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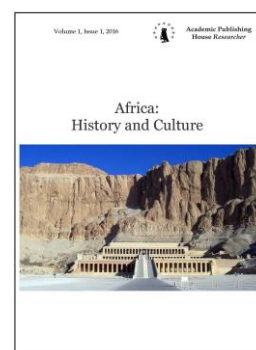
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Editorial

2018 Open Call for Special Issues: Editor-in-Chief's Note

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Africa: History and Culture is an electronic scientific journal published by Academic Publishing House Researcher s.r.o. This double-blind peer reviewed journal accepts high quality manuscripts in English with a focus in Africa. We understand that the history and culture of Africa will influence and differentiate every African research from other places.

Thus, we encourage the publication of papers in fields such as agriculture, arts, development, social sciences, health sciences, education, law, humanities, applied sciences, pure science, engineering, technology and other related disciplines from or directed to the African continent.

In this current issue, we published papers from Ghana, Nigeria, and the United States of America. As we work to advance our mission, we announce our 2018 Open Call for Special Issues.

Themes/topics for proposals must denote a scope that is vital and critical for present development of Africa and should be line with our mission. Assessment for relevance and novelty will be carefully employed by peer reviewers to select the best proposals.

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2. maximum of 8,500 words [including tables, figures and references];
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Completed proposals should be sent to the Editor-in-Chief [sarfojo@yahoo.com] before 31st May, 2018.

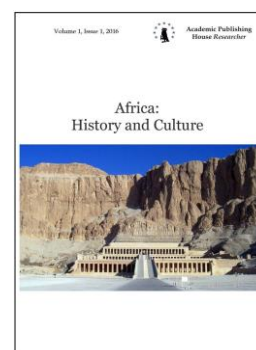
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Get the Rabbit Habit! National Rabbit Project, Mamattah and the Psychology of Rabbit Consumption in Ghana

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Abstract

Rabbit breeding and rabbit meat in Ghana have both political and animal husbandry values. Beginning from the famous “Operation Feed Yourself” (OFY) by the regime of Colonel Ignatius Kutu Acheampong’s National Redemption Council (NRC), rabbits gain popularity into national history, food production and nutrition of Ghanaians. The OFY housed the National Rabbit Project (NRP) which was created and managed by Newlove Mamattah. This paper seeks to examine the historical NRP, rabbit production, benefits and potentials existing and future governments in Ghana and other African countries can unearth to advance food production. Although OYF, Mamattah and the NRP made historic triumphs, the role of rabbits in national development has not received much attention till date. The loss of interest in raising and consuming rabbit meat may be attributed partly to the political fall of the NRC and the poor political commitment of future governments towards sustainable meat production in Ghana.

Keywords: animal husbandry, Ghana, national rabbit project, national redemption council, operation feed yourself.

1. Introduction

Rabbits have a long history with many countries worldwide and are raised for several purposes. These small mammals are raised most often for their fur and meat. In some cases, they are kept as pets or as show rabbits (McNitt et al., 2013). Rabbit breeding as an industry has been evolving over the years to include governments, international agencies, and commercial farmers. In Ghana, history has it that domestic rabbits were brought into the then colonial Gold Coast by missionaries. These missionaries introduced the congregations in their missions to raise them. Nonetheless, local rabbits which were hunted or reared were treasured and highly priced (Lukefahr, 2000; Opoku, Lukefahr, 1990). One of the greatest motivation then was that, “rabbits were easy to handle by women and children, feeding and management practices were simple and locally sustainable, and a plentiful (albeit inexpensive) meat source was secured” (Lukefahr, 2000: 308).

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2. Results



Fig. 1. Rabbits feeding on vegetable leftovers at Rabbit Reino, Eastern Region, Ghana (photo credit: J. O. Sarfo)

Currently, rabbit breeding is done at the backyards of local Ghanaian farmers, with few commercial breeders. To begin and maintain a rabbit farm, basic guide is provided by Ghana's Ministry of Food and Agriculture (n.d.) at their district and regional offices. Generally, the ministry recommends that a healthy breeding stock should be obtained from a trusted rabbit breeder to start with. Other necessary information like reproduction, hutch construction, feed rack and nest box construction, site for breeding, and issues regarding feeding are briefly outlined on their website* (see examples from local farms in [Figure 1, 2](#)).

Post-independent Ghana had Ghanaians engaging in small backyard rabbit breeding. Though this farming was ongoing, it is vital to note that the movement of keeping domestic rabbits on a more extensive and popular scale began in Ghana during the NRC's OYF ([Lukefahr, 2000](#)).



Fig. 2. Rabbit hutches at Savanna Farms, Ashanti Region, Ghana (photo credit: Raphael Owusu Sekyere Assim)

Mamattah and the NRP

The historic OFY by the NRC government of Colonel Ignatius Kutu Acheampong, under Colonel Frank George Bernasko [Commissioner for Agriculture] was driven in 1972 by food shortages in Ghana ([Ghanaweb, 2010](#); [Girdner et al., 1980](#)). The OFY as a food relief intervention

* https://mofa.gov.gh/site/?page_id=14081

encouraged Ghanaians in both rural and urban areas to grow food in their backyards and open spaces. It was in this same period that came the NRP (McNitt et al., 2013; Okolie, 2003).

The NRP, which first began as “Rabbit for Food for the Millions in Ghana” was suggested by Mr Newlove Mamattah, a past adult educator and a lover of rabbit breeding. He was approached and supported with 160,000 Cedis (equivalent of USD 184,000) by the Government of Ghana to make the NRP a reality. The passion of Mr Mamattah got him to be appointed as the first Director of the NRP. With a foundation stock of 80 local rabbits, he developed a 32-hectare farm at Kwabenya in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana (Lukefahr, 2000; Opoku, Lukefahr, 1990). Figure 3 shows the signboard of NRP at its Kwabenya location in Ghana. This site became the home of rabbit breeding during the rule of NRC.



Fig. 3. NRP signboard in Kwabenya (photo credit: S. D. Lukefahr*)

Mr Mamattah and the NRP were fortunate to receive exotic stocks from Australia, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Switzerland and the United States of America upon request between 1972 and 1984. Governments of these countries donated breeds such as Alaskan, Blue Vienna, Californian, Champagne D’Argent, Checkered Giant, Chinchilla, Creme D’Argent, Danish Giant, Danish White, Dutch, Flemish Giant, French Lop, New Zealand White and Thuringer to the project (Lukefahr et al., 1992; Lukefahr, 2000). The NRP progressed from 80 rabbits to an approximate population of about 4,000 rabbits after 3 years of Mr Mamattah’s leadership, though these exotic breeds faced adaptation challenges (Opoku, Lukefahr, 1990). Today, most of these exotic and hybrids can be found in many local farms in Ghana (see Figures 1, 4, 5).

Mr Mamattah pushed the rabbit agenda in Ghana with the help of a Malawian Professor of Communications, Joseph Ascroft, who was on leave from the University of Iowa. This team got Ghanaians interested in “everything rabbit”; from local posters to rabbit cuisines. Farmers received various workshops in rabbit breeding after registration with the NRP, before obtaining their stocks. Schools began to include rabbit breeding in their curricula and the whole of Ghana embraced the concept of rabbit farming. Mr Mamattah also circulated the NRP concept and achievements at local and international conferences, workshops, radio presentations and scientific publications. He was later on appointed as the Secretary for Developing Countries in 1976, at the first World Rabbit Congress which was organised by the World Rabbit Science Association in Dijon, France (Lukefahr, 2000; Mamattah, 1978).

* <https://world-rabbit-science.com/Developping/Documents/Projects-Stories/Ghana-Rabbit-Project.htm>



Fig. 4. A colony of rabbits [with their kitten] feeding at Rabbit Reino, Eastern Region, Ghana (photo credit: J. O. Sarfo)

Between the beginning of the programme till 1977, Ghana had 13,948 rabbits after its first national rabbit census. After working so hard and promoting rabbit farming in Ghana, Mr Mamattah handed over to Mr Eugene Opoku by the late 1970s as the Director of NRP (Lukefahr, 2000). After the fall of the Colonel Acheampong's NRC, the OFY became unpopular including the NRP (Baidoo, 2014).

The Psychology of Rabbit Consumption in Ghana

Rabbit meat is famous as one of the healthiest white meat when compared with other domestic meat sources like chicken, beef or pork (Nistor et al., 2013). It contains higher quantity of protein (28 g) while lower in fat and calories. It is high in potassium, calcium and phosphorus but practically cholesterol free and low in sodium. It also contains vital vitamins and minerals like vitamin B, copper, iron and zinc. In a chemical analysis of rabbit, chicken, beef and pork, "rabbit meat was richer in calcium (21.4 mg/100 g) and phosphorus (347 mg/100 g) than other types of meat and lower in fat (9.2 g/100 g) and cholesterol (56.4 mg/100 g). Beef had the highest cholesterol content (114.5 mg/100 g), almost double than rabbit meat, while pork was rich in fat (28.2 g/100 g)" (Nistor et al., 2013: 172). This makes rabbit meat, highly digestible and very friendly to children, elderly, diabetic and heart disease patients.

Notwithstanding these important benefits, cheaper breeding requirements and the role of rabbit meat in Ghana's food history, the current breeding and consumption of rabbit is not encouraging. Fewer farms in Ghana like the Savanna Farms in Ashanti Region (see Figure 5) and Farm of Mr Adotei Brown (popularly called Farmer Brown) in the peripheries of Greater Accra Region have commercial rabbit farms (Baidoo, 2014).

Today, the behaviour of the average Ghanaian towards rabbit meat production and consumption may range from indifference to less interest due to many factors. Unlike the days of the NRP where the Government of Ghana and media support boosted the 'taste' of the general population regarding rabbit meat, the case is currently the opposite (Baidoo, 2014; Lukefahr, 2000).

In addition, the inadequacy of public knowledge regarding the health benefits of rabbit meat when compared to popular meat sources like chicken, turkey, pork, beef, sheep and goat meat may be a factor. At present, Ghana still struggles with high protein-energy malnutrition (PEM) and other nutritional problems. Though the annual mortality rate per 100,000 people from PEM has reduced by 10.1 % since 1990 to an average of 0.4 % a year, Ghana is still lagging behind with annual PEM mortality rate of 25.6 per 100,000 people and Iron-Deficiency Anaemia of 9.3 per 100,000 people (Health Grove, n.d). These nutritional deficiencies could easily be realised by making rabbit meat accessible to the masses at affordable prices.



Fig. 5. Exotic rabbits in their hutches at Savanna Farms, Ashanti Region, Ghana (photo credit: Raphael Owusu Sekyere Assim)

As the Government of Ghana launched the “Planting for Food and Job Campaign” in 2017, a similar policy should target sustainable meat production in Ghana (Frimpong, 2017). This is worth considering as a nation because of the inadequacy of meat production and related health problems (Health Grove, n.d). In that sense, rabbit breeding and consumption can be given the priority and support as done during the NRP days.

Rabbit breeding also has the power to create jobs and provide adequate meat production as these mammals are noted to have a faster breeding rate; beginning from 6 months old, an average rabbit will breed and kindle within 31 days*. Ghana can also join exporters of rabbit meat to places in Europe, United States and Canada as done by nations like China†. This will help improve our national income through export to grow the domestic economy.

3. Conclusion

In summary, rabbit breeding and consumption had been with Ghana since the colonial days through the coming of missionaries. The NRP took it to a national pedestal and encouraged scientific breeding and nationwide consumption. The hard work of Mr Mamattah, followed by Mr Opoku came to an end as the OFY collapsed. Notwithstanding these issues, rabbits breeding and consumption have answers to Ghana’s demand of protein, other health concerns, and socio-economic problems. The paper recommends a national rabbit census to document the current state of rabbit breeding in Ghana. In addition, rabbit breeders in Ghana should come together to organise scientific publications, conferences, workshops and other in-service breeders training. Government of Ghana should support these initiatives to boost the production of rabbits in Ghana.

4. Conflicts of Interest

The author declares the work has no conflicts of interest.

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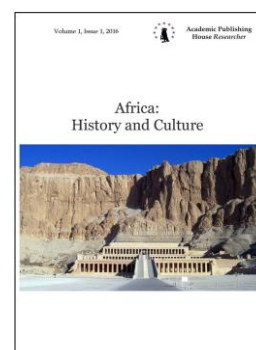
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African Legal Culture in Modern Era: The Etutekpe Okpo Experience, North Central Nigeria

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Abstract

African legal culture exists in every African society to instill order, via the spirit of brotherhood and oneness. Despite the foreign invasion of Africa, the strength of this cultural system remains commendable. This paper examines how the African legal culture works presently with regards to the Etutekpe-Okpo of North Central Nigeria between 1990-2015. Using a mix-methods approach, findings reveal six different segments in the Etutekpe-Okpo legal culture; political (kings and chiefs), ancestors and deities, African Traditional Religion (priest and priestess), family system (the most elderly), social (women and age grade associations), and indigenous court institutions (wise elders). It is also noteworthy that masculinity and the role of community elders are revered with few subscribing to the African Traditional Religion, due to the influx of foreign religions. This paper has implications for future research, education and development of African culture.

Keyword: Africa, Ancestors, Etutekpe-Okpo, legal culture, Nigeria, religion.

1. Introduction

Conflict is an integral part of every human society, hence the indispensability of legal systems in instilling orderliness and justice. From the advent of the European colonial masters, some have argued the fact that Africa had no legal system or culture. This assertion is wrong because a human society cannot exist without legal systems (Olaoba, 2002). In a more practical analysis, law and culture are relatively inseparable as the former is usually seen and understood as an integral part of the latter (Cotterrell, 2004; Tamale, 2014).

Law in African society is never defined in a vacuum; it puts on the gown of culture with ultimate performance. In the past, some foreign scholars perceived indigenous African societies as stateless, thus, cannot experience legal systems (Olaoba, 2002). These states include the Logoli, the Tallensi, and the Nuer (Gimode, Barnes, 2015; Kubar, 2016; Olaoba, 2002; Reshef, Barkai, 2015). Even those societies which have centralized authority like the Ashanti, the Zulu, and the Yoruba were almost denied the existence of legal systems enshrined in their political system (Diawuo, Issifu, 2016; Olaoba, 2002).

The point of confusion lies in the different approaches to the definition of law or legal culture have been defined in the past centuries. Every society has its distinct peculiarities, and so is its legal system. It is egocentric to attribute the definition of law or legal system of a particular society to

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another Austin and Austin (1885) identified law with the ‘command of the sovereign’ thereby making political authority a *sine qua non* of law ‘so properly called’. In furtherance of this view, Salmond (1937) and Gray (1921) emphasized the point of enforcement as the substance of law, and also recognize that only the rules enforced by the court as the core of law. The meaning given to the ‘court’ is however ambiguous.

The Africans do not need a judge (of western type) or what Adewoye (1977) refers to as professional pleader to be robed before justice can be dispensed. Allot (1960) has shown that there are two types of courts in Africa, namely the judicial and arbitral courts. The community’s legal culture is grounded in traditional religion, which is the most paramount among other traditional legal institutions. They believe in the influence and powers of the ancestors on all human activities including health (Zuma et al., 2016). The belief and the fear of their wrath provide a vital force for regulating the conduct of individuals in the community. The African legal culture is geared towards enhancing peace and harmony in the society. The appropriate definition of this legal system is associated with the socialization process, collective responsibility and dynamism of operation. These are values which keep the soul of African solidarity aglow and propel the axis of development (Michalopoulos et al., 2016).

The purpose of this study is to explore the existing African Legal Culture among the Etutekpe Okpo people in North Central Nigeria. The Etutekpe-Okpo community was selected because of its peaceful co-existence due to the structure of the traditional legal system, which is quite civil and non-adversarial in nature.

2. Method

Design

The study used a mix-method approach. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected.

Participants

Quantitative Sample

Purposive sampling was used to select 40 participants; 10 traditional institution agents who play prominent role in maintaining the legal culture of the community and 15 others who have been witnesses to the evolution of the community’s legal culture.

Table 1. Proportion based on Gender

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
<i>Male</i>	32	80 %
<i>Female</i>	8	20 %
Age		
25-35	4	10 %
36-45	6	15 %
46-55	3	7.5 %
56-65	7	15.7 %
66-75	10	25 %
76 and Above	10	25 %
Religion		
<i>Christianity</i>	29	72.5 %
<i>Islam</i>	6	15 %
<i>African Traditional Religion</i>	5	12.5 %
Institution & Agents		
<i>Political institution: kingship/palace chiefs</i>	12	30 %
<i>Women Association & leaders</i>	4	10 %
<i>Religious institution/ leaders</i>	8	20 %
<i>Age grade/youth members and leaders</i>	6	15 %
<i>Family heads</i>	4	10 %

<i>Community elders</i>	4	10 %
<i>Professional Institution: Trade & Commerce/Market leaders</i>	2	5%
Total	40	100%

Qualitative Sample

The key informant interviews included 25 agents of the institutions that maintain the legal culture, while the in-depth interviews included 15 community members that have been witnesses to the operation of the legal culture.

Data Analysis

Content analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data while quantitative data were analysed descriptive analysis.

Research Instruments

An unstructured interview guide was used in the qualitative phase while a structured questionnaire was designed to explore participants' gender, religion, age and their institutions/agents.

Procedure

An approval was given by the Council of Traditional Rulers of the community in written form for the conduct of this research. Participants were also assured that the entire research is for educational and policy making purposes only. Participants were allowed the free will to consent and data kept confidentially.

3. Results

Qualitative Phase:

From the interview analysis, the following themes emerged as the components of indigenous institutions and agents of the community's legal culture:

Theme 1: Political institutions

Theme 2: Ancestors and deities' institution

Theme 3: African Traditional Religion's institution.

Theme 4: Council of elders and family heads institution

Theme 5: Family system institution

Theme 6: Social Institution

Theme 7: Indigenous courts institution

Theme 1: Political Institution: (*Onu and Gago*) Kings and Chiefs

Conflict resolution requires great force of intention and enthusiasm, great probity, bravery and bravado, highly stimulating zeal and enduring sense of history. It behoves on the peace facilitators to be doggedly determined to ward off calamity which conflicts might have triggered off, and a broad knowledge of norms and nuances of the art of conflict resolution at the grass root level.

Kings (usually referred to as *Onu* in Igala language) are part of the agents of legal culture which exists within the indigenous political institutions. The paramount head of the community's political institution is the Attah (which means father) of Igala, who rule in collaboration with the *Onu* in charge of the various towns. They play very significant roles in conflict resolution. They have been adjudged suitable for providing; forum, process, principles, pattern, pace, context, direction for the fine tuning and inauguration of peace and harmony, this fosters growth and development in African societies. These provisions are in tune with the norms and customs of the kingdoms, which the kings inherited from their ancestors, thus to facilitate peace in his domain or jurisdiction. Unwavering wisdom of distilling facts from falsehood to the issue of treatment of conflict, enduring sense of history of norms and the nuances of the kingdom, high level of epitomizing moral order, peace process and classical demonstration of harmony, broader sense of legitimization of the vital link between the universe and the supernatural order, and so much more.

In the case of the chiefs, their job is to partner with the King in the dispensation of justice and handling of administrative as well as serving as advisers in critical situations. The chiefs are lower than the king, but in partnership with the king, carries out legislative, judicial and executive functions. They are duty bound to resolve conflicts regularly and facilitates peace and harmony which will enhance peace and development in the society. The chiefs act as safety verve in the

conduct of conflict resolution during meetings for the king, who perhaps by loss of memory have missed certain procedures associated with the arts of resolving conflicts, thus African chiefs provided; supporting force of action, enabling spirit and motivation, team spirit and interest, checks and balances, validity of verdicts and reconnection points for parties to the conflict.

African chiefs respect their king so well, even in Etutekpe-Okpo, they held the king (Onu) in great reverence, usually accorded kings with utmost obedience, regarded the king as representative of the gods and as such, next to God, upheld the words of the King as law and authority sacrosanct, expected reciprocal gestures from the King (*Onu*). Thus, African chiefs never expected their Kings to be absolute, in the expression of their right and privileges.

Theme 2: Ancestors and Deities Institution; (*Ibegwu, Odumdum*)

The ancestors are the living-dead, and they occupy an indispensable position in the community's conflict management pattern. In Etutekpe-Okpo, the ancestors (*Ibegwu*) are highly feared, because, its dispensation of justice is instant and deadly, sometimes sacrifice will not be able to revoke the wrath of the ancestors. However, in every African society, the ancestors have always played prominent roles in its legal culture.

From the foregoing, it is apparently clear, that African ancestors are no pushover, when it comes to the welfare of the living, they protect obedient members of the society and punish erring members and they certainly cannot be bribed even with sacrifice or propitiations, they carry out justice in every sphere of the traditional African society and even in Etutekpe-Okpo, one can confidently say, the fear of the ancestors is the beginning of maturity.

In the community under review, respondents noted that the nexus between the living and the living-dead (ancestors) is one that is inseparable, and so they stay clear from anything that could make them to come into conflict with the ancestors.

Theme 2: African Traditional Religion's institutions: *Atama (Priest and Priestess)*

The African legal culture is grounded in African traditional religion, in the sense that the adequate maintenance of peace or social engineering is both the responsibility between the living and the living-dead. This however makes the roles of the Priests and Priestess a sacred one. It was as well noted in the course of the field work that the priests and the priestess serve as intermediary between the land of the living and the dead and as well the solicitor in the realms of conflict between the living and the dead.

In furtherance of this fact, once there is an eminent conflict, they are said to receive signals that is superior to the understanding of normal humans, and so they carry out sacrifices to determine the root cause of whatever may be, and if it be an issue that deserves sacrifices or rituals be carried out to appease any of the gods of deities, it would be carried out quickly in order to avert any danger that may want to befall a family, or the entire community. These agents under the African traditional religion institution help to maintain order and sanity in the community's legal culture.

Theme 3: Council of elders and family heads institution: (*Abo ogwijo kpai Attah Ughi*)

In Etutekpe-Okpo, elders have the capacity to initiate developments, give foresight into the future of the society and facilitated peace and harmony, the preserves of law and orderliness, which signalled social engineering. These elders display some important virtues, and these are; tolerance, forbearance, patience, foresight, innovative spirit, self-control, forthrightness, and commitment to development among others.

These qualities enable elders to relate well with members of the communities, to the degree of carrying the people along with the programme of development and thesis of companionship and social engineering.

According to a respondent who is above 90, he believed that 'elders possess certain level of wisdom that is seen as divine';

Respondent 2:

“My son (He looks at me more intently) although the mouth of an elder may be smelly, in it lies wisdom; they are the gods that the Almighty God have raised to handle issues beyond the young brains.”

The system at Etutekpe-Okpo manifested that fair play and justice lies in the process of conflict resolution. The elders cannot afford to do otherwise, in their commitment as geared towards peace and harmony for the parties to the conflict and the society at large.

Theme 4: Family System Institution

At the family level, (facilitator) of peace and harmony are the family heads, who in their own rights are also considered elders. As a matter of fact, family head in African societies and the community under discuss are the most aged and mature. Otherwise, they would have lacked the experience and wisdom to resolve conflicts. They must be the oldest person in the family. The family heads are conscious of the cord of unity among family members; they therefore, exercised some level of caution, patience and level headedness.

In furtherance of this view, findings from participatory observation and interviews conducted reveal that the family is the first place of dealing with conflicts amicably, any conflict that get to the elders, or the palace chiefs are usually the ones that the family cannot handle. Hence, the family is seen as a sacred force and also a fundamental institution of the community's legal culture.

Theme 5: Social Institution

Under this institution, two subthemes can be identified; the women association, and the age grade association.

Women Association: (Ama deejū tabobule)

Women play prominent role in the maintenance of peace and stability in the community's legal culture. They instil discipline and raising young ladies that are well tutored in the community's legal culture. They are seen as mothers as well as models to young ladies. They are symbols of the true nature of African women.

They are in their own right custodian of the community's legal culture which gear towards home making as well as handling marital issues, empowering women to become entrepreneurs, to sustain and support their family. They settle disputes between women, they only take issues outside when it is beyond what they can handle.

Age Grade (Achiokolobia)

The age grade association, for our understanding, it equalled a task force, which was given a special mandate in the indigenous in the community. A taskforce in that context was an organized labour unit working for the development of the society.

They are charged with; building and repairing of roads, tidying up the market square, clearing places and shrines, and protecting lives and properties, summons members of the community to meetings, encourage oneness, unity and every other thing that could help in mitigating conflicts, and instilling social harmony and oneness.

The age grade often seeks for the wisdom and proficiency of the elders in handling cases that are beyond them. The age grade summons offenders to the scene of conflict resolution, watch over the behaviour of the parties to the conflict at the scene of reconciliation, ensuring adherence to the application of the norms and customs governing conflict resolution and especially protecting the lives of the crowd spectators present at the scene of conflict resolution.

Theme 6: Indigenous court institution

Another institution of great importance is the Indigenous Moot Court; this group plays an indispensable role in the maintenance of the community's judicial legal culture. In line with the participatory observation, when a particular member is accused of, or having committed a particular crime, he or she is being summoned to the court, in order for reconciliation to be made through alternative dispute resolution and a lasting peace to be restored.

The native court is not a standing body, in other words the actors in this judicial institution is not formation of people who are always together, however, they gather anytime there are/is case (s), succinctly put, they are situational assemblies which disband when any case concluded, because, argumentation, persuasion and compromise determined the outcome of a dispute, the personal talents of members are usually very important, and particular men from the pool of

elders appeared as councillors in case after case, an individual's ability to serve on such moot or occasion is not contingent on his membership in a particular class or set without exceptions. Informants stress ability rather than set or class status as the major criterion in moot participation or leadership.

4. Discussion

The study identified that the people of Etutekpe-Okpo have a distinct legal culture which is composed of seven main components. These include political institutions, ancestors and deities' institution, African Traditional Religion's institution, Council of Elders and Family Heads institution, family system institution, social institution and indigenous courts institution.

From the results, ancestors and deities play a significant role in maintaining law and order. This is because deities are believed to have supernatural powers to protect, punish and bless community members. To neglect these forces or an undue tapping of the forces would always carry negative implications. Moreover, they can trigger off conflicts and afflictions within the family, lineage and society once they do wrong or sin (Ikechukwu, 2017; Titova et al., 2017).

In Etutekpe-Okpo, the ancestors (Ibegwu) are also powerful forces; offence against them often comes with terrible punitive measures, sometime even propitiation is not enough to save the erring member's life. Ancestors may be called upon to resolve a dispute, to put it in another way; disputants may carry out their arguments in the language of ancestral authority. Specific ancestors hold primary authority over groups, larger than households (that is larger than those headed by living parents). African ancestors are watchdogs of morality, discipline and facilitators of peace and harmony in African universal space, enhancers of social ethics and ethos, and custodians of the knowledge and wisdom of conflict resolution (Ajayi, Buhari, 2014).

Thus, Sangree (n.d) described the role of the Tiriki elders in a succinct way;

"The judicial elders who habitually gather at the community centre in the mornings may always be prevailed upon by any man in the community to arbitrate a dispute. Younger people (boys and girls) and women customarily have their grievances' presented by an adult bother or father..." The above illustration shows clearly the norms of the Tiriki of Kenya which demonstrate that such system does not replicate itself alone at Kenya, but also have spread its tentacles on the Etutekpe-Okpo community. From the results, it could clearly understand that these seven components carried out significant functions (whether integrative or subsidiary) geared towards propelling development, peace and harmony.

5. Conclusion

The study explored the African legal culture among the Etutekpe-Okpo people. Results showed that their legal culture include political institutions, ancestors and deities' institution, African Traditional Religion's institution, Council of Elders and Family Heads institution, family system institution, social institution and indigenous courts institution. There is a need for African educational institutions to examine local legal cultures in Africa.

6. Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare the work has no conflicts of interest.

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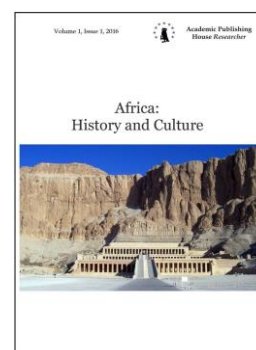
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The Millennium Challenge Corporation: A Backward Mapping Approach to Implementation of Foreign Aid

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Abstract

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is the main U.S. agency for development aid programs; just like other poverty-reduction programs in developing countries, it faces policy implementation issues. In 2004 President Bush created the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) as an alternate agency to provide aid based on a set criteria and indicators for high-performing governments. The MCC changes the way the US provides aid for development. Policy implementation is a major issue in developing nations. This paper explores the implementation of the Millennium Challenge Corporation and attempts to link it to the “backward mapping” implementation framework of Elmore.

Keywords: developing countries, foreign aid, millennium challenge corporation, policy, poverty-reduction programs.

1. Introduction

“Foreign aid” is a broad term and a controversial topic; it is often thought to be either too much or a waste of taxpayer dollars from developed countries by corrupted governments in developing countries. Oxfam America (2014) reports that there are several reasons aid is provided to countries by the US government such as to protect national security, to promote economic interests and to foster US values of goodwill. Thus, US foreign aid includes the International Affairs Budget or “150 Account”, Foreign Aid or Foreign Assistance and Poverty-Focused Development Aid. The 150 Account covers US activities overseas, USAID programs, Department of State diplomatic expenditures, interests of businesses and US citizens abroad, the Peace Corps and contributions to international organizations such as the United Nations among others (Oxfam America, 2014). Foreign Aid or Foreign assistance is mostly used for strategic purposes such as defense and aid to political allies. Poverty-Focused Development Aid is the specific type of aid provided for “improving livelihoods and promoting economic growth, providing much-needed services, such as health care and schooling, and creating lasting solutions to poverty” (Oxfam America, 2014).

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The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is the main agency responsible for development aid; just like other poverty-reduction programs in developing countries, it faces policy implementation issues. In 2004 President Bush created the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) as an alternate agency to provide aid based on a set criteria and indicators for high-performing governments. The MCC changes the way the US provides aid for development. Policy implementation is a major issue in developing nations. This paper explores the implementation of the Millennium Challenge Corporation and attempts to link it to the “backward mapping” implementation framework of Elmore.

2. Discussion

Issues of Policy Implementation in Developing Countries

Policy implementation is one of the stages of the policy process resulting from the passage of a legislative act, the issuing of an executive order or the promulgation of a regulatory rule (Makinde, 2005). Most of the policy implementation frameworks reflect western models, in particular the United States where policy process and implementation are linked to political governance (Paudel, 2009). Analysis of policy in countries with developing economies cannot always be applied to western frameworks as there are various characteristics that are particular to these environments (Paudel, 2009). Policy implementation in developing nations is a challenging process as well as it is in developed nations but the process is more difficult however in environments that are mined by poverty, political instability, corruption, violation of human rights and so on (Paudel, 2009).

Poverty is a barrier to successful translation of policy in developing countries. UNDP (2002) define poverty as “a state of economic, social and psychological deprivation occurring among people of countries lacking sufficient ownership, control or access to resources to maintain minimal acceptable standards of living”. Policy implementation in developing nations is related to the economy and the political environment (Paudel, 2009). Political stability matters for economic development. Lane argues that poor economy can result in political instability, which in turn can just increase poverty. There are four factors critical to effective policy implementation (Makinde, 2005). They are: communication, resources disposition or attitudes, and bureaucratic structures; and these factors interact simultaneously. Despite the design of clear goals and objectives of a policy, if resources are not in place, implementation is deemed to fail (Makinde, 2005).

Culture is another factor that affects policy implementation and it varies according to countries. Studies in the past had identified four culture values that affect proper implementation: power distance between policy makers and implementers, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, and masculinity versus feminist (Hofstede, Hofstede, 2005; Paudel, 2009). A case study on Nigeria Education Policy and the Better Life Programme found that factors that influence implementation failure included faulty planning process, political and financial constraints, and statistical deficiency; inadequate provision of manpower, inadequate maintenance of equipment and lack of monitoring of programs. Lack of continuity of programs due to changes in government is also an issue (Makinde, 2005).

Paudel (2009) argues that the assumption that policy implementers are involved in the policy process is not always applicable to developing countries. Policymaking most of the time is centralized within high level policymakers (Paudel 2009). In order to reduce poverty in developing countries, effective implementation of policies is necessary. However, policies cannot yield successful results if a country is economically poor, politically unstable and has corrupted institutions. Political instability and uncertainty, along with all other difficulties such as lack or resources, low participation in the policy process and weak institutions just make policymaking and implementation inefficient (Paudel, 2009).

The Millennium Challenge Corporation

A brief history of US foreign aid as described by Oxfam America began in the 1910/1920s when the US sent food assistance to Belgium and Russia. In the 1940s the Marshall Plan was created as the first major foreign aid program that was oriented in rebuilding Europe’s economy after WWII. The 1960s saw the creation of USAID through the Foreign Assistance Act passed by Congress. Funding for foreign aid started declining in the 1980s; by the 1990s USAID started managing grants and contracts instead of direct technical assistance due cuts in funding. In 2003, the President’s

Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) was created; the same year President Bush wrote a letter to Congress to support the creation of the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC).

The letter states that the MCC is,

“a new approach to providing and delivering development assistance. This new compact for development breaks with the past by tying increased assistance to performance and creating new accountability for all nations. ... To be eligible for this new assistance, countries must demonstrate commitment to three standards -- ruling justly, investing in their people, and encouraging economic freedom. ...The goal of the Millennium Challenge Account initiative is to reduce poverty by significantly increasing economic growth in recipient countries through a variety of targeted investments” (U.S. Congress, 2003).

The MCC was thus established with the authorization of Congress in 2004 as an independent government entity separate from the Departments of State and the Treasury and from USAID. The MCC is different from other types of U.S. foreign aids in the sense that it is characterized by competitive selection, poverty reduction through economic growth, country-owned implementation, and emphasis on civil society involvement, monitoring and transparency. For better implementation and accountability purposes MCC makes sure the qualifying countries have good policies or are committed to suitable policies for economic growth.

As of year 2015 since its establishment, the MCC has approved 28 grant agreements also called compacts to “Madagascar (2005), Honduras, (2005), Cape Verde (2005), Nicaragua (2005), Georgia (2005), Benin (2006), Vanuatu (2006), Armenia (2006), Ghana (2006), Mali (2006), El Salvador (2006), Mozambique (2007), Lesotho (2007), Morocco (2007), Mongolia (2007), Tanzania (2007), Burkina Faso (2008), Namibia (2008), Senegal (2009), Moldova (2009), Philippines (2010), Jordan (2010), Malawi (2011), Indonesia (2011), Cape Verde II (2011), Zambia (2012), Georgia II (2013), and El Salvador II (2013, not yet signed)” (Tarnoff, 2014).

The MCC selection process for eligible countries is based on three major criteria

1. Ruling justly—promoting good governance, fighting corruption, respecting human rights, and adhering to the rule of law;
2. Investing in people—providing adequate health care, education, and other opportunities promoting an educated and healthy population;
3. Economic freedom—fostering enterprise and entrepreneurship and promoting open markets and sustainable budgets (Tarnoff, 2014).

The MCC has a board of directors that selects countries that are eligible for the MCC assistance. There is a lot of transparency regarding the process and the criteria that govern selection of the country partners, and also inform the board’s eventual decisions which is a hallmark of the MCC model. For a country to be selected for MCC it has to show a commitment to just and democratic governance, investments in its people, and economic freedom as measured by different policy indicators. The MCC came up with four steps to select the countries for the aid:

1. Identify candidate countries;
2. Publish selection criteria and methodology for the country selection and accept public comment;
3. Issue the candidate country scorecards;
4. Select countries eligible for MCC program assistance.

A country is considered eligible for a full grant when it has score 17 on the indicators. All the indicators are put together by a third party who has no connection whatsoever with MCC as the previous ones were pledged by political considerations. The MCC signs either a compact or a threshold agreement with a partner country. A compact reward is awarded if the country scores highly on the selection criteria indicators. If the country scores poorly but has a positive upward trend on the selection criteria it still qualifies for a smaller grant, called a threshold program. The Millennium Challenge Act is country driven; participating country officials must come up with a design and submit project proposal based on the national development objectives. The proposal is negotiated with the MCC board and approved before being funded.

Implementation Research

Implementation is worth studying precisely because it is a struggle over the realization of ideas. It is the analytical equivalent of original sin: there is no escape from implementation and its attendant responsibilities” (Pressman, Wildavsky, 1973). In management and organization top-down

and bottom-up approaches of Implementation are used in decision making. A top-down approach is where an executive body makes the decision with a clear objective and specifics steps to be followed to achieve the objective. The top authorities use their power to make decision for the lower levels in the hierarchy, those who will be implementing the steps related to the authority's decision.

Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) came forth with three models of implementation: Implementation as control, implementation as evolution and implementation as interaction. Their model is a top-down approach whereby initial planning and implementation are on the same level and, policymakers' direct agencies to follow a set of instructions in a manner that is rational. It applies to the top-down approach where the policy has goals that are clear and a plan that is detailed on how to achieve the goals. The authors concluded that the implementation process is never complete because in the end it comes back to the stages of revision and evaluation. They both agree that implementation is a continuous process, however when multiple actors are involved in the decision-making process, failure is likely.

Van Meyer and Van Horn (1977) studied the effects of the top-down approach on the delegation stage of the implementation process and particularly with compliance with the decisions. The implementers have great power and this also increases the level of implementers' compliance with the decision. When the methods and procedures for policy implementation are not specific; the implementers have the authority over how they can implement the decision and they use the high level of discretion for an undesired interpretation. When the ex-ante control is strict, the implementers have less room for interpretation, hence, comply with decisions; the scholars in this approach look at how the various features affect the process of implementation (Chun, Rainey, 2005; Huber, Shipan, 2002; Van Meter, Van Horn, 1977). One of the factors is policy conflict: where there are policy conflicts in regards to the preferred decision of an implementer and the decision from the guidelines.

Bardach (1977) suggests that implementation is like a game where the goal of the parties involved is to win by influencing the process. It involves legislators, administrators and intergovernmental groups through bargaining and persuasion to fulfill their own needs and agenda. It is important therefore to understand the behavioral system of groups and individuals involved in the policy process. Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) put forth one of the most comprehensive implementation frameworks giving sight into the process as a whole. They laid out a framework which consists of two parts of the implementation process. They characterized policies according to the policy itself, the actors and the systems. They looked at all the characteristics that may influence the process of policy implementation and how much power every influence holds. They looked at implementation as the hierarchical execution of policy intentions that are centrally defined. They suggest getting feedback from the difficulties encountered during implementation to modify policy accordingly.

The bottom-up approach works from the grassroots whereby a group of people work together and cause a decision to arise as a result of their joint involvement for instance an implementation decision made from group discussions with classroom teachers. The involvement of everybody in decision making enables efficiency and a good perception of the higher levels of decision making. This is unlike the top-down approach whereby it appears like the decision is imposed making it hard for lower levels to accept the decisions (Pereira et al., 1993). According to Dubois (2002), the bottom up system is more experimental and caters for the needs of everyone in the organization.

Lipsky (1980) describes how the street-level bureaucrats get their policies implemented from above. He coined the term street-level bureaucrats in his book: *Street-level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services* published in 1980. He brought out a case on how power and roles influence policy making and implementation. Street-level bureaucrats are considered as public service workers and they interact with citizens in their jobs and have discretion when executing their work. The bureaucrats have power in determining the goals and the success of these goals. Their actions reflect what the government delivers. This is where most people come face to face with the government. This therefore gives power to the street-level bureaucrats. So the workers play the same role as the elected leaders in decision making and policy implementation. Hjern and Hull (1982) also belongs to the bottom up idea. They emphasized the fact that implementation consists of problem-solving strategies that occur on a continuous basis through a network of interactions. Barrett and Fudge (1981) suggest that the implementation process occurs

through compromises between internal and external parties; initial policies are not supposed to be static but should evolve as changes in the environment occur.

There is a third generation of implementation where the researchers tried to bridge the gap between top-down and bottom-up approaches by putting ideas from both approaches together. Their other goal was to be more scientific than the two previous approaches in regards to implementation (Goggin et al., 1990). They focus on coming up with clear and specific hypotheses and also finding proper operations that will produce adequate observations to test the hypotheses (O'Toole, 2000). Both approaches exaggerate respective positions and this leads to oversimplification of the once complex implementation process. Elmore (1979) and Sabatier (1986) tried to synthesize both approaches and the model presented also contained information from both sides to avoid weakening of the approaches. Other contributors blended several aspects of both perspectives into their theories to form the hybrid theories (Ripley, Franklin, 1982). They came with the idea of forward mapping and back mapping. Forward mapping is whereby policy makers put a consideration of the policy instruments and the resources available for policy change. Back mapping is whereby they should identify the incentive structure and the target group. This approach is most likely going to work because both the implementation structures and policy makers are taken into consideration (Agranoff, 2017; Townsley, 2003).

Backward Mapping Approach to the MCC Implementation

Backward Mapping as forward mapping is policy implementation framework that intends to affect directly the implementation process and the outcomes of the policy decisions. It is a little different because it questions the assumptions that the policymakers ought to or do, they have a determinant influence over the implementation process. The backward mapping framework also questions the assumption that explicit policy directives, which are clear statements of the administrative responsibilities and well-defined outcome will necessarily increase the likelihood that policies will be successfully implemented (Goggin et al., 1990; Townsley, 2003).

Backward mapping, Elmore (1979) suggests that policy implementation should begin at the street level and move up to the original problem. Backward mapping does not begin at the top of implementation process but begins at the last possible stage, the point at which the administrative actions intersect private choices. It does not begin with a statement of purpose, but it begins with the statement of the problem/behavior at the lowest level of implementation process and this is what generates a need for a policy. After the problem is described that is when they go ahead and set the objective. The objectives are stated as a set of organizational operations and then later as a set of effects or outcomes; all this results from the organizational operations. After the target has been established at the lowest level of the system, an analysis is done back through the structure of the implementing agencies. In the final stage of the analysis the policy makers and the analyst make a description of a policy that directs resources at the organizational units likely to have the greatest effect. The backward mapping helps the policy makers and the analysts to design sound policies other than giving a research strategy and also making a contribution towards theory development. Most of the policies that take the forward mapping approach to implementation have failed at point and this has led them to taking the backward mapping strategy and the bottom up policy design and implementation.

Backward mapping is important in the implementation process because it brings the affected stakeholders into the process of designing and implementing the reforms; it also leads to an increased consensus for change, which leads to proposals that allow greater discretion and flexibility at the ground level. This becomes the direction that almost all the critic's advice should be taking in regards to policy implementation. According to Hill and Hupe (2002), it is very interesting to note that the backward mapping has been seen by others not only as a methodology for analysis but also as something that can be recommended for policy development in practice. One of Elmore's (1979) justifications for the backward mapping is that most of the policy areas are given a chance to make choices within programs that conflict or have a relation with each other. If compared with the top down theory methodology, this approach is relatively free of predetermining assumptions. The top-down approaches to policymaking are prescriptive, whereas the bottom-up approaches are descriptive of the implementation process difficulties for feedback that can result in better policies.

These policies according to Sabatier (1986) should be analyzed in a ten-year cycle to allow time for policy learning. Top-down approaches facilitate the identification of different parameters within which policies are operationalized such as socioeconomic conditions, legal instruments, and the basic government structure that seldom change; policy actions occur within these structures. Sabatier (1986) therefore suggest to pay attention to advocacy coalitions which are groups of public and private entities with the same beliefs and goals who can advocate for what is needed to optimize policymaking and implementation. According to Tarnoff (2014), when the MCC was established in 2004 it faced a lot of frustration with the foreign aids that existed before but later on when they embedded the backward mapping strategy there was a noticeable change with the way the United States gave its economic assistance. Their basis is economic development that succeeds best when linked to free market economic and democratic principles and policies, and also the governments are committed to implementing reform measures in order to achieve the goals that are set. They came up with a competitive process that rewarded countries for the commitment that they had to free market economic and democratic policies as measured by the objectives which are the performance indicators, its major goal become to seek poverty reduction through economic growth but not to overload with multiple sector objectives.

3. Conclusion

The establishment of the Millennium Challenge Corporation has drastically changed the way the U.S provides development aid. The major focus of the MCC is to promote economic growth in the countries that receive the grant. The program puts its emphasis on good economic policies such free market and minimal corruption. Elmore's backward mapping approach is really relevant in anticipating implementation issues, especially in the implementation of foreign aid in developing countries.

4. Conflicts of Interest

The author declares the work has no conflicts of interest.

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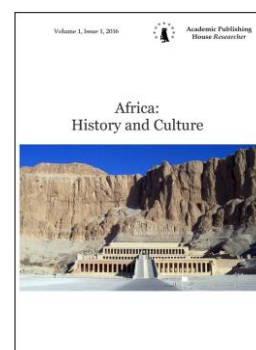
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"It's Best when You Treat Yourself": Culture of Healthcare and Health Seeking Behaviour Among Health Care Professionals in Accra, Ghana

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Abstract

The study sought to explore the health seeking behaviour of healthcare professional in Accra. A sample size of 100 respondents was used for this study through the questionnaires while 4 persons were interviewed. Results in satisfying the research objectives revealed that healthcare professionals faced both major and minor health problems. Factors such as time, knowledge of disease, accessibility, quality care, quick treatment of disease, confidentiality, embarrassment, severity of illness, attitude of colleagues among others cause them to practice self-medication instead of seeking formal healthcare. Though additional research studies are needed to understand this behaviour among healthcare professionals, the emphasis should be on an intervention to eliminate the behaviour.

Keywords: culture, Ghana, health care professionals, health seeking behaviour, healthcare, self-medication.

1. Introduction

Health seeking behaviour defines a person's general conduct regarding physical, psychological and social wellbeing (Sarfo et al., 2016; Uniprojects, 2015). Health seeking behaviour of people within Ghana is very complex; it may come as a combination of both traditional and orthodox health systems. In addition, the health seeking behaviour is affected by multiple determinants including the culture of healthcare (Sarfo et al., 2016; Sarfo, Ofori, 2016).

Subject to these determinants and their interactions, health seeking operates uniquely at individual, family, and community level in Ghana. Basically, health choices involve many factors related to illness type and severity, socio demographic characteristics, pre-existing lay belief about illness causation, accessibility of treatment available and their perceived efficacy and disease profile (Ntim, Sarfo, 2015; Sarfo et al., 2016; Sarfo, Ofori, 2016).

Globally, the health of healthcare professionals is of paramount importance to development. It is becoming a norm that the stressors and hazards found in their working environment and the culture of their professions often lead to physical and mental illness. Notwithstanding this, there are several barriers affecting their seeking healthcare (Lindo et al., 2009; Soares et al., 2012; Totman et al., 2011).

Studies have shown that doctors often ignore medical advice given to them when they become patients and some also disregard adequate medical management (Davidson, Schattner, 2003; Frank, Segura, 2009). Healthcare professionals are seen to practice self-medication and

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other negative health behaviour (Ali et al., 2012; Uallachain, 2007). While there is an extensive literature on health seeking behaviour among patients with different health problems, there is a paucity of empirical studies on the health seeking and culture of healthcare of healthcare professionals (Lindo et al., 2009; Frank, & Segura, 2009; Williams et al., 2006). In addition, little is known in Ghana regarding the topic under study using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

The purpose of the study is to explore the culture of healthcare and health seeking behaviour of health care professionals in Accra, Ghana using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

2. Method

Research design

The case study design was adopted as the study focused on health seeking behaviour of healthcare professionals. This design was deemed appropriate in exploring the health seeking behaviour of health care professionals in Accra.

Research approach

A mixed method approach was used to collect data for the study. This approach allows for the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data to build a complex, holistic picture of the study's problem.

Population and sample

The study population comprised all healthcare professionals within Accra. The target population includes doctors, pharmacists and nurses within the facility. A purposive sample size of 100 respondents were selected for the quantitative phase of data collection. Eighty out of the total sample responded (see Table 1 for details). An additional 4 participants were also selected purposively from the initial sample to be interviewed for the qualitative phase. This sample includes 1 senior doctor, 2 senior nurses and 1 senior pharmacist.

Table 1. Demographic background of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
20-29	34	42.5
30-39	28	35.0
40-49	4	5.0
50-59	14	17.5
Gender		
Female	47	58.8
Male	33	41.2
Marital Status		
Married	40	50.0
Not Married	36	45.0
Divorced	4	5.0
Profession		
Nurse	32	40.0
Doctor	30	37.5
Pharmacist	18	22.5
Educational Level		
Diploma	24	30.0
Higher National Diploma	3	3.8
Degree and above	53	66.2
Total	80	100

Instruments

The quantitative questionnaires were in two main parts comprising the following: Part 1 (demographic information of respondents); Part 2 – (health problems among health care

professionals, their health seeking behaviour, and the factors that influence their health seeking behaviour and culture of healthcare). Semi-structured interview guide was used to identify their experiences.

Data analysis

The analysis of the quantitative data was done using descriptive statistical method, which included frequencies, tables and charts while interviews were transcribed and analysed thematically.

Ethical considerations

In order to ensure the rights of the research subjects, their protection from harm, privacy, confidentiality and dignity, a letter of introduction was obtained from the Department of Public Administration and Health Service Management of University of Ghana to seek permission from the chairman of the Ethics Committee of the Ghana Health Service. After approval, a letter of information explaining further the purpose of the study was sent to participants.

3. Results

The results indicate that different health problems affect these professionals. These conditions include upper respiratory tract infections (n=21, 26.2 %), body pains/headache (n=20, 25 %) and malaria (n=13, 16.2 %). The least occurring were cold and cough (n=9, 11.2 %), heart problems (n=7, 8.8 %) and anxiety/stress (n=7, 8.8 %) and only (n=3, 3.8 %) complained of ulcer.

Theme 1: Promptness of seeking health

In addition, majority of healthcare professionals (n=41, 51.2 %) said they seek help immediately when sick. Majority (n=35, 43.8 %) said they do not seek help immediately and only (n=4, 5 %) answered they do not seek any help. Reason for seeking health promptly was expressed by Respondent 1:

"I often manage my relations when they are not well immediately because I know the consequences in delay treatment when ill. I have an in-depth knowledge on my profession."

Theme 2: Factors that negatively influence health seeking behaviour of healthcare professionals

From the results, majority (n=20, 25.5 %) were not readily seeking for healthcare because of the longer time spent in waiting. Confidentiality (n=18, 22.5 %) and severity of illness (n=18, 22.5 %) were evenly distributed. Embarrassment and perceptions of weakness (n=7, 8.8 %), accessibility (n=11, 13.8 %) and negative attitude of other healthcare professionals (n=6, 7.4 %) were recorded as minor factors. Qualitative excerpt from respondent 3 expressed:

"Time is one, the type of health facility to visit either public or private, accessibility, nature of health facility, attitude of healthcare personal or confidentiality."

Theme 3: Places and reasons where health professionals seek help when ill

When asked where they seek help when sick, the following were recorded; majority of healthcare professionals self-medicated (n=30, 37.5 %), followed by clinical specialist (n=19, 23.8 %), private healthcare (n=10, 12.5 %), family doctor (n=9, 11.25 %), public healthcare (n=8, 10 %), pharmacist (n=3, 3.75 %) and finally a traditional healer (n=1, 1.25 %).

Reasons for their choice include; reliability (n=22, 27.5 %), quality care (n=20, 25.5 %), knowledge (n=20, 25.5 %), affordability (n=9, 11.25 %), easily accessible (n=6, 7.5 %) and little time spent to receive care (n=3, 3.75 %).

Theme 4: Self-medication as an option of care

Out of the 80 respondents, more than half (n=60, 75.0 %) admit practicing self-medication. Twelve (15.0 %) respondents confirmed that they sometimes practice self-medication, only (n=8, 10 %) answered 'no' to indicate that they do not practice self-medication.

Majority (n=28, 35.0 %) of respondents self-medicate because they have adequate knowledge about their disease condition. Twenty (25.0 %) of them said they self-medicated because they see their disease condition as minor illness. As a form of first aid (n=15, 18.8 %), getting well fast (n=11, 13.8 %) and to save time (n=6, 7.2 %) were all given as part of reasons why respondents self-medicate.

Under this theme, Respondent 2 expressed the following:

"Yes, I self-medicate, but not always. I sometimes self-medicates because I think it is less expensive. I sometimes do so due to the knowledge I have in pharmacology."

According to Respondent 4:

"For myself, I sometimes self-medicate... it's best when you treat yourself".

4. Discussion

The study found out that healthcare professionals are confronted with major health illnesses as patients under their care. This is paramount because they must be well to perform their jobs optimally under difficult conditions (Lindo et al., 2009; Rushton et al., 2015). Notwithstanding this, research has shown that many healthcare practitioners are sometimes reluctant both to seek help and take time off work (Eisenberg et al., 2012).

Again, it can be noted from the results that healthcare professionals adopt a mixed approach (formal and informal) in seeking healthcare. Instead of seeking care from formalized systems such as hospitals and health centers, others resort to informal means like self-medication and buying over-the-counter drugs, which can pose greater risk to their health condition. Like non-professional patients, utilization of health care system depends largely on the efficiency and effectiveness of the culture of healthcare system. This has led to incidence of non-adherence to clinical management (Sarfo, Ofori, 2016).

The percentage of professionals who expressed their interest in seeking healthcare from informal sources, as compared to clinical specialist confirms that the quality of public healthcare systems is affected by problems such as delay in patient care and poor accessibility. The results did not agree to some extent the socio-economic theory of health seeking which states that the lower the level of education and income, the more likely individuals are to use informal services (Ahmed et al., 2005). Asampong et al. (2015) opined that accessibility, perceived benefit of treatment, quality of service and cost of care are major determinants of a person's first choice of access of health care.

Another important issue that found relevance to the study is self-medication. Out of the 80 respondents, a significant majority (75.0 %) practice self-medication. This is true in many developing and economically deprived countries. Most episodes of illness are treated by self-medication in such settings according to Hussain et al. (2011). Results from reinforce the Health Belief model that hypothesises that people's behaviour in relation to health depends on an individual's perception of four critical areas; severity of illness, susceptibility to that illness, benefits of taking a preventive action and barriers to taking that action. The themes in the study reveal similar findings vis-à-vis the practice seeking help (Hamilton et al., 2017; Jones et al., 2014).

5. Conclusion

Globally, healthcare professionals are seen as tools for development. Nevertheless, they are more likely than ordinary person to get sick as a result of the number of occupational health and safety hazards in the hospital's work environment. The study shows that several factors affect the health seeking behaviour of healthcare professionals. In addition, self-medication as a practice among healthcare professionals from the results is a major concern that needs to be addressed by both policy and research. Additional studies are needed to understand this behaviour among healthcare professionals with emphasis on what to do to minimize the behaviour.

6. Conflicts of Interest

The author declares the work has no conflicts of interest.

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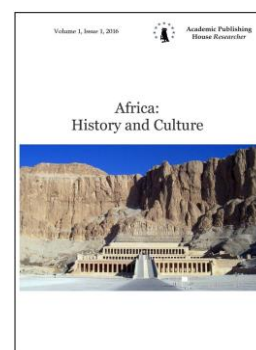
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Call for Self-Esteem Interventions in Africa: A Brief Look at Gaps

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Abstract

Self-esteem is a sociocultural concept that looks at the evaluation of one's self or the value one places on his or her life, whether positive or negative. High self and low self-esteem have different characteristic features. This paper looks at current issues regarding self-esteem and existing interventions that have emerged so far. Future studies will need to advance interventions with a focus on African cultural factors. They should also look at the role of gender, physical appearance, parenting and other demographic factors on self-esteem.

Keywords: Africa, socio-culture, current issues, gender, interventions, self-esteem.

1. Introduction

Self-esteem is a psychological concept that looks at the individual and their evaluation of their selves (Orth, Robins, 2014). Self-esteem is the summary judgment of everything a person can assess about himself or herself including; who one is, what one does, what one has, the different levels in how one appears and to whom and to what one is attached (Balley, 2003). Brown and Marshall (2006) instigated that the concept of self-esteem is used in different ways. These uses include the global self-esteem, the state self-esteem (feeling of self-worth) and self-evaluations.

Brown and Marshall (2006) referred to the global self-esteem as the personality variable that represent the way people generally feel about themselves. They referred to the state self-esteem as the self-evaluative emotion reactions to different events, that are experiences that either threaten or boost self-esteem. For example, feeling proud or feeling humiliated or ashamed. The last construct of self-esteem, they proposed is self-evaluation of which they defined it as the way people evaluate their various abilities and attributes. Though these three uses of the term may seem conceptually distinct, they are highly interrelated.

High self-esteem refers to a highly favourable global evaluation of the self, whereas low self-esteem refers to an unfavourable meaning of the self (Baumeister et al., 2003). Baumeister et al. (2003) added that people with high self-esteem are likely to set higher aspirations, persevere in the face of early failure and less likely to surrender to paralyzing feelings of incompetence and self-doubt.

High self-esteem may raise the confidence to tackle difficult problems and enable people to develop satisfaction from progress and success in tackling the difficult problems. In contrast, low self-esteem people feel worse about themselves when they fail (Brown, 2010).

Reports gathered in a research by Trzesniewski et al. (2006) found out that, adolescents with low self-esteem were at increased risk for poor mental and physical health as adults and had worse

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economic prospects than adolescents with high self-esteem. They found out that, they were 2.13 times more likely to leave school and were less likely to attend universities.

Self-esteem varies across cultures especially on age and gender. In a systematic cross-cultural study, cultural differences affecting self-esteem varied on socioeconomic, sociodemographic, gender-equality, and cultural value indicators (Bleidorn et al., 2016).

2. Discussion

Sociodemographic Indicators and Self Esteem

Bleidorn et al. (2016) reported from their research, aimed at investigating age and gender differences in self-esteem, that, males consistently reported higher self-esteem than females. Again, a study by Atindabila et al. (2012) among adolescents in Ghana indicated a significant difference between gender and self-esteem. Hence, it was reported that, male adolescents had higher self-esteem than was seen in female adolescents.

Fortman (2006) examined the effects of body image on self-efficacy, self-esteem and academic performances. In his result, the self-esteem scores of women on the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale were substantially correlated with their Body Esteem Scale and the Objected Body Consciousness Scale. These correlation coefficients showed that body image is strongly associated with both general self-efficacy and self-esteem in women. However, body image in men was neither associated with measures of self-assessments. On the other hand, Bhardwaj and Agrwal (2013) reported different results from their research which examined the gender differences in pre-adolescents' self-esteem. In their findings, the general self-esteem of females was found to be higher than that of males, which is entirely different from earlier reports reviewed.

In the early years of students' education, academic achievement plays essential roles in the development of the self-esteem of children. The successes or failure of students in academic performances greatly affect their evaluations of their self. Also, another factor that has become a chief contributor in the self-esteem of children is their subjective social experiences (Crocker et al., 2002). According to Bhardwaj and Agrwal (2013), children's good and bad experiences has tendencies of creating attitudes towards the self which can be favourable and develop positive feelings of self-worth, or in the opposite sense could be unfavourable and develop negative feelings of self-worth.

One other factor that influences self-esteem is one's satisfaction with physical appearances, explicitly one's body type. Bruce (2016) reported that male and female adolescent students with mesomorphic body type, who preferred their bodies, had high self-esteem compared to male and female adolescent students with ectomorphic body type. Body dissatisfaction may sometimes result in depressive symptoms and strive in keeping interpersonal relationships (Bittle et al., 2001). It is obvious that, adolescents who suffer from poor body image and dissatisfaction of their body/physical appearances during this period become more vulnerable to low self-esteem.

Interventions for Self Esteem: African Socio-Cultural Indicators Matter

According to Orth, Robins and Widaman (2011), the promotion of self-esteem and the prevention of low self-esteem is widely perceived as an important societal goal that's merits widespread interventions to boost self-esteem levels in the population. Efforts to boost self-esteem in schools, homes and elsewhere would be well adjusted, if they resulted in significant improvements in how people get along with others in the African context (Baumeister et al., 2003; Bleidorn et al., 2016).

Such interventions will allow participants to discover themselves as members of a bigger environment with multiplicity of factors (Bleidorn et al., 2016). For example, academic performance was found to relate positively with self-esteem among junior high school students in Ghana where students received equivalent exposure of corporal punishment (Nyarko, 2017). To study self-esteem of students in Ghana will also require the study of the nature of punishment and social appraisal of self.

Kipp and Weiss (2012) emphasised that, a group setting can afford an ease of sharing common struggles and the possibility of seeing the issue from another perspective. Social influences are much stronger during this period, and adolescents frequently look to each other for support and guidance. According to Emler (2001) the most apparent message from suggestions of the determinants of self-esteem programs envisioned to raise low self-esteem, particularly on

childhood and early adolescence, is to modify the behaviour of parents. Acceptance and approval from parents together with practices such as making time for children, taking an interest in them, encouraging initiative in them are actions that can help change children's belief about themselves.

It is noteworthy that self-esteem develops and increases with age, declines after it reaches its maximum at about age 50 to 60 years (Orth et al., 2015; Orth, Robins, 2014). Age in this regard is also influenced by socio-cultural factors like household variables, work, relationships, and health (Orth et al., 2015). Intervention programs intended to raise low self-esteem should focus on developing competence, training in particular patterns of behaviour and modifying existing behaviour. Self-help activities, physical exercises, recreational activities, group based programs, peer-tutoring and whole family programs should consider the African socio-cultural variables to make it significant (Emler, 2001).

3. Conclusion

Self-esteem is an important part of human development. Those with low self-esteem are faced with various challenges. As researchers and practitioners work to develop interventions to help those with low self-esteem in Africa, the cultural and social frameworks of local settings ought to be taken into consideration. This will make interventions ecologically valid and effective to support those with challenges. This study has implications for education, policy and research.

4. Conflicts of Interest

The author declares the work has no conflicts of interest.

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