472, the Castilian, English and Italian ships joined Flemish and the Portuguese in the Gold Coast prompting the English to launch a

challenge in 1580 against the Portuguese monopoly over trade in the land which they later won. Other Europeans such as the Dutch, the Swedes, the French, and the Danes also made their way to the Gold Coast, primarily for trade in gold and other resources (Owusu-Ansah, 2005).

Suddenly, trade metamorphosed into buying and selling of captive people by the Europeans known as the Transatlantic Slave Trade in which approximately 1.2 million people were exported from the Gold Coast between 1515 and 1866. Between 1480 and 1530, gold from the Gold Coast was able to finance Portugal's brief global supremacy, however, as a result of the shift in trade from gold to commodified and enslaved Africans, trade competitions between the other Europeans radically shot up. Guns and gun powder from the Europeans were exchanged for captives in wars as slaves from the local people. Consequently, wars among different ethnic groups in the Gold Coast increased as the quest for captives from war to sell as slaves became a booming business. Slave markets were established in Salaga in modern Northern Region of Ghana as well as Assin Manso in modern Central Region to boost the trade (Konadu & Campbell, 2016). On 16th March 1792, the Danish King ordered his subjects to end the slave trade after January 1803 and the first Methodist missionaries arrived in the Gold Coast in 1833 with the Gospel of the Lord, Jesus Christ (Owusu-Ansah, 2005).

3.2.3 British colonial rule and political independence

Critical circumstances such as military hostilities between the Asante and the Fante greatly contributed to the successful influence of the British over the people of the Gold Coast especially those at the south. As such, there was the need for a conducive environment for the booming trade of the British to continue and in order to bring sanity into the trade and other related activities, the British decided to get involved in some of the clashes (Sampson, 2016). The British thus emerged as the dominant Europeans left on the shores of the Gold Coast amidst indigenous ethnic wars and conflicts between themselves (the British) and other ethnic groups, which resulted in them securing colonial supremacy (Konadu & Campbell, 2016). From 1850, many coastal areas increasingly were brought under the control of a governor of the British Fortress. To enable the governor to discharge administrative duties with ease, he was assisted by the Executive Council and the Legislative Council. The Executive Council comprised a small number of European officials that suggested laws and taxes to the governor, but those suggestions were still subject to his final consideration and approval. The Legislative Council comprised members of the Executive Council and some unofficial members selected initially from British commercial interests. After 1900, three Africans and three chiefs representing the areas of Accra, Cape Coast and Sekondi were added to the Legislative Council. Further changes

were made to both the Executive and the Legislative Council after several agitations from local people (Sampson, 2016).

The political geography of the settlement of the Gold Coast as a British colony at the time was formed by 1901 after the Yaa Asantewaa War of 1900 in which the Asantes were defeated. After the defeat of the Asantes, the British tried to amalgamate their aggressive dominance over the Northern Territories thereby integrating them into a protectorate that became part of the Gold Coast Colony as Governors were appointed periodically from Britain to rule the people (Konadu & Campbell, 2016). On January 1, 1902, The Gold Coast officially became a colony including the Asantes and the Northern Territories, and in 1907, the capital of the Northern Territories was moved from Gambaga to Tamale while the administration of the colony changed from military to civil status (Owusu-Ansah, 2005). Several Governors ruled both the Asante and the Northern Territories by proclamations until 1946 while the modern-day borders of Ghana were constituted in May 1956 with the people of Volta Togoland (now Volt Region) voting in a plebiscite to become part of the people of the Gold Coast (Sampson, 2016). On 4 August 1947, the first political party known as the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) was formed and inaugurated at Saltpond with the motto "self-government within the shortest possible time". Dr. Kwame Nkrumah (who later became the founder of Ghana and first president of the nation) became the General-Secretary of the party. Prior to the formation of the political party and the plebiscite, the chiefs and people of the Gold Coast became extremely agitated with a series of concerns about the British structure, constitution and the system of governance (Owusu-Ansah, 2005).

3.2.4 The 1948 riots and dynamics leading to self-government

Amidst a number of concerns and agitations from chiefs and the people of the Gold Coast, a protest march was also organized by some unarmed ex-servicemen (who served the British interest in the World War II) over poor after-service conditions on 28th February, 1948 to present a petition to Governor Sir Gerald Hallen Creasy at the Christiansburg Castle in Accra. However, the protest march by the ex-servicemen was broken up by the British Police leaving three of them, Sergeant Nii Adjetey, Private Odartey Lamptey and Corporal Attipoe dead resulting in a riot spreading throughout the Gold Coast in which shops and properties belonging to the British people were destroyed by the Gold Coasters. Six leaders of the UGCC (the Big Six) were arrested consequently for their possible involvement in the organization of the 1948 riots but were later released. Nonetheless, in June 1948, a British commission constituted and headed by Governor Andrew Aiken Watson, issued a report outlining the causes of the riots

and recommending educational development and a new constitution to be written by the people of the Gold Coast (Konadu & Campbell, 2016).

On 12 June 1949, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah formed a new political party known as the Convention People's Party (CPP) with its motto, "self-government now". Several political activities championed primarily by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah and the leaders of the CPP led to a general election in July 1956 in which Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was elected the Prime Minister having won 57% of the total votes cast and obtained the a two-thirds of the 104 seats contested in the National Assembly. He remained in office as the Prime Minister when the independence of the newly created Ghana came into being on 6 March 1957. Ghana thus became the first country south of the Sahara on the continent of Africa to regain political independence from British rule and attained a republic status on 1 July 1960. Gold Coast was renamed Ghana just after the country regained self-rule (Sampson, 2016).

3.2.5 Ghana: From independence to the Fourth Republic

Even though Ghana regained independence, the constitution drafted in 1957 allowed Queen Elizabeth II of England to be represented in Ghana by a Governor-General and, accordingly, Sir Arden-Clarke was appointed as the first person to serve in that capacity. However, on 1 July 1960 when Ghana became a Republic under a new constitution, the position of the Governor-General was scrapped signifying a full exit from British rule. Though Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was considered a dynamic leader who inspired nationals of other African countries to regain independence, some scholars such as Peter Omari considered him to be a dictator who presided over the enactment of some laws, notable among them, the Deportation Act of 1957 and the Preventive Detention Act of 1958 (Sampson, 2016). Several people were arrested and detained in prison under the Preventive Detention Act including Dr. J.B. Danquah on 1 January 1964 amidst a crackdown on divergent views and opinions about the government of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. Consequently, On February 1, 1964, Ghana was declared the Convention People's Republic one-party state. However, on February 24, 1964, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was overthrown in the first military coup while on a trip to Beijing and Hanoi. The National Liberation Council (NLC) was established and Major-General Joseph Ankrah became its Chairman but was later replaced by Brigadier Akwasi Amankwaa Afrifa in April 1969 (Owusu-Ansah, 2005).

In August 1969, a Presidential Commission was constituted to oversee a transition from military rule to civilian administration to return the nation to its multi-party democratic state. On September 30, 1969, Ghana returned to civilian rule and the Second Republic began with its Prime Minister as Dr. Kofi Abrefa Busia winning majority votes in the National Assembly

through a general election. Edward Akuffo-Addo was also elected by an electoral college comprising the National Assembly and 21 Chiefs. This Government was also overthrown in a military coup by the National Redemption Council (NRC), later changed to the Supreme Military Council (SMC I) under the Chairmanship of Lt. Colonel Ignatius Kutu Acheampong on January 13, 1972. The Supreme Military Council (SMC II) was later formed with Lt. General Fredrick W. K. Akuffo taking over from I.K. Acheampong on July 4, 1978. His government was itself toppled by a group of junior officers in the Army on June 4, 1979 which saw the coming into office of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) headed by Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings. However, power was handed over in June of the same year to Dr. Hilla Liman of the Peoples National Party (PNP) who won the 1979 General Elections establishing the Third Republic. However, the military regime of a newly formed Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) ended the civilian administration on December 31, 1981. During this time, foreign debts of the country ballooned to twice the total value of 1981 exports with a record high of over 140% inflation recorded (Owusu-Ansah, 2005).

In what is deemed to be the end of military interventions in Ghana's political history, Chairman Jerry John Rawlings presented the timetable for the return to constitutional rule establishing the Fourth Republic of the nation on March 6, 1992. A referendum was consequently conducted the following month to approve the Draft 1992 Constitution submitted by a Consultative Assembly commissioned by the PNDC to oversee the successful return of the country to civilian rule. More than 80 % of the people voted in favour of the new constitution bringing into force the official registration and formation of political parties in May, same year. On January 7, 1993, the Fourth Republic was inaugurated with Jerry John Rawlings becoming the first having won a general election on November 3, 1992 on the ticket of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) party (Owusu-Ansah, 2005).

From 1992 until the 2016 General Election that saw the election of President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo becoming the Fifth President under the Fourth Republic, five successive General Elections (Presidential and Parliamentary) were conducted in 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012, producing four Presidents (from two main political parties-New Patriotic Party and National Democratic Congress) namely John Agyekum Kuffuor, Prof. John Evans Attah Mills (who incidentally died while in office) and John Dramani Mahama.

Ghana went through these mixed regimes of both democratic and military as a result of divergent views, opinions and systems of government culminating in the use of both dictatorial and democratic ways of taking decisions towards development in the governance process. Relative to this study, backgrounds of the two divergent regimes - military and democratic, are

expected to play a crucial role in examining the results of this research to determine the extent to which participatory communication could be promoted or hindered in the two administrations. This is likely to also inform the future of participatory communication for development in the current democratic governance system in Ghana.

3.3 CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL PROVISIONS FOR LOCAL AND GRASSROOT PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE IN GHANA

Since the beginning of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana that saw the end to frequent military regimes, several provisions, both in the constitution and other Acts enacted by the Parliament of Ghana have given resemblance to the practice of participation and democratic governance at the local level in theory and yet in a very limited way in practice.

3.3.1 Rights and freedoms of the people

Serving as a foundation, the 1992 Constitution in Chapter 5(12), Clause 1 and 2 highlights the fundamental rights and freedoms to be enjoyed by all persons living legally in Ghana, irrespective of the individual's gender, race, religion, place of birth, creed or political opinion but subject to the respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the interest of the public. In Article 21 (1), the Constitution clarifies the freedoms of the individual as enshrined requiring that all persons shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression, which shall include freedom of the press and other media, freedom of thought, conscience and belief, which shall include academic freedom. Under educational rights and freedoms, Article 25 (l) stipulates that all persons shall have the right to equal educational opportunities and facilities. In order to achieve the full realization of the right above, (a) basic education shall be free, compulsory and available to all; (b) secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular, by the progressive introduction of free education; (c) higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular, by progressive introduction of free education (1992 Constitution of Ghana).

3.3.2 Freedom of the media

Another aspect of this research in relation to the Constitution deals with the media for the purposes of communication. Even though the Constitution mentions the freedom of the press and other media in Chapter 5, Article 21, another full chapter was dedicated to the work and operations of the media in Ghana.

As a result, in Chapter 12, the Constitution spells out the freedoms and responsibilities of the media. Article 162 (1) stipulates that "freedom and independence of the media are hereby

guaranteed. (2) Subject to this Constitution and any other law not inconsistent with this Constitution, there shall be no censorship in Ghana. (3) There shall be no impediments to the establishment of private press or media; and in particular, there shall be no law requiring any person to obtain a licence as a prerequisite to the establishment or operation of a newspaper, journal or other media for mass communication or information. (4) Editors and publishers of newspapers and other institutions of the mass media shall not be subject to control or interference by Government, nor shall they be penalized or harassed for their editorial opinions and views, or the content of their publications. (5) All agencies of the mass media shall, at all times, be free to uphold the principles, provisions and objectives of this Constitution, and shall uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people of Ghana. (6) Any medium for the dissemination of information to the public which publishes a statement about or against any person shall be obliged to publish a rejoinder, if any, from the person in respect of whom the publication was made" (1992 Constitution of Ghana, p. 102). But this is not without a responsibility as the state-owned media has been tasked to ensure fair opportunities and facilities for the expression of divergent views and dissenting opinions as enshrined in Article 163.

3.4 THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN GHANA

Prior to the re-structuring of Ghana's system of education in 1987, pre-tertiary formal education comprised seventeen years of education, otherwise called the 6-4-7 system. It includes six years of primary education, four years for the middle school education, 5 years of secondary school for the Ordinary Level Certificate and two years of secondary school for the Advanced Level Certificate. It was however common for some students to shorten the total number of pre-tertiary years by skipping the last two years of the middle school education after passing what was known as the common entrance examination that qualified candidates for the secondary school. After 1987, the 6-4-7 system was replaced with a 6-3-3 system that provided six years of primary education after kindergarten, three years of junior secondary school and three years of senior secondary school education, thereby allowing students to enter university in their late teens.

In December 2008 under the leadership of President John Agyekum Kuffuor of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), the three years of secondary education was changed to 4 years primarily to allow more time for students preparing for the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE) and this was also contained in the Education Act, Act 778. Three years after the implementation of the 4 years system, the new government under the leadership of

President John Evans Attah Mills of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), changed it back to three years. According to Myjoyonline (2017) the duration of the secondary level education has always been tossed between three and four years depending on which political party was at the helm of affairs. The first term of Nana Akufo-Addo led government (2016-2020) of the NPP also started considering a possible change in the duration of the Senior High School (SHS) from three years to four years as the Minister responsible for Planning, Professor Gyan Baffour, indicated the government would arrive at a firm decision after assessing the efficiency of the current system.

The current education system consisting of six years of primary education, three years of Junior High School and three years of Senior High School affords students the opportunity to begin their university education in their late teens for four years at the tertiary level. Other institutions, such as Technical Universities (formerly Polytechnics), Colleges of Education (formerly Teacher Training Colleges) and Nursing Training Colleges are also available as optional preferences to the students.

Plans are also underway to convert Colleges of Education into University Colleges to offer degree certificates to professional teachers instead of the current diploma certificates (Ghanaweb, 2018). With the current 6-3-3-4 system, children normally begin primary school at age 6 including kindergarten even though it is not a prerequisite for entry into primary school. Meanwhile, as stipulated in the Article 25 (1) of the 1992 Constitution, every Ghanaian is entitled to free compulsory basic education while government takes steps to make secondary and tertiary education progressively free.

This research studies three initiatives in the education sector of Ghana. One of them is the Free Secondary Education Policy. In the 2015/2016 academic year, the government of the NDC under the leadership of President John Mahama began the implementation of the progressively free SHS policy. After the NDC lost the 2016 general elections, the NPP upon assumption of power introduced the free secondary education system in Ghana in fulfilment of its manifesto promise. This study critically examines this policy vis-a-vis the existence or otherwise of participatory communication approaches in its formulation, implementation and evaluation.

3.5 DECENTRALIZATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM

Decentralization of public services as a strategy received the needed devotion and attention over recent decades to serve as conduit for development and subsequently contribute to poverty

reduction (World Bank, 2003). This research stems from the need for grassroots participatory communication opportunities and its extensive practice to ensure sustainable development, especially in the education sector. To ensure effective grassroots participation in decision-making, adequate systemic structures needed to be established to aid the process. The 1992 Republican Constitution in its bid to implement broad consultative participatory communication strategies, established the local government system, through the Metropolitan Municipal and District Assembly concept with the expectation to enhance the decentralised organization of activities from the central government. In view of this, Ghana was divided into districts in line with Article 241 (1) prior to the coming into force of the Constitution on 7 January 1993.

In accordance with Article 240 (1) of the Constitution, "Ghana shall have a system of local government and administration which shall, as far as practicable, be decentralized. (2) The system of decentralized local government shall have the following features (a) Parliament shall enact appropriate laws to ensure that functions, powers, responsibilities and resources are at all times transferred from the Central Government to local government units in a co-ordinated manner; (b) Parliament shall by law provide for the taking of such measures as are necessary to enhance the capacity of local government authorities to plan, initiate, coordinate, manage and execute policies in respect of all matters affecting the people within their areas, With a view to ultimately achieving localization of those activities; (c) there shall be established for each local government unit, a sound financial base with adequate and reliable sources of revenue; (d) as far as practicable, persons in the service of local government shall be subject to the effective control of local authorities; (e) to ensure the accountability of local government authorities, people in particular local government areas shall, as far as practicable, be afforded the opportunity to participate effectively in their governance" (1992 Constitution of Ghana).

3.5.1 The Nature of participation in decentralized local government system in Ghana.

Mohammed (2016) conducted a research to test decentralization and participatory avenues created in Ghana's political and administrative system from five districts. He concluded that formal and informal procedures for participation are inadequate and irregular, given the goal of maximising decentralisation in the country.

Even though the Constitution has clearly called for a practicable decentralised local government system at the Metropolitan, Municipal and District levels throughout the country, many critics have challenged the operational strategies of the local government system of successive governments since 1992. One critical issue that has taken a centre stage in the discussions over

the years is the need for the heads of the districts known as the Metropolitan Municipal and District Chief Executives (MMDCEs) to be elected by the local people through the ballot box instead of the Presidential appointments initiated since 1992.

Civil society organisations and various opinion leaders have argued that the system where the President appoints the MMDCEs but subject to the approval of at least two-thirds of the assembly members is more or less a camouflage for full participation since the appointed MMDCEs are always expected to do the bidding of the President at the expense of the views and preferences of the local people who have been motivated in theory to participate fully in local governance administration. The crusade for the election of chief executives eventually became a topical issue for most Ghanaians in recent times while the political parties that were supposed to take pragmatic action towards the issue became reluctant since it is perceived to be an action that could jeopardise the political fortunes of any government at the local level.

According to an Afro barometer survey conducted by the civil society organization, Centre for Democratic Development (CDD), between September 9 to September 25, 2017, among 2,400 respondents from 300 areas spread across 293 towns in 171 districts in Ghana revealed that 69% of the respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that MMDCEs should be elected through the ballot box instead of appointment indicating a very strong support from regions, demographic groups and political parties. In 2017, there were strong agitations from many parts of the country over the nomination of some 212 MMDCEs by President Akufo-Addo for approval by their respective assemblies. However, some were rejected while the rest were approved amidst huge disquiet expressed by traditional leaders and community members (Ghanaweb, 2018).

Meanwhile, prior to the 2016 General Elections, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) while in opposition declared in their manifesto the intention to reverse the trend by instituting measures leading to the election of chief executives 24 months after coming into power. Shortly after winning the elections in December 2016, calls for the manifesto promise to be implemented became prominent putting political pressure on the NPP Government to honour the promise. A former Akatsi District Chief Executive, James Gunu, in the erstwhile National Democratic Congress (NDC) Government also criticised the government of the NPP vehemently for what he described as a disappointment since the initial date for the election of MMDCEs scheduled for 2019 was changed to 2021. He called on civil society organizations and the general public to mount pressure on the government to fulfil the party's promise in this special area of development since best standards and practices needed to be encouraged within globally accepted frameworks (Gunu, 2018).

The Founder and Leader of the Progressive People's Party (PPP), Dr. Papa Kwesi Ndoum, who also contested the 2016 general elections but lost to the NPP is also a keen critic of the decentralisation system. At a press conference in Accra on 25 April 2018, he criticised the Akufo-Addo Government for postponing the implementation of the manifesto promise to ensure that MMDCEs are elected insisting that the government's change of the timeline is a dent on its credibility. According to him, "it is an important matter. We have been promised, we believed it, people have gone to cast vote, power has been given to some people, but what is happening now gives us cause for alarm," (Citinewsroom.com, 2018).

Notwithstanding the challenges perceived to be associated with the process, the NPP government-initiated steps to reverse the trend. The country's Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Hajia Alima Mahama, called for a commendation in honour of President Akufo-Addo for initiating the process that would lead to the election of Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives (MMDCEs) on partisan basis. Speaking at the second Regional Sensitization Workshop on the election of MMDCES in Ghana held in Ho, the Volta Regional Capital, Hajia Alima Mahama said, "let's be realistic, very few persons would be willing give away the power to appoint and to have direct influence on local governance. The President is giving power back to the people. In fact, he is guided by the fact that real power belongs to people." (Myjoyonline.com, 2018).

Clearly, it was evident in the Minister's speech that allowing the people to select their own leaders at the district level to manage the affairs of the local authorities instead of direct appointments means empowerment on its own to the benefit of the people while taking away passive elements of dictatorial tendencies from the decentralisation approach to development. It would also afford the local people the singular opportunity to participate fully in the decision-making process leading to identification of development problems pertaining to their areas and finding sustainable solutions to them, thereby giving credence to the principles of participatory communication. It is equally obvious that it has been difficult for successive governments to be ready to exercise such powers to reverse the trend to create a disservice to themselves in terms of political fortune thereby losing popularity and votes in subsequent elections.

Speaking on an Accra based local radio station, Citi FM, on 26th April, 2018, the Minister also stated that on assuming office, President Akufo-Addo amended the promise of non-partisan election of MMDCEs, saying that the elections will instead be held on partisan basis requiring a referendum to amend certain parts of the constitution regarding the appointment of MMDCEs since such clauses are entrenched ones, hence the delay in the process (Citinewsroom, 2018).

Interestingly, however, the entire exercise involving processes to amend the 1992 Constitution and conducting a nationwide referendum scheduled for 17th December, 2019 to change the status quo for MMDCEs to be elected instead of appointment came to a total cancellation following a national televised announcement on 30th November, 2019 by the President, Nana Akuffo Addo, in which he called for the withdrawal of Article 243(1) and Article 55 (3) Amendment bills from Parliament due to what he described as absence of "a durable national consensus" on the whole issue (Citinewsroom, 2019). Though the main opposition party, the NDC and other notable institutions, such as the National House of Chiefs welcomed the idea they protested against the proposed element of political party sponsorship of candidates in the local level elections arguing that such an act will go a long way to increase the NDC-NPP division.

3.6 THE DECENTRALISATION CONCEPT IN EDUCATION IN GHANA

The vision statements of many countries over the years present a format for ensuring progress and development through improvements in access to quality education in which the beneficiary communities ought to play active and participatory roles (Davies, 1987; Sayed & Soudien, 2005; Watt, 2001) while international debate for delivering improved and sustainable services continues to lay emphasis on the bottom-up approach as against the top-down communication strategies (World Bank, 2003). Active and result-oriented participation in education governance is a critical tool for delivering accountable services to the beneficiary communities, especially for the poor and other marginalised people. Development partners continue to argue that the community participatory element is the only prerequisite for tackling poverty while paving way for realising educational change and development in Africa (Litvack, Ahmad, & Bird, 1998; World Bank, 2001).

According to Essuman and Akyeampong (2011), Ghana instigated the process to decentralise the management of education at the basic and second cycle levels from the central point (headquarters of the Ghana Education Service - GES) to districts in 1987 as part of the wider social, participatory and democratic governance reforms to equip the local people in decision-making processes. The most important part of this reform was the involvement of active community influence and contribution to the administration of schools within their localities. The introduction of Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) and School Management Committees (SMC) became a novelty and it was expected to close critical gaps in community participation (Hedges, 2002) but it was described as least progress (Akyeampong, 2009) since other significant areas such as textbook procurement, staff appointments and salaries, and curriculum development are still manipulated and controlled by headquarters of the GES (Essuman and

Akyeampong, 2011). Some of these weaknesses in the education management structure according to the World Bank (2004) is as a result of the absolute gap created in the human resource size needed to execute an effective decentralised system at the local level.

Seven years after the decentralization process took off, Mankoe and Maynes (1994) conducting a study on devolution in educational decision-making in Ghana concluded that key educational stakeholders in Ghana were unable to feel the levels of empowerment and ownership linked to local participation in education with the potential benefits of devolution even though they stated that it was too early to expect a radical change in the system. The situation, nonetheless, seemed to be the same when Essuman and Akyeampong (2011) also conducted a study on decentralisation policy and practice in Ghana regarding the reality of community participation in education in rural communities. Twenty-four (24) years after the decentralization process commenced, it was concluded in the study that participation in education policymaking by community members was only theoretical not as envisioned in practice due to the barriers in the decentralization process. Unfortunately, the above study focused on education decentralization rather than the emphasis on participatory communication as catalyst for development which is the focus of this research.

The story of the education sector in decentralisation process to ensure full participatory and consultative broad-based decision-making towards initiating development programmes for the total benefit of the local communities is of paramount importance in this study. In Ghana, education related policies and programmes at the Basic and Secondary levels are conveyed to all districts in the country through the headquarters of Ghana Education Service (GES), the government agency under the Ministry of Education (MoE) responsible for implementing pre-tertiary policies and programmes formulated by the MoE. Many educationalists and civil society organizations have questioned the approach saying that some of the policies and programmes are not applicable at the district or local school levels when decisions are usually taken from the "top" and relayed "down". There have been calls for the implementation of the proper decentralized system in education instead of the centralised system currently being practised.

In 2015, the government through the MoE decided to transform the approach in line with the calls from the general public to make education at the basic and second-cycle level more decentralised and participatory to all stakeholders. A committee was formed to initiate the process of the decentralization in education policy and presented recommendations for implementation by the government. Indeed, among other benefits, this decision by the MoE would be against the backdrop that community participation in education improves the

efficiency and effectiveness of education because it is expected that communities become empowered to hold schools or local governments responsible for the results of the services they deliver (World Bank, 2003).

By the end of 2016, the Ministry of Education made significant progress in the Education Decentralization process, more especially in efforts to merge two important laws governing the education system in the country. The work on the consolidation of the Ghana Education Service (GES) Act, 506 and the Education Act, 778 has been completed and the draft bill was presented to the Cabinet for consideration. It was executed by the Working Group on Education Decentralization in conjunction with the Legal Review Taskforce of the Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee on Decentralization after a comprehensive consultation with the various educational stakeholders, namely the GES Council, Ministry Advisory Board, the Management of the Ministry, Teacher Unions, Religious Bodies in Education, Conference of Heads of Assisted Secondary Schools (CHASS), conglomeration of NGOs in Education, Metropolitan Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), Regional Co-ordinating Councils (RCCs) and Traditional Authorities (Ministry of Education, 2016). According to the Ministry, the outstanding consultations with the Parliamentary Select Committees on Education, Local Government, Subsidiary Legislation and Constitutional and Legal would take place when the bill was put before Parliament.

It was evidently clear in the work of the Ministry's Committee that, not much had been done to involve grassroots people holistically even though traditional authorities made up of chiefs were consulted in drafting the bill which will be passed into law to become the solution-oriented decentralization mechanism in collectively identifying challenges and providing sustainable solutions to them.

3.7 INDEPENDENCE OF THE MEDIA AND MEDIA PRACTICE IN GHANA

Hadland (2015) asserts that even though there was a surge in the transformation of mass media in Africa in recent times as a result of increase in democratisation, this has not automatically culminated in a sphere of free press for the promotion of democracy. But Gyima-Boadi (2004) opines that in many mature democracies across the globe, the media are given a special role in enhancing the democratic governance of the countries. In the case of Ghana, there has been a significant and progressive contribution of the media towards ensuring free, fair and transparent elections from 1992, to the successive ones in 1996, 2000 and 2004 as the media held the parties accountable to the people while keeping them well informed about the progress and turn of

events associated with the elections. Diedong and Naaikuur (2012) are, however, of a different view that the electronic media for example, remains a problematic area that needed attention because of its inability and readiness to provide objective and balanced reportage to the people during national elections where presidential and parliamentary polls are conducted. Diedong (2008) argues that this problem is not only limited to Ghana but rather the whole continent of Africa especially in situations where the media have reluctantly refused to liberate themselves from the shackles of some corrupt politicians during electioneering times. He points out that in Ghana, many journalists and their editors have been recognised to be 'employees' of some political parties and yet pretend to be the objective, free and fair in their reportage, resulting in the holistic damage to the journalism profession.

3.8 PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION CASES IN GHANA: DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE COMMUNITY RADIO CONCEPT

Participatory communication practice uses tools such as the community radio system in engaging people at the community level to harmonise resources in driving the development agenda collectively. As such, this research examines the community radio concept in Ghana as a possible conduit for enhancing participation of people at the local level.

3.8.1 Evolution of the community radio concept

Ghana, like other African countries have had individual experiences in developing the community radio broadcasting system. Even though many community members become usually excited and interested in the community radio concept because of the benefits to be derived from it, most of them failed to understand its operations. The emergence of the community radio in Ghana became relevant in the years after the lifting of the ban on private media in 1992 as a result of coming into force of the Fourth Republican Constitution. In 1995, the Ghana Frequency Allocation Board (GFBA) now known as the National Communication Authority (NCA) implemented a deregulation policy in broadcasting paving the way for the establishment of the first community radio station in the Greater Accra region called Radio Ada in 1998. Prior to its establishment, people in Ghana had barely any idea of the operations of community radio but through workshops, Radio Ada introduced and promoted the concept. Shortly after that, two other stations, Radio Progress in the Upper West Region and Radio Peace also in the Greater Accra region were established while others emerged later (Diedong & Naaikuur, 2012).

Notwithstanding the long journey of the community radio concept in Ghana, Diedong & Naaikuur (2012) in an appreciation of its state conducted a study into the positive impact of the system on quality of lives of the people using some political and socio-cultural experiences to

describe the process. The study also questioned the empowering opportunities provided to the people (real agents of change and development) by the community radio stations to fully and effectively participate in the programmes on radio. Six of the ten community radio stations in Ghana as at 2010, were sampled for the study covering the Southern sector (Radio Ada and Radio Peace), Middle sector (Radio Royals and Radio Dormaa Ahenkro) and the Northern sector (Radio Progress and Radio Simli). Each radio station was studied from one socio-cultural and political change event in which the local people were actively involved in terms of programme discussions on the radio stations (Diedong & Naaikuur, 2012).

3.8.2 The impact of Radio Royals in ensuring preservation of natural resources

Using focus groups, interviews and assessment of secondary data from the radio stations, the study focused on the extent of democratic and participatory principles in operating the community radio stations. In the case of Radio Royals, the study examined the people's right in ensuring judicious exploitation of environmental resources, where timber logging in the area assumed an alarming proportion which needed the attention of the local community to preserve the resource. As a result, the community radio through its programmes empowered the local community to know their rights and responsibilities to challenge the chain saw operators in the forest, resulting in the drastic reduction of the activity in the areas of Agubie and Tromiso, all in the Brong-Ahafo Region. This became possible as a result of consistent and persistent programmes broadcast by the Radio Royals in which the local community actively participated through discussions, thereby getting to know and understand the dangers associated with depletion of forest resources because some of the community members themselves were serving as agents for the chain saw operators in return of money. Therefore, to cause a change in the thinking of some of these people, there was the need for intensive education and evidence suggests that community radio provided it (Diedong & Naaikuur, 2012).

This is in line with the view of Pagliani (2007) that environmental journalists owe the people a great responsibility to adopt pragmatic steps in actively engaging communities whose natural resources continuously suffer from depletion as a result of the activities of illegal chainsaw operatives cut down trees for their own selfish interest.

3.8.3 Provision of equitable platform for political campaigns by Radio Royals

Another important case study from Diedong and Naaikuur (2012) was research on the impact of participatory and democratic principles of community radio stations to the lives of the local people towards development centred on the provision of a stage for political party campaigns intended to ensure transparency and responsibility in Ghanaian politics. At the end of the 2008

presidential elections, Ghana's Electoral Commission could not declare the results owing to the fact that there was the need for a re-run in Tain Constituency in the then Brong-Ahafo Region scheduled for early January 2009. In this peculiar and exclusive presidential election, Radio Royals again played a decisive role in the campaign because it was the only radio station in the area at the time and all the political parties rushed to it to buy airtime in order to undertake various campaign-related activities to enable them gain more votes to improve their chances of winning the entire presidential elections.

The two main political parties, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) depended heavily on the services of Radio Royals to conduct their campaigns in the constituency which attracted many high-profile personalities including the former Heads of State, Jerry John Rawlings and John Agyekum Kufuor. Despite the tension and the polarised nature of the election in the constituency at the time, Radio Royals, played a professional pivotal role by ensuring that it resisted all attempts by the political parties to influence the station with money to broadcast political messages to sway voters. The outcome eventually was peaceful even though the NPP (the ruling party at the time) boycotted the polls at the eleventh hour and subsequently lost the election (Diedong & Naaikuur, 2012).

Esuh (2008) praises this bold decision taken by authorities at Radio Royals which marks a distinctive retreat from what is believed to be the "norm" in the African context where the media is seen to be biased towards the opposition parties while favouring the ruling party. White (2008); Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi (2005) are of the view that enhancing participatory democracy with the aid of the media demands increased level of education and greater exposure to the media as well as political socialization.

3.8.4 Community radio as advocate for empowering the marginalized and less privileged

Even though the liberalization of the airwaves in Ghana brought about the setting up of numerous private radio stations serving the interest of businesses, commerce and politics, there is the need for the media to contribute significantly towards the transformation of the entire society by empowering the marginalized in society, giving them voice in the process of development. Radio Progress, operating from the Upper West Regional capita, Wa, introduced a disability programme in 1998 to give voice to the voiceless: the disabled, the marginalized and the blind, empowering them through their associations to advocate for their rights through enactment of laws to promote their well-being. This benevolent service from Radio Progress among other interventions culminated in several blind children being admitted to the Wa School for the Blind without difficulties.

Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) also put in place policies to give 2 % of the District Assemblies Common Fund to disabled people in accordance with provisions of the 1992 Constitution. Disabled associations in Wa Municipality testified to the assertion that Radio Progress contributed immensely to the total improvement in their lives. Through the programme known as "Friday Morning Toaster", other pertinent social problems confronting the family and the society were regularly discussed on radio in their local languages and solutions found to such problems, sometimes through phone-in segments as well as invitation of guests to the studio (Diedong & Naaikuur, 2012).

Melkote and Steeves (2001) accentuate the influence of community radio in the context of social cohesion saying if social and political revolutions occur, it could be as a result of explosive participation of people.

3.8.5 Creating public awareness for fixing some negative cultural practices through community radio

Wireko (2011) began to ask critical questions regarding wisdom of investment of expensive resources towards funeral festivities at the expense of the education of most children in some families. This development assumed an alarming dimension in most Ghanaian communities to an extent where Parliament, the Church and other social organizations were tasked to find lasting solutions to it. Diedong and Naaikuur's (2012) study of the impact of participatory community radio in societal development identified Dormaa FM to have played a focal role in reshaping the opinion and perceptions of the communities within its catchment area towards unnecessary heavy expenditure on funeral ceremonies. In the mist of the intense discussions on the radio station over the issue, the Dormaa District Director of Education also reported the increasingly falling standard of education in schools in the district. Many stakeholders were brought on board to discuss and find sustainable solutions to what had become a societal canker. As a result of this intervention, people's understanding about education became more positive and attracted sanctions from community leaders, the Dormaa Traditional Council, and the Church against those who did not pay attention to education of their children.

3.8.6 Gender issues, development and community radio

From most African contexts, and especially in Ghana, women's role in decision-making processes for development have been largely limited as a result of some cultural impediments honoured over the years as women were restricted to the home. Decision-making regarding the family and to a large extent, the society, is primarily the work of men while the women are confined to the kitchen and denied education. As a result, women have been denied the chance to develop their talents leading to their contribution towards development in the societies in

which they live (Dolphyne, 1991; Kapoor & Shizha, 2010; Kwesiga, 2002). Meanwhile, Fayibi (2002) argues that education is the fulcrum for knowledge acquisition and educated women become better homeworkers as well as productive workers in the economy as they become educated to enable them to fulfil their potential.

Owing to the above critical gap in the socio-cultural heritage of the people recounted by the scholars above, Diedong & Naaikuur's (2012) study investigated the contribution of a community radio in Winneba in the Central Region of Ghana known as Radio Peace in championing girl child education in the Awutu-Afutu-Senya District through radio discussions.

3.8.7 Participatory community radio as medium for promoting peace through conflict management

Awedoba (2010) identifies sources of conflict in the African context, such as struggle over chieftaincy titles, land or boundary disputes, ethnic superiority-related clashes and religious differences. To Enu-Kwesi and Tuffuor (2010), conflict can be inexorable in any society unless emphasis is placed on solving such conflicts harmoniously. Adetula (2006) contends that many such conflicts have caused insecurity and tension while equally contributing to underdevelopment in Africa since there were no amicable means of addressing the problems.

Radio Peace in Winneba helped significantly in managing and controlling community conflicts that could have escalated into more serious situations. For example, in discussing such conflicts on Radio Peace one day, the listeners got to know the intention of a young man who having been exasperated by land-related skirmishes, was planning to bomb a town in the area called Apam. This was revealed when he called to contribute to a radio discussion but was unable to finish the submission as listeners got to know his intention of destroying the town. He was immediately reported to the police when he refused to understand why he was arrested (Diedong & Naaikuur, 2012).

3.8.8 Critical challenges to the operation of community radio in Ghana

The main communication strategy community radio needed to use according to the directives of the World Association of Community Radio (AMARC) is full participation by community members for which the radio station has been established (Diedong & Naaikuur). To Fraiser and Estrada (2001), several general guiding principles have been established as very fundamental to the management of community radio stations ranging from true community ownership to cooperative management and full participation in discussions. Fairchild (2001) is of the view that the management of the radio stations need to assume a democratic and transparent dimension giving room for maximum exercise of power by all stakeholders to permit the widest possible form of public probity and accountability.

Diedong and Naaikuur (2012) recounts several challenges identified from their study in examining the impact of participatory community radio on societal development in Ghana. According to them, management of all the community radio stations were running autocratic tendencies in selecting Board of Directors who managed the affairs of the stations while the community members had little or no knowledge about how management was constituted and dissolved by the supposed founders. Some community members who were conversant with the democratic management practices of community radios expressed their reservations about the development. It was evident that the root problem emerged from the ownership of the stations but in theory and documentations it appeared as community radio creating a gap in practice.

Besides, there was heavy dependence on non-professional journalists (for financial reasons) in constituting the workforce for the stations and this according to Diedong and Naaikuur (2012) could compromise the professionalism element in their deliveries. Additionally, the lack of considerable level of community participation in decision-making coupled with lack of well-designed mechanisms, policies and objectives for evaluation put the democratic participatory tenets of the community radio stations into jeopardy. Hochheimer (2002) discourses that the democratic communication practice in community radio illustrates full and extensive consultation, engagement, support and participation of the broader society served by the radio while they are not limited and known only to be listeners.

3.9 PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION PRACTICE IN THE HEALTH SECTOR IN GHANA

Though some political, administrative and legal structures have been created to enhance citizen involvement and community participation in decision-making across the country, the review and analysis of this chapter points to a lack of participatory communication in development initiatives. Sackey, Clark and Lin (2017) conducted a study in the health sector of Ghana, specifically in the northern part, where they investigated the use of participatory communication versus communication approaches by a United States (US)-based transnational Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), Abt Associates International. The NGO implemented an indoor residual spraying programme to eradicate malaria infection among the people, especially children and pregnant mothers. Results of the study suggest that aid recipients or beneficiaries should be given the opportunity to hold decision-making power aided with the needed relevant information to collaborate with NGOs in order to produce a successful and sustainable programme.

The conclusion above clearly gives an indication that there was a problem with the strategies used in line with the participatory communication practices involved with the indoor residual spraying to eradicate malaria among the people of Northern Ghana. Since the community people were expected to allow officers of the NGO to enter their bedrooms to undertake the spraying activity, the best strategy was to involve the people in every decision-making process leading to the final stage of getting access to their bedrooms for the spraying exercise. However, a better picture was created in the conclusions made after the study, by calling for decision-making power to be vested in the hands of the aid recipients or beneficiaries though there were some positive developments recorded by the NGO in the participatory communication processes.

3.9.1 Key participatory communication elements in the process

The NGO, Abt Associates International, recruited local people as staff who could easily speak the various vernacular of the dialect of the people. This was carefully done to enhance the communication process between the implementers of the residual indoor spraying programme and the community members. Evidence also showed that all the necessary governmental stakeholders or state institutions such as the Ministry of Health, the Ghana Health Service, Ghana Malaria Control Programme and the various District Assemblies were duly consulted. They also used opinion leaders in the various communities to aid the communication process as change agents so the staff could easily get access to the beneficiaries (Sackey, Clark & Lin (2017).

3.9.2 Gaps identified in the communication process

In the research, there was evidence to suggest information flow from the local NGO's Head Office in Washington, which proposed instructions on policy and implementation strategies reflecting top-down management style that overturned the decision-making process on the ground assuming informative design instead of it being consultative. Unfortunately, assent to procedures and processes were not received from the beneficiaries at all levels of the project except that they were involved only at the very last stage, where they needed to allow the staff of the NGO to get access to their rooms for the spraying. Specifically, the community people ended up holding very little decision-making power to decide on preferences since there were no multiple options available for them to choose from. Besides, the use of the chiefs and opinion leaders in the communities was basically to convince the community people to accept the idea since the leaders yield high authority in the community and failure to accept the programme could result in one punishment or the other to them. As a result, consultations were only used to seek their approval for acceptance of the programmes but not to seek their views for preferred

suggestions, guidance and directions on what to do in their own community (Sackey, Clark & Lin (2017).

3.10 GHANA AND ITS RELIANCE ON FOREIGN AID FOR DEVELOPMENT

At the time of Ghana's independence in 1957, the economy was doing well in the sub-Saharan region but in the 1960s growth fell to 0.4 percent and foreign exchange reserves severely depleted (Aryeetey and Fenny, 2017). A severe famine in the late 1970s and early 1980s exacerbated by the expulsion of Ghanaians from Nigeria in 1983 brought the country's economy to its knees (Gockel and Amu, 2003). By the early 1980s, inflation stood at more than 100% and per capita incomes had fallen from US$1,009 in 1960 to US$739 (Aryeetey and Fenny, 2017). Due to declining commodity prices on the world market especially gold and cocoa which were the country's major export earners, Ghana's exports remained low during the period (Hagan and Oduro, 2000). In 1983, inflation ultimately reached a record high of 122.8% in the history of Ghana's economy (Aryeetey and Fenny, 2017). After the 1982 military intervention, inflation was lowered to 40% with very direct actions such as impounding 50 Cedi notes and suspending bank accounts of wealthy people in the country (Gyimah-Boadi and Jefferies, 2000).

Ghana eventually became dependent on developed nations and international donor agencies for support towards development in all sectors including education, health, agriculture, road infrastructure, promotion of democracy among others. It is however observed that these international donors tend to dictate to various governments about the exact way to use the aid, sometimes to the detriment of the preferences of the local people. Sampson (2016, p.139) recalls how the Government of former President Jerry John Rawlings turned to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in 1983 for assistance to revive the ailing economy at the time and "accepted their recommendations in exchange for assistance packages to ease Ghana's economy". By 1990s, many Ghanaians had begun to assess the structural adjustments proposed by the World Bank and other financial institutions across the globe. The assessment was meant to determine the extent to which the changes impacted positively on the welfare of the majority of the people or a few (Sampson, 2016). This situation of reliance on international aid on the part of the Government of Ghana is not different in the case of Non-Governmental Organisations seeking support from international donors thereby tampering with the overall project preferences and involvement of the local people in decision-making.

This condition usually creates a gap between theory and practice of the participatory communication (Basu & Dutta, 2009; Berger-Gonzalez, Stauffacher, Zinsstag, Edwards, & Krutli, 2016; Dickson, 2000; Kingery, Naanyu, Allen, & Patel, 2016; Morris, 2003) recording reports of regular tensions between participatory communication strategies and conservative support delivery in various campaigns. As such, Edward and Hulme (1996), Khieng and Dahles (2015), Nezhina and Ibrayeva (2013) corroborate the assertion of Sackey, Clark and Lin (2017) stating that, due to the financial support usually solicited and received by local NGOs from their international counterparts, the donors tend to dictate the method and use of the funds in the administration of the projects leading to the failure of listening to and addressing the peculiar needs of the local people by not including them in critical decision-making processes.

Edward and Hulme (1996) link this disconnect to the disparity that may exist between the operations of the local NGO and the donors as a result of the philosophies, values and culture of management administration. In this sense Edward & Hulme (1996), Nezhina and Ibrayeva (2013) argue that since most of the donors are often based in Europe and North America, their policy-making operations and planning strategies are based on Western ideological practices including the top-down administration style coupled with the assumption of superior knowledge in scientific knowledge, thereby rejecting the experiences and problem-solving abilities of the local community members. Luecke (2012) notes that since Ghanaian local NGOs lack funding and would have to depend on international donors, the local agencies tend to accept whatever foreign donors demand from them.

Meanwhile Sackey, Clark and Lin (2017) maintain that a participatory communication approach that is geared towards societal change and relief efforts should hand over decision-making to the local community people receiving the benefits from an aid programme. This is in line with Waisbord's (2008) claim that participatory communication requires the beneficiary communities to be the main characters in all the processes leading to societal change other than being reduced to mere inactive receivers of decisions made by foreign specialists.

3.11 CONCLUSION

The chapter on Ghana in the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial era as the context for the study disclosed two main systems of government - the democratically elected governments and military regimes. Even the colonial era was characterized by actions of conquest and dominant decision-making processes in the administration of the country under the British rule leading to the fight for independence. It continued into the various governments (both democratic and military) in the post-independence era where even in the democratically elected regime of the

first President of the country, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the nation was declared, a one-party state. This style of the governance process vis-à-vis the framework for the analysis of this study, the participatory development communication, are not in consonance with each other.

The evaluation of some participatory communication cases in Ghana as well as educational systems and media practice also largely pointed to some basic lapses in the administrative context created for the efficient practice of participatory communication. However, in the final analysis of the evidence from the field, better understanding is expected to be established on how the educational system fared in terms of stakeholder participation in decision-making so far as the three development initiatives are concerned.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.0 INTRODUCTION:

This chapter discusses the methodology employed in carrying out the research. It consists of the epistemology applied, the research paradigm or approach used and data collection techniques. The chapter reflects on ethical issues such as informed consent of respondents, and data management and protection. The chapter outlines the approach to data analysis employed in this research from the transcription stage to coding processes using the thematic content analysis technique for the interview data and the constant comparison analysis technique for focus group data gathered in the project.

4.1 DEFINING METHODOLOGY

According to Whittaker (2012, p. 3), methodology refers to "the totality of how you are going to undertake your research. It includes the research approach that you will use, including your epistemological position and the specific research methods you will choose". In view of this, the researcher aimed to ensure that all aspects of the methodology employed in this research were carefully and critically chosen to meet all the requirements for answering the research questions appropriately and accessibly.

Kaplan (1973, p. 93), views methodology as an avenue "to describe and analyse… methods, throwing light on their limitations and resources, clarifying their suppositions and consequences, relating their potentialities to the twilight zone at the frontiers of knowledge".

According to Denzin (2002), the purposes of a research project determine the type of method and design of research to be used. It is in this spirit that after careful evaluation of all the options available relative to the methodology for this research, the most appropriate approach is to follow qualitative tradition, operationalised through undertaking interviews and focus groups as techniques for data collection. While interviews helped to elicit detailed information from government officials and community leaders, focus group discussions provided the best platform for young community members from different areas to discuss and share ideas on issues of common interest to the realisation of community development through effective communication and participation.

The choice of interview and focus group methods stem out of the fact that the research focuses on the knowledge, values, beliefs, and attitudes of community members who are affected largely by their involvement and participation or otherwise in development programmes and projects through effective communication.

4.2 THE CASE STRATEGY AND JUSTIFICATION FOR ITS USE

This research analysed three main development cases or initiatives in the education sector of Ghana. Payne and Payne (2004, p. 31) define the case study as "a very detailed research enquiry into a single example (of a social process, organization or collectivity) seen as a social unit in its own right and as a holistic entity" while according to Yin (2012) the case study involves an in-depth investigation into a case and the analysis of contextual issues that give meaning to the understanding of the case. Yin (2003) also observes that the use of case study for research is appropriate in situations where there is the need to understand a complex social phenomenon, for example, participation in which questions of "when", "how" and "why" begin to emerge while having at the same time, little or no control over behavioural events. While some researchers categorise case study as a research methodology with a qualitative twist (Creswell, 2003), Yin (2003) argues that it is a research methodology suitable and acceptable for both quantitative and qualitative studies.

The use of the case approach in investigating the phenomenon of participatory communication in the education sector for development in Ghana in this thesis validates the argument of Yin (2003) that, studies emanating from participation in which questions of "when", "how" and "why" are used, require the case study method in examining such social phenomena into detail.

This study involves an in-depth examination into the behavioural issues associated with community people and actors in government over the participation processes in sustainable policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. In order to achieve the objectives, set for this study, the case study is in consonance with the fact that an empirical in-depth inquiry strategy is needed to examine the three chosen initiatives in the education sector in accordance with the participatory communication strategies. The three cases include the Free Senior High School (SHS) Policy, the Community Day SHS Project and Shelter for Education by Tigo (a private telecommunication and mobile company in Ghana) and now incorporated as Airteltigo.

4.3 THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE/EPISTEMOLOGY

An epistemology is a "theory of knowledge" Harding (1987 p.3). Drawing on the work of Crotty (1998), Creswell (2003, p.4) elaborates on the above definition and says an epistemology is "a theory of knowledge embedded in a theoretical perspective."

There are two main epistemological positions in research namely the Positivism and the Interpretivism. Each type is informed greatly by the kind of research being conducted. Researchers who defend the choice of taking the middle position of the two are known as the pragmatists.

Positivism as a position, traces its intellectual background to Auguste Comte and postulates strongly that the traditional scientific process applied in the natural sciences is applicable to the study of society (Giddens, 1993). From the perspective of the positivist, the researcher is always recognised as an objective observer whose main responsibility is to deduce laws that expound relationships between observed phenomena (Giddens, 2006). On the other hand, the logical roots of Interpretivism can be mapped out to Weber's notion of *Verstehen,* the hermeneutic phenomenological tradition and symbolic interactionism - giving deep and resounding understanding of human behaviour (Bryman, 2012).

Davies and Hughes (2014, p. 26) point out that interpretivism "is based on an ontological assumption that there is no objective reality-no singular way of understanding the world". They argue that instead of the objectivity reality, things are seen to be subjective, where people can possess varied experiences and perspectives in giving interpretations of the social world. According to them, one can only understand the social world when the varying experiences and perspectives are well understood and explained.

In view of the above, Davies and Hughes (2014, p. 26) postulate that "it follows, then, that we should adopt qualitative methods so as to understand the rich and complex lives and opinions that we are researching".

It is for this reason that for a qualitative research of this nature, Interpretivism was chosen as the epistemological position since it fits with an attempt to generate evidence in service of its research questions which elicit the perspective of all the categories of people positioned in the participatory communication process leading to development within the project context of education in Ghanaian communities.

4.4 RESEARCH APPROACH: JUSTIFICATION FOR THE CHOICE OF QUALITATIVE TRADITION

As many researchers are of the view that quantitative methodology provides precision, Coolican (2003) sharply refutes it submitting instead that even from a quantitative model, the amount of arithmetic precision of some research can be disputed.

As a result, Creswell (2009) advances that qualitative methodology helps researchers to understand their experiences. He explained further that qualitative methodology puts more emphasis on depth rather than breath and it is not aimed at generalisation. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) argue that in doing qualitative research, it is important to follow procedures to discover the result and this according to them focuses on understanding, which is universal in its approach, and follows a rational and interpretive style.

Idowu (2016, p.182) in the study of organisational culture postulates that "the most significant and crucial issue, however, is that organisational culture, like many social phenomena, is not easily amenable to quantitative rigours." He was of the view that depending on the method used, each one has its merits and demerits, and more importantly, each method used would only be suitable for a specific context.

The qualitative approach was chosen for this research within the context of finding ways to explain the reasons for the inclusion or otherwise of community members in development projects through deployment of communication strategies, in the area of education in Ghanaian communities. As such, it is only the qualitative approach that bears the requisite techniques and tools to uncover attitudes, behaviours and the in-depth viewpoints of all stakeholders in involving people for community development using effective participatory communication. This was achieved primarily during data collection where interviews were used to produce detailed information from government officials and community leaders on the current practices of communication related to development initiatives in the education sector, while focus group discussions provided the best opportunity for young community members from different areas to discuss and share ideas on issues of common interest to the realisation of community development through more creating effective communication and participation strategies.

4.5 RESEARCH TECHNIQUES: EMPLOYING INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP FOR DATA COLLECTION

The research was conducted with the view to unravelling the critical issues surrounding the use of participatory communication in community development using education as the specific project area. In arriving at the data for analysis, two separate techniques were combined; interviews and focus group discussions, due to the nature of the research that demands the views of two distinct groups of participants–the young adults and community leaders/development actors (who are the elderly). While participants in the interview grouping disclosed more depth and sensitive information, those in the focus group were effective in sharing public knowledge freely on what they knew about the subject under discussion as well as providing personal views on it. This combination thus provided a data set with complementary elements within it. Whittaker (2012, p. 51) postulates that "for research topics that require both forms of knowledge, combining both methods can be productive".

Bowling (2002), Robson (2003) and Bryman, (2004) offer some of the advantages and disadvantages of interviews in research. Firstly, semi-structured interviews are good for their flexibility since they allow the interviewer to determine the wording of the questions, to clarify

terms that are not clear, to control the order in which the questions are presented, and to probe for additional and more detailed information where necessary.

Whittaker (2012, p. 37) again argues that "interviews are best used for researches that focus on the knowledge, values, beliefs and attitudes of participants. They are particularly good at helping participants to think through, consider and make explicit things that have previously been implicit."   To Patton (1980), the main purpose of using interviews in research is to find out what exactly is in the mind of the interviewee that are not directly visible to see. This was indeed, very relevant during data collection when government officials responsible for formulation, execution and communication of policies, programmes and projects in the education sector as well as community leaders produced relevant data from the interviews conducted that could not have been derived adequately using questionnaires, for example.

It is often interesting to bring out independent thoughts and interpretations on the importance of issues when conducting interviews, which is not always likely with a structured questionnaire survey. Interviews licence very diverse kinds of data to be collected. In interviews, one can scrutinise participants or interviewees about the explanations for positions taken and different actions. These justifications expose the kind of connotations that individuals give to their actions (Bryman, 2004). In line with this argument, Robson (2002, p. 272) also states that "face to face interviews offer the possibility of modifying one's line of enquiry, following up interesting responses and investigating underlying motives in a way that postal and other self-administered questionnaire cannot."

Despite the above merits in using interviews, Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (2011) advance that it could be used as a chance by respondents or participants in research to simply present their opposition and dissatisfaction about an issue though arguably that in itself is useful evidence. Using the above as a control mechanism, the researcher was very cautious and paid attention to the whole interview process of each interviewee to guide them in making adequate use of the time allotted. Community leaders used the opportunity overwhelmingly to express their sentiments with passion about the way things were being handled in the chosen development projects. This provided a rich picture of the state of communications processes within the chosen initiatives.

Greenfield (2002) is of the view that though the interview type and type of questions may be relevant, it is however important to appreciate the interview as a procedure rather than just a one-off activity. As such, irrespective of the type of interview being used, the process involves a series of linked activities to keep the interviewees on track from start to finish.

Accordingly, Greenfield (2002, p.212) recognizes five stages in the interview process namely "preparations, introductions, the uneven conversation, the ending and after the interview". The uneven conversation stage is meant for the interview process itself where the researcher is expected to listen more than to talk. Greenfield (2002, p.213) points out that "the conventional social rule of you speak, then I speak is supposed to be suspended. The interviewer's role is to listen". Howard and Peters (1990) also agree that the most important thing a researcher should remember to do in an interview is to pay attention and listen to the interviewee. To them, the interview is mainly a way to collect evidence, not a conversational exchange of views. They argue that even though full recording is needed for the interview, it is equally imperative for the researcher to take notes of very important submissions.

To conclude all the stages after the interview, field notes are taken immediately after the interview. Miles and Huberman (1994) state that this stage allows the researcher to gather the summary of the points of the interviews and to check that research questions have been addressed.

4.5.1 Justification for the use of semi-structured interviews

While Whittaker (2012) proposes three main forms of interview as structured, unstructured and semi-structured interviews, Patton (1980) identifies four main types of interview as: informal conversational interview, interview guide approach, and standardised open-ended interview as well as closed quantitative interviews.

For the purposes of this research and to strictly maintain the qualitative format of the study to elicit detailed responses from respondents, the semi-structured interview type was adopted in achieving that goal. It was selected as this research aims to find answers from key knowledgeable informants regarding participation and communication for sustainable development in Ghana, in the education sector. The semi-structured format of the guide also affords the researcher the needed flexibility to assume a constructively interrogative posture where necessary during the interviews to derive the needed responses. The choice of interview method stems out of the fact that the research focuses on the knowledge, values, beliefs, and attitudes of community members who are affected largely by both involvement and participation or otherwise in development programmes and projects through effective communication.

Semi-structured interviews therefore, afforded the avenue for examining the complex issue of the possible reasons why political actors and policy makers may decide to either involve community members in the decision-making process towards the choice of development

programmes and projects for their own areas and how the policy makers eventually expect such development projects and programmes to affect the lives of the people positively.

The interview was an appropriate context for the participants to discuss such sensitive issues in an open way though it was time-consuming in gathering and analysing the data (Whittaker, 2012).

4.5.2 Justification for the use of focus group to complement interviews

Whittaker (2012) defines a focus group as a selected group of people brought together to share their opinions about a topic, usually convened and chaired by a moderator who is determined to create an open and transparent atmosphere for the participants to fully express themselves. Kitzinger (1994) argues that instead of an interview with a group of respondents providing their opinions, focus groups provide a platform for respondents to interact and discuss the issue. Wilkinson (2004) asserts that focus group research is a qualitative data collection method that involves an informal discussion on a topic of interest usually by a small group of people. Krueger and Casey (2002) affirm that qualitative researchers mostly depend on the focus group to derive data from a sizeable number of people simultaneously as the platform is conducive for participants to express their opinions and ideas freely in the discussions. Paul Lazarsfeld and Robert Merton are said to have formalised this method or technique in the 1940s (Madriz, 2000) and it has been used for decades since then by communication researchers (Morgan, 1998).

In recent past, social science researchers have extensively used focus group to collect data (Madriz, 2000) because it has the advantage of obtaining information from numerous participants at the same time thereby saving time and resources (Krueger and Casey, 2000) and as a result, the overall number of people needed for a feasible qualitative study could be achieved (Krueger, 2000). Besides, whereas focus group discussion provides a platform or a setting where the participants can feel free to discuss peculiar issues and provide possible solutions to them (Duggleby, 2005), the discussions are also capable of producing relevant data for the intended research (Morgan, 1998).

Morgan (1997) asserts that, often, focus groups are used as a single data collection technique but can still be combined with other research methods such as surveys or interviews. Whittaker (2012, p. 51) shares the same view arguing that "interviews can be used in conjunction with focus groups where participants may disclose more sensitive information than they would in a group setting. While focus groups are effective in accessing shared public knowledge, interviews are fruitful for more personal, biographical information." In this research, the

combination of interviews and focus groups proved complementary. The focus group discussion provided a relevant sphere for the youth selected at the Ghana Institute of Journalism to express their views on inclusion in decision-making processes related to development in Ghana's education sector.

In using both the interviews and focus groups for data collection, an investigative approach was adopted where focus group discussions were conducted for the youth ahead of the interviews with community leaders (chiefs and opinion leaders) and government authorities. There were two main reasons for using this fact-finding approach. First, to assemble the very pertinent concerns of the youth in probing those in authority and community leaders regarding their participation in education matters. Studies have shown a great disparity for respect between the elderly and the young ones in African societies (Van der Geest, 1998). Second, both approaches provide balance in data gathering in the country and culture where the views of the elderly on critical issues are regarded to be sacred and acceptable for implementation while those of the young are assumed often to lack merit.

According to Sarpong (1974) and Van der Geest (1997, 1998), the Ghanaian culture reveres the old on the notion that they are well-informed due to their intimacy with their forefathers. Van der Geest (1998) again observes that as a result of the total respect given to the elderly in the society, their pieces of advice are also highly upheld and mostly equated to the truth. Williams (1987) and Kasoma (1996) agree with the position of earlier scholars adding that in African Societies, the life-long experiences of old people make them well-informed to become citadel of knowledge and wisdom making their counsels very practical for implementation compared with that of the youth. Beyond the elderly, Williams (1987) and Kasoma (1996) strongly argue that those found in authority are also given special reverence due to the positions they occupy. Since culture does not allow the youth to interrogate the elderly or those in authority for answers on issues pertaining to their communities, this research was used as a mechanism to question the status quo for more answers to explain possible reasons for youth inclusion or otherwise in participatory decision-making during formulation, implementation and evaluation of development initiatives.

Though the main risk in focus group discussion has to do with the inability of most participants to fully participate in the debate as some may feel less confident or less powerful, Whittaker (2012, p. 52) provides a remedy and argues that "recruiting group members from similar backgrounds combined with a skilled moderator can significantly reduce the risk." This solution was adequately utilised and since the participants in the group were all youth and students in the same school, it gave similar level playing field for all members to contribute their views freely without fear and intimidation. Before coming together for this exercise, they also had a

common background in social work in various communities in the past through the students' club on campus known as "Keteke Ghana".

4.5.3 Scope of the research - recruiting and selecting participants using purposive sampling for interviews and focus group

For this research, the scope and extent of the study in terms of tools for recruiting and selecting participants as well as the number of participants to be engaged were carefully evaluated. Whittaker (2012) describes sampling in research as the procedure involved in choosing the participants for study. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), there are no specific rules guiding the choice of sample size in qualitative research, but relatively smaller sample sizes are used for the studies in more depth and detail purposely to understand individuals' own interpretations, views and feelings as well as meanings attached to social occurrences.

In the case of the focus group, Krueger and Casey (2009) argue that 8-12 participants are convenient for market research purposes however, in the case of social research, smaller group sizes are used, often 6-8. Whittaker (2012) agrees with this assertion noting that large groups can be problematic if some participants do not get the opportunity to talk, they may be tempted to talk to people next to them and that can easily create confusion.

To researchers such as Baumgartner, Strong and Hensley (2002), Bernard (1995), Johnson and Christensen (2004), Krueger (1988, 1994, 2000), Langford, Schoenfeld, and Izzo, (2002), Morgan (1997), Onwuegbuzie, Jiao and Bostick (2004) the discussion meeting may last between 1-2 hours and the number of participants appropriate for a well-designed focus group ranges between 6 and 12. They argue that this number is needed in a focus group to provide diversity in information to be obtained. Additionally, Flick (1998); Lincoln and Guba (1985); Morse, (1995); Strauss and Corbin (1990) suggest that the number of times a focus group meets may vary according to the prevailing circumstances. Krueger (1994) and Morgan (1997) have suggested three to six different focus groups as very adequate to reach data saturation. With reference to the two suggestions above, 6 participants were carefully selected for each focus group, creating 5 of such groups for the exercise.

According to Whittaker (2012) the most common approach usually used in qualitative interviewing is non-probability sampling made up of five main strategies: purposive, convenience, theoretical, snowball and quota sampling. Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) maintain that purposive sampling techniques are more appropriate for focus group discussions. To this end, it was appropriate and convenient to use purposive sampling to meet key

characteristics such as ability to have detailed knowledge of the participatory communication and community development concepts by virtue of the role they play in the society.

In describing purposive sampling, Bryman (2012, p. 333) affirms "it is a procedure in which the researchers choose participants whom, in their judgement, are likely to yield useful information". Bryman further argues that reasons such as the participant's level of familiarity, skill or duty should inform the researcher's selection through purposive sampling. This was the exact situation in the case of this research as the participants sampled purposively for the interview were found to be in this category by virtue of the rich knowledge acquired in the field or experience gained through the position occupied in public office, for example as civil servants in charge of education policy-making and communication, as well as the roles played by community leaders in their communities including the youth involved in social work.

Consequently, with the use of the non-probability sampling approach and purposive sampling strategy, 21 participants were selected for interviews. In arriving at this number, seven (7) participants each were recruited to represent 3 categories of stakeholders identified for interviews in the research namely funding actors, traditional leaders and opinion leaders. Besides, 30 participants took part in the focus group discussions. In each focus group, there were 6 participants, while 1 participant each from all focus groups was selected for a subsequent interview based on the responses given during the focus discussions which the researcher needed further attention for probing on individual basis. As a result, 56 participants in total, took part in the research as represented in the table below:

CATEGORIES OF RESPONDENTS OR PARTICIPANTS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS
Funding Actors—Chief Directors/Directors, Public Relations Officers of Ghana Education Service as well as Ministries of Information and Education and Communication officer of Tigo.	7
Chiefs and Traditional leaders of communities	7
Opinion leaders in the communities	7
Young people (students) with interest in communication and have been participating in community development activities and social work in the area of education forming 5 focus groups in all with 6 participants in each group.	30
One (1) shortlisted or selected member of each focus group for exclusive interview.	5

Total number of interviewees and focus group discussants	**56**

Table 4.1: Table representing all the participants in the research.

4.6 JUSTIFICATION FOR THE CHOICE OF THE KEY PARTICIPANTS

All the three main categories of participants chosen for this research were purposely selected to meet specific requirements for producing appropriate data to answer all the research questions and to provide justification for the objectives to be met, hence the use of the purposive sampling technique. Critical reasons for selecting the participants are explained into detail below.

4.6.1 Funding actors/political actors/civil servants

The selection of participants to form this category made up of Political Actors, Chief Directors/Directors, Civil Servants and Public Relations Officers of Ghana Education Service as well as Ministries of Information and Education that are responsible for policy formulation, design of programmes and allocation of projects to communities became necessary because in Ghana, nearly all development projects, policies and programmes in the education sector are approved from the central government through its affiliate institutions. To this end, the inclusion of these people in the research, helped the researcher to understand the extent to which the government actively involved the intended beneficiary communities and other stakeholders in the decision-making process of policy making on regular basis.

In order to realise the objectives of this research and answer the research questions, the researcher decided to conduct the focus group discussions first and used the views, sentiments and suggestions expressed by the young community members as additional follow-up questions during the interviews with political/funding actors and community leaders. Still under this category, a communication officer from the private communication company, Tigo, was also interviewed. All these participants were grouped under funding actors. In total, 7 participants were used for interview under this category.

4.6.2 Chiefs or traditional leaders

This research would not have been complete without the involvement of chiefs or traditional leaders to express their views and concerns on Government's ability or otherwise to involve them and their subjects in communication around development projects. Throughout Ghana, their role is very important because they serve as traditional heads and custodians of their areas. This had been the situation even before the emergence of colonial rule by the British. Currently under the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, chapter 26, made up of eight Articles, is dedicated to the

recognition of the Chieftaincy institution. It is very interesting to note that customarily, before any political actor visits a community in Ghana for any purpose that is of interest to the people, the first person to be visited is the chief of the area to pay homage and disclose the mission of the visit after which the person is allowed to carry out the intended action. Most resources and more importantly, lands for development projects are primarily donated to Government by the traditional leaders. Even though the Constitution prohibits them from taking active part in partisan politics, they play a pivotal role in the development process of their communities hence their active involvement in this research cannot be underestimated. Under this category, 7 participants were also allocated for the interview.

4.6.3 Opinion Leaders

Opinion leaders on the other hand assume a respectable position in most communities across Ghana. Some of them are youth leaders while some are elderly people who are well educated and are mostly concerned about the progress and growth of their communities. In some cases, these opinion leaders are unanimously selected or elected for a term of office or for life with the sole mandate of making sure that they promote the development of their areas especially through cooperation; this they achieve either collectively with their traditional rulers or independently. They are directly responsible for mobilising the youth and community members for self-help projects and other forms of activities that bring about progress to the communities. In this sense, it would have been a substantial omission for this research to exclude opinion leaders who act as developmental liaisons between the people on the one hand and the traditional or government authorities on the other from taking active part in the study to express their views about communication and development projects. Also, under this category, 7 opinion leaders were selected for the interview.

4.6.4 Young people (students) with proven records of participation in community development programmes

The need to include young people (between the ages of 18 and 30) who are students with keen interest in communication and have been participating in community development activities in their areas was clear because it was very essential to assemble the views of the community members from the grassroots. For purposes of this research, 30 students were selected, at least one from each region of Ghana studying at the Ghana Institute of Journalism, the premier Communication University in the country.

More importantly, no student qualified to be a member of the group without a proven record of active participation in development programmes and projects in their individual communities. It was feasible to compose the focus group participants since a student club known as *Keteke*

Ghana was formed in the school more than five years ago with the main aim of reaching out to needy communities across the country to support them with educational materials and voluntary teaching. The club selects one region in Ghana to benefit from this initiative every year (during summer holidays) where the club solicits support from the public to embark on these trips. The choice of young people for the focus group discussion became necessary since the rest of the participants in the interview category were adults and it was imperative to include the views of young people in the research since the youth hold a stake in both the present and the future of the communities.

4.7 DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERVIEW GUIDE AND THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION SCHEDULE

Mason (2018) argues that qualitative interviewing involves the use of investigative and interrogative dynamics by the interviewer to unravel deep thoughts of the participants, therefore interview questions ought to be drafted to assume the analytical and exploratory dimension. Whittaker (2012) describes the interview guide or schedule as the organisation of the intended interview including the possible questions to be asked in an approximately arranged order. He advances that in designing the interview guide, all attempts are made to cover all research questions while promoting a natural flow of dialogue in an open and comfortable manner.

In developing the interview guide for this study, the use of a practice assessor, a post-graduate researcher at the University of Salford, completing a thesis in the qualitative tradition, offered views that were valuable in drafting the questions to meet the above standard. The use of a practice assessor helped to identify questions that were vague, too similar and others that were not directly linked to the research questions. As a result, making the necessary corrections became feasible and a successful guide was developed for the government officials/funding actors separately and another set for community leaders (chiefs or traditional leaders and opinion leaders). This became necessary due to the differences in roles, experiences and knowledge of government officials and the community leaders.

In designing the guide for focus group discussion, care was taken to design the questions to provide participants with the opportunity to compare, contrast and critique each other's issues through the argumentative interactions. This can be instrumental in generating quality and reliable data for the research (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). The focus group guide was developed to accommodate the divergent views and opinions of the participants knowing that participants were recruited from different regions, diverse cultures and orientations. In line with the suggestion of Mason (2018), the focus discussion guide also considered the need for

investigative dynamics and the use of critical skills in moderating. The investigative dynamics were considered to ensure that enough attention was given to the concerns of the youth for such concerns to be addressed with other stakeholders/participants to be engaged in interview.

4.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CONSENT OF PARTICIPANTS

According to Buckingham and Saunders (2004) researchers need to take practical steps to ensure that whatever they intend to do or carry out as part of a study is in line with generally accepted ethical rules, insisting that in ensuring ethical standards the research must be academically or socially defensible. As such, this study did not cause any harm to those that participated in the data collection process. Instead, it guaranteed the principle of informed consent and ensured the confidentiality of participants who wished to remain anonymous. However, some participants preferred to be identified by their first names only in the research, hence indicated as such on their consent forms. As a result, in the findings or the results chapter, some participants were identified with only their first names while the rest remained anonymous strictly according to their wishes.

All participants who agreed to participate in the research were given information in form of documents such as introduction letter in support of the researcher from the University of Salford, participant information sheets, and the consent forms detailing any information pertaining to the research, their voluntary decision to participate or otherwise all according to the ethical guidelines of the Social Research Association (2003). Enough time was also given to the respondents to read through the documents carefully and to take their independent decisions to participate while ensuring that the ages of all participants were 18 or above.

4.9 PILOTING THE DATA COLLECTION

In a pilot study, the researcher's aim is to find out if the interview guides and the focus group guides prepared are devoid of any irrelevant information, clear and easy for understanding by the intended participants to solicit the needed responses on the field (Wadsworth, 1997). After the interviews and focus group guides alongside other ethics guideline documents received successful approval, piloting was conducted among post-graduate research peers to identify, modify and correct any other identifiable errors before usage on the field. After arriving in Ghana, a number of separate pilot interviews and focus group discussions were also conducted with students and staff at the Ghana Institute of Journalism and the Ministry of Education respectively, ahead of the main data collection exercise. The pilot study afforded the researcher

the singular opportunity to amend and review some critical areas identified in the guide that could be problematic and not capable to solicit the needed responses in meeting the requirements and results for the research questions and objectives. For example, through this process, vague questions and questions that were not directly related to the context of the youth and other stakeholders in participatory communication were addressed ahead of the main data collection exercise.

4.10 TRANSCRIBING THE AUDIO RECORDING OF INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUP

According to Boyatzis (1998), transcribing audio recordings of interviews is a herculean, time-consuming task, full of time-consuming. One hour of interview can take 2-6 hours to complete the transcription culminating into 20-40 pages. As evident from this research, it is worth noting that due to the qualitative style of this study, a huge amount of data, particularly secondary data was expected. Hence, due to the large amount of data generated through both interviews and the focus groups in which a total of 56 participants were involved, nearly four hundred pages of data were gathered with the entire transcription taking about five months for this exercise. Nonetheless, it was a very fruitful exercise, thereby helping to reveal the important comments and concerns of the people in the participatory communication process regarding education sector and other related sectors in Ghana.

4.11 SCRUTINIZING FOCUS GROUP DATA FOR CODING

Whilst literature exists on how to design focus groups for a qualitative research (Krueger, 2000) and some health-related researchers (Carey, 1995; Carey and Smith, 1994; Duggleby, 2005; Kidd and Parshall, 2000; Morrison-Beedy, Cote-Arsenault, and Feinstein, 2001; Stevens, 1996; Wilkinson, 1998) there is much less on focus group data analysis itself and what type of analysis will be beneficial with large focus group data (Wilson, 2004). Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007, 2008) provide some relevant information on the qualitative focus group data analysis and this was complemented by Onwuegbuzie, Dickson, Leech & Zoran (2009, p. 5) insisting that "to date no framework has been provided that delineates the types of qualitative analysis techniques that focus group researchers have at their disposal" describing the situation as a surprising one. Nonetheless, Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007, 2008) provide techniques such as constant comparison analysis, classical content analysis, keywords-in-context and discourse analysis for use. Therefore, in analysing the focus group data for this research, the constant comparison analysis technique was selected and used. This technique, developed by qualitative researchers

(Glaser, 1978; 1992, Glaser and Strauss, 1967, Strauss, 1987) and also known as the method of constant comparison has three main strategies in the analysis process. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), the first stage is known as open coding where the data are grouped into small units where the researcher assigns specific codes to each unit. The second stage, known as axial coding, involves grouping of individual codes into categories to be translated into developed themes in the third and final stage known as selective coding.

Charmaz (2000) argues that constant comparison analysis technique is also efficient for analysing multiple focus group data in a single research project where it creates opportunity to determine the point at which saturation in data collection has been reached.

Table 4.2 under (scrutinizing data from interviews for coding) shows an example of the coding framework designed for the initial analysis process (portions of the focus group data). According to Clarke & Braun (2013) the constant comparison analysis technique as used for focus group data also uses similar approach as that of the thematic content analysis as used for interview data and this becomes possible because of flexibility involved where new categories of codes are produced to finally culminate into themes.

4.12 SCRUTINIZING DATA FROM INTERVIEWS FOR CODING

All the semi-structured interviews conducted face-to-face ranged from 1 hour to 1 hour 50 minutes. On average, each interview for the total of 26 participants engaged in the interview category of the data collection exercise lasted for about 1 hour 20 minutes. After spending time to transcribe all the interviews verbatim, thematic content analysis was used to analyse the data generated. According to Clarke & Braun (2013), this involves identifying themes from the interview scripts and trying to validate, confirm and qualify them by searching through the data repeatedly to find more themes and categories. As an illustration, a sample coding framework emanating from the responses of one of the traditional leaders has been included under this section below. This particular interviewee, though a traditional leader currently in his community, worked in the education sector of Ghana beginning as a teacher. After more than twenty years of dedicated service in the Ghana Education Service, he eventually retired as a Deputy Director and headmaster of one of the Government assisted Senior High Schools in the country. As such, he was able to blend his rich experiences in both community leadership and education service delivery and also merged it appropriately with the participatory communication for development strategies. The table below shows an example of the coding framework designed for the initial analysis process (portions of the interview) obtained from a participant who fell within the traditional leader (chief) category.

RAW INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT	INITIAL CODES DEVELOPED
INTERVIEWER: How will you rate the level of participation in our development process in education Is it low, average or high?	
INTERVIEWEE: <u>Very low</u>, it is covered in ignorance. So, <u>somebody must one day stand up and tell us that we are not doing the right thing</u> and what we are doing will lead us nowhere.	• Very low participation level • Need for change
INTERVIEWER: So, in this particular case, what innovative measures do you think could be adopted in order to improve on this particular limited participatory communication system we have at hand now?	
INTERVIEWEE: <u>Education should be decentralized at the regional, assembly and municipal levels so that the people will own education</u>. Education the people will have will be the input of their thought, actions and inputs and <u>when they feel involved, they will take care of the classrooms, the textbooks, and even the teachers and have access to them. Currently, the people only access them on open days, during PTAs when they invite them</u>. Because the only calamity that can befall you is to leave your training to an unqualified hand. <u>So, if you are not lucky and your child falls into untrained and unexperienced hand you can imagine.</u>	• Education decentralization as remedy • Active participation • Policy/project care • Current deficient decentralization • Wrong education effects
INTERVIEWER: Do you see any problem in this area as well with regards to CDSHS and infrastructure development and were you involved in the project as chiefs?	
INTERVIEWEE: <u>Some of these projects which are cited are politically motivated</u>, <u>the people were not consulted</u>. It is the MP that wanted to satisfy his aim by bringing Secondary School to my hometown, even if he feels that his hometown is not the most suitable place but because he also wanted to leave some legacy he	• Politically motivated projects • Poor planning

will force for that school to be sited in his hometown whereas another location might be more suitable. There was a policy that the walking distance of any pupil in our country to an educational facility should not be more than a certain distance which I cannot remember at the moment. But there are well built schools and enrolment in those schools are very low, there are some schools that have modern equipment, the science laboratory yet there are no students to use them. Conversely there are schools which were overflowing, the classrooms, dormitory and dining hall were not adequate and too small, yet they left them to go and build the school at places where there is a very little need. The question is, did the people ask for it? Because they only saw a beautiful building sited and it is a secondary school. For example, last time I was passing there and this E-classroom block that was built by the former government under the Community Day SHS. Please, you go and look at the environment yourself. They could have used that money to expand existing structures. Someone will say that at the beginning of every school you start with a small number, I accept that but you can also look at the existing structures and find out if there is the need for the existing structures to be expanded. So, what it means is that before you do such a thing, you should contact the people and let them tell you what they need. There is a classroom block here built by the Council of Ewes Association in North America. Before starting anything, they asked us and said they wanted to give us a project, which project do you need?	• Non-consultation effects • Non-participation by grassroots • Top-down decisions • Inefficient CDSHS • Need for broader engagements • Misplaced priorities
They asked us to contribute about 10% of the cost of the project and that came in form of labour that is, the community should be engaged. Because of those guidelines the community know that those classroom blocks here, they also own it. Because they came here to carry sand (Vui Community in the Keta Municipality). There was a time somebody was writing on the wall and a parent stopped the person because he was spoiling the face of the wall. So, they know the classroom block is for them and they know it enhances education in the area so they should take care of it.	• Community owning projects • Project maintenance.

INTERVIEWER: Is there any room for improvement?	
INTERVIEWEE: So, much room for improvement. Because if you are a farmer and your harvest is not good, as you check your results you check your seed or the technology you are also using. So, once we identify that things are not working well then there is room for improvement. There is the need for change.	• Room for improvement • Need for change

Table 4.2: An example of initial coding for data collected from a traditional leader.

The initial coding of all the interviews and the focus group discussions (since the constant comparison analysis also uses similar approach as that of the thematic content analysis) were reviewed and new categories of codes produced (through combination of multiple codes) to finally culminate into themes (Clarke & Braun (2013). For instance, initial codes from the transcript above such as "community owning projects", "policy/project care" and "project maintenance" were reviewed and combined to produce a final category of code known as "policy or project sustainability". In another instance, "non-participatory policy making", "transfer of grassroots participation", "non-awareness of education problems" and "dead or passive participation" were also combined to produce "limited participatory processes".

As much as researchers make use of suppleness and ingenuity in constructing study reports (Yin, 2003) such results are usually analysed and presented in themes (Simons, 2009; Yin, 2003). As a result, all the key empirical findings from the field in this study were presented thematically in the results chapter. These thematic groupings were done manually. James & Busher (2006) advise that to preserve the anonymity of those who wish to remain so, such interviewees must be assigned a pseudonym and that was adhered to strictly.

4.13 DATA MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION
The researcher was very careful in taking steps aimed at ensuring that none of the data gathered from the field was lost or vulnerable to access by any unauthorised person. The data was stored on the researcher's computer at home and personal laptop computer supported by a password known to him only with additional backups created elsewhere. Agreements were reached with all the participants for personal information or data collected to be destroyed securely when it no longer assumes research significance.

4.14 CONCLUSION

This chapter underscored the approach used in carrying out this research - the qualitative tradition with the case study strategy to evaluate the three development cases selected from the education sector while using interviews and focus group as its techniques for data collection.

The choice of interview and focus group as data collection techniques emphasised the focus of the research on the knowledge, values, beliefs, and attitudes of community members who are affected largely by their involvement and participation or otherwise in communication activities surrounding the development cases selected for assessment. On data analysis, constant comparison analysis was used for focus group data while thematic content analysis was used for interviews data.

CHAPTER FIVE:

NOTES FROM THE FIELD AND DESCRIPTION OF THE THREE DEVELOPMENT CASES IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

5.0 INTRODUCTION:

This chapter highlights the preparations put in place ahead of the field trip to Ghana, the practical field experience while in Ghana for data collection as well as some challenges faced in the data gathering exercise. This chapter also presents descriptions of the three development cases in the education sector chosen for analysis according to the participatory communication framework for analysis whose elements were set out in chapter 2.

5.1 PREPARATIONS FOR THE MAIN DATA COLLECTION EXERCISE

Having chosen the context of the study to be Ghana, the necessary arrangements were made to obtain official leave from the university to travel back home. While preparing to leave the United Kingdom, efforts were made to contact the various institutions and potential individuals to participate in the study to discuss the date and time for meeting each participant for either the interviews or the focus groups. Consequently, a schedule was drawn to clearly spell out the intended structure of the data collection exercise in Ghana. While in the late preparations for departure from the UK, agreement to participate was received from some participants and the appointment schedules confirmed in line with the travel itinerary. The University through the office of the School of Arts and Media, wrote an official introduction letter for the researcher to facilitate the process of getting access to the various institutions and individuals in Ghana.

5.2 EVENTS FROM THE FIELD: MEETING OF RESPONDENTS FOR THE INTERVIEW AND THE FOCUS GROUP

Upon arrival in Ghana, time was spent in contacting other potential participants for the study. As a result, through the use of the introduction letter, research information sheets, invitation letters and consent forms, the research participants were officially recruited in line with ethical guidelines governing the conduct of the research. The first point of call was the Ghana Institute of Journalism where the focus group discussions were to be held. This institution happened to be where the researcher obtained his first degree, won a contested election for the position of President of the Students Union and after graduation, emerged the Overall Best Student. The letter of introduction from the University of Salford as well as personal permission letter were received and approved by the Registrar of the institution.

This approval provided the researcher, official access to the use of other facilities such as the library and internet services. Besides, an Assistant Registrar was also assigned to help the researcher in the official recruitment of participants and preparation of offices and lecture halls for the focus group discussions. The focus group targeted Level 400 students offering Development Communication and were members of "Keteke Ghana", a campus association committed to social community work through education related benevolence. The assistance given by the President of the Club in organising most of the focus group discussions in collaboration with the researcher was enormous. Research information sheets, invitation letters and consent forms, were again made available for each student participant to read through and acquaint themselves with the general and specific requirements of the research.

Consent forms were only signed by the participants after reading through all the relevant documents and readiness for participation in the study expressed willingly without any form of intimidation or manipulation. Interestingly, more students than initially expected or required expressed interest in the research as many students volunteered to invite their colleagues. According to Lindlof and Taylor (2011), the researcher or moderator should be able to create good rapport with the participants and at the same time making sure that it is not confused with his neutrality in the discussion. This is to enable the discussants bring out their independent views on the topic under discussion. Before the commencement of each group discussion, as an "ice breaker", an informal chat about campus life was undertaken with the participants while a comprehensive introduction was also provided by the researcher who acted as the moderator. Due to the fact that the researcher was an alumnus of the institution and held various leadership positions as well during his studies time on campus, it appeared it was easier for the participants to assume a comfortable posture and that also translated in the easy flow of discussions in all the five focus groups. This also afforded the participants the chance to introduce themselves without any hindrance.

Meeting with participants for the interviews on the other hand was conducted mostly on individual basis since most of them were worked in a wide range of establishments. All the participants earlier earmarked and recruited from institutions like the Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service, Tigo Ghana (now Airtel Tigo) as well as traditional leaders and opinion leaders were available for the interview sessions. Interview sessions conducted at the Ministry of Education where the researcher worked as the Public Relations Officer (PRO) prior to his further studies, were very revealing even though initial meeting with the civil service officers were very challenging due to their busy work schedules. The presentation of the official letter to seek permission from the Director, Administration and subsequent approval were done

smoothly and the individual interactions in the interview sessions were very encouraging, producing interesting revelations to be produced and discussed in the results and analysis chapters of this thesis. In both the interviews and the focus group discussions, some of the participants expressed their desire on the consent forms not to remain anonymous. The researcher however assured those who wished to remain anonymous of the use of pseudonyms to identify their comments in the results and data analysis segments of the thesis. The following table shows a sample of the focus group questions or guide used in the discussions with the youth.

RESEARCH QUESTION	SAMPLE FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS
What kinds of participatory communication structures and processes exist for community development initiatives in Ghanaian education sector?	- As a youth, how would you define or describe development that is beneficial to you? - As students in a communication university, do you think communication can play a critical role in the development process? - What kind of communication do you propose? - What actually attracted you to community development especially in the area of education? - Do you see a conscious effort by authorities to include you in all development related programmes and activities in your communities? - If yes, does this happen from start to finish of the development programmes? - If no, what do you think are the causes for this?
Can a reformed model of development communication be created to allow the deployment of innovative measures of participatory communication in the implementation of development programmes in the Ghanaian education sector?	- What specific roles do you play in the development process in your communities? - How do you see the implementation of the Free SHS policy and Community Day SHS projects in relation to participatory communication? - Do you think you should necessarily be consulted in all education-related development issues before they are formulated, implemented and evaluated? - If yes, why do you think so? If no, why?

	- If authorities or other stakeholders involve you in the projects or policies, do you feel fully satisfied with the current state of affairs with particular reference to the level of involvement in decision-making and implementation of the programmes and projects? - If no, let us discuss some innovative measures that could be put in place to improve the use of participatory communication for effective community development, especially in education.
What challenges is government likely to face in the deployment of full participatory communication approaches in community development projects in the education sector and how might these be overcome?	- Do you envisage some challenges in the implementation of full participatory communication to the development agenda of Ghana? - Do you see any particular challenges as a youth and how do you think it could be solved to produce the desired results? - What issues have you found on the implementation of CDSHS and Free SHS policy?

Table 5.1 Focus group guide relating to the research questions

5.3 CONDUCTING AND RECORDING THE INTERVIEW

The five stages of conducting and recording interview sessions set out by Greenfield (2002, p.212) below were fully followed throughout the interview process. Classifying the interview process into stages and addressing each stage with specific assignments made the entire exercise concise to complete. In a concise illustration, according to Greenfield (2002), the following stages present a systematic development of events.

Stage one: Preparations: To Greenfield (2002) the researcher at this stage should take the opportunity to organise all materials and tools ready for the interview process after successful recruitment of the respondents. Hence, ahead of the interview process, the researcher was able to gather more information on the respondents and their organisations to be visited. Enough time was also spent to book appointments for the interviews with all the respondents, especially government officials during office hours. Appointment for some chiefs and opinion leaders

were scheduled for venues and days convenient to them beyond official working days in the offices of the Regional and National House of Chiefs. The interview guides and tape recorders were equally checked to make sure that everything was ready to be used ahead of the interview dates. In the case of some traditional leaders, the interview sessions were eventually planned and executed in their palaces because of the busy schedules reported to the researcher by the chiefs' spokespersons.

Stage two: Introductions: Greenfield also asserts that the researcher introduces himself or herself to the respondent and also remind the respondent of the rational for the study. The respondent is also expected to introduce himself or herself in return. This is where the interviewer and the interviewee could agree on the format of the interview ahead of the interview. The researcher is also expected to re-assure the respondent of strict adherence to ethical guidelines for purposes of voice recording. Therefore, in this interview exercise, the researcher and the respondents exchanged pleasantries and introductions after which the researcher reminded the respondents of the need to record the interview for accurate transcribing purposes. The researcher, however assured them of strict adherence to ethical guidelines governing social research. The researcher and the participants also agreed on the format of the interview ahead of the interview. All participants were given the consent forms to read and to indicate acceptance by signing the documents and handed over to the researcher. They were also assured of personal confidentiality regarding personal data provided such as email addresses and mobile phone numbers.

Stage three: the uneven conversation: This is the stage for the interview process itself where the researcher is expected to listen more than to talk. Greenfield (2002, p.213) points out that "the conventional social rule of you speak, then I speak is supposed to be suspended. The interviewer's role is to listen". Howard and Peters (1990) also agree that the most important thing a researcher should remember to do in an interview is to pay attention and listen to the interviewee. To them, the interview is mainly a way to collect evidence, not conversational exchange of views. They also argue that though full recording is needed for the interview, it is equally imperative for the researcher to take notes of very important submissions.

As a result, during the conduct of the interview for the government actors, opinion leaders and the traditional leaders, the researcher exercised a high sense of circumspection in the way questions were posed to reduce likelihood of unnecessary argumentation. The emphasis was centred on asking probing questions that enabled the interviewees to make responses regarding potential gaps in participatory communication in education policymaking in Ghana that were not ordinarily expected to be revealed especially by government actors responsible for

policymaking. In the course of the interviews, notes on important matters or issues raised by the respondents were taken for easy referencing. Interestingly, the respondents that agreed to remain identifiable in the thesis were very happy to present their positions arguing that their comments represented exactly what was happening in reality.

Stage four: the ending: Greenfield (2002) further reveals that this stage provides a medium for the researcher to request for additional information from the respondent provided that is available. It also includes a moment of appreciation to the respondent for accepting to take part in the research. Accordingly, the researcher in this study provided the opportunity to all the respondents to submit additional relevant information they deemed fit and helpful towards the enrichment of the data. Most respondents equally expressed their readiness to assist the researcher in any additional capacity related to the research after the initial interview exercise.

Stage five: after the interview: At this point according to Greenfield, field notes are essentially taken immediately after the interview. Miles and Huberman (1994) state that this stage allows the researcher to gather the summary of the points of the interviews and to check that research questions have been answered. In line with this, the researcher created assessment sessions after each interview to check and juxtapose the responses with the research questions and the objectives to determine whether the answers were adequately provided to meet the requirements of the research questions. The outcome indeed, provided quality results.

5.4 ISSUES ENCOUNTERED DURING INTERVIEW

Even though an interview guide was prepared in a semi-structured interviews format, Whittaker (2012) argues that the researcher is not obliged to go strictly according to it during the interview process depending on the circumstances which may even lead to change of order of questions as a result of the respondent's style of answering the questions. There was a similar experience during the data collection exercise as the format afforded the researcher enough elasticity to make changes to explore the respondents' feedbacks in detail. For example, in the interviews with some chiefs or traditional leaders and opinion leaders, most of them were prepared to speak about what they described as critical concerns that they consistently raised on different platforms previously but produced no encouraging remedies from the government authorities. As such, the motivation received by the respondents to participate in this research afforded them the singular opportunity to speak with no fear bearing in mind that the results of the study are capable of changing the status quo for the better.

At one of the interview sessions at Teshie, a suburb of Accra in the Greater Accra Region, various traditional leaders in the Teshie Traditional Council, assembled themselves in the palace of the Paramount Chief to receive briefing from a similar research conducted in the area of health the previous year by a medical student of which they were ready to receive the findings and how impactful it would be on their community. As my interview was introduced by the respondent (one of their own colleague traditional leaders), they were happy to receive the researcher as they expressed their initial comments and hoped for significant changes in the participatory education decision-making especially in the area of curriculum development.

Since three different groups of people were interviewed, specific interview guides were prepared for each group of people to derive the needed responses in answering the critical research questions posed in the study. The table below shows an example of one of the semi-structured interview guides used purposely for the government actors.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	SAMPLE INTERVIEW GUIDE
What kinds of participatory communication structures and processes exist for community development initiatives in Ghanaian education sector?	• What does development mean to you? • Do you apply communication at all times to projects and programmes for the realisation of development? • Do you believe that problems and solutions to development issues in the education sector must be identified and dealt with by both the provider and the beneficiaries? • How are policies, programmes and projects in education in communities arrived at? • Which categories of people formulate policies in the education sector for implementation and evaluation? • Do chiefs, opinion leaders and community members take part in the decision-making processes to determine the kind of development project or programme they really need in their areas before conclusions are made?

	• How do stakeholders at the community level take part in the decision-making process for programmes and projects from start to finish? • Is there any platform or sphere usually created to engage only the community members or the youth in the project formulation stage to deliberate on the entire idea before arriving at conclusion? • Is there any element of participatory communication in community development activities in the area of education, especially on the implementation of Free SHS policy, the Community Day SHS and Shelter for Education? • What is the level (quantification) of participation of stakeholders (especially the youth) at the community level in development programmes?
Can a reformed model of development communication be created to allow the deployment of innovative measures of participatory communication in the implementation of development programmes in the Ghanaian education sector?	• How do you decide on site or location of projects in a traditional area or district for example? • What sometimes causes conflicts between and among communities over the siting of projects especially construction of schools? • Are there opportunities to meet community members to sensitize them on the programme or project regularly during the implementation? • What development communication techniques do you use in engaging the people at the community level? • How do you approach and engage the youth (or other stakeholders) in the development process? • Do they play any special role in the development process at the decision-making and evaluation levels? • Are community members satisfied with the language being used at all times during interactions?

	· Do beneficiaries of these programmes, polices and projects at all times express their satisfaction or otherwise over the form, style of initiating them? · If they sometimes express dissatisfaction, what are some of the issues that surround their displeasure? · Are beneficiaries able to own the projects after its completion to ensure the appropriate maintenance culture? · Do you think there is still more room for improvement in the area of participation of all stakeholders in communication to effect community development?
What challenges is government likely to face in the deployment of full participatory communication approaches in community development projects in the education sector and how might these be overcome?	· Do you find any stakeholder in the community development process that always feels intimidated by others? · If yes how is that likely to be solved? · Have you observed the use of full participatory communication strategies or techniques in implementing development initiatives in the education sector? · If not, what challenges are likely to be encountered by government and other stakeholders in implementing full participatory communication techniques towards sustainable community development? · Are there possible remedies to these challenges? · What are your suggestions for full participatory communication measures to be put in place for the cooperative and mutual benefit of all stakeholders?

Table 5.2: Sample interview guide relating to the research questions

5.5 CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED IN THE FIELD

While in the field, efforts aimed at scheduling appointment meetings with the respondents, especially the interviewees became a challenging task as the busy schedules of the interviewees (especially traditional leaders and government actors/civil servants) could not offer guaranteed opportunity for the meetings. In the case of most traditional leaders, the interviews were conducted in their palaces instead of the initial appointments in their offices at the Regional House of Chiefs.

Interviews for some government actors were eventually conducted late in the evening in their offices usually after normal office hours. Several attempts to get an interview appointment with the Communication Officer at the World Bank, Ghana Office to understand the participatory communication strategies employed in managing the World Bank component of the Community Day SHS proved futile. However, relevant comments were received from the Policy Officer in charge of infrastructure development at the Ministry of Education during his interview on the management of the entire project. Supplementary information was also received from a former communications officer of the SEIP project even in the absence of the World Bank officer. On the whole, the researcher achieved a high sense of satisfaction in all activities before, during and after the study.

5.6 THE THREE DEVELOPMENT CASES IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR
5.6.1 (A.) Community Day Senior High School Project (CDSHS)

As part of efforts to improve access and equity in secondary education in underserved districts in Ghana, the Government of National Democratic Congress (NDC) committed to construct 200 Community Day Senior High Schools, a project that began in 2014.

For the attainment of universal access to secondary education in Ghana, the NDC initiated the move as one of their political campaign promises leading to the 2012 General Elections to construct two hundred (200) new Community Day Senior High Schools (CDSHS) throughout Ghana with emphasis on districts where there were no secondary schools (NDC Manifesto, 2012).

Out of the total of 200 CDSHS, the government after winning the elections secured 156 million-dollar counterpart funding from the World Bank to implement a component of the infrastructure development plan known as the Secondary Education Improvement Project (SEIP) which sought to provide support through two components: to increase access with equity and quality in senior high schools and also to provide management, research, and monitoring and evaluation for a period of five years. As part of the SEIP implementation, 23 new Community Day SHS

were to be constructed and 50 existing low performing SHS also supported with additional classroom blocks, rehabilitation of sanitary facilities, construction of libraries and science laboratories and 10,000 scholarships for needy students, especially girls. The remaining 177 new schools under the CDSHS were earmarked for funding by the Government of Ghana.

The implementation of the CDSHS project commenced in 2014 with the completion of at least 50 new community day SHS across the country out of 123 projects in total that were under construction prior to the exit of the NDC Government from office in 2016. At a ceremony to commission one of the facilities at Abodoman Community Day Senior High School at Agona Abodom in the Central Region, the former President, in expectation of returning to power declared that "in my next term of office, by the grace of God, we will complete all the 200 new senior high schools that I promised. As I said, currently, 123 are under construction, and that means that the Central Region will receive additional secondary schools among the remaining over seventy schools that we shall build," (Myjoyonline com, 2017). This did not materialise.

5.6.2 (B). The Free Senior High School (SHS) Policy

In line with the 1992 Constitution's mandate to make secondary education progressively free, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) Government under the leadership of President John Mahama, introduced the progressively free education policy which was launched and implemented in 2015 and 2016. The fund related to it aimed to absorb the cost of only some items including Examination fees, Entertainment fees, Library fees, Students' Representative Council (SRC), Sports, Culture, Science development, Science and Mathematics Quiz, ICT and Co-curricular fees for some 320,488 day students in public SHSs. At the same time, the main opposition party, the New Patriotic Party (NPP), was championing its campaign for the introduction of full free SHS covering all items in terms of fees.

After the 2016 General Elections, the NDC was defeated by the NPP making it possible for the new government to implement the flagship policy in fulfilment of the manifesto promise. At the launch of the policy in Accra in 2017, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo declared that "the cost of providing free secondary school education will be cheaper than the cost of the alternative of an uneducated and unskilled workforce that has the capacity to retard our development. Leadership is about choices. I have chosen to invest in the future of our youth and of our country" (Graphic.com.gh, 2017). The policy means that currently no fees are paid for tuition, with admission, library fees, science centre fees, computer laboratory fees, textbooks fee, examination fees and utility fees also totally scrapped. Students in boarding institutions are

also benefiting from free boarding and meals while day students are offered a meal at school for free. Free SHS also covers agricultural, vocational and technical institutions at the high school level. In effect, all approved fees certified by the GES Council were absorbed except Parent Teacher Association dues which still remains the responsibility of parents and guardians. To begin with, the policy covered students that entered the SHS in the 2017/2018 academic year but was designed automatically to capture the students in their yearly progression while making room for new entrants as well. Only Ghanaian students who are successful in their Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and subsequently placed in a publicly funded second cycle institution through the Computerised School Selection and Placement System (CSSPS) qualify to benefit from the policy for the three years of secondary education. A new department was subsequently created at the Ministry of Education solely dedicated to the coordination and management of the policy.

5.6.3 Challenges reported in the media about the Free SHS Policy

Soon after the launch of the policy, some challenges started to emerge. Typical of them was lack of secure funding for its implementation, infrastructure challenges and associated sustainability problems. Many stakeholders became worried about the continuous challenges faced by the students benefiting from the policy, especially at the beginning of the programme. In a resolution passed at the end of the 51st Annual Delegates Congress of the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS), the association commended the initiative, but warned of possible failure if the challenges were not addressed immediately. The outgoing Press and Information Secretary of NUGS, Kenneth Sarpong, said:

> As a student body, we are always excited at any initiative that will lessen the financial burden on students and by extension parents, so we are increasingly getting worried as we hear of widespread infrastructural and funding challenges which are impacting negatively on teaching and learning in our high schools (Citinewsroom.com, 2017).

A former Trade Minister, Dr. Ekwow Spio-Garbrah, believes the difficulties that have blemished the NPP government's implementation of the free secondary education policy were due to lack of planning. In an attempt to address the financial challenges bedevilling the policy, the country's Minister for Finance, Ofori Atta, delivering the 2018 budget and financial policy in Parliament, announced the setting up of a Voluntary Education Fund to receive donations from the public to support education in Ghana (Peacefmonline.com, 2018). But a former Deputy Minister of Education and NDC Member of Parliament for the North Tongu Constituency, Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa, described the government's budgetary allocation for the

implementation of the Free SHS as dolefully insufficient to support the programme. According to him:

> No country runs public education on just voluntary funds. What if the fund is not considered attractive and you don't really get as much as you are expecting? We can't leave the destiny of our children's quality education to just a voluntary fund where we don't really know the projections. Meanwhile, there's an 800 million-cedi gap as we speak. You've only allocated 1.2 billion, but you need two billion cedis, at least to sustain free SHS for the 2018 fiscal year (Citinewsroom.com, 2017).

As part of efforts to find a lasting solution to the problem, the former President (who introduced the progressively free SHS policy ahead of his defeat in the 2016 General Elections), John Mahama, also joined the discussion arguing for a broader national consultation on sustainable funding avenues, insisting it was not too late to call the conference even though the programme had already been rolled out for implementation. He noted "we need a broader discussion on how to fund the free SHS. Just the first year of implementation and we are seeing the challenges. By the time it gets to the second and third years then these problems are going to be multiplied by three" (Peacefmonline.com 2017).

5.6.4 (C). Shelter for Education Project

Sackey, Clark and Lin (2017) argue that even though the Government of Ghana is answerable to the people in the provision of infrastructure development projects to enhance their standard of living across the country, it has been difficult for the government alone to deliver on this mandate hence, the need for other non-governmental institutions to come to the aid of the state.

The Shelter for Education Project was a private infrastructure development project initiated in 2015 at the basic school level and implemented across the country by a telecommunication and mobile company popularly known as Tigo. The project formed part of the company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CRS) to either construct selected new educational facilities for school children or rehabilitate the already existing ones that were in dilapidated forms.

Tigo under its CSR project, Shelter for Education, went to the aid of thousands of students who hitherto were sitting under trees to study and in most cases these students were subjected to severe weather conditions resulting in poor learning outcomes. As a result, the company built 4 new classroom blocks and refurbished 2 dilapidated classroom buildings in 6 different selected communities. Each building consisted of a 6-unit classroom block and expected to go a long way to better the lives of the vulnerable children. It was also expected that some students who dropped out of school would be motivated to go back to school thereby improving their educational background (TigoGhana, 2017).

At a ceremony in Nana Yaw Obeng, a farming community in the Eastern Region, to commission the first completed new classroom building to the chief and people of the community in 2015, the Chief Executive of the Tigo Ghana, Roshi Motman, expressed the company's interest in the welfare of the people adding that the project was meant to empower the young ones in the area through education. According to her, building a better Ghana starts with the education of the youth through access to quality basic education since education has always been the key to successful future of any nation. Facilities attached to the six-unit classroom block included headmaster's office, staff common room and a toilet facility. Besides, school uniforms, sandals, books and other teaching and learning materials were also provided. At this ceremony, further details of the remaining projects and the venues of the projects in the country were revealed. Such communities included Sekyere-Dumasi MA School in Ejura and St. Joseph Primary School all in the Ashanti Region, Tupaa Basic School in the Ga-South Municipality of the Greater Accra Region, Dimabi Nursery and Primary School in Tolon Kumbumgu of the Northern Region as well as Banda Ahenkro MA School in the Ahenkro of the Brong-Ahafo Region (Biztechafrica.com, 2017).

5.6.5 Justification for the selection of the three cases

In selecting the three cases in the education sector for study, various conditions or factors such as the party-political affiliation, topical nature of the policy or projects in public domain as well as relevance of the projects to the development effort of the country were considered. To assume even distribution of the cases from the perspective of the two main political parties in Ghana, the researcher identified the Free SHS as an NPP manifesto promise for the 2014 and 2016 General Elections while the Community Day SHS was also a manifesto promise for the NDC in the 2016 General Elections. The two cases became topical at one point in the public discussions in the media in Ghana especially before, during and after the campaign seasons of the two elections.

Meanwhile, the two cases also had relevance to the development effort of the country because the projects were aimed at improving the quality and access in education at the secondary level in Ghana to produce better qualified candidates or students for the country's tertiary institutions thereby contributing to the development of the human resource capacity of the nation. Each case from a political party was assessed independently in consonance with their use of participatory communication strategies in driving the policy or project when their governments were in office. The third case, Shelter for Education, was an infrastructural project initiated by a non-governmental institution aimed at improving access and quality in some basic schools in

the country. The third project was selected since it exemplified privately driven development projects to examine the extent to which Tigo Ghana implemented participatory communication strategies taking into account the interests and preferences of the beneficiaries as well as decision-making processes involving the stakeholders during the stages of formulation, implementation and evaluation of the project.

5.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter on preparations undertaken ahead of the data collection exercise in this work is relevant since it paved the way for the achievement of the evidence gathered for the research. Full descriptions of the three development cases in the education sector to be scrutinized against participatory communication principles also presents a better context for this research. This chapter finally closes with the profile of the individual development cases while introducing the next chapter of the thesis to the evidence gathered from the field using focus group discussions and interviews.

CHAPTER 6:

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS/FINDINGS ON PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION IN GHANA

6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results from the field on participatory communication. These were presented according to themes developed from the raw data using coding. The results when analysed in the next chapter through the application of the chosen framework for analysis will address the research questions set out for investigation. The chapter begins with the presentation of results directly aligned to the three development initiatives selected from the education sector. The focus is on the nature of communications strategies in evidence in the planning, execution and evaluation of each project.

6.1 REVISITING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS IN CONFORMITY WITH THE RESULTS.

Below are the research questions and objectives of the study:

1. What kinds of participatory communication structures and processes exist for community development initiatives in Ghanaian education sector?

2. Can a reformed model of development communication be created to allow the deployment of innovative measures of participatory communication in the implementation of development programmes in the Ghanaian education sector?

3. What challenges is government likely to face in the deployment of full participatory communication approaches in community development projects in the education sector and how might these be overcome?

6.2 PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS ACCORDING TO THE THREE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES.

Even though the research touched on the general context of participatory communication usage in the development process affecting other sectors, three main development cases in the education sector of Ghana were chosen for study: the Community Day Senior High School Project (CDSHS), the Free Senior High School (SHS) Policy and the Shelter for Education Project. Two of the development cases were carefully chosen from different governments; Community Day Senior High School Project implemented by the National Democratic Congress Government and the Free Senior High School Policy implemented by the New Patriotic Party Government. This was cautiously done to understand the use of participatory communication strategies (if any) by the two main political parties that tend to exchange power during elections since the emergence of the 1992 Republican Constitution. The Shelter for Education Project on the other hand was implemented by a private mobile communications company, Tigo, now amalgamated with Airtel (another mobile communications company) and known as AirtelTigo. This is to provide an independent understanding and assessment of the

use of communication strategies by a private organisation alongside those implemented the government under various regimes.

6.3 PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY DAY SHS

Various issues emerged from the implementation of this project according to the submissions from participants (the youth, opinion leaders, chiefs/traditional leaders and funding actors) in the research through interviews and focus group discussions. As explained in the methodology chapter, some participants preferred to be identified by their first names and indicated as such on their consent forms while others chose to remain anonymous and codes were developed to identify them. All their preferences were upheld and protected by the researcher. Reacting to a question in focus group 1 on whether the government of the NDC carried out enough engagement with the beneficiary communities before the implementation of the CDSHS did, a youth who preferred to be known in this research as Abigail noted:

> In my view I don't think they were consulted considering the current problems we are facing. Because if they had consulted the people, they would have known that wasn't what the people needed at that time. Also, most of these particular Community Day SHSs were built at places that were far from homes or communities…that particular project is a failure because it is not benefiting the people it meant to benefit (Abigail, FGD1, 11/2017).

Her assertion was supported by another participant, Youth 3, in focus group 2 saying: "I live around Kwabenya and a Community Day SHS was built there which we didn't know that was what they were working on". Another participant, Youth 5 in the same focus group 2 argued that "if they had consulted us on the Community Day SHS project, we would have suggested a full boarding senior high school and not community day senior high schools".

With Ghana's population having been described as a youthful one according to the Population and Housing Census (2010), the research also sought to find out the extent to which the youth of the country who are considered the future leaders, are involved in the development process through full participation in the decision-making processes, especially in the education sector. This was one of the main reasons for engaging the youth in the research, especially in the focus group discussions. In focus group 1, a discussant known in this research as Kennedy observed:

> The youth are not being involved. Looking at where I live (Sowutuom) for instance, I was told there is a land that has been apportioned for the community day senior high school. But looking at the situation, there is no basic school in that area. If they had consulted the youth, they would have gotten to know that what the community needs at that moment is a basic

> school. So, I think they don't involve the youth in decision-making with regards to education and all aspects of socio-economic life (Kennedy, FGD1, 11/2017).

The above participant's important observation, asserting that the non-involvement of the youth in appropriate and holistic decision-making is widespread across all aspects of the social-economic life, gave a hint and the need to explore the relevance of the general views of the participants regarding all sectors of Ghana's economy as captured later in this chapter. Related to this, Youth 3 in focus group 5, rather saw a problem with the youth themselves. She argued that:

> The Ghanaian youth are very unresponsive. Where I live at Kasoa in the Central Region, we know the road is bad so as a communication student, I took it upon myself and spoke to the assembly member of the area… I went house to house and door to door speaking to the people on what we can do but they were very unresponsive. (Youth 3, FGD5, 11/2017).

In alluding to the observation of the colleague above, another participant (Youth 4) in the group expressed optimism in the youthful exuberance of her colleagues, thereby calling for action to address pertinent issues confronting their communities. She said: "Because we have strength… I think if we start speaking up and coming together, authorities will give us what we need". Other participants in the discussion group 5 concluded that to make the decision-making process very transparent and motivating, they must be allowed to participate in the communication and project execution processes from formulation to evaluation.

An Opinion leader and former Director of Public Relations at the Ministry of Education (known in this research as Opinion Leader 4), through an interview with the researcher on the typical nature of engagement with beneficiaries of development initiatives in the education sector, lamented about the negative impact of party politics on the education sector and said "our biggest problem in the education sector is that we do a lot of politics, we do things to satisfy only a section of the Ghanaian public".

Reacting to a question on why policy makers were unable to involve most of the beneficiary communities of the CDSHS right from the beginning of the project, the Head of Infrastructure Development at the Ministry of Education, known in this study as Funding Actor 3, disagreed insisting they did their best to involve a number of stakeholders. He explained more:

> Let me use this Community Day SHS as an example, the chiefs were at the forefront of choosing of the sites for the E-blocks. So, whenever a site is proposed, we meet as a whole whereby all stakeholders within the community are present, the chiefs, the DCEs, the opinion leaders, the district director of education, the district planning officer, survey officer

are all present. We will have a consensus and decide which location to site
the school (FA3, Interview, 12/2017).

When he was interrogated further regarding claims of the youth and opinion leaders regarding their involvement only at the implementation stage leaving out formulation and evaluation stages, as well as evidence in the media about some conflicts and delays that erupted during the implementation of the projects in some areas (with one which typically caused a disruption in the commissioning programme of one of the schools as the President of the Republic was scheduled to attend), he responded:

Due to bureaucracy, we try as much as possible to cut some of these things
because when you don't avoid some of these bureaucracies, it brings about
delay and fluctuations. (FA3, Interview, 12/2017).

In response to why some chiefs (traditional custodians of their areas) had varied reservations about the way things were done regarding the CDSHS projects, he said "because of party politics, the interests and decisions of MPs and MMDCEs over the implementation of the projects in some areas surpassed whatever the chiefs said." This clearly corroborates the argument of Edwards (2001); Khalid, Mushtag, Muhammad & Naveed (2016) in the literature that individual interest of political leaders lead to domination in policy-making processes making it top-down instead of introducing broader participatory communication and engagement approaches in finding sustainable solutions to problems confronting developing nations. Referring to the trend in the argument towards low level of participatory communication in implementing development initiatives, a participant in focus group 2 (Youth 5) argued for legal and policy directions towards effective engagement and participation of beneficiaries in development programmes. She suggested:

I think it has to do with policy and the way we practice our democracy…
If Ghana can come up with policies and laws that involve us in decision-
making that will be fine. So, the MMDCEs are not just appointed but we
decide who they are and how they are paid (Youth 5, FGD2, 11/2017).

The issue of lack or very little preparedness in taking steps to implement policies and projects using participatory communication strategies was acknowledged by Opinion Leader 4 and former PRO of the Ministry of Education, who himself at a point in time while in office was in charge of the Community Day SHS. He remarked:

An example is the CDSHS; some of the schools have been situated in areas
where others are not happy about … So, if the communities right from the
very onset were involved in identifying the area where the school is to be

sited, I don't think this problem would have arisen (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017).

Some of the problems relating to the CDSHS were attributed to various actions of political party narrow-minded interests. This claim of political party interests was raised by Opinion Leader 4 while referring to the way the Community Day SHSs were sited claimed:

> …we do things just to please people. Like you know, some of the schools might have been built for political reasons…There is the need for us to look at Ghana in general so that whatever we do is for Mother Ghana and not for any government (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017).

6.4 PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FREE SHS POLICY

All the categories of participants engaged in the research – government authorities (funding actors), the youth, opinion leaders and traditional rulers or chiefs, presented their positions on the implementation of the Free SHS policy being implemented at the second-cycle level in Ghana's education system. Youth 2 commenting on it in focus group 4 said "looking at the free SHS policy…they didn't engage us, and I don't think they engaged us as youth in Ghana to know our views.". The same youth further noted that "it is going to affect the future generation. I think the government is not doing well when it comes to engaging the youth on policies pertaining to our educational system".

Even though Youth 4 in focus group 4 holds the general view of his colleagues that governments perform poorly when it comes to the use of complete implementation of participatory communication in handling development initiatives, he was also of the view that most Ghanaians look for every opportunity to criticize whatever the government is doing and most at times they are not done in a constructive way. He referred to the Free S.H.S policy and said some people failed to recognise the good aspect of it and rather focused on their narrow-minded interests. He said:

> But because of our selfish interest and all that, we try to criticize things instead of providing solutions… we would never concentrate on the gap, but we would rather end up criticizing the creation rather than providing solutions (Youth 4, FGD4, 11/2017).

On the account of chiefs and traditional leaders, regarding their involvement and participatory decision-making processes regarding the formulation, implementation and evaluation of development projects, programmes and policies, a chief from the Ga State known in this research as Chief 4 responded:

> I will say it is low. Let's take for example the Free SHS, I don't think the problem is that serious here because the facilities are not here but elsewhere country-wide, you find out that the implementation wasn't well managed…The intervention was not well planned. (Chief 4, Interview, 12/2017).

Despite a number of issues expressed by the participants in this research regarding the implementation of the Free SHS policy by Government as having ignored largely the views, active participation and direct involvement in decision-making processes by the grassroots and other stakeholders in the education sector, one participant (Youth 4) taking part in the discussion in focus group 1 disagreed. According to him, his view on the disagreement with his colleagues was based on an interview he listened to on an Accra based radio station where a political actor in the NPP claimed they conducted a research ahead of the formulation and implementation of the policy. He said:

> I remember when Citi FM was interviewing the campaign manager for NPP, he said they had to do research on this free education. They talked to people about why they were not sending their kids to school and they said there was no money. They suggested that if government should pay the fees of their wards would they take them to school? Most of them responded yes and that made them see that this free education thing would help. (Youth 4, FGD1, 11/2017).

Regardless of his position on the issue, he admitted there could be an element of selfish interest on the part of the political party, hence their decision to implement a policy that could fetch votes for them during election, nevertheless, the respondent maintained that an attempt to conduct research in the topic could reveal more. He concluded:

> They might have done it because of vote but you could realize they did some research to know what the people want, and they decided to inculcate them into their policy so that they campaigned with it. (Youth 4, FGD1-11/2017).

On the part of development actors, a policy officer from the Ministry of Education known in this research as Funding Actor 4, has a different view to the communication and engagement process that preceded the implementation of the Free SHS Policy. He however acknowledged that the Ministry could not engage the intended beneficiaries, the students. He explained further:

> There was stakeholder engagement with regards to the free SHS except that the engagement was done with heads of SHS, school accountants; I think three people at the school level who are critical staff in our public SHS and we engaged with district and regional directors of education. The minister held a press conference in Accra and spoke about free SHS, but it was also a bit late, the students themselves were not engaged… (FA4, Interview, 12/2017).

6.5 RESEARCH FINDINGS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SHELTER FOR EDUCATION PROJECT.

The Shelter for Education project chosen for analysis in terms of stakeholder participation before, during and after the implementation were undertaken in 6 selected communities across different administrative regions. Even though this is a private sector investment by the then Tigo and now incorporated as AirtelTigo, examination of their stakeholder engagement processes and participatory decision-making activities during formulation, implementation and evaluation stages were compared with that of the Government of Ghana and the World Bank initiated one (Secondary Education Improvement Project) embedded in the Community Day SHS.

Commenting on the communication strategy deployed in the execution of the project, Corporate Affairs Manager of Tigo known in this research as Funding Actor 6, said:

> …GES came on board and then we went to the community and the chiefs also came on board. So, for instance, some of the schools where they had the old infrastructure, we pulled down the old to build the new one for them. The community also provided a land there that you can build the school on for them so we brought all the stakeholders on board especially the community people, we brought the teachers, the district director of education, the chiefs and opinion leaders on board (FA6, Interview, 12/2017).

The contributions of the youth in the overall success of the initiative also form a crucial issue in the broad-based stakeholder participation and decision-making processes. When asked whether the youth of the communities were involved in the project in any way at all, Funding Actor 6 replied:

> In some of the communities the youth helped the contractors; they were employed by the contractors, so the contractor didn't employ someone from Accra to the community to go and work. On the day of the launch when we were handing over the school, they came to help us and it was a marvelous scene because they were excited (FA6, Interview, 12/2017).

The researcher further enquired to understand the strategies employed in the selection of the projects for implementation. Responses from Funding Actor 6 suggested that the communities themselves requested for the specific projects to be undertaken thereby meeting the requirement of the inclusivity in the decision-making at the formulation stage. He further explained how the process works:

> We receive letters and proposals from the communities, some from chiefs, and some from opinion leaders that they needed help. It may be school it may be health facility or a library…If we are in a position to help, we call

them and they come for a meeting here and then we ask for further information and once we have the information we put together the strategy and then we call for another meeting on how the execution will be and they are also part of the execution as well (FA6, Interview, 12/2017).

Commenting on how the monitoring and evaluation steps were taken to assess the entire projects, one thing was prominent; the inclusion of the Ghana Education Service (GES), and commissioning of an independent body from the organization to undertake a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation so as to get all the areas of the projects covered. He expounded further:

> …on monitoring for example, our Shelter for education was done by the GES themselves, but we also commissioned an independent body to do the assessment. If we compare the current state in terms of attendance and then the evaluation a year after we have done the project, the attendance was very high. The parents of children stopped them from going to farms to go to school, enrolment has increased, and teachers who were refusing postings to the communities are now willing (FA6, Interview, 12/2017).

The researcher questioned the reason behind the things they did in helping the beneficiary communities and what they ultimately expected from these projects. In his response, Funding Actor 6 gave the reason as "impact" on the communities taking a centre stage in the entire process. According to him, securing impact can account for the high interaction level among all stakeholders from start to finish of the projects. He explained more:

> The level of interaction is very high…they have access to our phone number, sometimes they will call and say they want to pay us a visit and then they will come. This year when the minister of communication was appointed, she paid a visit to us and we invited some of the schools, the children and the headmasters to come and share their story and they came. So, in terms of level of engagement, very high, we don't hide anything from them (FA6, Interview, 12/2017).

Responding to some of the participatory communication strategies adopted by Tigo now merged as AirtelTigo in the implementation of the Shelter for Education project, Funding Actor 4, a policy officer with the Ministry of Education was of the view that due to the enormous task of the initiatives the Government of Ghana undertakes on yearly basis, the challenges will be expected to be far more than that of the then Tigo. He said:

> …Tigo will probably do in a year, one or two schools at most I guess so they can decide to do one in Tamale and one in Ho and go there and talk to everyone involved but with the government, we have over 32,000 schools across the country and Tigo will not even go to the remote part that is why it is difficult to assess (FA4, Interview, 12/2017).

He explained further his analysis in comparing successful broad-based stakeholder engagements by the organization with those undertaken by the Government of Ghana through the Ministry of Education:

> Secondly, these are businesses and the incentive they have to engage every stakeholder is huge. They can't wait, they try to promote their brand so they talk to everyone and if they put in one dollar, they want to generate 100 million dollars in return and all that so for them it is huge to do that. (FA4, Interview, 12/2017).

Despite the concerns of the policy officer from the Ministry of Education, the assertions of the officer from the then Tigo were in tune with the practices of the participatory communication strategies that have the tendency of encouraging high participation in decision-making and engagement. Funding Actor 6 stressed that to implement a comprehensive communication strategy, stakeholder participation must be a key determinant. He noted that in the absence of this, there could be repercussions. He said:

> It is the stakeholders' involvement that is very key in every project that you deal with in a community. One, to let them understand and make an input, if you make them part of it you will be successful but if you isolate them and do your own thing and tell them that I have done this thing for you, then I think you will have a bit of backlash. Even before you get into the community, you must know the needs of the community (FA6, Interview, 12/2017).

Funding Actor 6 insisted that communication strategies apply to all development actors irrespective of where they may be operating from. He cited two things as unavoidable considerations in the process – the needs of the beneficiaries and their active involvement in each stage of the process:

> You must first do your research to understand the needs of the people and once you understand the needs of the people and you come up with the initiative, make sure you involve them, then you will be able to avoid the challenges. Some companies in Ghana have had a backlash because what they have provided did not meet the needs of the people, even government. So, two key things, the needs of the people and then involve them at every stage (FA6, Interview, 12/2017).

6.6 KEY ISSUES EMANATING FROM THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS ON PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION PRACTICE IN GHANA.

Several issues (grouped into themes) emerged after the final coding using the thematic content analysis technique for the interview data and the constant comparison analysis technique for

focus group data. These themes are associated with their corresponding views or results from the participants in the practice of participatory communication in Ghana.

6.6.1 Views on development

Participants in the research gave varied opinions about how they viewed development. As some described it as a step towards change, the final goal is to effect the change in a certain direction; others referred to it as a gradual or incremental improvement - qualitative or quantitative in the lives of people in line with social objectives. However, they all asserted that development brings about change and improvement in the lives of the people. For example, Youth 4 in focus group 2 simply described development as "change" while a policy officer with the Ministry of Education referred to development as the "improvement in the living standards, access to education and social services and improvement in literacy".

Youth 3, in an interview with the researcher was of the view that "development does not affect just an entity but affects everybody that resides in a particular community or society". Youth 5 in focus group 3 asserted that "for development to take place, there has to be some form of information sharing and this can only happen through communication". Youth 2, in focus group 2, sees development as "a gradual and incremental change in the life of a person or group of people and it is usually born out of a creative initiative that you take in an attempt to solve a problem".

Youth 4 in focus group 4 identified development as a medium of positive transformation affecting both the individual and the society. He noted that "at the level of the individual, it has to do with increased creativity, skill, discipline and maximization of potential in the society". Opinion Leader 4 described the impact of development in the lives of the people, especially when it gives them the opportunity to freely participate in programmes that are common to their survival. He explained that:

> Development aims at bringing a lot of changes in communities; to improve the quality of the community people to participate fully in whatever that goes on in their areas…people look at development as a way of enhancing their image, as a community when there is development, people feel very happy that at least something is being done to enhance their image as members of a community (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017).

6.6.2. Current forms of communication practice in Ghana

One of the aims of this research (and with specific reference to research question 1) is to identify the current state of development communication practice in Ghana, exemplified in selected

education sector projects. In finding out the possibility of identifying any form of participatory communication practice, several submissions were made by respondents to the effect that there exists some form. However, respondents described it as very low and poorly coordinated communicative process. Youth 3 in focus group 5, argued that "participation in the Ghanaian setting I think is really low and poor". When questioned about the reason for the assessment, she explained further saying, "because few years ago the former government of the NPP tried to implement the four years agenda for SHS and the implementation was made without adequately consulting the people". Youth 2 from focus group 3 who was later gave an interview in the research said:

> In Ghana, I see some level of participatory communication being used in terms of the education sector of our country. I see it at the macro or national level, and this is very evident in national policy fair that has been instituted. Deliberations are made on the various sectors of the economy and also some government policies that are put out…but it is mostly at the macro level and not at the micro level for those at the grassroots to participate. (Youth 2, Interview, 11/2017).

Reacting to the comments and assessments given by the youth in their focus group discussions regarding the current state of the participatory communication practice in Ghana describing it as poor, an Opinion Leader in this research known as Opinion Leader 1(OP1) agreed largely with the opinions of the youth, adding that the decision-making process is too concentrated at the top while the implementation takes place at the grassroots level. He explained:

> Yes, I agree with them that it is quite poor at the moment and it is a fair comment they have made because this is based on something they can see for themselves and observe practically and that is what it is in our country. Deliberations are mostly done at the top, but the policies rather affect those who are down and with this I mean the grassroot or the common man (OP1, Interview, 12/2017).

Opinion Leader 1 is, therefore of the view that if the country is really serious about the integration of the participatory communication in the development models of the nation, more work needs to be done in that regard. When asked if he would be surprised when the views expressed largely by the youth and most opinion leaders regarding what they described as the poor state of participatory communication in decision-making processes could easily be overruled by government officials or funding actors responsible for policy and project implementation, he answered in the negative. He noted:

> They [government officials] would always like to take the defensive posture but against the backdrop of what is happening, we really feel the impact of this lack of participatory communication. They are at the top and will get just sycophantic comments and believe that they are doing their best but

actually the situation on the ground is that people are at sea over what the government is doing (OP1, Interview, 12/2017).

He further observed, "I will not be surprised if they try to justify themselves but it remains true about what is happening on the ground, it is very scanty and poor and more needs to be done about it", he said.

All categories of participants in the research, especially the youth, opinion leaders and chiefs or traditional leaders argued that the current form of communication being practiced is very low and poorly managed with limitation to only one stage of the process - the implementation stage thereby leaving behind the formulation and the evaluation stages. They argued that even at the implementation stage, most development actors, especially government, embark on such engagements because they needed to try to engage the mass media and other channels to create awareness. Opinion Leader 5 and Assistant Headmaster of one of the Community Day Senior High Schools (CDSHS) described such engagements at the implementation stage as "mere formalities" and also questioned the suitability of the same development actors in producing feedback and serving as evaluation officers at the end of the implementation stage. He remarked:

> It is a mere formality. It is a formality of creating awareness and if you are talking about the stakeholders not knowing anything or not being part of the evaluation, I will tell you they don't know anything about the feedback. Who gives the feedback, who participated? What are the criteria for feedback? We need to watch that because evaluation goes with feedback (OPL 5, Interview, 12/2017).

Even though the participants engaged in this study agreed in principle that there is an element of participatory communication in the way development initiatives are initiated and implemented in the Ghanaian context while describing it as poorly managed, Opinion Leader 2 interviewed was determined to describe what effective participatory communication practice meant to them and what they always desired to have happened instead. He said:

> Making participation more interesting and convenient for the people especially at the grassroots level would mean that you would have to get down to their very communities to speak to them and get them involved and in everything possible to make sure that they are in talks with you right from the very beginning of the project to the very last stage (OPL 2, Interview, 12/17).

The participants, especially the Opinion Leaders interviewed lamented over the inability of development actors in engaging the change agents, hence suggested greater use of opinion leaders and chiefs as a convenient mechanism for reaching out to the communities and beneficiaries of development programmes. Opinion Leader 4 interviewed also gave his reason:

> If it is an opinion leader or a chief who is giving that information, it will increase the level of participation and the people will be under the influence of the chief and so participation is definitely going to work and they are going to get themselves involved and when people are involved in decision-making process, they feel relevant throughout the process (OPL 4, Interview, 12/17).

Describing the approach being used for finding solutions to the development issues in the country across all sectors, a traditional leader known in this research as Chief 4 held that: "our development management processes have been increasingly top-down approach but I recommend the bottom-up, top-down approach so that they will meet at the centre where the activity is". In encouraging the development actors to take further steps in reaching out to the beneficiaries in communities for active engagements and consultations for consensus decision-making, Youth 5 in focus group 5 also suggested additional avenues for helping the people in the rural areas to feel part of the participation and development processes. She said:

> In the villages, we have the "gong-gong" (metallic objects for making announcements) beaters who can go round and give information and we have community radios where the journalists over there speak the local dialects and communicate to the people in the local languages on the radio stations. Sometimes too, people could meet in a public sphere, just gather and talk to them…or use songs, cultural activities, drumming and even during festivals (Youth 5, FGD5, 11/2017).

In assessing the degree of participation in current communication practices in the development projects of the education sector, the Opinion Leader 5 and Assistant Headmaster at one of the newly completed Community Day SHS in the Central Region described it as " very minimal" as only few people are involved in the process. He said:

> I think this research is in the right direction because participatory communication policymaking in our level is very minimal…only few people are involved in this. The stakeholders concerned are not involved in the formulation of policies so when the policies are out it seems strange so that has been making it difficult for implementation, performance and output. (OPL 5, Interview, 12/2017).

He further rated the participatory level as low saying the inability of the appropriate stakeholders in the decision-making processes retards the "efficacy" of the policies designed for implementation with the outcome always positioned for questioning:

> It will be very low. It is at the low level in the sense that you make policy for people to obey and follow because policy is a guideline so when the majority of the people are not involved in the stage where the policy is being made, the effect and the efficacy of that particular policy cannot be realized. (OPL 5, Interview, 12/2017).

Despite the very low rating and the poor management practices with the use of participatory communication in implementing development initiatives as reported by the youth, opinion leaders and the chiefs, one participant from the category of funding actors actually rated the level of participation in current processes as "high" yet added that more work needs to be done. When he was asked to explain the reason for the high rating and if the high rating meant an end to problems confronting its current state, his response appeared contradictory. He expounded further:

> There are problems, if I say it is high, with regards to a certain standard, it's before and after. As I said it is continuum, something that has started and is moving up. Not everybody will buy the idea so at the end, it will get to be the highest if there is any categorization of that nature (FA1, Interview, 12/2017).

This response from the PRO of the Ministry of Education did not go down well with some opinion leaders, especially Opinion Leader 5 and Assistant Headmaster of a CDSHS. He was of the view that in an attempt by the PRO to defend the defenceless, he ended up contradicting himself. He illustrated his argument in the following explanation saying:

> How can it be at the high level and yet there is room for improvement? If participation is at the high-level which room of improvement are we talking about again? (OPL 5, Interview, 12/2017).

A civil servant and policy officer at the Ministry of Education known in this research as Funding Actor 4, however admitted that they do not use broad engagement through "individual level of consultation". He gave reasons for the current practice where a group of people from various backgrounds representing bigger constituencies of stakeholders are usually selected to form a committee of experts to design solutions to a development problem describing it as "elitist" approach. He said:

> It is not just practical to engage everyone you have within education institutional representation and so if I take teachers, I can talk to the leadership of the teachers' union. I cannot talk to the over 200,000 teachers we have in the education system and it is not just practical to talk to each of them in every part of the country…I don't remember us doing that individual level of consultation (FA 4, Interview, 12/2017).

However, the reasons given by the policy officer at the Ministry of Education was rejected as not valid enough to necessitate the current practice of what the civil servant described as an "elitist" approach in formulating policies at the Ministry. Responding to this, Opinion Leader 5 and Assistant Headmaster described the policies coming from the Ministry as "hanging" ones as they are detached from the beneficiaries from the formulation stage. He asked those at the

helm of affairs to make adequate use of planning as a remedy for the challenges enumerated. He said:

> I vehemently disagree with those excuses all because if we are talking about time consuming and high numbers then we are not planning well. Anybody who fails to plan, fails to succeed so, if we plan well time should not be our problem. I call all the policies formulated by the Ministry of Education as hanging policies... They are hanging policies because the stakeholders are not privy to what is going on (OPL 5, Interview, 12/2017).

The policy officer at the Ministry of Education also did not agree with the youth that beneficiaries of development policies, programmes and projects are excluded from the evaluation stage. He explained his reason for the assessment given saying both the implementation and the evaluation stages are participatory:

> With regards to implementation and evaluation, they are participatory. We have governance institutions that we build within the system so we have the school management committees because we want the communities to own the basic schools by seeing the school as theirs; they support the teachers and demand them to do their work. Also, we have the Parent Teacher Association (FA 4, Interview, 12, 2017).

According to Opinion Leader 5, political party politics and misplaced priorities have greatly contributed to the current situation for poor stakeholder decision-making processes in the education sector and more specifically at the Ministry of Education where policies are formulated for the onward implementation by the agencies under it. He noted:

> I think resources shouldn't be our problem. Political interference might be selfish interest. Government may think if I broaden the base of participation there wouldn't be a lee way for me to have what I want. They are playing with education (OPL 5, Interview, 12/2017).

In giving their impressions about the current state of participatory decision-making processes in implementing development initiatives in the education sector, most chiefs complained about the current state of affairs noting that they are not involved in the formulation stages of policy and project design but are made to get involved during the implementation stage. In providing an assessment of the current situation to the researcher, a Chief in Osu in Accra, the capital city of Ghana known in this research as Chief 1 said:

> I can say that we are partially involved because with education like this, it is the government that brings the policy then we too have to get ourselves involved when it gets to a certain place of the development process and give our suggestion that this is what we want you to do. In Osu like this, we have the schools and the traditional council has come in to tell the teachers how to handle the students… (Chief 1, Interview, 12/2017).

When Chief 1 was further asked about their reactions and concerns, during the implementation stage, he said: "Yes, when we see that the implementation they are having is not good, we talk about it and we also add our voice to it". As to whether they are involved in the evaluation stages of the policies and projects or not, he responded:

> As I said, it is in the hands of the government and they do it and impose it on us but if they impose on us and there is anything we can say that this isn't good for us we do it or at times we keep mute…it is not appropriate to do that. Immediately you plan to do something you have to involve the chiefs and from the chiefs we also communicate to the community (Chief 1, Interview, 12/2017).

6.6.3 Stages in policy implementation where participatory communication sets in

Despite the general perspectives shared among the participants pointing to the notion that government does not engage in effective participatory communication with the intended beneficiaries of initiatives, there was the need to identify the stages in the initiative in question (formulation, implementation and evaluation) where beneficiaries are engaged consciously in one way or the other and the nature of involvement.

Members of focus group 1 believed that participation by all stakeholders, especially those at the grassroots in decision-making processes, should be exercised in all stages of the policy or project chain - formulation, implementation and evaluation stages. Youth 2 observed:

> It should start from the formulation stage then goes to the implementation and then the evaluation. So when you involve the people in making decisions, you implement it and then see how it goes then you evaluate it to assess whether it benefited them or it was important to include the people at the grassroots level in the process (Youth 2, FGD1, 11/2017).

Even though discussants in focus group 1 gave the ideal situation on the need for the three stages to be incorporated into the use of participatory communication for the management of development activities, they pointed out that the situation is however not the case according to their assessment. Youth 3 in focus group 3 remarked:

> I believe the conscious effort sets in after they have rolled out the policy. So, after they have rolled it out then they engage media houses, it turns into advertisement and doing all what it takes for us to accept it. If that happens there is no other way to go, you either accept it or you are at a loss. (Youth 3, FGD3, 11/2017).

Since some youth and tertiary students engaged through focus group discussions indicated that they mostly notice participatory engagements during the implementation stages of the policies

but not at the formulation and the evaluation stages, there was the need to engage independent verifiers in the form of opinion leaders and chiefs. As such, in engaging a former national student leader and Opinion Leader 3 in this research to understand the levels of engagement at the formulation, implementation and evaluation stages of the chosen initiatives, various striking revelations were made. This is to the effect that students (even at the tertiary level) are exempt from some critical platforms or committees which make decisions that directly affect students and no amount of argument or petitions can change this position. Opinion Leader 3 narrated one of his experiences:

> Throughout my days as a student leader, I argued that if you take for instance the formation of the National Council for Tertiary Education, there is no student representative on the board. These are boards that superintend over the activities of students yet there are no student representative on these boards and many a time the polices are formulated at these boards so if some group of students have said this, then to a very large extent they are right that many a time students and student leaders are not engaged in the formulation of policies (OPL 3, Interview, 01/2018).

Opinion Leader 3 assisted the researcher to understand some basic irregularities regarding the practice of participatory communication involving instances where development actors designed their own policies and programmes both in mind and on paper before going ahead to meet any stakeholders identified. In instances where the already structured and premeditated policies meet agitated concerns of the stakeholders during deliberations causing change in the eventual end, such policies are either abandoned totally or views of the stakeholders are neglected. This former student leader presented his experiences in such instances to the researcher:

> Sometimes the policies are partially formulated and put across that this is what we want to do, what is your view? Sometimes you even make inputs that should have engineered the changing of some of these policies but eventually that does not come out. I can tell why it is done so because many a time when we argue they say that it is a constitutional instrument. For instance, the composition of National Council for Tertiary Education board (OPL 3, Interview, 01/2018).

Opinion Leader 3 further opined that involving the stakeholders in all the stages of the participatory development processes of formulation, implementation and evaluation, bringing about ownership, gives the projects "national identity" and not political party inclination. He said:

> People should be engaged not only in the implementation of the policies but in the formulation as well so that right from the beginning, they can own the policy and contribute towards its safeguarding. It is a national identity and not NDC or NPP policy but Ghana's policy. (OPL 3, Interview, 01/2018).

Opinion Leader 4 and former PRO of the Ministry of Education in his response to assertions of the youth about the relegation of beneficiaries of development programmes to the background at the formulation and evaluation stages, agreed with the youth citing the School Feeding Programme as a typical example and noted that as it stands now, the school heads "are detached. They are not part of the programme formulation so; they are only part of the implementation." He added that the issue of evaluation does not come to play in any way at all. He also mentioned the policy regarding teaching of local languages (mother tongue) in lower primary schools as another educational policy that was poorly managed in terms of the use of participatory strategies only at the implementation stage. According to him, only sections of the stakeholders were engaged. As such, parents who fell within this category rather chose to encourage their children to speak English instead of the mother tongue even at home.

He noted, admitting that the policy was defeated to a large extent as a result of inefficiencies in the structures that were put in place as teachers were also not readily available for the teaching of the respective local languages in schools. He said:

> So, the policy is defeated in the sense that the teachers who are expected to teach the various Ghanaian languages are not available in the schools. For instance, a school in Volta Region, the common language in Volta Region is Ewe so if for instance you bring a teacher from Greater Accra Region who speaks Ga to teach in Volta Region, definitely that person cannot teach in the lower primary in Ga so what will happen is that the child will be taught in English (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017).

He was particularly not happy that the objective was defeated because according to him, the objective with the teaching of the local languages was that "when the child is taught the first three years then he is able to pick up the English Language but because the teachers are not available the children are not taught in the Ghanaian languages so the old system actually prevailed and it has been a big problem", Opinion Leader 4 noted. He also talked about the one book per child policy. The former Public Relations Officer of the Education Ministry also admitted that the engagement process for this policy side-lined a cross-section of some important stakeholders especially during the formulation stage and that as a result culminated in a lack of success. He explained how it happed:

> The children sent the books home and they mishandled them but assuming the parents were involved in the implementation of the project, they would have realized that they had a unique role as parents to ensure that their children took good care of the textbooks. So, what happened was that when the textbooks got torn, the government had not got any replacement. (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017).

The youth and opinion leaders were clear in their submissions regarding the implementation stage of the chosen initiatives where they appeared to be involved as opposed to the formulation and evaluation stages that always appeared to be the sole prerogative of political actors in government. In finding more about the situation in the case of chiefs' involvement as against the assertions of the youth and opinion leaders, a chief in Teshie known in this research as Chief 4 agreed with the youth saying:

> That is exactly what happens in 99 cases out of 100…they might not even be aware of whatever intervention or research that has taken place. They will get to know about it at the implementation stage and when it happens like that the people find it very difficult to accept or even cooperate with whatever development project they have brought (Chief 4, Interview, 12/2017).

Respondents in the research also bemoaned the poor impact factor associated with the already existing elements of communication practice in the education sector. According to them, the many deficiencies in the process defeat the purpose on its own. A teacher and Christian religious leader known in this research as Opinion Leader 6 also talked about the structures instituted in the schools for enhancing participatory communication processes. He mentioned the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) but was quick to add that this particular platform is not mostly used efficiently as it assumed a one-way communication trend. He explained further:

> …you would see that yes; we have PTA meetings, but such meetings were not frequent. But even then, anytime they were organized, they were like teachers have something to communicate to the parents but not the other way round. Mostly, it is when the teacher or the school has needs to meet that they see that parents are needed in the whole process…It becomes a one-way form of communication process (OPL6, Interview, 01/2018).

The ineffective ways of practising participatory communication could be one of the reasons why Opinion Leader 7, a social development actor and founder of Keteke Ghana, a non-profit organization for helping rural poor schools in the country, described the process as lacking impact. He said:

> …in Ghana for instance when you really study our governance landscape you will realize that participatory communication exists, but the impact is where the challenge is. Because we want to look at how you implement participatory communication, how it goes down to the common people in society which I think is lacking in Ghana (OPL7, Interview, 01/2018).

According to him, it remains a delicate issue that needs to be addressed to curb the recurrent practice of various governments that decide to formulate policies or programmes without using the bottom-up approach in most cases. He noted:

> …our governments over the years have implemented the top-down approach of policy formulation without looking at it from the bottom-up approach level

which has in a way derailed the progress we are making as a nation because at times you see government sitting somewhere and they decide on what they want to do without necessarily involving the communities that are supposed to benefit from whatever policies they are trying to bring on board (OPL7, Interview, 01/2018).

6.6.4. Cases of widespread lack of or low participatory communication for implementing development policies/programmes in other sectors

In a further attempt to adequately answer research question 1 and to ascertain what pertains in other sectors of the country's governance process apart from the education sector with the use of participatory communication in the development agenda, interesting responses were received from the youth, opinion leaders and traditional leaders or chiefs pointing to the position that the practice is very sketchy and skeletal in operation coupled with poor coordination. The participants, especially the youth, opinion leaders and chiefs/traditional leaders were not happy about the manner in which decisions were taken and policies, projects and programmes implemented without due diligence of consulting and engaging beneficiaries for their views and concerns before undertaking such development activities. While some participants described the practice by development actors, especially political leaders as a canker that is widespread in all sectors of the Ghanaian economy, others called for an immediate end to the practice as it has the tendency to dictate to the people that they (political actors) are the only reservoir of wisdom and knowledge. A youth interviewed by the researcher after a focus group discussion suggested that the leaders had over the years neglected their responsibility of keeping the intended beneficiaries of development initiatives updated through active engagements. She (Youth 5) explicates further:

> They ought to communicate with us through the opinion leaders and the various leaders at the various levels, be it the community or the regional level who are supposed to represent us. So, if there is going to be a policy or there is going to be the implementation of an educational policy or reform, they should engage us and know our thoughts (Youth 5, Interview, 12/17).

She further suggested that "sometimes people even have better ideas than what the leaders have", insisting that "if you would go to people and talk to them and ask them how things should be done you will be surprised how they will bring up ideas and innovations that will help the entire nation", Youth 5 added.

Opinion Leader 4 and former PRO of the Ministry of Education said he believed that the problem of non-adherence to participatory communication practices during policy and project implementations is very common in other sectors as it is in the education sector. He remarked:

> Yes, there are so many of them in Ministry of Local Government, Health etc. this is because participatory communication is something that is lacking in Ghana so there is the need for us to involve everybody. Once the people know that the project is meant for them, they will also contribute their quota towards its effective implementation (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017.

Referring to the attitude of some leaders, Opinion Leader 1 opined that personal interests of some leaders have overtaken the communal spirit of the society, hence the communities need to rise up and "limit the desire to either win political power at all cost in election period or all those desires to amass wealth".

Chiefs and traditional leaders also described the current state of poor usage of participatory communication in implementation of development initiatives especially by government as "a common thing" and "useless". Chief 1 explained further:

> …if you want to evaluate something or do a project without the knowledge of those you are doing it for, it is useless. You think it is government but on the field itself, the students or the youth themselves, they are not benefiting, and they don't know that this is for them. This is a common thing in this place…and it seems that they are being forced to take the government's decision. (Chief 1, Interview, 12/2017).

Another traditional leader known in this research as Chief 5 equally bemoaned the unilateral decisions usually taken by political actors in finding solutions to development problems with little or no involvement of the custodians of the communities saying their actions have reduced modern traditional leaders/chiefs to "ceremonial" attendees of events instead of them taking active part in the decision-making processes alongside other key stakeholders. He gave further account of what he claimed is happening on the ground:

> …we are not incorporated in making the decisions. In fact, even traditional leaders have become more ceremonial than being part of policymaking. You will see them dressed up going to governmental functions and the policies and decisions have already been taken. Sometimes, what we hear is that we are launching this and that is it. Chiefs were called to some function last week and I didn't go but when they came back with their booklet, you will need a PhD to understand what was in it (Chief 5, Interview, 01/2018).

A retired educationalist and traditional leader in the Anlo State, known in this research as Chief 7 called for a redemption from the current approach saying, "so somebody must one day stand up and tell us that we are not doing the right thing and what we are doing will lead us nowhere". He added, "when we meet as chiefs, we only complain…at our congress of chiefs". To him, they are eventually left with nothing to do because their hands have been tied by the actions of political actors and this might be the reason why a redeemer could be sought from elsewhere to bring salvation to their siege.

On the part of development actors, the Public Relations Officer of the Ghana Education Service, known in this research as Funding Actor 5, also said the challenges associated with the practice of participatory communication in the implementation of development initiatives is not limited to the education sector alone but to other sectors as well. His assertion alongside some other funding actors interviewed in this research solidified the position held by the youth, opinion leaders and traditional leaders/chiefs regarding the skeletal and poorly managed participatory strategies engaged in the developmental agenda of the nation. He attributed the cause of the challenges to petty party politics saying:

> …education is having some few challenges so as all sectors are having in that politics in Ghana is veering off the track which any government that comes to rule this country decides what he feels will be better, that is party politics. It is affecting our education in that people who are expected to be used, contacted or people who are expected to be instrumental in the formulation of the policies and implementation level are not contacted (FA5, Interview, 12/2017).

To him, any improvement in the participatory communication practices in the development of a developing nation like Ghana can only be manifested through actions of political actors where party politics is taken out of the development process (something he again had a doubt about). He remarked:

> What you hear and see is that do this and that and in actual fact it is affecting education in Ghana. If party politics will be out of the system in Ghana then I believe strongly that the aim of participatory communication will be very vital, useful and will be something that everybody will welcome as a community or as a country (FA5, Interview, 12/2017).

Even though the above assertions of the PRO were referring to the bitter element in party politics as found in the Ghanaian context, the claims rightly explained the reasons why political actors are always seen to be the key challenges in the practice of full participatory communication in the development process. A policy officer at the Ministry of Education, known in this research as Funding Actor 4, claimed time constraints make it difficult for such policies to be implemented using broad-based engagement of intended beneficiaries as politicians always aim at delivering their policies from party manifestoes. He said:

> …if you are to engage the major participants you seek to engage, even if not everyone but a broad base of people the transaction is going to be huge. Do you have the time to wait? They have four years to deliver on their manifestoes. We want to build schools and do this and that and are you saying we should go and consult community people before we implement that? (FA4, Interview, 12/2017).

Furthermore, he made a profound statement suggesting that there will be a huge impediment for the practice of full participatory communication in the development process as politicians choose to think of the success in elections compared with the welfares to be derived by intended beneficiaries of development initiatives. He was not concerned about the limitations in the current approach of using the views and contributions of only people of higher learning and knowledge in specific fields of study at the expense of the final consumers of the development programmes. He remarked:

> …policy making has been elitist and I see it being elitist in the future because within that four years, if you spend one year six months to engage people it will be difficult so, the politics that we play will also make this difficult. However, they would rather do this quickly and when campaign is up, they will refer to it than to seek to engage the broad masses (FA4, Interview, 12/2017).

6.6.5. Possible causes of poor participatory communication in projects and policy implementation management

In line with research question 2 to find innovative measures to be put in place in arresting the problematic features of development communication highlighted in the evidence of this thesis, there was the need to first of all understand the root causes of the use of poor participatory communication strategies as found in the education sector and other sectors alike (as suggested by some respondents). From the beginning of this research, enough room was created to accommodate any possible results (after gathering evidence from the field) of poor performance in the use of participatory communication in project and policy implementation. Having identified wide-spread cases of poor performance in the use of participatory communication across the education sector, the following reasons have been cited by the participants in the research as the causes.

Zainat (who prefers to be identified in this research by the first name), a youth in focus group 3 noted that, "the major cause of this whole thing is the fact that from the onset, our founding fathers decided to copy from the West so the entire thinking of the Ghanaian is how to become like the West". To Zainat, something might have gone wrong with the attempt to copy Western democracy for use in the Ghanaian context without considerations for the African culture. She pointed out, "But we are not taking into consideration our culture, how we are so different from them and so we cannot be copying whatever that they are doing, and we are copying blindly." She recalled how the traditional rulers (chiefs) of her area used to organise inclusive social gatherings to discuss issues confronting their communities before taking actions to address them. She said:

> I think from the onset even with our chiefs before they implemented a policy within their areas of jurisdiction, they gathered in town council meetings where people would come and voice their concerns in the presence of the chief and his elders. If it is a school that they want to build for the community, each and every household is going to contribute and build that particular school. But Ghanaians have copied the Western world to the extent that we don't even know what is going on (Zainat, FGD3, 11/2017).

Another participant in focus group 5 (Akosua) suggested that the leaders who needed to make the changes happen are selfish in their dealings, serving their own greedy interests at the expense of the entire population they lead. As a member of Keteke club, she recounted her experience during one of the trips the club made as they aided some communities through donation of education materials. She said:

> I also think our leaders with selfish desires have also contributed immensely to this because I remember very well that when Keteke went to the Volta region, Akatsavakpor to be precise, to donate some the items to the school, we realized the teachers and even the Headmaster were not open enough to our discussions…We got to realize later that the Assemblyman (a local government legislator) of the area painted a false picture to illustrate that we were there at the express invitation of him (Akosua, FGD5, 11/2017).

Another participant, Youth 1 in focus group 5 attributed the cause of poor performance in the use of participatory communication in projects and policy implementation to what he described as "sheer ignorance" on the part of the beneficiaries for not knowing their rights in a democratic nation and pursuing same. Shadrack, a key contributor, who was also part of the Keteke trip to Akatsavakpor corroborated the experience recounted by Akosua. He said:

> The Assemblyman was telling us what the school needed while we saw the kids writing on the floor, so I was asking Akosua, look at the kids doing their assignment on the floor…the child is on the floor and writing in the sand for the teacher to see what he has done. As a teacher, how are you going to mark this thing? And then you sit in your home and assume that you know what the people want without engaging them to really know what their needs are? (Shadrack, FGD5, 11/2017).

One of the officers within the category of funding actors known in this research as Funding Actor 1, the Public Relations Officer at the Ministry of Education, also identified political interference through implementation of manifestos as one of the causes for the limited participatory communication practice during execution of initiatives. He noted:

> Most of these programmes and projects are derived from party manifestos at elections so they are made to succeed but unfortunately communication doesn't always go down well to such an extent that some of these things when started you will realize there are a lot of problems. Because people didn't get into it or didn't get the actual essence of the whole programme (FA1, Interview, 12/2017).

6.6.6 Effective communication contributing to development

To design corrective measures in addressing the gap identified in the use of participatory communication strategies, the level of effective communication contributing to development was evaluated. All the participants in the focus group discussions as well as those in the interviews pointed out that communication plays a vital role in the development process, especially when managed well. Youth 2 in focus group 3 said for any development process to begin, one "needs to communicate to the people involved, the people you want the project to affect…and at the same time they would also give you feedback as to what they want and do not want." To Zainat (who prefers to be identified by her first name) participating in the focus group 3 discussion noted that "for development to take place, the number one ingredient is communication. You cannot develop as a nation without communication. You need communication, it is communication that will kick start everything." Another participant, Youth 2, in the discussion summarized the importance of communication to development as a situation where "nothing is done if nothing is said".

Youth 1 in focus group 5 (who prefers to be identified by her first name as Enyonam) was of the view that "communication is one of the pivotal tools we need in order to achieve development" and insisting that "without communication you will not be able to get access to information and you will not be able to involve the people in the processes you want to undertake in attaining development." Youth 3 in the group agreed with the position held by Youth 1 adding that "it is not just a shallow process where you go and just talk to the people, you would need to make them understand".

Youth 2 in focus group 5 basically summarized that it is impossible for development to take place without the input of communication. He said: "For development to occur, you need to communicate with the people to understand what they want and what they need to bring about that development and without communication there can't be development."

In response to a question on whether communication is able to play any pivotal role in the development process of developing communities or nations, Opinion Leader 4, formerly of the Ministry of Education said:

> Yes, communication is very vital in everything that we do. So, if you want to undertake a development project there is the need to actually communicate whatever activity you want to undertake. Communication is very vital in the sense that it enables the people to appreciate what you intend

to do for them and to enable them to participate fully in whatever activity you want to undertake in the community (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017).

In suggesting the best form of communication capable of contributing to development, Youth 3 in focus group 4 said: "I would seriously suggest participatory communication or dialogic communication that involves the people through the airing of their views and telling you why this way might be better and why that way might not work for them." Youth 3 in focus group 2 in suggesting a mixture of top-down and bottom-up approaches said:

> …I think the communication should not be from only the top to down it should also be at the participatory level. So, as you transmit the information from the top that is from those who want to bring about the change to the people, you should also give room to the people to also participate by giving their views. So, communication should be both at the vertical and horizontal levels (Youth 3, FGD2, 11/2017).

The views of Opinion Leader 4 were sought on the approach or kind of communication needed for the implementation of development policies, programmes and projects for a success. He also explained the reason for the choice of his approach in the response saying:

> I would suggest the bottom-up approach. I think this should begin from the bottom; the people who are the beneficiaries should participate fully in whatever activity that is being undertaken so right from the very onset they should be part of decision-making. Once they are part of decision-making, when the project is implemented, they would appreciate it more but if they are not part of the project, they would not appreciate what you are doing for them (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017).

He went further to give what he termed, the "ideal thing" to be done, especially when considering a participatory development process that will culminate in empowerment for the beneficiaries at the end of the project. He said:

> When you want to undertake a project, you meet the people at the grassroots then you discuss all the issues with them and plan. They may bring some suggestions and if their suggestions are ok, you incorporate it into whatever project you want to undertake and by so doing the people will be happy that at least their contributions have also materialized in the sense that it has been embodied in the project implementation (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017).

At this point when the "ideal thing" to be done was mentioned, it prompted several follow-up questions to find out if the ideal thing was done during his time as the officer in charge of communications at the ministry responsible for education matters in the country. Here, he started to narrate the practical issues involved in the engagement processes; the very issues that were heavily challenged by the youth through their focus group discussions. He then confessed:

> We pretend to involve them, but we don't actually involve them. Because honestly speaking before any programme is actually implemented there is the

need for beneficiaries to participate fully in whatever project or programme you want to introduce but most often than not, decisions are taken and the beneficiaries do not participate in the formulation of the programmes so when the programmes are being implemented that sort of lukewarm attitude is always displayed by the people (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017).

From what looked like a helpless position for the Opinion Leader especially when he was in office, he continued to recount the frequent frustrations in the process where the direct beneficiaries are either neglected or consulted haphazardly. For instance, he was not pleased about the manner in which the Free SHS Policy was handled in terms of participation in decision-making processes. However, he admitted that the trend has always been the same over the years. He explained further:

> So that has always been the trend and I don't think it is the best in the sense that for instance the Free SHS policy that the present government is implementing there hasn't been enough consultation with the stakeholders. It is just a matter of take it or leave it attitude because under normal circumstances there should have been proper stakeholder consultation. It is not just a matter of meeting the heads of schools, there is the need to meet the parents to know how they feel (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017).

Media reports capturing several well-meaning Ghanaians including former President John Mahama, equally shared the same views of a comprehensive stakeholder consultations and participation in decision-making towards the implementation of the Free SHS Policy, especially regarding funding. According to Opinion Leader 4, the policy is a big one, hence all the key stakeholders needed to be actively included in the engagement processes "and even if there is a possibility, you meet the students and tell them the challenge" since they are the final beneficiaries of the policy.

6.6.7 Conscious effort in the engagement process

In line with the research question 2 of suggesting innovative ways of closing the gap of poor participatory communication practice, one of the critical reasons for conducting this research is to find out any possible elements of conscious efforts being made by authorities in government and other establishments related to the education sector towards the practice of full participatory communication for development. When asked whether successive governments were making concerted efforts to involve beneficiaries in the decision-making processes, Shardrack (as he prefers to be identified in this research), a youth from focus group 3 responded, "I wouldn't say there is, they have made it look like there is an imaginary consultation".

From the same focus group 3, Zainat, a youth and development communication student, who also prefers to be identified by her first name, noted that there is no evidence of thoughtful

effort from authorities from all levels towards broad-based consultative decision-making processes involving key stakeholders where their views are strongly taken into consideration. She said: "let's start from GIJ, we have been in this school for four years. When was the last time the Rector came and said all students should come and sit here, let us know some of the problems you have faced so far since you stepped your feet in GIJ? It has never happened before", she lamented. She was of the view that even the internal structures for student participation which are backed by law in the Act of Parliament establishing the Ghana Institute of Journalism requiring the President of the Students Representative Council (SRC) to be a member of the Governing Council (the highest decision-making body of the university) was just a formality as views through the SRC were mostly neglected. She agreed with Shadrack who earlier referred to the current system as "imaginary consultation" saying:

> We have done that several times and they have not listened to us. So that means even the SRC is there like a plaque to say that GIJ has an SRC but the SRC so far has done their best to solve some of our problems but the problems that are directed to the heads of the institution are neglected. Since Level 100, no one has had a breakdown of school fees. We have requested for it for four years and it hasn't been done, so what are the individual institutions in the country doing? (Zainat, FGD3, 11/2017).

In what seems to be a defeated expectation of any future progress in participatory communication, one of the participants, Edna in focus group 3 (who also prefers to be identified by her first name in this research) suggested quite painfully:

> We don't see the government making a conscious effort anytime soon. It is not going to happen so we should stop expecting it. This is because it started generations before us, and it is going to continue. Like she said we should even consider the smaller institutions because if you take the government, their primary focus is to give you mouth-watering manifestos, so you vote them into government. But when it comes to what satisfies the individual while they are in power, it is not their priority (Edna, FGD3, 11/2017).

Yet, the assertions of the youth above regarding the non-preparedness of political actors and funding actors to change the status quo by engaging in broad-based participatory decision-making through formulation, implementation and evaluation stages, was totally rejected when Funding Actor 4, a policy officer at the Ministry of Education reacting to this call with a reason for his position said:

> …policy making has been elitist and I see it being elitist in the future because within that four years, if you spend one year six months to engage people it will be difficult so the politics that we play will also make this difficult. However, they would rather do this quickly and when campaign is up, they will refer to it than to seek to engage the broad masses (FA4, Interview, 12/2017).

Participants in focus group 5 were of the view that the deliberate effort of authorities in creating avenues for active participatory engagements in the implementation of initiatives, especially in the education sector of the country was lost the very moment political actors started to taste power and authority over their subjects. According to them, the desire to take away the power of participation from the people cuts across all levels of the stakeholders or beneficiaries in the education sector not forgetting students and pupils. Youth 1 in the discussion group questioned the inability of education authorities in engaging some children of school-going age in a suburb of Accra, the nation's capital, to know the underlying reasons for not going to school:

> When you go to James Town, they have schools, but the kids are not going to school even if their mothers push them to go. They go and return to the sea to fish, they don't really like what is going on there so why don't you involve the kids to let them know and understand what you are doing and get their understanding of what they want and try to give it to them? Because they don't involve us as students in our education system (Youth 1, FGD5, 11/2017)

Youth 6 in focus group 4 disagreed a little with the submission of Youth 1 in their focus group discussion saying things have evolved with the way such engagements were done in the past. According to her, in cases where such grassroots engagements are done, they are confined to only people with the same political ideologies and the government in power. She affirmed:

> "I think there is a paradigm shift from the olden system to the new system which has become partisan in a way. They would rather center with their party people because they think they might be loyal to them as compared to the opposition. Because of our partisan nature as a country, we have taken our nationalistic sense away and we have replaced it with our politics (Youth 1, FGD5, 11/2017).

Opinion Leader 3 and former national student leader believed that authorities do not have any conscious effort to willingly engage the people at the grassroots for their valuable input, yet lack of funds and other resources are being used as the justifications for the inability to comprehensively engage stakeholders for quality output. He, therefore advised authorities especially governments and institutions to stop assuming that they are the only reservoir of knowledge in all fields:

> We feel as though the people don't have anything to offer but I beg to differ, there are people out there. We don't regard them but when we engage them the idea they have will blow your mind and when you do that some of them can even aid you get connected to people and even support you financially so that you will not necessarily be lacking behind in terms of funds (OPL 3, Interview, 01/2018).

Opinion Leader 3 was asked to suggest possible ways of getting the participatory communication strategies put in place by all standards even if the development actors remain

hesitant to share power with the grassroots in decision-making. He suggested the use of the mass media to invoke the system. He explained more:

> Many a time when we say government may reduce in power, they may not necessarily do that but those at the grassroots can invoke the system. But how will they invoke the system and succeed? They can invoke the system through the various media platforms in this country…if 20 are genuinely responding to the issues by the grassroots and then heat and heat the government, they have no way than to listen that there is the need to engage these people and let them participate genuinely for the good of the nation (OPL 3, Interview, 01/2018).

A youth in focus group 4, Kennedy, who prefers to be identified by his first name in this research, said:

> Looking at our political system, when our politicians want our votes, they come to the grassroots to seek the vote of the people but when they go to Parliament, the decisions they take are that of their political parties and not the main people that voted them to power. So, our leaders that make the decisions do not involve the grassroots in their decisions (Kennedy, FGD4, 11/2017).

As part of efforts to understand the preparedness of authorities in engaging the intended beneficiaries of development policies, programmes and projects from start to finish, a policy officer at the Ministry of Education, known in this research as Funding Actor 4 was asked about the origin of the policies, projects and programmes they formulate, he answered:

> It comes from the top and sometimes some come from the lower levels. You know in Ghana within our multi-party democracy every four years, there is election and political parties' campaign on manifestos. They seem to do some level of diagnosis of the education sector, whether it is well done or not I don't want to comment on that and then based on that diagnosis they identify challenges and propose solutions, what reflects their manifestos (FA4, Interview, 12/2017).

In his further responses, it appeared the needed conscious effort by authorities to engage the intended beneficiaries from start to finish, incorporating their views and concerns into the design of the development solution do not exactly work in the education sector. Instead, development actors prefer to take unilateral decisions on what to provide and how to provide it before engaging the beneficiaries, an action one of the opinion leaders described as formality as the views of the people may not eventually be taken into consideration because of the already developed posture portrayed. Funding Actor 4 at the Ministry of Education illustrated this further by saying:

> But if it is so that I have to communicate with them that I am coming to build a school here for this reason and it will help you and all that, let them understand so that they can relate with it and not that they coming to tell the

system that no, you have to do it this way, you have to teach our children this
way, it sometimes becomes difficult (FA4, Interview, 12/2017).

Even though the policy officer involved in this research from the Ministry of Education is not a political actor but a civil servant, it appeared the position taken by him regarding the call for comprehensive stakeholder consultation and engagement in all projects and programmes implementation appeared to be an inflexible one, with very little room to accommodate the views of the intended beneficiaries of projects and programmes, a situation which is very likely to be detrimental to the total success of the said projects. His explanation below gave reasons to suggest that there is no or very little conscious effort on the part of development actors to involve and engage intended beneficiaries in decision-making processes leading to finding solutions to their development problems. He said:

It does not mean that what the chiefs say or the people in the community say is always right. If I am investing in a school as a person trained, I am planting the school anywhere and I am making a choice, I am looking at where the benefit will be maximized. So, there are catchment communities with children of school going age that is what I look at (FA4, Interview, 12/2017).

6.6.8. Ghana's democratic system questioned

The absence of elements of conscious efforts from authorities and non-preparedness of development actors, especially political actors to reverse the trend in the use of poor communication in the development agenda of the country has led to the creation of critical gaps in Ghana's democratic system. Participants in this research, especially the youth, traditional leaders/chiefs and opinion leaders, questioned the practicality of the democratic credentials the country professes, especially in the case of successes chalked regarding free, fair and transparent elections since 1992 yet, transparent and meaningful stakeholder participation in decision-making is heavily infringed upon. They maintained that it is not enough to be successful in electoral processes and yet be heavily deficient in the participatory decision-making processes that define the new way of participation and engagement. In evaluating the performance of Ghana's democratic practices and juxtaposing it with the current low level of participatory communication approaches in the management of development initiatives, a focus group discussant, Youth 3 in focus group 4 remarked:

I think the democracy system we have built for ourselves is just a façade, it's not really working. Because if it's really a democratic system, you the people who want us to vote for you to be in power will come down to our level (Youth 3, FGD4, 11/2017).

Some participants expressed the view that there is a lot lacking in the democratic system being practised in the country as participation of people in decision-making processes is very limited

with the representatives of the people assuming the responsibility of taking decisions on behalf of the masses at often times when the decisions do not tally with the views of the people. Even though the participants admire the democratic system and describe the periodic election of leaders in a free, fair and transparent elections since 1992, to some participants it is a system of incomplete participation. In an interview with Youth 4 in focus group 4 after the group discussions, the participant critically questioned the democratic system of the governance structure that allows for people in constituencies to elect their members of parliament to form the legislative arm of government every four years. When questioned further to know how and why the system is questionable in Ghana's jurisdiction, he explained:

> Yes, it is questionable. Let's say it is a complete cylinder, but we have participation to the middle, and it stops there, it doesn't get to the base. These people are supposed to represent us, they are supposed to see what we feel and they are supposed to express our views but it seems they are either expressing views that they think we have or their own personal views (Youth 4, FGD4, 11/2017).

According to the participants, the people at the grassroots level have always expected that their representatives, especially those in Parliament will be closer to them in order to know their views and demands so as to express them while making laws to govern them but the contrary always happen. While some participants are of the view that they only see their members of parliament when it is electioneering time and rarely see them representing the views of the people, Youth 4 in focus group 4 sounded quite sarcastic as he observed: "Quite frankly, maybe I have not been fortunate enough to be in a forum where people in the community or in the constituency were actually involved." He continued saying: "But the MPs just represent people but not totally representing the people, they literally speak for the people but not in the voice or the same language that the people speak".

The Opinion Leader 4 attempted to find answers to the reasons why some participants in the research questioned the viability and credibility of Ghana's democratic credentials, saying Western democracy is one of the causal agents for the disrespect towards the chiefs in the communities. He called for more empowerment for the chiefs to be relevant in the modern democratic system.

> …because of the Western democracy, most people do not respect chiefs as they used to. So, I think there is the need for us to take a second look at the role of chiefs in our communities and appreciate their role. It will also help us that whatever they tell us we will make sure we adhere to them. How many of the MPs hold meetings? They don't and even if they do, it is once a year. They are not actively involved in the communities that they are leading so we must empower the chiefs to play their roles (OPL 4, Interview, 01/2018).

Most participants in the research also expressed concern over the decaying nature of the once valuable and vibrant chieftaincy institution but now gradually giving way to unhealthy party-political tendencies. When asked what the solution might be moving forward to restore confidence in the chieftaincy institution, Chief 1 said:

> I don't think there should be any solution unless we turn everything into a one-party state which also, I don't know how because Nkrumah tried it sometime ago and it didn't work. When we started politics, it wasn't like this but now it has turned into dirty politics. So, is education, when we talk about a project, you will know that this project will be good for us, but the opponent will talk badly about it. If you speak your mind you are painted black (Chief 1, Interview, 12/2017).

To a traditional kingmaker known in this research as Chief 2, the issues relating to education are only handled by experts in the education sector leaving the views of the traditional leaders in the various communities within which the schools are located. He narrated how the process had worked so far confirming the assertion of a policy officer at the Ministry of Education who said policy formulation has been "elitist" in nature. In response, Chief 2 said:

> Most of the times the chiefs are left behind, only when it comes to the town hall meetings but when talking about education like this you have the principals, teachers, the professors of education and all of them, they come together with the Ministry of Education to organize this sort of forum where they discuss about what to do (Chief 2, Interview, 12/2017).

In what appeared to be a rift between most traditional leaders or chiefs on the one hand and political actors on the other, Chief 2 asserted that political actors would want to take away all their powers, something they should not have attempted to do. He expressed it below:

> That is not supposed to be the case, but this is what we are seeing now in the political arena, it looks like these people want to absorb everything. They do it politically by appointing their own officers to do that is harming this area and harming very big chiefs…I don't have a say, I don't have to say anything because people are paid politically to look over them (Chief 2, Interview, 12/2017).

As part of measures to restore confidence in the chieftaincy institution, there was a call to take a second look at the current democratic governance system so as to give better legislative powers to chiefs to assist in some parliamentary duties since the traditional areas being governed are under the chiefs who serve as lifetime leaders as opposed to the political leaders who have fixed term in office. Chief 2 explained further:

> So, chiefs can be involved in a small way, in parliament because you are discussing something concerning my area. A minister has been appointed for the area but I am the chief, the minister has gotten only four years tenure, sometimes they spend just one year and they say he is not doing well but I am on the seat till I die and I know what is going on there. So, I may be even a backup for the

minister so this is where the government must sit down and watch. (Chief 2, Interview, 12/2017).

6.6.9. Incomplete participation in decision-making

Most participants in the research expressed views regarding participation in decision-making processes that only show on the outside that some stakeholders have been engaged and prompted to take part only in the process but the outcome of the participation process is totally contrary to the views of the stakeholders. In such cases, some participants refer to this type of participation as a waste of time and resources as nothing meaningful comes out of the engagement process to reflect the distinct views and decision taken since authorities still go ahead to implement their independent decisions. Youth 6 in focus group 4 stated:

> They give you the chance to believe that you are involved but, in the end, you are not evidently involved so if you think about it, it is a waste of time to go there anyway. You will see them vote on something and you will hear what it is, but it will not be implemented something else could happen (Youth 6, FGD4, 11/2017).

To bring an end to the phony attempt by development actors in ensuring that the correct investment is done in education sector with its corresponding stakeholder participation, Opinion Leader 3 and former student leader called on all stakeholders, especially government to ensure that beneficiaries take part in formulation of policies, even the curriculum. He illustrated further:

> It is rather unfortunate that less investment is made into education in our part of the world. Stakeholders should invest more in education, it is not just about the investment, but it should be able to open up and all stakeholders effectively and genuinely participate in the formulation of the policies, for instance in the development of the curricular. One of the issues I argued out when I was the NUGS President is making entrepreneurship course integral part of all students studying at the post-secondary level (OPL 3, Interview, 01/2018).

6.6.10. Passive and active participation.

Participants in the research, especially the youth, opinion leaders and traditional leaders were of the view that various forms of engagements that might have taken place during the implementation of policies, programmes and projects in the education sector as well as other sectors assumed the "passive participation" format where decisions were already taken at the helm of affairs but pretend to engage the people merely for participation sake. In the focus group 5 discussion, Youth 2 maintained: "Look at the passive participation where the decision is made at the top level and it comes out to the grassroots that we are done with the decision so this is what you have to do." In the same disposition, they (participants) tend to prefer active

participation where meaning is added to the contributions of people at the grassroots. To the Youth 2 in the group, "the empowerment aspect, where the grassroots people themselves mobilize themselves and are able to come to a conclusion on a particular thing to do" is the best option rather than totally deciding the solutions from the top and urging the people to adopt it with little or no input at the formulation stage.

Opinion leader 3 and a former student leader, in agreeing that there is an element of participatory communication in the administrative management of the development process in Ghana rated the process as average and insisted that even as student leaders who were advocating for such critical engagements at a point in time, decided to practice what they were preaching. He said:

> I would rate it as average. Because for instance when I was the SRC President we had engaged communities to undertake certain projects and when I was TTAG President we engaged PRINCOF and the Ministry of Education for the establishment of the Teacher Trainees Student Fund to aid teacher trainees and then when I became GUPS President we looked at how professionals could contribute to national development and then we engaged the ministry that was in charge of that (OPL 3, Interview, 01/2018).

This participant further explained his reasons for the rating, but the reason could better be situated in the context of passive participation as no particular dividend was derived from all the engagements the student leaders embarked upon at the time. He noted:

> Me, rating it as average is because, we have engaged these people but the actions we were expecting these key ministries to take in the implementation of resolutions of communique we arrived at after these engagements were not actively implemented that is why I would say this is average (OPL 3, Interview, 01/2018).

When he was asked if the engagements were just passive participation instead of active participation where meaning was not given to the decisions taken through such engagements, he answered in the affirmative, describing it as "formality". He expounded further:

> I would say it was a passive participation because the outcome or the resolutions were not effectively implemented so it became some form of formality where we just came together and discussed it. So, the idea and the intensions are right, but the implementations of the ideas were not done properly or not done at all (OPL 3, Interview, 01/2018).

As if that was not enough, this participant gave his preparedness to cite instances where during his student leadership days as President of the national student body, he was involved in some meetings with the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders aimed at reducing graduate unemployment, yet all such engagements ended in fiasco with no recommendation implemented. He gave a typical example of such passive participatory engagements.

For instance, I recall the first education conference we organized when I was the NUGS President which was under the theme, bridging the gap between academia and industry and reducing graduate unemployment and also the second leg of the theme was funding higher education a roadmap to community development. We came up with a communique and sent to the various stakeholders expecting that they would take actions…but afterwards nothing was done about that (OPL 3, Interview, 01/2018).

In what seemed to be one classical exception of one of the chiefs from Jamestown, a suburb of Accra engaged in this research, Chief 3, as he is known in the research noted that in his area, chiefs were not left out in the decision-making processes in matters relating to the education sector; they were actively involved. He gave an example of upgrading of a school in his traditional area and how they were actively involved in the process saying:

…at our community level, they do involve us especially in the education sector. A classic example is the Simpe Primary School, initially it was Simpe Primary School but now they have made it Primary and Junior High School. At first, it was an old school and then the government tried to seek their concerns because the population of the pupils was increasing in that area (Chief 3, Interview, 12/2017).

6.6.11 Other policies in the education sector with no effective consultation before implementation.

In narrating their experiences in one of the focus group discussions about other policies implemented without effective participation of beneficiaries, Youth 4 in focus group 2, a university student said: "when they were implementing the three and four years system for the SHS, they didn't come to us as students to seek our opinion whether we would like the four or three years system. They needed to ask us about the reasons why we would go for the three or four years". In an interview, a youth, Dominic, in focus group 5 (who prefers to be identified in this research by his first name) said:

The last time I visited my village, Kusanaaba in the Upper East Region (Bawku East Constituency), I realized with dismay that the only people who were schooling were the boys and you realize the girls were confined to the kitchen…they believe that education is the preserve of boys and that boys are actually to become better so they would come and take care of the women. So, although the affirmative action was a positive thing, I believe it wasn't participatory enough else all these communities and others may not have been neglected (Dominic, FGD5, 11/2017).

In focus group 3, Zainat (who also prefers to be identified by the first name in this research) opined that developments in the education sector in the past demonstrated a neglect for the active participation of beneficiaries in the sector. She added to an earlier submission made by a colleague on the three/four-year SHS saying:

> I think so far, the government of Ghana has neglected participatory communication when it comes to education. A typical example is the three/four-year change at the senior high level which was a top down approach. They just decided on something and came to say that instead of going to school for three years, you would have to go for four years. Another government also came and said the four years is too much, so we are taking you back to three years (Zainat, FGD3, 11/2017).

She was particularly not happy about the way various governments interfere with education matters and keep tossing with their future based on the changes being brought forward each time with no substantial evidence. She was of the view that:

> …if the government with the four-year system had done a comprehensive broad-based consultation and people generally agreed to it, it would have been sustainable instead of another government coming out to say that people are complaining and so they were changing it back to three years (Zainat, FGD3, 11/2017).

In the same discussion however, another participant, Shadrack (who prefers to be called by his first name) was of the view that some sort of consultation was done by the government before the change of 3 to 4 years system came into force. According to him:

> They did consult some students just like we are having this discussion. Because I know they can't go to every school or every student so they still have to pick a section which might not have been necessarily your school but then they did research from the news I was following. And they felt with the kind of results they were getting if it were increased to four years it would be better (Shadrack, FGD3, 11/2017).

He, however said all these changes being introduced by successive governments "is as a result of their political wills and then using the senior high schools as laboratory guinea pigs." Interestingly, Shadrack's submissions were greeted with queries from some other participants with many of them asking for evidence on the news he was listening to. Youth 1 in the group, for example said, "I don't think there was anything like that because we all know in this country that when this three/four system started, nobody was consulted, participants, parents, or even stakeholders were not really consulted about this issue. Which news did you listen to?", She quizzed. She added that "there are so many examples in our sector, in fact many things that are going on that they don't consult anyone; they just get up and do what they want just because we don't get people to stand up and tell the government enough is enough."

Among other policies and programmes that could not have been managed well with lack of participatory communication contributing to its poor performance according to Opinion Leader 1 is the School Feeding Programme. He said:

> What I can identify is the issue of the school feeding programme. There have been challenges with it …A veteran writer for the Graphic Communications Group mainly the Mirror, Adwoa Yeboa Afari recently wrote an article concerning school children who are complaining bitterly about the food they have been receiving. Giving them meals, which are not adequate is also a problem and I think the School feeding program has even been politicized to a great extent (OPL1, Interview, 11/2017).

Still on the School Feeding Programme, Opinion Leader 3 (OPL3), affirmed that due to the inability of comprehensive participation in the programme by community members, most parents do not even know how and what their children are given to eat in school, something he attributed to petty party politics. He asserted:

> There is a vicious cycle that is ongoing, so we have reduced it to politics, and we are not even involving the local communities in knowing what the pupils are feeding on. Even how it should be financed and the type of food that should be given to them. The only thing they know is that there is policy in place for school feeding programme to be conducted but because people have not been involved practically, they cannot even know where to start from by asking their question or how it should be conducted (OPL3 Interview, 12/2017).

Another education sector policy or programme identified by the respondents as having suffered credibility challenges as a result of poor implementation of participatory communication strategies was what the participants described as "the sanitary pad" programme.

The Government in 2014 began the implementation of the Secondary Education Improvement Project (SEIP) to increase access to secondary education in underserved areas of the country and to improve quality of education in low performing schools. The project which was sponsored by the World Bank with an amount of $156 million had a component dedicated to the provision of free sanitary pads for school going girls in deprived communities. However, this component received public outcry in the media. A section of the Ghanaian public criticized the government for what some described as a misplaced priority for taking loans to buy sanitary pads for schoolgirls whose parents should instead be responsible for their care. But the government disagreed saying their independent research revealed that the provision of free sanitary pads to schoolgirls from poverty endemic communities would result in increased confidence and school attendance by these girls who hitherto were leaving school during their menstrual periods. Reacting to this as one of the areas where the Government is seen to have failed in engaging the public meaningfully, Opinion Leader 1(OP1) affirmed:

> This received a public outcry because some people were saying that was not really the case and that research was wrong and the amount of money that was going into the project was not good because there are other sectors of the economy that needed funds. The outcry came because they were not informed

reliably or were not involved in the decision-making process. All that was brought was, what the government wanted to do and the money that has been allocated to it and this is how we are going to do it (OPL1, Interview, 11/2017).

Discussions in focus group 4 for example, could be described as the pinnacle of the assembly of ideas due to the fascinating deliberations and revelations that emanated from these discussions. For instance, they touched on issues that could easily be unattended to under normal circumstances. Making reference to other policies, programmes and projects in the education sector that seemed to have suffered setbacks due to the possible neglect for effective and efficient implementation of participatory communication strategies, participants in the group advocated a thorough and wide consultation for the Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD) of the Ghana Education Service to include students of higher learning in deciding on the subjects and courses to be studied at the basic and second cycle institutions in the country. Youth 3 in the group explained in a proverbial way saying:

I believe the CRDD should be very consultative enough because it is the curriculum or the programme, they design for us which are going to make us become what they want. So consider us to be the mortar who have been put in a mould, so if you mould us into becoming squares we will come out as square but if you really want us to be rectangles and you have made us squares then you are going to hurt us (Youth 3, FGD4, Interview, 11/2017).

He explained further that the peculiar challenges students face at one level during their education can only be sorted out for the prospective ones when students are regularly given voice to talk about their experiences and are given the opportunity to better shape the future of education for the young ones. He suggested that:

…those in school now may give some inputs but may not give a lot of inputs relating to what they are studying because they may not have ample knowledge but we have gone through it so we know the peculiar challenges those like us are going to face. It should be very consultative and very wide and it should just take the model of National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) that calls for ideas from the common Ghanaian for us to include what we want in the syllabus or curriculum (Youth 3, FGD4, Interview, 11/2017).

Funding Actor 3 from the Ministry of Education, a civil servant in charge of infrastructure development admitted that "there are a lot of projects that are stalled partly because of finance and lack of effective communication".

6.6.12 Youth in decision-making

There was series of interesting arguments in all the focus group discussions over the need to necessarily involve the youth in decision-making processes in all sectors of the economy, especially in education. Participants (the youth) that were involved in the research through focus group discussions defended their position for the need to actively be part of the discussion of education related matters. Some opinion leaders and government actors also shared the same opinion. Youth 2 in focus group 1, a university student who has engaged himself in community work for a number of years was confident in his response, saying:

> Education is the key to success and any change that happens in the education sector affects me since I am a student. If anything goes wrong it means my success is at stake, hence would want to get involved in what is happening in the education sector (Youth 2, FGD1, 11/2017).

Youth 3 in focus group 2 expressing his view on the need for him to be involved in the participatory communication practices in the education sector as well as other sectors remarked:

> Yes, because those policies and programmes are going to affect the youth so you just can't bring something thinking that will be the ideal solution for we the youth. You are supposed to come down to our level to let us express ourselves and views on what is worrying us and what we think can be done to curb or solve the problems (Youth 3, FGD2, 11/2017).

Further cogent arguments were raised by the youth in the focus group discussions with illustrations to suggest that since the country's population is largely described as youthful, there would be the need for the active participation of the youth in all decision-making activities and processes including the governance and administrative circles. They argued that it would not make sense for only the elderly people to be making decisions for the youth due to the mere fact that the constitution of the nation (Article 62, b) recommends 40 years as the least age to be attained by any citizen to qualify to contest for election as President of Ghana. Youth 4 in focus group 3 asserted:

> I believe the youth need to be necessarily engaged in decision-making relating to the education sector because the youth constitute a large part of those who are going to lead the country in the future (Youth 4, FGD3, 11/2017).

He equally argued that the youth are also equipped with the relevant education needed to understand the country's problems and propose required solutions in solving the myriad of problems confronting it. He noted:

> Great number of youth are those who have been educated and by that experience they understand the problems they went through and would propose solutions they find that is directly going to inform the younger ones who will be coming (Youth 4, FGD3, 11/2017).

The arguments for full representation in the decision-making process reached a pinnacle when focus group 4 underlined some interesting points to support what they meant by active participation and for their views to be considered in the final decisions and not just for them to take part in the mere discussions after which their views would be ignored. According to them, the country's education system currently has serious challenges that need to be fixed by their consultation even when it comes to re-shaping the curriculum to introduce students to innovation and creativity. Youth 5 in the group pointed out:

> With my experience, I find out that education in our place has been one of a strait jacket or conventional type. It doesn't allow for a lot of creativity and innovation. We as the youth must be consulted in all these in making us help tailor the syllabus that is needed to help us maximize our potential (Youth 5, FGD4, 11/2017).

They also held the view that Ghanaian students who get trained in universities outside Ghana do better than their colleagues trained in the country. They gave reasons why the Ghanaian educational system lacks the requisite capacity and competency to produce graduates of high standards capable of solving the country's myriad problems. Youth 1 in focus group 4 explained:

> Because we may learn or spend the same number of years in school with some others from different countries and we find out that after they are out of school they are able to do a lot of things that we who have used 15 or 20 years to go to school are not able to do. This is because our education does not focus on innovation and creativity (Youth 1, FGD4, 11/2017).

Youth 1 in the group also talked about one risky cultural barrier that is needed to be crossed in order to enforce their active participation in decision-making. Youth 4 stated:

> We have a culture in the country whereby the views of the younger ones are not taken, when the elders speak the child must shut up. So, this has been with us for a very long time and even in modern times. It is very hard for elderly people to collate your views when they see your views as superseding their creative projections (Youth 4, FGD4, 11/2017).

To find a solution to this by either altering the culture, Youth 2 proposed: "We don't necessarily have to change it, we have to just create the avenue for views to be channelled irrespective of your age or sex." Youth 3 in focus group 5 added her voice to the concerns raised by her colleagues regarding youth involvement in decision-making especially in the education sector arguing that there is a deliberate attempt at all times by educational institutions to exclude students from arriving at decisions that eventually are made for the students. Furtherance to his position, he referred to his university stating:

Let me take it to the educational level, our institution. I will say there is a problem with management in communicating information to students. They make certain rules and regulations that they don't even consider the students, they don't need their consent to approve of the information. The students will air their opinions countless times and the school will never take it into consideration (Youth 3, FGD5, 11/2017).

According to the youth, the situation is not different in other sectors and as such, the neglect for effective participatory communication strategies in the development process in the education sector is the microcosm of what happens at the national level. Youth 4 in focus group 5 stressed:

At the national level too, they don't consider us because they feel like the population is too large to handle and manage but when it comes to national census they would get people to go and do that but when it comes to making laws and decisions on behalf the people they don't consider that (Youth 4, FGD5, 11/2017).

Some participants argued that the problem circulates from the highest institution in the country (the Presidency) right from the source of the governance structure involving the three arms of government, especially the Executive and the Legislature to the extent where authorities do not see anything wrong with the process anymore. Youth 5 in the same focus group proclaimed:

The members of parliament who are representing the people don't even have time to come down and communicate with the people. They only meet them during elections and after that they leave them. They are always thinking about money and power. That is what is happening in the Ghanaian setting (Youth 5, FGD5, 11/2017).

Concerns in the contributions of the youth for example, depicted some level of bitterness towards authorities in the development process, especially government, regarding their marginalization from direct engagement, frequent consultations and critical decision-making processes culminating in regulations and even laws that end up affecting them (the youth).

6.6.13. Obstructions to implementing participatory policies and projects

Despite the quest for putting in place some innovative measures to enhance the full participatory communication practice in the development agenda of the country, there was also a clear determination to identify the possible impediments for the effective use of participatory communication approaches in the application of policies, projects and programmes in line with research question 3 of this study. When the Public Relations Officer of the Ghana Education Service known in this research as Funding Actor 5 was asked to identify some possible impediments likely to pose a challenge towards the use of full participatory communication practice, he responded:

Already the challenges are there. We will face some challenges as far as the cultural practices are concerned, as far as the level of education of the people are concerned, as far as political affiliations are concerned - those are the challenges, I think we will face it but we must be in the position of thinking ahead of time so that whatever development that is to be done anywhere the people in the development should be considered first but not the political parties (FA5, Interview, 12/2017).

In focus group 5, Youth 4 noted that the strong tendency of playing and toiling with education matters by political actors, for electioneering purposes will pose a great challenge to the overall success of the quest to change the status quo. He said:

Most times, the government doesn't involve the people when they want to initiate any programme because in the political environment, they have their agenda and goals they want to attain. They do politics with the educational system and so when they come to power, they want to make sure that these promises are fulfilled and at the end of the day they roll out some policies which are not favourable to the people (Youth 5, FGD4, 11/2017).

Youth 1 in focus group 3 said lack of a united force for action in correcting the wrong being done is one of the impediments for maintaining the status quo where governments continue to neglect the views of the people in the development process through poor and ineffective dialogue, consultation and participation. He observed:

Representation is everything. So, maybe we are calling for participation but coming together as a youth and a representative or maybe a cross-section of us to stand up to voice it is also one of the causes of the things that draw us back. We talk a lot, but it is within our circles, but have we come together to form a representation for ourselves to speak up? (Youth 3, FGD1, 11/2017).

Youth 4 in focus group 2 was also of the view that over-dependence on Western countries for support by most African nations including Ghana, thereby relegating all approaches to development from within the African context to the background may pose a serious threat to the call for change. He explained further:

…we are not participatory enough in any development agenda because of our affiliation and associations with some of the Western countries. Because we are always in haste to develop at their pace… thinking they are equipped with the best solutions to our problems. Because of that we see ourselves not fit enough to propose solutions, leaving the responsibility or onus on them. I think that is why the governments bring educational policies without contacting the people (Youth 4, FGD2, 11/2017).

To Youth 3 in focus group 5, the nature of the governance system as set out in the 1992 Constitution makes it too easy for political appointments to emerge from the Executive arm of government headed by the President. The group agreed with his assertion that such appointees are very likely to offer allegiance to the appointing authority over the real needs of development.

Youth 3 illustrated a point below using the political infiltration in the Ghana Education Service as an example:

> I think institutions within the educational sector like the Ghana Education Service have also failed the whole system because they have to identify the problems with the system and make proposals to government but most of them because of their political affiliations succumb to the plan of the government so it has been more or less an imposition. They impose the thing on the system but they should be the right persons to stand and say no, this thing is not going to help the system so we should drop it and go for this one instead (Youth 3, FGD5, 11/2017).

For a remedy, discussions in the group suggested for urgent attention to be paid to the country's constitution so as to put in place amendment processes to change the focus of the constitution to assume a participatory posture other than what were described as the despotic elements currently found in it with specific reference to appointments to critical positions. They advocated for a practice where independent bodies with representation from all sectors and the governance structure will be set up to manage such appointments instead of leaving most appointment powers in the hands of the President who is very likely to abuse it. The African culture was also cited as one of the critical impediments likely to undermine the forward march to the practice of full participatory communication approaches in the development agenda of the country. Youth 2 in focus group 2 said:

> I think one of the reasons why we are still where we are is because of our culture. Our culture is such that you do not talk to an elder, rather you listen to what he says because whatever he is telling you is definitely right. So as young as we are, we are not supposed to challenge or throw answers at older people because we have been told that it is wrong. So, a parent tells his child to keep quiet and the child must keep quiet and when you are told to keep quiet, it means whatever you have to say just shut up and sleep with it (Youth 2, FGD2, 11/2017).

Discussions on this critical issue in focus group 3 suggested the seriousness of the matter as this practice has been embedded in Africa for centuries. Youth 4 in the group revealed more:

> That is something we have been brought up with. When an adult speaks a child is quiet and we have also been told that so far as you have grey hair on your head, you are wise. So, he feels whatever he is bringing down to you is good for you. Which child goes to tell his father that because you work for me, I should pay you what I want, he is telling you how much he thinks he should be paid? It is some way for us to sit down and decide on issues (Youth 4, FGD5, 11/2017).

Some participants bemoaned the practice of adhering to only the views of experts at the expense of critical views of key stakeholders who eventually become the direct and indirect beneficiaries of such policies and programmes. Youth 5 in focus group 5 asserted:

167

When you look at the chain of participation, you realize that when it comes to education, they only end up at the expert level and even if they are going to come down it will be at the teachers' level. They will cut the children or the primary participant out of it, meanwhile it is about us and we need it. I think it has to do with our culture where we see the child or the youth as not being knowledgeable enough and to some extent it has found its way to governance and it is not helping (Youth 5 FGD5, 11/2017).

Youth 5 in focus group 4 was particularly concerned about the endemic African cultural practices that have lingered on for centuries making it difficult for the youth to challenge anything identified to be abnormal and so long as it is being done by the elderly, it is considered good and sacred. She said:

…decisions are made up there and we have no say than to accept it. Everything is decided at the background, but we just have to go through it because we believe that is just the way it is. Because the culture is that the elders make the decisions and when we talk about education, we are usually looking at the youth and we don't really have a say in this scenario. They make all the decisions and we have to accept it as it is (Youth 5, FGD4, 11/2017).

Just as the youth blamed the non-existence of the participatory approach on some cultural impediments against the youth, some chiefs also blamed the situation on party politics and modern governance system. Chief 1 expressed his opinion saying chiefs are no longer relevant in the current dispensation of democratic governance as compared with the past.

It was relevant at that time and they used the chiefs because in those days the chiefs were respected. They were the government, since the colonial era I think chiefs have lost their authority on the community. For instance, you cannot arrest somebody to your palace to discipline him, all happens at the police station and the chiefs are doing nothing and even it has come to a point where some of the people in the community don't respect the chiefs (Chief 1, Interview, 12/2017).

6.6.14 Institutional challenges to the full implementation of participatory communication.

Participants in this research admitted without doubt that numerous challenges would be encountered in resolving the vast participatory communication deficit identified by the same participants. Most participants deeply complained about the loss of patriotism by most Ghanaians which they considered a potential catalyst for correcting wrongs in society. Youth 5 in focus group 4 explained the argument further:

The reason why I think we will envisage a lot of challenges is that we have lost our sense of nationalism. Right now, people are so much interested in what they and their families will get instead of the community or the society as a whole.

So, they will rather seek their interest than that of a larger community (Youth 5, FGD, 11/2017).

According to him, "we have to reinstate our sense of nationalism if we want to move forward with such development programmes." Nonetheless, the participants agreed that immediate action must be taken in resolving the anomaly. Therefore, in addressing the deep gap of participatory communication in policies and projects implementation in the education sector of Ghana particularly, the participants identified the following challenges that need to be considered. Some participants also see the regular practice of neglect for the views of the people in the rural areas as an impediment to the introduction of participatory communication for development. They insisted that the views of such people count in national debates especially when the country is inhabited by a good number of rural populations. Youth 2 in focus group 4 stated: "we have to go to the rural areas because we most of the times take them out of our national discourse. We mostly focus our attention on the cities or capitals and the district capitals rather than going to the rural areas."

Participants engaged in the research, particularly the youth and the opinion leaders, called for change towards the attitude of what they described as "nine day wonder initiatives" that has eaten deep into the fabric of most leaders at various levels of the governance system. They insisted that this is a critical challenge to the success of the full implementation of participatory communication in managing development programmes, projects and policies because most initiatives of the past started very well but lost focus along the way and eventually became fiasco. Sarah, who prefers to be known by first name, explained:

> The reason why sometimes some people don't want to give their all is because, they feel they are wasting their time and that even if they do anything, nothing will be done about it because that is the culture we are currently in (Sarah, FGD4, 11/2017).

Angelina (a youth in focus group 3 who also wishes to be identified in this research by her first name) also noted: "taking decisions usually delay because we all have different views and taking into consideration all these views take a lot of time and may delay the process of bringing developmental projects in the area of education.

Another critical challenge likely to be faced by stakeholders in ensuring the full implementation of participatory communication in development programmes as pointed out by some youth in the focus group discussions is the high cost to be incurred in the wide-range consultations and engagement processes for intended beneficiaries to take active part in the decision-making processes. Angelina again stated:

> I also think there is an issue of cost because trying to get a lot of people to bring their ideas on board means you are going to travel and put in a whole lot of things. Sometimes when you get to a place where they don't even understand your language, you have to employ someone who can speak their local language and you would have to pay (Angelina, FGD3, 11/2017).

As part of the discussions regarding the high cost to be incurred in the consultation process, Dominic (who also wishes to be identified in this research) noted in an interview that:

> I believe development is a gradual process and one of the solutions to the high cost will be efficient planning that is targeted at relevant and specific audiences. So, I believe if you are able to target your audience or the people you are channeling the change towards, it will solve this problem. As such, you know who you want to speak to and you decide on how to speak to them whether on a mass level or on interpersonal level or even using opinion leaders (Dominic, Interview, 11/2017).

The youth in the discussion groups also arrived at a conclusion that the change expected through the wide consultations and dialogue may not be necessarily targeted at 100 per cent rather, development communication actors should expect a meaningful progress and a build-up on a later time. In view of this, Youth 3 in focus group 1 said:

> I think in wanting to effect change, you will not be able to attain a hundred per cent change but if you are able to reach a certain percentage that affects the majority, then you will be able to say you have done something. You will only be able to achieve a goal to a certain point and later build on that (Youth 3, FGD1, 11/2017).

Another participant, Youth 1 in focus group 3 cited one critical challenge to the implementation of full participatory communication as the difficulty in getting consensus reached on issues especially in emergency situations. He said:

> Getting people to agree on a thing is the issue. When it comes to a project that you really want to implement very fast, getting people to agree on one thing is going to be a problem. Development is different for each and every one of us so when you go to a particular community, maybe one person wants a borehole and another wants street light or something else, it will be very difficult to come to a compromise (Youth 1, FGD3, 11/2017).

From the perspectives of Opinion leaders, Opinion Leader 1 (OP1) suggested that apathy on the part of citizens to practice full participatory communication will become a challenge to be encountered. He explained:

> What I can see is the case of apathy. There will be a lot of apathy on the part of citizens because this is an era where we are not just a socialist state, there is a lot of private sector participation in the educational sector. If people are deriving satisfaction from there, they wouldn't see an important reason to involve themselves in the government's approach towards education. I think what

created the discontentment or the dissatisfaction is the fact that the demands of
these people are not being met (OPL1, Interview, 12/2017).

Participants in the focus group discussions identified a negative development in the political
landscape, naming it as "political sabotage" which according to them is eating deep into the
political fabric of the leaders bringing about retrogression. Youth 4 in focus group 5 admits this
practice will serve as a serious challenge to the implementation of full participatory strategies
in engaging all stakeholders for a common action. He explained more:

When a government tries to initiate a development agenda, the opposition party
will feel that this party will score political point if it tries to do this. So, whether
or not we think this is good we are going to sabotage it through our own medium
of communication and so you will hear different sides of stories even in some
cases the formulation of lies and propaganda (Youth 4, FGD5, 11/2017).

The participants elucidated their claim to suggest that political parties contesting for power
through elections pretend to care for the electorate by engaging in all kinds of things to convince
the voting public on their side through unpleasant propaganda. Youth 4 in referring to the above
indicated that "all of these things trying to confuse people and then trying to sabotage the
development process, and I think it is really hurting us in terms of development".

Admitting that funding will be one of the critical issues to be considered when considering the
use of full participatory communication strategies in the implementation of development
initiatives in the education sector and for that matter other sectors, Opinion Leader 4 and former
PRO of the Education Ministry also talked about the preparedness of authorities or development
actors to count the views of other stakeholders, especially the beneficiaries worthy for
acceptance. He noted:

One other challenge is the goodwill of the people, will the authorities look down
on the people and do they appreciate the contributions of the people? Those are
bound to be some of the challenges. There is the need for those implementing
the programme to appreciate the contributions of all stakeholders but if that is
lacking then it becomes a problem (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017).

6.6.15 Innovative participatory communication practice

Suggesting innovative measures in accordance with research question 2 to promote
participatory communication practice in the implementation of development programmes,
projects and policies, participants suggested several actions to be taken. Godslove, a youth who
prefers to be identified by her first name, in this research called for a more regulated
responsibility towards participatory communication practice. She noted:

So, it has to do with the issue of policy. If we come up with policies that will involve the people directly it becomes their civil duty. Ghana should come up with policies and laws that involve us in decision-making…I have my view and someone else has his view so when we come together, we will come at a convergence that would help everyone. So, the DCEs and MCEs are not just appointed but we decide who they are and how they are paid (Godslove, FGD1, 11/2017).

Youth 3 in focus group 1 agreed with the views of the above participant but added that putting in place regulated policies alone would not be able to solve the problem, rather a comprehensive framework including an entrenched national development plan. The participant said:

Till the time when we can define that as a nation, this is what we need, we have a five- or ten-year development plan and our policies fall in line with it, we will always struggle. If you go to the US, they have oil reserve and no one can touch it, not even the president but in Ghana we can't have it here. The president will even come and make a policy against it. Until we have an entrenched national plan that this is what we have to do as a nation, it will never work (Youth 3, FGD1, 11/2017).

In suggesting possible innovative measures for improving upon the participatory communication practice in Ghana especially in the education sector, Opinion Leader 1suggested a wide range of innovative measures to be put in place. He noted:

I feel the innovative measures to be adopted are town hall meetings, open fora, meetings with groups and societies at various levels culminating into a report... It should be participatory enough and the government at that level should see themselves as part of the people. They shouldn't try to feel big or better than anyone. They should also use both mass media and indigenous African communication systems in reaching out to the people at the grassroots (OPL1, Interview, 12/2017).

He equally advocated for the use of storytelling, drama, folklore among others as very typical tools for reaching out to those in the rural areas. He said:

People still make use of folklore in traditional communities…it is very important because we make use of plays or drama since there are even TV stations that are mainly working towards traditional communities. We can even use Telenovelas which are working so well in our communities so it forms part of entertainment education as we create our own films, drama, poetry, music and the songs; it will have a great impact on our communities if they are used (OPL1, Interview, 12/2017).

Some participants appreciated the decentralized governance system Ghana as a country has and backed by the 1992 Constitution. However, their comments criticized the way the system or the District Assembly concept is being managed giving rise to the undue tendency of taking away the independent decision-making autonomy of the various assemblies hence advocated for the

reverse. According to Youth 3 in focus group 2, a functional decentralized District Assembly system will enable assemblies to be closer to their people than what it is now. She explained:

> We first have to restructure our communication system and restructure our assemblies in such a way that we make sure those at the top are communicating with those at the grassroots level, maybe monthly. The people in authority will receive feedback from the people at the grassroots level. It shouldn't be only during the political period that they go to the people. That is one of the tools they can use to bring about participatory communication. (Youth 3, FGD2-11/2017).

Using the method of outright rejection of policies and programmes that are implemented by authorities without due diligence to active participatory decision-making strategies was also suggested. According to Youth 4 in focus group 5, such a rejection strategy is capable of sending a signal to the authorities to do the right thing, adding that they have already started implementing it and it is working. He gave an example of a previous experience:

> With the four years policy of the SHS calendar that they brought, the people rejected it and that is one of the reasons why they recognized that they can't just impose things on us. So if the community will always use our rights and knowledge that we have to always reject what they impose on us I think they are going to take a second look at what they bring on board (Youth 4, FGD5, 11/2017).

Still on the innovative measures, Opinion Leader 3 and former student leader advocated for paying of attention to the relevance of research and attaching strong adherence to the implementation of research results. He was of the view that:

> One thing we must begin to do is to start implementing the recommendations from our research papers. When the recommendations are implemented people are going to question and begin to see the relevance then both government and other donor agencies can get on board to support and the argument that there are no funds will not be there again. If more funds are released that could be one of the ways to solve it (OPL3, Interview, 01/2018).

He also called on the preparedness of students and the youth to be committed to the engagement processes, especially at the formulation stage of the initiatives as they are invited, thereby breaking the long term notion of slackness on their part, noting that this will serve as motivation for others. He elucidated further:

> …students, student leaders, opinion leaders and the youth should be actively engaged in the formulation of policies and when that happens that way there is this motivation and urgency of the young getting something to do in that direction because they know that for instance if I see that this is my idea and it has been implemented it motivates me to get on board whether you give me money or not, for the fact that my idea has been implemented, I am encouraged to do it (OPL3, Interview, 01/2018).

In suggesting other innovative strategies aimed at enhancing the use of participatory communication in implementing development initiatives, Opinion Leader 4 and former PRO of the Ministry of Education emphasised the use of chiefs and other traditional forms of communication in reaching out to the people at the grassroots to participate in decision-making. He said:

> …we need to involve the chiefs actively because they are the leaders in the community, and they are very much revered in the community, so they are people who everybody looks up to. Even the "gon-gon (metallic object used for passing information) beater" has a role to play such as going round to beat the "gon-gon" to mobilize people for a discussion about a project that is being undertaken in the community and this can be done only through the active involvement of the chiefs because they have the right to mobilize the people (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017).

Some participants admitted that the best approach to solving the deep gap in participatory communication in the country must be tackled holistically where everyone is expected to be involved. A youth, Dominic, taking part in an exclusive interview after a focus group discussion referred to "citizen journalism" (gathering and transmission of news by the general public usually through the internet) as one of the tools to be used. He also advocated for a more decentralized system in handling the participatory process: He said:

> My suggested solution is that participation in decision-making should be decentralized enough. There should be foot soldiers in every community to actually explain what these policies mean in various languages. So, take Kusanaaba my village as an example, we speak Kusaasi so I can be a change agent because I speak it fluently. I may be of help by helping my people to understand what the policy means (Dominic, Interview, 11/2017).

Youth 4 in focus group 3 also called for a proactive development-oriented media in addressing the possible challenges to be faced in implementing full participatory communication strategies in the country, especially in the education sector. According to him, "development journalism" (using media as a critical tool for promoting development) is highly capable of keeping the government institutions on their toes to do the needful. He said:

> We are talking about participatory communication and we are expecting that the government involves us. What if they don't involve us? So, we need the media to consistently set an agenda that we need to be involved in what is going on. We have the right to know and we just don't have to wait for any decision to be imposed on us because we may wait and wait but they may never involve us. So, we need the media to prompt the government that this is what you are expected to do; so, the major solution is the media (Youth 4, FGD3, 11/2017).

Commenting on the innovative measures to be put in place to specifically enhance the inclusion of students of higher learning in decision-making processes in the education sector, Youth 2, in

focus group 4, suggested that policies may not be enough to regulate this process, rather a law binding legislation. She noted:

> I think there should be a legislative instrument. If it is made the matter of law or a provision for them, it will be binding on them that they should consult the young people especially those in universities regarding the syllabus, curriculum and programmes they will design for pupils in SHS and the University. It should be a demand so that they can't go out of it or say I want to do it this way. There should be a legislative measure binding on them (Youth 2, FGD4, 11/2017).

The youth also called for consistent orientation to their parents at home so as to give their wards the liberty to choose their programmes or courses freely in school without a force or stress being exerted on them. They believed that the non-participatory element in the operations of government agencies and departments especially in the education sector regarding the implementation of policies and programmes is cultural and systemic and emanates from the home. Youth 3 in focus group 4 stated:

> If they are actually going to listen to us and bring us into the participatory process, they should also bring our parents into the process because some parents have this stuck image of what they want their kids to do and they don't allow the kids to do what they actually want to be (Youth 3, FGD4, 11/2017).

On the whole, while some participants in the focus group discussions recommended for what they termed "complete overhaul" of the educational system, some rather advocated for significant changes that will propel innovation, technology and creativity among students at all levels of education in the country through the assistance of some state agencies. Youth 5 from focus group 5 says:

> I believe the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences should have their role mainstream in our education sector. They should institute awards to help students who would want to engage in creative and innovative stuff. This Academy should be of national value in such a way that it honours creativity, innovation and students for their ground-breaking work (Youth 5, FGD5, 11/2017).

There was another profound innovative mechanism proposed by the youth (focus group discussants) on the way forward in improving upon the effective participatory communication practice in managing development programmes, policies and projects in the country, especially in the education sector. Sarah (who prefers to be identified with her first name in this research) in focus group 4 addressing development actors including government said, "put yourselves in places that you will be easily accessible to us, it is a two-step kind of communication where we can send messages and we can be assured that these messages are going to be read and acted upon".

Most participants were not happy about what they described as participation in decision-making without recognition for the views expressed and Sarah equally shared the same sentiments calling for a regime that will respect the public spheres of the youth of today- social media, where several engagements can be made with evidence demanding action on the views shared. She explained the use of flyers for campaigns and the use of social media platforms in reaching out to the youth. She said:

> So, they should put themselves where we are, aside actually creating innovations and then maybe handing out flyers to children in schools, I mean designing campaigns and programmes and hand flyers or somehow making the students aware. They should also utilize social media to get us on board since it is the main thing that we are using now (Sarah, FGD4, 11/2017).

Apart from the use of social media platforms in reaching out to the youth, they admitted that the use of face-to-face interactions cannot be underestimated. As such, Erica in focus group 3 (who also prefers to be identified in this research with her first name) suggested:

> There should be periodical open forums in schools at both the SHS and tertiary level where the organizations and bodies responsible for the educational policies and programmes get to engage students one on one. So, it is very conversational when students get to tell them what they think they need than what they want to give to them (Erica, FGD3, 11/2017).

6.6.16 Interaction in local languages

The respondents believed that in transmitting the well packaged messages to the beneficiaries, the government or development actors need to take into consideration the local languages of the people in the rural areas since they are able to relate better in those languages than the English language. In line with this, some participants also appreciated the way some community radio stations were established to enhance this process. Youth 6 in focus group 3 said:

> …they have been able to put up community radio stations where they operate with the local languages of the communities. Obonu and Radio Ada are examples where they speak Ga and Adangbe respectively. There are some of the television stations where they speak Twi and so I think that when it comes to putting things in place for the participatory communication to be effective…like the community radio stations to help the people bring their views on board so that they can understand what is happening (Youth 6, FGD3, 11/2017).

On the part of development actors, one of the policy officers at the Ministry of Education, known in this research as Funding Actor 4, said emphatically that engaging intended beneficiaries and other stakeholders is not possible to do. He said:

> Engaging everyone requires that you communicate to them in their local language and that is a big challenge, it looks like an impossible task because we have many languages in the country and not all of them are well developed and

so translating from English to all the local languages we have here becomes difficult (FA4, Interview, 12/2017).

6.6.17 Non-participation effects in development programmes

Throughout the research, all categories of participants including government authorities, alluded to the assertion that there are dire consequences for non-participation in decision-making processes involving beneficiaries in the management of development policies, projects and programmes. Youth 2 in focus group 1 claimed that: "the programmes are brought on us and not that we are brought on board. So, you often find out that whatever they do, even if it is infrastructure, becomes a white elephant because the people who are supposed to be involved to find out what is actually needed are not engaged". She described this practice as "imposing" policies, projects and programmes on beneficiaries with the desire to win political power by politicians during elections.

Citing the effects of non-participation in decision-making processes by the grassroots in the education sector, Youth 3 in focus group 4 asserted:

> …what it will cause is stagnation in our educational sector and going forward
> if nothing is done at all it can even make our educational system dysfunctional
> not fulfilling any objective or adding to our national objective of development
> (Youth 3, FGD4, 11/2017).

Youth 2 in the same focus group 4 also identified disconnection of the intended beneficiaries from the development projects, policies and programmes as one of the repercussions of inability to practise full participatory communication strategies in the development agenda of the nation. She noted:

> People will feel like if there is a problem the government should deal with it
> because it is not my headache. This is because we haven't been involved in the
> process any way, you started it so you must finish it yourself, don't think that we
> are going to seek solutions ourselves (Youth 2, FGD4, 11/2017).

The participants also spoke about the possibility of low participatory approaches in managing development policies and programmes especially in the education sector, resulting into lack of interest in education for both students and parents. They argued that, as unemployment rates continue to rise in the country, there are also frequent reports of unmatched course content with industry requirement being studied in schools providing a sharp contrast for job placement. The fear is that the situation may deteriorate more in the near future. According to them, since nothing significant is being done through the use of participatory communication to arrest the situation, losing total interest in education and education-related matters especially by the youth in the long run is highly expected. Youth 3 in focus group 4 indicates:

> ...if the educational system is not really trying to implement change in the person who is going to be educated, then what am I going to school for? It will be like oh everybody is going so I should also go. If I am not being persuaded to implement change in my society then I am not interested (Youth 3, FGD4, 11/2017.

Participants including the youth, opinion leaders and the chiefs were primarily concerned about the continuing neglect in the use of effective participatory communication strategies in implementing development policies, programmes and projects insisting that such practices lead to the total disregard for basic and person and group specific needs of the people at the expense of the preferred ones of the political actors. Youth 2 in focus group 5 quizzed:

> They are not dealing with the things that are most important so how can they just come to a community and put up an infrastructure and they expect the people to follow whatever infrastructure or policy they have made? Youth 2, FGD5, 11/2017).

Nonetheless, the research informants, even the youth, agreed in principle that there is at least some level of involvement in decision-making processes where only the leaders of the youth (in a tertiary education institution) are engaged in discussions and they serve as links between the student body and the management of the universities. However, they preferred to describe such participations as totally inadequate and limited in nature. Angela (who prefers to be known by her name in this research) is one of the participants in focus group 3 who appreciated the work of student leaders in her institution of higher learning though she admitted some level of limitation. To her, the administration of her university "mostly consult them". She said: "They are like mediators, they (management) tell them what we want, and they give us feedback, so I believe there is some form of participation even though it is not complete".

An Infrastructure Development Officer at the Ghana Education Service, known in this research as Funding Actor 3, admitted that one of the effects of a lack of participatory communication is a disorganized implementation phase. Nonetheless, he was optimistic for the future noting that:

> The challenges do not prevent us. Though it is cumbersome, costly, time consuming etc. we go through them, we don't allow those challenges to prevent us otherwise we can't do any project. Where you need to bring certain people in, you bring them and when you need to avoid certain people, you do so (FA3, Interview, 12/2017).

In order to understand the practical experiences of social development actors in the field regarding the use of participatory communication in the development agenda, the researcher also interviewed Opinion Leader 7 who is the founder of Keteke Ghana, a social development club at the Ghana Institute of Journalism dedicated to helping rural poor schools across the

country. He described the absence of the participatory communication as "gaps" that exist between the government and the people in the various communities they ever worked.

> I have been in this humanitarian programme for the past 6 years and anytime we go to the various communities we realize that there is this gap between the people and also the policies that their district assemblies are trying to put in place. So, I see the government speaking one language and the people speaking another language. So, there is a gap between what the government thinks to be done and what the people also think should be done (OPL 7, Interview, 12/2017).

6.6.18 Unanimous demand for two-way communication

The research reveals that all the participants (the youth, traditional leaders, opinion leaders and the government actors) agreed in principle that there is the need for beneficiaries of policies, projects and programmes to be included in the decision-making processes. Opinion Leader 3, who once served as the President of the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS), the umbrella body of students in Ghana, spoke about his experience as a student leader insisting that solutions to development programmes and policies must necessarily be developed by both the development actor and the intended beneficiaries. He gave his reasons:

> Certainly, both the provider and the beneficiary are to work hand in hand because if they don't work hand in hand there may be a gap. The provider may think he is giving out something which the beneficiary doesn't know the rationale behind it but if the idea and reasons are conveyed to the beneficiary, it gets the beneficiary actively involved to carry out that vision (OPL 3, Interview, 01/2018).

In addressing the current state of poor participatory communication practices, Opinion Leader 5 and Assistant Headmaster of one of the CDSHS called on the authorities to begin a process aimed at putting in place what he called a "fair representation" of all the stakeholders for an effective and holistic decision making process in for development matters. He said:

> I think that would have to be worked on so that there will be effective representation even if not all, a fair representation of the stakeholders in the various institutions in our educational sector must be involved in the policy-making than to live it for only the board of directors to do. Again, when such policies trickle down, it seems like imposition so people quickly like to kick against it and in other vain it seems they are being autocratic so the heads will suffer for it. (OPL 5, Interview, 12/2017).

On the part of chiefs and traditional leaders, the value still remained the same on the call for all stakeholders, especially chiefs who are considered custodians of the communities to be brought on board during policy and project implementation in decision-making to ensure the sustainability of the policies and the projects. A kingmaker in Ga State, known in this research as Chief 2 illustrated it better as follows as he directed the call to political actors:

This has been going on every year…we will usually talk, get us involved in whatever you are doing so that there will be sustainability in whatever you are doing because you come and go in four years. So, every year all the chiefs around the country… people have been saying get these chiefs involved in the local government and things like that so that they can help in the development of their States. We have been speaking about that (Chief 2, Interview, 12/2017).

From the perspective of government authorities, the Public Relations Officer at the Ghana Education Service (GES), known in this research as Funding Actor 5, also agreed with the views expressed by the youth, the opinion leaders and traditional leaders or chiefs that effectiveness of projects and programmes are dependent on the level of deep engagement with the intended beneficiaries. He admitted:

Before any policy can be effective and utilized well, there is the need for formulators of that policy to go down to the roots, to the people who are going to benefit from the policy, discuss issues in details with the people, get the ideas and challenges that the people are going through so that at the end you realize that the policy formulated will be beneficial to all. The government will achieve its aim and the implementers will achieve their aim and the people will also achieve same (FA5, Interview, 12/2017).

Some of the respondents, however, do not think all policies, projects and programmes necessarily need to go through participatory decision-making process, especially when the need to find solution to a particular issue demands urgency.

6.6.19 Restoring participatory communication practice

Various ways to restore confidence in the communication practice for increased stakeholder involvement in decision-making has been described in various forms by informants in the research. Opinion Leader 4 and former PRO of the Ministry of Education is of the view that there is always a way to solve problems like this. According to him:

We can solve this by letting those in authority know that for any project to be very effective there is the need for them to engage the beneficiaries. The engagement of beneficiaries is very crucial because without their engagement you will not be able to achieve much. So there is the need for them to engage the people, sell the idea to them, let them appreciate what you intend to do and let them get involved…it is something that all formulators of programmes should take note of (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017).

While commending the Free SHS Policy introduced by the NPP government, a traditional leader and Chief 6 (as known in this research) said, "SHS should be free, it is a very good thing". To make the development processes participatory to enhance the sustainability of the policies and projects, he also asked for a holistic inclusion of all key stakeholders, including

chiefs in the decision-making process at the formulation, implementation and the evaluation stages.

In taking steps to improve practice in line with the principles or practices of participatory communication, Opinion Leader 4 identified some key criteria to be met with a conscious effort put in the process to ensure that there is no element of pretense in securing the involvement of the beneficiaries. He called for the participation to occur from start to finish:

> Before you formulate or implement a programme, a policy or a project there is the need for you to involve the beneficiaries and stakeholders because if you are unable to do that it becomes a problem because the people will say that they were not part of the formulation of the programme and you are asking them to implement? So, programme and project formulators should engage the stakeholders so that whatever decision they arrive at will be of mutual interest to both parties (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017).

When he was asked about his opinion on the preparedness and willingness of authorities to accept and come to the realization that participation of beneficiaries in decision-making in the implementation of development programmes and policies for the sustainability of such programmes, Opinion Leader 4, expressed optimism, but called for more sensitization while citing party politics as one particular canker destroying the growth of the education sector. He added:

> I think there is the need for them to be sensitized because sometimes people do certain things and they think they know much but they know nothing. It all depends on the leadership, now it is a very crucial issue and participatory communication is very important so if those at the helm of affairs take the decision that from now onwards whatever we will do we will involve stakeholders, it will work…Our biggest problem in the education sector is that we do a lot of politics (OPL 4, Interview, 10/2017).

Still on the way forward for participatory communication, especially in the education sector, a former educationalist and traditional leader in the Anlo State, known in this research as Chief 7, advocated for the decentralization of the country's education system to enable the people at the grassroots to own and care for it. He explained further:

> Education should be decentralized at the regional, assembly and municipal level so that the people will own education. Education for the people will have the input of their thought, actions and inputs and when they feel involved, they will take care of the classrooms, the textbooks, and even the teachers and have access to them. They only access them during open days during PTAs when they invite them (Chief 7, Interview, 01/2018).

In arriving at the final decision to be taken when using participatory communication especially in the wake of time constraints, Angelina in focus group 3 said:

If you are using the participatory communication and you don't have everybody in support of something, then you can take the majority view. If the majority's view is in favor of something, then it means it is going to represent the larger group, so you take their view. (Angelina, FGD3, 11/2017).

She suggested early and adequate planning and the use of "time limit" as a remedy to the time constraints in participatory communication. In the focus group 5 discussions, participants suggested a mechanism of setting priorities and dealing with important issues adequately as a device for checking unnecessary delays in arriving at decisions when using participatory communication strategies in implementing development policies and programmes. Youth 3 in the group asserted:

What they can do to curb this problem is that they should at least weigh the problems. They ask the people and pick the most important one and work on it. Because they will get diverse ideas from people since it is not everyone who is going to consent to one issue, they will all have diverse issues so they should weigh it and look at the most important one (Youth 3, FGD5, 11/2017).

In a related approach to solving the delays expected when using full participatory strategies, the youth also suggested the use of the mass media as well as social media platforms in getting quicker feedback during consultations and decision-making. Youth 2 in the focus group 5 explained:

I think that if they are going to go by the participatory communication it is going to waste a lot of time. So, they should also involve the mass media and social media in disseminating the information since these platforms can reach the masses. So, the ones that they think that the media can help them get feedback that they need maybe through organizing open discussion on air and all that, they can sample all their posts for the implementation of the project (Youth 2, FGD5, 11/2017).

The use of chiefs or traditional leaders as agents of influence on their subjects was cited as one of the strategies to be employed by development actors in getting decisions taken on the urgent policies, projects and programmes to be implemented to save time and other resources. Youth 1 in focus group 5 further expounded this point:

I think the key stakeholders will be the chiefs, so you communicate with the chiefs and they communicate with the people. The chiefs have influence and so if in a way it is going to delay, you will strategize in a way that you will persuade the chiefs to influence their people to buy into a particular idea that you have so that you won't spend so much time (Youth 1, FGD5, 11/2017).

6.6.20 The Community Radio Concept in practice

Using community radio in advancing the progress of participatory communication during the implementation of development initiatives in the education sector was also topical in the views

of the youth during the focus group discussions. However, they were particularly concerned about how development actors use the community radio stations to announce policies and projects instead of allowing people to participate in the formulation of the policies using the radio. Youth 1 in focus group1 shared some sentiments in this regard:

> But when it gets to the formulation stages or when they are about to implement a policy, I don't think they do that. They don't go down to the radio stations to inform the people that we are about to do this and so what do you think about it? The community radio stations are there, but they are there just for announcing news and things that have already taken place (Youth 1, FGD1, 11/2017).

In view of the above, youth 4 in focus group 5 was of the view that the formulation stage of development initiatives are very important to the intended beneficiaries, hence the need for development actors to exercise maximum social responsibility by allowing intended beneficiaries to deliberate over solutions to their own societal problems using the community radio a tool at the formulation stage. Youth 4 said:

> So, the best thing the government can do is that for instance, when anything is going to be implemented, going down to the community radio stations or maybe telling the chiefs to assemble their people or town hall meetings to solicit their views should be encouraged. (Youth 5, FGD4, 11/2017).

In focus group 5, the youth expressed their displeasure about the concentration of the radio stations in the urban centres leaving those in the rural areas barely informed. According to them, since opinion leaders in the various communities yield enough authority to shape the views of the people, there is the need for development actors to use them in championing some of their plans. Youth 4 contended:

> …it is only a few people in Accra that get to know about the new policy that is coming, and they start debating about it. So, I think we should use the community radio stations to communicate in our local dialects and use our opinion leaders and we even have to involve the leaders of our churches and that of the Muslim communities (Youth 4, FGD5, 11/2017).

Concerns regarding ownership of the community radio stations emerged in focus group 3. They argued that since most the radio stations are owned by private individuals instead of the communities themselves, priority over programming is likely to be affected as owners may not be able to agree to the suggestions of development actors to leave their preferred programmes to air educational issues. Youth 3 opined:

> How about people in Northern, Volta, Prestia amongst others where they don't have access to television or radio. How then do they get information about these educational policies that we are talking about now? Also, if they have these community radio stations, I am not sure the managers of the radio stations

themselves are ready to propagate the issues people are talking about (Youth 3, FGD3, 11/2017).

6.6.21 The SEIP Project: A distinct case

Despite the widespread record of poor participatory communication in the execution of development programmes and projects implemented by the Government of Ghana, there appears to be a unique case. All officials interviewed as part of this research from the Ministry of Education suggested that the performance of the component of the World Bank Project, Secondary Education Improved Project (SEIP) which was part of the larger Community Day Senior High School project run by Government of Ghana was excellent compared with that of the one implemented exclusively by the government. According to them, the Development Communication department of the World Bank took total responsibility towards all communication related concerns of the project from start to finish and ensured its total compliance. They argued that coupled with the fact that the communication component of the entire project was fully funded, all the necessary structures were also duly followed from start to finish making it possible for all the stakeholders in the project sites in all the communities to be adequately involved in the formulation, implementation and the evaluation stages.

A policy officer at the Ministry of Education, known in this research as Funding Actor 4, was emphatic that there was clear difference between the project component delivered by the World Bank and that of the Government of Ghana. According to him, very comprehensive engagements with communities and chiefs are not usually done during government funded projects and programmes. He noted:

> We may go and build a school somewhere like you said and maybe when you are going to commission or inaugurate a school, we will invite the chiefs. But that level of engagement is not done especially in a purely government project but in the World Bank one, communication was part of project design and so there are resources within the project period to do that. So, the communication around it was better than the government one (FA4, Interview, 12/2017).

Reacting to the same development especially on the need for broad-based involvement and decision-making including the beneficiaries from start to finish to enhance smooth project implementation, the Head of Infrastructure department, also a Civil Servant at the Ministry of Education, who in this research is known as Funding Actor 3 said:

> …all those were planned whereby people were resettled and compensated and people whose farmlands were taken from them were compensated by the World Bank and so there was a smooth take off. But in any other ordinary Government of Ghana project those things are not factored in whereby there

will be a budget line for communication or resettlement of initial owners of the land all those things are not factored in (FA3, Interview, 12/2017).

Funding Actor 3 gave credit to the communication component of the World Bank project for the 23 schools constructed saying chiefs and community members had direct consultation with the officers from the World Bank and there was no way to "fabricate" anything. He explained further and recommended that the communication approach of the World should be copied by the Government of Ghana moving forward. He suggested:

> The World Bank had a direct relationship with the chiefs because they wanted an independent assessment of issues, so they confirmed some of the things from the chiefs, the stakeholders and beneficiaries before coming to us because they are at the receiving end. So, there is no way you can go and fabricate any story to them, they will go behind you and crosscheck…the Ghana Government should replicate a good communication in all their programmes using the bottom-up approach (FA3, Interview, 12/2017).

6.7 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The outcome from the interview and focus group discussions in the research produced a substantial document of findings largely divided into two: first – the participatory communication practice in the implementation of the three educational development initiatives – the Free SHS Policy, the Community Day SHS, and Tigo's Shelter for Education; and second – related issues that emerged from their implementation strategies. Largely, the youth, opinion leaders and traditional leaders (chiefs) agreed in principle on various critical issues including the position that development actors, especially governments often exclude key stakeholders in the education sector from important decision-making processes, with specific reference to the three initiatives studied among other related ones.

Out of the total number of 30 youths engaged in the study, 28 of them (93%) agreed that the authorities have consistently neglected their contribution in the education sector decision-making activities while 2 participants (7%) disagreed as illustrated in figure 6.1 below:

Youth's view about their involvement/participation in decision-making in education

- Agreed
- Diasgreed

7%

93%
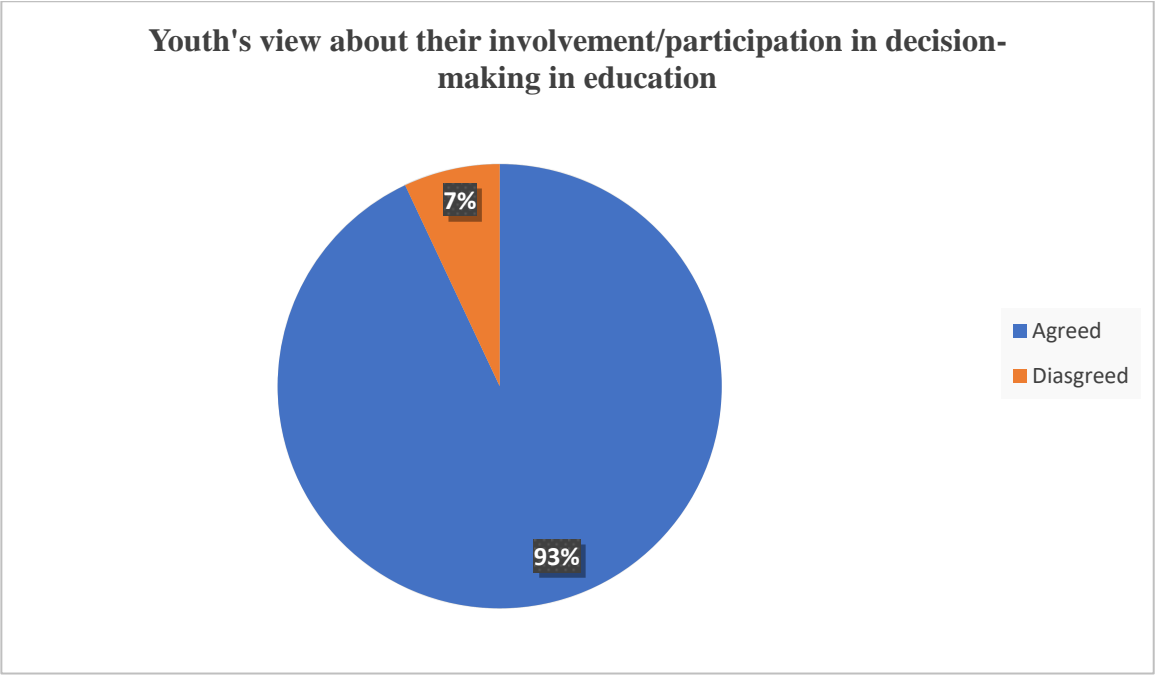
In the case of the traditional leaders (Chiefs) interviewed, 6 out of the total of 7 participants engaged (85.7%) believed their roles have largely been taken over by the government and attempts are not being made to get them involved in the formulation and implementation of education-related initiatives. However, 1 participant (14.3%) disagreed as illustrated in figure 6.2 below:

Chiefs' view about their involvement in decision-making processes in education

- Agreed
- Disagreed

14%

86%
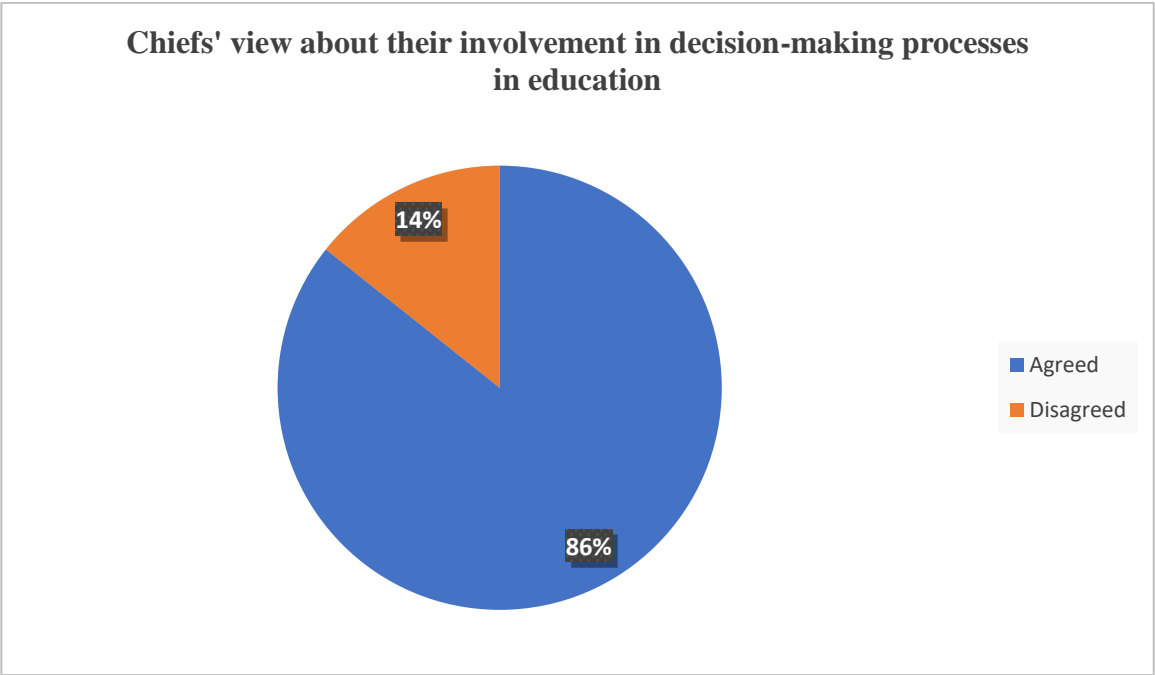
On the part of opinion leaders, all the 7 participants (100%) were of the opinion that their critical roles in the education governance process have been relegated to the background. This is shown in figure 6.3 below:

Opinion leaders' view on their involvement/participation in decision-making in education
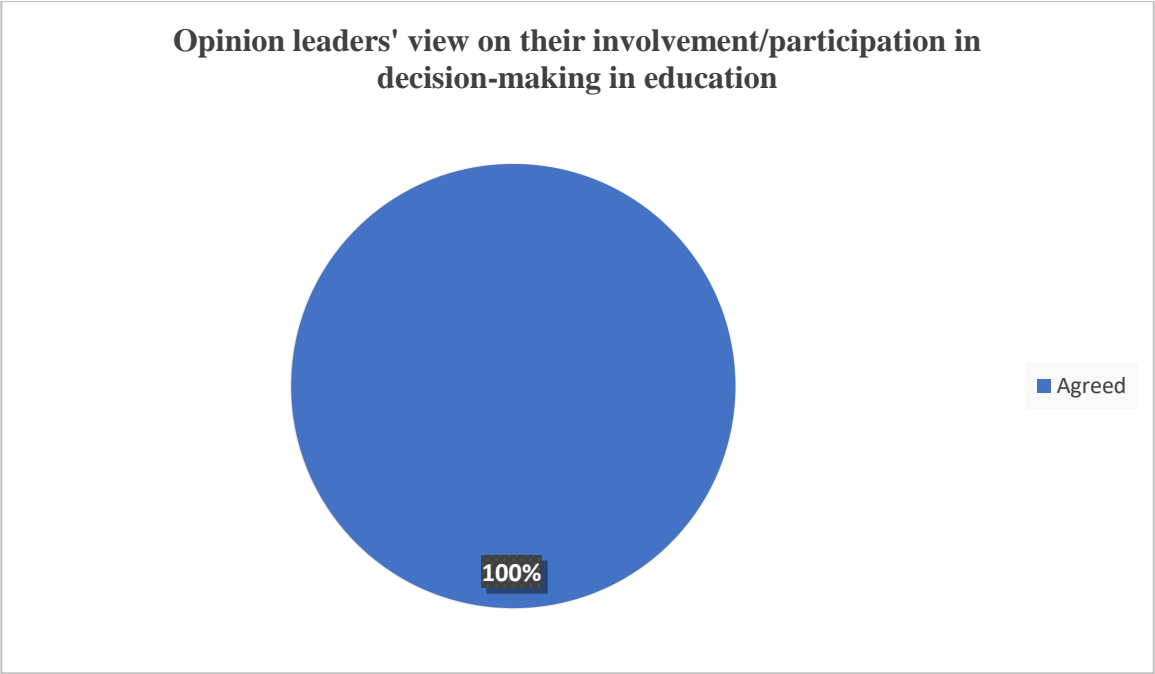
As the case may be for funding actors, 6 out of the total of 7 participants interviewed, (85.7%) agreed in principle that the inclusion of other stakeholders in decision-making process is essential (though they complained about bottlenecks that hamper the process) while 1 participant (14.3%) thought otherwise. This is displayed in figure 6.4 below:

Funding actors' view on the need to involve other stakeholders in decision-making in education
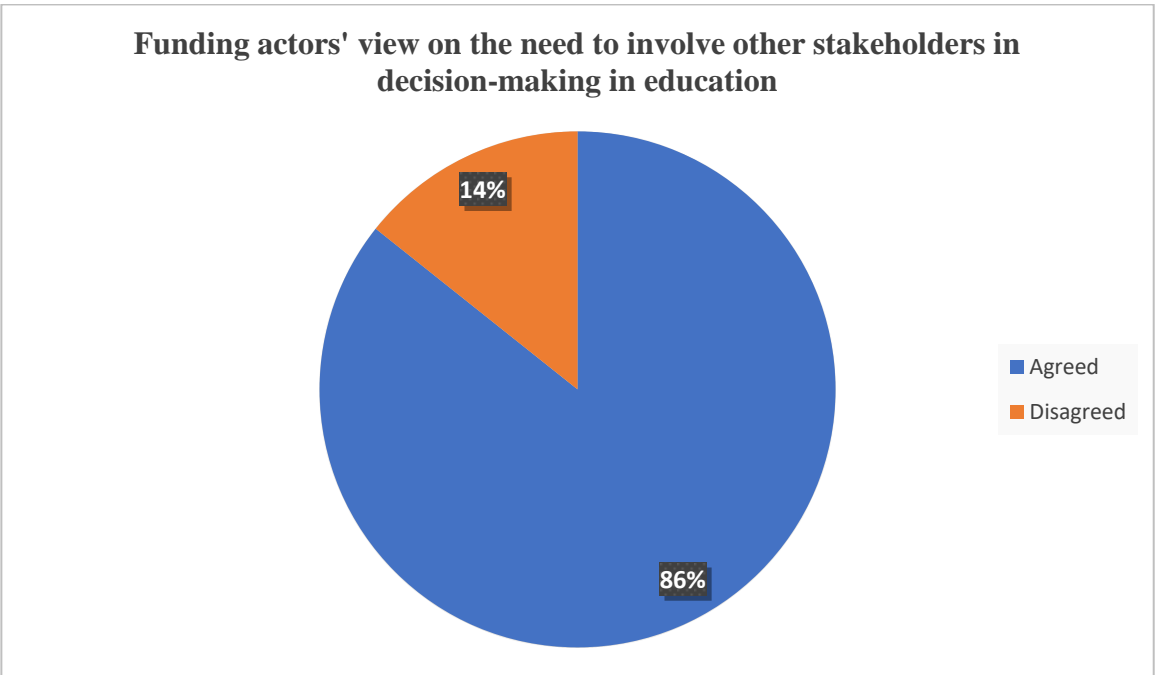
Even though officers from the policy-making institutions like the Ministry of Education concurred with the position of the youth, opinion leaders and the chiefs, it was with a justification – time constraints, lack of resources, party political influences, among others. It was however observed that Tigo's Shelter for Education project and the Secondary Education Project (SEIP), a sub-component of the Community Day SHS, performed far better in terms of the integration of the participatory communication strategies in the project execution.

6.8. CONCLUSION

This chapter compiled a wide range of situational cases including assessments for the already existing practice of participatory communication in the Ghanaian context - both in the education sector and other sectors. While examining the potential for better and best practices and the key challenges explored with possible remedies and innovative ideas suggested for implementation, participants who felt neglected expressed hope for a better development agenda that can build a holistic stakeholder participation. Nonetheless, the World Bank's Secondary Education Improved Project (SEIP) stood tall for commendation as against those implemented by the Government of Ghana.

CHAPTER 7:

THEMATIC DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

7.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives an account of analysis carried on the results of the empirical findings through application of the features of the framework for analysis set out in the literature review chapter of this thesis in line with the research questions of the project. The chapter culminates in the presentation and explanation of improvements in a new model which explains the nature which characterises participatory development communication practice in Ghana known as the Methodical Participatory Communication Model. The affordances, but also the deficiencies of development communication highlighted in this model, are discussed in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

7.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To rehearse, the research questions underpinning this project are:

1. What kinds of participatory communication structures and processes exist for community development initiatives in Ghanaian education sector?

2. Can a reformed model of development communication be created to allow the deployment of innovative measures of participatory communication in the implementation of development programmes in the Ghanaian education sector?

3. What challenges is government likely to face in the deployment of full participatory communication approaches in community development projects in the education sector and how might these be overcome?

7.2 INTERPRETING THE EVIDENCE OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION IN GHANAIAN EDUCATION PROJECTS WITH THE FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

The goal of this discussion chapter is to apply the theoretical framework derived from the literature review and relate it to the evidence generated in the empirical part of the project in order to address and provide answers to the core research questions of the research.

Therefore, in understanding the extent of participatory communication practice (where any) in the implementation of development initiatives in the Ghanaian context, participatory development communication (PDC) is the framework for analysis of this research used to analyse the empirical evidence gathered. Bessette (2004, p. 9) defined (PDC) as: "a planned activity, based on the one hand on participatory processes, and on the other hand on media and interpersonal communication, which facilitates a dialogue among different stakeholders, around a common development problem or goal, with the objective of developing and implementing a

set of activities to contribute to its solution, or its realization, and which supports and accompanies this initiative".

Bessette (2004) strongly argued that the PDC is a deliberate action of planned activities from development actors towards the implementation of development policies, projects and programmes using a systematic approach in its application using the following 10 steps (model) to be followed while involving all necessary stakeholders in the process:

Step 1: Establish a relationship with a local community and understanding the local setting, their culture, and doing research to know more about the background of the people.

Step 2: Involve the community in the identification of a development problem, its dimensions, causes, potential solutions, and the decision to carry out a concrete initiative in finding a solution to the problem identified collectively.

Step 3: Jointly identify the different community groups and other stakeholders concerned with the identified problem (or goal) and initiative and gather support from all of them in tackling the issue.

Step 4: Collectively identify communication needs, objectives and activities to be carried out in the strategy to execute the implementation of the development initiative.

Step 5: Identify appropriate communication tools that support two-way communication and appropriate in the context of the community people for easy accessibility and understanding.

Step 6: Prepare and pre-test communication content and materials together with all the stakeholders identified and involved in the process from the beginning.

Step 7: Facilitate partnerships from within and outside all concerned actors in the community, local technical authorities, specialized agencies, and the media in all the activities connected with the design and implementation of the communication strategy at each stage of the process.

Step 8: Produce an implementation communication strategy or plan agreed and fashioned collectively by the development and communication actors, intended beneficiaries of the development programme and other stakeholders.

Step 9: Monitor each stage of the process and evaluating the communication strategy to determine if the objectives have been achieved or otherwise as well as documenting the development or research process.

Step 10: Plan the sharing and utilization of results to serve as a learning process for the community or other people in a similar activity, especially development policy makers.

7.2.1 Application of the framework's definition to the evidence

The definition of PDC by Bessette (2004, p.9) with specific reference to "a planned activity", as well as the whole communication activity expected to be conducted "on participatory processes", were not in evidence from the results. It also appears that there were no deliberate and calculated attempts by the funding actors, especially the Ministry of Education, to achieve an intentional process of engaging all key stakeholders whenever there was the need to formulate development initiatives. Corroborating the views of the youth and opinion leaders in the research, the opposite of this was in fact evident, where only a few specialists were mostly gathered to take decisions in a committee setting, producing a report for the consideration of the ministry for government. Just as one policy officer at the ministry described the current process as "elitist" in nature, this research deduced that it is mostly a common practice for all governmental actors in Ghanaian education projects where the opinions and preferences of intended beneficiaries of development initiatives are ignored due to limited engagements and decision-making processes undertaken by the ministry. The planned activity element in Bessette's definition could further be seen as a mirage in the face of a proposition from a civil servant and policy officer from the ministry that he was optimistic the "elitist" approach in policy formulations were likely to continue, a clear indication participatory processes will largely be compromised.

Furthermore, Bessette's (2004, p.9) PDC definition element of "dialogue among different stakeholders" was not in evidence since there was a limited selection of specialists for committee setting deliberations where, constantly, the views of the larger constituency of beneficiaries are neglected, leading to the poor implementation and low productivity of the policies and programmes. From the views expressed by the participants, especially the youth, one of the reasons for the poor results recorded in the implementation of most policies and programmes is that there was no collective consideration of the development problem and potential solutions to it among a broad and diverse range of actors. Bessette's 10-step model of PDC was also applied to evidence from the field. From this, clear deficiencies were identified while few of the elements of the model could be found in the evidence. Instead, the development actors studied in this research - including the Government of Ghana, the World Bank and the then Tigo, now incorporated as AirtelTigo - carried out communication activities that conformed only partially with the prescriptions of the PDC framework as described in steps beneath:

191

7.2.2 Establishing relationship with communities and involving them in problem identification

Topical deficiencies seen were Step 1 and 2 that refer to establishing relationship with local communities and identifying development problems from such communities. These two steps were combined for assessment because both are processes in the formulation stage. These key components in the formulation stage were not found in the evidence where a relationship was established with the local communities first of all to understand their culture and local setting and also by identifying their problems necessitating for the construction of the Community Day SHSs. This is indeed, connected with the observation of a youth who pointed out that they would have informed authorities that they needed full boarding schools instead of the ones constructed if they had been consulted ahead of the project formulation. The implementation of the Free SHS is not different as the policy was introduced as part of manifesto promise by the government. Youth 2 in focus group 4, for example, said: "looking at the Free SHS policy…they didn't engage us, and I don't think they engaged us as a youth in Ghana to know our views". Referring to the policy's formulation and implementation, Chief 4 also asserted that … "the intervention was not well planned, the consultation or education of the communities was very minimal". Even though youth 4 in focus group 1 claimed that the New Patriotic Party did "…some research to know what the people want", he was not able to provide evidence to support his claim when his colleagues demanded prove. This, therefore raises a critical question on how development policies and programmes emerging from manifestos of political parties in Ghana are derived, especially when they are expected to assume a comprehensive consultative approach in the decision-making processes for the benefit of all stakeholders especially the intended beneficiaries.

In the case of the then Tigo, (now AirtelTigo) attempts were made to establish a relationship with the beneficiary communities through a meeting in the office with chiefs and community leaders after receiving the requests from the communities themselves which is very commendable. However, such meetings could best be done in the communities from the very beginning and that would have afforded every stakeholder especially the organisation to see themselves as the community people or the beneficiaries from the very beginning. Nevertheless, the performance of this organization in the implementation and evaluation stages was very commendable. During these stages, the community people were involved in the project, contributed their quota through self-help initiatives and were still in touch with the communities for constant updates including asking them to assist in various assessments after the implementation of the main project. The Government of Ghana sponsored development

initiatives (the Free SHS and the Community Day SHS) were the worst in terms of performance while analysing the framework with that of the results regarding step 1 and 2 of the PDC.

7.2.3 Joint identification of community groups and stakeholders

Step 3 of the PDC model requires that different community groups and stakeholders be jointly identified by the development actors and intended beneficiaries in tackling the problem identified in step 2. Evidence indicates that the Ministry of Education formed expert committees in addressing project and policy issues instead of largely involving the intended beneficiaries like students and parent groups in the critical decision-making processes. A policy officer identified as Funding actor 4 in this research from the Ministry of Education admitted that … "the students themselves were not engaged" in the process of the formulation and implementation of the Free SHS policy. Prior to the implementation stage, he however said, stakeholders such as school heads, school accountants as well as district and regional directors of education were engaged while a press conference was held by the Minister of Education, noting that "it was a bit in lateness". The youth and opinion leaders complained about the inability of development actors' engagement with them at the formulation stage where the problems in the education sector were to be identified and solutions designed to solve them. While a civil servant from the Ministry of Education gave reasons such as lack of time and budgetary resources for the failure to engage intended beneficiaries in decision-making, the youth and opinion leaders suggested that authorities were not prepared to engage them, describing the reasons given as not convincing enough.

7.2.4 Collective identification of communication objectives, activities and tools that support two-way communication

In analysing this stage of the process, two steps (4 and 5) were combined because the collective identification of the communication objectives and activities in step 4 as well as the identification and use of two-way communication tools in carrying out the strategy in step 5 are directly linked. From the evidence, it was difficult to find any resemblance of these two steps being carried out in two-way communication format in the case of the two development initiatives implemented by the Government of Ghana. In these initiatives, the intended beneficiaries were expected to be part of the design of all communication activities with constant feedback from all stakeholders as an important ingredient. Hence, the communication component of the Free SHS policy and the Community Day SHSs were designed and carried out from the Public Relations office of the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service (GES) mostly controlled by the Government. The choice of the communication tools for carrying out the initiatives was mainly done by the funding actors, thereby relegating the input of the other key stakeholders to the margins. By delving more into the situation to identify

possible reasons why this has become the practice, a former public relations officer at the Ministry of Education, known in this research as opinion leader 4 said, "our biggest problem in the education sector is that we do a lot of politics, we do things to satisfy only a section of the Ghanaian public". This suggests that the successive governments desire to control the communication and dominate the implementation of the development initiatives to appeal to their preferred voting public. While funding actor 3 suggested that a good number of stakeholders were engaged using different communication tools, it was still evident from his submission that the design of the communication objectives and tools were done by only the funding actors (in this case, the Government). Besides, he admitted that limited budgetary allocation to communication activities hinder the process of reaching out to all key stakeholders. In so doing, he clearly contradicted his initial argument.

In the case of the World Bank's Secondary Education Improvement Project (SEIP) involving the construction of the 23 Community Day SHSs, the level of engagement regarding the design of the communication objectives and tools necessary for two-way communication was well documented and formed part of the project implementation strategy with adequate funding for the communication component. However, the beneficiary communities or key stakeholders from the intended beneficiaries were not involved in the design of the communication plan at the formulation stage but were, rather, actively involved in the process during the implementation stage. Funding actor 4 from the Ministry of Education showed awareness of the significance of the World Bank's SEIP project stating that "the communication around it was better than the government one". Closely linked to the relatively successful SEIP project in terms of the design of communication tools and objectives for carrying out the initiative, was that of the then Tigo's Shelter for Education project. A communication manager with the organisation, known in this research as funding actor 6 noted that face-to-face and community gatherings were deployed most of the time to engage the intended beneficiaries and that this worked well for them because the projects were community-based ones.

7.2.5 Pre-testing of the communication tools and materials by stakeholders and forming partnerships with all concerned actors

Step 6 of the PDC model as framework of analysis for this research focuses on preparing and pre-testing communication content and materials together with all the stakeholders identified and involved in the process. In interpreting and analyzing the requirements of this stage with the evidence gathered on the development initiatives in the education sector, there was no evidence to ascertain pre-testing of the communication content and materials with all the stakeholders ahead of the full implementation of the communication strategy.

Step 7 of the PDC framework relates to facilitating partnerships from all concerned actors within and outside the community, local technical authorities, specialized agencies, and the media in all the activities connected with the design and implementation of the communication strategy at each stage of the process. Here, evidence suggests that in the implementation of the initiatives, the responsible organizations took steps to facilitate special partnerships from some actors and specialized agencies and, more importantly, from the media in relation to the implementation stage of the communication strategy only and not at every stage of the process as found in the Free SHS policy and Community Day SHS project. The use of the mass media in facilitating the implementation of the Government sponsored initiatives cannot be over-emphasized. Press conferences and live programmes were carried out many times during the implementation stage of these initiatives to create awareness among beneficiaries and to allow people to send their feedback, though some were said to have been done late as captured by a funding actor with specific reference to a press conference on the Free SHS ahead of takeoff. Facilitating partnerships with specialized agencies and actors in the case of the Shelter for Education project, funding actor 6 from Tigo said, "GES came on board and we went to the community and the chiefs also came on board". It was commendable that all these actors were brought on board because, the GES, for example, is the pre-tertiary agency under the Ministry of Education responsible for the implementation of policies and programmes. As such, it was important to include in the implementation of what was an educational project delivered by a private organization.

7.2.6 Implementation of the communication strategy

Step 8 of the PDC framework for analysis centers on producing an implementation communication strategy or plan agreed and fashioned collectively by the development and communication actors, intended beneficiaries of the development programme and other stakeholders. Prescriptions on this step could not match the evidence from the research suggesting that the communication strategy was designed in all the three development cases in the education sector by the development actors without the input of other stakeholders and intended beneficiaries. More so, the strategies were equally executed exclusive of the input of the other stakeholders. It is commendable in the case of the Shelter for Education project however, where "in some communities, the youth helped the contractors" that worked on the projects, according to funding actor 6, due to the high level of communication that took place to enable beneficiaries to get involved in the process. Enough evidence was gathered to assert that there was comprehensive engagement at the implementation stage, but nevertheless, this was mostly at the expense of such activity at the formulation and evaluation stages. For this reason, opinion leader 3 opined that "people should be engaged not only in the implementation

195

of the policies but in the formulation". From the submissions of the participants in the research, it appears the use of all forms of communication to execute the development initiatives during the implementation stage was considered of paramount importance to the development actors, to the extent that all resources and attention are devoted to this stage with little or no consideration for other stages. This narrow focus has clearly resulted in opposition from the intended beneficiaries. Chief 4 in the research recounted his experience about introduction of development initiatives in the education sector noting, "they get to know it at the implementation stage and when it happens like that people find it difficult to accept" it or even go a long way to cooperate with the implementer of the initiative.

7.2.7 Monitoring and evaluation of the strategy and sharing of results

While step 9 centers on monitoring and evaluation of the communication strategy to determine the achievement of objectives, step 10 facilitates the use of the results to serve as learning platform for other people. The evaluation stage was the least addressed aspect of the development communication process (alongside the formulation stage) in terms of the existence of participatory communication strategies employed for execution of the development initiatives in the education sector. The youth, opinion leaders and chiefs even including some funding actors raised serious concerns about the lack of communication about the development processes at the evaluation stage with some participants describing the limited engagement experienced in respect of the implementation stage as mere "formalities". In describing the forms of monitoring and evaluation measures put in place by the Ministry of Education during the implementation of the Community Day SHSs, a former public relations officer of the Ministry of Education, known in this research as opinion leader 4 said, "as for evaluation, it doesn't come in at all". He stated further that stakeholders do not participate in evaluation and still referring to the Ministry of Education, added that, "the same people who formulate the policies undertake the evaluation" suggesting a complete lack of communication around the process. Regarding step 10, where the results are meant to be published or used for the benefit of other development actors, communities and stakeholders, there was no evidence to suggest that results from the implementation of the initiatives were made available for the use of other stakeholders.

The deployment of the PDC framework for analysis of the evidence gathered in the empirical part of this research revealed clear gaps in the current practice of participatory communication in the education sector of Ghana. This calls for a better approach or model in addressing these gaps, especially in the areas of formulation and evaluation where key stakeholders especially the intended beneficiaries were excluded from these critical stages of the participatory processes

in development in the education sector of Ghana. It is to this task that the thesis turns in the remainder of the chapter.

7.3 DISCUSSION OF THE EXISTING POOR STATE OF PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION PRACTICE IN GHANA.

In line with research question one, review of responses of participants regarding the current state of participatory communication practice in undertaking development interventions in the education sector more specifically and other sectors revealed frequent policy, programme and project failures providing both the motivation and disincentive for active participation by intended beneficiaries in political and governance issues to question the status quo. However, Henning, Badiane and Krampe (2018) suggest that in response to continuing policy failures in many developing countries, participatory and evidence-based political processes are rather being gradually encouraged for ensuring balanced and efficient sustainable policies for the use of the people. This is not totally consistent with the results because in the context of Ghana, deep cultural inclinations of profound respect for the elderly and those in authority do not easily allow those affected to challenge the status-quo. This observation is in agreement with (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009; Detert & Edmondson, 2011; Morrison, 2014) who argue that cultural norms and values limit people's access to voice or silence in situations with higher authority.

While some participants said all forms of similarity of participatory communication in the Ghanaian context only exists at the macro level (national level) and remains a mirage at the micro level (intended beneficiaries at the community level) for those at the grassroots, others argued that most traces of the practice are in the form of passive participation and not the active one. This, therefore, means it is still not participatory communication identified but just a resemblance since it heavily lacks inclusivity at the formulation, implementation and evaluation stages. Indeed, passive participation – where stakeholders may appear to be involved in the decision-making process but their inputs ignored, could best be described as abysmal as it has the critical tendency of painting a picture full of mirage and attempting to empower the people at the grassroots but rather doing the total opposite. This domineering element by political actors towards policy, project and programme decision-making as suggested by some participants in this study, may be introduced out of selfish and vested interests, especially to force their ways to remain in office. This is consistent with Edwards (2001); Khalid, Mushtaq, Muhammad & Naveed (2016) that individual interest of some political leaders and their attitudes of implementing programmes that do not meet the desire and preferences of constituents always lead to the domination of the policy-making process, thereby relegating the

beneficiaries to the background. One former student leader, who served as one of the opinion leaders in this research narrated his experience when he was in office as the National President of the Ghanaian student body, Ghana Union of Ghana Students, describing one of such consultative and participatory stakeholder engagements with the government through the Ministry of Education as a mere "formality". Since decisions agreed upon at the end of such engagements were not successful in terms of implementation, such appearances of participation are vague and devoid of solution to development problems of third world nations.

While participatory communication increases the preferences of the intended beneficiaries to be met in the implementation of development initiatives, some state institutions help to deteriorate the condition. This observation is aligned to the assertion of Keefer and Khemani (2005) that it also leads to accountability of government. The typical experience of the Opinion Leader 3, and former President of the National Union of Ghana Students, regarding his call for the reconstitution of the board for National Council for Tertiary Education to include student representation fell on deaf ears with one of the reasons being that the board was constituted through an Act of Parliament and supported by a constitutional instrument hence the difficulty in getting it done with ease. This reason on its own describes the unwillingness and sincere unpreparedness coupled with total opposition on the part of authorities in the education sector to the call for amendments to the Act establishing the institution. If this had been successful, it would have made it participatory with recognition for the students who will end up becoming the recipients and beneficiaries of such policies and programmes emanating from the National Council for Tertiary Education since it is the body responsible for regulating higher education in Ghana. In some jurisdictions like the case of the UK for example, the independent public body responsible for the experience of students in higher education, the Office of Students, there is student representation on its main board and a permanent student panel as avenues for seeking the views of students. The Board of the Office is advised by the student panel (Officeforstudents, 2019).

As a result of these concerns, an assessment was done on other similar boards in the education sector, especially the pre-tertiary institution in the country responsible for the implementation of policies in the education sector, the Ghana Education Service, and this revealed that the situation appears alike; the composition of the membership of the council of the service has no student representation, a situation that could best be described as an avenue for prohibiting student stakeholder participation in education in a developing country like Ghana. Hedges (2002) applauded the introduction of Parent Teacher Associations and School Management Committees (SMC) in Ghana arguing that these structures provided better platforms for

participation of the local people but this is inconsistent with the experiences shared by opinion leaders and chiefs saying they lack the needed effective two-way communication styles.

Meanwhile, one particular area worth commending in terms of student representation is the composition of Governing Councils of all State-owned tertiary institutions in the country. On these councils, there is at least one and often two student representations. In cases of two student representatives, one represents the undergraduates while the other is responsible for the post-graduates. However, it is argued from the results of this research that the two students (at most) represented on such councils are not enough to represent the views of the student population for a particular institution without fear, favour or intimidation. Since most of the decisions taken at such meetings are voted upon with the majority view taken for implementation, the Opinion Leader 3, who was also once a member of one of such councils noted that the student leaders found in the minority are either directly or indirectly moved to go along with the decisions of the majority and the independent views of the students are neglected. This, according to the concerns of Opinion Leader 3 creates the conditions for lack of trust in most student leadership fronts because the student population makes their own deductions to conclude, sometimes, pre-maturely, that the leadership is always influenced by management or the council for selfish interests at the expense of the larger student population. Indeed, such concerns were also expressed by the youth/students engaged in focus group discussions from the Ghana Institute of Journalism.

Broader participatory decision-making processes are needed especially in the education sector with the desirable recognition for the students' needs to make provision for input from the larger student constituency despite the representation at council, board and committee levels. This engagement could best be done through surveys.

7.3.1 Links between poor participatory communication and domineering power and authority

The use of effective participatory communication strategies by development actors, especially politicians help greatly to empower beneficiaries of development programmes to be equipped in finding solutions to their own problems. This agrees with the assertion of Jones (2013); Chambote and Shankland (2011); Melkote and Steeves (2001) and increases the chances of ownership of the problem by the participants (Chi and Han, 2008; O'Driscolls, Pierce and Coghlan, 2006). In the absence of this empowerment for beneficiaries, power and authority are transferred into the hands of political actors but in a domineering format in developing and young democratic nations. This research also reveals that it is easy for power and authority that

originally emanate from the people to be placed in the hands of leaders making them to be self-centred in decision-making with little or no regard and recognition (in terms of their worth and contribution to development) for those at the grassroots when there exists little or no participatory communication strategies in the developmental agenda of a community or nation. Indeed, there is a direct correlation between the above and the assertion of Serveas (2006) that true and active participation involves the more equitable sharing of both political and economic power where leaders are able to allow for participation of beneficiaries in taking mutual decisions towards development, insisting that in governance, power and participation are inextricably linked.

Research informants frequently mention the high sense of disregard meted out to the people at the grassroots immediately after transferring power and authority to such leaders; and this they do mostly by relegating the electorate to the background in broad-based decision-making. It ranges from Members of Parliament to the head of the Executive arm of government. In this research, some youth complained of the situation where after elections, Members of Parliament tend to ignore them and will come back to campaign for votes only during another electioneering period. This is a direct reflection of a research conducted and published in June, 2019 by the Political Science Department of the University of Ghana and captured by the (Citinewsroom.com, 2019) suggesting that "49.5 % of Ghanaians surveyed have said they will not vote for their incumbent Member of Parliament in the subsequent election citing poor performance and a lack of representation" as the reasons for their decisions. Participants in this research attributed the unusual conduct of most Ghanaian members of Parliament to misuse of power and authority (p. 1).

It was also very interesting for one Opinion Leader and former PRO of the Ministry of Education to have raised concerns such as this regarding the non-preparedness of the authorities to appreciate the contributions of the other stakeholders in broad-based decision-making processes, a key ingredient in successful participatory communication practice. For a fact that this concern also came from a former civil servant in charge of communications at the Ministry of Education spoke heavily of one of the causes of poor implementation of participatory communication being misuse of power and authority on the part of leaders coupled with undermining the worth of the people.

7.3.2 Participatory communication's link with democratic governance.

The level of participatory communication in decision-making processes granted to beneficiaries of development policies, programmes and projects determine preparedness and ability to participate fully in issues of democratic governance in a developing nation raises concerns over the authenticity of the democratic credentials being depicted. This particular observation with the case of Ghana is consistent with the findings of Henning, Badiane and Krampe (2018) that allowing the citizens to participate in decision-making empowers them to make informed choices based on policy indicators during elections in choosing governments and selecting their leaders.

Various participants in this research ranging from the youth, opinion leaders and chiefs or traditional leaders raised concerns over the high level of unilateral decision-making trends in the governance process mostly exhibited by political actors in formulating policies that affect beneficiaries without their input. Indeed, Opinion Leader 5 was accurate to say that when authorities take unilateral decisions to formulate policies, programmes and projects before seeking other stakeholders' attention merely on the implementation, "it seems they are being autocratic". Ghana being the first sub-Saharan African country to have regained independence should have led the continent in showcasing enviable democratic practices that are not only experienced through the ballot box but across the full scope of the governance process. Concerns of the participants (the youth, opinion leaders and traditional leaders or chiefs) and even some participants from the category of the development actors or the funding actors gave credence to the situation on the ground to mean a calculated attempt by political actors to limit the participation of the key stakeholders in development to the barest minimum either by complete ignorance or intentionally for individual interests.

Some traditional leaders and chiefs were of the firm conviction that some of the policy-making areas are alien to them in terms of expertise, especially in the case of education making it difficult for educationists in the education sector to get them involved. This corroborates the views of Howlett and Ramesh (2003) cited in Khalid, Mushtag, Muhammad and Naveed (2016) arguing that due to limited knowledge of some stakeholders in the development process, other actors tend to take advantage of the situation to limit their involvement to the lowermost level. However, this cannot be seen as a cogent excuse for limiting chiefs in the decision-making processes in the education sector. Nonetheless, as much as some chiefs and traditional leaders interviewed were educationists with a high level of education attainment, these people could easily be allowed to take active part in stakeholder engagements for the benefit of their people, but these hardly happen.

7.3.3 Participation in only implementation stage excluding formulation and evaluation

Throughout the results gathered in this research, there was a clear indication of existing participatory communication traces (though sketchy and poorly managed) but a majority of these traces were confined to mostly the implementation stages of the development policies, programmes and projects with the formulation and evaluation stages relegated to the background. Even though some funding actors rejected this claim, it appeared the results were clearly overwhelming from the youth, opinion leaders and traditional leaders/chiefs and even from some other funding actors to establish this assertion. Interestingly, some participants even described the participatory communication element seen in the implementation stage of the programmes and projects as mere "formalities". Chiefs or traditional leaders who were once regarded so highly in the communities were also taken out of the formulation and evaluation stages in decision-making reducing them to function attendees as one of the chiefs rightly described it.

7.3.4 Challenges with or without participatory communication practice

In line with research question 2, implementation of full participatory communication approaches in developing nations with low democratic practices are bound to face myriad of challenges, and are likely to go through political, social and economic trials in such societies. Failure to address such challenges for a breakthrough also culminate into severe penalties for the development of such nations. The final result is that the beneficiaries are deprived of their right to effect the changes in the process. The preparedness of political actors to allow people at the grassroots to influence the process then becomes the biggest predicament for the vulnerable beneficiaries of already cooked programmes and projects. This result agrees with Gardiner (1995); Omollo (2011) in their definition of participation to mean a process where all stakeholders are given the needed opportunity to influence the design, policy formulation, implementation and evaluation of programmes to solve their own problems.

7.3.5 Development actors performing as intended beneficiaries

The wish of stakeholders in the execution of development initiatives is for the development actors, especially political actors, to come to their level and avoid all forms of superiority over the beneficiaries with the use of power and authority. In this research, one Opinion Leader categorically said these political actors should "see themselves as part of the people". The effect of development actors especially political actors seeing themselves as those better than their

subjects with a high sense of unsympathetic treatments eventually have the tendency of culminating into insurgencies from the grassroots upon getting access to knowledge. Some of the participants especially the youth in this research called on those in authority to change their approach to development to include them in every development policy, programme and project no matter the situation may be.

However, in the case of the youth and opinion leaders in the Ghanaian context whose society significantly upholds the culture of deep respect for the elderly and those in authority as those decorated with reservoir of knowledge and wisdom, any revolt in these African societies like this against all appearances of domineering tendencies may take some time.

7.3.6 Using expert committees in the participatory process

In an attempt to execute programmes, policies and projects to portray participatory communication approaches, some funding actors tend to use expert committees (Ministry of Education's approach in assembling experts on a particular issue for taking decisions for the consideration of the ministry's authorities) as a remedy to constitute inclusivity for broad-based stakeholder participation. Such questionable strategies are mostly instituted in defence of myriad of alleged challenges associated with full participatory communication practice involving stakeholders of large constituencies. It is not surprising that a policy officer in this research described this as an "elitist" approach capable of representing the views of other people at the grassroots level.

It must be established that such practices are capable of killing the motivation from the grassroots participation of key stakeholders. There are many ways such as the use of social media platforms, community radios among others to consult, engage and invite participation of large constituencies of key stakeholders in decision-making. Expert committees can be engaged after enough broader consultations have been made, various suggestions assembled for analysis and final decision expected to be taken based on the various submissions from both the beneficiaries and development actors. This should be the last resort and not the first in the practice of development communication. Alternatively, the use of expert committees can be done alongside the broad-based consultative participation of other key stakeholders but not the use of only the expert committees at the detriment of engaging other stakeholders.

7.3.7 Using community radio and social media platforms in reaching out to the masses

Community radio's critical role in development is enormous but this research reveals luckless ownership by individuals instead of communities retarding the development agenda of such communities as ownership shows the direction of operation and not necessarily the views of the communities. This agrees with Srampickal (2006) that mass media ownership poses significant limit to media's role in development with Wilkins (2000) expressing concern over the disregard for national development at the expense of global knowledge. This research identified developments suggesting that even though the participants advocated for the comprehensive use of the community radio system as a key medium for reaching out to the people, the said community radio stations are not wholly owned by the communities skewing their direction of operation in some cases against development. Meanwhile, the use of local languages in communication by these community radio stations giving voice and empowerment to the people at the grassroots level as argued by Diedong & Naaikuur (2012) was also consistent with the suggestions of the youth who appreciated how community radio stations use their local languages in the communication process. Youth 6 in focus group 3 said: "they have been able to put up community radio stations where they operate with the local languages of the communities. Obonu and Radio Ada are examples where they speak Ga and Adangbe respectively". The eventual effect is that the people are able to communicate understandably and effectively to contribute to discussions on development at their own level. This is particularly common to communities with relatively low literacy rates and are unable to communicate and understand one another in the English language. Notwithstanding the above, the use of social media platforms for the youth in particular and the community radio stations available in some communities could serve as platforms for reaching out to the masses.

7.3.8 The 1992 Constitution with enormous power to the Executive

Critical issues of domineering tendencies in the 1992 Constitution of Ghana were identified from the responses submitted from the engagements made with them through the focus group discussions and interviews. It was found that there were traces of too many appointment powers vested in the hands of the Executive headed by the President and such appointments to high offices assume allegiance link to the appointees limiting their independence and free access to resources for delivering on the mandates given them. A typical example is the case of the nature of performance with respect to the Director-General of the Ghana Education Service, which according to some youth is usually linked to the ultimate appointing authority which is the

Executive since all policies and programmes to be implemented are totally in line with the overall manifesto promises of the government in power.

Clearly, participants were able to draw a strong correlation between the too many powers of appointment and dictatorial tendencies trickling down to the political appointees in all sectors thereby hindering free and transparent participatory communication approaches in the execution of development programmes, policies and projects. A comprehensive review of the 1992 constitution could make it more participatory by assigning some strategic appointment powers to duly constituted bodies in the selection of these appointees other than the President as the case may be in Kenya's 2010 Constitution, as this is capable to curtail all forms of domineering powers from the Executive arm of government. This aspect of the research is partly inconsistent with the claim of Haido (2010) cited in Khalid, Mushtag, Muhammad and Naveed (2016) that some developing democratic countries have started winning transparency and accountability successes in policy formulation as a result of the congenial atmosphere created for inclusivity and participation for both state and non-governmental players. This is so because the existing situation regarding participatory communication within government institutions in Ghana is extremely poor while the one with private institutions also have some key deficiencies as in the case of Tigo's Shelter for Education project.

7.3.9 Ownership and commitment with sustainability assurance in participation

At the Ministry of Education for example, unequal dependence on some elites for advice (through committee settings) at the expense of the beneficiaries of policies at the critical formulation stage is best practiced alongside and not without the participatory communication guidelines or principles that will instead promote the inclusion of these beneficiaries in the decision-making processes from start to finish of the initiatives. At the Ministry of Education, where the country's educational policies are formulated and implemented by agencies under it, it was disastrous to identify the style or approach usually employed in getting the policies formulated described as "elitist" by one of the participants (civil servant) engaged in this research through an interview.

Even though reasons such as insufficient funds, time and unavailability of other resources necessitated for the committee-styled approach where only the stakeholders deemed to be relevant by the funding actor are often engaged through appointment for a period of time to form an expert view of the issue and submit a report to be considered by the Minister in the formulation of the policies, this is too limited in scope. This approach was condemned by a former student leader engaged in this research as an opinion leader who described the

development as "unfortunate". Allowing for broader stakeholder participation in decision-making indirectly means power sharing with the grassroots. The use of expert committees can best be practiced alongside the broader consultations with other key stakeholders in a project. It is to this end that Lozare (1994) demonstrates that participation may not be the desired option for those who currently control power and as such, they may be expected to resist such efforts of reallocation of additional power to the people. It also finds complete association with the notion of Kraft and Clary (1991) that it is often not rare to find authorities limit participation of stakeholders in critical decision-making processes to the lowest minimum or entirely abandon any move related to participation.

7.3.10 Management of large numbers involved in participatory decision-making processes.

Many participants (especially youths and funding actors) in the research expressed fear over undue delay and time to be consumed especially when very large numbers of people or communities are to be involved in participatory decision-making processes. For example, one policy officer at the Ministry of Education argued that when large groups of people are to be involved in participatory communication activities, successful execution of government policies and programmes will be hampered as it will be time consuming and very expensive. It is to be noted that putting in place participatory communication practices and strategies in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of development policies, programmes and projects do not necessarily require for the participation of all citizens in a country, state, region, district or community at one point in time. Situational analysis and stakeholder segregation of each participatory development case will determine the relevant structures to be put in place to ensure the participation of the very key stakeholders who would serve as candid representatives of the entire population in instances where the whole population is too large to arrive at consensus decisions.

Besides, various platforms could be used as avenues for reaching a large number of people within the shortest possible time to solicit their candid views, contributions and support or otherwise of initiatives before formulation and implementation. A typical one is the use of social media platforms, or electronic surveys through the internet. In developing nations for example, the youth could be mostly targeted with this approach while the elderly could be reached through the community radio system.

Not all the people engaged in the participatory processes towards the implementation of development initiatives will essentially arrive at a consensus, however, a well-coordinated and

comprehensive process will arrive at various commonalities in terms of views and opinions towards a particular subject of interest to the group. As much as similarities are established in the responses or opinions of the people, key stakeholders could then be introduced at this stage for further deliberations before coming out with the final policy, programme or project. At this point, all parties are sure to identify their interests in the policy or project since the key stakeholders are their direct representatives who are to assemble the interests of the larger population.

7.3.11 Donor sponsored projects adhering to participatory communication practice

Results from the research also revealed that development initiatives emanating from international donor agencies like the World Bank that have structures for promoting development communication in the projects are able to adequately achieve the goals of participatory communication approaches earmarked for implementation as against those strictly emanating from developing nations with limited resources for sponsoring the communication components of such projects and programmes. This was seen in the references from one policy officer (known in this research as funding actor 4) from the Ministry of Education while asking for such structures to be put in place by government moving forward said "the communication around it was better than the government one". Funding actor 4 also, also a policy officer at the Ministry, equally commended the style of the World Bank in which all projects executed by the Ministry in the past seemed to have communication components with budgetary resources adequately assigned to help execute the broad-based communication approaches necessary. He said: "the Ghana Government should replicate a good communication in all their programmes, especially bring on board the beneficiaries thus using the bottom-up approach".

In the case of this research, a clear difference of far better practices of broad-based engagements among the key stakeholders were seen in the implementation of the 23 Community Day SHSs under the Secondary Education Improvement Project as against the Government of Ghana fully funded community day schools constructed.

7.3.12 Combining Public Relations and Development Communication strategies

The research engaged two Public Relations Officers (PRO) from the Ministry of Education – one was former and the other the incumbent at the time of conducting this research. The former PRO (Opinion Leader 5) was emphatic to suggest that the Ministry "pretends" to involve the

stakeholders and beneficiaries in decision-making processes. The PRO who was in office at the time of this research defended the participatory communication process and even rated it as "high" but failed to adequately offer enough defence even after admitting it still has room for improvement. After subjecting the two responses to critical analysis, it appeared the PRO in office at the time was trying to protect the image of the institution whilst the former was forthright in admitting that the ministry only attempts to engage beneficiaries of policies and programmes, (as supported by the views of other officers at the ministry) hence the "pretence". Clearly, it is expected that in practical sense, the public relations' role of protecting the public image of organisations surpass that of the interest of its publics and in this case, beneficiaries. It appears that it is not possible for public relations to assume equal position in protecting the image/reputation of organisations and at the same time prioritising the interests of its publics (beneficiaries) through comprehensive stakeholder engagements and decision-making. More importantly, this research was necessitated out of the inability of public relations to solve pertinent misunderstandings between the community members and the Ministry in the implementation of key educational policies, programmes and projects.

In light of this, a civil servant in charge of infrastructure development at the Ministry of Education, known in this research as Funding Actor 3, highly recommended the communication approach used by the World Bank in implementing 23 of the Community Day SHSs in the country saying it was very good and called on the Government of Ghana to emulate this Development Communication embedded approach in implementing all projects moving forward for the desired results. Even though the recommendation sounded very good, it appeared the strategies used by the Public Relations Unit of the Ministry was limited in delivering the full results as against participatory communication strategies used by the World Bank. Clearly, this appears to be a call for Development Communication departments to be established in all strategic state-owned institutions alongside the Public Relations offices for desired results.

7.4 MAJOR INFERENCES AND ISSUES FROM THE DISCUSSION

1. Low participation of some stakeholders especially intended beneficiaries of the education initiatives. There was also evidence of little or no knowledge of the needs and preferences of the direct beneficiaries around which the education initiatives were tailored.

2. The very lean and totally restrictive student participation channels in decision-making process in the education sector limits the progressive educational standards and quality innovation.

3. The one-time vibrant chieftaincy institution that operated within the typical rudiments of democratic decision-making mostly under participation involving subjects has been largely reduced to mere ceremonial figures after the emergence of modern democracy political administration.

4. The much-touted democratic credentials enjoyed by Ghana since the emergence of the 1992 Constitution appears to be vibrant only at the polls but acutely epileptic in participatory decision-making involving the grassroots. The current democratic style has been described by respondents as a "façade" and "questionable".

5. Governmental or political actors admire the cherished credentials of participatory communication in the management of development policies, programmes and projects yet lack the appetite to implement such strategies due to self-interested reasons.

6. Long lasting systemic cultural impediments in the African context, requiring the young ones to receive, accept and consume everything hook line and sinker from the elderly with no option to question or challenge the veracity of the content is one of the typical sickling common denominators for the shambolic participatory communication practice in governance.

7. A direct inseparable link has been established between strong and practicable participatory communication on the one hand and democracy on the other, hence a deviation from one affects the other spontaneously.

7.5 A NEW MODEL FOR PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION PRACTICE IN GHANA

In line with objective 4 of this research to provide a new conceptual model of participatory development communication in Ghana and drawing on the evidence and analysis of the thesis to this point, a new model is now presented, known as *the Methodical Participatory Communication Model*. The new model was derived in two stages:

1. Creation of a preliminary model of development communication in Ghana as it currently exists, termed the 'impoverished model', derived directly from the application of PDC to the evidence (as illustrated in the previous parts of this chapter).

2. Then development of this stage 1 model by applying insights from literature on Ghana to the preliminary model to create what is considered to be a 'realistic type' model containing 7 steps: ***The Methodical Participatory Communication Model***.

7.6 STAGE 1: THE CURRENT STATE OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION IN EDUCATION PROJECTS IN GHANA - THE 'IMPOVERISHED' MODEL

In the process of analysis and discussion, in evaluating the current practice of participatory communication in the education sector of Ghana – applying the framework of analysis to the evidence (see earlier in this chapter), the researcher found a very weak practice, which is here referred to as the "the impoverished model" as many gaps were found when compared to the parameters of the PDC framework for analysis. Below is the full description of the current practice examined in three phases – formulation, implementation and evaluation:

7.6.1 Formulation

The analysis revealed that the use of effective communication involving all key stakeholders in the formulation stage of development initiatives in the education sector is absent. While it is essential according to the PDC model, the framework for analysis, that all intended beneficiaries are consulted and actively involved in the identification of problems in their communities, all development actors studied in this research did not offer any opportunity to the intended beneficiaries to identify their own problems to be solved. Instead, these actors designed their own mechanisms about the kind of projects to be undertaken with very little or no involvement of the intended beneficiaries in deciding what is good and necessary to be solved for them. Students, who often were the intended beneficiaries of the educational initiatives were mostly excluded from the key decision-making platforms created by the Ministry of Education to design policies and projects for implementation by the agencies under it. Attempts by the student union groups, for example, the National Union of Ghana Students, to get the situation corrected to allow for active participation of student leaders in all policy and project decision-making processes ended in fiasco. The evidence gathered clearly revealed that not only the students were affected; chiefs, opinion leaders and the youth were excluded from the formulation of initiatives. The current practice of communication in decision making at the formulation stage of educational development initiatives is driven by political inclinations usually guided by manifesto promises from political parties during elections. The overall effect is that since the intended beneficiaries of the educational development initiatives do not actively take part in deciding what to do, when and how to solve their problems, most of them become totally detached from the projects at various stages of execution.

7.6.2 Implementation

The current state of the use of effective communication at the implementation stage of development initiatives in the education sector can best be described as an improved version of what pertains at the formulation stage. At this stage, the various development actors are viewed to be active in bringing all the stakeholders together to take part in the activities involved through awareness creation using the mass media and other tools of communication. Even though the concerted efforts at increasing communication at the implementation stage to include many stakeholders as possible is not well coordinated to produce efficient results, this stage in the entire process has seen some level of improvement from all the development actors. Nevertheless, some participants in this research described such efforts as mere "formalities" noting that the efforts put into such communication activities aimed at bringing the stakeholders together are meant to serve the interest of the actors and not the beneficiaries.

7.6.3 Evaluation

The worst performing stage of the entire communication process as evaluated by the PDC framework is the monitoring and evaluation stage when executing development initiatives in the education sector of Ghana. Regarding the initiatives implemented by the Government of Ghana - the Free SHS and the Community Day SHSs, the only stakeholder seen in the monitoring and evaluation stage is the Ministry of Education. A former public relations officer interviewed in this research also attested to this claim noting that the same Ministry implements projects and "evaluates them". In the case of the Shelter for Education project, an approach by the development actor to involve the community people in the evaluation stage is commendable. It was also revealed in this current state of poor application of participatory communication to the implementation of educational development initiatives that there was no coherence in the conduct of the communication activities. There was no evidence of systematic presentation of communication activities implemented by the Ministry of Education as evaluated with the PDC framework for analysis prompting the design of a proactive model with a logical approach in using effective communication for carrying out initiatives.

7.7 STAGE 2: THE METHODICAL PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION MODEL

This Methodical Participatory Communication model is defined as follows:

The logical application of relevant, realistic and appropriate two-way communication activities in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of development initiatives by all stakeholders while giving prominence to the intended beneficiaries to participate in the design of solutions to their own problems.

1. *Getting to know the community, culture, and environment through a lead(er).*
This lead(er) could either be the media or the people (intended beneficiaries) themselves. Since development communication uses all forms of communication in its approach, a particular community can easily be brought to the limelight through a mass media, community media or even social media. The people in the community themselves can equally bring the attention of the community to development actors through their community leaders such as chiefs or opinion and youth leaders. For example, a community with its students recording increasing low performance in examination at the basic or secondary school level could draw the attention of government's agencies responsible for education to the situation either through the chiefs or the media that will serve as lead. The lead (if a chief) could invite government officials to the community during traditional festivals such as Hogbetsotso (festival of exodus) Aboakyer (hunting of antelope) and they will get to know the community. The media as the lead in this case could also be used to publish stories about the community to project it to development actors.

2. *Identifying and building consensus on a problem selection through examining other possible development problems within the community*. After the first step has been exhausted, where government authorities (development actors) are expected to know the community, its problems could be presented at this stage. There may be other issues to be addressed in the community but the problem with priority must at all times be identified and accepted as such, together with the development actor and the community members. For instance, having collectively chosen the low academic performance to be addressed over other issues, there is also the need to know the source of the problem even after community consultative meetings. Afterward at public gatherings like festivals, the traditional leaders (chiefs) could draw the attention of the government and education officials to the issue in an appeal for assistance. The government, through the decentralised administration is therefore expected to send a team of education experts to the community to assess the situation together with the community members through their cooperation. Where a consensus is reached on the causes of poor academic performance among students, both the development actors (education officers) and the community will decide on the next line of action especially, in addressing short, medium- and long-term issues surrounding the problem identified.

3. *Discovering and categorizing key stakeholders to be responsible for the management of the problem*. This must involve members from both the development actor's team and that of the community or beneficiaries. Here the important stakeholders from the community including

the chiefs, opinion leaders, youth leaders, men and women leaders, parents of the school children, the students themselves and teachers as well as the government and education officials - both at the central and decentralised administrative levels - identified and grouped according to the generally accepted way of addressing the problem using the short, medium and long term goals as the determinants. In some cases, where necessary, expert committees could be formed but this only happens after all the stakeholder discussions have been exhausted. In cases where the stakeholders need capacity trainings to equip them through the process, this could be done in reciprocation where those already trained would be given the opportunity to train others to reduce cost and other resources.

4. *Cooperative design of effective two-way participatory communication strategy for implementing the development problem from start to finish.* Stakeholder categorization must be done to design specific and appropriate participatory communication channels such as face-to-face meetings, community gatherings, community radio discussions and tools for each category capable of producing broad-based engagements. The intended beneficiaries of the initiative should be given the opportunity to form a unique group to decide on the kind of appropriate and relevant two-way communication tools that are compliant with the cultural and societal setting of their members. This is important because it is expected that all the key stakeholders will use such communication tools in the decision-making processes throughout the project implementation period to receive information, make suggestions and receive feedback.

In instances where the development actors propose a more convenient communication tool for executing the project, adequate research is needed to be done on it to provide the necessary equipment and the required education for its use to enable all the key stakeholders subscribe to it. Effective time management should be a key element of this design and this can be delivered by ensuring that all stakeholders attend to their assignments promptly. In a bid to promote press freedom, most Ghanaian communities after a careful stakeholder classification, may resort to the use of development and citizen journalism for the stakeholders during critical decision-making processes that involve a wide range of beneficiaries. For the young people most especially, these are two key means of achieving the success of the Methodical Participatory Communication Model, which can be achieved through the community radio and social media platforms. While the elderly may be encouraged to participate fully in discussions through call-in programmes on radio, the youth having access to social media platforms may be encouraged to use the social media platforms to contribute to discussions on education-related development initiatives, devoid of rancour.

5. *Conduct a fact and solution finding mission to identify possible solution proposals from the beneficiaries on how they want the problem at hand to be resolved before designing the final implementation plan for solving it*. Where necessary, expert panels could be formed but only based on an earlier broad-based consultation and engagement proposals. For example, in the above scenario, the community and the education officials may decide to engage the students, teachers and parents through focus groups and interviews to come out with proposals on how to adopt a more practical measure in addressing the poor performance among students. Developing and implementing solutions collectively will allow the beneficiaries to cooperate fully with all other stakeholders during the implementation stage.

6. *Using participatory implementation, monitoring and evaluation strategies to conduct comprehensive assessment of the development project.* All parties engaged in the formulation and implementation stages must also take part in the monitoring and evaluation processes. This stage clearly involves the implementation and the evaluation stages. This is where the community members - chiefs, opinion leaders, parents and students - are also expected to offer their services in any form to the total realisation of the project, where at the end of the entire process, good academic performance would be realised. Under no circumstance should the monitoring and the evaluation strategies be left in the hands of only the development actors (education officers) as it is not likely to produce a holistic report capable of addressing the needs and preferences of the beneficiaries. This stage forms a critical component of the entire process where frequent and regular monitoring teams developed from all the stakeholders are expected to meet and produce a report for discussion and decisions taken on the next line of action until the programme or project finally comes to an end.

7. *Establishing mechanisms to ensure sustainability and durability of the development programme.* The approach should be capable of meeting future needs of other communities, especially through additional research by other communities. Practical measures should equally be put in place to ensure that the success achieved is not compromised later by any stakeholder of the stakeholders involved in the project. As such, all stakeholders ensure there is an essential component of instituting sustainability mechanisms (e.g. forming watchdog committees and regulatory bodies) to ensure that the community education continues on regular basis with community members playing a pivotal role in this as beneficiaries who own the programme.

7.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter relied on the evidence produced from the focus groups and interviews to analyse and discuss the framework for analysis, PDC, with the three development cases in the education sector of Ghana (the Free SHS policy, Community Day SHS and Shelter for Education). Though the results show series of gaps in the participatory communication practice indicating the need for introduction of a more practicable model, the Methodical Participatory Communication (MPC) was designed. This seven-step-model works systematically while giving prominence to the participation of all key stakeholders, especially the intended beneficiaries of initiatives taking part in all the stages (formulation, implementation and evaluation). Results of the thematic discussion also produced some major issues than can largely be dealt with using the new model, MPC. To effectively address the gaps using the new model, some bottlenecks such as addressing the domineering elements in the Ghana's 1992 Republican Constitution through possible holistic review of the constitution will be a vital thing to consider.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

8.0 INTRODUCTION

This research has studied the contribution of participatory communication to development in a developing country like Ghana with focus on the education sector. This chapter provides the conclusion to the entire research with emphasis on the reexamination and attainment of goals of the study (research questions) giving rise to the establishment of contribution to knowledge. It also identifies some limitations, policy recommendations, and proposals for future research in this area of study as well as final statement on the entire research.

8.1. THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS REEXAMINED

In line with the conclusion chapter, the research questions set out for the study were evaluated with the results obtained from the focus groups and interview data gathered to establish the veracity for its fulfilment as found below:

1. *What kinds of participatory communication structures and processes exist for community development initiatives in Ghanaian education sector?*

From the available evidences gathered during this study, the research submits that there is a form of participatory communication practice in Ghana and more specifically, the education sector in terms of formulation, implementation and evaluation of development initiatives. What is this form identified? The participatory communication practice identified in implementing development initiatives could best be described as very minimal, sketchy and full of domineering tendencies from the authorities when it comes to participatory decision-making processes. At the moment, participation and decision-making processes are limited to only the implementation stage with formulation and evaluation stages confined to the funding actors (government authorities). The eventual effect is that time and again, the needs and preferences of intended beneficiaries of development initiatives have been neglected since they were not often practically part of the formulation stage to voice their concerns.

2. *Can a reformed model of development communication be created to allow the deployment of innovative measures of participatory communication in the implementation of development programmes in the Ghanaian education sector?*

Having identified in the study that the participatory communication practice in Ghana is limited in prospect especially to the beneficiaries of development initiatives, participants in the research advocated for a wide range of measures including the use of traditional communication systems such as folklore, music and dance, poetry, drama, a better decentralised governance system

216

that gives credence to the grassroots, formation of Chiefs Assembly and a strong democratic foundation (policies, regulations, laws and total review of the 1992 Constitution) that could easily reflect in the participatory decision-making processes. The above measures will be deployed using the reformed model, Methodical Participatory Communication (MPC) to allow the intended beneficiaries of development initiatives in the education sector to get practical access to participation in the decision-making processes right from the formulation through the implementation to the evaluation stage.

3. What challenges is government likely to face in the deployment of full participatory communication approaches in the community development projects in the education sector and how might these be overcome?

It was established from the evidences in the research that Government as well as other stakeholders, especially those in the education sector will face myriad of challenges with the decision or resolve to use full participatory communication strategies in the implementation of development policies and programmes including the inability of authorities to willingly share power with the grassroots through broad-based participation and decision-making. Other challenges such as the African cultural practices serving as impediments that revere actions and opinions of the elderly against that of the younger ones would need to be dealt with. Political inclinations of appointees holding key positions in critical sectors especially those in the education sector who appear to be doing only the bidding of their political masters at the expense of the grassroots as well as the state of demotivation of people in education or governance issues are equally supposed to be addressed. To resolve the challenges, evidence from the research revealed the need to discourage the use of expert committees as a form of participatory communication strategies, involvement of youth in decision-making, while paying attention to the use of the new model developed (Methodical Participatory Communication) in the education sector.

8.2 ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

As noted in the introduction to the thesis, this research has provided a contribution to knowledge in the following areas:

8.2.1 Theoretical contribution to knowledge

As described in detail in Chapter 7, this research has produced a model of current development communication in Ghana which is then augmented and presented as an aspirational-though - realistic model of what Ghanaian development communication in the educational sector could

become. This model is known as the Methodical Participatory Communication Model. Thus, in making its contribution to knowledge in terms of theory, the research is able to show both the affordances of but also serious deficiencies in development communication practice in the country. The PDC model has been used to derive the model from the empirical evidence generated. Achieving this has allowed the researcher to consider elements of practice which might be further developed to creative effective participatory communication for development in Ghanaian education initiatives.

8.2.2 New evidence from the field as contribution to knowledge in education

This research identified significant new evidence as a result of responses from participants through the interviews and the focus group discussions undertaken in the project. For instance, there was a revelation about the preparedness of government actors or civil servants at the Ministry of Education to continue with the limited "elitist" approach in decision-making, and policy and programme formulation, implementation and evaluation, as indicated by a civil servant in charge of policy formulation. Besides, some of the youth also appeared to have lost confidence in the system arguing that there should be a regime change towards effective participatory communication due to very deep generational-cultural barriers, suggesting that in such societies, when "the elders speak the child has to shut up" as indicated by one of the youth.

In addition, this research also emphasizes education decentralization where stakeholders at the grassroots level could easily get access to the communicative processes around decision-making, and participate in them unlike in the current centralized system where critical educational initiatives are implemented to affect the whole country irrespective of cultural and social differences in the regions. The decentralized system makes it easy for the people to be empowered in owning the projects and programmes for management.

8.2.3 Practical contribution to knowledge

This research has produced practical recommendations for solving emerging issues underpinned by the new Methodical Participatory Communication Model. The research explains reasons for intended beneficiaries' refusal to actively participate in the design and implementation processes leading to development. The use of the model can help to offer relevant training to stakeholders through training peer-to-peer rollout, where a cross-section of stakeholders is able to receive relevant training and offer the same to others to save cost and other resources. It will also help to resolve, in practice, issues surrounding the inability of people at the grassroots - who sometimes even refuse to use completed projects - to contribute to the sustainability and improvement of policies and programmes implemented by government.

These deficiencies could now be handled better by engaging through more practical, participatory approaches, ensuring that all direct beneficiaries of development programmes are empowered to address, at least in part, their own problems and subsequently find solutions to them with assistance and guidance from development actors. Part of the practical contribution to knowledge also includes the key proposals or recommendations as stated below:

8.3 KEY PROPOSALS OR RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations emanated from the suggestions put forward by all the participants engaged in the research and how each could be achieved.

Education authorities represented in this study acknowledged the relevance of consultative and participatory decision-making in education, recommending the unique case of the World Bank's contribution in the implementation of the ESIP project. It is, therefore, prudent that the Ministry of Education takes pragmatic steps to include students (especially through their recognized associations) in the formulation and evaluation of educational initiatives since they are the very reason why such policies and projects are being made. To achieve this, student groups are encouraged to advocate for strict policy guidelines to be put in place by the Ministry of Education to ensure that all educational initiatives are undertaken by the Ministry and its agencies with students as intended beneficiaries. Having executed this, it will allow students and student associations' practical involvement in the decision-making processes during the formulation, implementation and the evaluation of the education initiatives.

Participants in the research representing some key stakeholders in the education sector including parents, traditional leaders, religious leaders and student leadership organizations bemoaned their exclusion from the formulation and evaluation stages of many initiatives including the communication around curriculum development for schools. To address this, it is appropriate for the Ministry of Education to put necessary measures in place to improve the allocation of student representation on all relevant councils, boards and committees, including the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. Surveys could be another way of soliciting the views of the general student body on issues affecting their educational curriculum development.

Throughout the research, chiefs and traditional leaders desired to play a critical role in decision-making and all kinds of legislative activities, as was the case in the pre-colonial times. In order to satisfy this demand especially for these leaders who are still regarded as custodians of their traditional areas, the Regional and National House of Chiefs will be better platforms for

scrutinizing the development policies, programmes and projects on non-partisan basis, before the details are forwarded to the grassroots interests.

Participants in the research greatly admired and advocated for the use of efficient tools, such as community radio for enhancing participatory communication in local communities. It is equally judicious for the operations of traditional or mass media to go beyond information dissemination, education and entertainment to become direct and indirect change agents. In doing this, the promotion of development journalism will take a centre stage, where the mass media and community radio stations can help to promote development-related programmes on their airwaves while advocating and encouraging necessary participatory approaches.

Funding actors that participated in the research cited imminent time constraints and delays as some of the impediments for their inability to undertake broad-based consultative participatory decision-making on education issues, especially at the formulation stage. In dealing with the issue of delays in taking decisions using participatory communication, priorities need to be set by development actors through the creation of adequate and comprehensive action plans to be followed systematically from start to finish to ensure that all the necessary key stakeholders are allowed to participate actively.

Besides, it is important to tackle the challenge of lack or insufficient resources for effective participatory communication by using mass media and social media platforms by means of practical and effective community radio broadcasting to reach out to the masses to save cost and time while at the same time, feedback from the local people is assured. Development actors can achieve this by instituting programmes on radio and TV mainly for discussing initiatives wherever necessary. This is necessary in situations where the views of a larger population are needed in the implementation of an educational initiative.

The youth expressed their desire to take part in the execution of education-related projects from the formulation to the evaluation stages and this becomes easier for them, especially in this digital age. Promotion of citizen journalism by media houses and state institutions is, therefore, necessary for the growth of participatory communication in all sectors of the governance structure. To attain this, media institutions need to put in place motivational messages and rewards encouraging citizens to capture interesting events using their phones from their communities for the media stations' use.

In the area of governance and policy making strategies, comments and views from opposition political parties appeared to provide suggestions for broad-based participatory communication strategies that produce development initiatives for the people. In contrast, political actors in

government who seem to be mostly the initiators of such development initiatives, ironically, show little or no interest in promoting participatory communication. Therefore, there is the need for all political parties to invest in the interest and preferences of the grassroots through research using both bottom-up and top-down approaches in decision-making. Paying attention to the grassroots or other beneficiaries through participatory decision-making can create a consensus view for holistic formulation, implementation and evaluation of development initiatives. This can be achieved through broad-based consultations initially and further narrowed to expert committee views and conclusions for implementation.

More so, the use of expert committees in decision-making processes as a form of participatory communication especially in the education sector as suggested by policy makers at the Ministry of Education should not, in fact, be the default position in dealing with all initiatives at the expense of the preferences of direct beneficiaries and other key stakeholders. Evidence from this thesis suggests that they can be employed either alongside, or even after a broader consultation processes have been conducted. If the use of expert committees become the sole strategy for determining the focus for the formulation and implementation of development initiatives, it goes against the principle of participatory communication where the preferences and critical needs of the local people and direct participation are typically liable to be omitted.

Political party manifestos have been found to be critical sources for various governments' policies, programmes and projects. This suggests that there is a need for political parties to subject the derivation of such manifestos to grassroots participatory scrutiny informed by comprehensive research. This will allow the construction of a bottom-up approach where the needs and preferences of citizens could be directly accounted for and accommodated in political manifestos.

Finally, all political parties and relevant stakeholders working together to identify and eradicate all bottlenecks in the effective practice of participatory communication, especially through amendment of existing laws and enactment of new ones to promote the practice will be a great step in the right direction. In order to ensure the successful implementation of the new Methodical Participatory Communication Model presented as a result of this research, some structural conditions – political and legal – needed to be reviewed. For example, a comprehensive review of the 1992 Constitution could occur to allow it to reflect the views of the people through strategic participatory structures. It is encouraged that the review of the Constitution which began in 2010 - but subsequently was halted should be allowed to continue as it is in the best interest of the nation and strenuous efforts by all stakeholders in the governance sphere must be made to achieve it.

8.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Though several factors and issues listed below had a restriction on the entire research in one way or the other, effective progress was made to successfully conclude the study:

1. There was a cultural impediment of paying homage to chiefs and traditional leaders with assorted drinks and money or both before getting access to these personalities for interview. Even though these personalities did not receive the items personally, most of their servants, elders and aids in the palaces were not able to allow the researcher to get access to the interviewees without paying 'homage' as it is an established cultural norm in most traditional areas across Ghana for anyone seeking audience with the traditional leaders.

2. Closely linked to the cultural restrictions was the generally perceived notion that views of the elderly are always right in most African societies and no matter how invalid it may sound when tested, no one, especially the youth, should challenge it. Besides, the youth are not allowed to make contributions no matter how valuable they may be in instances where the elderly for example, oversee affairs. In the Ghanaian context relative to this study, most youth felt very reluctant to participate in the research arguing that the results and the recommendations were likely going to be neglected by those in authority in case the results stood against the status quo. This initially made it difficult for the recruitment of participants. Nonetheless, this hurdle was crossed, though some participants still voiced their concerns during their participation in the research.

3. This research is based on qualitative data from a relatively small pool of people and excludes some key stakeholders, for example, the World Bank which was originally earmarked for this project but several attempts made by the researcher to get officers from the Ghana Office of the Bank to participate in the research proved futile.

8.5 PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In further research, the following two research areas will be discovered:

1. Complete research into the professional connections between the use of public relations and development communication strategies in finding solutions to issues related to relationship and communication management and which of the two is capable of building better relationship and communication management between organizations and their beneficiaries in developing nations will be the next research focus.

2. Research into power, authority and participation in decision-making processes in democratic societies and in developing nations will equally be another area to be focused on. Regarding

each topic, it is aimed that a relationship or otherwise will be established between power and authority using participation in decision-making processes as a determinant in developing or developed nations.

8.6 CONCLUSION

After carrying out this research on participatory communication for development, with focus on the education sector of Ghana, it is clear that the critical concerns and deficiencies relating to the democratic governance structure of the country call for immediate attention. This is because the full participatory communication element necessary to serve as a motivation for all stakeholders to contribute to effective all-inclusive participatory decision-making processes towards development initiatives for high quality results and sustainability was found lacking at the time of conducting this research.

It is difficult for this type of democratic practice to trickle down to the grassroots where institutional structures such as laws particularly restrict the practice of free and fair broad-based consultative participatory communication activities in the implementation of development initiatives. While appreciating the critical role the 1992 Constitution played and continues to play in ending the military regimes in the history of the nation, its origination out of a military regime appears to have had a strong bearing on its character and modus operandi and it is time a total review (which was started in October 2010 with an inauguration of a nine-member Commission by former President John Atta Mills but halted after his sudden death while in office) was done to assume a more participatory, decentralized system akin to other developing countries, such as Kenya and South Africa. This is essential because the kind of power and its impact on institutions, the media, and the people or society in general (Hadland, 2015) largely determines the focus for citizenry participatory approach in critical decision-making processes towards sustainable growth and development.

This research, therefore, concludes by stating emphatically that even though several factors were cited by participants for shortfalls in development communication practices related to the education sector, chief among them is the politically domineering inclinations in the Constitution and the governance structure. Both need urgent attention to give better meaning to participatory communication for development in education and, possibly by extension, all other sectors of Ghanaian society.

APPENDIX 1: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of study: Participatory communication for community development: The Ghanaian experience.

Name of Researcher: Francis Gbadago

Please complete and sign this form **after** you have read and understood the study information sheet. Read the statements below and answer yes (Y) or no (N), as applicable in the box on the right-hand side.

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the study information sheet version for the above study. I have had opportunity to consider the information and asked questions which have been answered satisfactorily.

   Y
   N

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason, and without my rights being affected.

   Y
   N

3. I agree to be quoted in the research.

   Y
   N

4. I agree to participate by being interviewed or participate in a focus group.

   Y
   N

5. I understand that my personal details will be kept confidential and not revealed to any other person apart from the researcher.

   Y
   N

6. I understand that my data may be used in the researcher's thesis and other academic outputs that may arise from the project.

   Y
   N

7. I understand that data from interviews or focus groups, when used in academic writing or conference papers, will be anonymised.

   Yes/No

8. I agree to take part in the study:

   Y
   N

_____   _____   _____
Name of participant   **Date**   **Signature**

_____   _____   _____
Name of person taking consent   **Date**   **Signature**

APPENDIX 2: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

This discussion is part of a research study on participatory communication for community development in the Ghanaian context with specific reference to the education sector, conducted by Francis Gbadago, a PhD student at the University of Salford, Manchester in the United Kingdom.

Its purpose is to examine the pivotal role participatory communication plays in the development of communities whenever there is contribution and participation of all stakeholders in decision making processes from start to finish and the need for the adoption and implementation of participatory communication in the development agenda as a country. The project seeks to study the sector or area of education of the country. The findings are hoped to inform all stakeholders for effective implementation that will go a long way to empower communities to envisage aspirations to discover solutions to development issues.

The research primarily examines how educational initiatives and infrastructural projects are initiated, implemented and evaluated in the spirit of Development Communication or Participatory Communication. In view of this, you are humbly invited to participate in this focus group discussion by virtue of your role in community development as a youth (communication university student aged 18 and above) in your area. This study deals with the use of participatory communication in the initiation and implementation of 3 education development initiatives: **The Free SHS policy, the Community Day SHS project and Shelter for Education project.**

Taking part in this focus group discussion is voluntary and subject to your own decision to participate or otherwise. The whole discussion lasts for 30-45 minutes and involves face to face conversation with focus on your experiences with stakeholders in the implementation of development policies, programmes and projects in the education sector. As such, your discussion group is made up of 7 youths (made up of colleague students from the Ghana Institute of Journalism) who would submit and share views or opinions about practical involvement in community work and perspectives on participatory communication for development in their communities.

To ensure confidentiality, any information for personal identification like signatures and contacts will only be accessible by the researcher. Besides, all data collected will be stored in a securely protected format with double passwords and codes assigned to the data of each participant for easy referencing during usage. Relevant notes will be taken during the discussion while the entire process will be audio recorded upon your permission.

This study has been reviewed according to the research standards and procedures involving human subjects by the University of Salford, Manchester and the results of this discussion will be used for academic purposes related to the Ph.D. thesis as well as conference papers or written papers produced during or after the Ph.D.

If you have any questions about the research study, please contact Francis Gbadago at: f.gbadago@edu.salford.ac.uk

You can now move on to read and sign the participant consent form (attached) to indicate your consent for participation in this study or otherwise.

Thank you.

APPENDIX 3: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET FOR INTERVIEWS

This interview is part of a research study on participatory communication for community development in the Ghanaian context with specific reference to the education sector, conducted by Francis Gbadago, a PhD student at the University of Salford, Manchester in the United Kingdom.

Its purpose is to examine the pivotal role participatory communication plays in the development of communities whenever there is contribution and participation of all stakeholders in decision making processes from start to finish and the need for the adoption and implementation of comprehensive participatory communication in the development agenda as a country. This study deals with the use of participatory communication in the initiation and implementation of 3 education development initiatives: **The Free SHS policy, the Community Day SHS project and Shelter for Education project.**

In view of this, you are humbly invited to participate in this interview by virtue of your position as a Chief (traditional leader), Opinion leader, Chief Director or Director, Public Relations Officer or in your capacity as a government official responsible for formulation and implementation of development initiatives in the education sector.

Taking part in this interview is voluntary and subject to your own decision to participate or otherwise. The whole interview lasts for 30-45 minutes and involves face to face conversation centred on the current practices about participatory communication or development communication. It also involves submission of views or opinions on feedback received from a cross-section of youth (some university students aged 18 and above) about their practical involvement and perspective on participatory communication for development in their communities with specific reference to the education sector.

To ensure confidentiality, any information for personal identification like signatures and contacts will only be accessible by the researcher. Besides, all data collected will be stored in a securely protected format with double passwords and codes assigned to the data of each participant for easy referencing during usage. Relevant notes will be taken during the interview while the entire process will be audio recorded upon your permission.

This study has been reviewed according to the research standards and procedures involving human subjects by the University of Salford, Manchester and the results of this interview will be used for academic purposes related to the Ph.D. thesis as well as conference papers or written papers produced during or after the Ph.D.

If you have any questions about the research study, please contact Francis Gbadago at: f.gbadago@edu.salford.ac.uk

Many thanks for taking time to read this page. You can now move on to read the participant consent form (attached) to indicate your consent for participation in this study or otherwise.

Thank you.

If you have any questions about the research study, please contact Francis Gbadago at: f.gbadago@edu.salford.ac.uk

APPENDIX 4: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR THE YOUTH

Research Question Area 1: **What kinds of participatory communication structures and processes exist for community development initiatives in Ghanaian education sector?**

As a youth, how would you define or describe development that is beneficial to you?

- As students in a communication university, do you think communication can play a critical role in the development process?
- What kind of communication do you propose?
- What actually attracted you to community development especially in the area of education?
- Do you see a conscious effort by authorities to include you in all development related programmes and activities in your communities?
- If yes, does this happen from start to finish of the development programmes?
- If no, what do you think are the causes?
- How successful was the participation of stakeholders in education initiatives, especially the Free SHS policy, the Community Day SHS project and Shelter for Education project?

Research Question Area 2: **Can a reformed model of development communication be created to allow the deployment of innovative measures of participatory communication in the implementation of development programmes in the Ghanaian education sector?**

What specific roles do you play in the development process in your communities?

- Do you think you should necessarily be consulted in all development issues before they are initiated?
- If yes, why do you think so?
- If authorities or other stakeholders involve you in the projects, do you feel fully satisfied with the current state of affairs with particular reference to the level of involvement in decision making and implementation of the programmes and projects?
- If no, discuss some innovative measures that could be put in place to improve the use of participatory communication for effective community development.

Research Question Area 3: **What challenges is government likely to face in the deployment of full participatory communication approaches in the community development projects in education sector and how might these be overcome?**

Do you envisage some challenges in the implementation of full participatory communication to the development agenda of Ghana?

- Do you see any particular challenges as a youth and how do think it could be solved to produce the desired result?

APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: COMMUNITY LEADERS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

<u>Research Question Area 1:</u> **1. What kinds of participatory communication structures and processes exist for community development initiatives in Ghanaian education sector?**

<u>**Sample interview questions:**</u>

- What does development mean to you?

- Do you apply communication to projects and programmes for the realisation of development?

- Do you believe that problems and solutions to development issues in the education sector must be identified and dealt with by both the provider and the beneficiary?

- How are policies, programmes and projects in education in communities arrived at?

- Which categories of people formulate policies in the education sector for implementation and evaluation?

- Do chiefs, opinion leaders and community members take part in the decision-making process to determine the kind of development project or programme they really need in their areas before conclusions are made?

- How successful was the participation of stakeholders in education initiatives, especially the Free SHS policy, the Community Day SHS project and Shelter for Education project?

- How do stakeholders at the community level take part in the decision-making process for programmes and projects from start to finish?

- Is there any platform or sphere usually created to engage only the community members or the youth in the project formulation to deliberate on the entire idea before arriving at conclusion?

- Is there any element of participatory communication in community development activities in the area of education?

- What is the level (quantification) of participation of stakeholders (especially the youth) at the community level in development programmes?

<u>Research Question Area 2:</u> **Can a reformed model of development communication be created to allow the deployment of innovative measures of participatory communication in the implementation of development programmes in the Ghanaian education sector?**

How do you decide on site or location of projects in a traditional area or district for example?

- What sometimes causes conflicts between and among communities over the siting of projects especially construction of schools?
- Are there opportunities to meet community members to sensitize them on the programme or project regularly during the implementation?
- What development communication techniques do you use in engaging the people at the community level?
- How do you approach and engage the youth (or other stakeholders) in the development process?
- Do they play any special role in the development process at the decision-making and evaluation levels?
- Are community members satisfied with the language being used at all times during interactions?
- Do beneficiaries of these programmes, polices and projects at all times express their satisfaction or otherwise over the form, style of initiating them?
- If they sometimes express dissatisfaction, what are some of the issues that surround their displeasure?
- Are beneficiaries able to own the projects after its completion to ensure the appropriate maintenance culture?
- Do you think there is still more room for improvement in the area of participation of all stakeholders in communication to effect community development?

Research Question Area 3: What challenges is government likely to face in the deployment of full participatory communication approaches in the community development projects in education sector and how might these be overcome?

Do you find any stakeholder in the community development process that always feels intimidated by others?

- If yes how is that likely to be solved?
  Have you observed the use of full participatory communication strategies or techniques in implementing development programmes, projects and policies in the education sector, especially the Free SHS policy, the Community Day SHS project and Shelter for Education project?

- If not, what challenges are likely to be encountered by government and other stakeholders in implementing full participatory communication techniques towards sustainable community development?
- Are there possible remedies to these challenges?
- What are your suggestions for full participatory communication measures to be put in place for the cooperative and mutual benefit of all stakeholders?

APPENDIX 6: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: THE CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER OF TIGO
Research Question Area 1: **1. What kinds of participatory communication structures and processes exist for community development initiatives in Ghanaian education sector?**

Sample interview questions:

- To TIGO, what does development mean to you?

- Do you have a corporate social responsibility project for the education sector, and do you apply communication to all projects and programmes for the realisation of development?

- How are problems and solutions to development issues in the education sector supposed to be identified and dealt with by both the provider and the beneficiary alike?

- What is the level of interaction in decision-making between your organisation and the government on the projects and programmes you undertake?

- Do chiefs, opinion leaders and community members take part in the decision-making process to determine the kind of development project or programme they really need in their areas before conclusions are made on the corporate social responsibility project to be undertaken?

- How do stakeholders at the community level take part in the implementation and evaluation processes for programmes and projects from start to finish?

- Is there any platform or sphere usually created to engage only the community members or the youth in the project formulation to deliberate on the entire idea before arriving at conclusion?

Research Question Area 2: **Can a reformed model of development communication be created to allow the deployment of innovative measures of participatory communication in the implementation of development programmes in the Ghanaian education sector?**

Where necessary, what development communication techniques do your officers use in engaging the people at the community level?

- Are there practical results to the use of such techniques during the engagement process; are the community members able to get involved in the Shelter for Education project and what is the level of their contribution?

- How do you approach and engage the youth in the development process?

- Are community members satisfied with the language usually used during interactions?

- Are you satisfied with the participatory or development communication techniques being used on the ground?
- How do you ensure sustainability (improvement in life span) of the education projects in the communities?

Research Question Area 3: What challenges is government likely to face in the deployment of full participatory communication approaches in the community development projects in education sector and how might these be overcome?

- Do you find any stakeholder in the community development process that feels intimidated by others? If yes how is that likely to be solved? If no, why?
- Have you observed some challenges in the use of comprehensive participatory communication strategies or techniques in implementing the Shelter for Education project?
- If not, what challenges are likely to be encountered by government and other stakeholders in implementing comprehensive participatory communication techniques towards sustainable community development especially in the education sector?
- Are there possible remedies to these challenges?
- What are your own suggestions for a comprehensive participation by all stakeholders and improvement in communication strategies for the mutual benefit of all stakeholders for development?

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