

The Future of Education in Ghana: Critical Education for Socio-Economic Development

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ABSTRACT

This research explores how critical education can contribute to the development of critical human capital relevant to Ghana's socio-economic development. Teaching and learning in many Ghanaian classrooms follow a rigid curriculum with limited or no classroom interaction, restricting students' creativity and critical consciousness. A systematic literature review was conducted using scholarly articles and books to identify concepts that promote critical education. The research revealed four concepts (i.e., problem-posing education, teacher and student roles, praxis, and dialogue) and the following about education: education should be about the critical examination of the social world, resulting in actions that serve the best interest of society. The research concluded that critical education could empower students to become critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and change agents who can champion the cause for Ghana's socio-economic development.

Keywords: banking concept, critical education, education in Ghana, socio-economic development, student-centered learning

INTRODUCTION

Education in Ghana has received high priority since independence from Britain in 1957, while at the same time, educators have grappled with the challenge of designing and implementing a model of education that meets the expectations for national development (Arnot, 2008; Sefa Dei & Opini, 2007). As a result of this challenge, education in Ghana has been subjected to series of reforms through various laws and Acts, including the Education Act of 1961 for free universal and compulsory education, the Education Act of 1987 for the whole school development program, and the Education Act of 1996 for the free compulsory universal basic education (MacBeath, 2010; Nudzor, 2014).

Since independence, several governments, starting with the first republic, have made attempts to decolonize the minds of Ghanaians by rewriting a new form of educational curriculum that has no semblance of the colonial past. For instance, the 1987 and 1996 education reforms promoted child-centered literacy by improving the quality of classroom teaching and learning (MacBeath, 2010; Nudzor, 2014). The 2007 education reform, on the other hand, modernized the technical and vocational courses and made them relevant for application in the job market. However, some features of the Ghana educational curriculum can still be traced back to the British colonial past. The current instructional delivery methods practiced in Ghanaian educational institutions still bear the remnants of British colonization. For instance, key elements in the dominant instructional methods in Ghana, including the rigid curriculum with limited or no discussions and interaction in the classroom, are the legacy of British colonial rule (Kumar, 1991; Sefa Dei & Opini, 2007; Segura, 2009). The classroom layouts with textbooks usage and rigid timetables are carry-overs from the British colonial education influences. Again, the traditional instructional method characterized by the banking concept (Freire, 2008) of memorization and repetition in the educational system are attributes of the British colonial education legacy. Needless to say, Ghana does not need to continue practicing an education that was introduced to further the agenda of the British Crown.

Education during the British colonial era was established to create a class of low-level bureaucrats and clerks who would occupy administrative positions that supported colonial rule (Gupta, 2006; Kumar, 1991; Segura, 2009). Education was defined as being fluent in the three Rs (i.e., reading, writing, arithmetic), which was the qualification for employment into administrative positions. The educational system was highly structured with a content-based curriculum and a government-administered national

examination system that required students to reproduce textbook information. Therefore, the instructional delivery method was rigorously exam-oriented, emphasizing reproductive knowledge rather than independent thinking. This education restricted creative thinking and critical consciousness for both students and teachers. As argued by Antwi (1992) and Segura (2009), the curriculum for instruction had no relevance to the local people and was only established to promote the British colonial agenda.

A curriculum for instruction and learning that had no relevance to the Ghanaian people during the colonial era should not be practiced in contemporary Ghana. Ghana needs an educational curriculum that will develop the critical human capital relevant to its socio-economic development. Education in general and, particularly, education at the tertiary level needs to serve the purpose of preparing students to be proactive and critical thinkers capable of taking actions that transform their lives and the entire society. Therefore, Ghanaian higher education should nurture students with a sense of open-mindedness, logic, and critical consciousness required to build productive citizens for socio-economic development.

This systematic literature review examines how Ghana can leverage critical education to develop critical human capital and socio-economic development resources. McLaren (1998) defined critical education or pedagogy as “a way of thinking about, negotiating, and transforming the relationship among classroom teaching, the production of knowledge, the institutional structure of the school, and the social and material relations of the wider society” (p. 45). Critical human capital refers to the appropriate knowledge and skills of citizens a nation can leverage to further its development goals. This research answers the question: What concepts promote critical education for the development of critical human resources relevant to Ghana’s socio-economic development? The paper begins with a discussion of the research method employed in this secondary research. The research method section is followed by a review of the literature discussing Ghana’s education system, focusing on precolonial, colonial, postcolonial education. The literature review section also discusses the issues and challenges in education practice that warrant the need for this research (i.e., insufficient education of critical human capital for Ghana’s socio-economic development). The paper further presents a discussion of the findings relative to the concepts that promote critical education. Next, the paper presents more discussions by situating the research findings into the current educational climate in Ghana and offering conclusions based on the findings. The last section of the paper provides a discussion of the implications of the research for scholarly literature, educational policy, and practice.

RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher conducted a systematic literature review to collect relevant data for this research. A systematic literature review involves the process of identifying, selecting, and critically appraising scholarly literature or research with the purpose of answering a research question (Dewey & Drahota, 2016). The researcher used the University of West Florida libraries as the primary source for gathering scholarly articles and books for the review. The researcher used online search engines such as OneSearch, eJournals, and Google scholar to collect data using the following keywords: critical education, education in Ghana, banking concept, critical pedagogy, instructional delivery methods, student-centered learning, socio-economic development. The researcher compiled approximately 92 resources, including books, journal articles, website publications, and news articles. Based on the literature gathered and reviewed, the researcher developed an annotated bibliography to easily identify the similarities and differences in literature, which reduced the relevant literature to 66. Afterward, the researcher identified the common themes and created a literature synthesis matrix that ensured the credibility and reliability of the findings (Roberts, 2010). A synthesis matrix is a technique for synthesizing literature for credibility. The matrix assisted the researcher in linking studies together and categorizing common themes that appear across the gathered literature sources. The common themes were developed as findings to answer the research question. Table 1 illustrates a sample of how literature was synthesized. The stub heading represents the gathered literature sources. The left column represents the common themes identified in the sources. The asterisks indicate the sources where the common themes were found.

Table 1

Literature Synthesis Matrix Sample

Common Themes	Source 1	Source 2	Source 3	Source 4	Source 5	Source 6
Problem-posing education	*	*	*	*	*	
Teacher and student roles	*		*			*
Praxis	*			*		*
Dialogue	*	*		*		

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Education System in Ghana

Ghana's education system is divided into three educational levels: basic, second cycle, and tertiary (Anamuah-Mensah, 2007; Ministry of Education, Republic of Ghana, 2018). The basic education comprises two years of kindergarten, six years of primary, and three years of junior high school. The second cycle level is made up of three years of high school. The tertiary level comprises two to four years of education, which includes polytechnics, colleges, and universities (Anamuah-Mensah, 2007; Ministry of Education, Republic of Ghana, 2018). The tertiary education system in Ghana was established to address the following aspects of society's human capital:

- develop the intellectual and analytical capabilities of individuals;
- develop the capacity to conduct research and draw meaningful conclusions;
- produce individuals with the ability to adapt and apply research findings to the developmental needs of society;
- produce high functioning human capital with the capacity to meet the ever-changing demands of society; and
- produce individuals with nationalistic tendencies who also appreciate international relations and world peace (Anamuah-Mensah, 2007; Anamuah-Mensah Committee, 2002; Ministry of Education, Republic of Ghana, 2018).

Evolution of Ghana's Education System

Education has always been a priority in Ghana (MacBeath, 2010; Sefa Dei & Opini, 2007). However, the constant quest for a model of education that meets the expectations of Ghanaians and, thus, suits the needs of the country has subjected education over the years to a series of changes. The first president of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, perceived education as an opportunity to build the requisite human resources the country needed for development after independence from Britain (Sefa Dei & Opini, 2007). Thus, he introduced free education and established social interventions that would assist in building the capacity of Ghanaians (MacBeath, 2010). During his term as president, Nkrumah established Ghana Education Trust Schools, hospitals, roads, factories, and state corporations with the intention of not only educating Ghanaians but also creating employment for them after school. With these measures in place, Ghana was set to be self-sufficient and not rely on or need assistance from foreign countries.

In 1961, the Education Act established a free universal and compulsory education (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016; MacBeath, 2010). This law increased attendance, which necessitated the need to build more elementary and middle schools. However, this era was short-lived with the overthrow of Nkrumah in 1966 (Kingsley, 2007; MacBeath, 2010). After a decade of military coup d'état accompanied by political instability, corruption, and mismanagement of public goods and services, the 1961 Education Act was no longer operational (MacBeath, 2010; Mfum-Mensah, 2009). Thus, by the 1980s, the educational system in Ghana was not functioning properly, and the zeal and excitement for education by Ghanaians were also lost.

Ghana's dysfunctional education system gained some redirection by the late 1980s. The 1987 Education Act established the Whole School Development Programme (WSD) to address the educational issues of the country. With the introduction of the new act, a national literacy campaign was launched to cater to school dropouts and adult learners. Also, the timeframe for schooling was reduced from 17 years to 12 years (MacBeath, 2010; Sefa Dei & Opini, 2007). These new adjustments in the education system made it possible for children, whether rural or urban, rich or poor, to have access to affordable education.

In 1996, under the leadership of President Rawlings, the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) was established to address the quality of education at the basic level (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016; Nudzor, 2014). The FCUBE sought to improve quality in teaching and learning, management efficiency, and increased access and participation in education (Akyeampong, 2004; Nudzor, 2014). The objectives of FCUBE coincided with the goals of the 1987 WSD program. Both reforms promoted a child-centered literacy by improving the quality of classroom teaching and learning, efficient management of resources, and community involvement and participation in the delivery of education (MacBeath, 2010; Nudzor, 2014). However, the aims of the two reforms could not be realized due to inadequate support and human resource (Osei, 2010). Osei (2010) explained that teachers did not fully comprehend the rationale for the reforms, and therefore were not capable of engaging and implementing the necessary change. Also, teachers did not receive the support and full backing as public intellectuals charged with the important task of social and moral formation.

In 2007, new education reforms were launched under the leadership of President Kufuor (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016; MacBeath, 2010). This policy introduced a new structure for the junior high school and the senior high school systems. Junior high school was an entry point to senior high school, and the completion of senior high school had the option of pursuing tertiary

education or entering into the job market. A key component of the reform was modernizing the courses, especially technical and vocational courses, and making them relevant for application in the job market. Thus, the 2007 education reform sought to enhance Ghana's human resources and equipped Ghanaians with the skills to address the demands of the ever-growing economy.

Education in Ghana: Precolonial, Colonial, and the British Colonial Legacy

Education in Ghana before colonization and European influence was an informal process of community members preparing the next generation (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975; Obeng, 2002). The home was the first school with parents and other community elders serving as teachers imparting life as the curriculum. The learning process was by observing parents and the older community members. The purpose of the first school was to inculcate quality health and appropriate character into the younger community members. The second school involved the transfer of beliefs, culture, and history, which would equip the younger generation with the requisite skills for full participation in the social life of the community (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975; Odaga & Heneveld, 1995).

Precolonial education in Ghana was a collective approach. It was a shared responsibility of ensuring that the younger generation learned from the older generation (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975; Obeng, 2002). Since the education of children was a collaborative effort, the entire community also shared in the success or failure of the learning process. Fathers and mothers passed on gender roles to their sons and daughters, respectively (Odaga & Heneveld, 1995). Thus, the education of children occurred with the communities through observation and practical experience.

The British, during colonization, perceived education as essential to indirect rule (Segura, 2009). The British began importing Western formal education and used the school as a means to educate locals who would serve as intermediaries between them and the local people (MacBeath, 2010; Segura, 2009). Merchants seeking interpreters to promote their business served as educators. The missionaries also joined the education cause but were only interested in spreading information about the gospel (Antwi, 1992; McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). Soon, schools were established, and children were separated from their families to isolated locations to pursue education. Away from their families, the children were cut off from their native culture, and the Western culture was imposed on them (MacBeath, 2010; Segura, 2009). According to Antwi (1992) and McWilliam and

Kwamena-Poh (1975), the colonial education system translated to schooling for the elite, imposing language, knowledge, and culture by creating new breeds of elites from the locals who remained loyal to the values and culture of their colonial masters.

The British education system during colonization had the same agenda in all the colonies; to create a class of low-level bureaucrats and clerks who would occupy administrative positions that supported colonial rule (Gupta, 2006; Kumar, 1991; Segura, 2009). According to Macaulay (1835), the British did not intend for the education system to educate the masses but rather form a class of clerks who may serve as interpreters between the British and the local people; a class of people, who although local by blood and color, have acquired English tastes, opinions, intellect and morals (as cited in Alexander, 2001). Thus, the curriculum for instruction had no relevance to the local people and only produced a class of people who considered themselves elite and were loyal to the British Crown and its colonial agenda.

Ghanaian governments over the years, since independence, have made several attempts to rewrite the British colonial legacy (Arnot, 2008; Sefa Dei & Opini, 2007). Starting with Nkrumah, his vision for Ghana was an independent nation with an entirely new identity without any semblance of the colonial past (Arnot, 2008; MacBeath, 2010). Nkrumah, however, did not succeed in decolonizing the minds of the Ghanaian people. Over 60 years since independence, there are still features in the Ghanaian education system that can be traced back to the colonial past (Segura, 2009). Elements in the dominant instructional methods in Ghana, such as rigid curriculum with limited or no discussions and interaction in the classroom, are the legacy of British colonial rule (Kumar, 1991; Sefa Dei & Opini, 2007). The British established specific political structures to reinforce colonial rule (Kumar, 1991). Education was one of such structures that served the purpose of training individuals for roles that supported the colonization agenda of the British (Kumar, 1991; MacBeath, 2010; Segura, 2009).

The British designed and constructed knowledge as a tool for social control (Kumar, 1991; MacBeath, 2010). Thus, people received education to be fluent in the three Rs (i.e., reading, writing, arithmetic), which could qualify them for administrative positions such as clerks in the colony. This education system restricted creative thinking and critical consciousness for both teachers and students. According to Crook (2003), the British created a core and compulsory national curriculum, thereby leaving no room or time for alternative curricula activities, which would develop the critical competencies of students.

British colonial education structures and teaching styles persist in the current instructional methods practiced in schools in Ghana. The classroom layouts with textbooks usage and rigid timetables and starting times are all Western education influences. The traditional instructional method or banking concept (Freire, 2008) of memorization and repetition in the educational system are attributes of the British colonial legacy. The British were training individuals for specific roles in the colony and therefore introduced an educational system strictly based on prescribed textbooks (Sefa Dei & Opini, 2007). The educational system was highly structured with a content-based curriculum. The British also introduced a government-administered national examination system that required students to reproduce textbook information (Gupta, 2006; Sefa Dei & Opini, 2007). Thus, the instructional delivery method was rigorously exam-oriented with an emphasis on reproductive knowledge rather than independent thinking.

Historical Development of University Education in Ghana

The first university in Ghana, the University College of Gold Coast, was established in 1948 (Ministry of Education, Republic of Ghana, 2018; Owusu et al., 2016). For decades, the University College of Gold Coast, now the University of Ghana, was the only institution of higher education in the country. As of 1991, over 40 years after establishing the first university, Ghana had three universities with a total enrollment of 10,000 students (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016; Effah & Mensa-Bonsu, 2001; Ministry of Education, Republic of Ghana, 2018). The 1987 education reform, however, necessitated the diversification and expansion of higher education in the country (Anamuah-Mensah, 2007; Effah & Mensa-Bonsu, 2001). From 1987 to 2000 is considered one of the most active periods of education policy reforms in Ghana (Nudzor, 2014). The Ministry of Education during this period launched the three strategic objectives (i.e., improving involvement and participation in the delivery of education, enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, promoting efficient management of resources in the education sector) to inform and aid the execution of the several education sector policies (Effah & Mensa-Bonsu, 2001; Nudzor, 2014). From 1992 to 1996, two more universities were established, and the 10 regional polytechnics were transformed into tertiary institutions (Ansah, 2017; Ministry of Education, Republic of Ghana, 2018).

Between 1997 and 2006, there was further diversification in tertiary education (Effah & Mensa-Bonsu, 2001). Six institutions for postsecondary specialist professionals were upgraded to the tertiary level, and 49 private universities and colleges emerged. Private sector participation in higher

education creation increased with the establishment of the National Accreditation Board (2018). Additionally, 18 nurse's training colleges, 39 teacher's training colleges, and an additional public university were established. By 2006, Ghana had six public universities, one institute of public administration, 10 polytechnics, 18 nurse's training colleges, 39 teacher's training colleges, six specialist professional institutions, and 49 private universities and colleges (National Accreditation Board, 2018).

The growth of university education in Ghana is, therefore, recent. This wave of development in the educational sector was possible due to the actions and efforts of the government. These efforts included the 1991 White Paper education reform and the establishment of the National Accreditation Board in 1993. In 2017, Ghana recorded about 181 accredited institutions of higher education in the country (National Accreditation Board, 2018). These institutions include four chartered private universities, two public polytechnics, eight public technical universities, 10 public universities, one regionally-owned tertiary institution, one distance learning institution, five private colleges of education, 11 private nurses training colleges, one private polytechnic, 65 private tertiary institutions, 41 public colleges of education, seven public degree-awarding and professional institutions, 15 public nurses training colleges, five registered foreign institutions, and five tutorial colleges.

Lack of Critical Human Capital for Ghana's Socio-Economic Development

Ghana lacks critical human capital with the appropriate knowledge and skills needed for socio-economic development. Every year, thousands of students graduate from higher institutions of learning in Ghana but do not gain employment because there is a disconnect in the relationship between education, building human capital, and meeting the needs of society and industry (Dai et al., 2008). In 2015, about 71,000 new graduates joined the 200,000 unemployed graduates making a total of 271,000 unemployed graduates (Effah, 2016). These graduates are unemployed because they did not receive the appropriate education that would empower them to pursue opportunities for self-employment or become employable and sought after in the job market (Dai et al., 2008; Effah, 2016).

The World Bank in the 2018 Human Capital Index (HCI) report on Ghana revealed that in the next 18 years, approximately 56% of the country's human capital would go to waste due to the poor quality of the education in the country (African Daily Voice, 2018; Nggenbe, 2018; The World Bank, 2018). According to the HCI report, the quality of the education system is so

impoverished that it would result in the dearth of the human capacity for sustainable national development (GhanaWeb, 2018; Nggenbe, 2018; The World Bank, 2018). The projections from the HCI report established that if measures are not taken by stakeholders to address the deplorable state of the education system, about only 44% of children would have the chance of becoming productive members of the society in their old age (African Daily Voice, 2018; GhanaWeb, 2018; Nggenbe, 2018; The World Bank, 2018).

The pursuit of higher education is a significant achievement in every society and is viewed as the development of critical human capital and resource relevant to progress and societal advancement. Higher education produces educated citizenry and well-informed leadership essential for sustainable development. Thus, institutions of higher education are meant to preserve and guide the creation of knowledge, while providing society with the critical human capital equipped with knowledge and skills to address the demands for sustainable socio-economic growth. A higher education that does not serve the purpose of preparing students to be proactive, critical thinkers, and problem-solvers capable of taking actions for societal transformation and advancement is therefore problematic.

FINDINGS

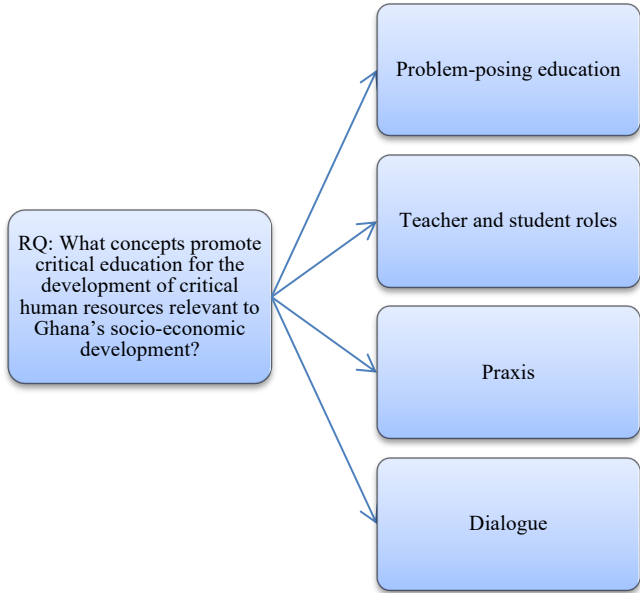
The research question for this secondary research was: What concepts promote critical education for the development of critical human resources relevant to Ghana's socio-economic development? The literature identified the following four concepts of Paulo Freire's (1970, 2014) critical pedagogy: problem-posing education, teacher and student roles, praxis, and dialogue that promote critical education appropriate for Ghana's socio-economic development (Figure 1). Critical pedagogy is a student-centered approach to teaching and learning that emphasizes students' critical thinking and action leading to the transformation of society and life conditions. Freire's ideology of a critical pedagogy stems from the assertion that education empowers not only students but also initiate social change (Giroux, 2010; McLaren, 1997; Shor, 1993).

Problem-Posing Education

Problem-posing education advocates cognition and transformative learning (Freire, 1970; Zokaeieh & Alamdari, 2018). Freire (1970, 1973) emphasized problem-posing education as developing students' critical consciousness. Freire further established that students develop knowledge by questioning the status quo and other problematic issues in their lives.

Problem-posing education encourages students to ask questions as it is based on their realities and living conditions. Thus, problem-posing education uncovers reality, incites critical thinking, and develops critical consciousness, leading students to take actions that improve life conditions (Freire, 1970, 1998; Kareepadath, 2018).

Figure 1
Emergent Concepts Relative to RQ



Teacher and Student Roles

Freire (1972, 1998) argued the teacher and the student should control the educational process and develop knowledge together. Thus, the teacher and the student are critical educators and critical learners in the educational process (Degener, 2001; Moore & Parker, 1986). Because the focus is on creating knowledge together, the teacher maintains an open and friendly relationship with the student (Foley, 2007; Giroux, 1997; Rugut & Osman, 2013). The teacher maintains an open and equal classroom environment by making the class student-centered (Crabtree & Sapp, 2004; Higgins, 1996). The teacher listens to the student’s opinions and ideas and accepts the student’s feedback on the educational process (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011; Crabtree & Sapp, 2004; Higgins, 1996).

Freire established the student is an active participant in the educational process because the teacher and the student negotiate on classroom procedures (Izadinia, 2011; McLaren, 1995). The teacher creates classroom experiences that encourage the student to become an active agent in his or her education (Freire, 1998; Kellner, 1998). Thus, the student has a fluid relationship with the teacher, where the learner can become the teacher and the teacher the learner (Freire, 1970).

Praxis

Freire (1970) argued students achieve critical consciousness through intellectual effort, reflection, and action. Freire explained praxis as the critical reflection and action for implementing educational processes and practices (Keesing-Styles, 2003). Praxis occurs through dialogical processes between partners, the educator, and the learner (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011; Sadeghi, 2008). Praxis connects theory to transformational action by bridging the gap between education and social transformation (Boyce, 1996; Freire, 1970).

Dialogue

Freire (1998) maintained dialogue is the foundation of critical education. Dialogue is the means through which students actively involve in their education. Classroom dialogue reduces how much the teacher talks and encourages students to voice their opinions and ideas (Shor, 1992; Freire, 1998, 2014). Thus, dialogue balances the teacher's authority with the students' input (Shor, 1992). Freire (1970) further asserted the importance of establishing dialogue in education. Using dialogue implies using a language that is familiar to both students and the teacher (Freire, 1970, 1985; Rugut & Osman, 2013).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Higher education institutions offer the appropriate training to develop students into citizens who build and sustain a stable nation (Sisimwo et al., 2014; Yusuf & Oladimeji, 2015). Society establishes universities and colleges with the primary goal to provide services that nurture students to better themselves and eventually the society (Badu-Nyarko & Torto, 2014; French, 2009; Sisimwo et al., 2014). Therefore, the education at the tertiary level should train students with a sense of open-mindedness, logic, and critical consciousness required to build productive citizens that meet societal needs.

Classroom education contributes to the overall development of individuals. Effective instructional strategies in the classroom are essential to

ensuring students receive the best out of their education in higher education institutions (Badu-Nyarko & Torto, 2014; Sisimwo et al., 2014). Therefore, curriculum design and instructional methods become relevant to how students understand, learn, and live. Teaching methods such as traditional face-to-face lectures or expository, direction, collaboration, and discovery determine students' learning outcomes (Awidi, 2008; Badu-Nyarko & Torto, 2014; French, 2009; Yusuf & Oladimeji, 2015). These instructional methods also assess the quality of education students receive in school.

Education as the foundation for future sustenance of individuals and society is closely linked to the method of instruction adopted in the intellectual transformation of students (Freire, 2008; Sisimwo et al., 2014; Yusuf & Oladimeji, 2015). Quality education and appropriate training to meet societal needs is essential and should be considered when designing curriculum and instructional strategies. Through student-centered instructional methods, students can develop reasoning abilities, critical and creative thinking skills, problem-solving techniques as well as connect knowledge and relate information to different environments and contexts. However, student-centered instruction methods are non-existing in the tertiary education system in Ghana.

The majority of higher education institutions in Ghana practice the traditional method of instruction (Awidi, 2008; French, 2009), which Freire (2005, 2008) referred to as the banking concept. The banking concept is the method of instruction that treats students as receptors into which teachers deposit knowledge and, as such, does not encourage critical consciousness and the ownership of knowledge in students (Freire, 2005, 2008; Gutek, 2014). Most universities in Ghana utilize curricula that rely heavily on textbooks usage and traditional face-to-face lecture form of teaching (Awidi, 2008; Badu-Nyarko & Torto, 2014; French, 2009). Thus, these universities have adopted a teacher-centered approach to education where teaching has become the emphasis instead of learning.

There has also been an increased magnitude in class sizes prompting instructors to use public address systems during lectures (Awidi, 2008; French, 2009). Thus, there is both a literal and philosophical distance between teachers and students. For example, aside from teachers and students' distinct roles, there is also the two-thirds chance that some students may not hear or follow lectures due to the large classes and potential system failure (Awidi, 2008). Also, students do not receive any form of feedback from instructors to help them improve academically. According to Awidi (2008), many instructors do not assess students' performance through assignments in the

course of the semester, and the few who do only provide grades without comments.

The structure and operation of Ghanaian universities and colleges should reflect the needs and aspirations for socio-economic development. The instructional delivery methods currently practiced in many Ghanaian universities and colleges are, therefore, problematic. Students in these institutions should not only receive information and knowledge like receptors, but should also gain consciousness by expanding their logical, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Students need to learn and develop the curiosity to explore issues and ideas through communication and discussions with colleagues as well as teachers.

To address this problem means acknowledging the questionable formation and development of students who are also citizens and the future leaders of Ghana. Several decades after independence, Ghana is still practicing the colonial educational curriculum, which had one agenda: To create a class of low-level bureaucrats and clerks who could occupy administrative positions that supported colonial rule (MacBeath, 2010; Segura, 2009). During the colonial era, the curriculum for instruction had no relevance to the local people as, by design, only served the interests of the colonial masters.

An educational system that had no relevance to preindependence Ghana is definitely of no use to postindependence Ghana. It is, therefore, worrisome when current instructional delivery methods practiced in educational institutions in many of the nation's institutions of higher education still bear the remnants of colonial education, such as rigid curriculum with little or no discussions and interaction in the classroom. Due to these factors, there is no creativity and transformation as students are separated from inquiry and only perform the role of listening, memorizing, and repeating the thoughts and ideas teachers narrate in the classroom. Again, these practices do not create a conducive environment for the cultivation of critical thinking skills and the development of critical consciousness within students.

The aim of education is more than mere learning. Education should be about the critical examination of the social world, resulting in actions that serve the best interest of society (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011; Ares, 2006; Freire, 2008). Education should be conducted in an environment with curriculum and instructional strategies that enable the incorporation of the lived experiences, language, and knowledge of students. Thus, education should be about making students critical thinkers and problem-solvers who can assume roles for socio-economic development.

The time has come for the Ghanaian education system to introduce a critical pedagogy into the educational curriculum. Critical pedagogy is an educational philosophy that seeks to empower students through thought and action (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011; Freire, 1968, 2014). The philosophy emphasizes students' critical thinking and action, which leads to the transformation of society and living conditions. This teaching and learning approach makes students the subjects of their education rather than playing the passive role as objects. As such, the actions of students are geared towards transforming societies through problem-based education. When students are exposed to problem-based education, they can question the status quo and other problematic issues, cultivate critical thinking skills, and develop critical consciousness. Also, when students possess critical consciousness, they are not only in the position to improve their individual life conditions but also take actions that serve the best interest of everyone by building a more just society.

The concepts of critical pedagogy, including problem-posing education, the assignment of roles to teachers and students, the translation of thoughts into actions, and the promotion of classroom dialogue, need to be introduced in the curriculum and teaching in Ghana. The introduction of problem-posing education will assist students in developing knowledge by questioning the status quo and other problematic issues in their lives. The assignment of teacher and student roles in the classroom will make the teacher and the student both subjects and in charge of the educational process of developing knowledge. The application of theory to solve real problems will also be promoted. This concept will involve critical reflection and action for implementing educational processes and practices. Additionally, the promotion of classroom dialogue will enhance classroom communication, thereby creating critical inter-subjectivity between the student and the teacher and between the student and his or her world. This process will empower students to reflect on what is known and what is unknown and be in the position to take actions that are critical to transforming reality.

Many individuals in Ghana continue to receive education in traditional classrooms in which the content conforms with the status quo and still retain remnants of colonial education. The kinds of instructional methods in these educational settings minimize the critical literacy and awareness of individuals the country needs to address some of its complex problems, such as poverty and unemployment. Introducing critical pedagogy in Ghanaian classrooms will inform and facilitate the development of individuals who understand their history and current situations and are equipped with the tools to participate in their society actively. Ghana's educational system needs to

introduce new instructional delivery methods that teach students not to be passive and compliant. The educational process should allow students to grow their critical thinking capabilities, understand social systems, recognize political and social injustice, and act to rectify problematic situations.

Critical pedagogy as an educational strategy should be applied to Ghana's education system. Critical pedagogy, a student-centered learning strategy that challenges the construction of knowledge in schools and society, should be the focus of educators in a developing nation such as Ghana. This approach will not only challenge institutional structures but also put agency in the hands of students. Critical pedagogy is the instructional approach Ghana needs to empower its citizens to become critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and change agents who can address the country's complex problems and champion the cause for socio-economic development.

IMPLICATIONS

This research has implications for expanding the limited research on the instructional delivery methods in Ghanaian institutions of higher education (French, 2009). As revealed in the literature, current instructional delivery methods practiced in the majority of tertiary institutions in Ghana still bear the remnants of British colonial education (MacBeath, 2010; Sefa Dei & Opini, 2007). For example, the classroom layouts, textbooks usage, and rigid timetables are British colonial education influences that are still being practiced. There is a dearth in the contemporary literature relative to the instructional delivery methods that could break this trend. Thus, the findings of this study contribute to the literature by expanding the body of knowledge relative to teaching and learning strategies that discourage the traditional instructional method or banking concept of memorization and repetition of knowledge.

Furthermore, the paper contains information that may provide insight and understanding to educational policymakers. In a country such as Ghana, this paper is an invaluable document that departments of education, the Ministry of Education, and other educational bodies may find useful when making policies in the field. Such educational policies may also become beneficial to other countries in the sub-region and beyond facing similar challenges with curriculum and instruction at the tertiary level.

Moreover, this research will be valuable to institutions of higher education that seek to address educational issues related to curriculum design and instructional delivery methods. Many institutions struggle with the unilateral approach with an emphasis on teaching instead of learning (Awidi,

2008; Badu-Nyarko & Torto, 2014; French, 2009; Sisimwo et al., 2014). There is also a heavy reliance on structured curriculums with little or no room for student-student or teacher-student interactions. Thus, the paper presents new perspectives that could be explored by these institutions.

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