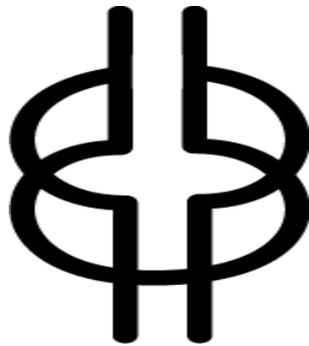


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NYANSAPO – "Wisdom Knot"

Symbol of wisdom, ingenuity, intelligence and patience

Ghana's Education in the Era of Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings: A Historical Review and Analysis, 1982-2001

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Abstract

This study examined the contribution of Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings to the development of education in Ghana. Specifically, the study focused on his introduction of the 1987 Education Reforms, and how the University Rationalisation Policy introduced by him affected tertiary education in Ghana. The study employed the appropriate historical and methodological approaches as its research design. It adopts the qualitative method and uses both primary and secondary sources of data to examine how education fared in Ghana under Rawlings. Interview guide was used to collect the primary data. Two persons were selected for the interview on the grounds of their knowledge about Rawlings. Again, they were present when Rawlings introduced the 1987 Education Reforms in Ghana. The study points out that Rawlings' contribution to education did not only shorten the duration of education but also, it built a school system that reflected the Ghanaian realities and that made the educated child more productive in the society.

Key words: Post-Independence; Products; Rationalisation; Reforms.

Introduction

Ghana's educational development first began as an informal or indigenous one until the coming of the Europeans, who introduced the western (formal) type of education. Western education started in the Gold Coast on 8th February, 1529 by the Portuguese. After the pioneering role by the Portuguese, other European merchants such as the Dutch, the Danes and the British also entered the field and provided education until the arrival of the Christian Missionaries, who took the country's education to the next level. On the attainment of

independence in Ghana in 1957, both the civilian and military governments provided education as part of efforts to rebuild the nation.

At this juncture, it is important, first of all, to historicise how and why Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings came to the political scene in Ghana. Flt. Lt. J. J. Rawlings staged a coup d'état that ousted the administration of the Supreme Military Council (SMC) II regime from office in 1979. After this, he put certain measures in place that returned the country to civilian rule. This issue, undoubtedly, brought the People's National Party (PNP) into power under the leadership of Dr. Hilla Limann on 24th September, 1979. However, due to mismanagement of the country's economy by Dr. Hilla Limann, (Gocking, 2005), Flt. Lt. J. J. Rawlings again, assumed power in a military takeover on 31st December, 1981 under the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC). He thus administered the country as a military leader and Head of State from 1982 to 1992 and then as a democratically elected President of the fourth republic from 7th January, 1993 up to 2001.

Even though literature exists, studies that explore education in Ghana during the era of Rawlings such as Asiedu-Akrofi (1982) "Education in Ghana" in *Education in Africa: A Comparative Survey*; Bening (1990), *A History of Education in Northern Ghana 1907-1976*; Takyiwaa, Gariba and Budu (2007), *Change and Transformation in Ghana's Publicly Funded Universities* and Ibrahim Mahama (2009), *A Colonial History of Northern Ghana*, such works do not delve into the 1987 Education Reforms and its implications on contemporary Ghanaian education. Even Girdwood (1998) in his *Tertiary Education Policy in Ghana, An Assessment: 1988-1998*, which argues that Rawlings epitomised "a sustained attempt to define the place of tertiary education within the Ghanaian economic and political landscape," (Girdwood, 1998) did not pay particular attention to the 1987 Education Reforms, especially how it made the school children more productive in the society. His focus was to assess Tertiary Education Policy in Ghana within a decade, 1988-1998. *Education, Society and Development in Ghana* (Antwi, 1992) provided significant developments during the era of Rawlings that assisted the present study a great deal. However, he did not examine how education fared during the democratic periods of Rawlings from 1993 to 2001.

This paper examines the contribution of Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings to the development of Education in Ghana. Specifically, it firstly analyses

his introduction of the 1987 Education Reforms, especially the Junior Secondary School (J.S.S) and Senior Secondary School (S.S.S.) concepts. Secondly, the paper demonstrates how University Rationalisation Policy introduced by Ft. Lt. J.J. Rawlings affected tertiary education in Ghana.

The interpretation and analyses of data of this paper are based on primary and secondary sources. The primary data are derived from oral interviews and other sources such as old newspapers, minutes of meetings, white papers and government official records from the National and Regional branches of the Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD) in Ghana. The secondary data, on the other hand, are made up of history books and journal articles that examine the political and educational history of Ghana. The data are analysed qualitatively and diachronically using historical method. In all, two informants were interviewed based on their knowledge about Rawlings and the 1987 Education Reforms in Ghana. It is significant, to first of all, shed light on the nature of education that Ft. Lt. J.J. Rawlings wanted to be provided in the country.

Ft. Lt. J.J. Rawlings' view on education in Ghana

On assumption of office, the PNDC Government advocated “a fundamental break from the existing neo-colonial relations, and from the existing foreign monopoly control over the economy and social life.” (Gocking, 2005). As a result, Ft. Lt. J.J. Rawlings and his government set out to stabilise the economy and the country as a whole by first restructuring the political, social and economic systems of Ghana. Special importance was given to education, a sector which was seen as an engineering tool to help fuel the potency and viability of the other sectors of the Ghanaian economy. It is worthy of note that the Government introduced major reforms in education.

In order to realise this aspiration, Ft. Lt. J. J. Rawlings shaped education to reflect the philosophies and objectives of his government which included the creation of economic prosperity in the country. The PNDC Government wanted a “reorientation of the structure and content of education based on a careful assessment of the changing conditions and needs of the nation and the world at large” (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988, p.1). As noted by Oquaye (2004, p.480), “the PNDC Government intended that

its new educational system should be geared towards the realisation of the development goal of the nation.” Mr. Rawlings linked the country’s economic prosperity to its educational system (Oquaye, 2004). Due to this, the PNDC Government aimed at “correcting the negative consequences of a steady decline in the quality of education over the past decade due to inefficient management and scarcity of educational materials and qualified personnel” (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988, p.1). The application of modern science and technology to education could not be achieved without equipping the potential manpower of the country and, as explained by Oquaye (2004), this necessitated a comprehensive restructuring of the education system in Ghana during the PNDC era.

The first thing the PNDC government did was to introduce allocation of quotas into secondary school admissions (Akoto, 2015). This was done to open access to secondary education in the country. Again, to ensure effective training of teachers, it restored the teacher-trainee allowances (state financial support) system in Ghana. This was intended to enable teacher-trainees have financial support to procure teaching and learning materials for their work and to have a sound stay in their various colleges (Akoto, 2015). One other significant thing the PNDC Government did was the introduction of curriculum enrichment programmes which aimed at bringing elements of national culture into the basic education system (Bekoe, 2010).

Apart from these, the government also tackled the issue of supply of primary school textbooks. This intervention was meant to ensure that primary schools all over the country would have common, relevant and recommended textbooks from the Ghana Education Service. Furthermore, the government introduced for the first time a single national uniform for all pupils in the public basic schools. One reason for this move was to distinguish pupils in the public schools from the private ones. It was also to let the pupils have an identity as Ghanaians (Akoto, 2015). One other significant thing which the PNDC Government is well remembered for was the 1987 Education Reforms in Ghana.

The 1987 Educational Reforms under Flt. Lt. J. J. Rawlings

The 1987 restructuring of education has been described as a major Educational Reform programme in Ghana (Primary Education Programme; Status & Report, 1992). The reform was proclaimed by the PNDC Secretary of State for Education in October, 1986. Its implementation, however, took place from September, 1987. In the estimation of Oquaye (2004, p.479), Flt. Lt. J. J. Rawlings saw the old system of education as “a narrow conception of education which had become increasingly obsessed with academic speculation to the virtual exclusion of serious practical skills”. As it is observed, “the aim of the old system was to obtain paper certificate as a prerequisite for employment and thus those who could not achieve this objective fell by the wayside” (Oquaye 2004, p.49).

This claim by Oquaye needs to be interrogated because it appears that he has watered down the education system of the National Redemption Council (NRC) Government in his quest to highlight the need for education reforms by Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings. This is because the educational reforms of the NRC Government were also intended to direct education to the socio-cultural needs and human resource development of the country and as such cannot be described as a narrow-based education (Oquaye, 2004). For example, the NRC Government set out to provide education which would develop “fully the natural endowments of the individual in order to make him first of all, a responsible citizen, useful to the society economically and in other ways, and secondly, a cultured and humane individual with a high sense of morality” (White Paper on the Report of the Education Review Committee, 1968, p.6). Furthermore, it was the educational system of the NRC which Flt. Lt. J. J. Rawlings implemented fully under the 1987 Educational Reforms.

Be that as it may, with the new educational system of the PNDC Government, every child of school-going age was to have nine years of basic education, comprising six years primary school and three years Junior Secondary School (JSS). In effect, every Ghanaian child was required to enter Primary one at age six and to go through Primary six and through to JSS. Basic education was then followed by three years of senior secondary school and three or four years of tertiary education (Dorkenoo, 1987; Antwi, 1992; Primary Education Programme, Status and Report, 1992). This educational reform thus reduced the duration

of pre-university and university education from 17 to 12 years (Antwi, 1992).

In general, the reforms, according to Antwi (2004, pp.44-45), set out to “provide increased access to education especially in the northern half of the country and in other areas where the intake was persistently low by making basic education available to every child; to make senior secondary education available to 50 per cent of junior secondary school (JSS) leavers; and to provide tertiary education for 25 per cent of the senior secondary school leavers.” The reform was largely drawn up by the PNDC Government “to ensure that the country works towards the achievement of our national goals of expanding access to education, improving the quality of education, making education more relevant to the socio-economic needs of the country and of the individual” (Primary Education Programme, Status and Report, 1992, p.1) The most significance aspect of the 1987 Educational Reforms, in the estimation of Akoto (2015), was the JSS system. An effort is thus made here to discuss the JSS system in detail.

The Junior Secondary School (J.S.S) System

It must be stated from the onset that the JSS concept was not an original idea of the PNDC Government. This educational policy was introduced by Colonel Ignatius Kutu Acheampong during the NRC regime, but could not be implemented due to inadequate funds and lack of political will (Bentum, 1987; Tetteh, 1999). Schools which were turned into JSS by Col. I. K. Acheampong, were already in existence on experimental basis and thus it is argued that Flt. Lt. J. J. Rawlings streamlined the whole idea pertaining to the JSS system and gave it a new emphasis (Akoto, 2015). It is also suggested that the PNDC Government adopted the JSS concept and implemented it fully.

Be that as it may, under the 1987 Education Reforms, the curriculum was designed in line with the PNDC Government’s objectives that the child should be equipped with basic competencies of numeracy (ability to manipulate figures); literacy (ability to read and write); and socialise harmoniously in the Ghanaian setting (Primary Education Programme, Status and Report, 1992). An examination was introduced at the end of the three years JSS programme to ensure the acquisition of these competencies and for subsequent selection of qualified pupils into a second cycle institution in subjects such as

English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Agricultural Science, a Ghanaian Language, Soil Science, Animal Husbandry, Crop Production, Cultural Studies and Vocational Skills made up of Leather work, Textiles, Pottery, Carving, Book crafts. Other subjects were French (optional), Pre-Technical Skills and Physical Education (Dorkenoo, 1987).

Selection depended on two factors. First, the ability of pupils to pass in the final year JSS examination and secondly, their choice of courses at the SSS (Dorkenoo, 1987). With the cessation of the Common Entrance Examination for pupils in Primary six (6) and seven (7), every pupil in public and private school got automatic admission into the JSS. The expectation was that 70 per cent of all pupils who completed the JSS would proceed to second cycle institutions. The remaining 30 per cent would then enter into various apprenticeships such as masonry and carpentry. In September, 1987, the time of the commencement of the new system, it was estimated that 250,000 pupils would enter the Junior Secondary Schools (JHSs).

However, those who have already passed the JSS entry stage, that is pupils in Middle Forms one (1) to four (4), continued to sit for the Common Entrance Examination (C.E.E.) until 1989 when it was finally phased out. By 1987, there were 118 JSSs already in the country. These schools started as model JSSs during the SMC I administration in 1976. In the estimation of Mrs. Vida Yeboah, the then Under-Secretary for Education and Culture, the 118 Model JSSs were restructured in such a way that the equipment required to run these schools were so expensive that it did not yield its intended impact (Dorkenoo, 1987).

The objectives for the new emphasis on the JSS system by the PNDC Government were first, to enable products acquire a considerable knowledge in the fields of Science and Mathematics which would ginger them up into a world of scientific and technological discoveries to sustain the government's policy of rural industrialisation. Secondly, it was to expose pupils to pre-vocational and technical skills in order to enable them use the skills acquired at this level and in particular, to help those who could not further their education to a higher level to work with the skills acquired. The PNDC Government wanted the JSS programme to build a school system that reflected the

Ghanaian realities and that made each formally educated child more productive (GNA Correspondent, Ghanaian Times, 1988).

This explains why the new scheme set out to make the “individual innovative and constructive in changing the old order of cultural, social and political development of the country” (Bentum, 1987, p.3). Also, the JSS system was intended to make pupils understand other foreign languages such as French since English was compulsory, and a Ghanaian language which would facilitate easy communication in Ghana and the rest of the world. Moreover, the JSS system was designed to help pupils have an in-depth knowledge of the general set-up of Ghanaians with particular reference to cultural and social studies so that they could help their societies to be more adaptable to the changing times. On this issue, Mr. Kofi Totobi-Quakyi stated “whatever new approaches we are adopting now cannot be divorced from the need to shift the content and orientation of education towards the inculcation of new [and acceptable] values” (GNA Correspondent, Ghanaian Times, 1988, p.3).

Basic education was thus restricted to ensure that children develop the basic life determining and supporting skills for the discovery of their full capabilities to function efficiently in the society (Primary Education Programme, Status and Report, 1992). The PNDC Government envisaged that “a product of the JSS is expected to make one of the objectives of the scheme achievable in the acquisition of vocational and technical skills to accelerate the rural industrialisation programme which has become the primary concern of the government” (Bentum, 1987, p.3). In this way, the products of the JSS would be able to acquire the requisite knowledge, skills and competencies needed to study at the higher levels of education. This pre-intervention in the long run will make it easier for the country to produce more qualified professional medical doctors, teachers, engineers, lawyers and technicians. This would help to reduce over-reliance on foreign experts and thereby facilitate their absorption into the factories and industries due to their training and specialisation in various fields. Also, the JSS was designed to support agricultural productivity and self-employment (GNA Correspondent, People’s Daily Graphic, 1987).

This is corroborated by Kofi Dantsil who stated that “the JSS concept predicts practical oriented end-products” (Dantsil, 1987, p.5) as boys and girls would be taught academic, technical and vocational

subjects. This shows that the new educational reforms of Flt. Lt. J. J. Rawlings was child-oriented which centred on children directing their studies to tap their creativity effectively. To this end, Mrs. Sarah Opong, who was the then Co-ordinator for the JSS programme, noted that the “concept is aimed at, among others, pre-disposing pupils to basic technological knowledge and skills so that they can decide on what technical skills to follow in future” (Beecham, 1987, p.1). This is also confirmed by Mrs. Sylvia Boye, when she stated that “education should help the individual to understand himself and others and enable him to determine his own future as well as to contribute to the development of the society” (GNA Correspondent, People’s Daily Graphic, 1987, p.8).

It appears from the foregoing discussions that the JSS system did not face challenges. This was not so as it was faced with some difficulties. First, there is the question of the effective preparation for the full implementation of the JSS system in Ghana. Here, financial difficulties hindered the early efforts and militated against the smooth turning of the JSS system into a functional reality in the entire country. It was not until 1988 that \$45 million was given by the World Bank OPEC Fund for the JSS programme (Dorkonoo, 1987) which was intended to be used for infrastructural expansion and thus increased intake of JSS pupils in the schools across the country.

The programme started without sufficient preparation and in the words of Oquaye (2004), it was “hurriedly executed.” In some parts of the country such as the Brong Ahafo Region, there was a feverish preparation for the JSS programme. A number of communities in this area feverishly prepared through self-help. For example, classroom and workshop blocks were funded through special levies and voluntary contributions. This was done so that the JSS programme could take off in the area. In many cases, considerable enthusiasm had been shown by the rural people but their meagre resources proved unequal to the task. Several communities felt over taxed in terms of contributions towards JSS infrastructure (Oquaye, 2004)

There is also the issue of qualified teachers required to teach in the JSSs. Obviously, in the JSS system, if the performance of teachers was not good, the whole system would not be successful no matter the amount of financial resources pumped into it. As Wotordzor (1987, p.3) observed, “in planning for any educational programme, serious thought

must be given to the type of teacher to service and conduct it.” Even though there were adequate teachers for subjects such as social studies, science and languages, others like vocational and technical subjects did not have sufficient teachers and in the estimation of Oquaye (2004, p.3), “a dearth of teachers, particularly science teachers plagued the system.” The trades could not be taught by non-specialists in the field as they needed special attention and professional training. The teacher required to provide education for developmental needs, as expected by the 1987 Educational Reforms, should be capable of identifying the special attitudes of learners and help them to develop their special gifts so that they would contribute effectively to the socio-economic development of the country (Oquaye, 2004). There was also the problem of inadequate facilities such as workshops for practical and science laboratories for experiments as well as shortage of technical workshops, textbooks and furniture. These facilities were crucial for products of specialist schools to tackle their tasks with ease.

The foregoing discussion does not mean that the PNDC Government did not adopt measures to solve the problems in order to ensure the smooth take-off of the programme. In order to overcome the problem of teachers who would teach in the new system that was introduced, a series of courses were organised for the teachers in the JSS. Eligible participants for the courses were post-secondary trained teachers who were exposed to the JSS syllabus in the various subjects which would be taught in the new system (Dantsil, 1987). The teachers were also exposed to the new approach of teaching in the JSS. They were trained in subjects such as Mathematics, Science, Agricultural Science, Physical Education, English, Social Studies, Ghanaian Languages, French, Vocational Skills, Technical Skills, Life Skills and Cultural Studies which comprised Religion, Music and Drama (Dantsil, 1987). By 10th September, 1987, 15, 000 teachers drawn from all over the country had been trained as part of the preparation towards a successful implementation of the JSS programme. Also, 240 teachers had been trained at the primary school level to prepare pupils for the JSS (Acheampong, 1987).

The training course for post-secondary trained teachers helped them to have an advanced knowledge of all the new learning areas embodied in the JSS curriculum and hence it is argued that the PNDC Government stopped the practice of the middle school system where a

teacher would take one class and would teach all the subjects. The PNDC Government was the first to introduce subject teaching in basic schooling in Ghana. The workshops and courses for teachers refreshed their minds and improved upon their teaching methodologies. This is confirmed by (Gyampoh & Acheampong, 1987, p.3) that teachers “managed during their studies to gather new ideas and update their facts for a new undertaking.”

By January, 1987 the PNDC Government had committed itself starting full implementation of the JSS system on 1st September, 1987. This was confirmed by the Chairman of Education Commission in its letter dated 7th January, 1987 that “I am writing to confirm that the Commission is fully satisfied with the extensive preparations which the Ministry of Education and Culture is making to ensure the successful take-off of the 9-year Basic Education programme in September, 1987” (Dorkenoo, 1987, p.3) On this date, JSS one (1) replaced Middle Form one (1) classes. Apart from the JSS concept, the PNDC Government also had a clear focus for second cycle and tertiary education which formed part of the reforms.

Second Cycle and Tertiary Education

The changes in the content and structure of education were not only felt with the implementation of the JSS system but also the second cycle and tertiary levels as well. By 1987, exactly 26 years after the promulgation of the Education Act of 1961, only seven percent of children of secondary school-going age were in school ((Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988). At the secondary school, the reform was intended to intensify time utilisation. As was the case of the JSS, parallel syllabuses were developed for senior secondary schools. This placed emphasis on the study of Science, Mathematics and Indigenous languages, the major objective being “to make each student competent in the current world of mass consumer products and services” (Antwi, 1992, p.45).

The institutions of higher level were also shaped to serve the needs of the country. The PNDC Government intended to “rationalise education at the tertiary level to ensure relevance to national development in harmony with lower levels of education and cost effectiveness in the use of manpower and resources” (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988, p.1). This

was done through ensuring the reduction of waste and cost of education, reorganisation of the management of education to infuse efficiency and to strengthen vital units of the entire management of education for improvement in planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988).

Tertiary institutions were put into two categories during the PNDC era namely, potential tertiary institutions and viable tertiary institutions. The former was made up of teacher training colleges, polytechnics and other post-secondary training institutions. Even though some of these institutions run tertiary courses for their students, they did not have the potential to upgrade their staff, admission requirements, libraries and other facilities to become viable tertiary ones (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988). The latter referred to universities and some diploma awarding institutions that satisfied the requirements for consideration as tertiary institutions.

The PNDC Government envisaged a new system of tertiary education made up of the universities, the polytechnics and regional colleges of applied art, science and technology. These institutions came under supervision and co-ordination of the division of the Ministry of Education and Culture in charge of higher education (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988). The government set out to introduce reforms in the universities and sought to rationalize them to reflect the needs of the country. This led to the passage of the University Rationalisation Policy in December, 1986 (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988).

University Rationalisation Policy (U.R.P.)

To obtain basic information for a medium-term university sector development plan to be formulated, the PNDC Government formed the University Rationalisation Committee (URC) in December, 1986. Members of the Committee were: Mrs Esi R. A. Sutherland-Addy, PNDC Under-Secretary for Education and Culture, (Chairperson); Mr. J. B. Abban, Senior Lecturer and Head of the Department of Economics, University of Ghana; Dr. M. A. Awuku, Senior Lecturer in Science Education, University of Cape Coast; Dr. E. A. Tackie, Senior Lecturer, Department of Architecture, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi; Professor C.

Okonjo, Consultant on Education to the Ministry of Education and Culture; and Professor B. C. F. Lokko, Director, School of Administration, University of Ghana (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988).

By 1986, resources for teaching at the various universities had declined while the overall costs of running the universities were high (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988). Again, the unit cost per student at the universities was very high as compared to those in secondary and basic schooling (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988). For example, student maintenance facilities and amenities per student at the University of Ghana in 1988 cost \$2, 191.00 (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988). Moreover, the universities used large amounts of foreign exchange. The quality of teaching and learning at the universities had fallen largely due to high student-staff ratios and inadequate teaching materials and learning resources and services like libraries (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988).

These, therefore, required a comprehensive study of the university sector to first, analyse the then cost structures and to propose necessary changes in order to increase the cost-effectiveness for producing qualified graduates (Ayam, 2019). Secondly, the cost of completing uncompleted buildings at the universities, the extent of utilisation of the existing facilities and the need for additional ones had to be assessed. There was also the need to assess teaching material requirements, departmental structures, course offerings and options (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988).

Given the background to the appointment of the University Rationalisation Committee (1988), their major tasks would include:

- (a) examine the overall cost structure of the Universities and assess in which areas resources need to be increased so as to allow a more efficient use of resources and in which areas could be decreased with no deleterious effects; (b) examine, in particular detail, non-

departmental activities such as municipal services and the cost and performance implications of alternative ways of financing these; (c) examine the large budget component which does not cover salaries or teaching materials with a view to re-assessing the present ways of financing these; (d) make a detailed study of student financing and the possibilities and implications of removing the feeding subsidy and charging for accommodation; (e) assess the levels of subsidy provided to staff e.g. Housing, health services, electricity and water charges, their comparability with those offered in other sectors and the feasibility and implications of their reduction or increase; ... (p) assess any other aspect of University organization having a bearing on improving the cost effectiveness while maintaining or increasing the quality of teaching; (q) in the context of national educational reforms, assess the role of University education as an element of tertiary level of education and make suggestion for the fourth cycle of education (p. ii-iv).

With these terms of reference, which were intended for a national policy on higher education to be established, and a medium term plan for reforming and revamping the universities to be formulated, the University Rationalisation Committee (URC) first of all, embarked on a preliminary study to ascertain the state of the institutions on the ground and to explore all aspects of the universities. Apart from these, URC also consulted experts in the areas of Manpower, Financial Structures, Academic Structures, Administration, Income Generation and Facility Utilization in order to have an in-depth knowledge about the aforementioned tasks assigned to them.

The URC spent one year before issuing its final report on 15th February, 1988, with their recommendations; a summary is provided here for emphasis:

(a) There should be an addition of a fourth cycle of education which would create centres of excellence within the country for the pursuit of research, the propagation of research findings and the expansion of the knowledge base of academic personnel; (b) that tertiary system of education should be made up of 3 main groups—the Universities and University Colleges, the Polytechnics and a Unified Comprehensive College System (Regional Colleges of Applied Arts, Science and Technology); (c) that all tertiary institutions should come under the Ministry of Education and Culture; (d) to ensure democratic aspirations and efficiency of the administrative system, each university should have a chancellor, who should be an eminent citizen of Ghana, expansion of the membership of the university council, the Pro-Vice Chancellor, the Registrar and Chief Director for Higher Education should sit in attendance (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988, pp. 5-12).

Polytechnic education was also reshaped through the work of the URC. First, such institutions were made to undertake courses to cover areas such as Home Management, Computer Science, Computer Programming, Transport Management, Library and Archival Studies, Social Work, Adult and Literacy Education, Legal Administration, Physical Planning, Statistics, Food Technology, Industrial Design, Graphic Design, Estate Management and Printing Technology (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988). Apart from these, other courses to be offered for diploma in the Polytechnics were General Course in Engineering, General Course in Construction,

Refrigeration Mechanics, Motor Vehicle Mechanics Work, Painting and Decoration, Carpentry and Joinery, Basic Cookery, Building Quantities and Secretarial; Polytechnics were to adopt the semester and course credit system; external examinations should be abolished in tertiary institutions (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988).

On the issue of student funding, the recommendations of the URC were as follows: firstly, free tuition should be given to all Ghanaian students at the tertiary institutions and that the policy on student maintenance should match national resources and priorities of the country. Again, tertiary students should be made to pay a uniform maintenance charge of recreational facilities, food and accommodation. Furthermore, every student at the tertiary level should be eligible to access loans to cover maintenance charges to be repaid after graduation and that full scholarships should be given to only exceptional students who offer courses intended to fulfil manpower requirements of the country (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988).

These were the developments that shaped the PNDC Government's effort to rationalise spending at the tertiary level of education in order to improve its quality and increase access to all qualified students. In view of this, the government's effort at directing higher education to "meet the needs of the national economy and spearhead the badly needed movement towards sustained and self-reliant national development both by providing the right calibre of manpower and research base" (Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988, p.36) would be achieved in the country. This also explains the determination of the government to reposition tertiary education in order to effectively absorb the number of children in schools who would reach tertiary level due to the implementation of the Free and Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) programme in the country. Apart from these, it was also the wish of the government to contain the cost of higher education within the national economic growth.

These measures were all taken during the military regime of the PNDC Government. As Ghanaians always wish to have a democratic rule, the PNDC era which began with dictatorship ended with democracy when the Draft Constitution was adopted through a

referendum on 28 April, 1992, which also brought into power the administration of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) after it had won the 1992 General Elections and was inaugurated into office in January, 1993. The NDC was indeed, an offshoot of the PNDC and as Agyeman-Duah (2008, p.23) argues, it was “reputed to have roots in the military regime of the so-called revolutionary era.”

Flt. Lt. J. J. Rawlings was sworn in as the first President of the Fourth Republic of Ghana and he ruled the country for two terms which spanned from 1993 to 2000. As a matter of fact, there was no significant change in the direction of education in the period of Flt. Lt. J. J. Rawlings' civilian administration from that of the military rule except that the former had a constitution which clearly spelt out the objectives of education at all levels in Ghana.

With the 1992 Constitution in force, the objectives for education which were intended to shape and direct education in Ghana were made explicit for Governments to follow. It stated that, “the state shall provide educational facilities at all levels and in all the Regions of Ghana, and shall, to the greatest extent feasible, make those facilities available to all citizens” (Ghanaian Constitution, 1992, p.40; Afari-Gyan, 1998, p.33). In the field of Basic Education, it called for the provision of free, compulsory and universal basic education for the country. Secondly, it provided for “equal and balanced access to secondary and other appropriate pre-university education, equal access to university or equivalent, with emphasis on Science and Technology” (Ghanaian Constitution, 1992, p.40; Afari-Gyan, 1998, p.33).

This provision of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana focused on Science and Technology. This issue appears to have been a restatement of the major objective of the 1987 Educational Reform which was that children should be trained to acquire considerable knowledge in the fields of Science and Mathematics for a world of scientific and technological discoveries in order to sustain the policy of rural industrialization embarked upon by the government (Bentum, 1987; Final Draft Report of the University Rationalisation Committee, 1988). It is argued that the educational provisions of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana were largely influenced by the political decisions of the PNDC and NDC Governments. This confirms the assertion by Harber (1989, p.3) that “schooling and politics are therefore inextricably linked in all societies.” Hence, schooling in Ghana often reflects government's

policy for education and to a large extent, this is influenced by the ideological orientations, values and societal politics at a given period.

Again, the 1992 Constitution of Ghana stated that government should use the country's resources for the provision of "a free adult literacy programme, and a free vocational training, rehabilitation and resettlement of disabled persons and life-long education." (Ghanaian Constitution, 1992, p.40; Afari-Gyan, 1998, p.33). These were the benchmarks that directed and shaped educational provision during the administration of the NDC Government up to 2000.

Conclusion

This work, relying on primary and secondary data, has demonstrated how education in Ghana fared under Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings for about 20 years. By the time Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings left the reins of government on 6th January, 2001, not only had he transformed the education system of Ghana but also, the JSS and the SSS concepts that he fully implemented took the country's education to the next level. It shortened the duration of education in Ghana making it more cost effective. Again, the products were dignified and pre-disposed to basic technological knowledge and skills intended to make them self-reliant, thereby addressing the issue of unemployment in the country. Furthermore, the products became agriculturally inclined intended to assist in the field of farming in Ghana. As such, Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings built a school system that reflected the Ghanaian realities and that made each formally educated child more productive in the society. These successes, which Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings chalked in the field of education was, more or less, largely due to his commitment to ensure that the country's education brings about socio-economic development and emancipation.

Recommendations

The educational interventions of Rawlings have significant implications for today's education in Ghana. Indeed, the current duration of both Junior High School and Senior High School are three years. Again, there is cost sharing at the tertiary institutions of Ghana where students and government are made to pay for the cost of education. It is, thus, recommended that:

1. In order to have quality education in the country, especially at the tertiary level, the cost of education should continue to be shared by both government and students until a time when Ghana's economy becomes robust and vibrant for the question of free tertiary education to be discussed and considered.
2. Education at all levels should be directed towards the acquisition of relevant skills intended to make the products (beneficiaries) employable in order to address the problem of unemployment among the Ghanaian youth.
3. There should be adequate and timely supply of all relevant teaching and learning resources as well as other logistics to facilitate the training of Ghanaian children of school-going age at all levels of education such as pre-tertiary and tertiary education in the country.
4. Teachers at all levels of education should be well-trained and well-motivated to enable them shape the education of Ghanaian children to the betterment of the country at large.
5. Governments of Ghana should direct education to reflect that of the global village due to technological advancement and modernisation. Here, emphasis should be placed on vocational, technical, mathematical and social skills to enable products acquire employable skills to function well in the Ghanaian society.

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