

# Ghana's Educational Reform and Policies Towards Teachers' Professional Development

Constance Osei Bonsu<sup>1</sup>, Ama Kyerewaa Preko<sup>2</sup>, Tetteh Terrence Thomas<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,3</sup>Ph.D. Candidate, Zhejiang Normal University, Zhejiang, China

<sup>2</sup>Master's Candidate, Portland State University, Portland, United States

## ABSTRACT

The Ghana Education Reforms Agenda has three key priorities: improving learning results, increasing accountability, and ensuring equity at all levels of the education sector. Ghana's education system has undergone modifications to improve teaching and learning, leading to increased skill acquisition and national development. In 1987, Ghana's educational reforms recognized the need for practical education for solving problems. According to the paper, Ghana's educational system has undergone frenzied reforms since independence in an attempt to address the nation's developmental demands while also meeting the bare minimum of standards. This extensive study analyzes the subject of inconsistency in Ghana's educational policy, focusing on the impact of teacher professional development in the education system. The paper discusses Ghana's educational reforms and the necessity for teachers to implement professional development strategies in their training programs. It also emphasizes the value of teacher professional development in the educational sector. The Implementation of educational reforms and policies helps instructors and teachers to gain new professional subject knowledge, and pedagogical approaches.

**KEYWORDS:** Educational Reform; Teachers; Teacher professional Development; Ghana

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Teachers globally encounter a diverse range of reforms designed to bring about changes in educational systems. These systemwide reforms directly influence the professional growth of teachers. Implementing reform processes in companies, especially in educational systems, is a challenging endeavour, and the outcomes often do not align with the desired goals. As said, the process of reform is typically executed hierarchically, starting from the highest level of authority (Fullan, 2010). The systemwide reform policy is implemented by policy-makers, excluding the parties directly involved in the process (Koomar et al., 2024). Hence, the extent to which all parties participating in the educational system reforms are included in the process and engage in discourse is a critical determinant of successful implementation (Cook et al., 2007). Ensuring the involvement of stakeholders as equal partners in the reform processes, where they actively participate in the formulation, establishment, and execution of reform goals, is crucial for the successful

and efficient implementation of the reform (Fuller, 2010). This is especially accurate when addressing policies that have an impact on teachers and their professional growth (Darling-Hammond, 2020). According to Cook et al. (2007), models that explain successful implementation of reform processes suggest that the initial crucial stage occurs when the relevant parties understand and appreciate the necessity for reform.

## 2. History of Educational Development in Ghana

Before the introduction of European traders, education in Ghana, traditionally known as the Gold Coast, was primarily informal. Oral communication was used to impart information and knowledge, whereas apprenticeship was used to transfer skills (Ekundayo, 2018; Opoku, 2016). The introduction of European merchants and Christian missionaries, specifically the Wesleyan, Basel, and Bremen missions, played a significant role in bringing Western education to Ghana as early as 1765

**How to cite this paper:** Constance Osei Bonsu | Ama Kyerewaa Preko | Tetteh Terrence Thomas "Ghana's Educational Reform and Policies Towards Teachers' Professional Development" Published in International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN: 2456-6470, Volume-8 | Issue-3, June 2024, pp.209-219, URL: [www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd64840.pdf](http://www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd64840.pdf)



IJTSRD64840

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(Ekundayo, 2018; Opoku, 2016). Presbyterian and Methodist schools were founded in the southern region of Gold Coast, which is now known as Ghana, with the purpose of educating the local population to serve as translators for trade and the spread of the Christian message. Their presence enabled the establishment of a school that focuses on teaching pupils the fundamental skills of reading and writing, using basic literacy and religious texts as the main instructional materials. In 1832, the missionaries expanded the establishment of schools to Osu. The majority of attendees were local elites, including mulattos, children of local chiefs, and wealthy traders. This demographic composition helped the missionaries persuade the traditional authorities, who then facilitated the acceptance of formal education (Ekundayo, 2018; Opoku, 2016). The Wesleyan was founded in coastal areas with the English language mostly used as a means of communication. At the same time, the Basel mission expanded its reach into the interior regions and encouraged the use of native languages for the purpose of converting people to their religion (Opoku, 2016). They offered instruction in writing, reading, mathematics proficiency, and hands-on skills training. The pupils were provided with practical training in artisan skills such as carpentry, masonry, blacksmithing, shoemaking, sewing, and agricultural activities, along with education in medical and health subjects (Ekundayo, 2018). An important accomplishment of missionary education during this time period is the transliteration of indigenous languages such as Twi, Ewe, and Ga (Ekundayo, 2018). Nevertheless, the students have imposed school fees due to the missionaries facing significant financial difficulties in managing the schools (Ekundayo, 2018).

### **2.1. Transformation from the Schools in the Castles to Missionary schools**

From 1874 onwards, the colonial authorities were responsible for governing the Gold Coast colony throughout the colonial era. By 1881, there were 139 schools on the Gold Coast, marking a significant accomplishment in the education sector. However, it is important to note that the education system at that time exhibited considerable variation (Ekundayo, 2018). Upon its colonization by Great Britain in 1874, the Gold Coast underwent transformations in its educational system (Opoku, 2016). In 1882, missionaries devised a strategy to guide the education sector. As a result, the job of school inspector was established in 1887, and the Office of the Director of Education was created in 1890. In 1918, a comprehensive educational development plan was implemented. This plan included initiatives such as universal primary education, the establishment of

provincial teacher training institutes, and the implementation of improved compensation for teachers. These efforts were carried out under the leadership of Sir Hugh Clifford (Ekundayo, 2018).

### **2.2. Education Growth in Ghana During the Second World War**

The education sector had a significant reduction in growth during the Second World War due to the mobilisation of European personnel for war. Mrs. V.A. Tetty assumed the role of the first African Director of Education in 1938. In the 1950s, Ghana had created around 3000 elementary and secondary schools, and 6.6% of the population had the opportunity to get formal education (Isahaku, 2009). In just one year, the number of primary schools in Ghana rose from 1,081 in 1951 to 3,372 in 1952. Additionally, within five years, enrollment in these schools doubled. As a result, Ghana emerged as the country with the most advanced education system in Africa. During the 1950s, the country achieved the greatest level of education in Sub-Saharan Africa. As a result, it was able to provide teachers and other government employees to all the other countries in the region. Nevertheless, individuals encountered financial obstacles in their pursuit of education due to the absence of free education (Ekundayo, 2018).

### **2.3. Ghana's education system after independence**

Formal education was limited to a select group of those who had the privilege of accessing it (Graham, 1971; Opoku et al., 2015). After gaining independence on March 6, 1957, Ghana prioritised education as a fundamental goal in Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's political agenda, as evidenced by the postcolonial education system (Ekundayo, 2018; Opoku et al., 2015). Various policies were implemented to promote education, such as free obligatory basic education, the creation of local education authorities, securing subsidies for school construction, acquisition of equipment, and maintenance of schools (Little, 2010).

Nkrumah held the belief that education is the pivotal factor in unlocking the potential of the future (Akyeampong, 2020). In 1961, he spearheaded the creation of the Education Act (Act 87), a policy document that establishes the premise of providing free, universal, and mandatory primary education. The Act enacted the primary and secondary education statute, as documented by Ekundayo in 2018. Additionally, the Act also established Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, as referenced (Opoku, 2016). The Act had three major outcomes: firstly, it created Local Education Authorities responsible for maintaining primary

schools; secondly, it made education compulsory for all residents under section 2(1); and thirdly, it ensured that education was offered free of charge to all individuals under section 20(2). (Ekundayo, 2018). Ekundayo (2018) reported that primary school enrolment had a significant growth from 664,332 in 1960 to 1,413,517 in 1965. During the same period, the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) jumped from 59% in 1960 to nearly a 200% increase in 1965. However, the documented gains primarily resulted from the enrollment of older students, suggesting that Ghana is already capable of accommodating a significant number of primary school students. The decrease in economic prosperity caused a halt in the increase of students enrolling in school between 1965 and 1970. This loss in enrollment resulted in a decrease in the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER), which fell to 72% by 1975. From 2000 onwards, the GER remained below 80% (Akyeampong, 2020).

The Education Act of 1961 subsequently enabled the establishment of new teacher training colleges, granting authority to existing colleges and endorsing on-the-job training programmes for instructors without formal qualifications. Between 1961 and 1963, the strategy resulted in a 1,000 rise in the number of teachers, and the annual production of teachers increased from 420 to 1,108 (Akyeampong, 2020; Ekundayo, 2018). The education system consisted of six years of primary education, four years of middle school, five years of secondary education, and two years of sixth form. This structure resulted in a total of 17 years of pre-tertiary education (Akyeampong, 2020). In 1966, there was significant criticism regarding the widespread and lengthy nature of schooling, particularly in relation to the expenses associated with providing high-quality education. In 1973, the military administration established a Dzobo group with the purpose of evaluating the education system and providing suggestions for enhancement. Therefore, committees were established in 1974 to investigate the underlying reasons for the decrease in school enrollment. As a result, these committees suggested implementing educational reform. (Ekundayo, 2018; Opoku, 2016).

According to Opoku (2016), education reforms in Ghana have been implemented in a succession of stages starting from 1987. The Rawlings government obtained funding from outside sources to support the implementation of new policies in the education sector. The Education Act of 1987 implemented the recommendations made by the Dozbo committee in 1974. These recommendations included the introduction of national literary publicity and a reduction in the number of years of pre-tertiary

education from 17 years to 12 years. Specifically, the changes involved reducing junior education from 4 years to 3 years and adjusting senior education to 2 years for both lower and upper stages. This transformed the education system from a 6-4-5-2 structure to a 6-3-2-2 structure. Additionally, vocational education was included in junior education as part of these reforms. Mandatory education was implemented for children between the ages of 6 and 14. The education reform successfully elevated the prominence of education by modifying the educational framework, augmenting enrollment, and improving infrastructure. Nevertheless, the goals of universal basic education and vocational education were not accomplished due to various circumstances, including administrative obstacles and a lack of political will (Akyeampong, 2020; Ekundayo, 2018; Opoku, 2020).

According to Ekundayo (2018), the school system deteriorated in late 1974 as a result of the country's economic collapse. The nation's debt profile experienced a significant increase, but the progress made in the educational system declined sharply. The country's education sector was adversely affected by various difficulties like as political instability, multiple military takeovers, brain drain, corruption, bad administration, frequent changes in education policy, inadequate funding, and low pay (Pryor et al., 2012). Opoku (2016) contended that the constitutional provision established in 1992 thereafter enabled the state to provide free and mandatory universal basic education to all. The Local Government Act of 1993 facilitated the decentralisation of school administration by granting local assemblies the authority to share power. In addition, the implementation of free compulsory and universal basic education from 1996 to 2005 aimed to bridge the disconnect between policy and practice in primary education. It also aimed to improve the living conditions of teachers in order to enhance the quality of education provided. The implementation of vocational education led to the establishment of the Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training in 2006 and the National Accreditation Board (NAB) in 2007 during John Agyekum Kuffour's administration (Opoku, 2016). According to the World Economic Forum's 2013/2014 report, Ghana ranked 46th out of 148 nations in terms of the quality of its education system. Additionally, Ghana's literacy rate was 71.5% in 2010 (Schwab, 2013). The present education policy plan organizes education into three distinct phases: basic education, which encompasses kindergarten, primary school, and junior high school. Secondary education includes senior high school, and technical and vocational education,



whereas tertiary education consists of universities, polytechnics, and colleges. Basic education is mandatory for children aged 4 and 5. The medium of teaching is English, and schools conduct academic sessions from August to May annually (Opoku et al., 2015).

### 3. Educational Policy Reforms in Ghana

Since gaining independence, the Ghanaian government has implemented several educational policy reforms as a key endeavour to improve the quality and quantity of education provided to the population. The changes mentioned are the 1951 Accelerated Development Plan, 1961 Education Act, changes of the National Liberation Council, the 1974 New Structure and Content of Education, the 1987 Education Reforms, and the 2007 New Educational Reform (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). The following items are covered below:

#### 3.1. The 1951 Accelerated Development Plan

The Accelerated Development Plan was the initial educational reform implemented in Ghana during Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's administration, marking the first postcolonial era educational reform in the country. The policy reform was enacted in August 1951 at the beginning of the Dr. Nkrumah government (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). The reform aimed to address the expansion of the educational system and the creation of teacher training colleges to generate skilled teaching staff for the instruction and development of students (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016; Pryor et al., 2012). The teacher training programme was customised to align with the African perspective by including the cultural realities of Ghanaians. This endeavour aimed to eliminate any Western perceptions or prejudices in education. The reform incorporated African cultural identity, values, and practices into the curriculum of the educational system. The reform allowed the use of local languages (vernaculars) as the main language of instruction in lower primary schools, while English was used for teaching and learning in upper primary and higher education levels. The strategy promoted the expansion of both primary and secondary schools. Fifteen new secondary schools and technical colleges were built by the government in various locations, including as Accra, Tarkwa, Kumasi, and Sekondi-Takoradi (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016)

#### 3.2. The 1961 Education Act

The Education Act of 1961, implemented during Dr. Nkrumah's administration, marked the second phase of educational growth in February 1962. The Education Act was a comprehensive 7-year policy initiative aimed at promoting national reconstruction and development. It focused on enhancing basic education and expanding secondary education, as

well as establishing teacher training colleges, post-secondary institutions, and technical and managerial training programmes. Additionally, the Act mandated universities to contribute to the expansion of various sectors of the economy, such as industry and agriculture, in order to foster overall development. According to Abukari et al. (2015), the Education Act established a system of free and mandatory education for all children, starting at the age of six and lasting for six years. The Education Act granted local governments the authority to engage in school administration and established free pre-tertiary education in northern Ghana.

#### 3.3. The Reforms of the National Liberation Council

This change was incorporated among the actions taken to rescue Ghana's economy from dire circumstances as soon as possible. On February 24, 1966, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's administration was overthrown by the military in a coup d'etat led by Major A.A. Afrifa and General E.K. Kotoka (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). On March 7, 1966, a new Education Review Committee was established to conduct a thorough examination of the formal education system. The proposals resulted in the prompt discontinuation of the 7-year education development plan implemented by the Dr Kwame Nkrumah administration. The free textbook policy was revised to implement a shared payment plan between the government and parents. As a result, parents are now responsible for contributing towards the cost of textbooks provided to students (Adu Gyamfi, 2023; Braimah & Forson, 2023). Additional measures to combat economic crises included reducing the expense of tertiary education and implementing government policies to curb its growth pace. The National Liberation Council (NLC) implemented many measures to successfully achieve its goals (Braimah et al., 2014). The education reform was fully implemented in 1968 with the aim of expanding secondary, technical, and teacher education, improving the quality of primary education, and effectively managing the growth of university education to meet development demands. The duration of elementary education was condensed from 10 years to 8 years, with an additional 2 years added to middle school as part of the secondary education prerequisites. However, the Common Entrance Examination holds utmost importance in determining a student's admittance to secondary school. Secondary education typically spans a duration of 5 years and serves as a prerequisite for taking the West African Examinations, which is necessary for admission into a 4-year university programme (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016).

### 3.4. The 1974 New Structure and Content of Education

The past education systems faced significant criticism for being exclusive and seen as mere replicas of British grammar schools (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). Under the leadership of Col. Ignatius Kutu Acheampong, the National Redemption Council (NRC) implemented significant changes to the educational system through the Dzobo Committee, which provided acceptable suggestions. The New Structure finalised by the 1973 Dzobo Committee report led to the completion of the Content of Education (NSCE) policy statement in 1974. The educational policy paper implemented the concept of junior and senior secondary school (JSS) (SSS) into the educational system. In 1974, the Ghana Teaching Service (GTS) was renamed as the Ghana Education Services (GES) as part of the reform implementation (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). The NSCE reform shortened the duration of pre-tertiary education from 17 years to 13 years. This programme modified the format from 6-4-5-2 to 6-3-2-2. Specifically, it reduced the duration of elementary education from 6 years to 3 years of junior secondary school, and altered senior secondary education from 4 years to 2 years of lower stage and 2 years of upper stage (Kadingdi, 2004). The primary objective of the reform was to enhance the employability of secondary school graduates by equipping them with the necessary skills to secure job possibilities. Additionally, it gradually incorporated tailoring, woodwork, cuisine, dressmaking, metals, technical drawing, masonry, and car activities into the educational curriculum. The aims were achieved exceptionally well (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016).

### 3.5. The 1987 Education Reforms

In 1987, Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings' government established an education committee with the purpose of evaluating education sector policies. The committee aimed to improve the delivery of education and promote the growth of the sector. The strategy aimed to achieve its goals by implementing universal and mandatory education, as well as by strategically reducing the duration of pre-tertiary education from 17 years to 12 years, following the structure of 6 years of primary education, 3 years of junior secondary school, and 3 years of senior secondary education. The reform implemented a 9-year educational programme, consisting of 6 years for primary school, 3 years for junior secondary school, and 3 years for senior secondary education. The procedure included a restructuring of the school calendar, dividing it into three terms for Junior Secondary School (JSS) and Senior Secondary School (SSS), culminating in the administration of end-of-

term examinations. The graduating students of JSS and SSS were required to take the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE), respectively, instead of the General Certificate of Examination (GCE). The reform conducted a thorough analysis of the integration of vocational education into school systems, alongside academically focused education, utilising the supportive technological environment (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016).

The reform implemented the diversification of secondary education into five distinct curriculums: agriculture, general arts and science, business, technical, and vocational. This enabled the students to select their area of interest in three or four elective classes in order to deepen their specialisation. As part of the reform, polytechnic education was elevated to the status of tertiary institutions. The National Council for Tertiary Education was given the authority to oversee the creation of the University of Development Studies in Tamale and the University College of Education in Winneba, Ghana (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016).

### 3.6. The 2007 New Educational Reform

During his two-year tenure, President John Agyekum Kuffour established the Presidential Education Review Committee, chaired by Professor Josephus Anamuah-Mensah, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Education, Winneba. The committee was tasked with evaluating the current education system in Ghana. The reform aims to achieve essential objectives such as fostering human capital development to drive industrial growth, preserving cultural identity and indigenous traditional knowledge, and enhancing advancements in science and technology (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). The Presidential Educational Reform implemented a revised education system that includes updated curriculum and extends the term of senior secondary school from 3 years to 4 years. The reform enabled the initial year of senior high school to concentrate on fundamental topics such as English language, mathematics, integrated science, information communication technology, and social studies (Brammah et al., 2014). The reform also included a provision for 2 years of kindergarten instruction in the universal basic education, resulting in a total of 11 years of basic education. The modification resulted in the implementation of a 2-year kindergarten programme, a 6-year primary education programme, and a 3-year junior education programme (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). The reform includes two significant policy changes. Firstly, Ghanaian

language (vernacular) will now be used as the medium of instruction in kindergarten and lower primary education. Secondly, the duration of senior secondary education has been extended from 3 years to 4 years. This change allows students to have enough time to cover their syllabus while also preparing for the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE). During the New Democratic Congress administration in 2008, there was a policy adjustment that reduced the duration of senior school education from 4 years to 3 years (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016).

#### 4. Challenges of Education Policy Reforms in Ghana

Braimah et al. (2014) recognised various obstacles encountered by the education system in Ghana as a result of numerous reforms implemented by successive government administrations. These reforms aimed to both improve and reverse the changes made to the school system. Any endeavours directed towards establishing a school system that is efficient, effective, and widely accepted will contribute to the growth prospects of the country. Common findings include a scarcity of resources and teaching materials, inadequate instructional time, an overloaded curriculum, teachers lacking pedagogical knowledge and abilities, and a lack of opportunity for in-service training (Armah, 2017). The 2007 government of the New Patriotic Party hastily implemented education reform without adequately considering the economic and political consequences. The reform required extending the duration of senior high school from 3 to 4 years. This change also necessitated additional resources, such as infrastructure, library facilities, teachers, and classrooms, to accommodate the extra year. However, the budgetary allocation did not include any provision or plan for these educational needs. The subsequent administration in 2008 inherited the issue and was compelled to furnish more than 500 public school facilities for educators and pupils. Another consequence of this concern was the financial strain it had on the government's revenue, forcing them to borrow money both domestically and internationally to address the financial problems caused by the education reform in the economy (Braimah & Forson, 2023). Another problem arises from the ongoing and unabated evaluations prompted by political considerations rather than a shared agreement among the nation. This is demonstrated by the decision to revert the senior high school education policy from 3 to 4 years in 2007, which was explicitly driven by political motives as stated in their platform. The introduction of the strategy resulted in difficulty within the education system, as the most recent group

of students who studied for four years and the first group of students who studied for three years had to take the WASSCE examination simultaneously. Another consequence of the impact was the surplus of applications for admission at a postsecondary institution, resulting in an overwhelming number of admissions at the seven public institutions in Ghana.

To tackle this problem, the government allocated GHC 7 million to the universities to enhance their infrastructure and accommodate a larger number of students for educational purposes. In addition, the admission quota for other higher schools, such as Teacher Training College, was eliminated to enhance student enrollment (Braimah et al., 2014). Despite the government's efforts to mitigate the adverse consequences of the education reform, the institutions did not have enough time to adequately address the student's needs. For example, the four-month period before the commencement of academic activities was insufficient to build contemporary infrastructures capable of accommodating the growing number of admitted students in institutions (Braimah et al., 2014).

#### 5. Current Structure of Educational Sector in Ghana

The education system in Ghana follows a 6-3-3-4 structure, which consists of 6 years of elementary school, 3 years of junior secondary education, 3 years of senior secondary education, and 4 years of postsecondary education (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016; Armah, 2017). Adu-Gyamfi et al. (2016) observed that basic education in Ghana has always consisted of a 6-year period of study from the start of formal education in the 16th century. Consequently, the many educational changes implemented by different government administrations did not have any impact on the duration of primary school education. The fundamental goal of basic education is to develop proficiency in reading, writing, mathematics, and critical thinking abilities (Armah, 2017). Currently, the education system includes a 2-year kindergarten programme to provide a solid foundation for students before they enter primary education (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016; Armah, 2017). The primary education objectives encompass the following: (a) fostering attitudinal growth and cultural appreciation, (b) instilling moral discipline to become a responsible citizen and contribute to national development, (c) promoting independent and healthy living, and (d) developing the ability to think critically and ask insightful questions. The primary school curriculum encompasses a range of disciplines such as English language, mathematics, Ghanaian language, integrated science, information communication



technology, religious and moral education, citizenship education, and creative arts (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016).

The junior high school, also referred to as the middle school, encompasses a 3-year term of postprimary education. The primary purpose of education is to provide students with a solid foundation in sciences and technical knowledge and abilities. This foundation prepares them for further education at the secondary level and equips them with the necessary technical and vocational skills. The curriculum at junior high school includes the following subjects: English language, mathematics, social studies, integrated science, Ghanaian language, agricultural science, religious and moral education, pretechnical drawing, and pre-vocational skills (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). Upon completing three years of junior high school education, the graduating class will be required to take a mandatory examination known as the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). The examination serves as a prerequisite for students to get admission into senior secondary school. Additionally, it provides students with the chance to explore and uncover their own interests, abilities, aptitudes, and potentials (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016; Armah, 2017).

The senior secondary school admits eligible students who have successfully completed the junior high school test (BECE) in order to continue their study at the senior level. The duration of senior education in public schools is three years. It encompasses essential courses such as English language, mathematics, integrated science, and social studies (Armah, 2017; Braimah et al., 2014). At this level of school, students have the option to take elective courses that are based on their chosen subject of study in tertiary institutions. The electives are classified into the following categories: sciences, arts, vocational, technical, business, and agriculture (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016; Armah, 2017; Braimah et al., 2014). Within the field of sciences, the mandatory elective courses include mathematics, biology, physics, and chemistry. Art students are required to select one of the following subjects: government, history, literature, French, geography, mathematics, Christian religious knowledge, economics, or Akan. Vocational education is categorised into two distinct streams – visual arts and home economics. Visual art students select electives in sculpting, general art knowledge, graphic design, textiles, and economics. The Home Economics students can choose from a variety of subjects including food and nutrition, optional biology, management in living, general understanding of arts, and economics. The elective courses available

to business students include mathematics, accounting, economics, costing, and business management. Agricultural science students can choose from a range of elective courses, including animal husbandry, physics, biology, horticulture, mathematics, and chemistry. Technical students are required to select elective courses from a range of subjects including physics, chemistry, mathematics, wood carving, technical drawing, construction technology, and metal works (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016; Braimah et al., 2014).

Senior high school students are required to take a mandatory qualifying exam in their third year of study for each of the seven or eight subjects (including compulsory and elective) at the senior education level. The West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) is a mandatory prerequisite for entrance into a postsecondary educational institution (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). According to Adu-Gyamfi et al. (2016), the grading system for admission to postsecondary education is quite strict, requiring a minimum grade of 'C' (average) on the WASSCE results, with passes (A-E) in all disciplines.

Tertiary education in Ghana is the highest level of education that may be achieved, and it is open to senior high school students who meet the necessary criteria based on their academic performance. Adu-Gyamfi et al. (2016) state that postsecondary education was first introduced to Ghana in 1984 by the Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge Universities. This led to the construction of the University College of Gold Coast. Higher educational institutions accept students for undergraduate, graduate, and diploma programmes in intellectual and professional fields of study. In Ghana, there are a total of seven government-owned and financed tertiary institutions of learning. These include the University of Ghana in Legon, Accra; the University of Cape Coast; the University of Education in Winneba; the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi; the University of Development Studies in Tamale; the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration/Greenhill College in Accra; and the University of Mines and Technology in Tarkwa. Additionally, ten government-owned and financed polytechnics offer three-year Higher National Diplomas in various subjects such as purchasing and supplying, accounting, marketing, and applied science. It should be emphasised that a Higher National Diploma is not equal to a bachelor's degree obtained from a university (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016).

### 5.1. Rationales for Education Policy Reforms in Ghana

Adu-Gyamfi et al. (2016) provided multiple justifications for a sequence of educational changes that occurred during both civilian and military regimes in the history of Ghana. These reasons are as follows: Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's administration, led by the Convention People's Party (CPP), introduced and executed the 1951 Accelerated Development Plans (ADP) and the 1961 Education Act to reform the educational system. The administration was overthrown by the military juntas' assault in 1966, resulting in the establishment of the National Liberation Council (NLC). Following the collapse of CPP, the majority of policies and programmes that were implemented were revoked. In particular, the education reform was heavily criticised for its failure to prioritise the development of human capital in science and technology, which is crucial for driving national growth. In response to this, the NLC appointed a committee in 1966, led by E.A. Kwapong, to revamp the education system in alignment with the country's overall objectives. The committee assessed the educational system and enacted the recommendations (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016).

The Dzobo Committee, established in 1973, implemented a significant education reform in Ghana that resulted in the New Structure and Content of Education (NSCE) in 1974. The current educational system of 6-3-3-4 can be traced back to the Dzobo educational reform. The Dzobo education committee, operating under the National Redemption Council (NRC), was tasked with developing and implementing a curriculum that would incorporate fundamental cognitive and psychomotor abilities into the school system. The objective was to reduce excessive dependence on white-collar occupations for secondary school graduates and improve the overall level of living in the economy. Therefore, the school reform promoted the acquisition of vocational and technical knowledge starting from the pre-tertiary level to uncover individuals' latent abilities. The 1974 NSCE education reform reduced the duration of education from 17 years to 13 years, resulting in a transition from the 6-4-5-2 system to the 6-3-2-2 system. However, both in the old and new reform, the students were required to engage in national service before pursuing tertiary education studies (Braitham et al., 2014).

Critics of the Dzobo education reform have accused the education policy of being ineffective in addressing the issues that posed a danger to its objectives. These issues encompass the absence or insufficiency of instruments and workshops for

technical and vocational education, which were key aspects of the reform's unavailability, as well as the absence of specialised teachers in schools to teach vocational and technical subjects. Therefore, the change was reduced to a mere aspiration (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). The 1987 Education Reform was a necessary response to Ghana's economic decline that began in the early 1980s. The school reform initiative was mandated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank as a prerequisite for Ghana's government under the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) to revamp the economy. The federal government has no alternative method of funding the economy but to request financial aid from foreign organisations that impose tight conditions, requiring the entire amount borrowed to be used for transportation purposes. The change was driven by both economic and political motivations to mitigate the country's economic decline. The education reform implemented by the Jerry John Rawlings administration was subsequently reduced to a superficial homegrown educational policy. It failed to prioritize improving access to basic education, enhancing the quality of education delivery, making education cost-effective and sustainable, and ensuring its relevance to socioeconomic development (Braitham et al., 2014).

Jerry John Rawlings' Economic Recovery Programme (1986) aimed to achieve specific goals, including equitable access to education at all levels, pedagogical efficiency and effectiveness, and restructuring the education system. However, it failed to reduce the duration of pre-tertiary education from 17 to 12 years, among other objectives. The Education Reform Programme achieved a moderate level of success in its targeted policy programmes within the education sector. For instance, there was a 2% increase in the gross primary school enrolment rate during the academic sessions of 1988/89 and 1990/91. Nevertheless, the rise in educational enrollment at all levels posed further obstacles to the successful execution of the new Education Reform Programme, thereby compromising the standard of instruction in schools and impeding the program's achievements (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). The primary issue stemmed from the widespread failure of students who took the last senior secondary school examination - WASSCE - in 1993. Among the 42,105 candidates who took the examination, only 1,354 (3.2%) met the necessary criteria to be eligible to take the University Entrance Examination (UEE) for admission into government-funded postsecondary institutions in Ghana. A total of 8,875 candidates, accounting for 21.08% of the total, failed in all topics presented (Braitham et al., 2014). The examination



result elicited widespread public outrage, protest, and criticism from parents, students, and other stakeholders in education regarding the new Education Reform Programme, which gained national attention. In response to the problem, the government took action by establishing another Education Review Committee in July 1994. The purpose of this committee was to examine the fundamental weaknesses in the programme. Nevertheless, the government faced intense criticism and calls for the elimination of the new Education Reform Programme from other political parties (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016).

Another reason cited for the failure of the new Education Reform Programme was the intermittent provision of school infrastructure by the government to accommodate the growing number of students. Unfortunately, no measures were taken to expand the personnel responsible for managing teaching and learning activities, particularly in the vocational and technical fields. Additionally, there was a lack of resources such as textbooks and instructional aids necessary for the efficient operation of these schools. It was contended that certain schools lacked specialised teachers to manage the intricacies of

technical and vocational programmes, which served as the transitional bridge between the old and new education systems. Furthermore, the provision of textbooks for educational activities was not done promptly for both teachers and pupils. This report highlights the teacher's incapacity to effectively teach students based on the syllabi of different programmes. The lack of resources to support the teaching of new topics, along with the delayed availability of syllabi to instructors, further contributed to this issue (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). Amidst various difficulties, including public petition, parental and student protests, and teacher concerns, the education sector became intertwined with politics. Political figures used it as a means to gain advantage over their rivals and further their own political agendas during the 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008, and 2012 general elections. They made empty promises to implement a reform that would improve the school system (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). According to Braimah et al. (2014), education has become the primary political strategy in Ghana's fourth republic for seeking votes, with a focus on individual political and ideological considerations.

## 5.2. National policies in Ghana corresponded to the Guide and teacher facets.

**Table 5.1: National policies on teacher development mapped to the teacher development guide**

National policies, plans and official documents	Content	Mapping to the Guide
National Teaching Standards (2018)	National Teaching Standards informed the newly developed 4-year Bachelor of Education programme.	Teacher standards
Human Resource Management Policy Framework and a Manual for the Ghana Public Service (2015)	Provides some broad and generic approaches to accountability.	Teacher accountability
Pre-Tertiary Teacher Professional Development and Management (PTPDM) policy (2012)	Focuses on teacher education (initial and continuing) and a scheme for career progression for teachers.	Teacher education (initial and continuing)
Collective Bargaining Agreement (2009) and the Code of Conduct (2008)	Links schools with teacher training institutions.	Teacher recruitment and retention
		Teacher employment and working conditions
		Teacher rewards and remuneration
School Partnership Policy		School governance
National Minimum Standards for Kindergarten in Ghana and a (draft) Private Schools' Regulation Bill (2000)	Standards for early childhood care and education include teachers and policy, which list expectations that the government and the Ghana Education Service have of private school owners.	School governance

Ghana has developed a national teacher policy that aims to provide a thorough framework, incorporating existing policies and frameworks. This policy utilizes the nine dimensions outlined in the Guide to address specific challenges faced by the country. These

dimensions encompass equitable deployment, teacher recruitment, and enhancing the quality of teachers graduating from teacher training institutions, among other related aspects. In addition to the nine dimensions, Ghana's national teacher policy includes

two additional dimensions: social inclusion, which focuses on promoting gender equality and inclusivity, and social dialogue. These dimensions recognize the importance of addressing issues related to gender disparities and fostering constructive dialogue within the education sector. To support the implementation of the national teacher policy, Ghana has also developed other documents such as the Social Dialogue Framework and the Teacher Deployment and Transfer Strategy. These documents provide guidance and strategies for fostering effective social dialogue among stakeholders and ensuring the equitable deployment and transfer of teachers across the country.

By incorporating these dimensions and supporting documents, Ghana's national teacher policy aims to tackle the unique challenges faced by the country in the areas of teacher deployment, recruitment, and training. It underscores the significance of promoting social inclusion, gender equality, and open dialogue to enhance the quality of education and improve the overall teaching profession in Ghana.

### Conclusion

The establishment of Ghana's comprehensive national teacher policy landscape signifies a praiseworthy endeavour to provide a strong and nurturing structure for the teaching profession. Ghana acknowledges the crucial role teachers have in shaping the future of its inhabitants by giving priority to teacher quality through initiatives such as the National Teaching Standards and the Bachelor of Education programme.

Implementing educational reforms and policies helps instructors gain new professional subject knowledge, pedagogical approaches, and research abilities for a rapidly changing environment. Consequently, teachers can meet the requirements of a successful learning environment.

The national teacher policy landscape in Ghana exemplifies the country's commitment to investing in its teaching staff. It acknowledges the significance of empowering and supporting teachers as a crucial measure in attaining enhanced educational outcomes and fostering the general growth of the nation.

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