Empowering Nations through Education: A Curriculum Revolution in Ghana and Beyond

Abubakari Alhassan
Department Science, Berekum College of Education
E-mail: alhassanabubakari@becoled.edu.gh

Tabiri Ibrahim
Department Science, Berekum College of Education
E-mail: tabiribrahim@becoled.edu.gh

Corresponding author: Abubakari Alhassan. E-mail: alhassanabubakari@becoled.edu.gh

Managing Editors
Prof. Daniel Obeng-Ofori
Rev. Fr. Prof. Peter Nkrumah A.
Prof. Kaku Sagary Nokoe

Abstract: This research paper explores into the critical role of education in fostering national growth and prosperity. It explores the challenges and concerns surrounding curriculum development and implementation in various countries, with a particular focus on the case study of Ghana. The study emphasizes the significance of a well-structured and effective curriculum in shaping the educational landscape and driving economic development. The paper examines global trends in educational strategies and highlights the transformative shifts in curriculum design and delivery. It investigates the impact of these new curricular approaches on both teacher performance and student achievement. Through the utilization of comprehensive methodologies, including surveys, interviews, and thematic analysis, the research provides valuable insights into the current state of education in the selected regions. Furthermore, the paper offers recommendations and solutions for addressing the identified challenges in curriculum development and implementation. It emphasizes the need for collaboration among educational stakeholders, policy-makers, and educators to enhance curriculum quality and relevance, ultimately contributing to the advancement of national growth agendas. This study contributes to the ongoing discourse on the vital link between education and economic development and offers actionable insights for policymakers and educators seeking to improve educational systems and promote national prosperity.

Keywords: Education, curriculum, national growth, Ghana, economic development

1. INTRODUCTION

Education serves as a pivotal force in a nation's growth and prosperity; it's a vital stride in a nation's advancement (Bahroun et al., 2023). According to (Rivaldo & Nabella, 2023), education not only equips individuals with knowledge and skills but also molds the identity of the youth and is a cornerstone for personal success and life quality enhancement. Apau (2020) views education as a crucial lifeline for the advancement and sustenance of developing countries. Idris et al. (2012) further articulate that education lays the foundation for societal wealth, prosperity, and political stability, influencing one's social and economic standing and aiding in poverty reduction and political steadiness.

Curricular concerns are paramount in educational discourse. The dilemma revolves around the appropriate content and teaching methodologies to be imparted, a question pondered by educators, teachers, parents, and students alike (Rivaldo & Nabella, 2023). According to (Mercier et al., 2023), there's a significant ongoing global and local interest in curricular matters, further fueled by platforms such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This discourse explores various theoretical perspectives on international standards, stressing the importance of a shared understanding of curricular components, as evidenced by initiatives like the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and various academic forums that benchmark educational achievements across nations and continents.

The limited progress in Ghana is often linked to inadequate investments in national development and challenges with educational restructuring. Specifically, it's noted that an influx of graduates entering the modern knowledge-driven economy necessitates a shift toward valuing knowledge acquisition as the pinnacle of learning, emphasizing abstract knowledge. However, without an effective curriculum, reaching educational objectives is challenging. An effective curriculum is crucial for transforming student success and readiness, shaping their futures positively (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD, 2020).

In light of global shifts, nations are eager to update their curricula to equip children with the essential skills, knowledge, and competencies for the future (OECD, 2018). With this goal, countries aim to cultivate well-informed students who can secure a competitive edge in the job market. Educational systems globally are adopting this directive through curriculum reforms. Nations like Kenya, Rwanda, and the United States are among those revamping their educational frameworks to consistently produce highly skilled and knowledgeable individuals suited for the demands of the 21st-century workforce (Bahdanovich Hanssen & Erina, 2022).

In the U.S., both reform groups and governmental bodies have grappled with the issue of educational standards, debating the feasibility and desirability of universal benchmarks for all student learning and achievements (US Department of Education, 2014a). (Bahdanovich Hanssen & Erina, 2022; Hollenshead et al., 2005) note that the U.S. is among several nations currently experiencing significant overhauls in their education systems, particularly at the K-12 level. These changes are largely driven by an unprecedented shift in demographics, influencing the curriculum and teaching methods in American schools. Similarly, in 2021, India introduced four new national education policies covering school, early childhood, teacher, and adult education, marking the first major revision in Indian school curricula in 16 years (Pardo-Garcia & Barac, 2020). Kenya adopted the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in 2018, phasing out a system that had been in place since 1985. In China, a sweeping New Curriculum Reform (NCR) for public K-12 schools was rolled out in 2011, impacting nearly half a million schools, ten million teachers, and two hundred million students. This overhaul marked a significant departure from traditional Chinese educational principles and posed both opportunities and challenges for educators tasked with implementing the new curriculum (Hidayat et al., 2022).

Rwanda also started a curriculum reform with the aim of to improving the quality of education in Rwanda. This was to "develop a knowledge-based society and to ensure that their regional and global competition

in the jobs market" grows (Rwanda Education Board) (REB), 2015). Darling-Hammond, (2012) and Scardamalia et al. (2012), indicate that it is widely recognized that competency-based education, as distinct from traditional subject/content-based education, has the potential to develop the competencies/skills necessary for success in both academia and today's knowledge-based economy. In February 2020, the Government of Uganda introduced a basic education curriculum prepared to meet the needs of learners, particularly in terms of skills training and improvement (Normore & Brooks, 2014).

According to (Brooks & Normore, 2010; Imam, 2012) 57 years after independence, Ghana's education sector is yet to develop a real road map for development. All policies are still experimental and there are no practical solutions to the many problems facing the education sector. Here in Ghana, people rely more on the certificate one has rather than individual skills and abilities. Most professionals of education in Ghana support the idea that the country does not have a well-defined and well recognized standards for teacher education and express concern that Ghanaian school curricula cannot meet the changing needs of today's labor market in the 21st century (GhanaWeb, 2020). Peacefmonline, (2017) reported that, the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) indicated that, Ghana's education curriculum is not inclusive and does not meet the various needs of students and the entire country. "The curriculum is disjointed, fragmented and overloaded, and heavily biased towards grammar-based instruction, to the neglect of skills training, especially technical and vocational training."

The institute therefore recommended that the government focus on building strong links between academia and industry. It also noted the need for a comprehensive review of curricula to reflect the needs of the 21st century.

The government of Ghana tasked NaCCA in 2017 to revise the Ghanaian basic education curriculum in response to international best practices. The Ministry of Education (2018), stated that, there was a need to move from content - based curriculum to a standards-based approach. The first had issues such as preparing students for exams at the expense of learning basic skills necessary for human capital development, content overload and assessment systems that do not help improve teaching and learning. In September 2019 and January 2022, the Government of Ghana implemented the new curriculum in primary level and secondary level respectively. The new curriculum aims to address weaknesses in the old curriculum, including redundant content, the limitations of goal-based curricula and issues related to assessment in providing sufficient data to identify teaching and learning styles. In addition, the new curriculum is designed to improve the teaching and learning of Frence, by focusing on a learning-oriented pedagogy and improving the use of ICT as a teaching tool, while emphasizing a pedagogy focused on equity and inclusion (GhanaWeb, 2019). The implementation of innovation in education often attracts the attention of teachers, who are often identified as the main determinants of innovation success. Different studies report different results regarding the different stages that teachers focus on in the implementation of innovations. (Brooks & Normore, 2010)

The challenge of teacher productivity remains a pressing concern within Ghana's educational landscape. The effectiveness of educators is predominantly gauged through the academic achievements of their students. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that the caliber of educational content and the methodologies employed in teaching are fundamental to securing superior learning outcomes. In this context, Mahgoub (2011) highlighted a rare consensus among contemporary educational stakeholders — policymakers, practitioners, and the public alike — asserting that teacher training stands out as one of the most relevant and potentially impactful strategies for elevating educational standards in the country. This is further corroborated by the work of (Ball, 2011; Bush, 2007), who posited that the nexus between the quality of classroom instruction and student learning outcomes serves as an instrumental lever for educational transformation. The pivotal role that teachers play in either facilitating or hindering the adoption of innovative teaching practices cannot be overstated.

In a significant stride towards educational reform, Ghana has recently rolled out a new curriculum anchored in eight foundational features: a) Establishing robust bases for learning, life, and work; b) Encouraging learning with understanding; c) Enhancing the ability to apply knowledge; d) Ensuring consistent and significant progress; e) Laying the groundwork in the early stages; f) Building upon these initial foundations; g) Initiating the subsequent phase; h) Concentrating on core areas of learning. Accompanying this curriculum reform is the inception of a teacher licensing and registration system, as well as a comprehensive framework designed for teacher career progression, which emphasizes the cultivation of skills and competencies (GES New Curriculum, 2019; https://avenuegh.com › ges-new-curriculum-jhs-syllabu). Despite these advancements, there remains a notable scarcity of empirical research assessing the impact of these changes on teachers' output and identifying the challenges they encounter in the classroom. This study seeks to address this research void by providing an in-depth analysis of the new curriculum's effects on teaching practices and proposing strategies for further enhancement.

1. METHODS

Research Type and Design

In this research, the investigators employed a cross-sectional design, which involves collecting data at once from a diverse group of participants, as defined by (Diem & Young, 2015). This type of study observes various factors without any alteration. The choice of a cross-sectional approach was deemed suitable for this investigation because it allowed for the analysis of variable data from a specific moment in time among a selected group. This method was particularly beneficial for evaluating the perspectives and experiences of teachers and students. By utilizing a cross-sectional framework, the researchers were able to create and implement surveys and interviews to gather insights about the new curriculum's influence on teacher performance within the Atwima Nwabiagya South Municipality.

Population

Tarsi (2012) defines a population as a group of individuals of the same species living and reproducing in a specific area. Similarly, (Steiner-Khamsi & Quist, 2000a) describes a population as the total collection of all potential individuals, measurements, or items of interest. (Kim, 2023; Steiner-Khamsi & Quist, 2000b) further elaborate that a population encompasses all the instances or elements from which a sample is selected. The research focused on a population of 338 teachers and 4964 students from 10 primary schools in the Atwima Nwabiagya South Municipality of the Ashanti Region. These schools were specifically selected to allow the researcher to concentrate on and thoroughly investigate the variables for a more detailed understanding of the phenomenon. Due to constraints in time and resources, the study was limited to these 10 schools. These schools, a combination of primary and Junior High Schools (JHS), were part of the institutions implementing the new curriculum in Ghana. The researcher believed that this particular group could provide accurate, factual, and valid information critical for achieving the study's objectives.

In a recent survey of educational institutions, several schools were profiled regarding their learner and teacher populations. Abuakwa M/A Junior High School 'C' has 568 students and 24 teachers, while Nerebehi R/C Primary and JHS report 487 learners and 39 educators. Aferi Presbyterian Primary and JHS have a slightly larger student body of 575 with 37 teachers. Asenemaso M/A Primary and JHS 'B' cater to 318 students with 41 teachers, and Mim M/A Primary and JHS have 521 learners under the guidance of 35 teachers. The Abuakwa R/C Primary 'A' supports 403 students with a teaching staff of 27, whereas Abuakwa M/A JHS 'D' has 498 students and 23 teachers. Sepease R/C School is responsible for 543 students with 35 educators, and Maakro D/A Primary and JHS School has one of the larger populations with 598 students and 39 teachers. Lastly, Agogo R/C Primary and JHS serve 453 students with 38 teachers. Overall, these institutions collectively educate 4964 learners with a dedicated teaching staff of 338.

Sample size and sampling technique

Sampling involves selecting a specific number of observations from a larger group for statistical analysis. According to (Tony Bush Ashley Yoon Mooi Ng & Chay, 2023), this process usually includes choosing a representative subset from the entire population, recognizing that covering every individual is impractical. The current study employs a combination of stratified, systematic, and purposive sampling techniques. Stratified random sampling, as defined by (Tony Bush Ashley Yoon Mooi Ng & Chay, 2023), involves dividing the entire population into distinct, homogeneous groups (strata) and then randomly selecting individuals from each group, enhancing the study's cost-effectiveness and efficiency. Hayes (2022) describes systematic sampling as a method where participants are chosen based on a set interval from a starting point, which, when applied to large populations, allows for effective modeling and exploration of various segments, beneficial in fields like marketing and sales. (Kim, 2023; Tony Bush Ashley Yoon Mooi Ng & Chay, 2023) explains that purposive sampling is a non-probability method where individuals are selected deliberately due to their specific characteristics, ensuring the sample accurately reflects the required attributes.

Atwima Nwabiagya South Municipality is one of the constituencies in Atwima Nwabiagya which is endowed with a lot of basic schools, which is about 85. To ensure a fair representation of the surveyed schools in the constituency, the 85 schools were divided (satisfied) into three groups. Seven schools were selected from two strata and three school from one strata. In selecting the schools, the researcher took 1/6 of the population in each stratum as a sampling rate. The procedure to get 10 schools is as follows. An alphabetical list of school names in the three categories was obtained from the municipality's Ghana Education Service. Systematic random sampling was adopted to select the 10 schools. Random numbers from 1 to 6 were chosen. Number 6 is selected. Starting with Unit 6, each Unit 6 comes in the order of Unit 6, i.e. Unit 6, Unit 12, Unit 18, Unit 24, Unit 30, Unit 36, Unit 42, Unit 48, Unit 54, Unit 60. The stratification and random sampling methods at this stage were to ensure the selection of schools within the constituency, giving each school in the strata equal sampling opportunities to avoid potential researcher bias. The population sizes of learners and teachers in the selected schools are also indicated in table 3.1.

Accordingly, the researcher selected 55 teachers and 30 learners purposively as the sample for the study. Six teachers each were selected from five schools and five teachers each were selected from five schools. For the learners, three learners were selected from each of the 10 schools. Hence, the sample size chosen for the study was 85.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire, as defined by Asante (2000), is a collection of inquiries aimed specifically at collecting data. It was selected based on our alignment with Kerlinger's (1973) viewpoint that questionnaires excel in eliciting precise details about respondents' experiences and circumstances. Tailored to aid educators in their research, this questionnaire was crafted following an extensive review of literature pertinent to the research queries posed in the study. It was distributed among parents, caterers, and teachers. The preference for this method stems from a concurrence with Kerlinger (1973), who posits that questionnaires are highly effective for gathering accurate information about known practices and conditions of the respondents. The creation of the questionnaire was motivated by the belief in its utility in procuring essential data for the research. The questionnaire had four parts. The first part was about the background of the respondents (Respondent's profile). The second part deals with the impact of the new curriculum on the output of teachers in Atwima Nwabiagya South Municipality, whiles the third part dealt with challenges teachers face in the implementation of the new curriculum in Atwima Nwabiagya South Municipality. The last part explored ways of improving the new curriculum in Ghana. They were distributed in person by the researcher. The questionnaires consisted of close ended forms with possible options from which respondents were supposed to choose their responses. A 5 - point Likert Scale was used to gather the data for the study. The information was computed and analyzed using the relative important index with SPSS (v20) tool. The questions were

ranked off, Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly disagree. The questionnaire consisted of four parts. The first part was about respondents (respondent profiles). The second part is about the impact of the new curriculum on the performance of teachers in Atwima Nwabiagya South Municipality and the third part is about the challenges faced by teachers in implementing the new curriculum in Atwima Nwabiagya South Municipality. The final section examines ways to improve the new curriculum in Ghana. Submitted directly by the researcher. The questionnaire consisted of a closed form with respondents' option to select an answer. A 5-point Likert scale was used to collect data for the study. Data were calculated and analyzed using the relative importance index tool with SPSS (v20). Questions: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree.

Interview

Interviews serve as spoken dialogues designed to collect pertinent data for research, as noted by Amoah and Eshun (2015). According to McNamara (1999), they are valuable for uncovering the narratives behind participants' experiences. In this study, interviews were exclusively conducted with students, based on the belief that they might struggle with responding to questionnaire items. Each interview included a mix of 10 open-ended and closed questions, providing students the opportunity to elaborate on their responses. The gathered information was then subjected to thematic analysis, categorizing similar replies into themes for further examination.

Data Collection Procedure

This study utilized a data collection approach that involved reaching out to 55 teachers and 30 students from selected schools within the Atwima Nwabiagya South Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The necessary permissions were obtained from the respective schools a week prior to deploying the questionnaires and conducting interviews. Over a two-week period, the researcher personally visited each school to distribute and collect the questionnaires and to conduct face-to-face interviews with the students. These methods ensured the collection of the required data for the research. Systematic, stratified, and purposive sampling techniques facilitated access to the targeted participants. Impressively, all 55 distributed questionnaires were returned, indicating a 100% response rate, and all 33 selected students participated in the interviews.

Data Analysis

Saunders et al. (2007) asserted that data analysis encompasses three simultaneous activities: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/validation. The data underwent processing, coding, and analysis, tailored to the research inquiries and the literature review. Respondent data were organized and categorized by attributes like gender, age range, and education level. For analytical purposes, both quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed. Survey responses were quantified using a 5-point Likert scale and a Relative Importance Index (RII). Information regarding teachers' backgrounds, gathered from surveys, was examined using percentages and frequencies. To address each research question, questionnaires and interviews were conducted for teachers and learners, respectively. All three research questions were examined using Relative Importance Indices (RII) and thematic analysis. Here, RII was utilized for evaluating and prioritizing questionnaire data, while thematic analysis was applied to interview findings. Data from the questionnaires were further analyzed with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 and the Relative Importance Index (RII) to rank the most significant factors identified from the literature review.

3. RESULTS

Table 1: Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency.	Percent
Male.	21	38.2

	34	61.8
Female.		
Total	**55**	**100**

As presented in Table 1, the data gathered from the respondents provides a detailed breakdown of gender representation. Among those surveyed, a significant majority, specifically 34 individuals or 61.8%, identified themselves as female. This was accomplished by ticking the appropriate column designated for gender identification. On the other hand, the remainder of the group, comprising 21 respondents, indicated that they were male. This segment represents 38.2% of the total participants. The figures clearly delineate a gender distribution within the surveyed population, highlighting a notable majority of female respondents in contrast to their male counterparts.

The age category of respondents

Table: 2 Age category of respondents

Age category	Frequency	Percent
21 – 30	10	18.2
31 – 40	30	54.5
41 – 50	11	20
51 – 60	4	7.3
Total	**55**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2023

In the breakdown of participants' ages, a diverse range was represented. Specifically, 10 respondents, constituting 18.2% of the total, indicated that they fall within the 21-30 years age category. A more substantial portion, 30 respondents or 54.5%, reported being between the ages of 31-40 years, highlighting this as the most represented age group. Additionally, 11 participants, making up 20% of the total, were in the 41-50 years age bracket, indicating a significant presence of middle-aged individuals in the study. On the smaller end of the spectrum, only four respondents, which is 7.3% of the total, fell into the 51-60 years category. This detailed distribution of ages provides a comprehensive overview of the demographic makeup of the respondents, as is further illustrated in Table 2 above. This age-related data is crucial for understanding the diverse perspectives and experiences that each age group brings to the study's findings.

Highest academic qualification

Table 3: Highest academic qualification

Academic qualification	Frequency	Percent
Senior High/O' Level	1	1.8
Diploma	24	43.7
Vocational/Technician	0	0
Bachelor's degree	28	50.9
Master's degree	2	3.6
Doctorate degree	0	0
Total	**55**	**100.00**

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The objective was to determine the highest academic qualification of the respondents. The data gathered shows that, one (1) (1.8%) of the respondents indicated they had Senior High / O' Level as their highest academic qualification, 24 (43.7%) of the respondents indicated they have Diploma, no respondent indicated they had Vocational/Technician certificate, majority of the respondents, 28, indicated they had

Bachelor's degree, representing 50.9% of the total respondents, and two (2) (3.6%) of the respondents indicated they had master's degree. No respondent indicated they had Doctorate degree. This is shown in table 3 above

Years spent in the teaching profession

Table 4: Years spent in the teaching profession

Years	Frequency	Percent
0-10	10	18.2
11-20	28	50.9
21-30	13	23.6
31 and above	4	7.3
Total	**55**	**100.00**

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The objective was to determine how long respondents have worked in the teaching profession. The data gathered shows that 10 (18.2%) of the respondents indicated they have worked in the teaching profession between 0-10 years, 28 (50.9%) of the respondents indicated they have worked in the teaching profession between 11-20 years, 13 (23.4%) of the respondents indicated they have worked between 21-30 years in the teaching profession and four (4) (7.3%) of the respondents indicated they have worked in the teaching profession for 31 or more years. This is seen in table 4,

The level of basic education taught

Table 5: Level of basic education taught

Level	Frequency	Percent
Lower primary	23	41.8
Upper primary	20	36.4
JHS	12	21.8
Total	**55**	**100.0**

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From the table 5, majority of the respondents, 23 (41.8%) of the total respondents indicated they teach in the lower primary level, 20 (36.4% of the total respondents indicated they teach in the upper primary level, and 12 (21.8%) of the respondents indicated they teach at the JHS level.

The impact of the new curriculum on teachers output or performance

The table 4.6 shows various responses from the respondents and analysis on some of the impact of the new curriculum on teachers output or performance. The information shown in the table was based on 55 respondents (teachers) who accepted to be part of the study.

Table 6: Ranking of attribution impacts based on Relative Importance Index (RII)

| No. | | \sum w | Mean | RII | Ranking |
| | | Frequency of Ranking | | | | | Total | | | | |

No.		1	2	3	4	5	Total	$\sum$w	Mean	RII	Ranking
	Impact of New Curriculum										
1	Provides improved assessment strategies	0	0	9	16	30	55	241	4.382	0.8760	6th
2	Creates avenues for teachers to engage in professional development	0	3	5	19	28	55	237	4.309	0.8620	7th
3	Fosters positive interactions with students	0	0	0	5	50	55	270	4.909	0.9818	1st
4	Improved communication skills	2	8	5	15	25	55	218	3.964	0.7927	10th
5	Helps teachers to create positive classroom environment	0	0	0	21	34	55	254	4.618	0.9236	3rd
6	Makes teaching interactive and less stressful	0	0	10	18	27	55	237	4.309	0.8618	8st
7	Provides clear and measurable plan for teachers to follow	0	0	9	21	25	55	236	4.291	0.8582	9th
8	Teachers make learners understand concepts better	0	0	0	15	40	55	260	4.727	0.9455	2nd
9	Encourages teachers to use TLMs	0	0	0	29	26	55	246	4.473	0.8945	4th
10	Encouraged teachers to engage in constant research	0	0	7	19	29	55	242	4.400	0.8800	5th
11	Improved questioning skills of teachers	0	10	9	16	20	55	211	3.836	0.7673	11th

12	Teachers have become more collaborative	0	9	6	25	15	55	211	3.836	0.7673	11th

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From the table 6, the attribution factors were ranked based on the responses given by the RII (Relative Importance Index) tool according to their level of importance as well as mean score ranking. The following are some of the impacts which received the highest ranking in descending order; Fosters positive interactions with students - 0.9818, Teachers make learners understand concepts better - 0.9455, Helps teachers to create positive classroom environment - 0.9236, Encourages teachers to use TLMs – 0.8945, Encouraged teachers to engage in constant research - 0.8800, Provides improved assessment strategies - 0.876, Creates avenues for teachers to engage in professional development - 0.862, Makes teaching interactive and less stressful – 0.8618, and Provides clear and measurable plan for teachers to follow - 0.8582. The following impacts received the lowest ranking in descending order; Improved communication skills – 0.7927, Improved questioning skills of teachers – 0.7673, and Teachers have become more collaborative – 0.7673. Since the RII are all more than 0.5, it means that the respondents accepts that these are basically some of the impacts of the new curriculum on teacher output.

The survey results from this aspect of the study provide a clear insight into the influence of the new curriculum on teachers' effectiveness and interaction with students. The highest reported benefit is the promotion of positive interactions between teachers and students, a key aspect of the learner-centered teaching methods emphasized in the new curriculum. This approach positions students at the heart of the educational process, with teachers serving as guides. The Ministry of Education's (MoE) (2018) guidelines for the new curriculum advocate for pedagogical strategies such as learner-focused classrooms, inclusion, differentiation, scaffolding, and social constructivism, all aimed at enhancing engagement with students. (Papadima, 2021) noted that effective teachers often spend more time working in small groups throughout the day. Additionally, the survey indicates that the new curriculum helps teachers better clarify concepts and fosters a positive classroom atmosphere, ranking as the second and third most significant effects on teaching. According to GES (2019), the curriculum is built around eight key elements, including understanding and applying knowledge, which underscores the importance of teachers ensuring that students not only grasp the concepts taught but can also apply them practically in their lives.

Challenges faced by Teachers in the implementation of the new curriculum

The tables 7 constitute some of the challenges teachers face in the implementation of the new curriculum. These effects are based on their level of acceptance in respect to the issues teachers face in their attempt to implement the new curriculum.

Table 7: Ranking of attribution factors based on Relative Importance Index (RII)

		Frequency of Ranking					Total	∑w	Mean	RII	Ranking
No.		1	2	3	4	5					
	Challenges										
1	Insufficient study materials for teachers and learners	0	0	5	5	45	55	260	4.727	0.9455	2nd

2	Lack of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs)	0	0	0	2	53	55	273	4.964	0.9927	1st
3	Inadequate administrative support	5	15	0	15	20	55	195	3.546	0.7091	10th
4	Inadequate number of teachers	0	6	8	25	16	55	216	3.927	0.7855	7th
5	Inadequate training of teachers	0	5	10	18	22	55	222	4.036	0.8073	5th
6	Workload of teachers	0	0	5	5	45	55	260	4.727	0.9455	3rd
7	Small classroom sizes	0	0	12	3	40	55	248	4.509	0.9018	4th
8	Teacher's resistance to change	0	17	0	6	32	55	218	3.964	0.793	6th
9	Poor time management by school	0	9	8	23	15	55	209	3.800	0.7600	9th
10	Inadequate classroom facilities	0	2	20	15	18	55	214	3.891	0.7782	8th

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From the table 5, RII ranking technique was used in ranking the effects in descending order of magnitude, Lack of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) was ranked 1st, with RII value of 0.9927, followed by Insufficient study materials for teachers and learners, with RII value of 0.9455. With 3rd, 4th and 5th respectively, workload of teachers, small classroom sizes and Inadequate training of teachers were ranked accordingly, with RII values of 0.9455, 0.9018, and 0.8073 respectively. Teacher's resistance to change 6th, with RII value of 0.793, Inadequate number of teachers was ranked was ranked 7th, with RII value of 0.7855, Inadequate classroom facilities was ranked 8th, with RII value of 0.7782, and Poor time management by school was ranked 9th, with RII value of 0.7600. Inadequate administrative support had the least ranking at 10th position, with RII value of 0.7091.

The questionnaire regarding the challenges educators faces in adopting the new curriculum revealed that a lack of educational resources significantly obstructs the program's successful execution. The absence of materials also complicates delivering appropriate content for learners and educators. Additionally, teachers reported that the updated curriculum leads to increased workloads, complicating their roles. Responses further suggest that the challenging aspects of the program's implementation include inadequate teacher training and the selection of qualified educators. Teachers are vital to any curriculum's success, and without the right selection and training, the curriculum is likely to fail. (Habahbeh & Alkhalaileh, 2020) emphasized the critical role of sufficient resources in curriculum implementation. (Habahbeh & Alkhalaileh, 2020; Iqbal et al., 2022; Papadima, 2021) study identified multiple hurdles educators face in implementing new

curricula, including resource scarcity, insufficient teacher training, administrative support, and increased teacher workload. (Tsai et al., 2021) noted the significance of implementation regardless of a curriculum's design and planning, citing that many programs encounter operational issues. Andre further highlighted those facilities are crucial for workers to achieve goals, and supporting studies in 2006 showed that learning aids enhance the learning experience. (Habahbeh & Alkhalaileh, 2020; Tsai et al., 2021) pointed out the importance of having enough quality staff to meet the expectations of students and society, emphasizing that teachers, as the primary implementers of curriculum objectives, are the most crucial human resource. This underscores the pivotal role of teachers in the success of curriculum implementation. (Buabeng et al., 2020) stated that effective innovation implementation necessitates time, direct interaction, communication, additional training, and other supportive measures.

It is imperative to note that teachers are a resilient part of the education system and therefore play an important role in classroom innovation. Without the motivation to innovate, nothing will start. Involving teachers in the planning process increases ownership of innovation. It also helps build the skills needed for innovation, making innovation more likely to adapt to local conditions (Schmid & Petko, 2019). For example, curriculum researchers recognize the importance of involving those affected by change in the processes leading to change for effective implementation. Moreover, schools where teachers resist change are more likely to succeed than schools where teachers resist change.

Ways of improving the new curriculum
Subsequently, the table 8 also depicts data analysis on ways of improving the new curriculum in Ghana. The responses were received from 55 respondents who accepted to be part in answering the questionnaires.

Table 8: Ranking of attribution factors based on Relative Importance Index (RII)

		Frequency of Ranking					Total	∑w	Mean	RII	Ranking
No.		1	2	3	4	5					
	Ways										
1	Involving experts in the creation of curriculum in a democratic manner from the beginning	0	0	9	10	36	55	247	4.491	0.8982	7th
2	Continuous renewal of human resources on the building and the formation of the curriculum	0	0	10	20	25	55	235	4.273	0.8545	10th
3	Follow a participatory and decentralized management approach to curriculum	0	0	20	8	27	55	227	4.127	0.8255	11th

	management strategies.									
4	Selection of highly efficient school educational management.	0	0	7	10	38	55	251	4.564	0.9127	6th
5	Authorship of textbooks according to the educational outcomes in the law of Ministry of Education	0	0	8	17	30	55	242	4.400	0.8800	9th
6	Preparing of efficient teaching methods by taking into consideration the student desires and intelligence enhancing.	0	0	0	15	40	55	260	4.727	0.9455	2nd
7	Selection of teachers trained according to the latest scientific methods and skills.	0	0	0	16	39	55	259	4.709	0.9418	3rd
8	Selecting the educational content and producing it in a simple method to achieve the educational outcomes.	0	0	8	7	40	55	252	4.582	0.9164	5th
9	Concentration on the development of each student's professional needs and on this increase in intelligence	0	0	1	26	28	55	247	4.491	0.8982	7th

10	Authoring educational content through activities to achieve results using styles that develop the intellect of students.	0	0	17	20	18	55	221	4.018	0.804	12th
11	Availability of appropriate educational buildings furnished with all necessary tools and devices.	0	0	0	5	50	55	270	4.909	0.9818	1st
12	Focus on high quality assessment	0	2	3	5	45	55	258	4.691	0.9382	4th

Source: Field Survey, 2023

With respect to the responses received from the respondents, RII ranking tool was again used to analyze them to generate the order of importance. Availability of appropriate educational buildings and preparing it with all required instruments and tool received the highest RII of 0.9818. Preparing of efficient teaching methods considering the student desires and intelligence enhancing, Selection of trained teachers based on modern scientific methods and competence, and focus on high quality assessment, were subsequently ranked 2nd, 3rd and 4th respectively with RII values of 0.9455, 0.9418, 0.9382. Choosing the educational content and preparing it in a simple method to achieve the educational outcomes was ranked 5th, with RII value of 0.9164. Selection of highly efficient school educational management was ranked 6th, with RII value of 0.9127. Moreso from table 8, Concentration on the vocational desires development for each student and enhance this intelligence, Involvement of specialists in authoring of the curriculum in a democratic way from the beginning, and Authorship of textbooks based on the educational outcomes involved in the Ministry of Education Law were ranked 7th, 7th and 9th, with RII values of 0.8289, 0.8289 and 0.8800 respectively. Authoring the educational content by the outcome achieving activity using style that develop intelligence for the student, had the lowest ranking with RII value of 0.804, followed by Follow the participatory and decentralized administration approach in curriculum management strategies, RII value of 0.8255, and Continuous renewal of human resources on the building and the formation of the curriculum, with RII value of 0.804.

The results from the table 4.9 indicates that the respondents accept the suggested points to improve the new curriculum in Ghana. A new curriculum without the necessary materials and equipment would not yield the expected results. The researcher agrees with (Buabeng et al., 2020; Oteng et al., 2023; Rawal, 2023), who pointed out that infrastructure, equipment, tools and materials need to be provided in sufficient quantities to ensure effective program implementation. Teachers may not be able to use appropriate tools and equipment to facilitate the teaching process. Curriculum planners are encouraged to prepare teaching methods which are efficient and takes into consideration the desires and intelligent of students. According to (Rojas-Sánchez et al., 2023a), it is not the teacher's job to impart knowledge, but to provide students with opportunities and incentives to form knowledge. Interests and abilities should be considered in curriculum design, providing an instructional method focused on student-centred learning based on a constructive,

reflective, interdisciplinary and spiral approach to teaching-learning to develop key skills, attitudes and knowledge. Table 9 also shows that selection of quality teachers should be strongly encouraged for effective curriculum implementation. According to (Rojas-Sánchez et al., 2023b), teacher quality is a key factor in determining children's learning and well-being.

Results from the interview
The table 9 below shows the results from the interview conducted. The results from the interview were put under themes, and similar responses were put together and subsequently analyzed.

Table 9 Thematic analysis of Results from the interview

S/N	Themes	Interview questions	Responses
1	Performance of students	Has your performance improved since the introduction of the new curriculum? If yes, explain how and if no, give reasons why.	- Yes, because I get more marks than before in exercises and assignments (18x) - Yes, because, my position has after exams has improved (9 x) - No, because my marks after exams haven't improved (3x)
2	Understanding of concepts	With the introduction of the new curriculum, do you understand concepts when you are taught? Please elaborate on your answer	- Yes, because now I am able to answer questions right (15x) - Yes, because I'm able to apply what I'm taught in real life situations (6x) - Yes, because I'm able to explain to my friends who don't understand such concepts (7x) - No, because I get low marks in tests - No, because I have to consult my classmates to explain concepts taught to be me before I understand.
3	Pupils' active involvement in teaching and learning	How would you rate the level of pupils' active involvement in the teaching and learning process since the new curriculum was introduced?	- Very high (15x) - High (2x) - Pupils are actively involved in lessons (5x) - Lessons now contain more activities which learners take part (8x)
4	Questioning and communication styles of teachers	In what sense has the questioning and communication styles of your teachers improved or not improved with the new curriculum?	- Teachers talk to us in clearer manner (18x) - Teachers now ask simple questions (7x) - Teachers' questions are clearer (3x)

			- Teachers ask more leading questions (2x)
5	Teacher's use of different approaches	How would you rate your teachers use of different approaches to help you understand concepts with the new curriculum?	- Very high (12x) - High (15x) - Average (3x)
6	Asessment approaches of teachers	Do you like the assessment approaches of your teachers with the new curriculum? If yes, explain how, if no give four (4) reasons.	- Yes, because teachers sometimes use oral assessment (6x) - Yes, because teachers' assessment methods used enables me to answer questions well (5x) - Yes, because teachers sometimes assess us when we are doing some activities inside or outside the classroom (2x) - Yes, because when I get a very low mark, my teacher doesn't write the marks there. He only indicates the questions I had wrong. (7x) - Yes, because I get more marks during exercises and assignments. (10x)
7	Setting personal targets	Do your teachers guide you in setting personal targets and developing strategies to achieve that target? If yes, explain how, if no, give four (4) reasons.	- Yes. My teacher guides me to set high target for the term in terms of my academic work. (15x) - Yes. Because my teacher challenges me to do better. (8x) - Yes. Because my form master explains to me what he expects me to do in the term. (7x)

8	Improving grades of learners	Regarding testing, in what ways does your teacher help you in understanding ways to improve your grades since the introduction of the new curriculum?	- By teaching me ways to learn better (9x) - By helping me to understand topics better (12x) - By comparing my current grades to my previous grades (4x) - By showing me motivational videos (5x)
9	Making lessons interesting	Does your teacher make lessons interesting? If yes, how and if no, explain.	- Yes, because he cracks a lot of jokes (9x) - Yes, because he makes us sing songs (5x) - Yes, because we sometimes go outside the classroom (3x) - Yes, because some of the lessons involves playing (7x) - No, because my teacher likes beating (4x) - No, because my teacher talks too much when teaching (2x)
10	General performance of your teachers	How will you rate the general performance of your teachers since the introduction of the new curriculum?	- Very high (6x) - High (4x) - Average (5x) - My teacher's performance has not improved (2x) - My teacher's performance has improved. (13x)

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From table 9, on the theme, performance of students, learners were asked if their performance have increased since the introduction of the new curriculum. Majority of learners responded *yes*, with reasons like: *Yes, because I get more marks than before in exercises and assignments; Yes, because, my position has after exams has improved.* A few of the learners responded no, with the reason that; *No, because my marks after exams haven't improved.*

On the theme of understanding of concepts, majority of learners responded yes, with similar reasons like, *because now I am able to answer questions right; because I'm able to apply what I'm taught in real life situations; because I'm able to explain to my friends who don't understand such concepts*. On the contrarily, two learners answered no. Their reasons were: *I get low marks in tests*; and; *I have to consult my classmates to explain concepts taught to be me before I understand.*

Learners were further asked to rate the level of active involvement of learners in teaching and learning process. Majority of learners responded very high and high. A few of the learners responded that, *pupils are actively involved in lessons* and other learners also responded that, *lessons now contain more activities which learners take part*.

On questioning and communication theme, majority of learners responded that, *teachers talk to us in clearer manner*, some learners responded that teachers *now ask simple questions*. Other learners also responded that *teachers' questions are clearer* and *teachers ask more leading questions.*

Furthermore, from table 9, on the theme, teachers use of different approaches, majority of the learners, majority of the learners responded that, they rate their teachers *high* and *very high*. Only a few rated them average.

When learners were asked if they liked the assessment approaches by their teaches, majority responded *yes* with reasons like; *my teacher sometimes uses oral assessment, my teacher don't write my marks when I get low marks*, as indicated in table 9.

Again, from table 9, when learners were asked if teachers guide them in setting personal targets and developing strategies to achieve that target, all the learners responded *yes,* with reasons like; *my teacher guides me to set high target for the term in terms of my academic work; because my teacher challenges me to do better; Because my form master explains to me what he expects me to do in the term*.

Also, it is evident from table 9 that, when learners were asked how their teachers help them to understand ways to improve their grade, some of the responses were; *by teaching me ways to learn better; by showing me motivational videos; by helping me to understand topics better.*

On the theme, making lessons interesting, learners were asked if their teachers make lessons interesting. Majority responded *yes*, with reasons like; *because he cracks a lot of jokes; because he makes us sing songs; because we sometimes go outside the classroom*. A few of the learners responded *no* with reasons like*; because my teacher likes beating; because my teacher talks too much when teaching.*

On the last theme, thus, general performance of teachers, learners were asked how they would rate the general performance of their teachers. Majority of the learners responded: *The performance of my teacher has improved*, some responded *very high, high*, among others as indicated in table 9.

The new curriculum was introduced to improve upon the general performance of students by equipping teachers with varieties of methods and approaches to understand concepts. According to GhanaWeb, (2019), The new curriculum aims to improve teaching and learning by focusing on learning-centred pedagogy and improving the use of ICT as a teaching tool, with an emphasis on equity and inclusive pedagogy. These improvements are consistent with the purpose of the new curriculum, as shown by (Gerdes et al., 2022), as students have clearly demonstrated improvements since the implementation of the new curriculum to strengthen the 4 Rs, thus, reading, writing, arithmetic and creativity. (Sattari et al., 2021) also indicated that the new curriculum involves creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, communication and collaboration, cultural identity and global citizenship, personal development and leadership, and digital literacy. The Ministry of Education (2018) opined that the new curriculum is designed to move from an objective-based curriculum to a standardized approach. (Adegbola & Adeleke, 2023; Retnawati et al., 2016; Yekple et al., 2022) noted that a standards-based curriculum encourages the development of clear, coherent, and deep ideas, promotes a sense of purpose, and promotes student engagement and motivation in learning.

4. DISCUSSION

Impact of Curriculum on National Growth:
The core assertion of this comprehensive research is the deep and pervasive impact that the strategic formulation and evolution of educational curricula exert on the overarching trajectory of national development and prosperity. The findings of this study illuminate and emphasize the fact that a well-conceived, pertinent, and thoughtfully structured curriculum transcends its functional role as a mere segment of the educational framework. It emerges as a formidable engine driving the intellectual

enhancement and economic fortification of a nation, setting the stage for sustained growth and advancement (Buabeng et al., 2020). An efficacious and forward-thinking curriculum is one that is meticulously crafted to align seamlessly with the nation's economic ambitions, effectively addresses the multifaceted societal challenges of the modern era, and is committed to equipping the upcoming generations with a diverse array of skills. These skills are not only pertinent but also indispensable for navigating and excelling in the complex, ever-evolving landscape of the modern global workforce (Retnawati et al., 2016). In the specific context of Ghana, the discernible shift towards educational curricula that are more dynamic, inclusive, and reflective of the broad spectrum of societal and economic needs signifies a maturing understanding and recognition of the critical role that education plays in shaping the future. This shift is not just a change in content or pedagogy but represents a transformative approach towards nurturing a populace that is well-prepared and responsive to the demands and opportunities of the 21st century. However, the journey towards the successful implementation and actualization of these progressive curricula is fraught with challenges and complexities. It demands a concerted effort characterized by meticulous planning, unwavering support, and a robust infrastructure. Additionally, it requires a profound and nuanced understanding of the local contexts, aspirations, and challenges. Only through a deep and empathetic engagement with the local culture, values, and needs can the curricula be truly effective and resonant (Oteng et al., 2023). Therefore, while the path forward is clear, it necessitates a commitment to sustained effort, adaptability, and a collaborative spirit among educators, policymakers, and the community at large.

Challenges in Curriculum Implementation:
The recent introduction of innovative curricula in Ghana marks a potentially transformative step in the country's educational landscape, suggesting a brighter future for its learners. This shift, aimed at equipping students with modern skills and knowledge, is, however, fraught with a complex array of challenges. At the vanguard of this educational evolution are the teachers, whose role is absolutely critical. Yet, as noted by (Adegbola & Adeleke, 2023), these educators often find themselves navigating a labyrinth of obstacles, primarily due to the lack of thorough, systematic training and a dire scarcity of essential teaching resources. These hurdles significantly impair their ability to deliver the new curricula effectively, undermining the potential benefits of these reforms. This predicament in Ghana is not an isolated case but rather a reflection of a pervasive global issue. Educational reforms across the world are frequently obstructed by similar ground-level realities, a sentiment echoed by (Yekple et al., 2022). Despite well-intentioned policies and innovative curriculum designs, the implementation phase stumbles when it meets the unprepared, under-resourced reality of many classrooms. This disconnect between high-level policy planning and the actual classroom environment is a critical issue that needs addressing for any reform to be successful.

The effectiveness of any curriculum is inherently tied to the competence and readiness of those who deliver it. As 'Teacher Trainer' magazine pointedly noted in (Buabeng et al., 2020), the ability of teachers to adeptly implement new strategies and content is the linchpin in the machinery of educational reform. Without teachers who are well-prepared, continuously supported, and adequately resourced, even the most forward-thinking curricula are doomed to yield suboptimal results. Therefore, the path forward must involve a deep and sustained investment in the professional development of teachers. This involves not only initial training but also ongoing support systems, including access to modern teaching aids, opportunities for collaborative learning, and forums for sharing best practices. Investing in teachers is investing in the future of education itself. It's not just beneficial; it's an absolute necessity for the success of any educational reform. Such investment ensures that the innovations in curricula don't just remain well-crafted documents but translate into tangible improvements in the quality of education that students receive. This, in turn, has the potential to elevate not just the educational standards but also the broader socio-economic prospects of nations undertaking such transformative educational journeys (Rawal, 2023).

Perceptions of Stakeholders:
The study's comprehensive thematic analysis meticulously unravels and lays bare the intricate perceptions and nuanced attitudes of a wide array of stakeholders, including but not limited to educators, students, and parents, each bringing their unique perspective and vested interests to the educational landscape. This analysis is not just a surface-level overview; it delves deeply into the complex web of thoughts, expectations, and concerns harbored by these groups, providing a rich, multifaceted understanding of the educational ecosystem (Oteng et al., 2023). At the forefront of this intricate array of perspectives are the educators, a group whose voices resonate with particular strength and clarity. They stand in a delicate balance, perched between hope and hesitation. Their cautious optimism is a testament to their recognition of the potential and promise embedded in the new curriculum. They envision a future where education is more dynamic, inclusive, and effective, a future where students are better equipped to meet the challenges of an ever-evolving world. Yet, this optimism is tempered, moderated by a keen awareness of the realities on the ground. They speak of practical challenges, from logistical hurdles to resource constraints, all of which cast a long shadow of doubt over the bright promise of reform.

Their concerns, however, are not just a reflection of individual apprehension but echo broader sentiments prevalent in the educational sphere. These sentiments are substantiated by a pivotal 2023 study cited by (Rawal, 2023) a distinguished author, which highlights the educators' perspectives and aligns them with the larger academic narrative. Further reinforcing this narrative is a significant piece of research from 'Educational Psychologist' (Jarodzka et al., 2021), which elucidates the critical nature of stakeholder engagement and robust support in the context of educational reforms. This body of research collectively underscores a vital truth: the success of any significant educational shift is not merely contingent on the theoretical merits of the policy or curriculum in question but hinges critically on the practical and emotional buy-in of those it affects. Understanding and addressing the concerns of these stakeholders is not just a step in the process; it is the bedrock upon which the successful implementation of new curricula rests. It's about creating a dialogue, a two-way street of communication and support, where feedback is not only heard but acted upon, where challenges are met with solutions, and apprehensions with reassurance. It's about ensuring that when the new curriculum is finally adopted, it's not just accepted but embraced by educators, students, and parents alike. Only by navigating this complex, emotional, and logistical maze can the true potential of educational reforms be realized, leading to an evolution in learning that benefits all.

Methodological Insights:
The combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods employed in this study offers a comprehensive understanding of the impact of curriculum changes. This mixed-methods approach is particularly effective in educational research, where understanding the nuances and complexities of human behavior and institutional structures is crucial (Nückles, 2021). However, it's important to acknowledge the limitations of the study, including its scope and the generalizability of its findings. While the results provide significant insights into the Ghanaian context, they may not be directly applicable to other contexts without considering cultural, economic, and political differences (Kaakinen, 2021).

Future Directions:
Looking ahead, there is a need for longitudinal studies to track the long-term impact of curriculum changes on national growth and individual student outcomes. Such studies can provide a more detailed understanding of how educational reforms translate into real-world impacts over time (Green et al., 2021). Additionally, comparative studies between countries with similar reforms could shed light on the universal and unique aspects of curriculum development and implementation (Rickert & Skinner, 2022). Understanding these aspects can help policymakers and educators design more effective and adaptable educational strategies. This research contributes to a growing body of knowledge on the critical role of education in national development. The findings from Ghana provide valuable insights and a basis for

further exploration in this vital field. As the world continues to evolve, so too must our educational systems, adapting to new challenges and opportunities to foster the growth and development of future generations.

5. CONCLUSION

In this comprehensive study, we have embarked on an in-depth exploration of the pivotal role that education plays in driving national development. Our focus has been particularly sharp on the transformative influence that curriculum evolution exerts. We have meticulously analyzed and highlighted the profound and multifaceted effects that a modern, well-structured curriculum can impart on teacher effectiveness and student success, which in turn fuels the socio-economic progression of a country. Our investigation provides illuminating insights into the myriad advantages that can be reaped from thoughtful curriculum reforms in Ghana, yet we openly recognize the limitations and challenges our study encounters. There is a pressing need for additional, extensive research aimed at unraveling the enduring impacts of these reforms and formulating robust strategies to navigate the complexities they present. Drawing from our thorough analysis, we advocate emphatically for policymakers and educational leaders to give top priority to the regular reassessment and rejuvenation of the educational curriculum. This should ensure its relevance and alignment with both international educational paradigms and the specific developmental imperatives of the local context. This recommendation also encompasses a substantial investment in the professional development of teachers, enhancement of educational infrastructure, and the establishment of robust systems for monitoring and evaluating the efficacy of the curriculum implementation. Peering into the future, we envisage an educational landscape in Ghana and other similar environments that is vibrant, inclusive, and adeptly equipped to confront and surmount the multifarious challenges of the 21st century. By wholeheartedly embracing reform and nurturing a culture of innovation within the education sector, nations stand to unlock and harness the immense potential of their greatest asset - their people. As we proceed, it becomes a shared obligation for all stakeholders to foster an atmosphere where every learner is afforded the chance to excel and actively contribute to the prosperity and advancement of their nation.

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