

# Decoloniality and Higher Education Transformation in Ghana

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**Abstract:** - Africa as a continent has witnessed a lot of dramatic political studies in the 1950's. Between 1956 and 1962, 26 countries including Ghana had gained their sovereignty and most of the remaining states were at varying stages of self-government. Ghana attained her independence during the tail end of the cold war era in 1957. Since then democracy has become a frequently used word in the national discourse. Higher education in Ghana over the past two decades has witnessed an unprecedented growth in the various areas as it tries to achieve democratization— increased access and participation, expansion of academic user facilities, private sector involvement, innovative financial sustainability strategies and a tremendous transformative policy environment. The benefit accrued from higher education to the national development of a country cannot be ignored. The 1992 constitution makes a unique provision for higher education: higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means, and in particular, by progressive introduction of free education. Most African states in which Ghana is among witnessed a lot of democratic changes in the early 90's. This chapter seeks to provide a critical and descriptive positive analysis of decoloniality and transformation of higher education in Ghana in an epistemological contexts relation to the history of higher education during the colonial era, post-colonial era in Ghana, emergence of private universities, governance, management and administration of the public universities, the role of government agencies like National Accreditation Board and National Council for Tertiary Education in the democratization of higher education institutions, higher education reforms in Ghana, financing of higher education, pedagogies and the various government transformative policies. Attempts will be made to stress the implications of the decoloniality and transformation of higher education to Ghana's political environments.

**Keywords:** Decoloniality, transformation, access, participation, higher education, National Accreditation Board and National Council for Tertiary Education

## I. INTRODUCTION

The role of education towards benefiting both individual and national growth has been universally acknowledged. Children receiving quality education are likely to be better citizens having active participation in the socio-economic growth in the region (UNICEF, 2000). Education brings a drastic change in the human capital of a nation as it helps train the minds for new skills which make them functionally productive in the society. Higher education system for any society is the final processing stage for graduates to sharpen their skillsets and gain more acceptance within the job market.

This is why most nations strive to bring considerable improvements within their job market to meet the growing demands of the country. While planning for education growth and development, careful consideration needs to be done for meeting globalisation needs. Graduates produced within one country need to meet the demand and acceptance within international markets as well. However, on the other hand, globalisation also imposes its own challenges on the higher education system. Global Neo-liberalism has been argued to be a tenant of colonialism and has emerged to become a hegemonic or 'common sense' based discourse (Harvey, 2005). This has also come to impact most government and institutional policies at global levels (Torres, 2013). Although global neoliberalism has been known to have positive impact on higher education policy of the country, yet, it has been surrounded in numerous controversies. One needs to be very cautious in understanding the benefits of higher education to national development and subsequent conformance to globalisation needs (Torres, 2013). While discussing the decolonisation and higher education transformation in Ghana, this chapter analyses policies, guidelines and practices that have significantly impacted higher education.

Firstly, the 1988 University Rationalisation Committee report, secondly, the 1991 Government White paper which introduced critical reforms in the tertiary education system, and lastly the 1992 constitution which introduced unique provisions for higher education. These policies, guidelines and practices ultimately aimed to empower universities in their role towards knowledge creation, knowledge management, research, training and teaching.

As compared to other countries in the Sub-Saharan Africa region, Ghana after its independence in 1957, has gained significantly in the area of higher education (Gyamera, 2015). Irrespective of this tremendous gain, inequalities continue to exist within the tertiary education system, particularly in areas like, language usage, curriculum dominated by Western knowledge systems, and other forms of Eurocentric practices etc. To solve these existing issues, Ghana would need to cooperatively work with other African nations to bring about necessary decolonisation of education. There is a need to work together to end the epistemic violence which Eurocentric knowledge systems have historically created in the Ghanaian higher educational system. This chapter tries to give a critical analysis of decoloniality and transformation in

the higher educational system of Ghana. Aspects discussed as part of the Ghanaian higher education decoloniality and transformation includes; emergence of private universities, relationship between government and higher education institutions in Ghana, higher education reforms in Ghana, financing of higher education in Ghana and governance and management of public universities.

### *1.1. Why the Crisis?*

Ghana was amongst the colonised nations of the British in the Sub-Sahara African region. From the period of 19<sup>th</sup> century to mid -20<sup>th</sup> century, there were detrimental practices of slave trade, segregation in the educational system, religious indoctrination, imperialism, neo-colonialism and neo-liberalism in Ghana, just like other African nations. These practices not only impacted the education and economic system but also had significant influence on the social life and citizenry in the region. Neo-colonialism, in particular, is about the usage of norms, practices, and values from the colonial education system, which are directly derived from the colonial masters (Higgs, 2016). The biggest challenge with this colonial system of higher education is that it does not address the various global and national challenges pertaining to social justice and universal well-being (Naidoo, 2007). Just like other African nations, the Ghanaian education system also experienced systematic suppression of the indigenous knowledge system of the country (Gyamera 2014). For instance, a senior high school graduate in Ghana has to secure minimum credits in English (the colonial master's language) in order to become eligible for enrolling in higher education. Tertiary institutions are instructed to use English as the official language for teaching and communication, although majority of the students are not native English speakers. Despite the fact that native Ghanaians constitute the majority in the universities of Ghana, current practices and norms give preference to white and foreign students when it comes to accommodation and admission (Gyamera, 2015). Additionally, in Ghana, the government has given enough incentives to private sector universities and institutions to contribute to socio-economic growth. Hence most institutions, including public universities are now emerging as income generating entities. Tertiary curricular reforms are aimed towards making public universities more attractive to international and local students, generate better income and promote better job opportunities for the students. Even though some laudable practices are at present, to make these university programmes better positioned internationally, yet, a general perception remains that Ghanaian institutions still lag in the skills and knowledge required to support the socio-economic growth (Government of Ghana (GoG) White paper on Educational reforms, 2007). Similar is the condition in most other countries belonging to the Sub-Saharan African region who were colonised in the past.

The apartheid era in South Africa witnessed a segregation amongst the universities based on race, population or language. These racial classifications were largely social

constructs but had real implications both in the apartheid and post-apartheid eras in South African region. Despite various attempts to transform the education system, it is still understood to be highly conservative in its current form. It is also known that prior attempts to transform the academic system have not resulted in significant results. Ugandan academic author Mahmoud Mamdani has accused these universities to profess 'Bantu education' instead of focusing on teaching critical African studies (Mamdani, 1998). Despite the historical position of liberalism which these institutions follow, specifically the Afrikaans medium white universities. Thus, even though these institutions have a history of admitting black students since the early 1920s, still, they largely operate as 'white universities' in the post-apartheid era as well. Although it may be argued that it is just a matter of perception, because the student demographic is mostly black, yet, in terms of norms and values which operate at institutional level, they still are regarded as white based universities. Most recently, a body of black academicians also wrote an open letter to these universities urging the universities to denounce institutional racism (Adjiwanou et al. 2014). It may be unsurprising that black learners are believed to be institutionally deficient because they lack the Eurocentric cultural capital which most of these institutions demand. There is evidently a hermeneutical injustice in the South African higher education system due to the colonial past, where other knowledge systems are not perceived to be important or useful. Nyamnjoh (2012, 132) describes colonialism as having ' . . . played the role of repressing instead of fostering, taming instead of inspiring, and enervating instead of strengthening'.

### *1.2. Why Decolonising Education?*

Decolonial thinking, as described by the Latin American academicians Quijano (1999) and Mignolo (2012), is based on the idea that colonialism delineates a period of temporary oppression which stayed and went away. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) also describes coloniality as an underlying hierarchising logic which put people and knowledge of others at an inferior level as compared to the European culture and values. Decolonial thinkers describe that one product of modernity arising from colonialism is the creation of a legitimate kind of knowledge. Quijano (1999) also believes that western civilisation includes an interrelated form of control which brings in practices like, racism, patriarchy, knowledge authority etc. This 'colonial matrix of power' still seems to have its effect on the society even though the colonialism has come and gone (Mignolo, 2012).

Mignolo (2012), explains the colonial matrix by arguing that the system of knowledge within this 'western code' does not serve all humanity, but rather only a small portion of people. This set of people believe that in terms of epistemology, there is just 'a single game in town'. Coloniality is therefore a system of management which relies on domination and impacts the way people perceive the world based on social categories, birth, geography and circumstance. During the

entanglement of modernity and coloniality, institutions are required to legitimise the sorts of classifications that gradually emerge. They help to separate and classify the valid ways of knowing and knowledge from the invalid ones. Modernity as described by Mignolo (2012) gives a rhetoric of salvation, whether seen as the salvation given by Christianity, by the civilising mission or through the discourses of development. Here, development discourses are also believed to contribute to myth creation that there are global needs which can be managed by one center which knowledge creation happens to solve problems (ibid, xvii). Decolonial thinking is thus believed to promote 'epistemic disobedience' which helps to envision social life, knowledge bodies and institutions differently (Mignolo, 2012:9).

Decolonial thinking is also attributed to have its own flaws. Firstly, it is believed to create the risk of essentialising complex knowledge formations. For example: binaries of 'Western' versus 'African' knowledge are described by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013), to be without an appreciation of complex entanglements in either of the imagined categories. Furthermore, the decolonial perspective also in some respects overdetermines the role played by current epistemologies by these decolonial thinkers like Mignolo and Quijano. This makes the readers wonder how assessments of coloniality even managed to emerge. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013), describe the theories of decolonial thinkers without providing any backing through primary research. Mignolo (2012) describes that these claims make one imagine tangible manifestations of the effects of decolonialism rather than seeking evidence for the same.

Nevertheless, decoloniality is useful as a means to understand the long-lived effects of colonialism as a body of knowledge-relations, and this chapter presents the same in this spirit. This author does not agree however that African writers like Steve Biko, whose thoughts are the product of modernity are in any way less adequate at describing African experience, just because they engage through the terms of modernity. The stance in this chapter is such that it takes African theories seriously instead of one that expresses the presence of unique African epistemology. There is thus significant value in the elements of decolonial thinking which focus on polycentrism and describe decoloniality as a theory amongst the rest. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013:180) has applied the lens of decoloniality on the higher education system in Africa to stress on the need to bring in cultural transformation within these African universities. This transformation as he describes is not within the neo-liberal meaning of the term as understood in post-apartheid Africa, but instead it is a 'package of transformation' and includes research, teaching, curriculum, epistemology, pedagogy, and culture. The aim of this transformation is to anchor higher education and the liberation strategies in the African region (ibid, 179). Ndlovu-Gatsheni describes it as a deeply politicised project. Although this author is troubled by Ndlovu Gatsheni's implicit assumptions regarding African identity, it may be easier to agree with the belief that calls for a recognition of coloniality

in these universities. Despite his focus on decolonial thinking, which results at times in over determining the impact of modernity on other African authors, Ndlovu (2013) recognises the various entanglements of knowledge systems in current African context. He therefore describes that true transformation of institutions will have to develop creative ways to blend African and Euro-American epistemologies, and to appreciate the need to decolonise. This shall include the pedagogies, curriculum, and the culture as they exist. This position, in the opinion of the author, is a useful lens to examine the post-apartheid Africa and the current status of universities.

Decolonisation of higher education, as Pillay (2015) hold, is about achieving a system of justice which can address the epistemic violence created by colonial thoughts and knowledge. A key limitation is the failure of higher education curriculum in Africa to adequately address the many global and national challenges that relate to social justice and global well-being (Naidoo, 2007). In Ghana and many other African countries, access to and widening participation in higher education is a concern, including the need for greater gender equity and indigenous knowledge systems are being suppressed (Gyamera, 2014). More so, South African region and other countries in Africa needs universities and education systems which can develop graduates who can solve the issues underlying epistemic violence of the past, which impacted the regional 'history of humanities' and denied the cultural development (Zeleza, 2009:116). However, it is tough to find the leaders, administrators and academicians who are capable of solving these deep-rooted problems of epistemic violence.

It is surprising to see that many still believe that Western Knowledge System is the only basis of higher education and thinking and believe in the universality of its application to rest of the world (Department of Education [DoE] 2008:91). This is why the involvement of white academicians in decolonisation project needs self-reflexivity, recognition of privilege, personal change and unlearning of the traditional knowledge which was created to subjugate the others (Langdon, 2013:385). This epistemological transformation also depends on the significant rise in the proportion of black, coloured or Indian academicians in these universities (Higher Education South Africa [HESA], 2014:8). However, simply replacing white academicians with this new batch does not imply that a fundamental change will occur. Ramoupi (2014:271) argues that leadership change at many universities from white to coloured or Indian chancellors did not mean any substantial paradigm shifts, and cannot be regarded as a meaningful attempt to decolonisation of curriculum or content. In this regard, Maserumule (2015) indicates that the professoriate in African region largely belongs to the white population, which is largely responsible for imprinting a culture of 'whiteness', and hence is not surprising. In this way, Western education in this region has largely played the role to proselytise black Africans (Maserumule, 2015). African academicians may show reluctance in repudiating their basic structure. This is why the struggle to decolonise higher

education can be a long-taking process and might need new generation of administrators and academicians, who were not part of the traditional system, and also represent the country's demographics so that they can reach senior positions.

In the past two decades, Ghana has experienced unprecedented growth in multiple areas to bring about democratisation or to remove colonisation. These changes are in terms of increased participation by academic institutions, greater expansion of their facilities, increased access for all sections of the society, higher participation by the private sector, and innovative financial strategies. All this has also been strengthened by a transformative policy environment. The contribution of higher education to the development of Ghana cannot be ignored. According to the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, Article 25(1c) 'the state shall make attempt to make higher education accessible to all irrespective of their capacity and by all means'. The idea is to progressively introduce free education in the economy. The early 1990s were the period in which most African states, including Ghana experienced dramatic changes in the democratic structure. There were drastic changes following the decoloniality and the subsequent transformation of the higher education sector. The critical areas for analysis are the emergence of private universities, change in leadership and governance, role of government agencies, increasing significance of National Council for Tertiary Education, and National Accreditation Board, changing pedagogy in relation to languages, financing of higher education, radical changes in university curriculum and content etc. The next section will make attempt to provide detailed discussion on higher education system in colonial and post-colonial eras in Ghana.

### *1.3. Overview of Higher Education in the colonial and postcolonial eras in Ghana*

The higher education system of Ghana dates back to the 1940s when the British appointed Mr. Justice Asquith to work towards designing principles for establishment of universities (Daniels, 1997). Subsequently, Ghana also adopted the British model of education, quite like other parts of the African region. This model of education was primarily designed to train elite groups to take up civil service roles (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2008). The first institution offering higher education in the region is the University College of Gold Coast, which was created by an ordinance dated 11<sup>th</sup> August 1948. The university (which is now known as University of Ghana) was created as having special ties with University of London. By the end of 1961, this University had attained sovereign status to independently award degrees on its own.

Subsequently, population pressure created the demand for more universities, which eventually led to setting up of University of Education, Winneba and University of Cape Coast, etc. Others like Kumasi College of Technology gained upgradation to become Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology following an Act of Parliament on

August 22<sup>nd</sup> 1961. This university offered courses in Arts, sciences, commerce, technology and engineering.

Likewise, the University college of Cape Coast was set up in December 1962 and gained a full university status by an Act of Parliament in October 1971, and subsequent University of Cape Coast Laws 1992 (PNDC LAW278). The primary aim of these laws were to create the workforce of graduates needed to teach in various colleges and senior high schools being created in the nation. The University of Education, Winneba (UEW) was also set up in 1992 and was initially affiliated to the University of Cape Coast. Currently UEW has three campuses in the region, in Asante Mampong, Kumasi, and Ajumako. Similarly, in 1992, University of Development Studies (UDS) was set up by the PNDC Law 279, although it was not affiliated to an existing university (Agbodeka, 1998). UDS was given the provision to run integrated programmes in critical development areas of Ghana, namely, in agriculture, health delivery, and social care etc. currently the university also has 4 major campuses in Upper East and West, Brong Ahafo, and the Northern part.

Currently there are 6 public universities functional in Ghana, 10 technical universities, 38 general colleges of education and more than 120 private universities. There are also 9 tutorial colleges which prepare the students for professional examinations outside and within Ghana. These institutions collectively prepare the citizens for the socio-cultural challenges facing the country and to make them competent enough to suit the radical human capital requirements within the country. The purpose is to make use of the resources of the nation for its own development without over-depending on the foreign impinges or adhering to the colonial culture.

### *1.4. Emergence of Private Universities*

Private institutions have been a critical part of the Ghana economy and have grown significantly in the last few decades. There were more than 120 institutions, as of December 2012, and most of them running diploma, degree and postgraduate programmes with various accreditation centers spread across the nation, particularly in capital districts. The national, ideological, and political changes accompanying the growth of Ghana have been largely responsible for creation and growth of these private bodies. High population growth and demand for access to university education, followed by decreased budgetary allocation by government for public tertiary higher education, have been the driving forces for their emergence.

### *1.5. Relationship between Government and Higher education institutions in Ghana.*

Education is regarded as the critical factor behind the socio-economic development of any nation. As described by former secretary general of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, universities in the Sub-Sahara Africa need to be channelised as instruments of growth and catalysts towards progress. They need to be developed to overcome the deplorable state of this

region in the twenty first century era. Mr. Annan (date,cited in Kurtz and Schrank, 2007, p.6) also stressed that these indigenous universities need to focus on developing African expertise to work towards resolving the local problems, fostering a model for good governance, working towards conflict resolution, and promoting greater role of African academicians to integrate with global scholar community (Kurtz and Schrank, 2007, p.6). The Government of Ghana also recognised that transformation of tertiary education in Ghana requires that human and physical capital base be strengthened to meet the current complications and future challenges.

To realise the full-fledge benefits of decolonisation and to transform the higher education in particular, there is a need to create pragmatic and positive relationship between these tertiary institutions and the government. There are incessant efforts by government of Ghana to decolonise and transform higher education through improvement in knowledge production, curriculum innovation but this noble attempt has been bedeviled by neoliberal influences, does not encourage differentiation of the curriculum, deemphasises indigenous education and undermines local languages. In the end, higher education privileges access to some groups and communities whilst restricting access to others (Mwaniki, 2012). One of the major steps taken to promote such a relationship, is the setting of institutions like, National Accreditation Board (NAB), and the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE). These formal institutions also act as avenue for government bodies to have a formal structure identified for creating necessary interaction with these universities (Daniel, 1998). To achieve higher efficiency in relationship building, the 1991 Government white paper recommended various tertiary reforms in the Ghanaian region. One of the major reforms was the establishment of NCTE (National Council for Tertiary Education) under the ACT 454. The aim of this body was to act as quality assurance body for educational institutions and be assisted by the National Accreditation Board (NAB) in these quality functions. The NAB would help NCTE to bring about 'furtherance in superior management of tertiary education in Ghana ([www.nab.gov.gh](http://www.nab.gov.gh)). Likewise, a National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations (NABTEX) would also perform its duties to prepare the upcoming workforce for the required skills and capabilities for the socio-economic growth. NCTE primarily functions like a regulatory body which monitors, evaluates and reviews the norms and standards in the institutions to promote superior leadership, defined roles, and high relevance in the tertiary education sector. NAB, on the other hand, was established by the PNDC LAW 317 in the year 1993, and was subsequently replaced by the NAB Act 744 in 2007. NAB functions as an agency within the Ministry of Education Ghana and mostly plays the role of supervising and providing accreditations for the tertiary institutions in Ghana.

### *1.6. Higher Education Reforms in Ghana*

By the end of 1980s, the number of public universities in Ghana was only 3, namely the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), the University of Ghana (UG), and the University of Cape Coast (UCC). This phase was characterised by severe problems in the tertiary education sector, wherein problems of low staff retention and poor staff recruitment were present. Staff of good quality were leaving the nation for better salaries and opportunities in foreign universities. Added to this, issues like rampant student unrest activities owing to introduction of unregulated residential fees and student user fees etc. were also responsible for a poor relationship between the university working staff, students and the government. The growth and expansion plan for a decolonised tertiary education was taken amidst these uncertainties. Two of the major tertiary education reforms were created in the same period. They are, the University Rationalisation Committee (URC) of 1988, followed by the 1991 Government White paper on tertiary education reforms which are described in detail below.

#### *1.6.1. The University Rationalisation Committee (URC) of 1988*

The University Rationalisation Committee (URC) was set up in the year 1988 under the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC). This is regarded to be amongst the most comprehensive policy initiatives in the education sector. This committee created the plan for a comprehensive review of the post-secondary education in the region. Base on the committees' reports, a suitable plan was drafted for expanding accessibility, equity, efficiency and effectiveness of the educational setting and for improving the quality of degree programmes. The changes recommended by the committee were with regard to the structural, administrative and governance framework changes within these higher education bodies. URC also recommended structural changes within the current academic programmes to make them more relevant for students and changing economy. It also recommended necessary steps to make higher education programmes more cost effective, with changes in the existing facilities and utilisation of existing resources (Girdwood, 1999).

#### *1.6.2. The 1991 White Paper on Reforms to Tertiary Education*

URC provided a comprehensive set of 166 recommendations in total, which were eventually accepted by the government as a policy guideline for creation of the 1991 white paper for tertiary education reforms (Girdwood, 1999). There were various proposals made under these reforms as described below:

1. The expansion of the tertiary sector to build more universities, polytechnic institutions and training colleges for teachers. These changes were expected to solve the current issues pertaining to cost recovery

mechanism, consolidation of cost sharing, promoting greater participation, and retaining high quality staff.

2. The creation of two more universities. The seven-specialist colleges awarding diploma degree were required to be upgraded and brought under one institution in the Central region, namely the University College of Education Winneba. The mandate was to create professionally qualified and competent teachers at pre-tertiary levels (Manuh, Sulley and Budu 2007:36). Established in 1992, the college was upgraded as a full-fledged university in the year 1994 as the University of Education, Winneba. Likewise, another University, namely the University of Development Studies (UDS) was established in the Northern region in Tamale. This university-trained agricultural specialist to offer degrees in areas of development studies and health. The idea was to address the community problems and offer more action-oriented approach for transforming the educational sector (Manuh et al., 2007:36). As described by Effah (2003: 339), apart from improving the access to education, UDS also introduced new action-oriented degree programs which promoted field training. The purpose was to adopt community-based educational guidelines in areas of developmental priority and adopt a more problem-based learning approach. The objective was to look towards solving the issues of deprivation and problems of the environment, particularly in the Northern Ghana and other rural areas in the country. UDS was set up to ensure adequate quality in the spatial distribution of universities as majority of the institutes were located in the central and southern parts of the country.
3. The establishment of the Board of Accreditation for superior expansion quality assurance, and streamlined management of tertiary education. NAB was to be established as a regulatory body within the Ministry of Education to enable a highly responsive system of education within the fast-evolving world. The purpose was to make the graduates more competent and competitive within the fast-changing world (NAB, 2007)

These practical reforms created the stepping stone for increasing the number of institutions, upgrading the status and facilities in existing institutions, strengthening the provisions within existing teacher education, and enhancing the scope of private education providers. However, there were some demerits in the form of huge government budgetary stress and lower rate of cost recovery.

### *1.7. Financing of Higher education in Ghana*

One of the major problems facing the development of higher education systems has been the shortage of adequate sources of finance. Both policy makers and other stakeholders face the

issue of managing the plans with the available limited resources and financial support, and the problem is common across Ghana and entire Africa (Antwi, 1995:164). The 1992 constitution of Ghana made attempts to prioritise the higher education and increase budgetary allocation to the sector. Article 25(1c) described that higher education needs to be made equally accessible to all, irrespective of capacity, and by all means, such that it needs to be progressively made free for all (Constitution of Ghana, 1992). Given the current socio-economic environment in Ghana, the idea of free higher education is difficult to achieve Samoff and Carrol, 2003). However, attempts do exist from government to adequately finance the higher education sector for effective decolonisation. The URC of 1988 also gave necessary proposal towards effective funding of the public universities. The World Bank funded project (TEP) helped to achieve necessary support and improvement from 1993 to 1998 for expanding access and improving the stability of these institutions (Girdwood, 1999). Basis these efforts, as Effah (2003:340) describes there was a 165% increase in the number of enrolments in public universities from 1991 to 1999, increasing from a figure of just 11,857 to 31,460. Likewise, in polytechnic courses, the number of enrolments increased from 1,299 in the year 1993 to a figure of 18,474 in the year 2000. The 38 teacher training colleges also witnessed a significant jump, with only 18,955 registrations happening in 1993 to a figure of 21,410 in the year 2000. Although the number of registration increase was laudable, yet, there was also significant increase in the public expenditure on the part of government from 1981 to 1992. Following this, budgetary stress reduced the financing towards higher education (Girdwood, 1999: ix). Subsequent to the financial stress, government took some extreme steps towards cost recovery and cost-sharing, some of which were withdrawn due to rampant student unrest. Like, the residential fees were charged only 25% post the unrest. Prevailing economic conditions have largely impacted the government spending on education, although some pragmatic measures and policies are being taken to achieve the vision. As described by Effah (2003: 344), in order to arrange for the shortfall in meeting educational growth objectives, the Ghana Educational Trust was set up in the year 2000, which provided that 20% of the rate of VAT (Value Added Tax) need to be paid towards GET fund for education. This fund was required to be channelised towards providing for education, developing educational infrastructure, implementing more scholarship plans, arranging for student loans, offering for grants for research and training, and for assisting indigenous lecturers to take up post-graduate programmes within and outside Ghana. There were some other measures which government adopted to help these universities accrue more fund and run their programmes successfully for effective decolonisation. Some of the steps included, effective reorganisation of the Social Security and National Investment Trust (SSNIT) funds to make them available for the needy students and for areas like, scholarships for brilliant students, payment of academic user fees, Ghanaian fee-paying students, residential fees, enhancing the enrolment drive for foreign students, etc. Likewise, steps were taken for operating more

market-oriented postgraduate programmes for creating more internal funds and consistently enabling NCTE to pay for the statutory monies for the various universities. All these have played a key role in enabling these universities to develop their self-reliance.

### 1.8. Governance and Management of Public Universities

Higher Education is believed to be a key facilitator of socio-economic growth and development in a nation. The contribution of higher education to the human capital development process cannot be ignored. Universities are largely seen as institutions which promote research, training and larger student engagement towards nation building. The decolonisation drive towards transforming education has seen the involvement of stakeholders, policy makers and government bodies in the form of various innovative methods for improving governance of public universities, as described below:

The URC of 1988 created necessary framework for governance and management of public universities. The report emphasised that universities achieve the below objectives:

- The tertiary education system and its structure were redefined to include all post-secondary and pre-service training bodies under the direct guidance of the Ministry of Education.
- Steps to make tertiary education accessible and cost effective
- Enhancing institutional capacity for creating more funds and income
- Enhancing the role of private sector in participation for fund generation
- Providing better access to qualified people, helping improve the gender representation and taking steps for quality assurance
- Creating necessary balance to promote science and technology along with social sciences and humanities to support the manpower needs of the country.
- Enhancing the management of tertiary educational institutions

Additionally, the report paved the way for creating a unified tertiary sector to bring necessary reforms in the management, governance, and academic funding in the Ghanaian universities. The report consolidated the various post-secondary institutions under a common umbrella of tertiary education system. This consolidation facilitated equitable access of education system to include people from various background. Upgrading the existing polytechnic institutions into technical universities helped to provide the diverse workforce needs which the country needed in this technological progress. Added to this, URC 1988 also made recommendations for reorganising the programmes with introduction of diverse modes of delivery to accommodate the growing need of non-traditional category of students. This helped build an inclusive environment particularly for the students living in rural areas or from lower socio-economic

strata. Standardisation of education with universities, teacher training colleges, and technical institutes adopting semester system for course units helped ensure quality assurance. Likewise, steps like introducing non-residential courses also helped to attract more students from various sections of society, particular the females into the higher education system.

Added to this, the 1991 white paper played a major role in reforming the tertiary education system and democratising the governance structure of the universities. It also helped to encourage cost-effective programmes for meeting societal demands and towards democratising higher education to make them accessible for all.

The National Accreditation Board (NAB) and NCTE also brought in necessary reforms in the governance and management, as a body for regulating quality assurance, and to serve as a bridge between government and tertiary education bodies respectively (NAB, 2007). In the current governance structure, all the 6 public universities are governed and run on the basis of the respective Acts enacted by the Ghanaian parliament. All public universities have their own governing council, executive committee, management committee, faculty boards, academic boards and other department boards to create a comprehensive system of management and decision-making. Other committees may be constituted and appointed from time to time to ensure effective running of the day to day function, or to take up specialised functional objective etc. All these bodies and the overall governance structured contributes towards transforming the education system to a decolonised form to help meet the demands of a growing nation.

## II. CONCLUSION

Evidences available indicates that, there has been an outstanding transformation of higher education in Ghana within the last three decades relating to access and participation, governance systems, reforms, acts and innovative financial sustainability strategies. Despite these successes much has not been done still at the tertiary level, where English language is been officially used as the language of instruction and the continuous running of certain foreign academic courses in most of the public and private universities in the country, which is defeating the transformation steps of decolonising our higher education and creating avenues for colonisation. There is therefore, the need for government, stakeholders and policy makers to pull all available resources together in order to remove this epistemic violation in our higher education and pursue more innovative strategies to achieve decoloniality and transformation of higher education in Ghana.

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