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UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

**DECENTRALISED EDUCATIONAL PLANNING - A CASE STUDY OF TWO
DISTRICTS IN GHANA**

Student : Abaidoo Adentwi Edzii
Degree : Doctor of Education (EdD)
Date : August 2017

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature:

Name: Abaidoo Adentwi Edzii

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines Ghana's decentralised educational planning policy by exploring meanings of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning, the legal framework and how it has been implemented in practice at district level from the perspectives of key stakeholders. In Ghana public policy measures have been directed towards the decentralisation of educational planning and management of pre-tertiary education to address education inefficiencies. To this end, various decentralised educational structures such as School Management Committees (SMCs) and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) have been institutionalized to encourage community participation in educational planning and decision-making. Attempts to enhance community involvement in Ghana resonate with global efforts. Several developing countries have chosen to decentralize educational planning in the hope of obtaining increased participation of stakeholders in educational planning and decision making.

Despite the strong policy commitment to decentralisation and decentralised educational planning, this has not translated into practice. The understanding and involvement of key educational stakeholders in decentralised educational planning fall short of expectation. It is against this background that this study examines the experiences of stakeholders in decentralised educational planning in Ghana.

The study employed a qualitative research approach focused on purposively sampled districts (Accra Metropolitan Directorate of Education and Komenda- Edina- Eguafo- Abrem). The key participants in the study were 2 Senior Education Officers, 2 Planning

Officers, 2 Headteachers, 2 SMC representatives and 2 PTA representatives. Both primary and secondary data were collected. Interview guides were used in the collection of qualitative data while statistical data were collected from Education Management Information System (EMIS).

In order to achieve the specific objectives set within the main purpose of this study, the main question which guides this study is: *What is the understanding and participation of District Officers, Heads of Schools and other stakeholders of Decentralisation and Decentralised Educational Planning?*

The study found that stakeholders have diverse understandings about the meaning of decentralisation, and decentralised educational planning. In general it was found that decentralisation entails empowering the districts/locals to make decision and being accountable for the decisions made. Educational decentralisation refers to devolution of educational delivery from Ghana Education Headquarters to the districts with the regional directorate gradually taking the role of the GES headquarters and the district directorates where final authority will reside at the District Assembly. Decentralised educational planning means empowerment to plan and take decision at the local or district level of educational delivery. The study also found that SMC/PTA members participate in the decentralised educational planning process but that their level of involvement is very low. The study also notes that there is weak capacity development for planners and other stakeholders in a system of decentralised education planning. The study suggests that a number of challenges should be addressed to ensure effective decentralised education planning.

This thesis provides new insights into decentralised educational planning in Ghana contributing to the extant literature on the topics.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It would not have been possible to write this doctoral thesis without the help and support of the kind people around me, to only some of whom it is possible to give particular mention here.

This thesis would not have been possible without the help, support and patience of my principal supervisor, Professor Sayed Yusuf, not to mention his advice and unsurpassed knowledge of the field. His good advice, support and friendship have been invaluable on both an academic and at personal level, for which I am extremely grateful. In finishing this thesis, I feel sad that I am going to lose a wonderful supervisor, but feel very happy that I will always have him as a lifelong friend and a brother.

I would also like to thank my second supervisor, Professor Colleen McLaughlin for her limitless degree of patience and understanding. She has well performed her role as a critical friend during the course of my Professional Doctorate in Education (EdD).

I would also like to thank my colleagues and friends in the Department of Education, University of Sussex, especially Christian Koramoah and Stephen Adu as well as those in the KEEA and Greater Accra Directorates of Education for their direct and indirect support. In particular, I am thankful to officers and all those Directors who participated in this study. It would have been impossible to continue this study without their support and cooperation.

Above all, I would like to thank my wife, Vivian Edzii for her unequivocal support throughout, as always, for which my mere expression of thanks likewise does not suffice.

DEDICATION

To my wife and children

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADEOP	-	Annual District Education Operational Plan
ADP	-	Accelerated Development Plan
CBO	-	Church Based Organisation
CPD	-	Continuing Professional Development
CSO	-	Civil Society Organisation
D/C	-	District Council
DA	-	District Assembly
DACF	-	District Assembly Common Fund
DD1		District Director of Education (Accra Metro)
DD2		District Director of Education (KEEA)
DEOC	-	District Education Oversight Committee
DESP	-	District Education Strategic Plan
DPCU	-	District Planning Co-ordinating Unit
ECCE	-	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECLAC/UNESCO	-	Education in Latin America and the Caribbean.
EFA	-	Education for All
EMIS	-	Education Management Information System
EO	-	Educational Officer
fCUBE	-	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education Framework
GAR	-	Gross Average Rate
GER	-	Gross Enrolment Rate
GES	-	Ghana Education Service
GIMPA	-	Ghana Institute of Management and Public
GPI	-	Gender Parity Index
HT1	-	Headteacher
HT2	-	Headteacher
ICT	-	Information & Communication Technology
IEPA	-	Institute of Educational Planning and

IIEPA	-	International Institute for Educational
ILP	-	Improving Learning through Partnerships
IMF	-	International Monetary Fund
INSET	-	In-Service Training
JSS	-	Junior Secondary School
KEEA	-	Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abrem
KG	-	Kindergarten
L/A	-	Local Authority
MDA	-	Ministries Departments and Agencies
MDGs	-	Millennium Development Goals
MLGRD	-	Ministry of Local Governmental and Rural Development
MMDA	-	Metropolitan, Municipal & District Assembly
MOE	-	Ministry of Education
MOESS	-	Ministry of Education Science and Sports
MTDPF	-	Medium Term National Development Policy
MTEF	-	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NAR	-	Net Average Rate
NDAP	-	National Decentralisation Action Plan
NDPS	-	National Development Planning System
NER	-	Net Enrolment Rate
NGO	-	Non Governmental Organisation
NIB	-	National Inspectorate Board
NDPC	-	National Development Planning Commission
PNDC	-	Provisional National Defence Council
PNDCL	-	Provisional National Defence Council Law
PTA	-	Parent Teacher Association (KEEA)
QUIPs	-	Quality Improvement in Primary Schools

RCC	-	Regional Coordination Council
RPCU	-	Regional Planning Co-ordinating Unit
SEO	-	Senior Education Officer
SHS	-	Senior High School
SMC	-	School Management Committee
SPIP	-	School Performance Improvement Plan
SSS	-	Senior Secondary School
TVET	-	Technical, Vocational Education and Training
UCC	-	University of Cape Coast
UK	-	United Kingdom
UNICEF	-	United Nations International Childrens' Education Fund
US	-	United States
USAID	-	United States Agency for International Development
WB	-	World Bank

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This first chapter sets the general background against which the conceptual discussion, my own interaction with both literature and evidence are to be understood. In so doing, the chapter helps in specifying: (i) globalization, its attributes and (ii) a major strategy: decentralisation and decentralised educational planning and how it is being practiced where the field work was conducted, providing key elements for the discussion in chapters five and six.

Globalization has brought about an increased flow of technology, skills, ideas and information across national borders. The result has been an increasing demand for a change in the structure and content of education as well as the role of educational planning to meet the demand of this new world order which is characterized by innovation and flexibility. Among the strategies that have characterized globalization is decentralisation. During the last two decades, there has been widespread adoption of decentralisation by many countries resulting in the transfer of some power, responsibilities and resources from the centre to local governments (Cohen & Peterson, 1996). This wave of decentralisation was initiated by international agencies when ‘good governance’ promoting democratic participation, accountability and transparency and ‘new public management’ arose as new concepts in the public sector (Leeftwich, 2000; Pierre & Peters, 2000). Developed countries such as Canada, USA, and Australia, have adopted decentralised approaches to governance and decision making (Brown, 1990). Developing countries, including Nepal, Brazil, Costa Rica (Yannakopulos, 1980), Papua New Guinea (Bray, 1984), Nigeria (Igwe, 1988) and recently Ghana (Okulo-Epak,

1985) have followed this lead. These countries have chosen to decentralise because of the presumed equity and efficiency benefits associated with it. In particular, decentralisation is seen to facilitate the matching of services with local preferences, thus increasing the chances of meeting policy goals. In Ghana the decentralisation of public service delivery to sub-national levels of government functions, decision making authority and resources is seen as instruments to pave the way for the closer involvement of people in decision making, for improving checks and balances, and ultimately for improving public services in line with the needs and priorities of local communities.

Educational planning as a dynamic process is changing and macro or centralized planning is giving way to decentralised or local and institutional level planning. This places more emphasis on stakeholder empowerment, institutional autonomy and accountability. In the basic education level the future trend is to plan for quality improvement with increasing focus on school improvement planning and deepening decentralisation in planning and management practices is of major importance. In Ghana public policy measures have been directed towards the decentralisation of educational planning and management of pre-tertiary education to address education inefficiencies. Ghana Education Service an agency under the Ministry of Education receives a substantial proportion (more than 60%) of the Education Sector budget every year for effective delivery of pre-tertiary education in the country in order to achieve its mission of ensuring that all Ghanaian children of school going age irrespective of tribe, gender, disability, religious and political affiliations are provided with quality formal education and training through effective resource management to make education delivery relevant to the manpower needs of the nation. The Service has decentralised educational planning, management and decision-making to Regions, Districts and

Institutions, while retaining central responsibility for establishing norms, guidelines and systems of transparency and accountability. To this end, various decentralised educational structures such as SMCs and PTAs have been institutionalized to encourage community participation in educational planning and decision-making. The School Management Committee is a school-community-based institution aimed at strengthening community participation and mobilization for education delivery. This was introduced through a Regulation under the Ghana Education Service Act (Act 506) of 1995. It is a governing body of basic schools in the various communities in the country. The main role of the SMC is to help the headteacher of a school to organise and manage the school's activities in an effective and efficient manner.

On the other hand, the PTA is a Non-Governmental Organization. It is essentially in advisory position in the school set-up. It is however, represented on the School Management Committee. It is not part of the school's day-to-day administration. Their roles focus on the promotion of the welfare of children and youth at home, school and community, through a strong linkage, assisting in income generating activities to provide some basic needs for the school, securing adequate laws for the care and protection of children. Even though the SMC and the PTA are different bodies, their functions towards the improvement of education delivery in the schools are quite related. Attempts to enhance community involvement in Ghana resonate with global efforts. Several developing countries have chosen to decentralise educational planning in the hope of obtaining increased participation of stakeholders in educational planning and decision making.

Despite the strong policy commitment to decentralisation and decentralised educational planning, this has not translated into practice. The understanding and involvement of key educational stakeholders in decentralised educational planning falls short of

expectation. Low level of capacity of stakeholders to participate in educational decision-making at the sub-national and local levels, lack of availability of data and competences to utilize the same for decision-making, poor resources in educational directorates and schools, confusion on the part of school management committees and PTAs in relation to new roles and responsibilities, difficulties of coordination, lack of decision-making authority, lack of knowledge, low parental participation, and under funding of education by governments constitute some of the barriers to effective decentralised educational planning. With these in mind, I set out to explore the views on decentralisation and educational decentralisation among senior education officers, educational planners and other stakeholders. In order to achieve the proposed goals I have relied on an approach which combines different tools and methods. Primary evidence was produced by fieldwork activities comprising semi-structured interviews with senior education officers, educational planners, headteachers and other stakeholders working in educational directorates and public basic schools in two Ghanaian settings: the Accra Metropolitan, and Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipal directorates of education. Secondary evidence; Draft Education Bill, Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2010-2020, Metropolitan and Municipal Education Strategic Plans, Annual Metropolitan and Municipal Education Operational Plans, Free Compulsory and Universal Basic Education Policy, Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462), National Decentralisation Action Plan (NDAP), The Fourth Republican Constitution of Ghana, and other documents on decentralisation policy in Ghana, were also used as a tool to shed light on individual narratives. While an attempt was made to contact educational stakeholders from different backgrounds, this study and its findings cannot be taken as a depiction of the Ghanaian situation as a whole.

It is against this background that this study examines the understanding and experiences of stakeholders in decentralised educational planning in Ghana. This study examines the extent to which decentralised educational planning is being practiced, the level of participation by stakeholders especially SMCs and PTAs (the community) and the capacity building opportunities provided by Ghana Education Service for stakeholders in decentralised educational planning.

1.1 Research Background and Rationale

The government of Ghana has adopted decentralisation as a strategy to enhance development and democratization. Education in Ghana, specifically, pre-tertiary education has not been left out of this process of decentralisation. There has been administrative decentralisation, fiscal decentralisation and decentralised planning of educational delivery with about 95% of the pre-tertiary annual budgetary allocation going to District Directorates of Education for the implementation of district's prioritized development goals (Government's Consolidated Budgetary Allocation, 2010).

Decentralised educational planning has been key in the educational development agenda of Ghana under the decentralisation programme because of the hope of having effective and efficient use of local resources, proper needs identification at the lower levels, and better solutions for local specific problems. Districts have now been empowered to plan and implement budgets to achieve district's set performance targets. Prakash (2008) indicated that educational planning in Ghana now places emphasis on decentralisation and use of local level planning techniques such as school mapping, and school improvement planning and so on for improving quality educational delivery. This involves identifying problems, priorities, possibilities, impossibilities and how the relationships among various stakeholders can be managed to improve the quality and

efficiency of education at the local level. Under decentralised educational planning, local organizations and institutions formulate, adopt, execute activities and supervise plan implementation. This process empowers and improves participation in planning and management of education.

The Educational Planning process in Ghana has been decentralised from the national level to the regional, district/local/school levels. This strategy shifts the location of the planning process from the national to the district and school levels. This implies that District Educational Managers in consultation with private sector organizations, civil society and non-governmental organizations as well as academic and research institutions, traditional authorities and other identifiable groups and individuals are required to participate in the planning and decision making processes.

Out of several issues particularly relevant to education policy-making, I have been mainly interested in understanding decentralisation and decentralised educational planning, convinced that effective educational planning is a critical activity for the operation of any education system. Several recent education reform efforts in this regard have not proven successful. One of the reasons for this is the lack of a comprehensive policy approach to the planning process that helps to visualise stakeholders as individuals merely responsible for “implementing” what others have decided for them leading to a mismatch between intention and practice (or policy gap according to Sayed 2002).

My experience in the field shows that educational planners and other key stakeholders in Ghana may have a different understanding of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning and how it impacts on educational outcomes in the country and are also confronted with challenges in practice. From my experience as a planner in the Ghana Education Service (GES), I have noted a number of problems. Also, the literature

I have read cites a number of such problems. These include a low level of capacity of stakeholders to participate in educational decision-making at the sub-national and local levels and lack of availability of data and competences to utilize the same for decision-making. As a former educational planner at the Ghana Education Service Head Office, I have been involved in planning and budgeting for the agency under the Ministry of Education for several years. My interest in decentralised educational planning however, increased when I began to critically examine the processes challenges that the entire decentralised educational planning go through, the personnel that are involved and their capacity to go through the process and how motivated they are in getting their job done. Having selected this area of enquiry as my prime goal, led me to develop a critical literature review on decentralisation and decentralised educational planning. This work provided me with a background on approaches to planning, and allowed me to identify critical elements for understanding decentralised educational planning processes. In this respect, exploring the understanding of senior education officers, educational planners and other stakeholders of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning, community participation in planning and decision making and capacity building opportunities provided by the Ghana Education Service for stakeholders in decentralised educational planning becomes extremely important. Educational officers and other stakeholders have the ultimate responsibility for school performance improvement planning and the delivery of quality educational services. Nevertheless, the debate on educational planning-related policies does not seem to be influenced by systematic evidence. This thesis is intended to address some of these issues that ultimately can inform public debate in significant ways.

The choice of this topic provides me an opportunity to learn more and understand how senior educational officers, educational planners and other stakeholders in educational

delivery in Ghana understand decentralised educational planning processes; their roles in needs identification, programme preparation, implementation monitoring and how these functions inform decision making at the district and school levels.

This study sought to find out the understanding of educational managers, planners and other stakeholders about the decentralisation policy and decentralised educational planning at the district and school levels of educational delivery by conducting in-depth interviews with senior education officers, educational planners and other stakeholders in educational delivery in selected districts.

The study also examines how senior education officers, educational planners, parents, community leaders, chiefs, civil society, faith based organizations, NGOs and other stakeholders are directly involved in decentralised educational planning, and their views on how this form of planning is working in practice at the district/local and school levels. The views expressed and suggestions made, apart from contributing to knowledge about decentralised educational planning, may inform the policy makers on certain issues to take into consideration as they decentralise educational delivery in Ghana.

1.2 Research Aims and Questions

The study aims at providing an understanding of decentralised educational planning in Ghana and some of the challenges of this form of micro level planning. Having this information allows educational managers, planners and other stakeholders to maximize the benefits of decentralised educational planning in Ghana. The study supports educational stakeholders to improve policies about decentralised educational planning.

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Identify the understanding of the concepts as perceived by educational officers, planners and other stakeholders in educational delivery at the district level.

2. Identify the participation by stakeholders in decentralised educational planning process
3. Examine the capacity levels of stakeholders and identify the types of assistance and/or support required.

In order to achieve the specific objectives set within the main purpose of this study, the main question which guides this study is: *What is the understanding and participation of District Officers, Heads of Schools and other stakeholders of Decentralisation and Decentralised Educational Planning?*

There are three aspects; stakeholders' understanding of decentralisation as a concept, participation in decentralised educational planning, and capacity building for personnel involved in the planning process. Three sub questions were derived from the three aspects of the main research question.

- (1) How do different stakeholders understand the concepts of decentralisation, educational decentralisation and decentralised educational planning?
- (2) What are the experiences of educational officers, Headteachers, teachers, PTAs and SMCs and other stakeholder of participation in Decentralised Educational Planning in actual practice?
- (3) What are the experiences of educational officers and other stakeholders of capacity development programmes provided by the Ghana Education Service?

1.3 Structure of the Research

This thesis opens by providing an overall view of its underlying context. Chapter one provides the general background information to the debate that influences the study delineating the rationale, research questions and structure of the study.

Chapter two presents a description of the research context. It focuses on Ghana's educational planning, examining its structure, the current decentralised educational

planning processes and how decentralisation has been implemented in practice at district level by various actors. In so doing, it also sets the background to understand how the subject-matter, the research questions, and the research methods were crafted.

Chapter three follows by addressing conceptual considerations presented through a critical engagement with the literature on decentralisation in general, educational decentralisation and decentralised educational planning as a policy in particular including definitions and meanings and the legal framework of Ghana's decentralised educational planning as well as participation and capacity building issues. The chapter ends advancing the conceptual framework resulting from this critical engagement and used in this thesis.

Chapter four outlines the methodology of the study. The chapter discusses the ontological and epistemological positions from which the research was conducted. It also explains the research methods, sampling approach, data collection techniques, and how the data was analysed. In addition, this chapter discusses issues of trustworthiness and authenticity, ethics, positionality and limitations of the study focusing on secondary sources of information.

Chapter five presents the analysis of fieldwork-generated information. Chapter five is organised according to major threads identified in the dialogues with senior educational officers, educational planners, Headteachers and other stakeholders namely: stakeholders' understandings of the concept of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning, stakeholders' engagement in decentralised educational planning; examining the use of manuals/guidelines in the operations of decentralised structures and finally capacity building opportunities provided by the Ghana Education Service. The main elements linked to an idea of "decentralised educational planning" are summarised as a concluding section for this chapter.

Finally, chapter six presents concluding considerations, including how the evidence allowed me to address the original research questions, and some additional remarks. It also outlines the significance and contribution of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Introduction

This chapter provides background information about Ghana and the specific settings where fieldwork was conducted, in order to make explicit contextual elements underlying the specific research context.

In so doing, the chapter helps in specifying: (i) some main attributes of the Ghanaian education setting, and (ii) the major contrasting elements between the settings where the field work was conducted, the case study, providing key elements entailed in the discussion in chapters five and six.

The first section provides elements related to Ghana's educational policies at the pre-tertiary, core values of the education system in 2.2 and a detailed discussion of the context of the study in 2.3. Sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.4 provide a description of the two specific settings where this research was conducted. The section 2.4 draws elements from the discussion that informed the construction of the subject-matter of this thesis – decentralisation, educational decentralisation and decentralised educational planning setting the ground for chapter three where reviews of relevant literature in the field of decentralisation, decentralised educational planning, stakeholder participation and capacity building opportunities are addressed.

2.1 An Overview of Ghana

Ghana is a West African country bounded by Côte d'Ivoire to the west, Burkina Faso to the north, Togo to the east, and the Atlantic Ocean to the south. Its largest river is the Volta. Called the Gold Coast, the area was first seen by Portuguese traders in 1470. They were followed by the English (1553), the Dutch (1595), and the Swedes (1640).

British rule over the Gold Coast began in 1820, but it was not until after quelling the resistance of the Ashanti in 1901 that it was firmly established. British Togoland, formerly a colony of Germany, was incorporated into Ghana by referendum in 1956. Created as an independent country on March 6, 1957, Ghana, as a result of a plebiscite, became a republic on July 1, 1960.

Formal education in Gold Coast (now Ghana) was started by the European merchants and missionaries by the 15th century through the 18th Century respectively. The impacts of their educational activities were so enormous. Western education started off in the form of Castle schools. The first recorded western type school was begun by the Portuguese in 1529 after settling in Elmina in 1482. They were followed by other European traders such as the Dutch, Danes, British, Normans, Spaniards and the French. Reading and writing were taught in the schools. Cost of running the Castle schools in the 18th century was mainly a subsidiary function of the merchant companies since funding of the Royal African School was irregular. Hence the merchant company supplied also textbooks. Few of the children were sent to Portugal for further educational training. Children were taught rudiments of the Christian religion, reading, writing and arithmetic. The school's enrolment at the Cape Coast Castle School rose to 200 and among others emerged George Blankson in 1861 who became the first pure African member of the Legislative Council and others from the group rose up to become members of the Fanti Confederation formed in 1867. This confederation was first movement of self government that combined African and British ideas (McWilliam, 1962).

In 1822, the Wesleyan Missionaries established a Teacher Training College in Aburi, a town in the Eastern Region. This college was moved to Kumasi, the Regional Capital of the Ashanti in 1924 and renamed Wesley College. The Basel Mission, mainly a German

society, with the headquarters at Basel in Switzerland, unlike the Wesleyans, emphasised vernacular more. The first boys' school was transferred to Aburi which became a Teacher Training College. By 1917, the Basel Missionaries had 176 schools with 10,000 children of which some were boarding schools scattered throughout the country. Training of girls was a priority so that there was a ratio of one is to about 3 boys as against one girl to 6 boys in government schools and 7 in Wesleyan schools. Study subjects included English, Reading and Writing, Twi or Ga, Geometry, Natural Science, Physics, Geography, History, Drawing, Bible Study, Craft Instruction and Singing Practice (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). From 1888 to 1890 the average number of pupils of each sex in primary and secondary government and assisted schools has been on the increase as shown in table on the next page;

Table 1

Primary and Secondary School Enrolment-1888-1890

	1888		Total	1889		Total	1890		Total
Denominations	M	F		M	F		M	F	
Catholic	150	57	207	303	71	374	297	59	356
Wesleyan	1067	124	1,191	1071	109	1180	1183	129	1312
German mission	931	375	1,306	976	383	1359	1078	441	1519
Government	626	160	786	638	177	815	512	153	665
Total	2,774	716	3,490	2,988	740	3,728	3,070	782	3,852

Source: C. K. Graham, *ibid*, pg 116



Figure 1. Map of Ghana

Source: www.ghanaweb.com/ghanahomepage/geography/region.php.

The Greater Accra Region with the capital and largest city, Accra, has a population of 4,402,749 (2014 projected population). The remaining nine political and administrative regions are Ashanti with a population of 5,159,038, Eastern Region: 2,890,146, Brong Ahafo Region, 2,539,001, Northern Region, 2,728,081, Upper East Region, 1,134,453, Upper West Region, 756,303, Volta Region, 2,322,912, Central Region, 2,355,314 and Western Region 2,755,096 (2014 projected population). Greater Accra Region has two Metropolitan Assemblies that is Accra and Tema, and 9 Municipal and 5 Districts. It has 34 constituencies. A district assembly variously called Metropolitan, Municipal (MMDA) is a division of territory, as of a country or state marked off for administrative, electoral or other purposes. This demarcation is based on population size. A Metropolitan Assembly is a local government unit whose population is above

250,000. Municipal Assembly is a local government unit whose population is above 95,000 and District Assembly is a local government unit whose population is between 75,000-95,000 (ILGS, 2008). Constituency on the other hand is a group of voters in a specified area or the residents of a district who elect a representative to a legislative body.

Ashanti Region, with Kumasi as its capital has 47 constituencies, one Metropolitan Assembly, 8 Municipal and 21 Districts. This is followed by Eastern Region with 33 constituencies; ten (10) Municipalities and 16 Districts, Koforidua is the Regional capital. Brong Ahafo Region has 27 Districts including 8 Municipalities and 29 constituencies. The Northern Region has one Metropolitan assembly, 2 Municipal Assemblies and 23 Districts with 31 constituencies. Tamale is its capital. Upper East and Upper West Regions have 3 Municipalities and 10 Districts, 15 Constituencies and 1 Municipal Assembly and 10 District and 11 Constituencies respectively.

The remaining 3 regions out of the 10 are Western Region, Sekondi/Takoradi as the regional capital with 26 constituencies. The region has 1 Metropolitan Assembly, 3 Municipalities and 18 Districts. Volta Region, with Ho as its Capital has 4 Municipalities and 21 Districts with a total of 26 Constituencies. Cape Coast, which is Metropolitan assembly, is the Capital of the Central Region. Central region also has 7 Municipalities and 12 District Assemblies with 23 political constituencies. In conclusion Ghana is made up of 6 Metropolitan Assemblies, 55 Municipalities and 155 District Assemblies. Ghana has a total of 216 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies and 275 constituencies (Ministry of local Government and Rural Development – MLGRD, 2012).

Ghana's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) based on 2013 budget estimates was \$90.41 billion (purchasing power parity) with a per capita income of \$5,150 (2013 estimates).

Real growth rate was 7.9% with inflationary rate of 14.5 % as at March, 2014 and unemployment rate of 11% (2000 budget estimates.). Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy with activities covering crops like cocoa, rice, coffee, cassava (tapioca), peanuts, corn, shea nuts and bananas. By 2013 budget estimates, the labour force was 12.07 million with agriculture engaging 56% of the labour force, industry 15%, and services 29%. Industrial activities include mining, lumbering, light manufacturing, aluminum smelting, food processing, cement and small commercial boat building. Natural resources are gold, timber, industrial diamonds, bauxite, manganese, fish, rubber, hydropower, petroleum, silver, salt and limestone. Exports cover gold, cocoa, timber, tuna, bauxite, aluminium, manganese ore, diamonds and horticulture earn the country \$13.37 billion (2013 budget estimates) annually. Imports include capital equipment, petroleum, foodstuffs and cost the nation \$18.49 billion (2013 budget estimates) annually. Major trading partners are Netherlands, UK, France, U.S., Belgium, Spain, South Africa, Nigeria, China, India and Singapore (2008 budget estimates).

2.1.1 Brief Historical Overview of the Ghanaian Education System

Education is considered as the most important tool for national development. Successive governments in Ghana have promoted educational policies to help its citizenry to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes that enables them to develop their potentials. According to McWilliam and Kwamena – Poh (1975), Ghana has had a formal education from around the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Before then an informal systems of education had been the main way in which Ghanaians were educated. The major purpose of such education was the inculcation of good character and good health in the young members of the community. Secondly, it was intended to provide them with adequate knowledge of their history, beliefs and culture, thus enabling them to fully participate in social life. Formal education started with the

colonial government in the form of Castle schools in the then Gold Coast in the 1600s and then later as colonial schools in the 1800s. Philip Quaque was trained and became the headmaster of the Colonial School at Cape Coast. The colonial schools produced the first generation of English educated Africans which though small had great influence on the development of the country.

Mission Schools followed the Castle Schools with the arrival of the missionaries in the country. The Wesleyan and Basel Missionaries established schools in Cape Coast, Dixcove, Anumabo, Accra, all along the coast and Akropong few miles away from the coast in the 1830s and 1850s respectively. Missionaries saw education as the best way to spread the Christian faith (McWilliam and Kwamina- Poh, 1975).

2.1.2 First Education Ordinance

The first education ordinance was passed in 1852 under Governor Stephen Hill. It was intended to provide for better education for the inhabitants of Her Majesty's forts and settlements on the Gold Coast. The Ordinance failed due to the refusal of the people to bear the cost of education through the Poll Tax. Another Education Ordinance in 1882 brought two categories of basic schools in the country, namely Government and Assisted schools. The latter were run by non-governmental bodies. These policies had no major influence on education in Asante and the Northern territories until the annexation of Asante by British in 1901, and the establishment of the Northern Territories Protectorates at about the same time.

2.1.3 The Accelerated Development Plan

Governor Gordon Guggisberg, in 1920 established the Educationist Committee which resulted in the tremendous expansion of the education system in the Gold Coast. Later, in the 1940s under the rule of Governor Burns the desire for compulsory education for all children in the country resulted in the Accelerated Development Plan for Ghana. The

1951 Accelerated Development Plan for Education (ADP) outlined the structure of basic education and aimed to provide universal primary education by abolishing school fees (Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu, & Hunt, 2007). The 1961 Education Act also laid the foundation for decentralised educational management in Ghana giving local councils the responsibility for the provision and maintenance of educational facilities, while leaving the central government responsible for teachers' salaries.

2.1.4 Post-Independence Educational Development

Education was given prominence in post-independence Ghana under Dr Kwame Nkrumah. An attempt to give legal backing to the ADP of 1951 led to the passage of the Education Act of 1961. Until the passage of this Act, Guggisberg's 1925 Education Ordinance constituted the main guiding law for education in the Gold Coast. The 1961 Act brought into effect many important measures about the powers and duties of the Minister of Education, compulsory education, the local education authorities, the higher institutions, the teachers and the relationship between the church and the schools. 1961 Education Act reaffirmed control and management of education at the local level to local councils. However, poor managerial capacity and a weak financial resource base of the local councils undermined the decentralisation process.

After Ghana attained independence from British Colonial rule on the 6th of March 1957, education became a high priority on the government agenda. There were policies on Free Compulsory Basic Education, free textbooks for all students and the creation of local education authorities with responsibilities for buildings, equipment and maintenance grants for primary schools (Asiedu Akrofi 1982). There was dramatic increase in the number of elementary and secondary schools during the time of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah (the D/C, L/A and Trust Schools). The education reforms in 1974, which called for 13 years of pre-tertiary education (six years primary, three years junior

secondary (JSS), four years senior secondary (SSS)), were never fully implemented because of the decline at that time of the economy and the migration of teachers out of Ghana. Access to basic education was at its lowest by 1983 (White & Masset, 2005) and education was increasingly being used as a tool for social stratification (Akyeampong, et al., 2007). As a result, the 1987 education reforms which followed the rise of the Rawlings government, attempted to equalize access to education and improve the quality of education provided.

In 1988, the military government under Ft. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings implemented broad reforms that affected all levels of the education system and attempted to address the recurring issues affecting the system. The reforms reduced pre-tertiary education from 17 to 12 years (6years of primary, 3 years JSS and 3 years SSS education). There was also a national literacy campaign through non-formal education for school dropouts and adult learners. In 1996 Ghana under Rawlings civilian rule implemented the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (fCUBE). This was specifically designed to focus on basic education access and quality through improving the quality of teaching and learning, efficiency in management and local participation in educational delivery.

The 1992 Constitution also codified the national provision of basic education. The constitution of the Fourth Republic of Ghana Article 39(2) mandates “the provision of free, compulsory and universal basic education. The 1996 fCUBE policy sought to expand access to quality basic education, promote efficient teaching and learning, improve teacher morale and motivation through incentive programs, ensure adequate and timely supply of teaching and learning materials to schools and improve teacher community relations. Specifically, fCUBE aimed to achieve universal primary education by 2005. Despite an existing policy of fee-free tuition in basic schools post-1996 as outlined by the fCUBE policy, many districts continue to charge students levies

to attend school as a means of raising funds, for example, for school repairs, and cultural and sporting activities. The Government of Ghana asserts that a levy has the effect of deterring many families, particularly the poorest, from sending their children to school (Ghana Education Service, 2005). In addition, a weakness such as poor supervision of education at the pre-tertiary level undermines the impact of the fCUBE policy (World Bank, 1999).

New education reforms were introduced in 2007 based on the report of the Government White Paper (2004). The reforms resulted in an education structure consisting of 2 years Kindergarten, 6 years Primary and 3 years Junior High School (JHS). Ghanaian language and English, where necessary became the medium of instruction in Kindergarten and Lower Primary. At the basic level, the emphasis is on Literacy, Numeracy, Creative arts and Problem Solving Skills.

After basic education, there is a 4-year Senior High School (SHS), leading to post Secondary and tertiary education. After JHS, students have the choice of going into different streams at Senior High School (SHS), offering General Education and Technical, Vocational and Agricultural Education and Training (TVET) or enter into an apprenticeship scheme with some support from the Government. Teacher Training Colleges were upgraded to Colleges of Education and conditions of service for teachers improved, with special incentives for teachers in the rural areas. The reforms also provided 3-4 year tertiary education. In 2010, the National Democratic Congress under the leadership of President John Evans Atta Mills reduced the four years of Senior High School to three years.

A New National Inspectorate Board (NIB) outside the Ghana Education Service (GES) but under the Ministry of Education (MOE) is now responsible for periodic inspection of Basic and Secondary Schools to ensure quality education. Greater emphasis was put

on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Science Technology. Special Education Needs was also improved at all levels (The Education Reform Review, MOESS, 2004).

2.2 The Core Values of the Ghanaian Education System

Education in Ghana is seen as the principal instrument for the provision of requisite skills needed in the economy and for improving the overall levels of efficiency, productivity, technical and managerial performance of the labour force. The government's coordinated programme for economic and social development focuses on Human Resource Development with the main goal of ensuring the development of a knowledgeable, well-trained and disciplined labour force. This is attainable only through provision of quality education. The mission of the Ministry of Education is to provide relevant education to all Ghanaians at all levels to enable them to acquire skills that will assist them to develop their potential, to be productive, to facilitate poverty reduction and to promote socio-economic growth and national development.

In fulfilment of this mission, the Ministry of Education provides facilities to ensure that all citizens, irrespective of age, gender, tribe, religion and political affiliation, are functionally literate and self-reliant, basic education for all, education and training for skill development with an emphasis on science, technology and creativity and higher education. In providing these services the Ministry is guided by the following values:

a) Quality Education

In all aspects of the school and its surrounding education community, the rights of the whole child, and all children, to survival, protection, development and participation are at the centre. This means that the focus is on quality learning which strengthens the capacities of children to act progressively on their own behalf through the acquisition of relevant knowledge, useful skills and appropriate attitudes; and which creates for

children, and helps them create for themselves and others, places of safety, security and healthy interaction. (Bernard, 1999)

Many definitions of quality in education exist, testifying to the complexity and multifaceted nature of the concept. Considerable consensus exists around the basic dimensions of quality education today. Quality education includes:

- Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities;
- Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities;
- Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace;
- Processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities;
- Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society,(Rasheed, 2000).

This definition allows for an understanding of education as a complex system embedded in a political, cultural and economic context. However; these dimensions are interdependent, influencing each other in ways that are sometimes unforeseeable.

Education's role in promoting learners cognitive development as well as values and attitudes of responsible citizenship and in nurturing creative and emotional development and ensuring excellence is of paramount importance to Ghana Education Service and

the government of Ghana. Infusing the nation's education system with quality, it is hoped to bring about productive, responsible and responsive citizens. Specifically, quality education has an influence upon the speed with which societies can grow economically and individuals improve their own productivity and incomes, (Government's Education Policy and Medium Term National Development Policy Framework (MTDPF) Document, 2003).

b. Efficient Management of Resources.

The G.E.S. acknowledges that efficient management of resources promotes delivery of quality education. Management of education service delivery strategies focuses on strengthening and improving educational planning and management through improved quality and efficiency in the delivery of education services and strengthening monitoring and evaluation frameworks. Teacher development, deployment and supervision, provision of incentives to teachers in deprived areas, improved remuneration and conditions of service, providing access and support to teachers for training and professional development is all considered to be important. Others include; strengthening of institutional arrangements for the role of Church Based Organizations (CBOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in advocacy, monitoring and evaluation, and training Directors, School Heads, Inspectors and Circuit Supervisors, educational managers/leaders in management and leadership skills, (Education Strategic Plan Document, 2010-2020).

c. Accountability and Transparency.

Accountability is a process by which those with responsibility for the management of public resources demonstrate to stakeholders that those resources are being used efficiently and effectively for their intended purpose. While systems of management should have internal accountability and control procedures it is increasingly recognized

that public institutions whose activities have substantial social impact have a duty of accountability to society in general.

Transparency is a characteristic of a system or transaction that enables all stakeholders to trace the flow of resources and understand the process of decision making around the use of those resources. Increased accountability and transparency generally reduces the incidence of corruption, increase the efficiency of resource use and make service delivery more responsive to beneficiaries.

Accountability for resources involves more than financial reporting. It includes the accountability to local stakeholders and beneficiaries of all those responsible for service provision, the outcomes achieved with the resources entrusted to them, and the efficiency of resource utilization. Public accountability and transparency is expected to strengthen decentralisation, reduce abuses in resource use and increase stakeholder commitment to a partnership for educational performance improvement (Education Strategic Plan Document, 2010-2020)

d. Equity

The concept of equity in school education means different things to different people, resulting in debate that is often at cross purposes. The most widely understood and accepted meaning of equity in education is in the sense of fairness, defined as making sure that factors specific to one's personal conditions should not interfere with the potential of academic success. This implies that specific instances of disadvantage will be addressed and overcome.

Another common approach equates equity with equality, which can mean either a basic minimum standard for all – referring to a comprehensive standard that applies to everyone in a certain education system that is opportunity in education or inclusion, ensuring that all children of school going age irrespective of tribe, gender, disability,

religious and political affiliations are provided with quality formal education and training through effective resource management to make education delivery relevant to the manpower needs of the nation.– or equal outcomes for all, regardless of social and family background.

Other researchers and advocates of equity in education couples equity and excellence as the twin primary goals for schooling, promoting a culture of excellence and delivering high quality schooling that will promote social inclusion and reduce the educational disadvantage of children.

The Service recognizes that some children are at a larger disadvantage than others and aims at compensating for these peoples' misfortunes and disabilities in order to make sure that everyone is capable of attaining the same type of healthy lifestyle. A key component of equity in education is the goal of providing people and their children with relevant skills to ensure their personal development and enable them to make the best use of future study and career opportunities

2.3 Context of the Study

The Government is committed to the Education for All goals (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It demands greater attention on those who do not enrol in primary education and at the right age, are unable to complete the programme, or fail to acquire adequate levels of literacy and numeracy. The problem of out-of-school children, and pupil drop-out, is also of immense importance.

The government's educational policy objectives are directed towards increasing access to and participation in basic education with emphasis on enrolment at the right age, improving gender parity as proportion of boys in school exceed girls, improving quality of education and improving management efficiency. Low growth of enrolment has also been accompanied by a rise in the number of repetitions and drop-outs. This has a direct

impact on transition rates. In recent times there have been steady increases in the enrolment numbers from Pre-school to Junior High School level. This is evidenced by gross enrolment rates presented by Accra Metropolitan and Komenda-Edina –Eguafo-Abrem directorates of education.

Early years of life, especially around age 4, are critical for brain development. Research has also shown that quality early childhood care and education (ECCE) can significantly improve the cognitive, social, and emotional development of the child. These benefits have been found to last well into adulthood. In addition to the personal development benefits, the child also derives cognitive and economic benefits as he/she develops into adulthood and participates in higher learning and/or the labour market. The society, too, derives economic and social benefits in the form of better labour supply, higher productivity, reduced costs for remedial educational, health and social programmes, including the costs of fighting crime and anti-social behaviour. As part of the Service's effort to increase access and participation, there is a policy goal of mainstreaming pre-school.

A particular aspect of the Service enrolment policy is to raise the proportion of girls in the pupil cohort particularly at the junior high level. Gender parity Index of the two directorates indicates parity in the case of KEEA and slightly below parity in the Accra Metropolitan directorate. Improvement in gender parity has been attributed to;

- Introduction of Capitation Grant
- Activities of the Girl Child Unit of the GES
- Sensitization on girls' child education by the Mass Media
- Improved infrastructural facilities in schools of many communities
- Improved school gender/child friendly environment- separate urinals and toilets
- School Feeding programme-Food ration for girls

- SMCs/PTAs participation in school management
- High Teacher commitment
- Support from the District Assemblies to basic school needy girls

2.3.1 Accra Metropolitan and Komenda–Edina-Eguafo-Abrem Municipal Directorates of Education

Two Directorates of Education in Ghana have been selected for the study. They are Accra Metropolitan and Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abrem Municipal Directorates of Education. These two Directorates were selected out of two hundred and sixteen (216) Education Directorates using a convenient sample strategy. Convenient sampling is used when a researcher is confronted with choices of availability as in this study (Bernard, 2000). These directorates were selected due to their relative ease of access for the researcher.

2.3.1.1 The Accra Metropolitan Directorate of Education

Accra has been Ghana's capital since 1877, and according to EMIS data for 2013 is one of the most populated and fast growing Metropolis of Africa with a basic school enrolment of 295,519. The primacy of the Accra Metropolitan Area as an administrative, educational, industrial and commercial centre in attracting people from all over Ghana, continues to be the major force for rapid population growth, with migration contributing to over 35% of the population increase (2010 population census document).

2.3.1.2 Boundary and Administrative Area

The Accra Metropolitan Directorate of Education is made up of six sub metros namely Okaikoi, Ashiedu Keteke, Ayawaso, Kpeshie, Osu Klotey and Ablekuma. The Southern boundary of the Metropolis of Accra is the Gulf of Guinea from Gbegbegese to the Mukwe Lagoon near Regional Maritime Academy. The boundary continues along the

Maritime Road to join the Accra-Tema road to Nungua Police Station Barrier. It turns right to the Ashaiman Municipal road till the railway overhead bridge on the Motorway and continues to Mile Post 91/2.

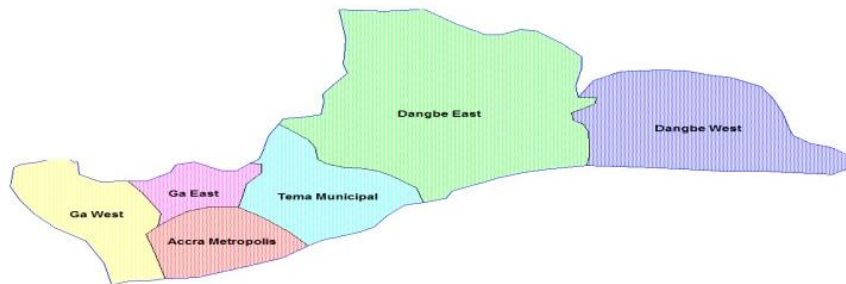


Figure 2. Greater Accra Region with Various MMDAs



Figure 3: Map of Accra Metropolitan

2.3.1.3 Education Characteristics

Pre-School

There are a total of 29,134 children which consisted of 14,551 boys and 14,583 girls in pre-school (both public and private schools) in Accra in 2012/2013 academic year. This is shown in table 1. The females slightly exceed the male enrolment which is evidenced by the gender parity index of 1.02.

Primary School

The primary school enrolment is 147,457 (2013 EMIS figures). The Enrolment of girls is 76,488 and that of the boys is 70,969. Table 2 depicts this. The high Gross enrolment Rate indicated on table 2 generally shows a high degree of participation, whether the pupils belong to the official age-group or not. At the primary school level the gender parity index is also above 1 which indicates that the girls are more than the boys.

Junior High School (JHS)

The Junior High School is part of the Basic Education programme. Its implementation began on September 29, 1987 nationwide. As at 2012/2013 academic year, total enrolment was 84,507 and enrolment in the school going age group of 12 – 14 was 59,913 indicating a 70.89% age specific enrolment. According to EMIS data for 2013, the ratio of girls is also higher at this level, girl's enrolment being 43,736 and boys 40,771. This is shown in table 3. The completion rate is 72.2%.

2012/2013 Academic Year KG, Primary and JHS Enrolment Rates

Table 2: KG Enrolment Rate

	Total	Boys	Girls
Population [4-5yrs]	75,848	38,186	37,662
Total Enrolment	29,134	14,551	14,583
Enrolment [4-5yrs]	20,480	10,178	10,305
Gross Enrolment Rate	38.4%	38.1%	38.7%
Net Enrolment Rate	27.0%	26.7%	27.4%
GPI	1.02		

Source: EMIS 2013

Table 3: Primary Enrolment Rate – 2013

	Total	Boys	Girls
Population [6-11yrs]	214,300	105,393	108,907
Total Enrolment	147,457	70,969	76,488
Enrolment [6-11yrs]	124,941	60,633	64,308
Gross Enrolment Rate	68.8%	67.3%	70.2%
Net Enrolment Rate	58.3%	57.5%	59.0%
Gross Average Rate	61.3%	59.7%	63.3%
Net Average Rate	49.4%	48.5%	50.2%
Completion Rate	77.3%	77.1%	77.5%
GPI	1.04		

Source: EMIS 2013

Table 4: JHS Enrolment Rate – 2013

	Total	Boys	Girls
Population [12-14yrs]	104,255	48,286	55,969
Total Enrolment	84,507	40,771	43,736
Enrolment [12-14yrs]	59,913	30,118	29,795
Gross Enrolment Rate	81.1%	84.4%	78.1%
NER	57.5%	62.4%	53.2%
GAR	89.1%	90.3%	88.1%
NAR	55.5%	56.9%	54.3%
Completion Rate	72.2%	76.0%	69.0%
GPI	0.93		

Source: EMIS 2013

2.3.2.1 Brief Profile of Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abrem Municipality**2.3.2.2 Geographical Location and Description**

The Municipality is bounded on the south by the Atlantic Ocean (Gulf of Guinea), the east by the Cape Coast Municipality, the north by the Twifo-Hemang-Lower Denkyira Municipality and the west by the Mpohor - Wassa East Municipality.

2.3.2.3 Background history of Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem (KEEA)

Located in the Central Region of Ghana, the people of the Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abrem Municipal (KEEA) have occupied the area for over seven hundred (700) years now. It is made of four distinct traditional areas or states, which have been put together to constitute a political district called Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abrem Municipality.

The Municipality has a chequered history and a rich cultural heritage. The drama of European colonization was initiated from the Central Region and particularly the KEEA Municipality. Elmina, the Municipal capital, prides itself as the first point of call by the Europeans on their exploration tour of Africa. It had the first contact with the Portuguese in 1471. The oldest Castle in Africa, south of the Sahara, the Elmina Castle, (built by the Portuguese in 1482), is located in the Municipality.

2.3.2.4 Educational Sector

Education in the municipality is free and compulsory at the basic level. There are 74 government basic schools in the municipality. Pupils' enrolment in basic schools in the municipality increased considerably following the abolition of payment of school levies in public schools by the government.

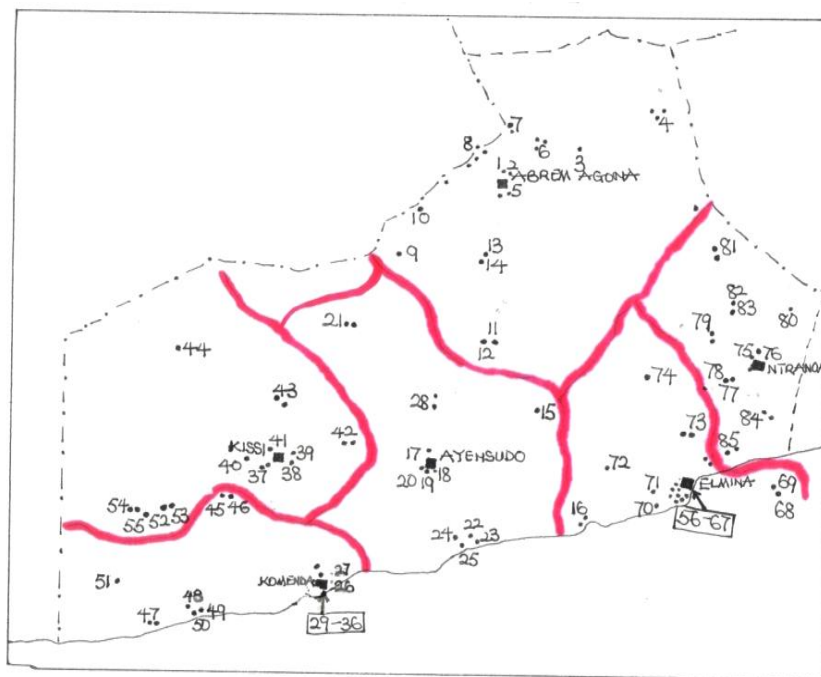
For effective supervision of schools, the Municipality is divided into smaller units called circuits. There are six (6) circuits, namely, Abrem Agona, Ayensudo, Elmina, Kissi, Komenda and Ntranoa. Table 5 shows the circuits status and their capitals and figure 5 indicates circuits boundaries.

Table 5: K.E.E.A. Circuits status and their capitals

S/N	CIRCUIT	STATUS	CAPITAL
1	Abrem Agona	Rural	Agona
2	Ayensudo	Rural	Ayensudo
3	Elmina	Urban	Elmina
4	Kissi	Rural	Kissi
5	Komenda	Rural	Komenda
6	Ntranoa	Rural	Ntranoa



Figure 4. Map of Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality



Source: KEEA School Mapping Report, 2004

Figure 5: Map of Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem Municipality showing location of Schools.

Appendix III shows the names of the schools being represented on the map by figures.

Table 6: Distribution of Schools by Level and Type in Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abrem Municipality (2013)

NAME OF CIRCUIT	TYPE	KG	PRIMARY	JHS
Abrem Agona	Public	15	14	11
Ayensudo	Public	9	10	9
Elmina	Public	11	13	12
Kissi	Public	11	11	11
Komenda	Public	14	15	13
Ntranoa	Public	8	8	8
Total	Public	68	71	64

Table 6 shows that, in aggregate, KEEA Municipality had 203 public schools, by level and type. Administratively, the 203 public schools were staffed by 98 headteachers as indicated below:

1. Kindergarten/primary/JHS	42
2. Kindergarten only	1
3. Kindergarten/primary	25
4. Kindergarten/JHS	2
5. Primary only	6
6. Primary/JHS	3
7. JHS only	19
Total	98

Table 7: Distribution of Schools by Educational Management Units (2013)

MANAGEMENT	KG	PRIMARY	JHS
UNIT	Public	Public	Public
MMDA	44	46	39
Catholic	7	10	8
Anglican	3	3	2
Methodist	5	5	7
AME Zion	4	3	4
Islamic	5	4	4
Total	68	71	64

Table 7 shows that out of 203 public schools by level 129 (63.6%) were directly under the control of the Municipal Assembly while the remaining 74 (36.4%) were partly controlled by Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) – Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, AME Zion and Islamic Educational Units. The Roman Catholic Church had 25 schools under her control making it the FBO with the greatest number of schools in the Municipality.

Table 8: ENROLMENT RATES -2013 KG Enrolment Rate

	Total	Boys	Girls
Population [4-5yrs]	8,605	4,445	4,160
Total Enrolment	9,040	4,579	4,461
Enrolment [4-5yrs]	5,294	2,667	2,627
Gross Enrolment Rate	105.1%	103.0%	107.2%
Net Enrolment Rate	61.5%	60.0%	63.1%
GPI	1.04		

Table 8 shows enrolment rate of KG children between ages 4 and 5 for the year 2013.

The GER lay above the 100% mark and this is an indication that a large number of pupils in KG who are in school are not in their age appropriate classes. Some of them are above/below stipulated 4-5 years. The NER at this level is little above 60%.

This suggests that while we have a high enrolment rate, the efficiency of enrolment needs to be improved. The net enrolment of 61.5% indicates that about 38.5% of the 4-5 years old children that are expected to be in KG are not in school.

The Gender Parity Index (GPI), shows that when equal proportion are taken from girls' population of KG school age and that of the corresponding value of girls, for every 100 boys in 2013, there will be more than 100 girls in school. This is an indication that, according to the national index the municipality have attained parity.

Table 9: K.E.E.A. Primary Enrolment Rate

	Total	Boys	Girls
POP[6-11yrs]	24,249	12,302	11,947
Tot Enrol	24,620	12,609	12,011
Enrol [6-11yrs]	18,188	9,196	8,992
GER	101.5%	102.5%	100.5%
NER	75.0%	74.8%	75.3%
GAR	109.6%	109.4%	109.9%
NAR	75.4%	73.9%	76.8%
Completion Rate	108.2%	106.0%	110.5%
GPI	0.98		

Source: EMIS 2013

Table 9 also presents a summary of the municipal averages of major primary indicators during the study. Like the KG, the primary values of GER and GAR is above the 100%. The Net Enrolment (NER) and the Net Admission Rate (NAR) fell below the 100% mark. This means that on the average the pupils admitted into P1 who were 6 years represented 75.4% of the total 6 year olds in the projected population of the municipality in 2013. The GPI registered a value of 0.98. This means when equal proportion are taken from girls' population of primary school age and that of the corresponding value for girls, for every 100 boys in 2013, there will be 98 girls in schools. This implies that the municipality has not attained parity at the primary level.

Table 10: JHS Enrolment Rate

	Total	Boys	Girls
POP[12-14yrs]	11,705	5,935	5,770
Total Enrol	8,688	4,494	4,194
Enrol [12-14yrs]	4,775	2,570	2,205
GER	74.2%	75.0%	82.1%
NER	40.8%	43.3%	38.2%
GAR	77.1%	76.2%	78.2%
NAR	33.6%	32.7%	34.6%
Completion Rate	61.4%	65.1%	57.6%
GPI	0.96		

Source: EMIS 2013

Out of the total projected population of 11,705 students of school going age at the JHS level, only 8,688 students representing 74.2% were in school. With a NER of 40.8% the difference of 33.4% represents students who are either above or below ages 12-14.

Students admitted in JHS 1 represented 77.1% with only 33.6% students in their appropriate age of 12 years. According to the GPI, education did not favour girls but rather boys. The general indication here is that as pupils move up the educational ladder, there is a high rate of female dropout.

There has been significant improvement particularly in the areas of basic school enrolment looking at the gross enrolment ratio, the Net Enrolment Ratio (NER), the

completion rate and the gender parity index indicators in both Accra Metro and KEEA municipal directorates of Education. However, these major accomplishments in educational terms have been obscured by low stakeholders' participation in planning and decision making and increasing concerns about its effect on quality educational delivery at the local/district level. Increased stakeholder participation in educational decision making would have improved the slowdown of enrolment growth at all levels of basic education over the years and reduced the challenge the education sector faces in expanding access to the remaining out of school children in these areas of study.

An aspect of formal parental involvement in school occurs through participation in School Management Committees (SMCs) and parent teacher associations (PTAs). Much of the literature cites poor community involvement in such processes with PTAs, for example, often not established or not functioning despite government mandates (PROBE, 1999; Heystek, 2003; Ahmed and Nash, 2005). Where these bodies are more active, there have been conflicts. For example, between PTAs and SMCs, in part because of unclearly defined and/or overlapping responsibilities or because certain groups have gone beyond their mandates (Passi, 1995; De Grauwe et al., 2005; Ahmed & Nath, 2005).

Research in various African and South Asian contexts has shown how there is unequal access to participation in such bodies according to socio-economic status, race, caste, social class, location, political affiliation and gender (PROBE, 1999; Therkildsen, 2000; Karlsson, 2002; Bush & Heystek, 2003; Rose, 2003; Soudien & Sayed, 2004; De Grauwe et al., 2005). Even when elected onto such committees, some voices are inevitably heard above others. Headteachers, in particular, have been singled out in a number of studies as having especially strong influence on these bodies (Soudien & Sayed, 2004; De Grauwe et al., 2005). In particular, political affiliation and cronyism

has been identified as a serious problem in the establishment and functioning of various school-community bodies to the detriment of poorer parents (PROBE, 1999; Ahmed & Nath, 2005; De Grauwe, et al., 2005).

Despite the fact that recent policy interventions have touched upon many areas of the education sector (increasing access and participation, quality education delivery, and especially improving management efficiency, etc.) there is little evidence that suggests that these have led to effective decentralised educational planning practices.

2.4 Educational Decentralisation and Decentralised Educational Planning

This section examined Ghana's decentralisation processes and related that to decentralised educational planning. It begins by discussing the decentralisation policy in Ghana.

2.4.1 The Decentralisation Policy in Ghana

In the last 25 years, Ghana has been quite affected by the international development discourse as governance power began to move out of the centre in 1988 with the passage of a local government law (PNDCL 207), which granted extensive political power and revenue-collecting rights to districts in Ghana. The reasons for this shift in Ghana are two-fold. First, decentralisation was seen as a mechanism to empower communities to be able to participate effectively in local governance (Ayee, 1997). This is in line with the broader new public management moment of the 1990s, which advocated a decentralisation model of governance in order to encourage participation and teamwork (Cheema & Rondinelli, 2007). Second, it has been argued that decentralisation was also used implicitly as a political tactic by the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) to give citizens a sense of empowerment in the political arena at the national level (Ayee, 1996, 1997).

The 1992 Constitution of Ghana lays the legal groundwork for Ghana's national governance and administrative strategy. It stipulates that "Ghana shall have a system of local government and administration which shall, as far as practicable, be decentralisation" (The Constitution of Ghana, 1992, Chapter 20, Article 240). The Constitution calls for political devolution as well as administrative and technical de-concentration of service delivery institutions. The Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462) as well as several other subsequent policy acts serve to support the prescriptions set forth in the Constitution. The decentralisation programme in Ghana seeks to transfer functions and powers in a programme of political decentralisation; to transfer skills and competences in a programme of administrative decentralisation and decentralised planning; to transfer means and resources through a programme of fiscal decentralisation (Ahwoi, 2010). Further reform initiatives for political, administrative and fiscal decentralisation in Ghana therefore are in line with the Victoria Falls Declaration of 2000 on an "African Vision on Decentralisation, which among others stipulates that the purpose of decentralisation should be to devolve power and responsibilities to the lower echelons, promote local democracy and good governance, with the ultimate objective of improving the quality of life of the people" (MLGRD, 2007). To do so, the policy seeks to devolve central administrative authority and divest implementation responsibility to the district level (110 districts originally; 138 districts as of 2007; 170 districts as of 2009 and 216 districts as at 2012 as a result of rezoning that split larger districts into smaller ones).

Political decentralization in Ghana has been the most thorough since 1988 when District Assemblies were first established. The pattern of constituting District Assemblies (in which 70% are elected and 30% appointed) that pre-dated the 1992 Constitution continued in 1994; 1998; 2002; 2006; 2010, 2014; . Constituting the sub-district

structures, which involves a more onerous combination of election and appointment of members into all Unit Committees as the basis for establishing Area, Town, Urban and Zonal Councils, has been difficult and still incomplete and some say un-attainable due to large numbers and lack of public interest.

Challenges to the political process of decentralisation identified by government and others include (a) Election of District Chief Executive, and eventually of all Assembly members to make the system both representative and democratic (b) the non-partisan nature of the District Assembly elections, in an environment where a partisan superstructure has been constructed at the national level.

The District Assemblies are the planning, administrative and developmental decision-making body for a district and the basic unit of government administration at the local level. They are assigned with deliberative, legislative as well as executive functions. Established as a monolithic structure, the District Assemblies are responsible for the totality of government including integrating political, administrative and development support. District Assemblies have discretion to set tax rates and fees and regions differ in the composition of their local revenues portfolios, which results in differing revenue bases (Mogues, Benin, & Cudjoe, 2009).

Central government transfers to districts funds via the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF), which financially supports the District Assemblies. The DACF is a pool of resources created under Section 252 of the 1992 constitution and is 5% of the national revenue. A formula approved by Parliament is used to share this fund among all Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies. As for locally collected revenue, districts have seven key sources for generating revenue including property taxes; a head-tax levied in fixed amount from each district resident; royalties from natural resources such as timber and minerals; a range of fees and tolls such as those charged on

market stalls; business licensing; returns from financial investments (e.g. dividends and interest rate earnings on financial capital); and rent collected on district assembly-owned properties.

Various levels of government have been assigned functions and responsibilities as follows: (a) Central Governments Ministries/Departments to undertake policy planning, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of sectoral development policies and programmes as well as the development of standards and implementation indicators.

This function has remained a traditional role of the MDAs, but it is not the only function they are performing. They have as well assumed the functions of directing planning, leading the budgeting process and representing the sector at all levels in their dealings with the Ministry of Finance & Economic Planning to acquire and disburse budgets, including all funds for services and investments at the lowest levels. This is especially the case with the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service (Decentralisation Policy Review Final Report, 2007).

(b) Regions through the Regional Coordinating Councils, (RCCs), Regional Coordinating Directors (RCDs) and Regional Planning Coordinating Units (RPCUs), formulate regional development policy, co-ordinate and harmonize district level development interventions, monitor implementation activities of the District Assemblies; develop implementation monitoring indicators, and reporting to the center. The process of aligning RCCs, RCDs and the RPCUs into the decentralization process has been slow and confusing. This is due in part to the contradictory nature of the laws, and also due to lack of capacity for these institutions to occupy the space provided under the law.

Moreover, many of the functions to be delegated to them are still being performed by Regional offices of MDAs. The latter continue to obtain the needed funding from

central government, through the MTEF budget arrangement to perpetuate their role as regional policy makers and coordinators.

c) . District Assemblies are to be primarily responsible for the development of local level policy based on/and informed by national policies/programmes and local circumstances; preparation of district development plans informed by national and regional development policies; and, the implementation of such development plans and programmes coordinated by the NDPC.

Substantial progress has been made in the district development policy, planning and program implementation, aided by the availability of the DACF. This is however occurring in tandem with equally strong “district-level” policy, planning and program implementation by competing MDAs (education, health and agriculture) who continue to receive funding and priority-setting directives from their national and regional offices, functioning in de-concentrated forms, yet implementing programs and projects directly planned through their head offices.

2.4.2 Educational Decentralisation

Since the 1980s, the shift of educational decision making authority and responsibility from the centre to regional and district/local and school levels has become an increasingly popular reform around the world (Hanson, 1997). This change is being driven by interrelated goals which include accelerating economic development by modernizing institutions; increasing management efficiency; reallocating financial responsibility, for example, from the centre to the periphery; promoting democratization; increasing local control through deregulation; and enhancing the quality of education (for example, by reducing dropout rates or increasing learning). According to Hanson (1997), educational decentralisation can simply be referred to as the transfer of educational decision-making authority and responsibility from the central

government to regional and local or district administration levels. Governments of most developing countries see educational decentralisation as a way to improve administrative services, increase the quality of education, share power with the local citizenry, and advance the pace of national development (Hanson, 1997). Development organizations give decentralisation reforms considerable attention and support with the expectation that these efforts would improve resource use and efficiency in delivering public services. Decentralisation has often been included as a policy prescription in World Bank and International Monetary Fund loan and credit packages especially those projects in the education sector (Alexander, 2001). Accordingly, education decentralisation has become a common component of public sector reform in developing countries in recent years (Alexander, 2001) and these reforms have been influenced heavily by external development consultants (Whitfield, 2005).

The process of decentralising education in Ghana began with the passage of the Accelerated Development Plan for Education in 1951 but the major turning point was the passing of the Education Act of 1961. The New Education Reform (2007) introduced the most current effort at promoting and strengthening decentralisation of education. Under the reform, the intention is to ensure that the structures and processes introduced to make education decentralisation function effectively for the benefit of stakeholders at the local level are enforced. A careful study of the arrangements for the implementation of decentralisation of education in Ghana denotes de-concentration as the type practised; a system of field administration through which functions are transferred to field staff to make routine decisions and implement central directives at the local level. This is seen in the reforms of the financial procedures, where resources are allocated direct to the District Directorates of Education. School Management Committees are required to oversee the preparation of School Performance

Improvement Plans (SPIPs) both to access funds and to ensure the implementation of the plans at the school level. Largely, the objective for decentralising education in Ghana has been to improve the delivery of education services at the local level in the areas of quality teaching and learning, management efficiency, increasing access and participation in schooling and reallocating financial responsibility.

Education in Ghana is managed like any other sector of the country; the country has a devolution type of the education decentralisation with a major focus in shifting responsibility over finances, management and operations to the District Assemblies. For instance, Ghanaians have seen no reason why teachers in the Districts Assemblies have to travel to Accra for a leave of absence, promotion, requests for chalk and textbooks. Most often times, the text books given to the schools are sometimes locked up until an order from Accra before embarking on any distribution exercise.

The Circuit Supervisors who monitor and examine teachers performance in the classrooms in the districts cannot decide who ought or who ought not to be paid salary based on performance average, whiles GES headquarters which has no direct contact with these teachers on the field continue to pay them without knowing and without checks. These have led to laxity, absenteeism, poor teaching, and lack of respect for the school authorities.

The biggest problem about the current system is that decisions are taken by the central government in Accra without the grassroots participation. So decisions that could easily be addressed within a small pace by the local authorities takes months and years for GES to respond.

There is by now significant international experience with education decentralization, the most widespread and far-reaching of which have occurred in Latin America. Examples of education decentralization outside Africa which have received significant attention in

recent years include Argentina, Chile, New Zealand, Armenia, Brazil, El Salvador, The Netherlands and The Memphis, Tennessee ((Gershberg & Winkler 2003).

These countries practice devolution system of decentralization as part of their educational reforms and sector management. These countries have successfully practiced devolution where responsibilities for financing and providing education from the central government has been devolved to its provincial governments (with elected governors and parliaments), to its municipal governments (with elected mayors and city councils) while the central government retained responsibilities for assessing student performance and for financing specific programmes i.e. for Argentina and Chile. New Zealand, which formerly had a highly centralized national education system, created an elected school board with parents as the only members and gave them the responsibility to select their own school managers and recruit their own teachers with funds from the central government. Following suit, Ghana's basic school system must be revamped more significantly by embracing the examples of successful countries.

2.4.3 Decentralised Educational Planning

From the earlier definitions of decentralisation, educational decentralisation and decentralised educational planning can be said to be a type of educational planning where local organizations and institutions formulate, adopt, execute activities and supervise implementation without interference by central body. Decentralised educational planning includes the use of local level planning techniques such as school mapping and micro planning in education for development of district basic education plan. It also creates space for wider participation from civil society organizations, NGOs and communities in the planning process. Additionally it allows for the setting of disaggregated targets and developing context specific strategies and interventions. To a large extent it reduces bureaucratic control of the planning process and makes district

planning process-oriented, flexible and to some extent, evidence based. Centralised planning processes produces plans that are quite alienated from local needs and aspirations. Thus there is a wide gap between those who plan (at the national level) and those who implement it (at the local levels). It is perceived that district level educational planning will reduce the gap between planning and implementation and ensure a high degree of success in plan implementation as implementers are partners in the planning process. Other arguments for decentralised educational planning include; effective and efficient care of local needs at the lower levels, better identification of district specific problems and quick flow of information. As part of the decentralised educational planning process, the functions and tasks at the central level, that is, of the Ministry of Education, increasingly focus on sector-wide policy making, planning, evaluation and implementation monitoring. Central level management focuses on responsibilities such as the formulation of education development policies, reform strategies and education sector strategic plans, monitoring the implementation of national education policies, and advising districts on results management of education as well as utilization of resources. District education offices have increased responsibilities in areas such as resource allocation within the district, between the different levels of education (Pre-school, Primary Education, Secondary Education), the negotiation of proposed district education budgets with public funding sources at central level (The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, other ministries), the drawing up of medium-term District Education Strategic Plans (DESP), setting district education sector priorities and monitoring the implementation of the district education plan.

The planning work done by District Education Offices (DEOs) currently is limited in nature, scope and complexity. It seems to be more reactive than proactive, short-term rather than long term, tactical rather than strategic. The planning function is to a large

extent centralized. There are two data collection systems – one run by the GES and the other [EMIS] by the MOE, but in both cases the rules for data collection, analysis and reporting are set at the national level, the funds are provided and allocated by the Ghana Education Service Headquarters and the Ministry, and management decisions are made by them. The DEOs only collect data at the schools, aggregate them and send them upwards. When the system is decentralised, DEOs may be required to develop proactive strategic, medium to long term plan to be submitted to the DAs. While they will continue to collect and send standard information to regional and national offices, more and/or different information may be required by their own DAs. More analysis, and sophistication may be required of them too. This will have implications for the number of staff they have in the planning function, the skills they have, and the computing equipment at their disposal.

2.5 Structure of Decentralised Planning System in Ghana

Ghana's current development planning system is designed to address the inherent deficiencies of the conventional national development planning namely over-centralisation and lack of stakeholder participation. Consequently the system is founded on the recognition that, to be an effective tool for development programming, the planning process should be based on the principles of integration, decentralisation, and problem solving. Key elements of the decentralisation reforms since 1988 include: devolving power of planning to District Assemblies (DAs), introduction of a system of fiscal decentralisation which gives the District Assemblies control over resources, and the establishment of a national planning system to integrate and coordinate development planning at all levels.

Prior to 1980s the structure of governance in Ghana was heavily top-down and centralised. Considering that planning is not only a method for making decisions about

the progress of a society and the future wellbeing of its people but also a tool for allocating the resources of a given society, it must be sensitive to the needs of the people. The framers of the 1992 Constitution provided for the establishment of a development planning system that would correspond to the underlying philosophy of democracy and decentralisation. This led to the establishment by law of completely new and innovative decentralisation development planning system in Ghana in 1994. By the National Development Planning (System) Act, 1994 (Act 480), “the decentralisation national development planning system shall comprise District Planning Authorities at the district level, Regional Coordinating Councils at the regional level and sector agencies, Ministries and the Commission at the national level” (National Planning Act, 1994, Act 480).

At the base of the National Development Planning System (NDPS) are the District Assemblies (DA), as planning authorities, and their sub-structures namely the urban, zonal, town/area councils and unit committees. The District Assemblies which have executive and legislative powers articulate the views, concerns and aspirations of the people in the district for development at local level. Formal plan making by District Assemblies is undertaken by District Planning Coordinating Unit (DPCU).

At the apex of the National Development Planning is the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) which has the responsibility for coordinating the system and integrating district and sectoral plans into a national development plan. Lying between the NDPC and the DAs are the Regional Coordinating Councils (RCC) which have the task of coordinating the planning process of the DAs in the region and harmonizing district plans with national development policies and objectives. This planning function is undertaken in the Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) by the Regional Planning Coordinating Unit (RPCU). Also at the national level and working in

collaboration with the NDPC are the sector Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA) including the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (Article 240 of the 1992 Constitution).

2.5.1 Legal Framework for Planning

Various legislative instruments and guidelines have influenced the process of decentralised planning in Ghana. These include PNDCL.207, the introduction of the Education Reform of 1987, Local Government Act 462, the Ghana Education Service Act 506, the 1992 Constitution, Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (fCUBE) policy of 1995, and New Education Reform, (2007).

The legal and institutional framework for planning consists of the laws and legislations which establish the institutions, structures, processes and procedures for planning and for regulating the planning process. The legal framework provides rules and guidelines for development decision making based upon the principle of decentralisation and democratic participation. Following the adoption of constitutional rule in 1993, the approach to decentralisation and local governance was set out in Chapter 20 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. This was further elaborated with relevant legislative instruments including the Local Government Act, 1993 Act 462, National Development Planning Commission Act, 1994 (Act 479), the National Development Planning (System) Act, 1994, Act 480, the Civil Service Law, 1993, PNDCL 327, the District Assemblies' Common Fund Act, 1993, Act 455 and the Local Government Service Act, 2003, Act 656., Legislative Instrument 1994 (LI 1589). Other laws and legislation which have a bearing upon aspects of development planning include: Public Procurement Act, 2003 (Act 633), Financial Administration Act 2003 (Act 654), Financial Administration Regulations 2003 (LI 1802) Thus the National Development Planning System is based

upon the 1992 Constitution, Acts of Parliament and legislative instruments which have been promulgated into law.

Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of education in Ghana. The first part outlined education system in Ghana focusing on the structure and core values of the system. The second part provided the information about the context of the study. This part highlighted the geographical setting of the study and education in the two selected locations. Finally, information about Decentralisation, Educational decentralisation and Decentralised educational planning in Ghana is provided. The section also discussed Decentralised Educational Planning in Ghana, the structure of the system and the decentralised planning processes in Ghana.

This chapter sets the major ground against which this research was conducted. My understanding of the Ghanaian reality, as broadly depicted here, can be organised around some topics that helped in framing the research:

- a. While Ghana has shown important progress in educational matters over the past two decades, there is a common understanding that something is not working properly, and this appears to be related to a major element of education systems; decentralised educational planning.
- b. It is clear that moving forward requires a clear understanding of the concepts decentralisation, educational decentralisation and decentralised educational planning, the experiences of participation by stakeholders in educational decision making and the experiences of capacity development opportunities provided by the Ghana Education Service. Therefore, the success of any policy intended to address the operation of the education system, and particularly those linked to decentralised educational planning, requires such an understanding in order to

facilitate dialogue between policy and the actual of agents at the local/school level.

- c. Out of the several issues that can be explored, focusing on the way educational officers and other stakeholders understand decentralisation, decentralised educational planning and capacity building opportunities provided by the Ghana Education Service are an interesting, central, and under-researched topic this thesis attempted to address.

Decentralisation and decentralised educational planning aims to improve the delivery of quality of education service. As a process of delivering educational services in a democratic country, decentralisation as a power sharing device makes good sense. Through decentralisation the conditions for some type of change have been put in place. It is expected that the decentralisation programme would provide the opportunity for increased stakeholder dialogue in educational decision making and improve quality educational delivery. There is the need for collaborative and comprehensive advanced planning. The next chapter presents the literature and develops a theoretical framework for the analysis of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

General Introduction

This chapter reviews the relevant literature in the field of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning. The concept of decentralisation has shaped the pattern of development thinking, administration and governance both in the developed and the developing countries. Indeed, the demand for decentralisation is strong throughout the world because of its link to the concept of subsidiarity which holds that decisions should be taken at the most appropriate level of government and establishes a presumption that this level will be the lowest available (Van Kersbergen & Verbeek, 1994). Against this background, this chapter sets out to address four issues. First, it reviews the concept of decentralisation and the drive for decentralisation. Second, it highlights the arguments for and against decentralisation. Third, it looks at participation in decentralised educational planning and the definition of decentralised educational planning and its importance and practice in Ghana. Finally it examines capacity development opportunities and theoretical framework for the study.

3.1 The Concept of Decentralisation

The literature on decentralisation is vast and only elements that are relevant for discussing issues about educational planning are dealt with here. Thus, it restricts itself to concepts and practices of decentralisation policy as they apply to educational planning in developing country contexts in the hope of understanding how they shape educational policies and practices on decentralised educational planning. In effect, this section of the review aims to identify key issues in the education decentralisation literature and relate these to issues about educational planning in developing countries.

In its broadest sense decentralisation is the assignment of fiscal, political and administrative responsibilities to lower levels of government (Mawhood, 1983; Smith, 1985). In the views of Rondinelli (1989), decentralisation may be defined in terms of the form (e.g., fiscal, political, administrative), the degree of power transferred (i.e., de-concentration, delegation, devolution, deregulation/privatization) and the level (e.g., national to sub-national, region to district).

Originally conceptualized in the context of industrialized nations, fiscal federalism suggests that the central government should have responsibility for macroeconomic stabilization and income redistribution functions while sub-national governments should play an important role in allocation functions (Musgrave & Peacock, 1958; Oates, 1999).

Grounded in the principles of fiscal federalism theory, decentralisation suggests that benefits lie in attaining allocative efficiency in the face of different local preferences for local public goods (Musgrave & Peacock, 1958; Oates, 1972; Tiebout, 1956). Not only is decentralisation seen as a pathway for improved delivery of social services, but it has also come to stand for a mechanism to improve the democratisation of decision-making for increased system efficiency (see Jutting *et al.*, 2004). In many countries in Africa, for example, where system restructuring has been going on, it has come to be regarded as a key part of the restructuring of the management of service delivery (UNESCO, 2004b). But the gap between decentralisation policy and practice is usually wide in many developing country systems (e.g. in Malawi – Davies *et al.*, 2003). The complexities and weaknesses within environments in which it is introduced produces outcomes that are not predicted by decentralisation policy.

Fiscal decentralisation consists primarily of devolving revenue sources and expenditure functions to lower tiers of government. By bringing the government closer to the

people, decentralisation is expected to boost public sector efficiency, as well as accountability and transparency in service delivery and policy-making. More recent literature on decentralisation focuses on what Lockwood (2006) calls the political economy approach to fiscal decentralisation. This second generation of fiscal federalism theory focuses more on public choice as well as the political economy by delving into the political and fiscal environments in which public agents act (Oates, 2008). While some find that local governments are successful in providing local services (Nath & Schroeder, 2007) others suggest that obtaining allocative efficiency in practice may be much more difficult (Guess, 2007; Robinson & Stiedl, 2001; Way, 2002). Several reasons are cited for this including the lack of political influence, insufficient financial resources, lack of management capability and a lack of accountability mechanisms. The Oates-Wallis hypothesis and the collusion hypothesis suggest that an increase in fiscal decentralisation leads to a higher or more efficient level of provincial government expenditure, while others suggest elite capture prevents such gains (Hernández-Trillo & Jarillo-Rabling, 2008; Lewis, 2005).

Decentralised service provision is thought to improve the quality and efficiency of the provision of public goods and services by improving decision making and allocating resources more efficiently. Decentralisation theory suggests that the proximity of local government to its citizens allows citizens' greater influence over local officials (Ostrom, Schroeder, & Wynne, 1993), improves accountability (Tommasi & Weinschelbaum, 2007) and enhances incentives in the provision of public services (Besley & Ghatak, 2003). In addition, decentralisation suggests that local level provision promotes competition among sub-national governments (Tiebout, 1956) and reduces central bureaucratic corruption through enhanced accountability (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2005). Some theorists also argue that in some circumstances local governments may

achieve equity and respond to distributional concerns more effectively than central governments (Pauly, 1973).

Others argue, however, that decentralisation may influence negatively the provision of public services under certain conditions. Theoretical assumptions may break down when local governments are less technically able than the central government to administer services (Smith, 1985). Local governments may also undersupply public services due to positive externalities and economies of scale in production (Oates, 1999). Accordingly, varying local government capacities could lead to increases in inequalities across regions. Imbalances and disparities in human and resource capacity in poor countries can through decentralisation exacerbate inequities in society (Davies et al., 2003; De Grauwe et al., 2005). Due to gaps in human and material resource capacity between urban and rural regions devolving power and decision-making completely to the local level actually has the potential to widen the development gap between rural and urban areas. As was found in Ghana, the nationwide introduction of PTAs and SMCs has served urban communities better because they have been able to muster financial capital to improve quality of some urban schools, thus widening the quality gap between them and rural public schools. The reason for this is because as Akyeampong (2004:42) has noted, “unlike the situation in many advanced countries where the socio-economic environment and infrastructure for equitable delivery of education programmes is much more even, for many countries in the developing world especially Africa, there can be very uneven conditions”. Thus, decentralisation in systems that are not appropriately adjusted to its fundamental requirements for effectiveness can lead to outcomes that undermine the very reason why it is introduced in the first place (see Davies et. al., 2003).

Bardhan and Mookerjee (2000) suggest a decline in accountability after decentralisation resulting from state capture by local elites and recognise that extent of relative capture at the local level may be context and system specific. Moreover, groups that have less voice with local decision makers may actually receive less when resources are allocated (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2005) In addition, others suggest that central redistribution is needed both for effectiveness (Musgrave & Peacock, 1958) and to overcome biases of local elites (Inman & Rubinfeld, 1996; Wilensky, 1974).

The debate on decentralisation has always been a contentious one. It has been argued that in many of the least developed countries the decentralisation of public services, including education, has not been the result of an internal debate, even if there was a conviction that such a policy would lead to higher quality services. Pressure from the local authorities or communities, who demand a more participatory decision-making process, has generally been absent. Rather, in many countries two forces combine to push for decentralisation: first, external pressure by international development agencies and experts; and second, internal political expediency in national contexts, where the public authorities are unable to organize or finance basic public services (De Grauwe et. al, (2005:2). This leads to three concerns: firstly, advocates of decentralisation, and the governments which have heeded their advice, do not sufficiently take into account a country's specific context. Countries vary considerably; in some, the State is strong and efficient; in others, it is weak and inefficient, especially in the more remote areas. Some countries are homogeneous; others are characterized by several cleavages – ethnic, regional or religious. Policies need to be adapted to each country's context, its strengths and its weaknesses.

Secondly, several countries have adopted this policy without paying sufficient attention to the strategies needed for its successful implementation. In many countries legislation

reflects the willingness to share authority and resources, but this has not always translated into efforts to reform existing structures, to strengthen an appropriate information system, to review career profiles, or – the greatest challenge – to change the institutional culture.

Thirdly, in developing countries relatively little is known about the impact of decentralisation on the ways in which schools and districts function. Presently not all district offices are able to exercise to the fullest the responsibilities that they have been assigned. This lack of capacities within some district offices helps to explain that disparities in quality educational delivery between districts and schools might have worsened.

As Smoke (2001) argues, defining a role for local governments cannot be generalized easily because of the different economic, political, fiscal and institutional contexts in which local governments operate. At the same time there is also a need for robust, comparative information on the extent to and conditions under which the alleged benefits and disadvantages of decentralisation are realized in Ghana (Smoke, 2001).

3.2.1 Definition of Decentralisation

Various authorities in the field of governance have defined decentralisation in varied ways. A lot of ambiguity surrounds the concept (Turner & Hulme, 1997) and it is not easily defined (Conyers, 1983; Litvac et al., 1999; Mawhood, 1983; Rondinelli et al. 1983). According to Livack et al., (1999), it involves the transfer of authority and responsibility for public functions from the central government to subordinate or quasi-independent government organizations or the private organizations. Rondinelli (1981, p. 137) defined decentralisation as the “transfer of authority to plan, make decisions, and manage public functions from a higher level of government to any individual, organization or an agency at a lower level”. He distinguished four major forms of

decentralisation which are basically determined by the extent to which the authority to plan, decide and manage is transferred from the central government to other organizations and the amount of autonomy the 'decentralization organizations' achieve in carrying out their tasks.

The four forms of decentralisation identified by writers such as (Rondinelli. 1981; Livack et al., 1999) are de-concentration, delegation to semi-autonomous or parastatal agencies, transfer of functions from public to non-governmental institutions and devolution. He further explained that when only responsibility or authority is transferred but not resources, there is de-concentration. When responsibility and resources are transferred there is delegation. When there is the transfer of responsibility, resources and accountability (partially or completely) there is devolution or democratic decentralisation. De-concentration, in the view of Rondinelli (1981) is often considered to be the weakest form of decentralisation and is used most frequently in unitary states- redistributes decision making authority, financial and management responsibilities among different levels of the central government. It merely shifts responsibilities from central government officials in the capital city to those working in regions, or districts.

Delegation according to Rondinelli (1981) is a more extensive form of decentralisation. It is the transfer of responsibility for decision-making and administration of public functions to semi-autonomous organizations not wholly controlled by the central government, but ultimately accountable to it. Usually these organizations have a great deal of discretion in decision-making.

Devolution is a third type of decentralisation under which governments devolves functions; they transfer authority for decision-making, finance, management to quasi-autonomous units of local government with corporate status. Devolution usually transfers responsibilities for services to municipalities and districts that elect their own

chief executives and councils raise their own revenues and have independent authority to make investment decisions. In a devolved system local governments have clear and legally recognized authority for specific public functions.

Deregulation/Privatization/Public Private Partnership (PPPs) is the transfer of planning and administrative responsibility for public functions to voluntary, private, or non-government institutions. The United Nations and other authorities in local governance define decentralisation from different perspectives. For instance, according to the United Nations (United Nations, 1965), decentralisation refers to the transfer of authority on a geographical basis, whether by de-concentration of authority to the field units of the same department or level of government, or by devolution of authority to local government units or special statutory bodies. Ahwoi (2010) also defines decentralisation as a tool of public administration reforms that involves the transfer of functions and powers, skills and competences and resources and means to lower levels of governance, normally structures of local government, though in some jurisdictions, the transfer is to other spheres of governance (Ahwoi, 2010, pg 4). Ahwoi is of the view that academic and other writers on decentralisation very often confuse the term “decentralisation” with other concepts that look like decentralisation but could at best be described as variants of administrative decentralisation. Rather, those concepts, namely devolution, de-concentration, (de-congestion), delegation and public-private partnerships (PPPs) are alternative attempts at achieving an efficient and effective public administrative system, and they are not forms of decentralisation. He explains four alternative strategies to decentralisation as follows;

1. devolution,
2. de-concentration, (de-congestion),
3. delegation and

4. public-private partnerships (PPPs)

De-concentration entails the shifting of the workload from the Central Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to offices outside their headquarters. It is a system of field administration through which functions are transferred to field staff to implement central directives at the local level. The field staffs remain employees of the centre and remain under the direction and control of the centre.

Devolution on the other hand involves the legal conferment of powers and the performance of specified functions by formally constituted regional or provincial bodies. Those bodies exercise those powers and perform those functions without reference to the central authority. Delegation is permissive legislation or activity. When a function or power is delegated, it means the person is actually vested with the power to make the law or take the decision has asked another person or body to do it on its behalf. In that sense, delegation can never be form of decentralisation.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) refers to the extent to which local institutions providing goods and services to communities are in the public or private sector. In local government, this is done either by outright privatization or through joint venture arrangements between the local authorities and the private sector or non-governmental organization. According to (Ahwoi, 2010)

In Ghana's decentralisation programme, local authorities are the destination of the decentralisation functions. The programme seeks to transfer functions and powers in a programme of political decentralisation, to transfer skills and competences in a programme of administrative decentralisation and decentralised planning; and to transfer means and resources through a programme of fiscal decentralisation, (Ahwoi, 2010, p 5).

In general, the concept of decentralisation means "reversing the concentration of administration at a single centre and conferring powers on local government" (Smith, 1985, p.1). It can further be deduced from the definitions that the concept of

decentralisation tends to emphasize grassroots mobilization and citizen participation in the decision making for development. It is aimed at the promotion of the collective efforts of citizens to better their communities. It also provides further opportunities to be involved in various aspects of governmental decision or planning process (Oquaye, 1995).

However, some authorities are of the view that the concept of decentralisation, delegation and devolution can be considered as different stages of the development in the same continuum (Gamage, 2006a; Gamage & Zajda, 2005b). They clarify that similar to the concept of democracy, there are no ideal or absolute models of decentralisation. It is a matter of degree as emphasized by Rondeinelli (1981). Any model of decentralisation involves certain element of centralization. Devolution or transfer of power and authority to the decentralisation unit, enabling it to operate as an effective entity in performing certain duties and functions, can be considered as the next logical step for delegation of authority. The devolution can be to the state, regional, or institutional levels.

Three main types of decentralization, namely, administrative decentralization or deconcentration, fiscal decentralization, and political/democratic decentralization or devolution, are discernible from a critical review of the literature (Ayee, 2000; Crawford, 2004; Manor, 1995; Nkrumah, 2000; Ribot, 2001). Administrative decentralization or deconcentration, as illustrated in the literature, involves the relocation of branches of the central state to local areas, entailing a transfer of power to locally based officials who remain part of, and upwardly accountable to central government ministries and agencies. Fiscal decentralization, however, entails the transfer of fiscal resources and revenue-generating powers, inclusive of authority over budgets and financial decisions, to either deconcentrated officials and/or central

government appointees or to elected politicians. The third type of decentralization (i.e., political/democratic decentralization or devolution), according to the public administration literature, is concerned essentially with the transfer of powers and resources to sub-national authorities who are largely or wholly independent of the central government and are democratically elected (Manor, 1995, cited by Crawford,(2004). Political decentralization aims to give citizens or their elected representatives more power in public decision-making. It is often associated with pluralistic politics and representative government, but it can also support democratization by giving citizens, or their representatives, more influence in the formulation and implementation of policies. Advocates of political decentralization assume that decisions made with greater participation will be better informed and more relevant to diverse interests in society than those made only by national political authorities. The concept implies that the selection of representatives from local electoral jurisdictions allows citizens to know better their political representatives and allows elected officials to know better the needs and desires of their constituents.

While these remain the commonly identifiable types of decentralization in the literature, it is worth noting for the purposes of this thesis that two competing concepts of decentralization appear to be operating in the Ghanaian context currently (Gariba, 2009). The first is the devolution of major political and administrative responsibilities from central Government to DAs, comprising the establishment of partially elected bodies with the mandate for local government and local community development. The second, running parallel to the concept of devolution, entails the process of administrative and technical deconcentration practiced by Ministries, Departments, and Agencies that plan and deliver specific services (such as water and sanitation, health, education, agriculture, roads, works) and other allied municipal services. Devolution, as

set out under the former illustration, has far reaching implications for political, administrative, and technical setup, proposing to restructure institutions and mandates for service delivery. Deconcentration as illustrated in the latter case has involved the simpler re-arrangement of the locations of key personnel and where their functions are delivered, while retaining the loyalties, promotion incentives, and the “chain of command” of the centralized agencies (Gariba, 2009, p. 6). This second entrenched concept and/or process of deconcentration depicts, to a large extent, Ghana’s interest and attempt at decentralization all along and is aimed at strengthening central government control at the local level (Ayee, 2000).

While decentralization should not be seen as an end in itself, it can be a means for creating more open, responsive, and effective local government and for enhancing representational systems of community-level decision making. By allowing local communities and regional entities to manage their own affairs, and through facilitating closer contact between central and local authorities, effective systems of local governance enable responses to people's needs and priorities to be heard, thereby ensuring that government interventions meet a variety of social needs.

Moreover decentralisation is not simply a unitary concept, but has different forms for different functions. According to Naidoo (2002:2),

“it (decentralisation) may be defined in terms of the form (functional activities) and level (national to sub-national) as well as the nature or degree of power that is transferred. Administrative, fiscal, market and political dimensions capture the form (functional activities) and level (e.g. national to sub-national and local) of decentralisation while devolution, de-concentration, and delegation refer to the nature and degree of power being transferred”

In other words, it covers a range of concepts with different implementation implications, especially in the degree of responsibility intended to be transferred to local actors. As de-concentration it aims to redistribute administrative responsibilities within the central

government whereas in what some describe as its ‘purest’ form, as devolution it seeks to create or strengthen autonomous action of local actors and institutions outside central government control (Allan, 2004; Kataoka, 2006). Devolution could also refer to the ‘transfer of competencies from the central state to the distinct legal entities’ which could include non-governmental and private organisations (Jutting et al., 2004). Another way of viewing devolution is as a process of devolving administrative and fiscal responsibility to lower levels of government. But, decentralisation does not mean a relinquishing of all forms of control from the central government or administration to the local level (De Gauwe et al., 2005). As Kataoka (2006) points out, even in contexts where devolution of roles and responsibilities are intended, central governments have continued to exercise some control or oversight of many responsibilities devolved to local government.

The new relationship that is emerging under decentralised governance between central and local government would seem to provide opportunities for how new roles and responsibilities might be conceptualised to provide effective decentralised educational planning. If the problem of participatory educational planning is construed as a political and economic one, then decentralisation may be seen as the response in offering citizens increased opportunities to participate in local-decision making to improve decentralised educational planning and make it a worthwhile venture for education stakeholders.

The above discussion of the definitions and their differences confirm the earlier assertion of the complexity of the concept decentralisation. Depending on the context or the country adopting decentralisation programme, the form it may take may vary from de-concentration, delegation, public and private partnership (deregulation) or devolution. The differences in definitions stated above to some extent have resulted in different approaches to decentralisation programme implementation in developed and

developing countries and Ghana in particular, the effect being the forward and backward trends in programme implementation. Various governments view the programme differently and adopt different strategies to shift authority, power and resources to local authorities for decision-making, planning and implementation of development programmes. Governments carry out the same policies in a country, but vary in their objectives and commitments for implementation. From the foregoing discussion decentralisation can be taken to mean the transfer of decision-making powers and responsibility for public functions from the central government organizations to lower levels of government units/districts or local levels. Decentralisation broadly refers to a policy of creating opportunities for managing popular inputs into decision making processes resulting in greater empowerment or popular control over processes involved in the authoritative allocation of resources at the local level (Crawford, 2005). Within the Ghanaian context, that implies creating partnership between districts authorities, chiefs, opinion leaders, faith-based organizations and non-governmental organizations to enforce standards, developing and maintaining infrastructure and to ensure that the broad institutional goals are achieved. This process of ceding power and authority to local authorities in most countries (especially countries in sub-Saharan Africa) has generally been driven by local and national political elites, by certain political realities at the center, and by “external pressures,” rather than by local-level democratic demand (Devas, 2005, p. 3). Thus raising further the critical issue about whether or not governance institutions at the local levels have the capacity to offer the prospect of increased accountability to citizens through the greater accessibility of decision making. As Maikish and Gershberg, citing the National Decentralisation Action Plan (NDAP) (GOG, 2003), rightly note, the policy of decentralisation in Ghana (which receives the necessary legal impetus from Chapter 20, Article 240 of the 1992 Constitution [GOG,

1992]; Act 462 of the 1993 Local Government Act [GOG, 2003]; as well as from several other subsequent policy acts) aimed to establish a decentralised administration through the transfer of power from the central government to sub-national institutions such as DAs “to enhance the capacity of the public sector to plan, manage and monitor social, spatial and economic development”(p. 2).

3.2.2 Arguments For and Against Decentralisation

Various arguments have been raised in favour of decentralisation. In a developmental context, decentralisation has been linked with such benefits as equity, effectiveness, efficiency and responsiveness. Rondinelli (1981) makes several claims regarding the economic benefits of decentralisation. Rondinelli (1981) pointed out that by reducing diseconomies of scale inherent in the over-concentration of decision making in the national capital, decentralisation can increase the number of public goods and services and the efficiency with which they are delivered at lower cost (p. 136). He added that decentralisation can also offset the influence or control over development activities by entrenched local elites who are often unsympathetic to the national development policies and insensitive to the needs of poorer groups in rural communities. It can also increase political stability and national unity by giving groups in different sections of the country the ability to participate more directly in development decision-making.

Other proponents of decentralisation argue that at least in its more substantial forms, where real authority and resources are devolved to autonomous local authorities, decentralisation offers opportunities to neutralize some of the commonly accepted problems of centralized, hierarchical and bureaucratic structures. For example, decentralisation may encourage the following; competition (direct through privatization, or indirectly among parallel public organizations; accountability to clients rather than to superiors; local adaptation (by eliminating requirements and incentives for functionaries

to conform to single, national programmes); learning (by allowing many units to experiment with policies and programmes, and by allowing clients to choose and to live with all the consequences of those choices); simplicity (by reducing the number of personnel, volume of decisions, amount of tasks, volume of information, number of decisions which centralized bureaucracies have to contend with); and allow utilization of communal norms of organization such as reciprocity (by allowing communal units some choice of programme and policy (Rondinelli, 1981; Smith, 1985; Wunsch, 1991).

In the context of developing countries, the alleged benefits of decentralisation have also been promoted as part of good governance initiative launched by the World Bank and other donors in the late 1980s (World Bank, 1989; 1992). This initiative has been concerned mainly with promoting “state capacity” in the areas of economic and financial management, civil service honesty and efficiency; legal frameworks and what is now called institution- building (Blunt & Collins, 1994; Bratton & Rothchild, 1992). But the policy also incorporates the neo-liberal political agenda insofar as it has emphasized the importance of enhancing the accountability and transparency of government in developing countries, goals which structural reforms such as democratization and decentralisation are expected to serve (Crook, 1996).

Advocates of political decentralization hold that greater participation by better informed diverse interests in society will lead to more relevant decisions than those made only by authorities on the national level.

Decentralization could also be expected to contribute to key elements of good governance, such as increasing people's opportunities for participation in economic, social and political decisions; assisting in developing people's capacities; and enhancing government responsiveness, transparency and accountability.

A remarkable empirical evidence from the various studies on decentralization (e.g., Coulson, 1995; Crook, 2003; Devas, 2005; Olowu & Wunsch, 2004; Shah & Thompson, 2004; Wunsch, 2001) exemplify the very many economic, political, administrative, and conflict resolution arguments for decentralization. For example, while in some countries (particularly central and eastern Europe and Latin America) the drive for decentralization came from demands from local levels as a reaction against the failures of the centralized state, in some other parts of the world, decentralization of the state has been a response to actual or potential regional conflict (e.g., Indonesia) and/or as a way of reconstructing states afflicted by conflict arising from ethnic diversity (e.g., Uganda, South Africa, Iraq). However, in reality, the process in most countries (especially countries in sub-Saharan Africa) has generally been driven by local and national political elites, by certain political realities at the center, and by “external pressures,” rather than by local-level democratic demand (Devas, 2005, p. 3). This raises further the critical issue about whether or not governance institutions at the local levels have the capacity to offer the prospect of increased accountability to citizens through the greater accessibility of decision making.

Many advocates of decentralisation assume that transferring authority, responsibility for decision making, planning and management of service delivery to the local levels will improve equity, participation, as well as encourage effective and efficient management of service delivery. It is also assumed that any form of decentralisation may ensure the transfer of decision making powers to a local level. This I think cannot be wholly accepted considering the types of decentralisation earlier discussed and decentralisation programme implementation in most developing countries, especially Ghana. Govinda (1997, p. 281) is of the view that decentralisation alone does not make sense, but a

decentralisation process combined with a clear government role in setting standards, provision of materials, support training and supervision matters.

Another major claim of decentralisation is that it brings decision making and resource allocation closer to the people, and therefore enables people at the local level to participate in the local planning process. It is further argued that decentralisation brings about increased opportunities for people to participate in public decision-making, from which they are generally excluded in a highly centralized government system (Asante, 2003; Crook & Sverrisson 2001). Empirical evidence globally, however, suggests that the results of decentralisation have been discouraging and dismal. Cheema and Rondinelli (1983), major advocates of decentralisation in the 1970s observed that despite its vast scope, decentralisation seldom, if ever, lived up to expectations. Similarly, Wunsch (1991, p. 433) also pointed out that decentralisation has not been a widely successful solution. He explained that the results of many decentralisation efforts in the majority of the Third World countries towards development (providing resources, training and incentives), have been generally disappointing.

In general decentralisation efforts have not significantly expanded participation, improved project efficiency or effectiveness, increased orientation to rural needs and wants, expanded financial support for local projects and services by rural dwellers, reduced central cost or (much less) redistribute wealth, status or power to the rural areas. Planning systems do not seem any more responsive to rural priorities, local institutions of governance any more viable and projects any more likely to be sustained after donor and/or central state investments have been completed (Olowu & Wunsch, 1990).

Govinda (1997, p. 281) argues against the belief that decentralisation increases community participation in educational decision making. According to him delegation does not automatically lead to stakeholders' empowerment and commitment.

This I strongly support looking at the experiences of most developing countries and particularly Ghana. Critiques of decentralisation believe that it does more harm than good. Decentralisation as a policy may not always be efficient.

Like the local government system, it is also beset with some pitfalls. First, not all decentralisation schemes seek to give power to the people as earlier expressed. In a case study of four countries (Zimbabwe, Chile, India & Tanzania) Tikly (1996:22) revealed that 'decentralisation of decision-making power ... often proved more rhetorical than real' because there was 'a tendency for bureaucratic establishments to protect their power and not to cede power to ... groups they do not trust'. The literature points out that in many instances education decentralisation occurs without changes to the incentive structure to motivate accountability and transparency (Colclough 1994; UNESCO, 2000; World Bank, 2001). In effect, decentralisation policy does not create new ways of working that balances responsibility with accountability. The reluctance to devolve critical decision-making to local agencies and actors reflects to an extent, the deep-seated hierarchical relationship between central and local government that resists change to shift power and control away from the centre. While in theory such a system is expected to have positive impacts on efficiency and equity of service provision, in practice these outcomes depend on the existing institutional arrangements and coherence of decentralisation policies to create the proper enabling environment for bottom-up accountability.

Although there is no overwhelming consensus on the benefits to be derived from decentralisation, it is possible to detect a mainstream view that decentralisation is at least a partial solution to many of the problems of developed and developing countries. They argue that small but clear cut improvements have resulted from decentralised development planning, with benefits that can be measured in terms of the distribution of

resources, the extension of public services to rural areas, better project identification and new employment opportunities. Decentralisation must be seen as a target or means to an end, and not a solution.

3.3 Participation

Participation is perhaps the most lauded concept in decentralisation and development planning today. The overwhelming interest in the concept and its widespread use by advocates of decentralisation requires that time be spent in understanding its meanings and implications.

The term “participation” can be interpreted in various ways, depending on the context. Shaeffer (1994) clarifies different degrees or levels of participation, including:

1. involvement through the contribution of money, materials, and labour;
2. involvement through ‘attendance’ (at parents’ meetings at school), implying passive acceptance of decisions made by others;
3. involvement through consultation on a particular issue;
4. participation in the delivery of a service, often as a partner with other actors;
5. participation as implementers of delegated powers.

Shaeffer stresses that the first three definitions use the word involvement and connote largely passive collaboration, whereas the last two items use the word participation implying a much more active role. Participation is concerned with human development and increases people's sense of control over issues which affect their lives and helps them to learn how to plan and implement. In essence, participation is a 'good thing' because it breaks people's isolation and lays the groundwork for them to have not only a more substantial influence on development, but also greater independence and control over their lives (Oakley, 1991; Warburton, 1997).

According to the World Bank, participation is a process through which stakeholders' influence and share control over development initiatives, decisions and resources, which affect them. Mikkeisen (2005, p. 348) is of the view that the common characteristics of participation are; voluntary contributions by people in development interventions; an active process where a group of people take initiative; fostering dialogue between stakeholders, between those with more or less decision-making power and voluntary involvement of people in self-determined change. The participatory nature of decentralised educational planning has made educational delivery more results-oriented for the achievement of education for all goals and the millennium development goals. International Development Agencies are of the view that participation is intimately bound up with politicised questions of exclusion, rights and control, and with relations of power. These definitions undoubtedly, prioritize the political dimension of participation with a focus on the power to do (affective) rather than power over (domination) and a goal to-change present (undesirable) conditions. Participation here means empowerment; that which happens to people because they have knowledge and resources but above all that they have the will to change. This contrasts with notions which suggest empowerment is done to people because they lack knowledge and resources to change.

Participation in politics and development planning are certainly fostered by a decentralisation system. Decentralised educational planning often promotes both the formal and informal participation of parents and other stakeholders in educational delivery at the local/district or school level of educational delivery.

Participation and decentralisation have a symbiotic relationship. On the one hand, successful decentralisation requires some degree of local participation. Sub national governments' proximity to their constituents will only enable them to respond better to

local needs and efficiently match public spending to private needs if some sort of information flow between citizens and the local governments exist.

On the other hand, the process of decentralisation can itself enhance the opportunities for participation by placing more power and resources at a closer, more familiar, more easily influenced level of government. In environments with poor traditions of citizen participation, decentralisation can be an important first step in creating regular, predictable opportunities for citizen-state interaction.

The symbiotic relationship between decentralisation and participation leads to somewhat contradictory policy outcomes. Mechanisms for citizen participation could be considered a helpful pre-condition when evaluating the prospects for successful decentralisation. Accordingly, the design of decentralisation should take into account the opportunities and limitations imposed by existing channels of local participation. Rahnema (1992), an ardent critic of the uncritical use of participation explains that participation could be either transitive or intransitive; either moral, amoral or immoral; either forced or free; either manipulative or spontaneous. The meaning sets that Rahnema offers in the explanation indicate that at best participation needs to be qualified. It also means that participation can be good and empowering, or bad and disempowering. His own analysis shows how donors, governments and even local authorities have employed the concept to extend their own despotic or tyrannical positions. The manipulative use of participation which is of interest in this review and central to Rahnema's analysis is said to occur when "participants do not feel they are forced into doing something, but are actually led to take actions, which are inspired or directed by centres outside their control" (p.116). I believe this context is very familiar to us in Ghana. I am very familiar with the many criticisms of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). I am also familiar with the many ways that civil

society organizations co-opt communities into their development agenda, under the banner of participation. Governments have done so through ballot boxes and nominations. Our assemblies and parliaments are typical cases of how the process of enfranchisement had resulted in the disenfranchisement of the people by their representatives. Basically, participation entrenches dominance rather than liberating the dominated. In spite of the skepticism about the use of the concept, it continues to generate appeal. Popular participation which places agency on the poor and obligations on development workers, has been proposed. For Crawford (2005) popular participation means popular input into decision making processes resulting in greater empowerment or popular control of government. Popular participation, then, is about the powerless achieving power and that the hitherto powerless, voiceless can re-gain and take control of their lives in dignifying ways. The power in question is

a special power - people's power- which belongs to the oppressed and the exploited classes and groups and their organizations, and the defense of their just interests to enable them to advance towards shared goals of social change within a participatory system (Rahnema, 1992, p. 120).

Popular participation in this sense is about the exercise of power, by the disadvantaged and excluded members of society to gain their genuine rights; those guaranteed in constitutions and other legalities; assured participation promised in development and decentralisation. Popular participation in the context of decentralisation is thus not about the formation of new centres of privileged power at the bottom to replace that from above but a dissemination and dissipation of power to the very bottom of society. It does not mean there cannot be MMDAs and district budgets or planning units and their expanded versions. Neither does it mean one merely include traditional authorities, opinion leaders or other local elite. It means all of that and more; which more refers to the excluded, powerless and voiceless. What it means also is that the new structures,

which replace the old centres, even in their de-centred form are not sufficient in themselves but will need to show accountability to local constituents especially the poorest members such as the food crop farmers, women, rural communities, children, persons with disabilities. Basically, in an attempt to decentralise one cannot limit participation to traditional wielders of power such as local elite including the chiefs, assembly persons, literate, merchant class and leave out the non-title holders. Popular participation is participation by all, especially the poorest of the poor in decisions, resources and benefits. It also means that decentralisation actors are accountable in their political, technical and social roles to the poorest as well as all others.

Table 11: Types of Community Participation for Educational Planning and Development

Types	Characteristics
Empowerment	Local people have control over all development without any influence (Choguill, 1996; Dewar, 1999).
Partnership	There are some degrees of local influence in development process (Arnstein, 1969).
Interaction	People have greater involvement in this level. The rights of local people are recognize and accepted in practice at local level (Pretty, 1995).
Consultation	People are consulted in several ways, e.g. being involved in community's meeting or even public hearings. Developers may accept some contribution from the locals that benefits their project (Arnstein, 1969).
Informing	People are told about development program, which have been decided already, in the community. The developers run the projects without listening to local people's opinions (Arnstein, 1969).
Manipulation	Development is generally developed by some powerful individuals, or government, without any discussion with the people (Arnstein, 1969).

Source: Adapted from Leksakundilok (2006)

Community participation is a concept that attempts to bring different stakeholders together for community problem solving and decision making (Talbot & Verrinder, 2005). Community participation is considered necessary to get community support for educational development projects (Cole, 2007). Community participation refers to peoples' engagement in activities within the educational system. It plays an essential and longstanding role in promoting quality of life (Putnam, 2000). Communities can play a variety of roles in the provision and management of education and learning processes. Community participation in educational development processes can support and uphold local culture, tradition, knowledge and skill, and create pride in community heritage (Lacy et al., 2002). Community participation is one of the mechanisms to empower people to take part in educational development. Increased participation is a means to achieve development to resolve educational problems (Aref et al, 2009; Lasker, Weiss & Miller, 2001). In summary, participation is concerned with human development and increases people's sense of control over issues which affect their lives, helps them to learn how to plan and implement. The literature reviewed shows the importance of community participation in educational decentralisation. One of the major aims of the concept is participation which offers opportunities for stakeholders at the local levels to be involved in governance and in making decisions on issues that affect their lives. In fact according to literature reviewed, participation of people such as parents at the local community level in the running and management of schools is one of the major purposes of educational decentralisation. As indicated by Grauwe et al., 2005, one of the purposes of decentralising education services is to widen the participation of especially non-education professionals at local community level in the running and management of schools.

If the new challenge for local government is to provide leadership that energises local communities, headteachers and teachers into action to improve access then what is needed is better understanding of how hierarchical power relations undermine local agency. Naidoo (2002) reviewed decentralisation policy and practice in six sub-Saharan African countries (Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Uganda & Zimbabwe) and concludes that core education decisions are hardly ever decentralised in a way that encourages genuine local community participation in decision-making. He argues that the key to real benefits of decentralisation are its emphasis on redistribution, inter-governmental finance, and the extent of local participation in decision-making. These are lacking to varying degrees in the countries he studied.

Citizen participation in some form is an essential part of successful decentralisation. It is becoming a more common element in developing country political environments, but the flow of information is by no means undistorted. Planning decentralisation policies should take these informational imperfections into account and attempt to improve the depth and degree of citizen participation in local government action. Local government responsiveness, one of the main rationales for decentralising cannot be realized when there are no mechanisms for transferring information between the local government and its constituents.

3.4 Educational Decentralisation

The Education Act of Ghana 2008, (Act 778 p5) states that “Minister shall take measures for effective decentralisation of executive responsibility for the provision and management of basic and second cycle schools to the District Assemblies”. Section 22 (1) of the Act also states that “the District Assembly shall, for its area of authority and as far as its functions extend, contribute to the total development of the community by ensuring that efficient education throughout the basic, second cycle and functional

literacy education levels including non-formal education is available to meet the needs of the population of its area”.

Educational decentralisation takes into account a number of aspects in the educational system, including budget allocation, the structure and organization of schools, construction of school building, curriculum, procurement of textbooks and materials, teaching methods, examination and evaluation methods and teacher management and training. The degree of decentralisation generally varies in each of these aspects, and what constitutes a suitable combination of them varies from country to country. Von Braun and Grote (2000), for example, suggest that whereas curriculum setting, the organization of examinations, and quality assurance are best provided by central authorities, building maintenance and monitoring teacher performance is better done by local authorities, though this may apply to some countries but not others. McGinn and Welsh (1999) categorise the decentralisation of education governance according to the location of legitimacy: professional expertise, political legitimacy and market efficiency. Governance by professional expertise regards technical knowledge of regional/local education authorities and schools as legitimate to control education. Governance by political legitimacy refers to decentralisation of education governance to communities or their elected representatives. This form of decentralisation assumes that non-education professionals can effectively govern education, which may indicate a loss of public confidence in professional expertise. Proponents of market decentralisation argue that markets can offer a variety of options to satisfy the desires and needs of consumers, which professionals are incapable of. Preference for any of these three models depends on the objectives of the decentralisation reforms. McGinn and Welsh (1999), for example, suggest that governance by experts is appropriate for minimizing variation in quality and to maximize overall school effectiveness, governance by

political legitimate bodies is for maximizing community participation in decision-making in a well-integrated society, and the market strategy is for developing centres of excellence. Whatever the form of decentralisation is, it is expected to lead to improvement in the quality of inputs and learning outcomes, greater efficiency in the allocation and use of resources, overall increase in education financing, and benefits for both central and local governments through the redistribution of political power and burden-sharing (McGin & Welsh, 1999).

The Education Sector undertook many of education policy reforms during the period 1987 to 2000. During this period the MOE formulated strategic objectives viz; improving access to and participation in basic education, improving the quality of teaching and learning, and improving science and technology education to inform and facilitate the implementation of the various education sector policies in the country.

Several international and multilateral agreements and conventions such as the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) Conference, the Beijing Declaration on Women's Rights, the Lome Convention, and World Education Forum (or what is commonly referred to as the Dakar Framework for Action or the Millennium Development Goals Conference) and now the Sustainable Development Goals were endorsed by Ghana.

The endorsement of the agreements and declarations of these international meetings, coupled with commitments to her own internal constitutional reforms led to major constitutional and educational reforms of which the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (fCUBE) policy was a formidable part (Nudzor, 2012). The Fourth Republican Constitution of 1992 and the policy acts that followed it set the stage for the national provision of basic education (Maikish & Gershberg, 2008). The 1992 constitution formulated the policy titled "Basic Education—A Right: Programme for the

provision of Free Compulsory and Universal Basic Education by the year 2005,” (MOE/Ghana Education Service [GES], 2001).

In 1997, a fourth objective, decentralisation and sustainability of management structures, was added to the three strategic objectives formulated to guide the execution of the fCUBE policy implementation and generally education policy formulation and implementation in the country. The objective of the decentralisation component of fCUBE includes decentralising the management of the education sector’s budget for pre-tertiary education to District Assemblies (DAs). This involves capacity building and financial management at the district level (GES, 2004).

In Ghana, for example, education decentralisation has been presented as the vehicle for strengthening management efficiency and accountability by locating critical decision-making of education matters at the district level.

“Decentralisation will be the major driving force in strengthening efficiency and accountability of resources and results. Basic education will be made accountable to local level authorities with development and operational responsibilities transferred from central government to the districts. Self-regulation mechanisms through school communities at grass roots will be introduced” (Government of Ghana, 2000:35)

In Malawi, the government hoped to improve the management of education through greater decentralisation of educational decision-making:

“Given that improved planning and management thrive better in situations characterised by reduced centralisation of decision-making; the Government will support efforts aimed at promoting decentralised administrative structures and the participation of stakeholder groups in educational decision-making” (MoESC, 2000:6 cited in Davies et. al., 2003)

These aspirations are common in many developing countries reform policy programmes that are aiming to decentralise education services, but the reality is often very different (see, Tikly 1996; Davies et. al. 2003; Rose 2003; De Grauwe et al., 2005; Sayed and Soudien, 2005). Case study evidence from many different countries indicates that

aspirations of decentralisation policy rarely produce the kind of outcomes expected (Tikly 1996; Naidoo 2002; De Grauwe et al., 2005). Nevertheless, this has not dampened commitment to its goals. In the main, developing country education systems that have pressed forward with decentralisation have not readily devolved power and control over education management, financial administration and teacher management to the local level. Also, as Davies et al, (2003) have clearly illustrated in their case study evidence from Malawi, introducing new structures is much easier than changing some of the critical levers that can make decentralisation work, such as the changing work culture, and improving accountability and resources.

3.5 Educational Planning

Educational Planning is concerned with the problems of how to make the best use of limited resources allocated to education. Decentralised planning provides educational planners and other stakeholders the opportunity to participate in decision making and needs assessment. According to Coombs (1979), educational planning, in its broadest generic sense, is the application of rational, systematic analysis to the process of educational development with the aim of making education more effective and efficient in responding to the needs and goals of its students and society. The International Institute for Educational Planning (2009) defines educational planning as a practice aimed at preparing the education system to address future challenges and achieving the medium and long-term goals set by policy-makers. It is closely related to the dynamics and shape of educational developments and is increasingly influenced by international commitments and the changing aid environment. Dror (1973) saw planning as the process of preparing a set of decisions for action in the future, directed at achieving goals by optional means. As a continuous process, it is concerned not only with where to go but with how to get there and by what best route. Effective planning, concerns

implementation, with progress made or not made, with unforeseen obstacles that arise and with how to overcome them. It helps decision makers see more clearly the specific objectives in question, the various options that are available for pursuing these objectives, and the likely implications of each. One of the central tasks of educational planning is to determine how best to keep the intricate internal and external relationships of the educational system in reasonable balance under dynamically changing circumstances, and to bend them constantly in the required direction. Educational plans, formulated at national level are quite distant from the grassroots realities. This is because implementers of educational plans and policies who are at the grassroots are not involved in the planning process. This gap is reduced by planning at the lower levels. At the decentralised level of planning the gap between planning and implementation is reduced. Additionally decentralised educational planning provides effective and efficient care of local needs and management of resources resulting in improved efficiency. It also helps to overcome local specific problems in a better way, and there are more chances of successful implementation of plans as the implementers are partners in the planning process.

3.5.1 Definition of Decentralised Educational Planning

Decentralised educational planning implies the district/local level planning of education. It refers to the “bottom-up” approach to educational planning as contrasted with the “top-down” approach which was the feature of the centralized educational planning system. In Ghana, District Educational Directorates are empowered to perform educational planning functions which are fused into the national educational planning process. These aim to help educational beneficiaries and other stakeholders take increasing control over the educational delivery processes. The commitment of the headteachers and teachers, the participation of parents, and the attitude of the

community consistently turn out to be important under this form of planning. Decentralised educational planning also promotes both the formal and informal participation of parents and other stakeholders in educational delivery at the local or district level of educational delivery. Participation has been viewed as a measure of accountability as well as tool for increasing accountability (Crawford & Hartmann, 2008). This concerns the involvement of people in the determination of policies, programmes, processes and outcomes that affect them.

The educational planning system in Ghana is decentralised from the national level to the regional, district and school levels, requiring collaboration between educational officers, headteachers, teachers and the community (SMCs and PTAs) as well as civil society and non-governmental organizations. These as well as academic and research institutions, traditional authorities and other identifiable groups and individuals are expected to participate in the planning process. In addition, the law provides for the system to adopt a combined “top-down”, “bottom-up” approach to decentralised educational planning. This implies that actual planning should start from the school to district, region through the headquarters to the Ministry and be based on policy goals and guidelines provided by the apex coordinating body, the Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring and Evaluation (PBME) of the Ministry of Education. Effective planning processes are required for educational directorates to respond adequately to local educational development needs. The problems which persist include over reliance on funds from headquarters and community participation in the planning and budget processes is also very weak.

The establishment of effective and transparent financial management is at the core of decentralisation. To be genuinely supportive of a decentralisation process, the basic characteristics of a system for decentralised financial management should include: (a)

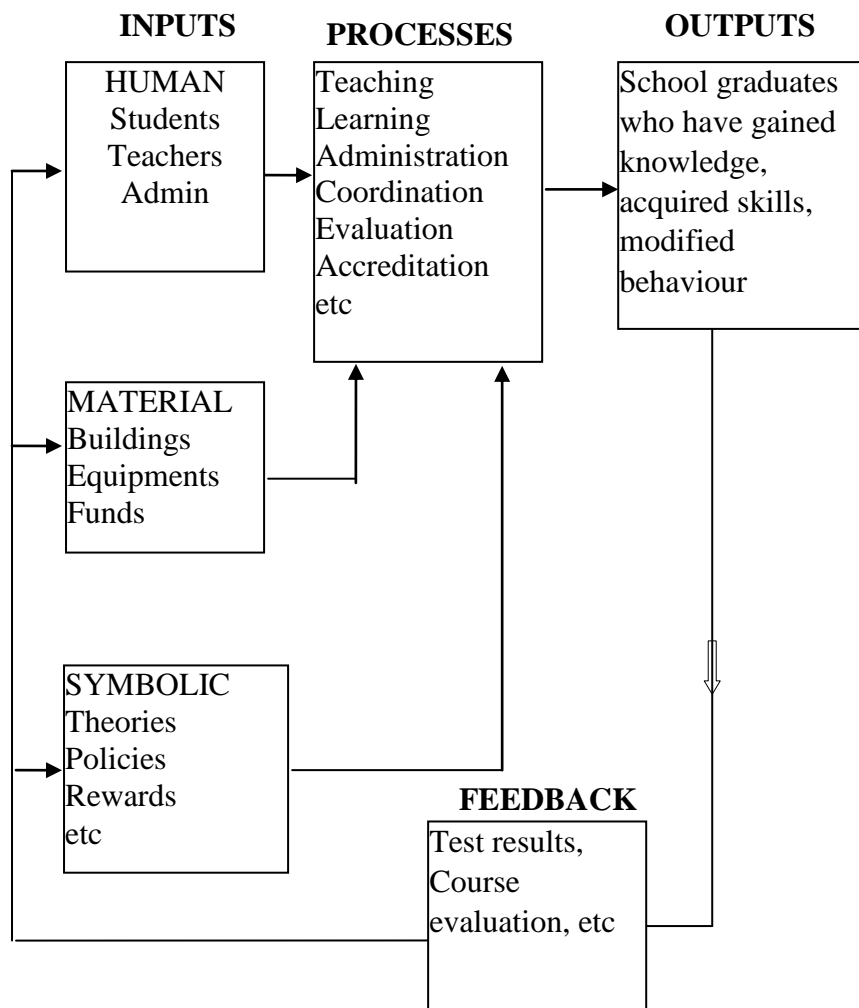
transparency of allocation (b) predictability of the amounts available to local institutions and (c) local autonomy of decision making on resource utilization. In contrast with the widespread practice of ad hoc grants driven by politics, the allocation of resources should be based on transparent formulas. Also, unlike the typical unpredictability of most central-to-local transfer mechanisms prevailing in developing countries, the process should provide local institutions with an up-front indication of how much money will be available in the next multiyear planning cycle. This makes decentralised educational planning possible and provides a financial ceiling that makes such planning a meaningful exercise and an opportunity for educational directorates to take autonomous decisions on the use of limited resources.

3.5.2 Importance of Decentralised educational planning

Decentralised educational planning is essential for resource utilization. It ensures efficient and effective resource management and also strengthens local governance. Additionally it provides advice on the allocation of resources among different components of the educational system (general buildings, equipment, scholarships, textbooks and the like). Decentralised educational planning thus allows for efficient performance of education. To achieve the national educational delivery goals there is the need to strengthen decentralised educational planning and resource deployment to improve the quality of teaching and learning, management efficiency, increased access to and participation in education delivery at the district or local levels. A strong knowledge base at the local level enables people to take informed decision and choices. It is believed that active community participation could contribute to effective needs assessment and facilitate proper planning and improved educational delivery.

3.5.3 Planning Processes

The planning process envisaged under decentralised educational planning system has broadly two dimensions: (a) professional/technical and (b) participatory. The effort under the decentralised educational planning is to professionalize local level planning in a participatory mode. The professional and technical dimensions pertain to the actual drawing up of plans which involves assessing the present situation, assessing the tasks involved, elaborating strategies and programmes and costing of the plan. This strategy shifts the location of the planning process from the state to the district level and strengthens the district planning teams to initiate district specific intervention strategies. The other dimension of planning exercise is the emphasis laid on the participatory process of planning. The very fact that local people are preparing plans ensures a better participatory process. Participation involve: (a) participation by departments other than education to ensure convergence of services at the micro-level, (b) participation by elected representatives of the local bodies (c) participation by academic and resource organizations to provide technical and professional input to the plan preparation process; (d) participation by educational functionaries at all levels including primary school heads and teachers; and (e) participation by the general public including parents. This is diagrammatically shown in figure 6 on the next page:



Understanding the role played by stakeholders in the educational planning process requires a clear delineation of the educational system. Like any social system the educational system involves inputs, process (conversion), outputs and feedbacks. (Inputs – Process – Outputs), that is the Input – Output Model of the educational system.

The educational system objectives and the various system inputs are the stimuli that energize the educational system and provide it with the contents of its operation. There must be a continuous supply of inputs from the environment to ensure continuity in the system. These inputs are human (students, teachers, administrators), material (buildings,

equipments, funds), and symbolic (policies, rewards system, theories, etc.). This reflects the involvement or engagement of academic and resource organisations, educational functionaries, other departments and the general public into the planning process (inputs). These different stakeholders come together for problem solving and decision making (Talbot and Verrinder 2005). Active stakeholder participation can contribute to promoting education and that support is necessary for educational planning and development (Cole, 2007). Involvement of stakeholders in educational development processes can support and uphold local culture, tradition, knowledge and skill and create pride in community heritage. Stakeholders engage in decentralised educational planning through visit to schools, identifying problems and monitoring teaching and learning.

The various inputs are processed (converted, transformed) in accordance with the objectives of the educational system, in the case of Ghana, the key objectives being increase inclusive and equitable access and participation in education at all levels, ensure provision of life skills training and management of personal hygiene, civic responsibilities, human rights peace, education, etc, improve quality teaching and learning and improve management efficiency. The conversion consists of the methods used in the teaching/learning process, administration and coordination, as well as evaluation and accreditation. The involvement of stakeholders in the execution of programmes and activities is another area of importance in an attempt to effect a change on the ground. Implementation denotes the translation of plans into practice and involves accomplishing and completing a plan. Implementation become less effective unless goals are clearly defined and understood, necessary resources are made available and controlled, and there is effective communication and supervision of those involved in the performance of the tasks. Successful planned outcomes depend not only upon designing good plans but also upon managing their implementation. There is therefore

the need for full stakeholder participation and ownership. The low level of stakeholder participation in decision making to implement educational development can lead to failure in planning. It can also have a negative impact on achievement of planned objectives.

Outputs are the results of conversions and are the objectives towards which input transformation are directed. Outputs are the educated individuals as could be evidenced by knowledge gained, the skills acquired and the attitudes changed. Within the context of educational planning, measurable outputs are the clients who successfully complete given educational cycles. This is another area where active engagement of stakeholders is of great importance. The monitoring of the implementation of planned activities provides periodic information for tracking progress of implementation of programmes and projects according to previously approved plans, work schedules and targeted output. Stakeholders are required to monitor plan execution and ensure that materials are being judiciously used, well secured and also that the teachers are really working. Any social system constantly requires feedbacks to adjust properly to its objectives. The school system in particular requires information about the environments if it is to respond adequately to client aspirations. For example, the employability of educational outputs and their adaptability in their own societies may be signalling the level of achievement of the system's objectives. Feedbacks are provided through test results, course evaluations, opinion surveys and careful observations. By and large, the effectiveness of the information system through which these feedbacks are provided determines the efficiency of the educational system.

Monitoring of plan implementation by stakeholders is highly influenced by resources. Inadequate resources can result in weak monitoring and thus, affecting implementation negatively.

The focus of human inputs in figure 6 of the input-process-output model was on students, teachers, and administrators. This strand provide different accounts of decentralised educational planning based on shared assumptions about educational planning systems that resort to a production function metaphor, where a particular mix of inputs (Students, Teachers, Administrators, Building Equipment, Funds, Policies and Rewards) explains an outputs (student's achievement). This line of reasoning reflects a leading concern focused on identifying the level of involvement of various stakeholders in participatory planning, and what are the underlying key elements that explain outputs achievement suitable to be affected by educational policy notwithstanding socio-economic constraints. It also provides different accounts of participatory planning based on shared assumptions about education systems that mostly resort to a production-function metaphor, where a particular mix of inputs (including teachers) explains an output (students' achievement). This approach is strongly linked to a rationalist tradition and view of science that assumes this sort of explanation approach to be "naturally" better than people's own knowledge of their activities. Even though, this thread has successfully identified some elements that are crucial to the understanding of participatory planning that relates to both market dynamics and institutional aspects, in the light of the study findings that revealed that PTAs and SMCs participate in the decentralized planning process in the district albeit at different degrees, the model fails to acknowledge them as part of the input there was a generalisation to people's participation and not specific reference to the two decentralised educational institutions.

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A decentralised educational planning process starts with the diagnosis of the educational situation. This involves a systematic and empirical analysis of educational situation involving collection of information, and developing a reliable data base in education for the purpose of initiating the planning exercise (Varghese, 1997). This informs decision makers on the current position of an educational institution. At this stage in planning process various indicators outside education may be considered, but the concentration is on education related factors which operate more in social and economic realm. What is considered during diagnosis, is all the inputs factors into the system, functioning of the system and factors related to efficiency and outcomes of the educational process as shown in figure 6 above. The inputs factors relate to the availability of schooling facilities, physical infrastructure in schools, teaching-learning materials, students enrolment in various grades, availability and distribution of teachers, teachers specialization and their age distribution and information on school finances. The diagnosis of input factors involves analysis of the information on these items.

The process factors of education include elements like factors leading to teaching-learning process, availability of educational managers like headteachers, inspectors, information on management of schools, policies and practices of students' evaluation, classroom teaching process, inspection and supervision of schools, educational administrative structure. Analysis of these items actually is the diagnosis of process factors of education.

The efficiency and outcome factors include wastage and stagnation in schools, the number and quality of pupils/students who pass out, achievement level of students, internal efficiency of education system. Diagnosis of efficiency and outcomes means analysis of these factors. Another important step in decentralised educational planning process is the identification of the problems and issues related to education. There can be various sources for identifying these issues. These are diagnosis of educational scenario, participatory exercises undertaken at district level, studies conducted and surveys undertaken. Having these participatory exercises in which all stakeholders are involved identifies the grass root level problems. Targets which are statements which state clearly and unambiguously what is to be achieved and are in measurable terms and have definite time frame are then set. In order to develop district education plan the targets may be set for access, enrolment, retention and achievement levels of pupil/students. Effective monitoring is required to see the progress of implementation of the plan on year to year basis and also facilitate in reviewing the implementation strategies and perhaps revising the targets for the coming years.

Evolving intervention strategies to achieve the targets is another important step in decentralised educational planning process. In coming up with strategies it is important to note that in a decentralised educational planning process any single strategy may not be applicable in different areas and that is why probably for addressing a single problem

one may have to envisage a set of strategies for a given context. Again a single strategy may not be enough to address an issue or a problem, there is therefore the need to work out multiple strategies for addressing a single problem. Translating the strategies into programmes and activities is the next step in the plan formulation. A specific intervention strategy may require a number of programmes to make it operational and effective. A programme is an aggregation of various activities. It is therefore necessary to translate each and every strategy into activities and tasks. For example for improving access the strategy can be 'opening of new primary schools'. However one of the activities under the strategy of opening new primary schools may be 'construction of school building'. But the activity of construction of school building has many tasks that are to be undertaken. These tasks may be identification of school-free areas; identification of towns and villages qualifying for opening schools; listing and prioritization of areas; deciding about the number of schools to be opened; identification of areas where schools are to be opened; deciding the site of the school; acquiring site/transfer of land; identification of agency for construction and supervision; actual construction work; monitoring and supervision of construction work and finishing and furnishing of school building (Zaidi, 2002, p136).

An important step in the decentralised educational planning process is the costing and estimation of financial requirements to implement the plan. Translating the physical inputs into financial requirements is essential for funding purpose. Various steps that are involved in estimation of financial requirements are listing of all the activities to be undertaken, classifying all these activities into two categories that is activities having cost implications and activities which do not have cost implications, classifying the activities which have cost implications into recurring and non-recurring heads, working out the average cost of recurring activities and unit cost for non-recurring activities,

estimation of costs separately under the recurring and non-recurring heads. While estimating the financial requirements for the District Education Strategic Plan the recurring costs estimation may be on items such as compensation, training, maintenance of building, equipment, furniture, infrastructure and the like, travel and fuel costs, stationary and consumables, contingencies, rents and so on (Goods and Services). Similarly the non-recurring cost estimation may be on items such as construction of school building, additional classrooms, gender and disability friendly sanitation facilities, equipment, furniture; infrastructure; vehicle (Assets) and the like. The aggregation of costs of all the activities and tasks under various strategies will give the total financial requirements of the plan.

3.6 Capacity Development

It hardly needs any mention that the development of planning and management competencies in education is of paramount significance. Equally important is the task of creating a sustainable enabling environment to make the best use of the available planning and management competencies. Absence of ‘capacity’, especially at the sub-national and institutional levels has been one of the critical constraints in decentralised planning and management of education at the district/local levels. With the changing direction in educational planning towards decentralisation the need for capacity building at the district, sub-district and institutional levels has assumed increased urgency. With the introduction of participatory planning and budgeting process for educational development in local/ district directorates, citizens are able to participate in the development planning process. The most important challenge in decentralised educational planning is ensuring people’s participation. In order to ensure people’s participation training for members of educational officers and institutionalised structures (i. e. SMCs and PTAs) is of paramount importance.

The requirements for capacity building in terms of demand – supply gap is high not only on account of the number of people to be trained but also in terms of the competencies of the personnel required if the intended decentralised educational planning service delivery standards are to be achieved. Some of the key areas where capacity gaps for decentralised educational planning have been identified include plan design, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation. Short term re-training of lower level MMDs staff and community members needs to be emphasized. In addition, certain specific skills will be required to analyse data for decision making and accessing data for projections.

The major constraint in the area of capacity building is the lack of explicit demand for capacity building. Capacity building has been so far accorded very low priority and is largely limited to administrative training. Demand is limited, sporadic and event based with no evidence of systematic planning, resource allocation or execution of skill enhancement programmes.

Capacity building for decentralised educational planning is the effort to strengthen and improve the abilities of personnel and organizations to be able to perform their tasks in a more effective, efficient and sustainable manner. It needs to be appreciated that capacity building is a long term and ongoing effort which needs to be institutionalised in the planning and implementation process. Capacity Building needs to be a continuous and ongoing initiative whose aim is to improve and facilitate the skill sets and processes involving human and other perceivable inputs.

Issues such as autonomy to plan and implement, professional skills (technical and managerial) needed for decentralised educational planning, skill development of cutting edge staff, capacity building of SMC and PTA representatives have been paid scant attention. In the current context of decentralisation dispensation, the challenges in

decentralised educational planning require not only specialised knowledge but also experiential learning to tackle the challenges faced by decentralised educational planning.

The educational planner at the district and local level is at the operational base of policy-decisions, has greater knowledge of operational problems at that level and therefore able to produce more realistic 'micro' plans, if he has the requisite training. Planning at the sub-national level entails the participation of parents, teachers, students, and those who are interested in or knowledgeable about education in the planning process through meetings like the Parent-Teacher Association, Teachers' Associations, and Students Representatives Councils (SRCs). The planning at this level accommodates the local needs of the area such as the relationship between education and employment in the locality. The planner at that level will need knowledge and understanding of such related problems as health, rural development, housing, agriculture and adult education. It is virtually impossible to plan an educational opportunities unless there is a clear indication of the nature and extent of the local problems, as well as the underlying causes and conditions based on factual information. For these and other reasons, every effort should be made into appropriate training needs for educational planners at the district and local levels. Decentralised educational planners at the district and local levels complain about their own inadequacies in the techniques and skills of planning at educational conferences, in-service courses, workshops, and at seminars. It is important to consider the need to train personnel in the areas of plan design, implementation and evaluation at progressive stages in the planning cycle. There is also the need to strengthen existing planning institutions in the country. In order to keep the decentralised educational planners abreast with new

developments in their field, training and exchange programmes, fellowships and short intensive courses should be arranged for them.

Unfortunately, the general understanding of the scope of ‘capacity development’ and the strategies to scale up the related interventions have been narrowly conceived in various reform programmes. Broadly, “capacity development is a process by which individuals, groups, organizations and societies create, enhance and maintain their capacities over time” (Caillods & Grauwe, 2006). Capacity in turn is defined as “the organizational and technical abilities, relationships and values that enable countries, organizations, groups and individuals at all levels of society to carry out functions effectively and achieve their development objectives”(Morgan as cited in Caillods & Grauwe, 2006). Capacity has human resource, organizational and institutional dimensions (Caillods & Grauwe, 2006). The human resource dimension aims at enhancing knowledge, skills and values of individuals through training and mentoring. The organizational dimension focuses on enhancing capacities of organizations, particularly those engaged in educational planning and management such as ministries, national level resource organizations, regional level education offices, research and training institutions, district and sub-district level education offices, related grassroots level organizations, local governments and schools, (Caillods & Grauwe, 2006). The institutional dimension focuses on the most critical component of capacity development, that is the environment building, (includes the overall economic, political and cultural environment.) which is extremely important for translating capacities of individuals and organizations into action. It is also argued that capacity development as a process goes beyond enhancing knowledge and skills of individuals and organizations and involves ownership of policies, gradual empowerment of all stakeholders and strengthening of civil society (Caillods & Grauwe, 2006). Lack of local/community capacity and technical expertise, e.g. plan

designs, implementation and evaluation at the local level constitute a serious bottleneck to the implementation of decentralised educational planning. Training programmes especially in-service-training or personnel development programmes contribute immensely to increased knowledge and job performance. Such programmes, combined with seminars, workshops and other forms of technical assistance have enabled a large number of individuals to improve their knowledge and competences. No employer will remain qualified in the face of accelerating change without some form of ongoing education and training. This is the impetus behind the recent emphasis on capacity development programmes.

Community capacity building (CCB) is a necessary condition for improving the process of educational development and enhancing its benefits for local communities. Community capacity can be defined as the characteristics of a community that enable it to mobilize, identify and solve problems. CCB is vital in order to empower local people to take advantage of the opportunities provided by education development. It is important to develop human resource and community leadership. At the organizational level, efforts could be made to develop the ability of community organizations to serve in community development. At the community level, it seeks to focus on association and relations between community residents, local groups and local community organization to build up community development. To build community capacity, community participants need to procure skills and knowledge. Knowledge helps people to think and act in new ways. The concept of community skill and knowledge is regarded as a tool to assist in education development. Increased skill and knowledge can be attained by any stakeholder in community based education development; educational officials, leaders and community residents. Thus, enhancing community knowledge and skill is one aspect of building community capacity for educational development in local

communities. Lack of skill and knowledge also constrains the ability of local communities to fully control their participation in educational decision making. Dimensions of community capacity which are most important for achieving systematic change in local communities are; participation, leadership, community resources, social network and community power. Collectively, these four dimensions of community capacity represent a community's social capital (Thomposon et al.2003).

Community leaders enhance capacity when they ensure active involvement of a diverse network of community members, thus enabling those with disparate interests to take collective action by forming a unit of solution. In order to develop in current economic and social environment, communities need leaders who can help local group, businesses, and non-profit organizations to work together to address challenges and promote local strengths. A community without leadership may not be equipped to mobilize resources or influence decentralised educational planning. The success of local community depends on the quality, creativity and commitment of its leadership in maintaining its daily affairs.

3.7 Summary and Conceptual Framework for the Study

This chapter discussed decentralisation and decentralized educational planning with relation to wider literature, and more specifically to decentralised educational planning in Ghana at three different levels, namely; definition of concepts, participation and capacity development opportunities provided by Ghana Education Service.

Even though the concept of decentralisation has been with us since the early 1970's, literature reveals that there is no clear-cut definition for the concept and various authorities have defined it in various ways. Decentralisation, a strategy adopted by the government of Ghana to improve public service delivery simply means the transfer of decision-making powers and responsibility for public functions from the central

government/organization to lower levels of government units/districts or local levels. This is seen as a way of increasing public involvement in decision making, a more participatory approach to development. Decentralisation as a concept is broad and complex and various authorities have applied the concept in different forms. From the work of Rondinelli (1981), four forms of the concept of decentralisation are identified. They are de-concentration, delegation, deregulation and devolution. De-concentration occurs when there is transfer of responsibility or authority but not resources. Delegation occurs when there is transfer of responsibility and resources. Deregulation occurs when government organizations/units transfer their functions to private entities in what is popularly known as Public-Private Partnership (PPP). When there is transfer of responsibility and resources and the unit to which the transfer of power is being made is accountable for its actions/inactions, there is devolution.

The concept of decentralisation emerged as an alternative to the centralised system of administration between 1970 and 1980, when people became dissatisfied with centralised administration and many scholarly studies at the time concluded that centralised administration was no longer being responsive to the development needs of the people at the grass roots. This was so because development programmes and projects were planned and administered from the top and in most cases these programmes and project could not address the needs of the people for whom they were meant for. It is the quest to get programmes and projects tailored to the needs of the people and to get them involved in decision making and planning that led to the development of the concept of decentralisation. Decentralisation programs have been implemented globally for mainly two reasons. It is first seen as key element of the process of democratization and a search for a more participatory approach to development. Secondly, it is regarded as an administrative reform. The realization of the

benefits associated with decentralisation depends greatly on human resource development through education. Education is seen as the principal instrument for the provision of requisite skills for production and performance of labour force. The education sector and specifically pre-tertiary education has not been left out of this process of decentralisation. There has been administrative, fiscal decentralisation and decentralised planning of educational delivery with about 95% of the pre-tertiary annual allocation going to the district directorates of education for implementation of districts' prioritized development goals.

Educational planning has been defined to mean making the best use of limited resources allocated to education in view of the priorities given to different stages or levels of education and the need of the economy. Decentralised educational planning on the other hand is district/local level planning of education. Unlike the centralised educational planning, decentralised educational planning uses the 'bottom-up' approach to planning. Decentralised educational planning as a policy in Ghana empowers the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Educational Directorates to perform educational planning functions which are fused into the national educational planning process. In this way, the needs of stakeholders such as pupils, parents, teachers and community members are all considered in the planning process.

According to the World Bank, participation is a process through which stakeholders' influence and share control over development initiatives, decisions and resources, which affect them. Decentralised educational planning often promotes both the formal and informal participation of parents and other stakeholders in educational delivery at the local/district or school level of educational delivery.

Capacity development has been defined as a process by which individuals, groups, organizations and societies create, enhance and maintain their organizational and

technical abilities, relationships and values that enable them carry out their functions effectively and achieve their development objectives. Inadequate capacity at the sub-national and institutional as well as community levels has been a critical constraint in planning and management of education at the district/local levels. This paradigm of decentralization is summarized in the form of the flow chart in Figure 7 below.

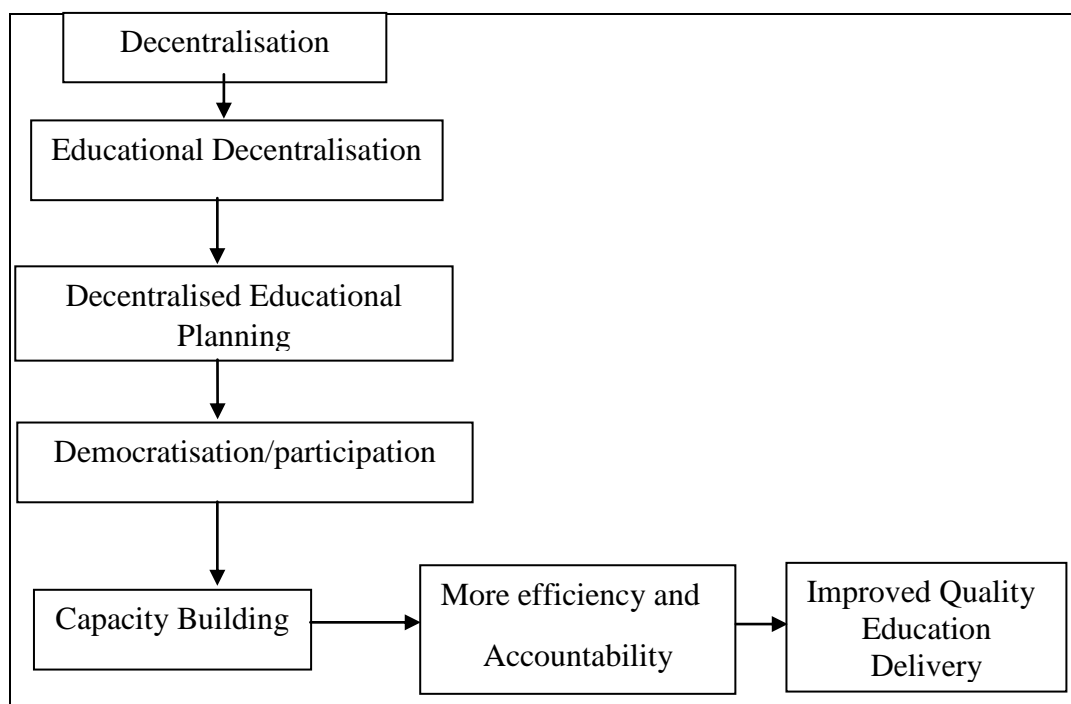


Figure 7. The Decentralised Educational Planning Paradigm

Figure 7 above shows the relationship between these concepts in educational delivery and demonstrate the expected outcome. The capacity of personnel to go through decentralised educational planning is very important.

Examination of figure 7 shows a linear progression from one stage to another for tasks to be accomplished. This fits strictly with reality. Some variables are ignored in this sort of progression. It starts from decentralisation and follow a logical progression of time-bound events that lead education decentralisation, decentralised educational planning, participation, capacity building, improved efficiency and accountability to improved quality education delivery. The general advantage of the linear progression is you know (most of the

time) where to go next, as well as you know it's going to have a beginning and an ending.

However the model is less rigorous and it lacks accuracy and certainty. Values must be known with certainty. Furthermore the model is static which means that it does not consider the changes and the evolution of variables as time goes by. It fails to take into consideration the elements of dynamic change where all stages of the model interact with one another. The model presents a scenario where group functioning becomes static when any of the stages stall.

The engagement with the literature has informed this thesis in relation to its design; conduct and the analysis of evidence, in different ways. In this chapter's final section, I summarise how such an engagement helped in shaping this thesis. The process of constructing the subject matter required that my original concerns and ideas (unravelling in chapter one) materialised into a 'dialogue' with the literature on decentralisation and decentralised educational planning. This effort identified the elements presented in this chapter. Among those elements, I focused on three major approaches; (i) definition of decentralisation, educational decentralisation and decentralised educational planning (ii) participation and (iii) capacity development.

This thesis is intended to build an understanding of the situation of Ghanaian decentralised educational planning in the light of national structural elements. It is intended to explore the understanding of stakeholders' of the concept and the participation level of stakeholders in decentralised planning process as well as capacity building opportunities provided by Ghana Education Service in order to inform the general debate on decentralised educational planning in Ghana.

The discussion about the concept highlights ways in which stakeholders give meaning to decentralisation and the benefits associated with this strategy. This began to shed

light on ways in which decentralisation policy and practices influence planning and decision making. This discussion was aimed to answer the first research sub-question which is:

“How do different stakeholders understand the concepts of decentralisation, educational decentralisation and decentralised educational planning?”

The second part of the review of the literature looked at participation. This was conceptualized through the notion that it is a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives, decisions and resources which affects them. The literature reviewed aimed to help answering the second research sub-question which is:

“What are the experiences of educational officers, headteachers, teachers, PTAs and SMCs and other stakeholder of participation in decentralised educational planning in actual practice?”

The final section reviewed literature focusing on the capacity building opportunities provided by Ghana Education Service for stakeholders engaged in decentralised educational planning, where most of stakeholders’ activities in planning assist in decision making. The literature about capacity building focused on the need for capacity building and opportunities available. This literature review in relation to capacity development aimed to answer the third research sub-question which is:

“What are the experiences of educational officers and other stakeholders of capacity development programmes provided by the Ghana Education Service?”

This analysis provides an understanding of deeper aspects of decentralised educational planning within systems of relationships rather than studying it in isolation. It discussed the concept of decentralisation and how stakeholders participate in the decentralised planning process. The review of the literature started by discussing the decentralisation policy and practices and decentralised educational planning.

These different perspectives to conceptualizing stakeholder understanding and experiences helped to enrich the understanding of stakeholders' planning experiences and aid to develop the overarching research question: *What is the understanding and participation of District Officers, Heads of Schools and other stakeholders of Decentralisation and Decentralised Educational Planning?*

The review of literature highlighted the objective of decentralisation as laid out in Chapter 20, Article 240, Sub-sections 1 and 2 of the 1992 Constitution placing emphasis on the principles of local government participation and downward accountability to the populace such that 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. Essentially, it is observed that in compliance with constitutional requirements, some reasonable amount of decentralisation efforts have been made and are still being made, and some education decentralisation structures are also put in place at the district level to devolve power to local levels to ensure that education decision making at the pre-tertiary level becomes more efficient and responsive to local needs. However, owing mainly to the hierarchical structure of the education system and its inherent concentration of power at the centre, coupled with the scramble for power between and among sub-national decentralisation agencies, educational institutions and structures of decentralisation in Ghana have become concerned with and performing centrally defined functions in local arenas.

The next chapter presents the methodology and research design of the study, which primarily focus on the data collection procedures and instruments to gain qualitative data for the purpose of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Introduction

This chapter unpacks the approach followed in this research providing an overview of the approach and its methodological implications. This effort aims at making the assumptions explicit so that any reader can develop a deeper understanding of this particular piece of research. This chapter outlines the methodology used in this research study. The chapter starts with a discussion of the ontological and epistemological stance that informs this inquiry in section 4.1. Section 4.2 provides a rationale for selecting case study as a research strategy. This is followed by discussion about the tools for data collection in section 4.3. The research instrument is discussed in section 4.4. Issues of trustworthiness and authenticity are discussed in sections 4.5. Section 4.6 discusses the analysis of data. Ethical matters are addressed in section 4.7. Sections 4.8 and 4.9 discuss respectively positionality and the limitations of the study.

4.1 Ontological and Epistemological Position

The main focus of this study is to understand the decentralised educational planning practice at the metropolitan, municipal, and school levels. It is also to acquire an insight into the planners and other stakeholders' accounts of engagement in decentralised educational planning. In the process of understanding educational officers and other stakeholders meaning of decentralisation, decentralised educational planning process and stakeholder participation, I realised that I need to understand my view of the world, reality, knowledge and how I, as a researcher, might express or interpret this reality. I started asking myself questions about the nature of the social reality that is to be investigated (ontological assumptions) and the way in which knowledge of this reality

can be obtained (epistemological assumptions). Whereas ontology involves the philosophy of reality, epistemology addresses how we come to know that reality while methodology identifies the particular practices used to attain knowledge of it (Krauss, 2005).

The fundamental methodological problem that faces all social researchers is what kinds of connections are possible between ideas, social experience and social reality (Blaikie, 2009). Ideas refer to the ways of conceptualizing and making sense of experience and reality – such as concepts, theories, knowledge and other interpretations. Social experience refers to individual conduct, social relationships and cultural practices in everyday life, and to the everyday interpretations and meanings associated with these. Social reality refers to the material and socially constructed world within which everyday life occurs, which can have an impact on people's lives, in terms of both providing opportunities and imposing restrictions (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002:2).

The various research paradigms present different ways of making connections between ideas, social experience and social reality. To a large extent, this is expressed in the ontological and epistemological assumptions they adopt: that is their particular way of looking at the world, as well as their ideas on how it can be understood.

Ontology is a branch of philosophy that studies the nature of reality. In social sciences, ontology answer the question: 'What is the nature of social reality?' It deals with matters concerning what entities exist or can be said to exist, grouping of entities, their hierarchical relations and sub-divisions according to similarities and differences. Ontology concerns the nature or importance of the phenomenon being studied. The field Bryman (2008) maintains that the questions of social ontology cannot be detached from issues concerning the conduct of social research. He argues that ontological assumptions and commitments nourish into the ways in which research questions are

formulated and research is carried out. The ontological position with which I approach reality and the ontological assumptions that have guided me in formulating research questions is constructivism. Unlike objectivism that argues that social phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors, constructivism asserts that the social phenomena and their meanings are continually accompanied by social actors. It implies that social phenomena and categories are not only produced through social interaction but they are in a constant state of revision thus produce multiple and amendable realities (Fry et al., 2009). This approach is appropriate for the study that sought answers of ‘how’ and ‘why’ of decentralised educational planning practices in educational directorates.

Epistemology – a theory of knowledge, set of assumptions about the way in which knowledge of reality can be obtained is a branch of philosophy that studies the origin, nature, methods, credibility and limits of human knowledge. It focuses on the nature, its forms and acquisitions and trends of communication with others. Trochim (2000) simply considers it as how we come to know. Heylighen (1993) maintains that epistemology attempts to answer basic questions like what distinguishes true (adequate) knowledge from false (inadequate) knowledge. Practically, this question translates into issues of scientific methodology: how one can develop theories or models in order to get a complete account of educational officers and the community’s decentralised educational planning experiences from their perspectives in their context. This approach defines my epistemological position as Interpretivist. The assumption underpinning this school is that ‘all human actions are meaningful and have to be interpreted and understood within the context of social practices. In order to make the sense of the social world, I need to understand the meaning that form and are formed by interactive

social behaviour (Usher, 1996:18). However, I do acknowledge the fact that interactive social behaviours are formed within the social structures.

This interpretivist paradigm reflects the researcher's views about the nature of knowledge and, subsequently, the way it can be acquired. This paradigm stresses "the world is constituted in one way or another as people talk it, write it and argue it" (Potter, 1996, p. 98) and that context plays a significant role in shaping the respondents' viewpoints about reality (Bryman, 2012). Therefore, it was important to gain access to the Ghana Education Service and Community planning context in order to construct an understanding of their reality (i.e., decentralised educational planning experience) from the perspective of the social actors in that context. This interpretivist view helps to explore, contextualize and capture the reality of the decentralised educational planning experiences through the eyes of those who were experiencing it first-hand. This does not suggest that adopting an interpretivism paradigm limited the nature of construction of reality to only one way of thinking: that only social actor experienced it; it also includes construction about their reality in relation to the existing theories and literature in the field of decentralised educational planning. This reflects the double hermeneutic of interpretation outlined by Bryman (2012) where he stated that the first level of interpretation is what the people infer about their reality, and the second level is how the researcher assesses and places the people's reality in relation to existing literature. This helps to bring together the different understandings of the educational officers and other stakeholders' experiences. The interpretivist paradigm helps to view reality in a wider context, and to then understand how decentralised educational planning is being practiced in Ghana.

Most researchers attest to the fact that qualitative research is the most favorable and commonly adopted approach to explore and understand individuals' or groups' meaning

to social phenomenon. Qualitative inquiry focuses on individuals and social behaviours to describe the meaning of lived experiences. It is considered to be the preferred strategy anytime one focuses on a phenomenon and minimizes the researcher's influence on events or situations (Cresswell, 2007; Yin, 1994). Proponents of qualitative approach argue that it offers access to valuable type of data: a deeper and richer understanding of people's lives and behaviour, including some knowledge of their subjective experiences (Gubrium & Holstein, 1997). Qualitative researchers basically involve activity in which data come in forms of words, pictures, narratives and description rather than numerical form (Duane, Thomas & Cornell, 2005).

A method of inquiry is therefore needed to understand social practices in a specific context. The preferred method of inquiry suitable for this study is the qualitative approach because the researcher seeks to understand the complexities in decentralised educational planning process according to the experiences of planners and stakeholders in the local settings, (Cresswell, 2003; Flick, 2002).

The researcher used qualitative research methodology for several reasons: the flexible nature of qualitative research methodology provides the opportunity to delve deep into the understandings and experiences of people explaining different interpretations on matters. Also respondents are allowed to air their views and opinions on decentralised educational planning practices are understood better. Answer to proposed questions provides for both positive and negative without the influence of the researcher. It also enables the researcher to have an insight into the feelings and achievements of stakeholders.

4.2 Research Design

This study used the case study design. As Merriam (1994) explained, the process of building a case study involves in-depth data collection in preparation for the description

of the cases of interest, confirming, validating, and generating a theoretical construct, which invites judgment and offers useful evidence for comparative analysis. According to Stake and Torrance (2005) case study provides better understanding of issues under investigation. It also focuses on experiential knowledge of the case and facilitates understanding of the experiences of actors and stakeholders. Additionally, case study offer understanding of the context. Stake and Torrance (2005) states that case study research seeks to engage with and report the complexity of social activity in order to represent the meanings that individual social actors bring to those settings. A case study is a method of choice when a phenomenon under study is not readily distinguishable from its context (Yin, 2009). It means that selecting a case study as research methods for a particular social phenomenon or a social event is based on context when the context is not sufficiently clear (Yin, 2009). The case study is preferred in examining contemporary events, but when relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated (Yin, 2009). In a case study approach, several case study designs are identified such as descriptive, exploratory and explanatory (Yin, 2009). Descriptive case study is related to the idea of cause and effect relationships. Here the sequence of interpersonal events over time, the subculture and key phenomenon are described. Exploratory case study mainly seeks to understand what is going on in a particular context in order to develop pertinent hypothesis and propositions for further inquiry (Yin, 2009). It is related to the idea that an explanation is needed for a particular phenomenon rather than seeking frequencies or incidences (Yin, 2009). Considering these case study designs, the researcher understands that this study has both exploratory and explanatory characteristics because it seeks to understand the uniqueness of educational officers and community's decentralised educational planning experiences in Accra Metropolitan and Komenda – Edina - Eguafo -Abrem Municipal directorates of education. This helps to understand

the phenomena in greater detail. Both designs are expected to enable understanding of the experiences of directors, planning officers, headteachers and other stakeholders about meaning of decentralisation, decentralised educational planning and the level of participation of stakeholders in the process. Also, the case study used in this research can be described as descriptive case study because it does not discuss the relationship between variables nor attempts to establish causality. Instead, it provides detailed description of the educational officers and community's experiences with Accra Metropolitan Directorate and Edina Eguafu Abrem Directorate of Education. Thus, the study provides a detailed analysis of the various experiences of stakeholders in a given context.

4.3 Population and Sampling

The total land area of Ghana is 92,456 sq miles (239,460 sq km) with a population of 25,758,108, 11,801,661 males and 12,421,770 females. Thus males constitute 48.7 percent of the population and females constitute 51.3 percent (2014 population census). The population growth rate is 2.19% with a birth rate of 31.4/1000. The infant mortality rate is 38.52/1000 and life expectancy is 65.75years.

Table 12**Ghana's Demographic Data**

Ghana Land Area	92,456sq miles(239,460)		
Population	Male (48.7%)	Female (51.3%)	Total
	11,801,661	12,421,770	25,758,108
Pop. Growth rate	2.19%		
Infant Mortality	38.52 deaths/1000 live births		
birth rate	31.4births/1000 population		
Death rate	7.37deaths/1000population		
Life Expectancy	65.75years		
Age Structure		Male %	Female %
0-14	38.6%	4,988,823	4,943,451
15-24	18.7%	2,403,326	2,426,076
25-54	33.8%	4,228,326	4,480,090
55-64	4.8%	599,510	633,688
65+	4.1%	489,566	565,052
Total		12,709,551	13,048,357

Source: 2014 population estimates

The most densely populated parts of the country are the coastal areas, the Ashanti region, and the two principal cities, Accra and Kumasi. About 70 percent (70%) of the total population lives in the southern half of the country. Changes in the demography impact significantly on the education sector.

Demographic transformation is shaping the age structure and the distribution of populations across the globe. Migration patterns within nations are changing the

distribution between rural and urban areas. The numbers and their age and spatial distribution are key information for effective planning of educational supply.

Regarding the age structure of the population, Ghana, as can be seen from Table 2, have youthful population in the range of 0 to 14 age group, 38.6% with male population of 4,988,823(50.2%) and female 4,943,451(49.8%). Educational provision for a youthful society is very different to that needed for an ageing society. In the case of the youthful society as it is with Ghana, educational provision for the early years become relatively more important and new school facilities become a priority.

Article 39 of Ghana's 1992 Constitution mandates the major tenets of the free, compulsory, universal basic education (FCUBE) initiative. Primary and junior secondary school education is tuition-free and mandatory. The Ghana Education Service receives a substantial proportion (more than 60%) of the Education Sector budget every year for effective delivery of pre-tertiary education in the country in order to satisfy the needs and aspirations of all children of school-going age. Students begin their basic education at age 4 (4-5years pre-school, 6- 8 years lower primary, 9-11years upper primary and 12-14years JHS education).

Sample is the segment of the population or unit of analysis that is selected for investigation (Bryman, 2004:87, 2008; Yin, 2003). It is a subset of population from which data are collected. In selecting the sample, there are two different methods that are commonly used: probability and non-probability approaches (Bryman, 2004: 87). The probability sampling method is usually used when the ultimate goal of a researcher is to obtain a random sample out of a particular population. In this case each unit or subset of a particular population has an equal chance of being selected (Cresswell, 1994: 120). This approach is mostly used in quantitative research where representativeness and generalisability are primarily emphasized. In contrast, when the non-probability

approach is employed, it is likely that some units in a population have more chances than others of being selected (Bryman, 2004:87).

In qualitative research, the size of a sample is relatively small compared to that in a quantitative study. In this study the interest of the researcher is in-depth understanding of what stakeholders understand as decentralisation, decentralised educational planning and stakeholders' participation level in decentralised educational planning. Since this study is not aimed at generalizing its findings, a non-probability sampling approach was used (Cohen, et al, 2007). The emphasis on sampling in this study is not about the representativeness of a sample drawn towards the population. Rather, it concerns more of how and why people construe the world in particular ways (Yin, 2003). There are five categories of non-probability sampling: convenience, snowball, quota sample, dimensional and purposive sampling (Cohen et al, 2007; Bryman, 2008). These sampling categories are popular in small scale research where accessibility and costs are considerable (Yahampath, 2004). Purposive random sampling strategy is one of these types where a researcher is allowed to judge whom he or she thinks appropriate for his or her study on the basis of their relevance to the theoretical focus of the research (Cohen et al, 2007). Considering accessibility, costs and focus, a purposive sampling strategy was chosen for this study because the number of people that have expertise and experiences in decentralisation programme is rather limited. Regarding the selection of Greater Accra Metropolitan Education Directorate and Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipal Directorate of Education out of the two hundred and sixteen directorates a convenient sampling strategy was used. Convenient sampling is used when a researcher is confronted with choices of availability as in this study (Bernard, 2000). These directorates were selected due to its relative ease of access for the researcher.

The respondents were also selected through purposive sampling. It is a 'hand-picked' type of sampling where the respondents are consciously selected on merit or seen as producers of valuable data, experience to meet valid and reliable documentation. Purposive sampling strategy is a type of sampling that allows researcher to judge whom he or she thinks appropriate for his or her study on the basis of their relevance to the theoretical focus of the research (Cohen et al, 2007). Dane (1990) advances that purposive sampling allows the researcher to get to the homes of the people and close to events which he/she considers as a fertile ground to produce authentic information and is a prerequisite to good research work. The key actors in the study were two Senior Education officers, two District Planning Officers, two Headteachers, two SMC representatives and two PTA representatives (Key stakeholders) in view of the fact that two educational directorates are involved in the study.

4.4 Research Instruments

4.4.1 Interviews

In general, an interview is understood as an interaction between two people on one particular occasion. However, it is not like an ordinary interaction of two people in informal situation (Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003). According to Denscombe (1998, p. 109 cited in Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003: 43), interviews involves a set of assumptions and understandings about the situation which are not normally associated with a casual conversation. In the case of this study, it is the understanding of decentralisation, decentralised educational planning and the level of participation in the planning process from stakeholders' point of view that was the main topic of interaction.

In qualitative research, three main types of interviews are usually used: structured, semi-structured and unstructured. In this study, the discussion of semi-structured interview is

emphasized because it was used as the main data collection technique. Semi-structured interview is usually regarded to be less flexible compared to unstructured interviews but its flexibility is sufficient to allow new questions to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee says (Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003, p. 45). This type of interview is widely used in social sciences. It is linked to the expectation that the interviewee's point of view is more likely to be expressed in a relatively openly designed interview situation (Flick, 2002). Through semi-structured interviews with Metropolitan and Municipal level education officials and communities (SMCs & PTAs), I explored organizational structures and process of decentralised educational planning that Metropolitan and Municipal level stakeholders practiced at the local level to inform educational decision making. The interviews were designed to ascertain policy meaning educational stakeholders give to decentralisation, educational decentralisation and decentralised educational planning, stakeholder participation in planning and decision making at the study area and the capacity building opportunities provided by the Ghana Education Service for stakeholders of the directorates for decentralised educational planning processes in educational delivery. The mode of interview was of semi-structured as the major method coupled with documentary analysis. This choice enabled the researcher to understand the perception and views of respondents in the selected areas with regards to the relevance and adequacy of decentralised educational planning realities and complexities. It also enabled the researcher to interact with respondents and exchange ideas together with exploring concepts. It offered an opportunity to the researcher to adjust the approach to meet both the event and the respondents. The respondents were also given the chance to analyze their practices in the professional context in broader ways where the researcher rather moderated instead of influencing the events.

In a semi-structured interview, the interviewer generally has a framework of themes to be explored. These general themes are used as a guide for a researcher to address

questions to the interviewees. To obtain information as to what is the understanding and participation of Metropolitan and Municipal Officers, Heads of Schools and other stakeholders with regard to decentralisation and decentralised educational planning, some themes were used in the semi- structured interviews. These themes were based on the research questions. Relevant probes and prompts were also used to elicit information from participants in the study. The trend of the interview also determined some of the questions. These interviews were tape-recorded. The following are the themes which were covered in the interview: meaning of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning, participation of educational officers and other stakeholders in decentralised educational planning process, and capacity development opportunities provided by GES, (see Appendix I)

Having such themes coupled with guide questions in conversation allows a researcher to balance his or her questions in terms of which to follow up and when to probe. Rubin and Rubin (2005, p 171) suggest that a good interview usually consists of a balance between main questions, follow ups and probes. Therefore, a specific topic or topics that an interviewer wants to explore during an interview should usually be thought about well in advance. It is generally beneficial for interviewers to have an interview guide prepared, which is an informal grouping of topics and questions that the interviewer can ask in different ways for different participants (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002).

The targeted group of this study as the sample indicated were senior education officers, planning officers, headteachers and community members (SMC and PTA). The position of these personalities in this study is central as their account of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning is the main concern of this study. The interview was carried out face-to-face in the offices of the educational officers and agreed rooms for other stakeholders. Each interview session was scheduled for one-hour. The

composition of the one-hour interview session consisted of 20 minutes for each theme. The introduction and the closing interview session were not included in the one-hour interview session and was therefore not recorded.

Each of the encounters with participants was initiated with a clear presentation of my general objectives, the specific purpose of the encounters, and the procedures to be followed. In this way I attempted to ensure participation was based on a clear understanding of the situation I was generating and participation was properly agreed upon. This introduction included explicit consent for participation and recording.

It must also be noted that, participants were most willing to express their opinions, and the dialogues were developed in a stress-free atmosphere. I deliberately started the sessions with very general questions, and the interventions freely follow different paths, I always kept control of the exchanges and, in the end, ensured that the themes I was interested in were covered.

Referring to the aforementioned themes, sample questions for the respondents in the interview appeared as follows: How do you understand the decentralisation concept?; Explain decentralised planning, What processes does it follow?; What is educational decentralisation?; Are there any institutionalized training programme for career development?; What are some of the challenges that you encounter in educational planning in a decentralisation environment?; How can decentralised educational planning be improved? (See Appendix I)

In each directorate a senior education officer was interviewed first due to their position as the cost centre manager and the one implementing government policies at the directorate. Information from the senior officer provided in-depth understandings of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning, processes involved, institutionalized structures and the level of engagement of stakeholders.

The metropolitan/municipal educational planning officers followed the senior education officers in the interviews as they are schedule officers and are directly involved in the decentralised educational planning process. The other stakeholders were scheduled for interview after the planning officers. The questions they addressed were similar in all cases. In relation to the themes previously described, questions appeared as: please tell me how you understand the decentralisation concept? Explain decentralised planning?; what is educational decentralisation?; what is decentralised educational planning?; in your opinion is there any link between decentralised planning process and educational planning process? ; and do you find any difference?; is there any institutionalized training programmes for educational planning practitioners? ; if yes how can it be improved?; what are some of the challenges encountered in educational planning in a decentralisation environment? The substance of the interview questions is made consistent to all the research participants although the questions appeared in different shapes.

In qualitative social research, positionality is considered to be an essential element of the research design and inquiry process. It affects the way research questions are formulated as well as the process of data collection (Ganga and Scott, 2006; Sultana, 2007). The researcher's positionality of the interpretive means that they should regularly ask themselves about the influence of their beliefs and values on the way they collect and interpret the data (Bryman, 2012)

My positionality (insider) within this research had important implications for the study as a whole. My professional status as a senior member of Ghana Education Service, the agency responsible for education delivery at the pre-tertiary level, serves as a source of both an advantage and a disadvantage. I am familiar with the context of educational planning at the Ghana Education Service both from the perspective as a planner and a

senior educational officer (having worked in the Service from 1992 to date). The position of insider is advantageous for research in many ways, offering a unique perspective and pre-existing understanding of both the individuals and the context being studied. As Sechutz (1976: 108) has noted, the insider researcher has, as a member of the in-group, access to its past and present histories. S/he is a party to the nuances and idioms within their shared language; the hierarchical position of members within the group is clearly defined.

As an insider researcher, I share research participants' social world, which meant that disorientation or culture shocks were not an issue. The expectation is that the context will be understood and appreciated in a way not open to an outsider researcher. Insights and sensitivity to things both said and unsaid and to the culture(s) operating at the time of the research - all these are potentially available to the insider researcher (Hockey 1993:119).

My position as an insider researcher also enabled me to develop 'enhanced rapport' with respondents (Hockey 1993:119). Senior Education Officers, planners, Headteachers and teachers alike and other stakeholders seemed willing to share often intimate life details, and this may have been due to a perception that I was empathetic to their experiences (as a former educational planner). Finally, education officers and the community support for the study was arguably a reflection of my known, insider status; I was freely granted access to officers of educational directorates, (my former colleagues) headteachers, teachers and the community in my research.

However, there are challenges associated with an insider researcher position. For example, Hockey (1993) cautions against presumptions that an insider researcher's partial knowledge reflects the full picture of the research context, and also warns against 'over-familiarity' and 'taken-for-granted assumptions'. Admittedly, I did undertake this

research with many presumptions about the context, educational officers and the community. I assumed that I already knew and understood the research context, and in particular, the challenges educational officers and the community faced. These initial assumptions meant that my research was initially adopted from a strongly behaviourist position; however, learning more about epistemological and ontological issues within research led me to revise my position. My research strategy was eventually firmly grounded in an interpretive approach. Rather than assuming prior knowledge of educational officers and the community's planning experiences, I moved to conceptualise educational officers and the community as constructing their own realities, and sought to understand these constructed realities from their perspectives. This new starting point also led me to reconsider my methodology; interrogating the assumptions of my insider research positionality was therefore essential to the development of the study as a whole.

4.4.2 Documentary Data

In any research, searching for data from documents is important. Documents provide numerous types of data needed in a research. The aim of a document review is to elicit preliminary information about subjects or issues being investigated. This information is useful for a researcher to prepare further investigation about what is going on in the subject matter. Bryman (2008) argues that document analysis is important because it provides authentic and meaningful information. Meanwhile, Yin (2003) considers that document review in a case study can reinforce evidence collected from other sources. Data for the study were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources included the document analysis of "official" written discourse such as national-level education decentralisation policy documents as well as district level education reports. The secondary sources included Draft Education Bill, Education Strategic Plan

(ESP) 2010-2020, Metropolitan and Municipal Education Strategic Plans, Annual Metropolitan and Municipal Education Operational Plans, Free Compulsory and Universal Basic Education Policy, Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462), National Decentralisation Action Plan (NDAP), The Fourth Republican Constitution of Ghana, and other documents on decentralisation policy in Ghana. Analysis of these policy documents on decentralisation and decentralised educational planning in Ghana gave more insight and in-depth knowledge of the practice.

4.5 Trustworthiness and Authenticity

According to Lincoln and Guba (1994) two primary criteria for assessing and establishing the quality of qualitative research are trustworthiness and authenticity. Trustworthiness is made up of four criteria, which are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of research. Guba and Lincoln (1994) are of the view that a single absolute account of social reality is not feasible. In other words, they are critical of the view that there are absolute truths about the social world and that it is the job of social scientist to reveal this. Cohen et al., (2011) suggests that using more than one tool for data collection helps to explore fully the richness and the complexity of human behaviour by studying it from several standpoints.

The feasibility or credibility of the account that a researcher arrives at determines its acceptability. The establishment of the credibility of findings entails both ensuring that research is carried out according to the canons of good practice and submitting research findings to the participants in the research to ensure that he or she has correctly understood that social world. In this process a researcher provides the research participants with an account of his or her findings. The goal is to seek confirmation that the researcher's findings are congruent with theirs and to seek out areas in which there is a lack of correspondence and the reasons for it. This is popular among qualitative

researchers, because of the need to ensure that there is a good correspondence between qualitative research findings and the perspectives and experiences of the research participants.

Transferability is about asking questions about the extent to which findings can be applied to other context. Denscombe (2010), Flyvbjerg (2006), Shenton (2004) and Stake (2003) argue for the possibility of such transferability as although each case might be unique, it can obtain data about similar concepts either in the same, similar or different context within a broader group. Thus, qualitative research could provide richness in their description and analysis of the case studies so that readers or practitioners in different context are able to relate to similarities (and/or differences) within the study in a way or another (Firestone, 1993; Lincoln and Guba, 1990). Qualitative research typically entails the intensive study of a small group, or individuals sharing certain characteristics (that is, depth). Its findings tend to be oriented to the contextual uniqueness and significance of the aspect of the social world being studied. Qualitative researchers are therefore encouraged to produce what Geertz (1973a) calls thick description – that is, rich accounts of the details of a culture. Lincoln and Guba argue that a thick description provides others with what they refer to as a database for making judgments about the possible transferability of findings to other milieu.

Dependability asks whether the research has conducted a thorough enquiry. According to Lincoln and Guba (1994) dependability is an auditing approach which entails ensuring that complete records are kept of all phases of the research process; problem formation, selection of research participants, fieldwork notes, interview transcripts, data analysis, decisions, and so on, in an accessible manner. Shenton (2004, p. 71) suggests that, “In order to address the dependability issue more directly, the processes within the study should be reported in detail, thereby enabling a future researcher to repeat the

work, if not necessarily to gain the same results. Thus, the research design may be viewed as a prototype model”. The notion of dependability is known as consistency and replicability of a study in terms of time, tools and respondents. It is a match between what has been recorded as data and what takes place in reality.

Confirmability is concerned with ensuring that, while recognizing that complete objectivity is impossible in social research, the researcher can be shown to have acted in good faith. In other words, it should be apparent that he or she has not overtly allowed personal values or theoretical inclinations manifestly to sway the conduct of the research and findings deriving from it. Confirmability also checks the quality of the data and whether the source of the data can be verified. This helps to ensure that the results of the study are the real outcome of the experiences and opinions of the participants rather arising from the imagination or poor research techniques of the researcher (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). This can be achieved through the triangulation which links patterns and trends through different sources of data collection to help reduce the bias and errors by the researcher (Shenton, 2004; Yin, 2009). In addition, confirmability could be achieved through reflexivity of the researchers which means that they admit their own predispositions in the study (Huberman and Miles, 1994).

Trustworthiness within this study is applied at different stages as a way of evaluating the validity and rigorousness of the whole research process from start to finish. First, my visits, acquaintance and rapport established between me and the interviewees are seen as one of the strategies that establishes trustworthiness within the research (Guba and Lincoln, 1989; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003). This helped me gain an understanding of the different issues that the respondents had to deal with. Acquaintance with the research participants allowed a relationship of trust to be established. Furthermore, this study used multiple tools as a source for data collection. Shenton (2004, p. 65) argues

that “the use of different methods in concert compensates for their individual limitations and exploits their respective benefits”. The data was collected through documents and interviews. These different tools were used to construct reality from different sources. Governmental and Ghana Education Service documents as well as many publications that represented the viewpoints of different social agents were sought and analysed. In addition, interviews were conducted with respondents that represented the educational officials and the community with different backgrounds. These different tools for data collection as well as the diverse sources of data helped to provide a valid understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

Finally the way of establishing trustworthiness was by cross-checking the data from feedback by the participants. This was done by asking them to give their opinion on whether their quotations and content of the thesis represented what they had wanted to say. The feedback helped to make changes and confirmed that their viewpoints were represented. This builds confidence that accurate views are represented in thesis. Guba and Lincoln (1989) and Shenton (2004) emphasise the importance of checking with participants to make sure that the written words, especially quotes and findings match what they actually wanted and hoped they had said.

4.6 Data Analysis

To analyze the data collected from the interviews, three stages are required (Drever, 2006; Ritchie and Spencer, 1994). The first step was to transcribe the entire interview and the process begun with the Senior Officer’s interviews, which were two in total. Other educational official’s interviews were transcribed by listening to the audio conversation. During this period, all the interview transcripts were analysed in order to identify certain patterns and to categorize and organize the data accordingly into initial themes as suggested by Patton (1990) and Kvale (1996). After this initial phase of

transcribing and identifying preliminary themes, the remaining interviewees', the community, were transcribed. These reinforced the already identified themes as well as identifying further emerging themes. Thus, the initial phase of transcription was an initial process of exploring the data. The second phase occurred after all the interviews were transcribed, that is, all the interviewees and the researcher looked again at the whole sample. This was done to further understand the established themes and develop links between different findings, re-evaluate and further analyse.

The final step is summarizing and analyzing results. For this stage, patterns are developed for drawing conclusions. This is based on the original structure of the interview in relation to the research questions addressed for the first time; but later, the original structure may be recreated in order to gain a different view. This was summarized and analyzed by using themes addressed in the questions developed.

Data obtained from documents was used throughout the study; from their use in developing the rationale of the study to analysing the documents and the presentation of the findings chapter. From the start of the study, all the different documents that I was able to access about decentralisation and decentralised educational planning were analysed. On obtaining data from the interviews the analysed data obtained from the documents was then linked to emerging themes and patterns (Huberman & Miles, 1994; Ryan & Bernard, 2000). The data obtained from the documents analysis was then triangulated with the data obtained from the interviews.

4.7 Ethics

The idea of ethics in qualitative research is of great importance. Ethics in qualitative research includes questions about voluntary participation, informed consent, risk of harm, confidentiality and anonymity. According to Cohen et al. (2011) ethical considerations are not only about awareness of the subject matter but also about being

careful that the study will not cause harm to anyone. According to Trochim (2007), three most urgent areas in line with ethical issues in modern social research are: informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity to the outsider. Christians in Denzin and Lincoln (2011) added the need to be accurate and careful in analyzing and reporting findings. Creswell (2009) identified some key points in relation to morality and privacy in research process: protecting research participants; developing trust with them; promoting integrity of the research; and guarding against misconduct and impropriety. General ethical considerations emphasize the moral principles of the social sciences. First, the researchers should obtain the informant's consent, and all the respondents should participate voluntarily in the research. Secondly, the anonymity and confidentiality of the data and the participants should be guarded. Neither the identity nor any data of the participants should be revealed or be used for purposes other than for the research. Finally, researchers need to be accurate and careful in analysing and reporting the findings. This study followed the above stated general ethical principles. The University of Sussex research code of ethics which were in place at that time the fieldwork of this study was conducted also guided the study.

Consent was obtained at two different levels. Consent was obtained from Ghana Education Service Management so that the Service was aware of the research and the activities that were involved as well as the people who would be consulted (see appendices III and IV for consent form for the Service and participants).

Another form of consent was directed towards the individual. The concept of informed consent includes the requirement that, even if people know they are being asked to participate in research, they must be fully informed about the research process. This was ensured in the current study by informing the participants both orally and in writing the purpose of this research. I assured participants that their identities and responses would

be kept anonymous and that the data would only be used for the purpose of this research and signed assurances of confidentiality and anonymity along with a consent form. All the participants that took part in this study were not forced to take part. Participants were given the opportunity to participate by providing their contact details, or to refuse by leaving this section blank. They even had the option of refraining from answering any question they felt uncomfortable with. Shenton (2004, p. 66) argues that to help ensure honesty (and openness) in informants when contributing data, each person who is approached should be given opportunities to refuse to participate in the project so as to ensure that the data collection sessions involve only those who are genuinely willing to take part and prepared to offer data freely. Thus, all the participants of this study contributed willingly and provided genuine and honest information.

In relation to anonymity and confidentiality, I assured participants that I would do my possible best to uphold confidentiality and anonymity. This was however limited by factors outside a researcher's control such as theft of confidential documents make such guarantees misleading. In ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, I used pseudonyms in transcripts and beyond; storing interview tapes, transcripts, and participants' contact details separately. Participants were named through a code and were never named directly in the discussion. Instead, they were referred to in the third person or as pronoun 'you'. Even when labelling the interviews, a simple code was used e.g. Planning Officer (PO1) or Senior Education Officers (SEO1). Also, when I transcribed the interviews, I altered specific details that could make participants identifiable, such as the locality, their occupation, and other details that participants referred to. I ensured that the details that I changed did not change the meaning of participants' words in any way.

Special care was taken to avoid deliberate falsification and misinterpretation of data, findings and conclusions when the result of the study is reported. To minimize the potential of misinterpretation in writing the report, data triangulation technique was used. Data triangulation was carried out by collecting data from a variety of participants; senior education officers, planners, headteachers, SMC members and PTA members who were involved in the study. Methodological triangulation was ensured by using several research tools: questionnaires, interviews and documentary review. These two approaches to triangulation were adopted in order to identify significant features of the case and lend maximum credibility to the final research report.

4.8 Positionality

In qualitative social research, positionality is considered to be an essential element of the research design and inquiry process. It affects the way research questions are formulated as well as the process of data collection (Ganga and Scott, 2006; Sultana, 2007). The researcher's positionality of the interpretive means that they should regularly ask themselves about the influence of their beliefs and values on the way they collect and interpret the data (Bryman, 2012)

My positionality (insider) within this research had important implications for the study as a whole. My professional status as a senior member of Ghana Education Service, the agency responsible for education delivery at the pre-tertiary level, serves as a source of both an advantage and a disadvantage. I am familiar with the context of educational planning at Ghana Education Service both from the perspective as a planner and a senior educational officer (having worked in the Service from 1992 to date); I therefore position myself as an insider within this study. The position of insider is advantageous for research in many ways, offering a unique perspective and pre-existing understanding of both the individuals and the context being studied. As Sechutz (1976: 108) has noted,

the insider researcher has, as a member of the in-group, access to its past and present histories. S/he is a party to the nuances and idioms within their shared language; the hierarchical position of members within the group is clearly defined.

As an insider researcher, I share research participants' social world, which meant that disorientation or culture shocks were not an issue: The expectation is that the context will be understood and appreciated in a way not open to an outsider researcher. Insights and sensitivity to things both said and unsaid and to the culture(s) operating at the time of the research - all these are potentially available to the insider researcher (Hockey 1993:119).

My position as an insider researcher also enabled me to develop 'enhanced rapport' with respondents (Hockey 1993:119). Senior Education Officers, planners, Headteachers and teachers alike and other stakeholders seemed willing to share often intimate life details, and this may have been due to a perception that I was empathetic to their experiences (as a former educational planner). Finally, education officers and the community support for the study was arguably a reflection of my known, insider status; I was freely granted access to officers of educational directorates, (my former colleagues) headteachers, teachers and the community in my research.

However, there are challenges associated with an insider researcher position. For example, Hockey (1993) cautions against presumptions that an insider researcher's partial knowledge reflects the full picture of the research context, and also warns against 'over-familiarity' and 'taken-for-granted assumptions'. Admittedly, I did undertake this research with many presumptions about the context, educational officers and the community. I assumed that I already knew and understood the research context, and in particular, the challenges educational officers and the community faced. I therefore initially intended to work on an intervention to address these challenges.

These initial assumptions meant that my research was initially adopted from a strongly behaviourist position; however, learning more about epistemological and ontological issues within research led me to revise my position. My research strategy was eventually firmly grounded in a interpretive approach. Rather than assuming prior knowledge of educational officers and their planning experiences, I moved to conceptualise educational officers and the community as constructing their own realities, and sought to understand these constructed realities from their perspectives. This new starting point also led me to reconsider my methodology; interrogating the assumptions of my insider research positionality was therefore essential to the development of the study as a whole.

Positioning myself as an insider also raised the issue of power relations, especially when conducting interviews with colleagues who often viewed me primarily as a planner at GES headquarters, Senior Education Officers Headteachers and SMC and PTA members. Within this research, the context of participants, their positions and status, invariably shaped the power dynamics of the research interaction. In these situations, Bryman (2008) has argued that respondents usually anticipate what the researcher wants to hear in their answers, rather than expressing their honest views. As far as possible, I attempted to avoid this outcome by creating a friendly atmosphere so that respondents felt at ease, and also assured them of anonymity and confidentiality. I used personal disclosure towards making the participants comfortable and reducing the hierarchical relationship between the researcher and participant. During the interview process, for example, I often invoked examples of my own experiences of educational planning when participants seemed uncomfortable with such disclosures or became emotional. The researcher's purpose was to level the power between the participant and researcher and be able to emphasise with the participant's narrative to express understanding.

Taylor & Rupp (2005). Few et al (2003), talk about levelling or sharing power through self disclosure and by letting participants challenge the researcher. The need for research to take account of the involvement and the participation of participants is important in order to acknowledge their role in shaping the research and not merely reducing them to objects of research (Kelman, 1972; Koch & Harrington, 1998; Fisher & Ragsdale, 2005; Hanley, 2005; Henry, 2005). This involved investment of more time and resources and engagement in trustbuilding and transparency processes to elicit meaningful participation and partnerships for research. This investment is important and necessary to include the voices of participants and engage with research.

I made conscious effort to ensure that participants know they had a significant voice in this exercise, following unstructured strategies of handling the interviews. At the same time, I tried to be as sensitive as possible to their concerns and attempted to integrate them into my own work.

4.9 Limitations

There are several limitations in this study. In the first place, the limited number of respondents used in the research does not enable generalization in the selected areas of study let alone the whole country. Sampling is another limitation. It is evident that the selected Metropolitan/Municipality does not represent the entire districts in Ghana.

The researcher's position as a professional member of the organization within which the study is carried out is a hindrance to the study and may create some extent of bias in relation to gathering of information. The researcher's existing relationships with the respondents of the study are emotionally influenced. Having been a planner-researcher investigating in the service may create problems with my neutrality with respondents of the study. On the other hand, the experience, values and beliefs between the researcher and the respondents of the study might ruin the trustworthiness of the data collected.

4.10 Summary

The main focus of the study is to understand the participants understanding of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning and the level of participation experienced in planning process at the Metropolitan, Municipal and School levels so as to gain insight into accounts and interconnectedness that engulf the cases. The researcher adopted qualitative approach to explore and understand groups' meaning to social phenomenon and behaviour in relation to lived experiences. The researcher considered qualitative approach as the most appropriate strategy as it minimizes researcher's influence on events.

The study also took into cognizance matters of ontology, epistemology and methodology. The study used a qualitative case study approach which involves in-depth data collection that will in turn help in the description of cases of interest, confronting, validating and generating a theoretical construct that offers judgment and evidence for comparative analysis.

The major data collection instrument was semi-structured interview coupled with documentary analysis. This enabled the researcher to understand the perception and views of respondents and also help to adjust the approach to meet both the event and the respondents.

Purposive sampling type was selected for the study. This is a non-probability and 'hand-picked' sampling where respondents were consciously selected to merit valuable data so as to meet valid and reliable documentation. Interview questions were carefully structured and specific to events.

The study also met the ethical dimension in modern social research such as informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity. These ethical elements were held high throughout the study as far as relationship with respondents are concerned.

Limitations identified in the study include the limited number of respondents used in the study, selection of metropolitan/municipal coupled with the researcher's position as a professional member of the organization within which the study was carried out (insider). These are limitations that may hinder generalization.

The next chapter presents the discussion of findings which basically focus on the different perceptions of stakeholders with regard to the concepts of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter analyses the different perceptions of stakeholders with regard to the concepts of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning. The chapter starts by discussing the understanding of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning.

The central body of this chapter is organized around how the elite group that is Senior Education Officers, planning officers, heads of basic schools and personnel of decentralised institutional structures; SMCs and PTAs (the community) perceive the concepts. The meaning of decentralisation policy is discussed in Section 5.1. The following Section 5.2 discussed decentralised educational planning process. Section 5.3 examined strategies for decentralised educational planning. These sections examine participants' responses relating to the research question; How do different stakeholders understand the concepts of decentralisation, educational decentralisation and decentralised educational planning? Stakeholders' involvement in decentralised educational planning is discussed in section 5.4. The functioning of decentralised structures is discussed in Section 5.5 These sections also explored the second sub research question; what are the experiences of educational officers, headteachers, teachers, and the community (PTAs and SMCs) of participation in decentralised educational planning in actual practice? Section 5.6 analysed capacity building that supports decentralised educational planning which relates to participants responses to the third sub research question; what the experiences are of educational officers and other stakeholders of capacity development programmes provided by the Ghana Education Service?

5.1 Decentralisation as Involvement in Decision Making

The decentralisation policy is a public sector reform which affects all government sectors with education not being an exception. This section explored participants' understandings of decentralisation in terms of involvement in decision making process. By involvement I mean promotion of effective community engagement in decision making concerning education delivery process as a factor propelling the decentralisation programme. Therefore, I examined decentralisation here in terms of increased efficiency and cost effectiveness of development programmes on the one hand, and how institutional practices are improved by direct involvement of beneficiaries who "influence and share control over development initiatives, decisions and resources which affect them" (World Bank, 1994: cited in Nelson & Wright, 1995, p. 5).

During the interviews SEO1 defined decentralisation as follows;

Decentralisation entails empowering districts to take their own decisions, implement them and being answerable to any decision taken (...).

(Interview with SEO1 on 8-06-12)

EO2 also defined decentralisation as,

The devolution of power from the top to down (head office to the district). Resources are managed by the local people bearing in mind the national policy. Local people play active role in managing resources at that level under decentralisation (...).

(Interview with EO2 on 25-01-12)

What can be argued from the statements above is that the participants take decentralisation to refer broadly to a policy of creating opportunities for managing popular inputs into decision making processes resulting in greater empowerment or popular control over processes involved in the authoritative allocation of resources at the local level (Crawford, 2005). Within the Ghanaian context, that implies creating a partnership between districts authorities, chiefs, opinion leaders, faith-based organizations and non-governmental organizations to enforce standards, developing and maintaining infrastructure and to ensure that the broad institutional goals are achieved.

That understanding is further illustrated in the quote below:

There is participation of stakeholders of the District level towards development bearing in mind the national goals. Conditions have been better than they were before decentralisation. There is a relative improvement in the provision of educational infrastructure such as classroom blocks, school furniture, gender friendly sanitation facilities and teacher accommodation in several localities within the district. Communal spirit has risen considerably. There is a strong mobilization for communal duties (...).

(Interview with EO2 on 25-01-12)

The view of EO2 presents the decentralisation programme as having had significant impact on growth and development of districts and local communities. He also noted that:

Decentralisation in Ghana was aimed at bringing power to the people at the 'grassroots' level, thus to improve their lot by allowing them to make and implement their own policies. Decisions made at the local level worked better because the local people understood better their financial standing and the circumstances of their local school (...).

(Interview with EO2 on 25-01-12)

So, for EO2, decentralisation compares to previous form of governance more favourably in terms of the fact that it brings about shared growth and development. The argument is that the decentralisation programme has had an impact on improving development generally and educational delivery in particular. These reflections from the respondents show their realization of what the decentralisation policy has to offer. Also they show that decentralisation raises the awareness of educational stakeholders' role and contribution towards the development of their communities and how they are to function competently in their role.

In the context of developing countries, the alleged benefits of decentralisation have also been promoted as part of good governance initiatives launched by the World Bank and other donors in the late 1980s (World Bank, 1989; 1992). This initiative has been concerned mainly with promoting "state capacity" in the areas of economic and financial

management, civil service honesty and efficiency; legal frameworks and what is now called institution- building (Blunt & Collins, 1994; Bratton & Rothchild, 1992). The policy also emphasizes the importance of accountability and transparency of government in developing countries, goals which structural reforms such as democratization and decentralisation are expected to serve (Crook, 1996).

However, some respondents registered a challenge being encountered. EO1 indicated that:

There is reduced involvement by the central government, which still provides resources and the local authorities/Districts take initiatives. The government is confronted with difficulties in ensuring expansion and improvement in the quality of the education service delivery due to inadequate resources and other private partners are taking over that responsibility (private Schools- transferring of functions from public to non-governmental organizations). The context of scarcity, in which decentralisation is being implemented, intensifies the challenges local/District authorities encounter while making it more necessary for the government to offer support to them (...).

(Interview with EO1 on 04-06-12)

This understanding of decentralisation echoes the point of Livack et al. (1999) that decentralisation involves the transfer of authority and responsibility for public functions from the central government to both subordinate structures and non-state actors such as NGOs and private individual providers. EO1 further added that decentralisation

... involves moving decision making from the centre to the local/district levels. Simply, moving educational management to school levels. The purpose of decentralisation was supposed to enable people to see themselves as part of the government and to be initiators of policies rather than to wait upon the central government. With the absence of total fiscal decentralisation, members of staff of the District Directorate of Education still owe their allegiance to the Regional Directorates and the Headquarters. In effect there is practically no change in the relationships among the District Educational Directorate, Regional Education Directorate and the Ghana Education Headquarters/Ministry of Education (Central Body) (...).

(Interview with EO1 on 04-06-12)

In some developing countries funding mechanisms used to allocate resources from central government have been used to encourage local governments to promote high enrolments in local government schools (Tikly 1996). However, the key to their success lies with greater responsibility and accountability for financial management devolved to the school level. Transparent approaches to resource allocation have been known to result in allocative decisions responsive to community demands as has been reported in Uganda (Reinikka & Svensson, 2005). In Ghana, the Ministry of Education embarked on capacity building plans for district education authorities with focus on improving management efficiency and transparent decision-making (MOESS, 2006). But, emphasis on vertical accountability has reinforced hierarchy as the dominant institutional arrangement in decentralisation. What appears not to have attracted much interest is ‘horizontal accountability’ to beneficiaries and stakeholders. If greater participatory decision-making responsive to local concerns is to take place satisfactorily, then this needs to enter into the decentralisation implementation strategy (Akyeampong, 2009).

The points made in the above quotes bring to light the challenges in the understandings of decentralisation as argued in the literature (Conyers, 1983; Litvac et al., 1999; Mawhood, 1983; Rondinelli et al. 1983). To suggest that there was little practical change in the relationships that existed between state institutions in terms of how resources are allocated contradicted previous comments by EO2. But what it says more is that there are tensions involved in how decentralisation is understood as a policy and in practice. SEO2 seems to share similar views with EO1 with regards to relationships established under the centralized system when he stated that:

The district office looks up to the Ministry as a policy making body, while we at the district office see to the implementation of the policies (...).

(Interview with SEO2 on 01-02-12)

This is reflected in SMC 2’s definition of decentralisation:

a process by which governance is sent to the local levels. It is having a share in decision making or when the local people have a say in the governance or administration of the locality or district (...).

(Interview with SMC2 on 08-06-12)

This quote stresses ways in which the policy emphasizes participation as key to effective decentralisation. In other words, the participant realizes that increased local participation creates opportunities for people to express their needs. Benefits of decentralisation such as democracy, popular participation, responsiveness, accountability and equity have led to the belief by proponents that decentralisation will lead to greater improvement of the living standard of the people who have little or no access to public goods and services. Decentralisation is seen as offering greater political participation to ordinary citizens whose voice is more likely to increase with commitment, relevance and effectiveness of government's policies and programmes (Crook, 2003; Crook & Sverrisson, 2004).

In general, however, one observable argument is that educational officers looked at decentralisation from the view point of policy, power, authority and control or policy guidelines, policy of creating opportunities for managing popular inputs into decision making processes resulting in greater empowerment and the community perceived the concept as involvement in decision making and district assembly's role in governance and educational delivery. My personal experience is that, under the decentralisation policy, there is a widening of the role of regional and district education offices, offering them a greater say in certain decisions, for example concerning the use of their budget and the appointment of headteachers, headmasters/mistresses – this could be described as a form of de-concentration. As such the regional and district offices have new mandate: to provide pre-service and in-service training for teachers, inspect and supervise pre-tertiary educational institutions, constitute boards of governors of second

cycle institutions. The District Education Directorates are now responsible for the management of basic educational institutions.

Within that context the next section examines decentralisation in terms of the role of District Assemblies, which were the main structural mechanisms through which it is assumed the goals of decentralisation may be realised in Ghana.

5.1.1 Decentralisation as Assembly Control

The community members (SMCs and PTAs) involved in the interviews considered decentralisation as a phenomenon whereby authority to influence or exercise control on what people do or think is shifted to the District Assemblies in governance and there is active participation of the citizenry in decisions that concerns their welfare.

PTA1 defined decentralisation as:

bringing governance and management close to the people. It means transferring the order or operations from the top to the lowest or grassroots level (District Assembly). This involves bringing the management to the door steps of the community or catchment area to feel part of both policy and practice (...)

(Interview with PT1 on 08-06-12)

From the community perspective the concept of decentralisation tends to emphasize grassroots mobilization and citizen participation in the decision making for development. It is aimed at the promotion of the collective efforts of citizens to better their communities.

As stated in 5.1.1, the primary role of the District Assemblies is taking responsibility for the overall development of the local government areas including the formulation of development plans and budgets and implementing them. This involves all stakeholders including the communities and also their traditional authority structures, civil society organizations, including community-based organization, non-governmental organizations, and the private business community. This was illustrated clearly in SMC1's definition of decentralisation which states that

“decentralisation brings powers for running the district to the district assembly”
(---)

(Interview with SMC1 on 08-06-12)

The United Nations (1995) similarly defines decentralisation as the transfer of authority to the field units or local government units or special statutory bodies, a form of devolution: elected District Assemblies (local authorities) are given a number of responsibilities in the field of basic education. The central level transfers some funds to these local authorities to allow them to take care of construction, equipment and maintenance of Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High schools, as well as Senior High Schools, and several tasks related to illiteracy eradication. The respondents in their explanation of decentralisation emphasized power and authority, participation, control and District Assembly role. The majority of respondents in the interview emphasized off-loading decision making process to a given Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDA). This was not a surprising response in view of the fact that extensive training was given to educational officers in the education department of the assembly. Other respondents representing the community (SMCs & PTAs) explained decentralisation from the perspective of exercising control on what people do or think by the District assemblies. Again this was not a surprising response in view of the fact that Ayee (1997) argues that decentralisation was also used implicitly as a political tactic by the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) to give citizens a sense of empowerment in the political arena at the national level.

Available evidence from empirical studies and literature on public administration suggests that decentralisation entails and/or could be defined generally as any act in which a central government formally cedes its power and authority to sub-national and diversified levels of the governance arrangement (Ayee, 2000; Crawford, 2004; Devas, 2005; Egbenya, 2010; Gariba, 2009). In other words, decentralisation as a concept

concerns the transfer of authority in public planning, management, and decision making from national and/or central levels to sub-national levels (Rondinelli cited in Egbenya, 2010) with the view to achieving positive outcomes in both democratic and developmental terms (Crawford, 2004).

Decentralisation places more demands on local institutions, schools and in particular headteachers (Chapman, 2000). Local government systems lacking in human resource capacity, usually have restrictions placed on their responsibilities under decentralised regimes (e.g. Malawi). But, instead of seeing local governments as inefficient and lacking capacity for responsive decision-making, I would argue that it is better to look for potential and opportunities within these systems that can boost their institutional capacity and sensitise them into adapting their operations to meet the challenges of improving decentralised educational planning (see Akyeampong, 2004). With new constitutional mandates giving local education authority fiscal power to manage schools (i.e. build, maintain and manage schools), as has happened in places like Uganda and Ghana (Naidoo 2002; Akyeampong 2004;) the opportunity to redistribute authority to the local level has increased, but so also have the expectations

The above definitions and their differences confirm the earlier assertion of the complexity of the concept decentralisation in the literature review and shows different facets of decentralisation. The above definitions also suggest that there is a consensus that decentralisation entails transfer of authority from a central point to local/district level, which conforms to an understanding as identified in chapter 2. Specifically senior education officers seem to emphasize the component of responsibility and being answerable to any decision taken. The issue of local participation in management of resources and decision making also runs through all the definitions provided by all stakeholders. The Community (SMCs and PTAs) in their definition bring the role of the

District Assembly to the fore. The community's definition emphasizes the position of District Directorate of Education under the decentralised assembly. The directors of education have the added responsibility of convincing the Assembly to allocate adequate funds for educational delivery in the District.

Ghana's Constitution uses the term "decentralisation" to mean different things at the different levels of governance. This has been one of the greatest hindrances to the implementation of the decentralisation policy, as the use of the same word in different parts of the Constitution suggests that the same meaning is sought to be conveyed.

At the national level, decentralisation conveys a sense of ministerial restructuring in which at the level of broad generalisation, Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) are to be restricted to policy making, planning evaluation and monitoring of governmental activities.

The regional level of governance is constituted by the Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) as the political institution and the regional level Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) as the bureaucratic and technocratic institutions. It is conceived as a level of de-concentration at which the regional level MDAs operate as departments of the national level MDAs, not of the RCCs, taking instructions from the national level, implementing national level decisions and providing feedback from the sub-national level to the national level MDAs. The regional level therefore coordinates and harmonizes the plans and programmes of the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) and transmits these to the national level as and when required.

For this reason, unlike the district level of the governance structure, the regional level is not created as a level with corporate legal personality. For the same reasons, it is not an elected level; it is not a policy-making level; it is not a legislative level; and it is not a taxation level. It simply exists as an extension of the national level institutions.

The district level of governance is the devolution level, where decentralisation in the true sense of the concept is played out. The District Assembly (DA) is set up as a body corporate with legal personality which can sue and be sued and which can acquire and dispose of assets and other property. Section 4 (1) of the Local Government Act, 1993, Act 462, provides that “Each District Assembly shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal and may sue and be sued in its own name”. Section 4 (2) states that: “A District Assembly shall have power for the discharge of any of its functions to acquire and hold movable or immovable property, to dispose of such property and to enter into any contract or other transaction”.

Operating within the framework of national policy, the DA is the policy making body for the district. It has legislative power and it has taxation power. Simply put, the character of the DA has the character spelt out in Article 241 (3) of the Constitution that: “Subject to this Constitution, a District Assembly shall be the highest political authority in the district, and shall have deliberative, legislative and executive powers”.

What these provisions mean is that the DAs make decisions and take responsibility for those decisions. They have the constitutional and democratic mandate of the people to act on their behalf. It is therefore inadvisable to erect bureaucratic and technocratic bodies over the DAs. Possibly the only bodies with the constitutional mandate to override the decisions of the DAs are the national Parliament (and even Parliament is limited by Article 254 of the Constitution which provides that: “Parliament shall enact laws and take steps necessary for further decentralisation of the administrative functions and projects of the Central Government but shall not exercise any control over the District Assemblies that is incompatible with their decentralised status or otherwise contrary to law”); and the Courts in the exercise of their constitutional powers of judicial review of executive, legislative and administrative action. In the true sense of

devolution therefore, the vision of Ghana's decentralisation system is one in which the DAs:

- are empowered as legislative, administrative, development planning, budgeting, rating and service delivery authorities;
- have clearly defined functions and responsibilities as well as the power to own, control and manage important expenditure decisions in the local public sector;
- have adequate financial resources and substantial autonomy in the allocation and Utilization of resources;
- have ownership of their budgets;
- have structures and mechanisms to promote and enhance probity, accountability and transparency in their administration;
- achieve efficiency, effectiveness and economy in the management of resources;
- have the capacity to deliver on their mandate

From a survey of the literature, one might conclude that the term 'decentralization' does not readily lend itself to universally accepted definition or meaning (other than, perhaps, the dictionary definition): it must be defined in context or as pertaining to its particular application, and this is what apparently has evolved in practice and in the literature. The English language definition of word 'decentralize' is straightforward enough: "Do away with centralization of; confer local government on; distribute (administrative powers etc) among local centers ..." (The Concise Oxford Dictionary). However, as a management term and term used in public sector management and increasingly governance, 'decentralization' appears to have descended into some inaccuracy and inconsistency insofar as its definition goes. This appears to be due to the many applications of the term to meet varying objectives in the domains of management, public administration and now governance. To give some meaning to the term,

qualitative definitions of ‘decentralization’, have emerged such as administrative decentralization or fiscal decentralization and these are likely to expand as the understanding and application of decentralization expands. Definitions from other donor and academic sources may elaborate, or provide variations, but the theme would likely stay pretty much the same. Decentralization, in general, involves a transfer of authority and responsibility from central government to a level of administration closer to the public actually being served. Depending on the level of decentralization, this could be to district or local governments or direct to schools.

Factors hindering decentralization include weak local administrative or technical capacity, which may result in inefficient or ineffective services; inadequate financial resources available to perform new local responsibilities, especially in the start-up phase when they are most needed; or inequitable distribution of resources. Decentralization can make national policy coordination too complex; it may allow local elites to capture functions; local cooperation may be undermined by any distrust between private and public sectors; decentralization may result in higher enforcement costs and conflict for resources if there is no higher level of authority.

Other challenges, and even dangers, include the possibility that corrupt local elites can capture regional or local power centers, while constituents lose representation; patronage politics will become rampant and civil servants feel compromised; further necessary decentralization can be stymied; incomplete information and hidden decision-making can occur up and down the hierarchies; centralized power centers can find reasons to frustrate decentralization and bring power back to themselves.

5.2 Educational Decentralisation

In the study, interviewees were also asked about their perception of educational decentralisation. SEO1 indicated that educational decentralisation refers to the;

“transfer of administrative, managerial authority for taking decisions concerning education to the people at the District and school level” (...)

(Interview with SEO1 on 08-06-12)

HT1 is of the view that:

School Management Committees at the basic level under education decentralisation see to the effective and efficient running of basic schools. Officers in charge of various units of an education directorate help effect education policies. Issues pertaining to the welfare of teachers and pupils/students as well as the development of the school are matters of great concern (...).

(Interview with HT1 on 08-06-12)

In the view of EO2

The SMC and Board of Governors of second cycle institutions are educational decentralisation institutions which have been put in place to see to the management of educational delivery in schools. These institutions represent community involvement in school governance. These structures have been put in place to serve as the transmission mechanism for ensuring grassroots participation in the tenets of the entire decentralisation process (...).

(Interview with EO2 on 25-01-12)

However, she admitted that the effectiveness of these institutions depends greatly on the degree of empowerment given them to manage the institutions, (Ghana Education Service Act [Act 506] of 1995). SEO2 also indicated that educational decentralisation is the:

Devolution of educational delivery from Ghana Education Service Headquarters to the District with the function of the regional directorate gradually becoming extinct and the local government gradually taking the roles of GES headquarters and the District Directorates where final authority will reside at the District Assembly (...).

(Interview with SEO2 on 08-06-12)

The current nature of Ghana's education decentralisation agenda is delegation at the Sub-metropolitan Assembly level, de-concentration at the regional level and devolution at the district level. Delegation provides that the Ministry of Education has the power to make policies, plans, evaluate and monitor. At the regional level is de-concentration

where the departments operate as extension of the national level where plans and programmes of the assemblies are harmonized and coordinated.

Devolution on the other hand is that the district assemblies must have clearly defined functions, own their budget, have structures to promote and enhance probity, accountability and transparency, manage their own resources and adequate capacity to deliver on their mandate and can sue or be sued.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) is required by the national policy to ensure education decentralization in the Country. In other words; the educational decentralisation policy is in tandem with the National Decentralisation Policy Framework (NDPF) of Government of Ghana. So under education decentralization reforms, the GES will still be active but would no longer be called GES. It will be devolved (transferred) to the district assemblies as Department of Education, Youth and Sports; no title like the District Director of Education.

Funds which are usually transferred from the Ministry of Finance to GES headquarters would be transferred to MMDAs and by extension for the Department of Education, Youth and Sports (DEYS). So in effect, when we have full education decentralisation particularly devolution, the Director of Department of Education, Youth and Sports will take funding from the MMDA account meant for Department of Education Youth and Sports which is coded and fenced for the DEYS under the composite budgeting system

The central government still provides resources while the local authorities/Districts take initiatives. The major challenge here is finance, how regular and timely these resources are made available to the educational directorates for the purposes for which it was intended. All District activities are powered by money from the central government, therefore when releases delay it seriously retard progress of plan implementation.

In all the major efforts for an improved decentralized educational planning, educational decentralization is affected and hindered by legal issues involving two conflicting Acts. The Ghana Education Service Act, 1995 (Act 506) and the Education Act, 2008 (Act 778). The conflict is that, whereas Act 506 suggests a de-concentrated education service, Act 778 on the other hand is backing for a devolved education service at the basic level. The continuing operation of both laws thus portends a confused and dysfunctional system for implementation and until steps are taken to adopt the devolution system, our quality and standard of education will never improve.

But moving forward, we will never achieve our ultimate dream of making basic education quality for our young children if our policy makers refuse to change their attitudes towards education decentralisation. The falling standards in our educational outcomes cannot be overlooked.

According to EO1,

Under this form of educational dispensation the Metropolitan/District Directorate of Education presents its development plan and budget proposals to the Assembly which is then captured into the Assembly's budget and financed. The Assembly is therefore expected to put in a lot of resources to promote educational delivery. The District Director of Education is mandated to recruit personnel, punish and report to the District Assembly on matters related to education in the district (...).

(Interview with EO1 on 08-06-12)

In the view of SMC2

Educational decentralisation enables the ordinary person in the community to participate in education delivery through sensitization to enable the individual to understand the value of education (...).

(Interview with SMC2 on 25-01-12)

The community's perception of educational decentralisation is that there is increased participation of people in the provision of education. In summary, according to the interviewees, educational decentralisation as earlier defined by Hanson (1997) refers to transfer of educational decision-making authority and responsibility from the central

government to regional and local or district administration levels meant to improve administrative services, increase quality of education and share power with the local citizenry.

The strategy of education decentralisation as the fourth strategic objective of fCUBE was aimed specifically at shifting responsibility of education decision making into the hands of local education authorities. To do this, the strategy sought to devolve central administrative authority and divest implementation responsibility to the district level.

The policy acts (e.g., Chapter 20, Article 240 of the 1992 Constitution; Local Government Law 207; Act 462 of the 1993 Local Government Act; and several other subsequent legal frameworks) that brought to being the strategic objective of decentralisation are still in force, and some reasonable amount of efforts are perceived to have been made and are still being made to decentralise education delivery to the local and/or district levels. Unfortunately however, a critical assessment of education policy and practice in Ghana generally suggests that despite the initiation and adoption of the strategic objective of decentralisation, education policy making and implementation is still perceived as adopting a hierarchical structure with its inherent practice of concentration of power at the centre. Policy is still largely formulated at the national level by political figureheads and technocrats and “pushed down” for implementation at the local level through regional and district representatives of the MOE/Ghanaian Education Service. The practice does raise a number of interesting questions worth examining. For example, the question does arise as to how the concept of educational decentralization can take hold when policy making remains the preserve of political figureheads and technocrats at the top echelons of the policy process? This and other concerns and challenges confront the MOE/GES as a result of the adoption of the rationalist approach to policy making.

Essentially, that Ghana's interest and focus on strengthening central government control at the local levels rather than the focus on devolution has encouraged education policy making and implementation to assume the managerial "top-down" posture, causing educational decentralization structures and institutions and their local governance counterparts to operate as dual hierarchical and parallel structures. The next section is focused on decentralised educational planning.

5.3 Decentralised Educational Planning

In this section I examined the data concerning decentralised educational planning. By planning, I mean the process of setting goals, developing strategies, and outlining tasks and schedules to accomplish goals. For me, decentralised planning simply refers to the "bottom-up" approach to development planning as contrasted with the "top-down" approach which was the feature of the centralized planning system. In Ghana, District Assemblies are created into District Planning Authorities and are empowered to perform development planning functions which are fused into the national development planning process. Thus I am attached to Owusu et al.'s (2007) view that decentralised development planning system is one of the strategies being pursued in Ghana to realize the objectives of decentralisation. The DAs are responsible for planning, provision and management of both social and economic infrastructure including education among others within the districts. For the education sector to be able to carry out developmental duties, the sector is required to draw up District Education Strategic Plan within which the education development goals and aspirations of the people are captured.

In this context interviewees were asked to relate decentralised planning to education and to indicate what they understand by decentralised educational planning. In the view of SMC2,

decentralised educational planning is a planning process where all stakeholders, right from the grassroots are involved in identifying educational needs of the

school community, plan and implement activities at the district level for stakeholders to benefit (...).

(Interview with SMC2 on 25-01-12)

PTA1 indicated that

“decentralised educational planning should be a joint effort involving all stakeholders” (...).

(Interview with PTA1 on 08-06-12)

Decentralised educational planning helps in clarifying lines of accountability. It increases the voice of parents and other stakeholders, who can more effectively demand better education. Shortening the distance between the Ministry of Education – the policy maker, and the directorates of education strengthens education system management through easier communication. Improved governance and accountability may lead to higher efficiency in the use of resources, which contributes to improved school performance. This is reflected in SEO2 quotes:

decentralised educational planning means having effective control in the district without interference from headquarters. It involves knowing gaps, identifying the basic needs and what we need to improve in teaching and learning to ensure quality educational delivery in schools, example, School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP). Circuit supervisors, Headteachers, classroom teachers and other stakeholders take part in the plan preparation (...).

(Interview with SEO2 on 01-02-12)

Additionally, decentralised educational planning is often accompanied by policies requiring teachers, parents, and administrators and other stakeholders to jointly prepare plans (District Education Strategic Plans [DESP], Annual District Education Operational Plans [ADEOP] and School Performance Improvement Plans [SPIPs]) with grant funding provided by the Ministry of Education. The inadequate and irregular flow of such funds affects plan implementation and demotivates the stakeholders who meticulously prepare such plans. Some of these plans even gather dust on selves due to lack of funds for execution.

The joint preparation of plans creates a shared commitment to raise quality as well as incentives to work together to implement it as reflected in HT2's explanation which states that;

“Localizing the delivery of education so that plans are done which is area specific, people plan to meet their local needs to benefit stakeholders” (...).

(Interview with HT2 on 08-06-12)

The increased power given to senior education officers, headteachers, parents and other stakeholders under decentralised educational planning provides them with the opportunity to be transparent in developing a vision and mission for the directorate. Educational officers and the communities (SMCs & PTAs) understand decentralised educational planning as involving transfer of power and authority as well as empowerment to plan and take decisions from the central to the local or district levels of educational delivery. Respondents felt that decisions made at the local level worked better because the local people have knowledge and understand better their financial standing and the circumstances of their locality.

There is considerable ambiguity in the laws and regulations regarding planning and budgeting, the result being considerable empowerment of MMDAs to preside over planning functions without the corresponding authority to plan and allocate resources to planned priorities. Consequently, the legal and regulatory regime seems to encourage “bottom-up”, participatory planning which catalogues a wide range of community-driven expectation, without the over-arching financial mechanism to allocate resources to satisfy these needs.

In many districts, including Accra Metropolitan and KEEA Municipal education directorates, support for bottom-up planning generates considerable inputs from communities and leads to the preparation of Action Plans, which are integrated into the Annual Action Plans and subsequently form an integral part of the Medium-Term Development Plans. However, the fulfilment of such community educational

expectations has been very limited because DA budgets are not necessarily allocated to these community-driven educational priorities, except in instances where donor-supported initiatives (Unicef, CIDA, EU, Danida) specifically allocated resources via the instrument of such Action Plans.

Due to this lack of authoritative assignment of functions and related expenditure assignments there is a significant discrepancy between planning and budgeting arrangements, funding flows and functional assignments continue to limit the authority and autonomy of the MMDAs to enforce harmonization and prioritization in line with the local realities, capabilities and needs. Sector priorities, including sector programmes and projects are defined substantially by the MDAs, with implementation targets set by the MDA Headquarters and resources allocated to meet these targets by the Headquarters. A vertical reporting and accountability system for the attainment of results still persist; between the District MDA and the central level MDA. While reporting to the MMDAs is happening, these are less binding in terms of accountability than the relations within MDA.

5.3.1 The Decentralised educational planning Processes

Decentralised educational planning can be said to be a type of educational planning where local organizations and institutions formulate, adopt, execute activities and supervise implementation without interference by the central body (head office). Decentralised educational planning simply implies district level planning in education.

The process of educational planning according to EO2;

Begins at the grassroots where one comes out with the peculiar needs of the area. When preparing the SPIP one has to gather all the teachers and all the stakeholders to identify their needs during the year to improve educational delivery after which SMC and Headteachers sign while all the teachers also sign at the back (...).

(Interview with EO2 on 25-01-12) On the other hand

PTA2 explains the processes of educational planning, school mapping and SPIP as;

“bringing together stakeholders (PTA, SMC, Teachers, representatives) to access the needs of the school to enable them improve educational delivery at the school level” (...).

(Interview with PTA2 on 25-01-12)

The interviewees stated that the process of decentralised educational planning involves bringing on board all stakeholders to discuss peculiar needs and solutions to improve educational delivery. The very fact that local people are preparing plans ensures a better participatory process. Participatory process implies engagement by departments other than education to ensure convergence of services at the local level, engagement by elected representatives of the local bodies; assemblies, local councils and unit committees, engagement by academic and research organizations to provide technical and professional input to the plan preparation process, participation by educational functionaries at all levels including primary school heads and teachers and participation by the general public including parents. Decentralised educational planning is therefore a better option for educational delivery. This strategy shifts the location of the planning process from the national to the district level and strengthens the district planning teams to initiate district specific intervention strategies. The key question to pose now is: What are the strategies for Decentralised educational planning which the next section addresses.

5.3.2 Strategies for Decentralised educational planning

In the study participants were asked to explain various strategies for decentralised educational planning at the local level. Their views were specifically sought about planning concerning School Mapping and School Performance Improvement Plans. The underlying motivation is that the use of local level planning techniques such as school

mapping, and school improvement planning and district education strategic plans for improving quality educational delivery is the practice under decentralised educational planning in Ghana. These techniques entail problem identification, prioritization, and management of relationships among various stakeholders so as to improve the quality and efficiency of a given level of education at the local level (Prakash, 2008). I began the analysis by examining the participants' views about school mapping.

5.3.2.1 School Mapping

This section is focused on the essence of school mapping exercises in decentralised educational planning. In my experience, School Mapping is a set of techniques and procedures used to plan the demand for schools at the local level to support decision-making on the planning, policy formulation, resource allocation and prioritization of future school development. School mapping is central to the planning of education provision at the local level. It focuses on particular characteristics and needs of the population in specific areas. With the policy of decentralisation, decisions on new schools and their location, teacher recruitment and deployment, which were previously taken at the central level, are now in the hands of actors at the district and local level. Actors at a local level have a more profound knowledge of the characteristics and needs of the population they serve, and of the education institutions in their area. School mapping is part of the “de-concentration” of planning involving local and regional stakeholders in the implementation of national educational policies and plans at the local level and reaching the educational development goals of a country as a whole. In the study respondents were asked to explain school mapping processes under decentralised educational planning. The elites (Education officers) indicated that school mapping is some sort of fact finding in individual schools of what actually their needs

are and what affects teaching and learning. This is done through annual school census.

EO1 defined school mapping to mean

a method used to identify current problems and future needs of education and again find measures to solve their problems at the local level. It involves active participation of local people; stakeholders of Education at Regional, District and School level from whom questionnaire is designed to look for data on Kindergarten, Primary, Junior High School (JHS), Senior High School (SHS) and other pre-tertiary institutions. The respondents are drawn from villages, circuits and they may include district officers, circuit supervisors, opinion leaders, NGO leaders, SMC members, PTA members and Assemblymen/women. (...).

(Interview with EO1 on 08-06-12)

In the view of EO2, school mapping is;

‘an instrument for assessing the state of a school, its needs in terms of access, participation, and quality for both pupils and teachers’ (...).

(Interview with EO2 on 08-06-12)

The two respondents (educational officers) seem to be in agreement with each other describing school mapping as a tool for overall planning of educational activities at the local and school levels. It is a tool for identifying and assessing the appropriate location of educational facilities so that larger number of pupils benefit from the given level of educational investment. It is sometimes referred to as ‘educational planning’; a local planning activity that constitute a description of the educational situation in a given year (base year), a determination of projected enrolment and resources and planning activities in anticipation of the future (GES, 2012). Basic education (compulsory education) is largely financed by the state and educating all children is state responsibility. The next section examined the role of School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP).

5.3.2.2 School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP)

This section examines the role of School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP) in decentralised educational planning. The education officers took the centre stage in

responses because few of the SMC and PTA members representing the community are familiar with SPIP. SEO1 defined this strategy as;

a kind of budget drawn termly by the headteachers, teachers, and the community. This sort of planning entails circuit supervisors going from school to school to fill a form to assess the needs of the school. This form comes from a central body – the Education Management Information System (EMIS). It is a quarterly plan that reflects on teaching and learning materials, repairs of broken hinges, books and INSET (...).

(Interview with SEO1 on 08-06-12)

He went further to explain that School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP) is implemented through the use of the capitation grant sent to the schools by the government. Non Governmental Organizations also support its implementation by funding a portion of the plan in consultation with the District Director of Education.

Similarly EO2 relates SPIP to;

a document that takes care of simple needs of the school; minor repairs, purchases of teaching and learning materials, the conduct of test and sometimes travels and transport claims for officers running errands for the school (...).

(Interview with EO2 on 01-02-12)

The quote above indicates that SPIP is a plan that assesses school facilities to determine the extent of damage and to improve upon them. An annual plan designed by the Headteachers of school, teachers and School Management Committee Chairmen which entails activities that is related to school development, improving teaching and learning, sanitary facilities, minor repairs on school building, provision of teaching/learning materials.

HT1 considered SPIP as,

a document whereby the teachers, Headteachers and staff prepare considering the needs of the school with special reference to enrolment. Some of the stages of SPIP are meeting teachers to declare needs of the schools; inviting unit secretaries to make an input, inviting SMC chairman to approve of the plan and finally all teachers signing the document (...).

(Interview with HT1 on 08-06-12)

For each of these areas, schools establish a goal statement, performance targets, areas of focus, implementation strategies, indicators of success, time lines, and responsibility for implementing strategies, checkpoints for status updates opportunities for revisions.

Commenting on the functioning level of this plan HT2 explained that

Under Quality Improvement in Primary Schools (QUIPs) programme, SPIP functioned effectively; Chiefs, Churches, SMC, PTA and Teachers initiate the discussion and brainstorm to agree on the need that should go into the plan. Lack of funds for allowances has reduced participation level from high to low level. Most members are demoralized. Only few of the community members go to the classroom to inspect what is going on (...).

(Interview with HT2 on 25-02-12)

The goal of the Quality Improvements in Primary Schools/Improving Learning through Partnerships (QUIPS/ILP) project was to assist the Ministry of Education of the Government of Ghana with educational reform, particularly efforts to improve basic education. The program worked directly with teachers and head teachers at the school level and circuit supervisors in QUIPS/ILP partnership schools.

In an attempt to explain the role of PTA in SPIP preparation, PT1 outlined the following;

to visit school regularly, identify problems, and also receive complains from the headteacher about teacher performance, lateness, lack of furniture and the like. These issues are therefore presented to members at meetings and solutions are decided on. Emergency meetings are held coupled with the organized termly meetings (...).

(Interview with PT1 on 08-06-12)

Majority of respondents interviewed indicated that SPIP is a plan or document designed by the headteacher in collaboration with the staff and SMC which captures the immediate but simple needs of a school. They also stated that these needs are provided through the use of Capitation Grant and sometimes assistance from NGOs. The SPIP is prepared by the Headteacher and the staff to cover the whole academic year, but broken down into terms. The plan is taken to the District Director of Education for review to ensure that the activities stated are in line with the District Education Strategic Plan and

other priority areas of education. The school management committee oversees the implementation. School improvement plans should be considered a working document designed by stakeholders that capture immediate needs and changes a school's needs to improve the level of students' achievements. It is a mechanism through which the public holds schools accountable for student success and through which it can measure improvement.

5.4 Stakeholders' Involvement in Decentralised Educational Planning

This section describes stakeholder's engagement in decentralised educational planning. As earlier pointed out in the review of related literature, stakeholders play a variety of roles in the provision and management of education and learning processes. Active stakeholder participation can contribute to promoting education and that support is necessary for educational planning and development (Cole, 2007).

It further examines the suggested mechanisms for improving decentralised educational planning and ends with the challenges of the implementation of decentralised educational planning. Additionally it examines the extent of stakeholder involvement in educational planning, the operations of decentralised institutional structures (SMCs and PTAs), major challenges and opportunities. This section examines participants' responses to the second sub-research question what are the experiences of educational officers, headteachers, teachers, SMCs and PTAs and other stakeholders of participation in decentralised educational planning in actual practice.

5.4.1 Stakeholder Participation

Stakeholder participation/involvement is a concept that attempts to bring different stakeholders together for problem solving and decision making (Talbot and Verrinder 2005). Lacy et al. (2002) further states that community participation in educational

development processes can support and uphold local culture, tradition, knowledge and skill and create pride in community heritage.

Recent interest in community participation in formal education has come from two distinct sources. As with the prioritisation of decentralisation, it has emerged both from neo-liberal imperatives for more efficient use of financial and material resources promoted by organisations such as the World Bank and bi-lateral agencies, together with increased political advocacy for greater community ‘ownership’ and involvement in decision-making (Rose, 2003; Pryor, 2005). However, greater community involvement has frequently been a top-down imposition and not a response to demands from communities for greater involvement. Indeed, in various national contexts many communities themselves consider this kind of participation as an additional burden on the already considerable demands on their time and resources (Watt, 2001; Pryor & Ampiah, 2003; Rose, 2003), whereas school and local government officials often ascribe what they perceive to be poor or non-involvement by parents to lack of interest or lack of formal education (PROBE, 1999; Vasavi, 2003).

Citizen participation in some form is an essential part of successful decentralisation. It is becoming a more common element in developing country political environments, but the flow of information is by no means undistorted. Planning decentralisation policies should take these informational imperfections into account and attempt to improve the depth and degree of citizen participation in local government action. Local government responsiveness, one of the main rationales for decentralising cannot be realized when there are no mechanisms for transferring information between the local government and its constituents. There are various modes of participation in the governance process at the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Directorates of Education. These include

decision making, planning, implementation and monitoring. On involvement of stakeholders in decision making at the local/District level, HT2 stated that,

Discussions are made at the staff meetings twice a term and six times every academic year. At the beginning of the academic year these stakeholders meet and prepare the SPIP and review it with the SMC. Without the involvement of SMC Chairman there is no way the SPIP document will be approved by the District Directorate of Education, which is a requirement for assessing Capitation grant (...).

(Interview with HT2 on 25-01-12)

SEO2 is of the view that,

Community participation is an important element of decentralised educational planning; however, it is an area of challenge. Communities get involved in the planning process through the PTA meetings where they ensure that schools run, fraternizing with teachers and heads and helping by way of clearing round the school, renovating cracked walls in the school and by way of starting classroom blocks for schools if the need arises through communal labour (...).

(Interview with SEO2 on 01-02-12)

HT1 commenting on the same issue said that

Before a decision is taken in a school, PTA meeting is called after executives have met to discuss the plans together with parents before it is implemented. Teachers are highly involved, they are conversant with the needs and initiate plan preparation and the PTA and SMC almost always accept what is presented (...).

(Interview with HT1 on 08-06-12)

From the respondents, it is evident that all the community members interviewed said that they have been taking part in the decision making about educational delivery in the directorates and schools. This accounts for the seemingly powerful role and authority of the SMC members to approve or otherwise of activities of the educational officers (Headteachers and teachers). SMC members provide the community with information on school activities and are trusted by the community and hence their views are more often held in high esteem. The chairman of the SMC is a co-signatory to SPIP. This makes it obligatory for the heads of schools to explain to SMC members the rationale behind SPIP and to approve it. The Heads recognize the importance of the SMC and

automatically involve the committee in the process of deciding what facility goes where and which activity is carried out first.

Interestingly, some of the educational officers interviewed indicated that only few community members had been involved in the decision making process by the directorates and the school. SEO1 asserts that

Executives of these decentralised structures always attend meetings but only about half of the members (Parents and Guidance) mostly women attend general meetings which are often held on taboo days. Most of the executives do not know their roles. When people are appointed, they decline the position. It is difficult managing people to function to expectation, example consulting churches and other organizations like the chieftaincy to explain to them their roles. One needs to be tactful in his approach (...).

(Interview with SEO1 on 08-06-12)

This was attributed to the non-functionality of the institutionalized sub-structures. At the local level and especially deprived or hard to reach areas, the level of education of SMC members is low and therefore could not make meaningful contribution to the decision-making process. Considering the opportunity cost of time spent at meetings and their economic activities, members opt for their economic activities instead of actively engaging in SMC activities. Additionally, SMC2 stated that

due to lack of recognition and motivation, most members were not committed to their duties so the Heads always by-pass them in the decision making process (...).

(Interview with SMC2 on 25-01-12)

It was also revealed that the involvement of SMCs and PTAs at the grassroots planning process is very low. In general, the data indicates that grassroots participation in educational decision making in the directorates is low.

5.4.2 Community Involvement in Planning

Some educational officers emphasized community involvement in decentralised educational planning through members visit to school, identifying problems and monitoring teaching and learning. Responses from participants however reveals that at

the planning stage community members are not involved because of the low functioning level of SMCs stemming from lack of motivation.

In the opinion of EO2,

The level of involvement of stakeholders in planning and decision making is very low. Parents attend meetings and give out suggestions at meetings; they share ideas, visit schools as individuals to see how the school runs and discuss issues with the Head (...).

(Interview with EO2 on 25-01-12)

The low level of community participation in decision making to implement educational development can lead to failure in planning.

5.4.3 Community Engagement in Implementation

Another area of importance in an attempt to effect a change on the ground is the involvement of stakeholders in the execution of programmes and activities. Implementation denotes the translation of plans into practice and involves accomplishing and completing a plan. Implementation become less effective unless goals are clearly defined and understood, necessary resources are made available and controlled, and there is effective communication and supervision of those involved in the performance of the tasks. Successful planned outcomes depend not only upon designing good plans but also upon managing their implementation. There is therefore the need for full community participation and ownership. Some of the participants interviewed indicated that they had participated in various school activities including the provision of school facilities like disability and gender friendly toilets and urinals, school buildings among others during the physical implementation through communal labour and attendance of site meetings. However the educational officers indicated that their level of participation in implementation is low. SEO1 was of the view that,

Senior education officers ensure that teaching and learning goes on in all the schools in the directorate. Needs identification and the nature of the programme is initially done by the Heads and the community verify and inform the appropriate quarters for solution. Additionally, Directors co-ordinates teaching

and learning in the directorate and inform the Regional Director and the Municipal/District Chief Executive. Head of management unit identify the needs, prioritize, budget and implement planned activities' (...).

(Interview with SEO1 on 08-06-12)

SEO2 added that,

Directors are members of District Education Oversight Committees and other important or relevant committees that deal with quality educational delivery within the Metropolitan/Municipal and District directorates of education. This decentralisation structure is concerned with and oversees conditions of school buildings and other infrastructural requirements of schools, provision of teachers and the regular and punctual attendance of teachers and pupils at the school, proper performance of duties by staff at the school, environmental cleanliness and supply of textbooks (...).

(Interview with SEO2 on 01-02-12)

Responding to the role he plays as a headteacher in the process of the preparation of SPIP, HT1 indicated that;

I invite parents for consultation, identification and presentation of needs to the community for change. I also organize open day and debate programmes for children and parents to increase access to the school (...).

(Interview with HT1 on 08-06-12)

According to SMC1 their involvement in implementation is seen in;

'regular visits to school, identify problems, receive complains from the headteacher about teacher performance, lateness, assesses the furniture situation in the school and the like. These issues are presented to members at meetings and solutions are decided on (...).

(Interview with SMC1 on 08-06-12)

PT2 opined that;

Parent Teacher Associations co-ordinate, and supervise plan implementation at the school level. The PTAs also ensure that teachers are not molested or harassed in the school or the community teachers operate, ensure regular and punctual attendance of teachers and pupils at the school and adequate supply of teaching and learning materials. (...).

(Interview with PT2 on 25-01-12)

According to the SEO2,

Community ownership of schools is lacking and it is having a serious impact on pupil/students attitude towards work, teacher's attitude towards work and general academic performance. (...).

(Interview with SEO2 on 01-02-12)

According to EO1,

The low participatory level of stakeholders is attributable to finances (non – payment of travel and transport allowances). Additionally the economic activities do not allow the stakeholders to participate except on their taboo days. Again the stakeholders at the local level are not committed and it is even very difficult to get somebody in executive positions. Most of them always want to use their time for their farming and fishing activities. The stakeholders have also not been educated enough on how they should come on board. Even with the PTA only few members decide for the entire group (...).

(Interview with EO1 on 04-06-12)

Two major issues emerge from the above quotes which are very important to the achievement of decentralised educational planning goals. First, that stakeholder participation in planning and implementation is of vital importance. They accelerate or quicken implementation. From the quotes even though a sizeable number of respondents indicated that they were engaged in implementation, the education officers were of the view that the level of participation was low. As such it is having a negative impact on achievement of planned objectives. The second issue is inadequate resources. As the comments showed, there were concerns about non–payment of travel and transport allowances. The implication is that monitoring is primarily weak, and thus, affecting implementation. This is taken more prominently in the next section (5.4.4).

5.4.4 Participation in Monitoring

Another area where active engagement of stakeholders is seen is in the monitoring and implementation of planned activities. Monitoring provides periodic information for tracking progress of implementation of programmes and projects according to previously approved plans, work schedules and targeted output. Stakeholders are required to monitor project execution and ensure that materials to be used are brought to the site on time and well secured and also that the workers are really working (especially the direct labour projects). It was realized from the study that the stakeholders scarcely monitor implementation of planned activities. According to EO1,

‘Monitoring teams are created and stakeholders get involved in their respective fields of endeavour. The district monitoring team then move around to acquaint themselves with the implementation process’ (...).

(Interview with EO1 on 04-06-12)

Movement of these monitoring teams is dependent on the availability of funds for fuel and other logistics. Earlier indications are that resources are inadequate to take care of SMC members travel and transport allowances. This has resulted in their state of non-performing decentralisation structure at the school level. Indications are that monitoring is similarly affected.

5.5 Functioning Level of Decentralised Educational Structures (SMCs and PTAs)

In the interviews the difficulties associated with getting decentralisation institutions to function effectively were a recurrent issue. Most, if not every individual, argued that the low functioning level of the SMCs and PTAs is a major impediment to decentralised educational planning. It is a potential source of frustration. In an effort to deepen the decentralisation process and facilitate grassroots involvement in the decision making process and provision of quality education the level of practical functionality of these decentralisation sub structures is crucial.

Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) are formed based on the understanding that both the home and the school (Parents and Teachers) are directly responsible for the total development of the child. As an essential body in advisory position in the School set up, they are represented on Schools’ Board of Governors or Management Committees so they are involved in the policy formulation and supervision of schools. They make contributions to supplement the supervision of the schools and additionally contribute to supplement the Government’s efforts in education development. School Management Committees co-ordinate the activities of all community engagement in school development from the sub-metro, the circuits through to the school level.

5.5.1 School Management Committees - Guidelines for SMC/PTA operation

This section explores perspectives on School Management Committees (SMCs) as essential vehicles in Ghana's educational decentralisation process. The SMCs are made up of a group of persons whose main aim is to promote the best interest of the school and to ensure that learners in a particular school receive the best education possible through decentralised educational planning. Thus the SMC is a school-community-based institution aimed at strengthening community involvement and mobilization of resources for education delivery. The SMC operates directly under the District Education Oversight Committee (DEOC) and in collaboration with the District/Municipal/Metropolitan Education Directorates and the schools.

The main role of the SMC is to help the headteacher of a school to plan, organize and manage the school's activities in an effective and efficient manner. This includes participating in the school's improvement planning, implementation and evaluation process, reviewing the school's progress in implementing the School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP) with the headteacher and implement mechanisms to hold headteacher and staff accountable for progress towards the goals set out in the School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP). The study investigated the role of SMCs at the local/school level. The study revealed that few of the structures were relatively functioning at the time of the study. This is reflected in the statements of some of the interviewees. EO2 indicated that there are attitudinal challenges;

Some of the SMCs are almost dysfunctional because members fear responsibility and do not attend meetings except the chairpersons. However certain measures have been put in place to improve the situation. Through workshops and sensitization programmes, PTAs and SMCs are being conscientized on their roles and responsibilities in relationship with school administration, disciplinary issues, monitoring of school performance, violence against pupils, Career Guidance as well as Financial Administration (...).

(Interview with EO2 on 25-01-12)

These responses prompted the researcher to probe further into the criteria used for selecting people to serve on the committees. EO2 again indicated that,

It is done by election at meetings. The Headteacher is an automatic member and a teacher is appointed to be the secretary. Assistant headteachers are also automatic members. The criterion for selection of members of the PTA and SMC could be found in the SMC Resource Handbook Page 23-24 (...).

(Interview with EO2 on 25-01-12)

In the opinion of SEO2, people who serve on SMCs are those who are well educated, respectable, honest and who by their actions have proven to be trustworthy and reliable. PTA2 pointed out that;

‘One must be a parent or guardian having your ward in the school before you can be made a member’ (...).

(Interview with PTA2 on 25-01-12)

Responses from interviewees led to the question of how these stakeholders get involved in decision making for the growth and development of education in their communities which is essential for decentralised educational planning. It was revealed that the SMCs met twice in a year even though they were required by Ghana Education Service Act 1995 Act 506 to meet four times. Whiles some met once others did not meet at all.

5.5.2 Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)

The adoption of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning is seen as a means for the closer involvement of people in decision making in local communities. The encouragement of the formation of Parent Teacher Associations is based on the premise that not all parents will have the opportunity to join School Management committees and so the other voices could be heard through the PTA. The purpose for establishing the PTA is to help plan and promote the welfare of children and youth at home, school and community, through a strong linkage, assist in income generating activities to provide some basic needs for the school, raise the standard of children at

home and secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children, so that parents and teachers may co-operate in the education of their children.

On the assessment of the functionality of the PTAs in the Municipal and Metropolitan directorates of education's bid to improve educational delivery the study revealed that the situation is better than the SMCs. However PTA members' relative low level of education impedes their ability to actively participate in the planning stage of the development process.

SEO1 stated that

'the involvement of these decentralisation structures in school activities is low. Some of the SMCs are even dead. Members fear responsibility and often Chairmen act alone' (...)

(Interview with SEO1 on 08-06-12)

In the view of EO2

Participatory process has been very low so far as the community (SMCs and PTAs) are concerned because of the system. The mission schools did better in community labour. Labour was provided freely. There is also economic decadence. People seem selfish. Some also feel that their ideas would not be considered. The stakeholders have also not been educated enough on how they should come on board. Even with the PTA, only few members decide for the entire group. Their increasing level of participation currently is due to sanctions attached if one fails. Comparatively the extent of SMC participation in school developmental activities is lower than the PTAs. A cluster based SMC, I believe will increase the participatory level. (...).

(Interview with EO2 on 25-01-12)

HT2 also indicated that

engagement of the two institutions is quite good but there is more room for improvement. The free business was over-emphasized. It appears that the PTA treasurer and two others are more concerned. Not all the members are on board; a percentage of Capitation Grant should be given to SMC. The QUIPs programme should be revisited to improve participation of stakeholders. Effective supervision should be re-emphasized (...).

(Interview with HT2 on 25-01-12)

According to PTA2,

'most of the time, the committee leaders participate but the voice of the PTA is always there in decision making and planning' (...).

(Interview with PTA2 on 25-01-12)

Apparently SMCs have lower participatory level because they are mostly concerned with matters relating to school management and Metropolitan, Municipal and District directorates of education. SMCs are established by legal act hence mostly concerned with policy issues and do not necessary have their wards in school. On the other hand PTAs highly participate in school development programmes as they have their wards in the schools, want to see them progress and want their wards' schools to meet high standards. In effect, it has been seen that the involvement of these two sub structures and the community in general in decentralised educational planning is not impressive as envisaged by the local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462).

The educational officers projected the community as not committed to the decentralized educational planning process and were critical of the community members and identified some problems including non-participation and lack of commitment. Parents are usually described as ignorant and are not very enthused about the education of their wards or unable to support their children's studies.

5.6 Motivation

The study sought to elicit information on how educational officers and the community (SMCs and PTAs) are motivated in the performance of their duties. SEO2 indicated that,

What motivates me is that if I reach my achievement level or when I get close to the target set, I feel motivated. The accomplishment of district goals make me motivated. Changes that are happening in the schools actually motivate me to do more to ensure that pupils perform in the schools. (...).

(Interview with SEO2 on 01-02-12)

HT2 agrees with the SEO2's view point when he says,

I am so much in love with my work, I want results. I have set target and the achievement of that motivates me to work harder. Self-motivation is there".

Also the support given me by teachers, PTA and SMC and the readiness with which supplies are given highly motivate me' (...).

(Interview with HT2 on 25-01-12)

The above respondents seem to agree on how they are motivated which relates to intrinsic motivation. Other respondents stated that their morale level is low. This is evident in the statement of EO2 that;

“lack of resources, (computers, printers, stationery), environmental conditions results in low level of morale and motivation among stakeholders” (...).

(Interview with EO2 on 25-01-12)

All the other interviewees looked at motivation from extrinsic perspective; praise or money, external incentives. Respondents indicated that no incentives exist for them in the execution of their duties and attributed the low morale to lack of needed support both material and financial support from the directorates. According to EO1,

Sometimes we need money for projects, and the director's go and come and there is no money syndrome is killing our morale. This issue also borders on resource availability at the district level. Due to scarcity of resources district budgetary allocation from headquarters often falls short of the actual requirements. This warrants reprioritization of programmes of activities which in turn affects incentive packages planned for officers generally (...).

(Interview with EO1 on 04-06-12)

EO2 enumerated various ways that stakeholders can be motivated to participate in educational delivery. PO2 indicated that;

First, giving recognition to the stakeholders' voice is a major way of motivating them. Providing adequate information to enhance participation and the provision of the needed logistics adequately and timely could also improve the morale and the level of satisfaction of stakeholders. Additional payment of travel and transport allowances, provision of snack and transportation for field verification will all go a long way to motivate staff and other stakeholders to give off their best (...).

(Interview with EO2 on 25-01-12)

Further, PTA1 suggested the 'use of PTA dues to motivate members by providing snack and generally servicing their meetings. According to him

headteachers do not motivate parents at PTA meetings to encourage parents to attend meetings to contribute their quota towards the development of the schools' (...).

(Interview with PTA1 on 08-06-12)

From the above, again, inadequate financial resources are making it difficult to effectively engage and motivate the stakeholders in decentralised educational planning. There should be a political will and commitment at both central government and the district levels to devolve adequate power and resources to the decentralised structures to enable them participate meaningfully in decentralised educational planning process. Capacities of planning unit, SMCs and PTAs should be strengthened in terms of logistics for effective participation in decision making, planning, implementation and monitoring.

5.7 Challenges of Participation in Decentralised educational planning

Decentralised educational planning is not trouble free. It has its associated problems. Lack of autonomy where districts operates as de-concentrated units, bureaucratic control over planning from the top, apathy and low performance levels of district sub-structures all hinder the effectiveness of decentralised educational planning processes. A comprehensive and well-developed database is a prerequisite for undertaking decentralised planning in education. However, the lack of capacity to effectively utilize data and information at district and school levels acts as a major constraint in decentralised educational planning processes. Interactions with interviewees brought out the fact that all is not well with decentralised educational planning.

EO1 opined that;

A lot of factors inhibit full participation on the part of the stakeholders. Decentralised educational planning in Ghana seems unable to function efficiently and effectively. Its contribution to meaningful assessment of the present situation, the tasks involved, elaborating strategies and programmes and costing of the plan as well as emphasizing participatory process of planning seems to be a problem (...).

(Interview with EO1 on 04-06-12)

In a similar vein SEOI stated that;

Factors inhibiting decentralised educational planning include non-availability of sufficient funds, and late releases of funds. Early release of funds will go a long way to improve decentralised educational planning and implementation (...).

(Interview with SEO1 on 08-06-12)

In the view of SEO2,

Mobilizing people is very difficult and needs tolerance and time to bring people together to participate in planning, implementation and monitoring processes. Non availability of resources sometimes makes people feel reluctant to avail themselves on such occasions. Payment of travel and transport allowances must be included in the budget (...).

(Interview with SEO2 on 01-02-12)

The Community (SMC and PTA members) also raised some issues militating against effective involvement in decentralised educational planning in the areas of payment of travel and transport allowance, improper use of time, change of mode of disbursement of resources and generally non availability of resources.

In the opinion of PTA2;

poor parental response to PTA meeting, poor financing, low visitation of parents to schools voluntarily inhibit participation in planning process at the district and school level (...).

(Interview with PTA2 on 25-01-12)

EO1 attributes this weakness to,

lack of commitment from planning officers, low capacity of officers at district directorate, and lack of adequate funds to carry regular and effective training programmes for planning officers. There is also high attrition rate. Poor working environment, low remuneration, political interference, and lack of logistics to work with and low level of involvement by planning officers during implementation as well as non release of funds for effective monitoring and capacity building (...).

(Interview with EO1 on 04-06-12)

The Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service acknowledge the need for strong relationship between school-community leaders and local school authorities as the key to educational reforms and provide every support to School Management

Committees (SMCs), Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and other community organizations to increase their participation in school management. High standards, development and maintenance of school infrastructure and fostering a working relationship among teachers, pupils and district authorities cannot be achieved without the active involvement of the communities.

Successful decentralisation requires some degree of local participation. Sub national governments' proximity to their constituents enable them to respond better to local needs and efficiently match public spending to private needs if some sort of information flow between citizens and the local governments exist.

Decentralisation can itself enhance the opportunities for participation by placing more power and resources at a closer, more familiar, more easily influenced level of government. In environments with poor traditions of citizen participation, decentralisation can be an important first step in creating regular, predictable opportunities for citizen-state interaction.

Mechanisms for citizen participation could be considered a helpful pre-condition when evaluating the prospects for successful decentralisation. Accordingly, the design of decentralisation should take into account the opportunities and limitations imposed by existing channels of local participation. Lack of participatory mechanisms could be considered a motivation for decentralisation and can help create local demand for more participatory channels to voice local preferences.

Institutional structures for citizen participation created in the process of educational decentralization in Ghana include SMCs and PTAs. In Ghana, for example, SMCs have been set up and its member's undergone training on developing work plans for school improvement (World Bank, 2005; MOESS 2006). But their impact varies widely and is generally not impressive. Most of the respondents cite poor community involvement in

such processes with PTAs, for example, often not established or not functioning despite government mandates (PROBE, 1999; Heystek, 2003; Ahmed and Nash, 2005). Where these bodies are more active, there have been conflicts between, for example, PTAs and SMCs, in part because of unclearly defined and/or overlapping responsibilities or because certain groups have gone beyond their mandates (Passi, 1995; De Grauwe et al., 2005; Ahmed & Nath, 2005).

In other studies, SMCs roles and responsibilities have been found to conflict with those of PTAs (De Grauwe et al., 2005). In the study of primary education quality in Bangladesh, Ahmed and Nath (2005) found SMCs had in principle total management control over primary schools but in practice were not able to exercise their authority. SMCs were usually made up of people who did not fit their role as they had been elected by friends and relations of headteachers and elected representatives.

Increasingly, headteachers are being expected to spearhead localised decision-making to improve schools, but many lack the requisite management skills and authority to deliver objectives of education decentralisation at school level (Chapman, 2000). More importantly, many lack the respect from their own teachers and communities to facilitate and implement decisions (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2006). In Bangladesh, there is widespread dissatisfaction with how school management committees are functioning. They tend to be dominated by head teachers and local political leaders and do not have sufficient resources to carry out their designated responsibilities (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2006).

Research in various African and South Asian contexts has shown how there is unequal access to participation in such bodies according to socio-economic status, race, caste, social class, location, political affiliation and gender (PROBE, 1999; Therkildsen, 2000; Karlsson, 2002; Bush & Heystek, 2003; Rose, 2003; Soudien & Sayed, 2004; De

Grauwe et al., 2005). Even when elected onto such committees, some voices are inevitably heard above others. Headteachers, in particular, have been singled out in a number of studies as having especially strong influence on these bodies (Soudien & Sayed, 2004; De Grauwe et al., 2005). In particular, political affiliation and cronyism has been identified as a serious problem in the establishment and functioning of various school-community bodies to the detriment of poorer parents (PROBE, 1999; Ahmed & Nath, 2005; De Grauwe, et al., 2005). Thus, parents and communities are expected to become further involved in schooling in a variety of ways but generally in ways determined by the school, laid down by central and/or regional or local government and driven by international policy agendas (Therkildssen, 2000; World Bank, 2004).

Citizen participation in some form is an essential part of successful decentralisation. It is becoming a more common element in developing country political environments, but the flow of information is by no means undistorted. Planning decentralisation policies should take these informational imperfections into account and attempt to improve the depth and degree of citizen participation in local government action. Local government responsiveness, one of the main rationales for decentralising cannot be realized when there are no mechanisms for transferring information between the local government and its constituents.

5.8 Capacity Building of Decentralised Educational Planning Practitioners and other Stakeholders

This section presents participants' responses and findings about the third sub-research question; what are the experiences of educational officers and other stakeholders of capacity development programmes for promoting efficiency and effectiveness provided by the Ghana Education Service? For Decentralised educational planning to be successful it requires the development of competencies-skills, knowledge and

experiences. Local actors have to acquire the skills and the tools to plan the organization of the education system. The section starts by emphasizing the need for capacity building in section 5.8.1. Section 5.8.2 discusses ways by which career skills can be improved and how improved capacities of stakeholders contribute to effective and efficient decentralised educational planning.

5.8.1 The Need for Capacity Development

The policy literature on community involvement continues to emphasize the need for capacity building within the community to enable them to participate in these ways (e.g. Chapman et al., 2002; Heystek, 2003; Bush & Heystek, 2003), without questioning what it is they are being asked to be involved in (Rose, 2003).

Training programmes for personnel development aims at increasing knowledge and performance, and maintaining viable and knowledgeable staff. It is important to stress that capacity building is vital for the success of every organization. Training programmes including seminars, workshops and technical assistance enable a large number of individuals to improve their knowledge and competences. Jones et al (1989) stated that staff/personnel development programme "provides the means for teachers/planners to experience continuing education as part of a team of professionals" (p.5). Staff development in this definition is seen as related to the needs of staff within a given institution. Rebore (1980) points out that "it is literally impossible today for any individual to learn a job or enter a profession and remain in it for forty or so years with his or her skills basically unchanged. Therefore, staff development is not only desirable but it is also an activity to which each educational system must commit human and fiscal resources if it is to maintain a viable and knowledgeable staff (P. 166). In a decentralised educational planning environment, it is required of the directorates to train the officers in the skills they need in order to work efficiently.

The effective execution of the functions of Educational officers and the Community in decentralised educational planning depends on the capacity of the Educational Officers (Senior Education Officers, Planning officers, Headteachers, Teachers) stakeholder participation, resource mobilization and implementation of plans among others. While one of the common rationale for educational decentralisation proposes that district directorates' proximity to their constituents/locality will allow them to be better than Headquarters at managing resources and matching their districts/local preferences, it is not at all clear that district directorates have the capacity to translate this information to their advantage. Metropolitan, municipal and district directorates (MMDDs) of education may not have the training to effectively manage the directorates in terms of planning. The legacy of central planning leaves many of the MMDDs with limited degree of planning capacity at the local level. In some West African systems the aspect of devolution practiced sees elected local authorities being given a number of responsibilities such as the construction, equipment and maintenance of basic schools (World Bank 2004; De Gauwe et al., 2005). What is mostly lacking is the authority and capacity of local authorities to restructure their systems so that they can provide more efficient delivery of services (Chapman 2000). Initiatives to decentralise school governance, for example, often leave out crucial decision-making responsibilities, for example, the power to allocate resources for context-specific needs. The literature presents education decentralisation in developing countries as burdened by bureaucratic bottlenecks reflecting a reluctance to allow lower levels of government complete autonomy over administrative and resource management (Tikly 1996; World Bank 2001; De Grauwe et al., 2005). Reluctance to devolve key decision-making is sometimes explained as the cause of weak human resource capacity and poor

accountability procedures. When the question why the need for planning officers in the Service was asked, EO1 said that,

‘during the initial period of the Public Sector Reforms in the country when Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring and Evaluation divisions were established in all Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) it became necessary to appoint planning officers to fill vacant positions in the national and the regional as well as the district directorates of education’ (...).

(Interview with EO1 on 04-06-12)

The indication here is that planning actually gained currency in the educational sector in the country when public sector reforms started around the 1980s. Trained educational planners are scarce and officers with some degree of mathematics and statistics background are appointed as educational planners. Appreciation of planning processes will to some extent suffer in the absence of qualified personnel to handle issues related to decentralised educational planning and to a large extent the way it is perceived. Assessing, improving and accommodating varying degrees of local capacity has become more and more important as the Ministry of Education seek to transfer greater responsibilities to the districts and communities. Building such capacity is a challenge. Existing institutionalized programmes to upgrade the skills of planning officers and the community and other stakeholders is limited. This is attested to by SEO1 in his statement that;

District Teachers Support Team (DTST) organizes such programmes for career development. Additionally, subject coordinators and guidance coordinators in schools also organizes such programmes. However there is no institution for career development in decentralised educational planning. Teachers advance to occupy such positions as planning and statistics officers (...).

(Interview with SEO1 on 08-06-12)

In the opinion of EO1;

Professional development is very important to every career officer. Unfortunately this seems nonexistent in the planning unit of the Service. There is no specific training programme offered to educational planners in the service. Skills are acquired through practical experience and learning from predecessors. What is in existent is training programme for data collection annually (...).

(Interview with EO1 on 04-06-12)

The Ghana Education Service (GES) has developed a framework for the implementation of In-Service Training (INSET) policy for basic education. The aim is to establish an institutionalized structure for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of teachers/ educational planners. This was confirmed by SEO2 in his statement that

“National In-service Training (INSET) which covers every district in Ghana, has been put up for teachers to update themselves in lesson preparation and presentation” (...).

(Interview with SEO2 on 01-02-12)

But further commented that;

This does not provide the professional training that the decentralisation educational planner requires. Statistics and planning officers should be given the opportunity to be trained in our tertiary institutions and other foreign institutions of higher academic repute (...).

(Interview with SEO2 on 01-02-12)

SEO1 is of the view that

“Constant in-service training for teachers at the grassroots level for efficient teaching and learning can contribute immensely. Additionally provision of adequate funds for frequent INSET for professional development can also help” (...).

(Interview with SEO1 on 08-06-12)

From the responses it is the case that there is limited training in place to cater for educational planners and other stakeholders. The head office however, annually organizes training workshops on decentralisation and Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) budget preparation for planners and budget officers. But such provision is still centralized. District Directorates do not budget for such professional development programmes. Institutions like Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA, UCC), Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) and International Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IIEPA), Paris offer such programmes, but financial constraints and

management unwillingness to promote planning, according to PO2, makes it impossible for personnel of the Ghana Education Service (GES) to access the courses.

Additionally, lack of local/community capacity and technical expertise, e.g. plan designs, implementation and evaluation at the local level constitute a serious bottleneck to the implementation of decentralised educational planning. There is also serious concern over lack of the capacity in the communities. It is important to develop human resource and community leadership. At the organizational level, efforts could be made to develop the ability of community organizations to serve in community development. At the community level, it seeks to focus on association and relations between community residents, local groups and local community organization to build up community development. A community without leadership may not be equipped to mobilize resources or influence decentralised educational planning. The success of local community depends on the quality, creativity and commitment of its leadership in maintaining its daily affairs.

It needs to be appreciated that capacity building is a long term and ongoing effort which needs to be institutionalised in the planning and implementation process. Capacity Building needs to be a continuous and ongoing initiative whose aim is to improve and facilitate the skill sets and processes involving human and other perceivable inputs. Capacity Building for decentralised educational planning is the effort to strengthen and improve the abilities of personnel and organizations to be able to perform their tasks in a more effective, efficient and sustainable manner. Issues such as autonomy to plan and implement, professional skills (technical and managerial) needed for decentralised educational planning, skill development of cutting edge staff, capacity building of SMC and PTA representatives have been paid scant attention. In the current context of decentralisation dispensation, the challenges in decentralised educational planning

require not only specialised knowledge but also experiential learning to tackle the challenges faced by decentralised educational planning.

It is important to tailor the content of training towards the educational background and experiences of the planners and other stakeholders. The objective of the content training should be designed such that the expectations of both organizers and the participants be met. For example, the objective should be able to solve specific problems as a result of reports from various sectors such as school inspectors, subject coordinators, curriculum and research, planning and budget and the directorates of Ghana Education Service. Additionally provision of adequate funds for frequent INSET for professional development can also help.

The educational planner at the district /local level is the pivot around which all educational planning processes revolve, so he need knowledge and understanding of all issues concerning human existence to be able to perform creditably. In view of this he or she must be given specific training to enable him or her to perform the tasks assigned to him or her in the area of plan design, implementation and evaluation in order to keep him or her abreast with modern trends in educational planning. Therefore, funds must be made available to train the planner through in-service courses, workshops, seminars and conferences.

5.9 Summary

In this chapter the interviewees responded to research questions;

- (1) How do different stakeholders understand the concepts of decentralisation, educational decentralisation and decentralised educational planning?
- (2) What are the experiences of educational officers, Headteachers, teachers, PTAs and SMCs and other stakeholder of participation in Decentralised educational planning in actual practice?

- (3) What are the experiences of educational officers and other stakeholders of capacity development programmes provided by the Ghana Education Service?

On the concept of decentralisation, the interviewees referred to it as broadly a policy of creating opportunities for managing popular inputs into decision making processes resulting in greater empowerment or popular control over processes involved in the authoritative allocation of resources at the local level (Crawford, 2005). Within the Ghanaian context, that implies creating a partnership between districts authorities, chiefs, opinion leaders, faith-based organizations and non-governmental organizations to enforce standards, developing and maintaining infrastructure and to ensure that the broad institutional goals are achieved. This was evident in common expressions that ran through all the respondents' comments some of which are: empowering the districts to make decision and be accountable for the decisions made; devolution of power from top to down where resources are managed by the locals; movement of decision from central to the locals/District levels; where ministry of education is only seen as policy maker while district directorates of education implement policies.

Decentralisation, from the respondents is a process that is supposed to make decision making more appropriate to local contexts with the involvement of local actors and institutions. But in reality, decentralisation only creates partial devolution of power, and tends to replicate deep seated hierarchical power relations operating on the delegation of power (Bray and Mukundan, 2004; Rose, 2005,). In terms of how it relates to improving decentralised educational planning at the local level, it raises questions about the extent to which local communities and schools can 'own' and participate in plan design, implementation and evaluation, school improvement plans, when they still see decentralised educational planning as belonging elsewhere, and are unable to adapt local structures and systems to effectively participate.

Explanation of decentralised educational planning revealed divergent expressions among others are about localizing delivery of education; identify educational needs of school community; joint efforts involving all stakeholders, having effective control without the interference from Headquarters and planning for specific local area needs. In sum, the views examined in this chapter suggest that the respondents understand decentralised educational planning as transfer of power and authority as well as empowerment to plan and take decisions at the local or district levels of educational delivery.

In terms of strategies for decentralised educational planning, school mapping and school improvement plans (SPIP), were discussed. The term was generally understood as a set of techniques and procedures used to identify current problems and future needs of education and again find measures to solve their problems at the local level. Most of the participants considered SPIP as termly budget drawn by the headteachers, teachers and community members or a document that takes care of the simple needs of the school or an instrument to assess the state of the school in terms of quality, access and participation. SPIP was simply referred to as a document that spells out prioritized needs of the school that can be provided by the use of capitation grants and sometimes with the assistance of NGOs.

In terms of community involvement and participation, which relates to the second research question, various participants agreed that the SMC/PTA participate in the decentralised educational planning process but in most of the places the extent or level of involvement is very low. Respondents attribute low rate of participation to inadequate knowledge of the defined roles of the Community (SMCs/PTAs). They also said SMC/PTA members should be considered for travel and transport and other allowances to improve upon their functioning level. Findings from the study indicate

that the morale of the community in participating in decentralised educational planning process is low. While educational officers found satisfaction in achieving set targets, the community was more interested in the payment of travel and transport allowances and provision of snacks during meetings to motivate them. Respondents attributed the low morale to conditions such as lack of resources, inadequate support from Headquarters and the lukewarm attitude towards planners by some directors which they referred to as 'go and come' and 'there is no money syndrome' as killing.

Although, PTAs and SMCs are being set up in many education systems in developing countries, there are tensions and contradictions in their roles and responsibilities that undermine their effectiveness. Also, the composition of these bodies may not necessarily be representative of parents and communities. Finally, the composition of school governance bodies has implications for the extent to which headteachers can be held accountable. Additionally the relationship between education offices, local authorities, schools and communities, is clearly not an unproblematic one. There are different interests and priorities for each group and the limited evidence we examined in the literature suggests that, the relationships can at times be tenuous and contradictory. It is not entirely clear whose involvement in school is being promoted by decentralization policy, and how these relationships might work to address exclusion issues in participation.

Some of the challenging factors that inhibit full participation in decentralised educational planning by stakeholders as pointed out by interviewees are inadequate resources, poor working conditions and lack of logistics among others. On the part of SMC/PTA, parents' low turn up at meetings, poor attitude toward free education, inability to visit schools regularly are some of the challenges.

On issues of guidelines for the operation of decentralisation institutional structures (SMCs/PTAs), almost all the participants responded affirmatively, confirming that there are operational guidelines for SMCs/PTAs published by GES/MOE. The argument is presented that some of the decentralisation structures are not functioning as expected because some members are not ready to take up responsibilities.

For the final question which is on capacity building it was defined as a process where planning practitioners will have to go beyond depending on natural gifts to acquisition of tools to function, skills for competencies, and knowledge for performance in order to service dynamism. Institutionalised bodies responsible for the training are district teacher support team DTST, subject coordinators, guidance coordinators who organise *ad hoc* trainings. INSET provides capacity building to planners in GES.

Decentralised educational structures often lack the required human resource capacity to take on critical planning and decision-making roles. Reluctance to devolve power is from both sides – taking power at local level is risky in contexts of strong authoritarian histories of governance. The question that this raises is how will this affect decentralised educational planning as a localized issue – who takes up responsibility for supporting deprived districts to address their problems of effective decentralised educational planning, how do we ensure that this does not increase disparities and dependency on external agents such as World Bank, UNICEF and NGOs that are not sustainable?

This chapter has demonstrated the diverse ways in which educational stakeholders understand the concepts decentralisation, education decentralisation and decentralised educational planning and how they experience decentralised educational planning in actual practice as well as exhibited knowledge of capacity building opportunities provided by Ghana Education Service from planning practitioners as other educational stakeholders. The next chapter will consider conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the main findings, recommendations, and implications of the research. This thesis begun by suggesting that public policy measures have been directed towards the decentralisation of educational planning and management of pre-tertiary education in Ghana to address inefficiencies in the educational system. These inefficiencies include low enrolment growth at all levels of pre-tertiary education, investment in infrastructure and service development is inadequate, community participation particularly in the management of basic schools is also low. Quality education delivery is far from desirable and there are also institutional deficiencies in the form of weak planning system, weak supervisory capacity, weak resource management and reporting. Planning and managing such educational system is therefore a major task.

The study elicited the views of senior education officers, educational planning officers, parents, and other stakeholders who are directly involved in decentralised educational planning on what they understood by this process and how they understand its functioning in practice at the district/local and school levels.

The central research question of the thesis is ‘what is the understanding and participation of district officers, Heads of Basic Schools, Teachers and other stakeholders (SMCs and PTAs) of decentralisation and decentralised educational Planning? Three aspects of the question include; the meaning of decentralisation, participation in decentralised educational planning and capacity building for personnel involved in the planning process.

The research used a case study methodology; the uniqueness of educational officers and community's decentralised educational planning experiences in the Accra Metropolitan and Komenda – Edina - Eguafo – Abrem Municipal directorates of education as the unit of analysis, in order to investigate this question.

Three sub-questions formulated from the three aspects of the main research question are;

- a) How do different stakeholders understand the concepts of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning?
- b) What are the experiences of educational officers and the community (PTAs and SMCs) as well as other stakeholders of participation in decentralised educational planning in actual practice? and

What are the experiences of educational officers and other stakeholders of capacity building for promoting efficiency and effectiveness provided by Ghana Education Service?

6.1 Summary of Findings

Chapter five addressed the main research question with reference to the educational officers' and the Community's (PTAs and SMCs) understanding of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning and the three sub questions as stated in the introduction of this chapter. The major findings of the study are centred on; educational officer's and community's understanding of decentralisation, decentralised educational planning, stakeholder participation in decentralised educational planning process and the capacity building opportunities provided by the Ghana Education Service for stakeholders for decentralised educational planning.

6.1.1 Understanding of Decentralisation and Decentralised Educational Planning

With reference to the meaning of decentralisation, the empirical work indicated that decentralisation is considered as the transfer of decision-making authority and responsibility from the central government to regional and to local or district administration levels. The analysis suggests that decentralisation entails empowering district to take their own decisions, implement them and being answerable to any decision taken. The understanding is expressed in various forms such as; ‘a devolution of power from the top to down’, ‘absence of central imposition on local or district administration’, ‘a process by which governance is sent to the local levels’, ‘the transfer of powers and authority for the running of an organization or cooperation to the district or local level’, and ‘taking management close to the people’. It was evident that decentralisation has to do with transfer of power, management and authority from the central to local administration. The various definitions of decentralisation also attest to the fact that power, authority and control lie in the hands of District Assemblies and other stakeholders such as chiefs, opinion leaders, faith-based organizations and NGOs. Decentralisation broadly refers to a policy of creating opportunities for managing popular inputs into decision making processes resulting in greater empowerment or popular control over processes involved in the authoritative allocation of resources at the local level (Crawford, 2005). Within the Ghanaian context, that implies creating a partnership between districts authorities, chiefs, opinion leaders, faith-based organizations and non-governmental organizations to enforce standards, developing and maintaining infrastructure and to ensure that the broad institutional goals are achieved. Not only is decentralisation seen as a pathway for improved delivery of social services, but it has also come to stand for a mechanism to improve the democratisation of decision-making for increased system efficiency (see Jutting *et al.*, 2004). In many

countries in Africa, for example, where system restructuring has been going on, it has come to be regarded as a key part of the restructuring of service delivery (UNESCO, 2004b). But the gap between decentralisation policy and practice is usually wide in many developing country systems (e.g. in Malawi – Davies *et al.*, 2003). The complexities and weaknesses within environments in which it is introduced produces outcomes that are not predicted by decentralisation policy.

Decentralisation does not mean a relinquishing of all forms of control from the central government or administration to the local level (De Gauwe et al., 2005). As Kataoka (2006) points out, even in contexts where devolution of roles and responsibilities are intended, central governments have continued to exercise some control or oversight of many responsibilities devolved to local government.

If decentralisation, in principle, is expected to shift decision-making closer to local actors and shareholders (Chapman, 2000; Naidoo, 2002) to improve access to services including education, then the argument goes that this will create a more equitable society and help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. But some studies show that attempts to decentralise services and decision-making faces great obstacles and may not necessarily serve the poor (Davies et al., 2003; Jutting et al., 2004; De Grauwe et al., 2005). The poor may not be in the position to actively engage in decisions about service delivery due to their lack of political bargaining power (UNESCO 2004 b).

Educational decentralisation was explained as follows; ‘transfer of administration, managerial authority for taking decision concerning education to the people at the district and school levels’. It was also suggested that educational decentralisation relates to the school management committees at the basic level who see to the effective and efficient running of the schools. In a nutshell, this study acknowledges that, educational decentralisation refers to devolution of educational delivery from Ghana Education

Service (GES) Headquarters to the District with the function of Regional Directorate gradually becoming extinct and the local government gradually taking the role of GES Headquarters to the District Directorates where final authority will reside at the District Assembly.

The literature presents education decentralisation in developing countries as burdened by bureaucratic bottlenecks reflecting a reluctance to allow lower levels of government complete autonomy over administrative and resource management (Tikly 1996; World Bank 2001; De Grauwe et al., 2005). But, it also explains why decentralisation falters in many of these countries. Reluctance to devolve key decision-making is sometimes explained as the cause of weak human resource capacity and poor accountability procedures. A well defined policy direction for decentralisation is needed. Decentralisation Policy that defines more succinctly, the policy choices associated with devolution of authority, for planning, budgeting and accountability for development results at the level of MMDAs should be prepared. Such a policy (drawing on relevant legislations already in place), will overcome the current situation in which every level of Government is claiming authority in various aspect of existing legislation. Thus the core of such a policy should be clear statement of the functions that are assigned to the local government institutions (MMDAs which subsequently needs to be effectively transferred from central government institutions to local governments). Any contradictions in legislation for these arrangements needs to be removed.

Following the policy, decentralisation strategic framework, elaborating specific priorities over a given time frame will need to be prepared. This may well be based on an up-date and refinement of the NDAP to align closer to the sustainable development goals, making the strategic framework an instrument for overall national strategy and programmes towards accelerated growth and development. In this context, a more

systematic dialogue between the various strategic planning institutions – NDPC, Ministry of Finance & Economic Planning and the MLGRDE, the Local Government Services Council, the Ministry of Public Sector Reform – is needed in order to streamline the strategic focus for decentralization with the operational guidelines issued and implemented by these institutions.

The on-going process of legal reform within MDAs should be supported and aligned with a new decentralisation policy focused on devolution. This will imply a refinement of the Local Government Act itself as well as laws, which reinforce central management functions over those strategically, allocated to MMDAs under Act. 462 will have to be revised to reflect the overarching policy on decentralisation.

It also came to light that there is the need for District Assemblies to respond to educational development plans and budget proposal and other resource needs so as to effectively deliver to meet the demands of the sector. Resource issues need to be carefully examined and continuously monitored. All stakeholders in Ghana will have to cooperate in efforts to make manageable what is certain to be a persistent problem. Indeed, given the state of Ghanaian and world economies, resource problems may not yield to even well concern efforts at solution.

Another important issue that the current study brought to light was about the explanation of decentralised educational planning. The analysis suggests that it is an assessment of the present educational needs of a specific locality and drawing up strategies and programmes to improve the locality or school considering bottom up to top down approach used in the planning process.

Decentralised educational planning, from the data analyzed was further explained as identifying the gaps or educational needs, what needs to be done to improve teaching and learning to ensure quality educational delivery. Initiating specific plans to meet

local needs. The data also suggest that decentralised educational planning is having effective control of education in the district.

There is evidence from the study that the benefit of using decentralised educational planning in educational delivery in developing countries particularly Ghana, is enormous. They include the following; it's potential to improve accountability, increase parental participation, strengthening the leadership role of senior education officers, heads of schools, educational planners and increase teamwork in educational delivery at the local/district level.

It also creates space for wider participation from civil society organizations, NGOs and communities in the planning process. Additionally it allows for the setting of disaggregated targets and developing context specific strategies and interventions. To a large extent it reduces bureaucratic control of the planning process and makes district planning process-oriented, flexible and to some extent, evidenced based. Other arguments for decentralised educational planning include; effective and efficient care of local needs at the lower levels, better identification of district specific problems and quick flow of information. With decentralised educational planning, the functions and tasks of district education directorates have changed quite significantly. District education offices have increased responsibilities in areas such as resource allocation within the district, between the different levels of education (Pre-school, Primary Education, Secondary Education), the negotiation of proposed district education budgets with public funding sources at central level (The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, other ministries), the drawing up of medium-term District Education Strategic Plans (DESP), setting district education sector priorities and monitoring the implementation of the district education plan.

Several pertinent policy issues and problems exist in the actual operation of the system. They include clearly specifying the unit for initiating planning process and effect planning decision, resources given from national levels are specifically earmarked for certain activities. Districts are unable to address issues which are highly prioritized on their educational development agenda. Nonexistence of organizational mechanisms to facilitate district planning in education is also another pertinent operational issue that needs to be addressed. Planning competencies at the district directorates still remain a problem. How districts in developing countries like Ghana could possibly adopt and successfully practice decentralised educational planning processes is a thorny issue.

Also, unlike the typical unpredictability of most central-to-local transfer mechanisms prevailing in developing countries, the process should provide local institutions with an up-front indication of how much money will be available in the next multiyear planning cycle. This makes decentralized educational planning possible and provides a financial ceiling that makes such planning a meaningful exercise and an opportunity for educational directorates to take autonomous decisions on the use of limited resources.

This study acknowledges that two main strategies of decentralised educational planning that are undertaken at the local level are (i) School Mapping and (ii) School Performance Improvement Plans. The study brought to light that School Mapping means some fact finding in individual schools and finding out actual things that affect teaching and learning in school. The findings also indicated that educational officers feel it is a set of techniques and procedures used to identify current problems and future needs of education and measures to solve the problems at the local level.

In a nutshell school mapping is considered as an instrument for assessing the state of a school, its needs in terms of access, participation and quality for both pupils and teachers. Additionally it helps to determine what school's specific needs are and gives

opportunity for appropriate interventions. Surprisingly the community (SMCs and PTAs) were ignorant about these strategies.

Explanation of School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP) brought out different approaches in interpretations, some of which are: ‘a plan that the school sets to cover areas for improvement. Example, enrolment, teaching and learning materials, infrastructure, books and how to achieve the set targets’. Others include a document that takes care of single needs of a school, ‘a means to assess the facilities and the extent of damage of a school and to improve upon them’. ‘SPIP relates to where preferential chart or a kind of budget drawn termly by school heads, teachers and the community to assess the needs of the School. Finally, the findings suggests that SPIP is a document designed by School Heads in consultation with the staff and SMC and it captures the immediate but simple needs of a school which are mostly solved through the use of Capitation Grant and sometimes support from Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

School Performance Improvement Plan is a plan that assesses school facilities to determine the extent of damage and to improve upon them. An annual plan designed by the Headteachers of schools, teachers and School Management Committee Chairmen which entails activities that is related to school development, improving teaching and learning, sanitary facilities, minor repairs on school building, provision of teaching/learning materials. A school performance improvement plan (SPIP) serves as a mechanism through which the public can hold the school accountable for pupils’ success and through which it can measure improvement.

All schools want their pupils or students to succeed. They can only however, be able to make a lasting difference when they focus on specific goals and strategies for change. School performance improvement planning is a continuous process through which

schools set goals for improvement and make decisions about how and when these goals will be achieved. The ultimate objective is to improve children's achievement levels by enhancing the way curriculum is delivered and by the creation of an enabling school environment. The process requires the collaborative effort of all; parents, communities, teachers and pupils. The first and most crucial step in developing a SPIP is to get teachers, School Management Committees (SMC), Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) and other community members to work together to gather and analyse information about the school and to determine what needs to be improved. This process of information gathering and analysis is continuous even when the plan is under implementation. By comparing the new data to those on which the plan was based the school and the public can assess the impact of the strategies. It is important for all partners to understand that real change takes time. A SPIP is therefore best designed as a three-year rolling plan so that strategies for unachieved targets in the year of implementation are rolled over to the next year.

The implication is that the use of local level planning techniques such as school mapping, and school improvement planning and district education strategic plans for improving quality educational delivery is the practice under decentralised educational planning in Ghana. These techniques include problem identification, prioritization, and management of relationships among various stakeholders so as to improve the quality and efficiency of a given level of education at the local level (Prakash, 2008).

6.2 Participation of Stakeholders in Decentralised Educational Planning

Section 5.2 answered the research question about the participation of stakeholders in decentralised educational planning and analyzed how stakeholders' interactions affect their participation in planning and decision making in educational delivery. There is the need to find out the level of participation of all the stakeholders in planning,

implementation and evaluation levels. In Ghana Education Service (GES) many decentralisation structures are put in place such as PTA, SMC and are provided with well-defined guidelines of operation.

The SMCs are made up of a group of persons whose main aim is to promote the best interest of the school and to ensure that learners in a particular school receive the best education possible through decentralised educational planning. Thus the SMC is a school-community-based institution aimed at strengthening community involvement and mobilization of resources for education delivery. The SMC operates directly under the District Education Oversight Committee (DEOC) and in collaboration with the District/Municipal/Metropolitan Education Directorates and the schools.

The main role of the SMC is to help the headteacher of a school to plan, organize and manage the school's activities in an effective and efficient manner. This includes participating in the school's improvement planning, implementation and evaluation process, reviewing the school's progress in implementing the School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP) with the headteacher and implement mechanisms to hold headteacher and staff accountable for progress towards the goals set out in the School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP).

Another aspect of formal community involvement in schools occurs through participation of parent teacher associations (PTAs). The purpose for establishing the PTA is to help plan and promote the welfare of children and youth at home, school and community, through a strong linkage, assist in income generating activities to provide some basic needs for the school, raise the standard of children at home and secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children, so that parents and teachers may co-operate in the education of their children.

Most of the respondents cite poor community involvement in such processes with PTAs, for example, often not established or not functioning despite government mandates (PROBE, 1999; Heystek, 2003; Ahmed and Nash, 2005). Where these bodies are more active, there have been conflicts between, for example, PTAs and SMCs, in part because of unclearly defined and/or overlapping responsibilities or because certain groups have gone beyond their mandates (Passi, 1995; De Grauwe et al., 2005; Ahmed & Nath, 2005).

Research in various African and South Asian contexts has shown how there is unequal access to participation in such bodies according to socio-economic status, race, caste, social class, location, political affiliation and gender (PROBE, 1999; Therkildsen, 2000; Karlsson, 2002; Bush & Heystek, 2003; Rose, 2003; Soudien & Sayed, 2004; De Grauwe et al., 2005). Even when elected onto such committees, some voices are inevitably heard above others. Headteachers, in particular, have been singled out in a number of studies as having especially strong influence on these bodies (Soudien & Sayed, 2004; De Grauwe et al., 2005). In South Africa, for example, this has been shown to result in skewed participation in important activities such as selecting the medium of instruction and setting school fees (Soudien and Sayed, 2004), which, we can infer, will have far-reaching implications for decentralised educational planning. In particular, political affiliation and cronyism has been identified as a serious problem in the establishment and functioning of various school-community bodies to the detriment of poorer parents (PROBE, 1999; Ahmed & Nath, 2005; De Grauwe, et al., 2005).

In contrast to the difficulties cited above, community participation in schooling has been judged to be working well in the rare instances where there are good understandings and relations between schools, communities and local educational authorities, operating within a stable social context with a history of community mobilisation and a genuine

commitment to community decision-making (see for example PROBE, 1999, on successes in Himachal Pradesh, India, and the Academy for Academic Development, 2002, and De Grauwe et al., 2005, on some countries of West Africa).

What is clear from the literature is that imbalances and disparities in human and resource capacity in poor countries can actually make decentralisation exacerbate inequities in society (Davies et al., 2003; De Grauwe et al., 2005). Due to gaps in human and material resource capacity between urban and rural regions devolving power and decision-making completely to the local level actually has the potential to widen the development gap between rural and urban areas. As was found in Ghana, the widespread introduction of PTAs and SMCs has served urban communities better because they have been able to muster financial capital to improve quality of some urban schools, thus widening the quality gap between them and rural public schools. The reason for this is because as Akyeampong (2004:42) has noted, “unlike the situation in many advanced countries where the socio-economic environment and infrastructure for equitable delivery of education programmes is much more even, for many countries in the developing world especially Africa, there can be very uneven conditions”. Thus, decentralisation in systems that are not appropriately adjusted to its fundamental requirements for effectiveness can lead to outcomes that undermine the very reason why it is introduced in the first place (see Davies et. al., 2003).

There is the need for a change; opportunities for influence should flow in both directions between any two stakeholder groups. Community leaders are not simply charged with responsibility to make up only shortfalls in resources allocated by district offices, but they have opportunities to participate in the decisions that determine the level of the shortfall. Similarly, district office staffs do not simply implement policy; they also contribute to the development of policy. This is a model of shared

responsibility and shared decision making. There is the need to put in place appropriate structure for participation, that is, at all levels of the education system, there are opportunities for appropriate involvement of relevant stakeholders.

Issues related to participation can perhaps render the resources issues more manageable. If participation of the kind congruent with the philosophy of decentralization were established, as stated by Shaeffer (1994), then all stakeholders would share equally in efforts to deal with the inevitable difficult economic circumstances. Community members feel reluctant to take up responsibilities for example SMC chairperson or member of the executive body. It was observed that members do not have time for committee meetings. These conflicts significantly impact on stakeholders' participation in decentralised educational planning. On parents' participation, the data analyzed reveals that some government policies and interventions like school feeding, free school uniforms, exercise books and the like have influenced some parents to shift parental responsibilities to government, expecting government to provide everything towards their children's education. This is significantly increasing government's budgetary allocation for basic education. The Ghana Education Service receives a substantial proportion (more than 60%) of the Education Sector budget every year for effective delivery of pre-tertiary education in the country in order to satisfy the needs and aspirations of all children of school-going age. The data also suggest that some PTA and SMC members are seeking remuneration as a means of motivation. One school of thought is of the opinion that government should give members allowances while the other is of the view that there should be an established levies for allowances.

6.3 Capacity Building for Personnel involved in the Planning process

This section answered the research question on what are the experiences of educational officers and other stakeholders of capacity development programmes provided by the

Ghana Education Service. The fact remains that training and development are necessary for the survival and performance of the Service. Upon the analysis of the capacity of the Metropolitan and Municipal education directorates and the community for decentralised educational planning some findings emerged.

The findings suggest that even though there is no institutionalized training programmes for educational planners in Ghana Education Service, District Teachers Support Team (DTST) organise such programmes. Additionally, practitioners acquire skills through practical experience and learning from predecessors. Data suggests that IEPA (UCC) GIMPA (Accra) and IIEPA (Paris) are institutions willing to support training programmes but are sometimes hindered by financial constraints. The findings further explained that provision of career development programmes is still centralized so educational directorates do not budget for professional development programmes.

The study suggests that there is the need for training to help people take advantage of their opportunities to influence decisions. Parents will need to learn how to work with Headteachers, teachers and SMCs. Headteachers will have to learn to work with SMCs, community leaders and district office staff. Headteachers need to learn that they can affect decisions at the district office level, regional, headquarters and even at the level of the ministry. Community leaders who are charged with responsibility to supplement resources provided by the District Office and the Ministry will have to become skilled at taking advantage of opportunities to influence decisions at those levels.

It is also important to develop human resource and community leadership. At the organizational level, efforts could be made to develop the ability of community organizations to serve in community development. At the community level, it seeks to focus on association and relations between community residents, local groups and local community organization to build up community development. A community without

leadership may not be equipped to mobilize resources or influence decentralised educational planning. The success of local community depends on the quality, creativity and commitment of its leadership in maintaining its daily affairs.

The decentralised management of the education sector's budget and finances for pre-tertiary education to District Assemblies (DAs) involved capacity building and financial management at the district level (GES, 2004). Zonal, Town/Area councils and Unit committees who are essentially implementing agencies of the DAs and what Ayee (2000) describes as 'rallying point of local enthusiasm in support of the development objectives of DAs' (p.17) were given training to enhance their capacity to plan, initiate and execute policies in respect of matters affecting the local people. However these sub-district structures are not well resourced to perform their roles and responsibilities. These sub-district structures in Ghana now lack the necessary wherewithal to enact their own policies owing mainly to the three-tier hierarchical structure created by the 1992 constitution; the Regional Co-ordinating Councils (RCCs), the DAs and Sub-District Structures (Ayee, 2000).

It needs to be appreciated that capacity building is a long term and ongoing effort which needs to be institutionalised in the planning and implementation process. Capacity Building needs to be a continuous and ongoing initiative whose aim is to improve and facilitate the skill sets and processes involving human and other perceivable inputs. In the current context of decentralisation dispensation, the challenges in decentralised educational planning require not only specialised knowledge but also experiential learning to tackle the challenges faced by decentralised educational planning.

The educational planner at the district /local level is the pivot around which all educational planning processes revolve, so he needs knowledge and understanding of all issues concerning human existence to be able to perform creditably. In view of this he

or she must be given specific training to enable him or her to perform the tasks assigned to him or her in the area of plan design, implementation and evaluation in order to keep him or her abreast with modern trends in educational planning. Provision of adequate funds for frequent training of educational planners and other stakeholders through in-service courses, workshops, seminars and conferences for capacity development can also help. Instead of seeing educational officers and the community as inefficient and lacking capacity for responsive decision-making, I would argue that it is better to look for potential and opportunities within these systems that can improve their capacity and sensitise them into adapting their operations to meet the challenges of decentralised educational planning.

Above all the political will and commitment towards strengthening the capacity of the decentralised educational sub-structures are important for improved decentralised educational planning and quality educational delivery.

6.4 Contribution to Knowledge

Advancing an understanding of decentralisation, decentralised educational planning, the level of stakeholder participation and capacity development opportunities provided by Ghana Education Service for stakeholders in decentralised educational planning represents the main contribution of this thesis to knowledge. The study provides an understanding of decentralised educational planning in Ghana and some of the challenges of this form of micro level planning. So far most studies on decentralisation have focused on the concept explanation and transfer of power and authority to local communities. In this study the researcher has tried to shift the focus to the issue of decentralised educational planning and this based on the framework developed in chapter 3.

Decentralised Educational planning in Ghana is a relatively unexplored field particularly in relation to how it is understood and implemented, community involvement in the process and capacity building opportunities provided by the Ghana Education Service for educational stakeholders. Theoretically, this particular study adds knowledge about the importance of exploring decentralised educational planning practices in a wider global context. It suggests new insight to add to theories of decentralisation and decentralised educational planning.

This study also contributes to debates about decentralised educational planning, contributing to the extant literature on the topic. The study also adds to the existing stock of knowledge on decentralisation and decentralised educational planning by confirming the earlier works of Varghese, 1996, Mankoe and Maynes, 1994, and Hanson, 1997 which suggest that when decisions are implemented closest to those affected they are empowered to make decisions and better decisions are made. If decentralisation, in principle, is expected to shift decision-making closer to local actors and shareholders (Chapman, 2000; Naidoo, 2002), and to improve access to services including education, then the argument goes that this will create a more equitable society and help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. However this study points out limitations of decentralisation supporting the arguments of Govinda (1997, p. 281) that decentralisation alone does not make sense, but a decentralisation process combined with a clear government role in setting standards, provision of materials, support training and supervision matters. Govinda further argues against the belief that decentralisation increases community participation in educational decision making. According to him delegation does not automatically lead to stakeholders' empowerment and commitment.

Tikly (1996:22) also revealed that ‘decentralisation of decision-making power ... often proved more rhetorical than real’ because there was ‘a tendency for bureaucratic establishments to protect their power and not to cede power to ... groups they do not trust’. The reluctance to devolve critical decision-making to local agencies and actors reflects to an extent, the deep-seated hierarchical relationship between central and local government that resists change to shift power and control away from the centre.

Colclough 1994 points out that in many instances education decentralisation occurs without changes to the incentive structure to motivate accountability and transparency. In effect, decentralisation policy does not create new ways of working that balances responsibility with accountability. While in theory such a system is expected to have positive impacts on efficiency and equity of service provision, in practice these outcomes depend on the existing institutional arrangements and coherence of decentralisation policies to create the proper enabling environment for bottom-up accountability. Additionally, Olowu & Wunsch, (1990) are also of the view that decentralisation efforts have not significantly expanded participation, improved project efficiency or effectiveness, increased orientation to rural needs and wants, expanded financial support for local projects and services by rural dwellers, reduced central cost or (much less) redistribute wealth, status or power to the rural areas. Planning systems do not seem any more responsive to rural priorities, local institutions of governance any more viable and projects any more likely to be sustained after donor and/or central state investments have been completed

Considering these case study design, the researcher understands that this study has both exploratory and explanatory characteristics because it seeks to understand the uniqueness of educational officers and community’s decentralised educational planning experiences in Accra Metropolitan and Komenda – Edina - Eguafo -Abrem Municipal

directorates of education. This helps to understand the phenomena in greater detail. Both designs are expected to enable understanding of the experiences of directors, planning officers, headteachers and other stakeholders about meaning of decentralisation, decentralised educational planning and the level of participation of stakeholders in the process. Also, the case study used in this research provides detailed description of the educational officers and community's experiences with Accra Metropolitan Directorate and Edina Eguafu Abrem Directorate of Education. Thus, the study provides a detailed analysis of the various experiences of stakeholders in a given context.

Raising awareness about the concepts of decentralisation, educational decentralisation and decentralised educational planning experiences in Ghana in a specific context could inform similar studies in other contexts. Gaps in human and material resource capacity at the districts widen the potential of increasing the developmental gaps in such areas by completely devolving power and decision-making completely to the local level. Poor community involvement in decentralised educational planning has also been cited by respondents. There is the need to develop human resource and community leadership.

6.5 Implication for Decentralised Educational Planning

The results of the research may be useful not only for the future decentralised educational planning policies and practice but also could offer an empirical example to the other policy decisions in educational delivery. The implications which have emerged from this research are classified under three main areas: implications for decentralized educational planning, for stakeholders, and for further research.

In the process of transformation, moving from centralized to decentralised educational planning the policy makers should consider the following strategic areas: a) Educational Decentralisation, b) Decentralised Educational Planning and c) Capacity Building. That

is the transfer of administrative, managerial authority for taking decision concerning education to local and school levels, identifying the gaps or educational needs and strategizing to improve teaching and learning to ensure quality educational delivery and institutionalized training programmes to improve the capacity of planners and other stakeholders in education should be critically examined.

This research highlights the seriousness of decentralised educational planning to improve the quality of educational delivery and increased participation in decision making by stakeholders in the education enterprise. Despite the fact that decentralised educational planning entails bottom up approach to educational planning, it is characterized by many problems. In an effort to deepen the decentralisation process and facilitate grassroots participation in decision-making process and provision of basic educational infrastructure at the local/district level, the level of practical functionality of the decentralised educational sub structures is very crucial. The interviewees suggested strengthening of all machinery needed to improve decentralised educational planning as it is the conduit for active grassroots/ community engagement in decision making at the local/district level. Transparency and accountability should be the hall mark. In effect, it could be seen that the involvement of the community in decision making on education is not impressive as envisaged by Ghana's local government Act, 1993, Act, 462 and the National Development Planning Act, 1994, Act 480.

The study points out that decentralisation require serious capacity development for planners and other stakeholders in a system of decentralised education planning. Capacity development, where it does occur, in the case of Ghana, is mainly the result of learning from practical experiences, on the job training. Training is particularly valued in a situation where educational officials felt their initial education is far from enough to address the challenges entailed in decentralised educational planning.

In order to enhance decentralised educational planning at the local level, the following are recommended; there should be capacity building for all stakeholders to enable effective and efficient stakeholder engagement in planning, implementation and monitoring of educational activities of the directorates. Management of educational directorates has to ensure that district strategic plans are drawn through meaningful engagement of all stakeholders at the local level. Thus, the district education directorate must organize regular fora at the community level to brief the people on activities of the directorate and central government policies and programmes.

6.5.1 Implications for Educational Planners

The findings of this study recommend that greater attention should be given to effective participatory educational planning in addressing quality educational delivery issues. The evidence is also suggestive of the need for management to provide more general policy guidelines, for example stating the functions of the educational planners and decentralised educational institutionalized structures explicitly. The policy could also provide a framework on how to manage planners in the educational system. District planning unit will have to be provided with the requisite manpower and other logistics to function effectively in the delivery of quality education.

6.5.2 Implication for Further Research

During the development of this research several new questions arose. While some can be addressed by resorting to the analysis hereby presented some others suggest topics that, even if connected to issues falling within the scope of this work, go beyond it. At this point I would like to identify four major areas for further research connected to decentralised educational planning.

First, this research is a case study that reports the way educational officers and other stakeholders within certain period of time experiences decentralised educational

planning. As the research progressed and data was analyzed, it became obvious that the research could have more and diverse data such as the use of questionnaires to gather data for comparative case studies, such as comparing similar results from different directorates of education. This can help to produce further rich data that can contribute to the enhancement of understanding the stakeholders' decentralised educational planning experience. This raises the need for a comparative approach to extend the scope of the study. It can be done by comparing practices in more districts, possibly deprived and well endowed district.

Furthermore, although this study is somewhat unique in the way that it investigates stakeholders' decentralised educational planning experience in Ghana, it is a case study using a small sample, so data could be expanded if other similar studies are carried out using different techniques.

6.6 Reflection on my Research Journey

At the beginning my research journey to understand stakeholders' decentralised educational planning experiences, I faced many difficulties. These included not only identifying what decentralised educational planning is and how it can be researched, but also the research design such as what method should be used, and most importantly, understanding myself as a researcher.

In terms of my conceptual understanding of decentralised educational planning, my research is evidence of how my understanding of such issue has changed over my research journey. In terms of conducting the research, I found that my understanding about research has changed drastically from the point where I started. I have become more aware about the research process and the many assumptions that I had about decentralised educational planning. When I started, I was not aware of the complexity of researching decentralised educational planning as a phenomenon, and I thought that I

knew most of the issues that would emerge from this research. Reflecting back on those days, I found that I was not aware of the many issues, such as my positionality in terms of research paradigm, some basic questions that any social science research student needs to address before commencing his/her research, i.e. 'what is your ontological and epistemological stance in conducting the research?', 'how do your ontological and epistemological stance inform your methodology?' Also, I took for granted the issue of access as I was going to conduct the research in a context with which I was familiar. Trustworthiness was also among the many issues that I had to deal with. Dealing and negotiating with such issues made me realize the complexity of doing research in a familiar context, and that it was not as straight forward a process as I originally assumed.

Thus, I stopped looking for the understanding, experiences and problems of decentralised educational planning and tried to learn how I should define my research stance. I realised that instead of knowing stakeholders understanding of and participation in decentralised educational planning, I should first explore myself as a researcher. With this approach, I came up with research strategy that was firmly grounded in interpretative constructivism. I assumed about stakeholders understanding and level of participation the way I perceived it. But now, I believe that planners and stakeholders construct their own realities, and the best way to understand their realities is from their perspective. This research stance made me reconsider my methodology. Thus I used a qualitative research methodology that would allow me to take stakeholders' perspective on board, and use in-depth analysis into planning practices. The flexible nature of qualitative research methodology provided the opportunity to delve into the understanding and experiences of educational officers and the community. This enabled the researcher to come into contact with variant

interpretations on decentralised educational planning. In short, this whole process significantly shaped my understanding of research and the ways of conducting it. It redefined me as a researcher and changed my ways of thinking.

In completion this study explored the understanding of educational officials and other stakeholders' of decentralisation, decentralised educational planning, and community participation in processes of decentralised educational planning as well as capacity building opportunities for stakeholders engaged in decentralised educational planning. The evidence presented in this research shows that, in Ghana, public policy measures have been directed towards the decentralisation of educational planning and management of pre-tertiary education to address education inefficiencies. The implementation of decentralised educational planning is to enhance grassroots participation in plan formulation and implementation in educational delivery in Ghana. To this end, various decentralisation educational structures such as SMCs and PTAs have been institutionalized to encourage community participation in educational planning and decision-making. Attempts to enhance community involvement in Ghana resonate with global efforts. Several developing countries have chosen to decentralise educational planning in the hope of obtaining increased participation of stakeholders in educational planning and decision making. In any effort to promote community participation for decentralised educational planning and development, it is necessary to assess the communities' capacity to carry out what they are expected to achieve in a long run. Community participation is a process that facilitates the realization of improving educational quality and the promotion of democracy within society.

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APPENDIX I

DECENTRALISED EDUCATIONAL PLANNING IN GHANA - A CASE STUDY OF TWO DISTRICTS IN GHANA

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DISTRICT DIRECTORS

A research is being conducted into how policy commitment to decentralised educational planning translate into practice at the District and school levels and the interviewer would want to elicit some information on issues related to the above topic and how it is impacting on efficient educational delivery.

1. How do you understand the decentralisation concept?
2. What role does an education planner play as a service in the delivery of education?
3. Explain decentralisation planning.
4. What processes does it follow?
5. What is educational decentralisation?
6. What does educational planning entail?
7. What is the link between decentralisation planning process and educational planning process.
8. How do you appoint your planning officer?
9. Is there any institutionalized training programme for career development?
10. If yes how can it be improved?
11. After appropriation bill has been passed what role does your planner/budget officer play during implementation?

12. What incentive package do you have in your district for planning/budget officer in your district? How are your planners motivated?
13. What are some of the challenges that you encounter in educational planning in a decentralisation environment?
14. How can decentralised educational planning be improved?
15. What are some of the specific measures that you think should be taken?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DISTRICT PLANNING OFFICERS

A research is being conducted into how policy commitment to decentralised educational planning translate into practice at the District and school levels and the interviewer would want to elicit some information on issues related to the above topic and how it is impacting on efficient educational delivery.

1. What is your qualification?
2. Number of years of experience in the field as an Educational planner?
3. How were you appointed as planning officer?
4. Is there any institutionalized training programme for career development?
5. If yes how can it be improved?
6. What role do you play in the educational delivery in your outfit?
7. After appropriation bill has been passed what role do you play during implementation?
8. What incentive packages exist for planning/budget officer in your district?
How are you motivated?
9. How do you understand the decentralisation concept?
10. Explain decentralisation planning.
11. What processes does it follow?

What is educational decentralisation?

12. at does educational planning entail?
13. What in the link between decentralisation planning process and educational planning process.
14. What are some of the challenges that you encounter in educational planning in a decentralisation environment? How participatory is the process?

15. How can educational planning be improved in a decentralisation environment?

- some of the specific measures that you think should be taken-.

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SCHOOLHEADS, SMC and PTA REPs

A research is being conducted into how policy commitment to decentralised educational planning translate into practice at the District and school levels and the interviewer would want to elicit some information on issues related to the above topic and how it is impacting on efficient educational delivery.

1. What is your qualification?
2. Number of years of experience in the field as Head, SMC chairman or PTA chairman?
3. How were you appointed as Head, SMC chairman or PTA chairman?
4. What role do you play in the educational delivery in your School?
5. How do you understand the decentralisation concept?
6. Explain decentralisation planning.
7. What processes does it follow?
8. What is educational decentralisation?
9. What does educational planning entail?
10. What is School Performance Improvement Plan?
11. What processes does it entail?
12. What are some of the challenges that you encounter in your planning process?
How participatory is the process?
13. How can this planning process be improved? - some of the specific measures that you think should be taken-.

Participant Consent Form

Title of Project

Decentralized Educational Planning in Ghana – A Case Study of Accra Metropolitan Directorate of Education and Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipal Directorate of Education.

Project approval reference: 1011/09/02

I agree to take part in the above research study, which is being conducted by Abaidoo A. Edzii a student of the School of Education, University of Sussex in the United Kingdom. I have had an informed explanation of the purpose of the research, and my level of involvement. I have read and understood the explanatory statements which I will keep for records. I understand that by agreeing to take part means that I am willing to:

- (i) Allow the researcher to interview me (One-on-one)
- (ii) Allow the interview to be audio taped
- (iii) Make myself available for a further interview/discussion/interaction

I understand that any information I provide will be treated as confidential and that no information that I grant will lead to the identification of any individual in the reporting of the research either by the researcher or by any other party.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can choose to participate in part or the entire project. I can also withdraw at any stage /phase of the project without being penalised or disadvantage in anyway.

Name:.....

Signature:

Date:.....25th January 2012.....

Tel. No.....

Participant Consent Form

Title of Project

Decentralized Educational Planning in Ghana – A Case Study of Accra Metropolitan Directorate of Education and Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipal Directorate of Education.

Project approval reference: 1011/09/02

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Name:.....

Signature:

Date:....25th January, 2012.....

Tel. No.....

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Name:.....

Signature:

Date 8th June 2012.....

Tel. No.....

Participant Consent Form

Title of Project

Decentralized Educational Planning in Ghana – A Case Study of Accra Metropolitan Directorate of Education and Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipal Directorate of Education.

Project approval reference: 1011/09/02

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Name:.....

Signature:

Date:...1st February, 2012.....

Tel. No.....

APPENDIX III

SCHOOL	COMMUNITY/ZONE
1. Abrem Agona Catholic Primary/JSS	Abrem Agona
2. Abrem Agona Methodist Primary/JSS	Abrem Agona
3. Saaman-Berese Catholic Primary and JSS	Berese
4. Abrem Essiam Catholic Primary/JSS	Essiam
5. Jesus Saves Preparatory	Abrem Agona
6. Ankaase D/A Primary and JSS	Ankaase
7. Kwesi Edum D/A Primary	Ankaase
8. Saman Abotar Park D/A Primary/JSS	Saman
9. Abrem Dwabor D/A Primary	Dwabor
10. Akwakrom D/A Primary	Akwakrom
11. Abreshia Catholic Primary	Abreshia
12. Abreshia Catholic JSS	Abreshia
13. Eguafo Breman D/A A&B Primary	Eguafo
14. Eguafo Breman D/A JSS	Eguafo
15. Essaman United D/A Primary & JSS	Essaman
16. Ankwanda Catholic Primary & JSS	Ankwanda
17. Ayensudo D/A Primary & JSS	Ayensudo (New Town)
18. Ayensudo Islamic Primary	Ayensudo Junction
19. Ayensudo Junction JSS	Ayensudo Junction
20. Ayensudo A.M.E Zion Primary & JSS	Ayensudo Junction
21. Abeyee D/A Primary & JSS	Abeyee

22.	Brenu Akyinam D/A Primary	Brenu Akyinam
23.	Brenu Akyinam D/A JSS	Brenu Akyinam
24.	Ampenyi D/A Primary	Ampenyi
25.	Ampenyi D/A JSS	Ampenyi
26.	Dutch-Komenda Cath. Primary	Dutch Komenda
27.	Dutch-Komenda Cath. JSS	Dutch Komenda
28.	D/Benyadze/Egyei D/A Primary A&B	Daber/Benyadze/Egyei
29.	Komenda D/A Primary A & B	Komenda
30.	Komenda D/A JSS A	Komenda
31.	Komenda D/A JSS B	Komenda
32.	Aldersgate Methodist Primary	Komenda
33.	Ghasel D/A Primary	Komenda
34.	Komenda College Practice Primary	Komenda
35.	Entsua-Mensah Memorial Preparatory	Komenda
36.	Entsua-Mensah Memorial JSS	Komenda
37.	Kissi D/A Primary	Kissi
38.	Oxford Preparatory Primary	Kissi
39.	Kissi English/Arabic Primary	Kissi
40.	Kyiase D/A Primary & JSS	Kyiase
41.	Kwahinkrom D/A Primary & JSS	Kwahinkrom
42.	Dompoase-Kokwaado D/a Primary & JSS	Dompoase
43.	Besease D/A Primary & JSS	Besease
44.	Anweem-Kissi	Anweem-Kissi
45.	Antado D/A Primary	Antado
46.	Antado D/A JSS	Antado

47.	Kafodzidzi D/A Primary &JSS	Kafodzidzi
48.	Abrobiano D/A Primary	Abrobiano
49.	Abrobiano D/A JSS	Abrobiano
50.	Abrobiano Islamic Primary	Abrobiano
51.	Duakyimase Islamic Primary	Duakyimase
52.	Aburansa D/A Primary	Aburansa
53.	Aburansa D/A JSS	Aburansa
54.	Dominase Catholic Primary & JSS	Dominase
55.	Dominase D/A Primary	Dominase
56.	Akotobinsin Methodist Primary	Elmina
57.	Etsiapa Memorial Methodist Primary	Elmina
58.	St. James Anglican Primary	Elmina
59.	Dr. Baffour Anglican JSS	Elmina
60.	St. Monica's Smiling Faces	Elmina
61.	Elmina D/A Primary A & B	Elmina
62.	Elmina D/A JSS	Elmina
63.	Hollywood Primary/JSS	Elmina
64.	The Community School	Elmina
65.	Holly Trinity Preparatory Primary	Elmina
66.	Elmina Catholic Boys Primary/JSS	Elmina
67.	Elmina Catholic Girls Primary/JSS	Elmina
68.	Elmina Methodist JSS A & B	SSNIT Flats
69.	Fair Weather Primary & JSS	SSNIT Flats
70.	Bantuma Akyinim D/A Primary/JSS	Bantuma
71.	Christ Care Primary/JSS	Mbofra Akyinim

72.	Pershie Jira-Akyinim D/A Primary/JSS	Gwira Akyinim
73.	Bronyibima D/A Primary/JSS	Bronyibima
74.	Sanka D/A Primary	Sanka
75.	Ntranoa D/A Primary A & B	Ntranoa
76.	Ntranoa D/A JSS	Ntranoa
77.	Nkontrodu A.M.E Zion	Nkontrodu
78.	St. Anne Catholic Primary	Nkontrodu
79.	Amisano Catholic Primary/JSS	Amisano
80.	Ankaful D/A Primary/JSS	Ankaful
81.	Simiw D/A Primary/JSS	Simiw
82.	Ankaful Mental D/A Primary	Ankaful Mental Hospital
83.	Ankaful Mental D/A JSS	Ankaful Mental Hospital
84.	Antonkwa Catholic Primary/JSS	Atonkwa
85.	Shariff Islamic Primary	Elmina