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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND CONSULTANCIES (DRIC)

I take this opportunity to express the gratitude of the Organising Committee to all who presented papers (completed papers or works-in-progress) at the SDD-UBIDS Research and Development Conference, 2022. We sincerely appreciate your support as we take steps to inculcate a culture of research by creating a conducive environment for research, collaboration, and knowledge sharing. The papers presented at this year's conference were of reasonably high quality. I encourage authors to use the feedback received to improve them for publication.

I wish you a Happy New Year and look forward to seeing you at the SDD-UBIDS Research and Development Conference in 2023.

Professor Maurice Oscar Dassah
(Director)

EDITORIAL NOTE

The SDD-UBIDS second Research and Development Conference, which was held in Wa from November 2 to 4, 2022, marked another successful milestone as part of the efforts to make the new University a research-intensive university. The conference was attended by one hundred and twenty-five (125) registered participants compared to 62 people who participated in the 2021 conference. The theme focused on how research in higher educational institutions could be leveraged to address contemporary development issues. Professor Mariama Awumbila, who was the Keynote Speaker, shed light on the theme of the conference and stressed that the conference served as a platform for presenting innovative research findings and igniting debates across various disciplines in the social sciences and humanities. The presentations covered ICT and sustainable development, urban development and spatial planning, gender, conflict, and social inequalities, teaching pedagogies in contemporary education, climate change, sustainable agriculture and disaster management, environmental policy and natural resource governance, capital development and financial economics, social policy and social work, poverty, livelihood and development, and indigenous knowledge systems among others. All 80 extended abstracts submitted for presentation went through a double-blind review process, out of which 77 were suitable for presentation at the conference. Parallel oral presentation sessions were organised for authors whose abstracts were accepted based on the blind review process. Each session was chaired/moderated by a senior academic expert assisted by a room rapporteur. Authors were required to revise their abstracts based on comments from reviewers and participants during presentations before acceptance for inclusion in this book of abstracts. The abstracts are of good quality and worthy of reading. The editorial team is thankful to the authors for their submissions and to the reviewers for the constructive comments that added quality to the abstracts. The team also expresses its appreciation to Professor Dassah for proofreading the book of abstracts. For those yet to publish full pieces of your research, we wish you all the best in this regard and hope to receive abstracts from you for the 2023 conference.

Editors:

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Ecotourism as a Strategy for Mitigating Climate Change and Climate Change Adaptation Among Women: Insights from Semi-Arid Ghana

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Introduction

Women in Northern Ghana are important in supporting the upkeep and sustenance of their households. Most of these women rely on small-scale farming activities, livestock rearing, and other ecosystem services to generate income to provide basic needs for their families. However, these sources of livelihood are increasingly being impacted by climate change, compelling women to think of alternative off-farm livelihood diversification strategies (Carr & Thompson, 2014). Meanwhile, research on how women within climate-stressed vulnerable communities in Ghana cope with the impact of climate change through ecotourism-based strategies is lacking. Besides, how those strategies may contribute to climate change mitigation remains unknown in the extant literature. Informed by the Sustainable Livelihood Framework, this study relied on a qualitative research lens to understand the kinds of ecotourism-based livelihood diversification strategies used by women and how these strategies contribute to environmental/climate quality.

Methodology

Purposive sampling technique was used to select 30 women in communities (i.e., Wechau, Tuole, Bulinche, Tokali, and Talewona) surrounding the Wechau Community Hippo Sanctuary (WCHS) in the Wa West District of the Upper West Region of Ghana for the study. Five management staff were also purposively selected and interviewed. Data were analysed using a thematic sampling procedure. The reliability of the data was ensured through “member validation” checks and inter-coder reliability using the Kappa Statistic in SPSS (Landis & Koch, 1977).

Findings

The findings show that women living around the WCHS diversified their livelihoods due to the operation of the Hippo Sanctuary. These activities include organic shea butter processing, organic groundnut farming, dry season vegetable farming, cultural dancing troupe, cake making, weaving, and picking herbs for sale. Regarding contributions to environmental quality and climate quality enhancement, residents have been sensitised to avoid bushfires, agrochemical use, felling of trees, river-bed mining, hunting within the core zone of the resource, and planting more trees, particularly shea.

Conclusion and Implication

The study concludes that not only do women, by living close to the WCHS, are able to diversify their sources of livelihood and develop resilience to climate change, but some of those livelihood strategies and support systems, by their composition, contribute to environmental quality and, ultimately, climate quality enhancement. Thus, ecotourism can be a strategy for climate mitigation and adaptation through the series of interventions implemented. Since the study shows that the WCHS-based initiatives, including sheanut processing, groundnut farming, and dry season farming, involve a few women groups in 5 out of 20 communities, these support systems could be extended to more communities and women. Besides, the positive impacts of their livelihood diversification strategies on the environment, and by extension, the climate, should be encouraged and supported by resource management and traditional leaders to promote environmental sustainability. These practices could also be replicated across communities with ecotourism-based resources to promote environmental sustainability in contributing to Climate Action (SDG 13).

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Migrant Adolescent Female Head Porter's Experience of Out-of-Pocket Healthcare Payments and Impoverishment in Ghana

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Introduction

In sub-Saharan Africa, many national health programmes have prioritised universal health coverage (UHC) and measures such as implementing social health insurance schemes have been taken to integrate UHC within health programmes. This notwithstanding, progress in health service coverage is fraught with gaps and out-of-pocket (OOP) healthcare payments abound pushing about 11 million Africans into poverty annually (World Bank, 2010). Ghana is among the leading UHC implementing countries in Africa. By intensifying the scale-up of community-based primary healthcare delivery and implementing Ghana's National Health Insurance programme among others, Ghana's health sector aims to expand the range of service coverage towards the achievement of universal health coverage (World Bank, 2010). Against this backdrop, this paper examines the impoverishing effects of OOP healthcare payments and the determinants of impoverishment due to OOP healthcare payments among migrant adolescent female head porters aged 10-19 years in the cities of Accra and Kumasi in Ghana.

Methodology

A quantitative cross-sectional survey design was used to draw a sample of 336 respondents who reported ill and sought healthcare within the last 12 months prior to the survey. Time-location sampling was used to draw the migrant adolescent girls for the study (Reichel & Morales, 2017). Impoverishment due to OOP payment was assessed by computing the net income after payment for health care using the World Bank's poverty line of income of \$1.90 a day converted to 2015 purchasing power parity (PPP) equivalent for Ghana. A questionnaire was used to collect the data. The questionnaire collected data including the socio-demographics of the respondents, socio-economic status (SES), healthcare-seeking within the last 12 months, place of seeking care, and OOP payment for care. The data were entered into a database using Epidata and then exported into STATA version 14.0 for analysis. Chi-square test and logistic regression models were

used to analyse the data. Bivariate analysis using the chi-square test of association and, and a binary logistic regression model were used to analyse the data. The variables included in binary logistic regression model were: age, education, marital status, ethnicity, religion, and years of working as head porter, city of migration, childbirth since becoming a head porter, SES, NHIS registration and place of assessing care.

Findings

The results show that the average daily income of the adolescent head porters ranges between Ghs 19.65 (~\$3.85) and Ghs10.88 (~\$2.13) in Accra and Kumasi respectively. The minimum daily income also ranges from Ghs 2 (~\$0.40) in Accra to Ghs 0.50 (~\$0.10) in Kumasi. In particular, the study illustrates that impoverishment due to OOP is very high among the head porters. In fact, poverty incidence increased from 23 percent before OOP payment to 76 percent post OOP payment for healthcare. The regression results illustrate that respondents who had primary education were significantly less likely to be impoverished by OOP payment compared to those without any formal education (OR= 0.32, p-value<0.01, CI: 0.15 - 0.68). Also, respondents who indicated that they were Mamprusi by ethnicity had 0.41 less odds of being impoverished by OOP healthcare payment as compared to those belonging to the Dagomba ethnic group (OR =0.41, p-value< 0.05, CI: 0.19 - 0.87). Also, those belonging to other ethnic groups including Gonja, Waala, Kusasi, Dagaaba, Frafra, Kassena-Nankana, and Ewes had 0.33 less odds of impoverishment due to OOP healthcare payment compared to Dagombas (OR= 0.33, p-value<0.01 CI 0.14 - 0.75). Study respondents who had been in the head porter business for over one year had 0.46 less odds of being impoverished due to OOP compared with those who had less than one year of engagement as head porters (OR=0.46, p-value<0.05 CI 0.23 - 0.95). Adolescent female head porters whose city of migration was Kumasi were 5.14 times more likely to be impoverished as a results of OOP healthcare payment compared to those whose city of migration was Accra, (OR=5.14, p-value<0.01, CI 2.45 – 10.77).

Conclusion and Implication

This study established that the incidence of impoverishment due OOP payments is very high among migrant female head porters in Ghana. The high incidence of impoverishment due to OOP healthcare payments among the adolescent female head porters' merits prompt public policy attention. Because without financial risk protection for these migrant adolescent head porters, they could be pushed into deep poverty. For this reason, the needs of vulnerable migrants have to be factored into restructuring of health systems to ensure that they have access to affordable healthcare. Specifically, as internal migration is increasing in many settings, it is important for the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and the Ministry of Health to collaborate and target the migrant female head porters in the informal sector and enrol them onto the NHIS in order to increase their access to healthcare.

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Local Actors in the Co-Management of Mole National Park and the Impacts Associated with it

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Introduction

Forests are managed for several reasons, among which is the provision of livelihoods to local communities (Sharma, 2011). The creation and management of protected areas (PAs) such as the National Parks and Sanctuaries have the prime goal of contributing to the conservation of biodiversity (Wilkie et al., 2008). However, approaches to forest management have witnessed changes over the years (Vacik & Lexer, 2014; Berkes, 2009). Effective forest management strategies remain a challenge, especially in areas where the forest serves as a livelihood foundation for local members (Marques et al., 2014; Hays, 2017). In Ghana, the co-management approach has become popular in managing forest areas. Hussein et al., (2016) observe that passive community participation still exists, especially when it comes to the management of forest reserves in the northern regions of Ghana. The Mole National Park has experienced numerous co-management strategies with the inclusion of the Community Resource Management Area (CREMA). The challenge is how to get all fringe communities to accept the rules and regulations and fully participate in the management of the Mole National Park. It is against this background that this study sought to investigate how local actors are contributing to the effective management of forest flora and fauna species of the Mole National Park and impact associated with it.

Methodology

The study employed a concurrent triangulation mixed methods approach in data collection, analysis, and presentation. Besides questionnaire administration as a quantitative method of data collection, the study made use of Key Informant Interviews, and Focus Group Discussions as qualitative methods of data collection. Apart from the use of descriptive statistics as a component of SPSS for the analysis of quantitative data, content analysis was used for the analysis of qualitative data.

Findings

The study revealed that the fringe communities endorse chiefs and land priests (kasawule wura) as most effective actors in the management of forest flora and fauna. The study also revealed that, among the many local management strategies such as taboos, totems, traditional fire belts, sacred groves, and traditional awareness creation, fringe communities use the totemic system as their major management strategy. The study found

that partnership in the management of forest flora and fauna in the study area has brought many impacts not only to the Mole National Park, but also to communities fringing the Park. The collaboration has led to the direct employment of the local people. This employment package helps reduce illegal activities, therefore, boosting the population of wildlife animal species.

Conclusion and Implication

The study concluded that there are local management actors, and strategies in resource management in the Mole National Park, and fringe communities and the Park are impacted positively by virtue of community participation. It is recommended that benefit-sharing schemes be considered and developed by Park management and fringe communities since this can engender commitment to participation.

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Traditional Political Hegemony and Farmer-Herder Conflict Intractability in Ghana: Evidence from Asante-Akim North Municipal

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Introduction

While Fulani herders are understood to be largely transhumance, climate variability over the years has prompted their rapid diffusion from Northern Nigeria, the Futa Toro and Futa Djallon regions of Senegal and Guinea and the Macina regions of Mali, Niger and Cameroon to many other states across the Sahel (Ajala, 2020; Eke, 2020). Land scarcity, demographic upsurge, social stereotype, land grabbing and land commoditisation have intersected to hatch violent conflicts of varying scales between Fulani herders and smallholder farmers across West Africa, including Ghana (Appiah-Boateng & Kendie, 2021; Tonah, 2002). Extant literature on farmer-herder conflicts in Ghana investigated conflict causality (Bukari & Schareika, 2015; Kuusaana & Bukari, 2015; Kyei-Poakwah, 2018; Tonah, 2002). However, interrogating the association of royal hegemony over customary lands and the intractable nature of farmer-herder conflicts in Ghana has been less investigated. This study contributes to critical literature on agrarian conflicts in Ghana by interrogating the nexus between cultural and social practices of land access and farmer-herder conflict intractability in the Asante-Akim North Municipal.

Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative research approach using a single case study design, involving 33 participants who were selected using maximum variation purposive sampling technique. Semi-structured interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were used to solicit primary data on the systems of land tenure, cultural and social practices of land access, conflicts and association of conflicts with cultural and social practices of land access. Propositions from the Theory of Hegemony guided the development of the research instruments, while thematic analysis following the first two steps of Attride-Stirling (2001) was used to analyse the data. Field data, which was recorded using an audio device was transcribed and developed into codes and themes and presented using narratives supported by direct quotations.

Findings

The study found that the state owns a vast forest reserve in Asante Akim North Municipal (AANM), which can be classified as state land while there are stool lands and family lands classified as customary lands. The stool lands are owned by the royal family, while family lands are owned by individual families who are not part of the royal family. Individuals also own lands through freehold and usufruct rights. The Paramount Chief of Agogo holds allodial right to all stool lands and may delegate same to his sub-chiefs to exercise such rights within their jurisdictions. Family lands are managed by family heads. Access to lands in AANM, therefore, is largely through the Paramount Chief, sub-chiefs, and family heads depending on the size of the land. The absolute control over lands by the Paramount Chief and his council members provides them with leverage to appropriate lands without recourse to the needs of the original land users. The youth, who are mostly smallholders, are beginning to resist this hegemony, but cannot engage the Paramount Chief directly due to customs and traditions that prescribe absolute reverence for the stool of Agogo. They are, therefore, redirecting their resentment to the Fulani herders whom they consider beneficiaries of royal hegemony. The insistence of the youth to evict Fulani herders and the resistance of the Fulani herders to eviction explains the intractability of the farmer-herder conflict in AANM.

Conclusion and Implication

Cultural and social practices of land access in AANM have vested much power over land in the Paramount Chief and his sub-chiefs. Until this hegemony over land is addressed, the Paramount Chief and his council members will continue to appropriate occupied lands, particularly in the presence of heightened land commoditisation and consequent land grabbing. Resistance and counter-resistance between the youth and beneficiaries of royal hegemony will continue to constellate to produce and sustain farmer-herder conflicts in AANM.

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Effect of Financial Innovation on Inequality in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Mediating Role of Financial Inclusion

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Introduction

Financial innovation provide easy access to financial services like disbursements, repayments, deposits, withdrawals, and money transfers. However, notwithstanding these benefits, innovations are associated with risks such as cybercrime, financial crisis, imitation, and non-acceptance by the general public. Financial innovation creates opportunities for financial inclusion within an economy, ensuring that financial services are available to a broader segment of the public through new financial services or products. Aduda and Kalunda (2012) view financial inclusion as the process of ensuring access to financial products and services at a lower cost, especially for vulnerable, weaker, and low-income groups. It is the ability of some individuals to access and use basic financial services like savings, loans, and insurance designed in a manner that is reasonably convenient, reliable, and flexible. Sub-Saharan Africa still suffers from high levels of poverty and inequality. Financial innovation has the potential to reduce inequality and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Available evidence shows that financial innovation contributes significantly to financial inclusion and economic growth (Bara, Mugano, & Le Roux, 2016; Maimbo, Laeven et al., 2016). What is not evident within the finance literature is the effect of financial innovation on inequality, with financial inclusion playing a moderating role. This study draws evidence from Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA) for the 1990-2021 period to fill this gap by empirically investigating the nexus between financial innovation and income inequality.

Methodology

The study adopted the quantitative research method and employed a panel quintile regression outcome model for the analysis. This is because the dependent variable, income inequality, is a bounded variable, which takes on values between 0 and 1. Quintile regression has the advantage of separating various groups into quintiles. The study also employed Principal Component Analysis in constructing the indices for the quintile regression analysis, using data from the World Development Indicators (WDIs) and the Global Financial Development Index of the World Bank.

Findings

The study showed that the individual measures of financial innovations and inclusion are significant in determining inequality. The interaction term (innovation*inclusion) shows a significant and negative relationship with inequality. This means that financial innovation reduces inequality when interacted with financial inclusion.

Conclusion and Implication

Financial innovation has a significant and negative effect on inequality, with financial inclusion playing a mediating role. To reduce inequality in SSA, financial innovation should be pursued along with financial inclusion. Individual measures of financial innovation and inclusion have the potential to reduce inequality. It is recommended that financial institutions in SSA pursue financial innovation with financial inclusion to get the needed impact on inequality.

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A Study on Social Relations Quality of Life of Elderly People with Disability in Ghana

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Introduction

The social relations Quality of Life (QOL) of elderly people is adversely affected worldwide, especially when they are challenged with some form of disability. In many communities in Ghana, for instance, elderly people with disability are generally subjected to some neglect and discrimination (Ba-Ama & YaabaAckah, 2014). Despite challenges many elderly people with disability encounter in their everyday life, studies relating to their social relation QOL are rare in the country, particularly in the Upper West Region. Accordingly, this study analysed the determinants of social relations QOL of the elderly with disability in selected districts in the Upper West Region of Ghana.

Methodology

The study used a census survey design to collect data from 810 elderly persons with disability. The explanatory variables considered in the study were sex, age, marital status, level of education, type of disability, and living arrangement. The outcome variable was social relations QOL and this was measured by three key indicators namely: personal relationships, sexual activity, and social support. Independent-samples t-test and one-way analysis of variance test statistics were employed to examine the social relations QOL of the elderly with disability.

Findings

The analysis established a significant difference [$F(807) = 24.381$ value, $p = 0.000$] in social relations QOL of respondents' age categories, such that those aged 60 – 69 years experienced the highest social relations QOL mean score compared to those aged 80 years and older. Again, significant difference [$F(807) = 25.239$ value, $p = 0.000$] was observed in social relations QOL of respondents' marital status, with those married having the highest social relations QOL mean score and lowest among those who were separated or divorced. Moreover, the results revealed a significant difference [$t(808) = 3.379$, $p = 0.001$] in social relations QOL between type of disability of the respondents, such that

those with physical disability other than those with visual disability experienced higher social relations QOL.

Conclusion and Implication

The study reveals the central role background characteristics of the elderly with disability play in determining their social relations QOL. Hence, the elderly with disability aged 80 years and older, those separated or divorced and those with visual disability should be given the needed social support by families and state agencies (for example, the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development) to improve their social relations QOL.

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Local Knowledge and Innovations in Farmer-Driven Irrigation Systems in the Kassena Nankana West District, Ghana

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Introduction

Rainfall patterns in northern Ghana over the years depict a continuous contraction of the length of the rainy season. Yet, regional climate forecast project this trend to become more pronounce, and climatic patterns more unpredictable and erratic (File & Derbile, 2020). Thus, it is becoming hard to sustain agriculture in semi-arid regions without irrigation development. While attempts to develop formal irrigation systems have been disappointing, most irrigation initiatives led and managed by farmers themselves have been more satisfactory. Notwithstanding, experts have largely focused on exploring advanced innovations for improving irrigation and many studies focused on conventional irrigation systems (Baddianaah et al., 2021). Studies on farmer-led irrigation systems did not take interest in local knowledge and innovations farmers adopt in sustaining their production. Therefore, this study assesses local knowledge and innovations for sustainable Farmer-Driven Irrigation Systems (FDIS).

Methodology

The study adopted an exploratory sequential mixed methods design. Irrigators were the primary target population. Using purposive and convenient sampling methods, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), respectively, were adopted to select irrigators and extension officers for qualitative data. In all, eleven KIIs and five FGDs were conducted. A survey was adopted to collect quantitative data using a multi-stage sampling method by first adopting cluster sampling to select two irrigation communities and stratified sampling to select irrigators using different methods of irrigation. Finally, systematic sampling was adopted to select 226 irrigators for interviews. Thematic and descriptive analyses were conducted for qualitative and quantitative data, respectively.

Findings

The results revealed that smallholder farmers apply local knowledge for innovating in FDIS at every stage of the production value chain. These innovations are multiple and include the application of ash or salt in furrows prior to transplanting to moderate

exposure to pest and disease infestation, construction of good water-yielding wells, and adoption of shallow wells for motorised pump irrigation to improve farmers' access to water. The others include smart mixed-cropping and strategic personal savings for financing irrigation, and staggering planting of crops and building relationships with traders to improve marketing.

Conclusion and Implication

Local knowledge systems are critical for innovation and sustainability in FDIS. Further, local knowledge as applied by irrigators, reflects a mix of innovations that reveal a blend of new scientific and external knowledge and technologies with indigenous knowledge systems of production shaped by culture and tradition - in ways that are affordable and sustainable to farmers. In the context of global environmental change, we underscore that endogenous development approach to agricultural extension is imperative if FDIS is to sustain in Africa and, particularly, in Ghana.

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Towards spatial justice in Junior High School access in Ghana; A case study of Nadowli-Kaleo District

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Introduction

In Ghana, inaccessibility of basic schools remains a major barrier to enrolment, transition and performance of pupils, especially in rural areas (Africa Education Watch, 2021; Takyi et al., 2019). To address this, the government of Ghana and its development partners have been providing schools to reduce travel distances. Needy communities are mostly identified through engagement with community members. This approach has the risk of not targeting communities with high cases of inaccessibility to schools for priority attention. It is against this background that this study developed and applied a GIS-based rational model for determining the location of Junior High Schools (JHSs) in Ghana in a spatially equitable manner, using Nadowli-Kaleo District as a case study. Specifically, the approach (a) estimated the catchment population of JHSs, (b) assessed the nature of accessibility to JHS and (c) identified areas where new schools are needed.

Methodology

The study approach was GIS-based. It began with the development of a spatial analytic framework for planning the location of basic schools in an equitable manner based on travel distances and catchment population of existing schools. This was followed by data collection, preparation and analysis. All data used in the study were collected from secondary sources. They included shapefile of houses and people locations, geographic coordinates of JHS in Excel sheet and shapefile of Nadowli-Kaleo District. Data preparation and analysis were done in ArcMap (version 10.8).

Findings

Access to JHS in the Nadowli-Kaleo District is characterised by spatial inequalities. Results of travel distances to schools revealed that 15.6% of children of JHS going age are beyond the acceptable walking distance of 3.2km. Also, analysis of catchment population of schools showed that 44.2% of JHSs are at risk of overpopulation. A new school index based on the number of children beyond acceptable walking distance to schools and excess serviced population of schools revealed that 18 additional JHS are required to meet Ghana's standards in terms of maximum distance to a school (3.2km) and maximum population of a school (120).

Conclusion and Implication

A considerable proportion of children in the Nadowli-Kaleo District are far from schools. Also, a significant number of JHSs at risk of overpopulation. These spatial injustices may lead to non-attendance, school dropout, and poor academic performance of pupils. To ensure spatial justice in pupils' access to basic schools in Ghana and other developing countries, location of schools should be informed by a rational spatial model as demonstrated in this study.

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Predicting Urban Growth in sub-Saharan Africa: A Case Study of the Wa Municipality

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Introduction

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is currently the world's fastest urbanising region with the urban population expected to double by 2050 (Saghir & Santoro, 2018). This may worsen access to infrastructure like water, electricity, transportation, and housing if cities are not well planned (Asoka, Thou, & Bunyasi, 2013). To ensure proactive planning of urban areas in SSA, city authorities need to identify potential growth areas for the provision of services. However, accurate prediction of potential growth areas is still a setback in urban planning in SSA. Drawing on Cellular Automata (CA) model, this study predicted growth of built-up area in the Wa Municipality between 2021 and 2030.

Methodology

The study draws on a Geographic Information Systems (GIS)-based CA model to predict urban growth in the Wa Municipality. Spatial data used in the study include Landsat images (2000, 2010 and 2020), road network, elevation, location of Wa (all secondary data) and location of growth poles (primary data). After data processing, the CA model was implemented in five interrelated phases, comprising, (a) land use classification of Landsat images for 2000, 2010 and 2020, (b) accuracy assessment of classified Landsat images, (c) prediction of built-up areas for 2020 based on elevation, proximity to roads, proximity to the central business district, and proximity to growth poles, (d) accuracy assessment of predicted built-up areas for 2020 to assess validity of the model parameters, and finally, (e) prediction of built-up areas for 2030. The image classification was done in Sentinel Application Platform (SNAP) (version 8.0.0), while prediction of built-up areas was carried out in Quantum GIS (QGIS) (version 2.18.18).

Findings

The classified Landsat images for 2000, 2010 and 2020 were 96%, 96% and 81% accurate, respectively. The prediction accuracy of the CA model used was 80%. A quantitative analysis of the built-up area showed that the Municipality is growing rapidly, with a greater proportion of the growth occurring in Wa because it is the most central place in northwestern Ghana. The built-up area increased from 2,830 ha in 2000 to 3,981

ha in 2010 and to 7,282 ha in 2020. Urban growth is predicted to increase to 9,472 ha by 2030. Spatially, future urban growth would largely take place in the southern part of Wa due to the presence of the main campus of the Simon Diedong Dombo University of Business and Integrated Development Studies. Elevation, proximity to roads, proximity to Wa, and proximity to growth poles were important determinants of future built-up areas in the Wa Municipality.

Conclusion and Implication

By 2030, the built area of the Municipality would expand by 30% of the 2020 built area. This expansion has far-reaching implications on land use planning, loss of agricultural land and infrastructure provision. To ensure sustainable urban development as emphasised by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda, city authorities in the Wa Municipality must be proactive in terms of land use planning and extension of infrastructure to growth areas, and also promote livelihood diversification in communities at risk of losing agricultural lands.

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Spatio-Temporal Analysis of Urban Green Space Distribution at the Neighbourhood Level in Kumasi, Ghana

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Introduction

Urban green spaces (UGS) are a central part of cities and provide multiple ecological and social benefits necessary for a higher quality of life of inhabitants (Feyisa, Dons, & Meilby, 2014). However, rapid unguided urban growth, together with planning policies of rezoning can lead to conversion of UGS to residential and other uses. This phenomenon results in inequities in the distribution of UGS in the city (Hoffmann, Barros, & Ribeiro, 2017). Hence, urban planners must rely on data and metrics that capture changes in the distribution of UGS within the city. The purpose of this paper is to examine the spatial and temporal distribution of UGS at the neighbourhood scale in Kumasi, the second largest city in Ghana.

Methodology

Five (5) UGS distribution indicators were computed from remote sensing data for 2013 and 2020 and compared across neighbourhoods. Further, a GIS network analysis method was used to analyse accessibility to parks in Kumasi.

Findings

The results showed that between 2013 and 2020, green spaces in Kumasi became fragmented and disconnected despite a slight increase in quantity. The level of UGS fragmentation was found to vary significantly among the neighbourhoods. Fragmentation and depletion in UGS were profound at the outskirts of Kumasi. Most neighbourhoods (46 out of 57) in Kumasi lacked access to urban parks within 45 minutes' walk-time.

Conclusion and Implication

To ensure equitable distribution of green spaces, the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly must work with landowners, traditional authorities, and developers to ensure that new planning schemes comply with Ghana's Planning Standards requirement of preserving a minimum of 10% of the development area as green cover. The methodology applied in this paper, which relies on cost-effective remotely sensed data and spatial metrics, could guide planners in monitoring UGS distribution to ensure compliance. The findings could

also guide planners in Kumasi and other fast-growing cities in Sub-Saharan Africa to better target the provision of green spaces for maximum benefit.

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Understanding the Perceptions, Processes and Challenges in the Acquisition of Residential Building permit in Rapidly Growing Secondary Cities

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Introduction

The built environment plays a very critical role in every country, especially in shelter provision, infrastructure, and employment (Hammah, 2010). Globally, countries have put in place several measures to regulate the built environment using development controls such as the acquisition of building permits, building regulations, and zoning regulations, among others (Alhassan et al., 2021). Without a regulation in the provision of shelter or residential units, there would be widespread informality, and substandard and poor-quality housing for families thereby defeating the socio-physical requirements of improving standards of living through private sector participation in housing provision. This notwithstanding, few studies have tried to examine challenges in administering development controls from multi-stakeholder perspectives within a rapidly growing secondary city context. This study explored (1) the perceptions and knowledge of landlords and developers about building permit acquisition and (2) processes and the challenges that developers and local governments encounter in the acquisition and administration of residential building permits, respectively, using Wa Township of Ghana as a case study.

Methodology

The study employed mixed methods research design using both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis approaches. A questionnaire was administered to 200 house owners and developers, while key informant interviews were conducted to collect data on challenges facing state institutions in the administration of residential building permits

Findings

The study found that most (73%) of the respondents did not have building permits. This is explained by the fact that 60% of the respondents had no idea about the need for

building permit acquisition. The study also found that property owners were mostly frustrated with the delays (typically more than 30 days) and multiple documentations involved in acquiring residential building permits. These delays were attributed to failure to submit appropriate documents by applicants, inadequate human resources, and requisite expertise to undertake field regular inspections and authorisation. In addition, inadequate logistics for the planning agencies, political interference, and manipulations were major challenges to the state institutions.

Conclusion and Implication

To address these critical structural challenges, there is a need to contextualise planning standards that reflect socio-economic realities and local aspirations. More needs to be done by Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority (LUSPA) in relation to educating developers on the relevance of building permits in urban development. Although LUSPA has simplified the permit acquisition processes by using fewer signatories for permit approval, further work could be done to align the requirements for obtaining buildings with socio-materialities of the local context. Therefore, development controls should be integrated as part of the urban governance discourse in keeping secondary cities sustainable.

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Effects of Riparian Vegetation Cover Change on Livelihoods Along the Basin of River Oti in the Saboba District

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Introduction

There is no excessive emphasis on the social and economic repercussions of riparian vegetation removal. One of the primary culprits of the loss of biodiversity globally describes the alteration of woodlands in riparian zones by livelihood (Akgu'l, 2020). Riparian vegetation is destroyed, degraded and fragmented by timber collection, agricultural land use change, road-building and other human activities (Barber, 2014). The loss in 2017 measured by Global Forest Watch was 29.4 million hectares, the second most recorded since the monitoring started in 2001. The biodiversity of Ghana's forests is under threat due to the quest for socio-economic development, especially urbanisation, industrialisation and tourism (FAO, 2019). Depletion of vegetation along river banks has taken a new twist. The riparian vegetation that held soil tight along the banks have been attacked, paving way for farming lands. This act has exposed the river banks to direct rays and rains. Since environmental damage and its repercussions are clearly focused, we face the threat of exhaustion of renewable vegetable resources and potential destruction of the environment by man if all the effects of vegetation loss continue unchecked. With the use of Normalised Difference Vegetation Index, images were produced to highlight the impact of human activities along the banks of River Oti. Livelihood activities in Saboba District are affected as a result of degradation of the riparian vegetation of River Oti. This study is vital in identifying the causes of degradation and how to develop solutions to these difficulties.

Methodology

The study used a case study approach for research to conduct this investigation. Mixed method approach was adopted for this research. Simple random technique was used to select 4 communities from 13 communities that are located at the basin of the river. Proportional technique was used to distribute population among the selected communities. Simple random was again used to select 200 respondents from the communities. Purposive sampling was also used to select 4 respondents for qualitative. Normalised Difference Vegetation Index was used and satellite images analysed to support the study.

Findings

Normalised Difference Vegetation Index and land use change showed changing greening or vegetation along the river declined from 2000 to 2019. The study also established that

vegetation cover removal adversely affects livelihood activities such as cultivation of food. These factors have led to poor yields because the land is not fertile as rain has washed away soil nutrients.

Conclusion and Implication

There has been a sharp decline in livelihoods in the communities selected. This has resulted from human activities that are taking place at the basin of the river. It is recommended that alternative livelihood programmes and afforestation be introduced by government and non-governmental organisations to change the system.

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Indigenous Institutions and Their Role in (Social) Development in Nandom Traditional Area

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Introduction

Institutions are cultural imperatives, serving as regulatory agencies, and channeling behaviour in culturally prescribed ways as well as providing procedures through which human conduct is patterned (Farkas, 2019). Institutions that are unique structures and are the units of organisation in a community, encompassing the norms, values, beliefs and cosmovision that guide social interaction or behaviour, are indigenous/traditional institutions. Indigenous or traditional institutions are not obstacles to development but, actors have failed to harness these institutions even though they serve collective purposes/needs and expectation of people who have established them. The establishment of these institutions have bearings on their well-being and progress. The study seeks to understand how the beliefs in the *Saa* and *Tengan* institutions influence (social) development in the Dagaabaland. The study specifically focused on understanding the nature, powers and interrelationship of these institutions as well as the roles they play in the lives of the people. Also, the study sought to understand the perceptions of non-traditional believers in these institutions.

Methodology

The study adopted the qualitative research approach to elicit and analyse the collected data. Three scenarios (one from Serekpere in the Nadowli District, and one each in Dodometeng and Kokoligu-Guri, both in the Nandom Municipality) were identified and through dung-beetle method. Participants and observers were further identified and interviewed using open-ended questions-guide. Key informants' interview with custodians of these institutions as well as focus group discussions with community members were held in the vicinity of the incidents/scenarios. These were done to solicit in-depth perspectives of participants as far as these institutions are concerned.

Findings

Findings from the study showed that indigenous institutions are both tangible and intangible entities and instill order/ensure good behaviour in communities. The *Saa* and the *Tengan* institutions mitigate societal destruction or societal chaos such as stealing in

the participating communities and, thus, promote harmony in society, which is conducive for (social) development. Non-traditional believers hold these institutions very highly in society and adhere to their dictates even though they do not publicly express it.

Conclusion and Implication

Beliefs in the traditional/indigenous institutions are somehow fast disappearing. This state of affairs has attendant negative impact on human endeavour, especially on members of the community who have been influenced by Christianity and Islam and, thus, do not hold onto the indigenous rules or norms that emanate from these institutions. This study presents suggestions on revitalisation of beliefs in traditional institutions. These include radio engagement with custodians of the *Saa and Tengan* institution as well as people who have experienced with impact of these institutions, for people to be well educated and for their contributions to (social) development to be well illustrated. Another approach involves employment of traditional/indigenous social media in illustrating the importance of these institutions. This will enhance knowledge on the derived benefits of beliefs in the workings of these institutions. Also, a policy directive for schools to give indigenous/traditional stories that border on these institutions will enlighten participants, particularly the youth as, well as boost cultural morale of residents of the study area and society at large.

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The Effectiveness of Community-Led Total Sanitation Sustainability from the Social Norms Perspective in Gushegu Municipality

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Introduction

One of the most significant developmental challenges faced today is access to improved basic sanitation and hygiene, especially from the social norm perspective (World Health Organization, 2018). In Ghana, poor sanitation is one of the most significant national challenges, particularly in the Northern Region. Gushegu is one of the districts that implemented Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) as an approach to improve rural sanitation. With a higher success rate, Gushegu Municipal had the potential of achieving district-wide Open Defecation Free (ODF). However, many of these communities have relapsed to open defecation practices and poor sanitary behaviour in less than a year. The study seeks to assess how social norms influence sustainability of the CLTS intervention

Methodology

This study adopted a mixed-methods approach to the research objective. Purposive sampling approach was used to select 11 communities. The study used a semi-structured questionnaire to survey 135 households in communities declared as Open Defecation Free (ODF) after sanitation interventions. In collaboration with the Municipal Assembly and partners, a purposive sampling technique was used to select eight (8) Key Informants for in-depth Interviews using an interview guide. Also, four (4) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held with community- and institutional-level stakeholders as participants, using a Focus Group Discussion guide.

Findings

The results indicated that the communities' status changed from ODF to Open Defecation (OD). Additionally, the study found a significant relationship between societal norms and expectations of post-ODF strategies. There is also less stakeholder participation in post-ODF activities at the community level. Again, despite promoting sanitation marketing in the area, households could not maintain their latrines when they become full or collapsed. To make CLTS practices sustainable, the study recommends government support for post-ODF activities, and re-strategising the implementation of post-ODF activities. Also, re-strategising the implementation phases of the CLTS strategy by NGOs, active primary stakeholder involvement, and stakeholder collaboration in post-ODF activities.

Conclusion and Implication

The study concludes that the aftermath of the CLTS concept that earmarked some communities as ODF yielded little results as most people were going back to the old system of OD. Based on findings of the study, it may be concluded that behaviour changed through the CLTS as perceived norms do not have an influence on latrine construction, but what is outstanding is the economic status of people does influence their ability to sustain changed behaviour. This brings to light that sanitation management requires a multi-sectoral approach involving both economic and social actors to achieve sustainability.

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The Nexus Between Ecological Threats and Rural Livelihood Diversifications: The Perspective of Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining in Ghana

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Introduction

Artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM), low-technology, low output, low capital investment, and low formalisation have become prevalent in developing countries, including Ghana (Mabe et al., 2021). In spite of its economic benefits, growing evidence in the literature points to environmental implications of ASGM for livelihood enhancement (Ofosu et al., 2020), which needs attention. The study explored the impact of ecological threats of artisanal mining on rural livelihood diversifications among selected mining communities in the Upper West Region of Ghana. The study addressed the following research objectives: examine the adverse effects of ASGM on the environment, the effects of ASM on rural livelihoods diversification, and evaluate policies that regulate small-scale mining activities.

Methodology

The research took the form of a case study and relied on explanatory concurrent triangulation mixed method involving simple random, snowball and purposive sampling methods. The sample consisted of 320 community members selected using a simple random sampling as well as 40 artisanal miners using snowball sampling method across 10 mining communities due to the illegal nature of ASGM in Ghana. The study also used purposive sampling in selecting key informants and relied on pragmatism as a philosophical underpinning as it advocates for the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences was used to analyse the data quantitative data collected from the field.

Findings

The results suggest both positive and negative relationships between ASGM and livelihoods of the people. It was found that ASM has a deleterious effect on the physical environment with land degradation touted as the most. The study also various livelihood assets associated with ASM and how critical assets are adversely affected by ASGM activities. ASGM contributes to livelihood enhancement through income generation,

increased well-being and asset acquisition (50.7%), reduced vulnerabilities (31.1%), and empowerment of people (19.2%) to establish other economic activities.

Conclusion and Implication

The study concludes that the search for livelihood among rural dwellers influences them to ignore laws that govern the use of the natural environment, leading to ecological threats. Finally, alternative livelihood programmes to improve the economic conditions of communities should form an integral part of planning for any mining activity, especially small-scale mining in Ghana.

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Female-Owned Microenterprises in Sustainable Poverty Alleviation in the Wa Municipality of The Upper West Region of Ghana

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Abstract

The role of microenterprises in economic growth and development is crucial to both policy makers and scholars as the world searches for ways to alleviate poverty through micro entrepreneurship. Despite the growth and improvement of Ghana's economy, there is still widespread poverty and inequality among the populace, particularly in the northern parts of the country with women and children bearing the brunt. Poverty alleviation attempts and policies often seem to fall short of providing sustainable sources of employment and empowering the poor to participate and contribute to the local and national economy. This study explored the role of female-owned microenterprises in poverty alleviation in Wa.

Methodology

The study was anchored on the Schumpeterian entrepreneurship theory and economic theory of entrepreneurship to illustrate how females in microenterprise occupation can lead to better living conditions and poverty reduction. A mixed-methods research approach was adopted. Data collection was done with the use of questionnaires and interview guides. Content analysis of the voices of interviewees, descriptive statistics, and Kendall's coefficient of concordance was used to analyse the data.

Findings

The study indicated that female-owned microenterprises in Wa have an average of 2 employees with the average monthly wage earning of workers pegged at GH¢ 500.00. The study further revealed that most women operate microenterprises to earn an income. It was also found that with their incomes earned from these microenterprises operations, most women were able to meet their basic needs, which include food, rent, health, and insurance. Thus, their poverty was alleviated because of engagement in microenterprises' operations. The study found the most pressing constraint was the lack of capital for the women to operate their businesses.

Conclusion and Implications

Women's operation of microenterprises leads to poverty alleviation, and it is recommended that the Central Bank of Ghana implement a special interest rates regime for female-owned microenterprises. They should collaborate with credit facilities and establish new ones for survivalist female-owned microenterprises without interests and see to the effective implementation of special policies formulated to support these enterprises as well as establish special subsidised interest rates for more viable female-owned microenterprises applicable across the country.

Use of Mobile Money in Intra- and Inter-Firm Transactions and Firm Growth in Africa

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Introduction

Mobile Money (MM) is a relatively new financial innovation in developing economies, which has fueled financial inclusion, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Mobile communication and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) are major catalysts for inclusion and growth (Simiyu & Oloko, 2015). About \$1 billion in transactions are processed daily through MM reaching an overall revenue estimate of about \$2.5 billion (GSMA, 2018). MM reduces transaction costs, enhances operational efficiency through timely payments and receipt of payments, and reduces financial risk. MM services also enhance corporate competitiveness and address the liquidity problems of most SMEs (Baganzi & Lau, 2017). The use of MM has, therefore, expanded beyond individual and household level transactions to cover business transactions as SMEs are constantly engaged in a web of arrangements with suppliers of inputs, customers and other businesses in large volumes of transactions, which involve the exchange of money. Trade credit arrangement tends to feature prominently in inter-firm transactions, which are linked mainly to the purchase and sale of products (Stanley & Harvey, 2020). However, there is a paucity of literature on MM used in intra- and inter-firm transactions and its impact on firm growth. This study sought to fill this gap by examining the extent and determinants of MM use in intra- and inter-firm transactions and its effect on firm growth.

Methodology

The study utilised cross-sectional data obtained from the World Bank Enterprise Survey collected between 2016 and 2019 involving 1,964 firms. The data covers 10 African countries, namely: Chad, Sierra Leone, Niger, Mali, Liberia, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Benin, Togo, and Cameroun. The choice of these countries was based on data availability. The binary probit model was employed in analysing the determinants of MM use in firm transactions and an instrumental variables regression was used in analysing the effect of MM on firm growth.

Findings

Only about 17.4% of the sample use MM in their transactions. The study findings indicated that age and firm size are significant determinants of MM use in sub-Saharan Africa. The results show that younger firms are more likely to use MM services. Also, smaller firms are more likely to use MM services in their transactions. Regarding the

effects of MM use on firm growth, our preliminary results showed that MM use is negatively related to firm growth. This is contrary to our a priori expectation. However, given that younger firms use more MM and that they are experiencing less growth, it is not surprising that firms experiencing less growth are mainly use MM. Other variables such as the educational level of the workforce and firm ownership diversity are significant determinants of firm growth.

Conclusion and Implication

The use of MM is relatively low among firms in the sample and mainly associated with smaller and younger firms. They are the ones also experiencing low growth, making the impact of MM on firm growth negative. Policies that enhance the use of MM, especially among firms, can help reduce the transaction cost of business operations, notwithstanding that firms experiencing lower growth tend to use more MM.

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Decentralisation and Local Participation: Assessing the Effectiveness of Unit Committees in the Nadowli-Kaleo District

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Introduction

It is recognised that effective local participation in development happens when institutions charged with promoting local participation are aware, capable and able to carry out their functions. Crisis have severely impacted public administration, traditional service delivery techniques and decentralisation initiatives have allegedly failed (Sakyi, 2013). These necessitate reforms to shift from traditional political and administrative structures where power is centralised to a new type of administration that promotes responsible governance with participation at its core (*Mali Public Perceptions as a Barometer of Local Governance*, n.d.). Article 240 of Ghana Constitution 1992 categorically states that “Ghana shall have a local government and administration system which shall, as far as practicable, be decentralised” (Ahwoi, 2010: 53). In the Ghanaian context, District Assemblies, sub-district institutions and Unit Committees are essential local government structures for development. This study determined the functionality and effectiveness of Unit Committee members in the Nadowli-Kaleo District in their roles and identified indicators of their effectiveness at both the community and area council levels, based on assessment of opinions expressed by residents of relevant jurisdictional areas.

Methodology

The study employed a mixed methods design using a convergent (parallel or concurrent) approach. A descriptive cross-sectional design through a simple probability random sampling technique was used to select 398 participants from communities to whom a questionnaire was administered. In addition, 24 community elders and 37 members of Unit Committees were purposefully chosen and interviewed. Data collected was captured and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 20). To describe community members’ knowledge, awareness of Unit Committee members’ functions, perceptions and effectiveness of Unit Committee members at the level of area councils against respondents’ socio-demographic characteristics, descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, Spearman Correlation, independent t-test analyses were used, with the results presented in tables and figures.

Findings

The findings indicate that community members and Unit Committee members had a good understanding of their roles, the importance of those roles to development and signs of

Unit Committees' effectiveness in fostering development. It was also found that the applicability of roles and signs of effectiveness of Unit Committees for development were positively connected with gender, age, and educational attainment. Unit committees are perceived to be important in a range of ways, from narrow to broad. Community people had favourable impressions of the functions of Unit Committees, but with occasional unfavourable connotations that Unit Committees encounter have an influence on their capacity to carry out community/area council development initiatives and programmes. Area councils' development initiatives and A successfully implemented by Unit Committees, but without written records for verification. Women's involvement in municipal government was little and minor.

Conclusion and Implication

The study concludes that because of their common knowledge and perceived values about the functioning of Unit Committees, members of the community and Unit Committees may successfully interact and work together at both the community and area council levels.

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Political Drivers of Energy Infrastructure Access: An Analysis of Grid RE Programmes in Tolon District - Ghana

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Introduction

The significance of electricity infrastructure as a catalyst for socioeconomic development has been underscored. Consequently, there is a high demand for community connection at the sub-national level (Ministry of Energy, 2010). However, this demand comes with intense contestations and political complexities. Yet this phenomenon has received limited attention in academic scholarship. The paper drew on contextual perspectives from rural regions in the Tolon District of Northern Ghana to delineate particularly the platforms for communities' demand; 'the level of political influence and major political drivers inherent in rural communities' demand for grid Rural Electrification (RE) infrastructure connection.

Methodology

The study was influenced by the Pragmatist research philosophy and employed a mixed methods approach (particularly concurrent mixed strategy) to collect both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2014). It adopted the simple random (lottery) and purposive sampling techniques to sample rural households (HHs) heads and key informants, respectively. A sample size of 385 rural HHs heads was drawn. This was proportioned based on eighteen (18) selected rural communities from the district's six (6) Area Councils (ACs). Data were collected through questionnaires administered to the HHs' heads, interviewing of key informants, and direct observation of electricity infrastructure in the study area. The Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance (W.), Chi-square (X^2), Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), and thematic analysis were employed in analysing the quantitative and qualitative data. The results were embedded in the discussion with Political Settlement Theory as an anchor in the analysis.

Findings

The study identified five platforms for demanding grid RE infrastructure connection, which were 'District Assembly (DA) meetings', 'election campaign periods', 'politicians' visits to communities', 'community action plans (CAP) preparation period', and 'area council meetings'. 'Political visits' and 'campaign periods' were the first and second most

reliable platforms for demand. The study identified a direct relationship between ‘perceived political influence’ and community connection with X^2 value of 45.576 at a 1 percent significance level. It established that ‘perceived affiliation to the political party in power’, and ‘the reliability of the DA’s implementation of current RE infrastructure Programme’ loaded highest and hence major drivers for rural communities’ demand for grid RE infrastructure connection.

Conclusion and Implication

In conclusion, political platforms are the most reliable avenue for demanding grid connection with partisan and other political factors as key drivers of demand. The predominant partisan nature, however, is a potential avenue for non-politically affiliated communities to be delayed or denied connection even if they are deemed more qualified per Ministry of Energy (MoE) selection criteria. Therefore, the MoE should ensure selection criteria are fully complied with to reduce politicisation. It should also concentrate on RE policy-making by decentralising planning and connection to the DA to enhance the level of reliability communities have in the DA’s implementation of RE programmes.

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Investigating Adaptive Instruction in Classroom Teaching and Learning: Evidence from Junior High School Teachers in the Jirapa Municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana

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Introduction

Teaching and learning are fast changing due to the ever-emerging learner variations in most classrooms. Thus, it is imperative for teachers to adopt responsive teaching pedagogies in response to increasing learner-variations in the classroom (Dumont, 2017; Singh, 2014). Consequently, teaching has shifted from a teacher-centred approach to a learner-centred approach (Alshammari, 2016). This means teaching and learning must focus mainly on transmitting knowledge, values, principles, and concepts through active learner participation.

Methodology

Pragmatists' philosophy, mixed method approach and concurrent mixed method design were adopted for the study. Differentiated Instructional Theory situated the study. Cluster sampling and simple sampling techniques were used to select a sample size of 148 teachers. A questionnaire and semi-structure interview guide were used to collect the data. Thematic analysis and Statistical Package for Social Science Research (SPSS) IMB Version 20 were used to analyse the qualitative and quantitative data.

Findings

The study revealed that varied learners' differences such as cultural heterogeneity, relevant prior knowledge, age, learning styles, cognitive abilities, emotional status reception span and retention memory existed in classrooms. Teachers were cognisant and considerate of these variations when teaching.

In responding to strategies teachers felt were helpful in teaching varied learners' differences, majority of them agreed they used mixed ability grouping; ability grouping; collaborative learning; co-operative learning; inquiry-based learning; microteaching; self-directed learning and task analysis approach as adaptive instruction strategies to teach learners with varied learning differences. The results further showed that there was a significant difference for teachers to adapt to the varied learners' differences (p -value<0.05) in the classroom teaching and learning.

Conclusion and Implication

Teachers generally were equipped with pedagogical knowledge and skills in teaching to meet varied learners' needs in their classrooms. Since teachers were not oblivious of learner variations in the classroom, efforts were made to reach out to every learner's needs during teaching and learning. However, teachers need to have adequate knowledge of adaptive instruction to be able to implement adaptive instructional strategies effectively in the classroom. This is evidence, as most teachers admitted, that adaptive instruction is a desirable instructional strategy and when deployed effectively teaching and learning outcomes would be enormous. It is recommended the Ghana Education Service organise Continuous Professional Development (CPD) trainings on adaptive instruction for teachers if the learners are to obtain the needed benefits of adaptive instruction.

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Exploitation of Labour Casualisation in Public Health Facilities in the Upper West Region: A Battle Between Survival and Dignity

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Introduction

There is evidence of understaffing in public health facilities in Ghana. For this reason, these facilities have regularly engaged the services of other people on casual basis. Labour Casualisation is becoming a concern to stakeholders. Even in some cases, what is supposed to be temporal often lasts for months and sometimes years, a situation that is described as permanent casualisation (Bayo, 2019). The enormity of the problem was recently made known in the Parliament of Ghana when the Member of Parliament for Nadowli/Kaleo, Anthony Sumah Mwinkaara, delivered a statement on how casual workers are engaged for long periods, sometimes, up to 20 years against Section 75(1) of the Labour Act 2003 (Act 651). This section states that workers, when engaged by an organisation for a period of more than 6 months should be considered permanent and given all benefits (Nartey, 2022). Despite the enormity of the problem, scholarly works on it are limited, particularly on providers of non-clinical support services. This study explored labour casualisation in public health facilities in the Upper West Region of Ghana.

Methodology

The study employed a qualitative approach in the collection and analysis of data and presented results in narratives. Casual workers, human resource personnel, hospital administrators and labour union leaders were the study participants. Twenty-five participants were selected through targeted, quota, and purposive sampling techniques. Interviews and focus group discussions with participants were conducted to collect data, based on life histories and stories relating to the study constructs.

Findings

Understaffing and lack of employment opportunities were found to be the key drivers of labour casualisation in public health facilities in the Upper West Region. It was established that, in many instances, the rights of causal labourers are abused and that they work under perpetual fear of being sacked at the slightest mistake. It was also indicated that casual laborers have come to accept their situation as normal and that even where they are convinced that their rights are being abused, they remain quiet and unsure who to report to, even if the outcome of reporting will favour them. The study further revealed

that many casual labourers are still in employment because of the lack of alternative job opportunities, low level of education that makes it difficult to seek better opportunities and the fear of livelihood dispossession. On how labour casualisation affects service delivery in these facilities, participants believe that, though casuals are doing their best, they also believe that unsatisfied workers cannot deliver satisfactory services.

Conclusion and Implication

The study found that labour casualisation in the Upper West Region is endemic and a source of worry. It is recommended that labour market regulatory institutions in Ghana intensify their regulatory efforts in protecting casual workers from exploitation.

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Gender Disaggregated Analysis of Sustainable Intensification Practices Adoption: A case of Northern Ghana

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Introduction

Agricultural productivity has remained low in Africa, especially among smallholder farmers. Women, who constitute a bulk of the farm labour force, suffer resource constraints with limited access to certain technologies needed to increase their productivity. While women account for 40% of plot-level labour supplied in African agriculture and contribute to household poverty reduction, their productivity has remained low (20%) in Africa compared to developed nations (50%) (Mulugeta, 2021). Sustainable intensification practice (SIPs) adoption is seen as a pathway to increasing productivity and resource use efficiency without adverse effects on the environment (Jabbar et al., 2020). While there is growing interest among researchers and development actors in agricultural sustainability and ways to improve productivity, little is done in the area of gender (Lampridi, Sorensen, & Bochtis, 2019). This study analysed how gender differentials influence SI technology adoption in Ghana using disaggregated data.

Methodology

The study analyses the impact of gender on the adoption of selected sustainable intensification practices (SIPs) in northern Ghana using a sample of 463 farmers involved in maize and cowpea production. A multistage sample design was used to collect the data. First, six districts in North East Region, Savannah Region, Northern Region, Upper East Region, and Upper West Region in which sustainable intensification technologies were introduced to smallholder farm households were purposely selected. The intervention districts (Tolon, Savelugu, Nadowli-Kaleo, Wa West, Bongo, and Kassina-Nankana) and farm households exposed to the technologies were purposively selected. Data analysis was done using LIMDEP econometric software to run a probit regression model.

Findings

The probit analysis revealed that age, membership to a farmer-based organisation (FBO), and perception of ease of adoption (PEC) would likely influence the decision of females

to adopt SIPs, while marital status, education, FBO membership, distance to farm, amount of credit received, extension access, and PEC affect adoption decisions of males. Thus, FBO membership and ease of adopting technologies influence both male and female farmers to adopt SIPs positively. SIPs adoption decisions by males are influenced by many factors relative to that of females, thus, highlighting the complexities involved in agricultural technology adoption.

Conclusion and Implication

More factors influence SIPs adoption among males compared to females. Factors that influence technology adoption for males are not entirely different from those that influence females (some factors are gender-neutral and there is an overlap). The link between gender and agricultural technology adoption is not linear, but complex. These findings have implications in terms of strengthening FBOs and utilising the concept of technology parks to deepen farmers' perceptions and understanding of SIPs so as to help bridge the gender gap in technology adoption and improve productivity. Also, prioritising SI-related interventions at various levels (district, regional, and national) using gender-transformative processes has the potential of generating equitable outcomes for both male and female farmers.

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The Nexus Between Foreign Direct Investment and Firm Productivity: A Firm-Level Study of Ghanaian Firms

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Introduction

Comparatively speaking, firms operating in developing economies are less likely than their counterparts in developed economies to devote significant resources to research and development to increase productivity. Consequently, firms operating in developing countries are heavily dependent on foreign investment (FDI) and technologies developed in advanced economies for their operations. Similarly, foreign-invested firms with better management abilities and technology are more likely to produce productivity spillovers that may benefit domestic firms. Increased foreign firms' presence in developing countries such as Ghana is expected to boost productivity in Ghanaian firms because it provides local firms with more opportunities to observe and imitate advanced technology, primarily through competition and demonstration channels. At the micro level, a plethora of scholars have established either a positive, negative, or no link between FDI and firm productivity. As such, the results in the literature have been inconsistent due to the use of different methodologies, data sets, and variables. In this study, we examine firm-level productivity spillovers in Ghanaian manufacturing firms.

Methodology

We use the System Generalised Method of Moments on data obtained from the Ghana Manufacturing Enterprises Survey (GMES) from 1991 to 2002. The GMES dataset is the most appropriate for the current firm-level investigation. It contains many firms (312 total) and 12 years of data, the most extended panel of firm data for Ghana. The survey period also matches up with Ghana's economic recovery programme reforms, which makes it a good time to see how Ghanaian businesses react to foreign presence.

Findings

Our findings show that FDI has a strong positive effect on firm productivity in Ghana. Capital intensity has a negative effect on productivity, even when all other factors are taken into account. Firm age has a positive effect on productivity. However, employees' age, experience, level of education, and earnings do not seem to have a clear relationship with the level of productivity. The study suggests, among other things, that policy be directed towards removal of all onerous access restrictions that foreign investors may be subjected to. It is possible that improving the ease of doing business in the country will be a significant policy objective that will pave the way for increased inflows of foreign investment.

Conclusion and Implication

The current study contributes to the existing body of research in the following ways: First, as a departure from previous studies, it uses recent methodologies to generate a reliable estimate of total factor productivity (TFP), while controlling for unobserved variables to avoid estimation of biased TFP. Secondly, the study employs a robust system GMM estimation technique to control for endogeneity in FDI-firm productivity link, an issue that has largely been ignored in earlier studies. Finally, we add to the discussion about the effect of FDI on productivity in Ghana by testing the significance of the time lag of FDI.

Edge of a Precipice: Multi-Party Electoral Violence in Jirapa Municipal Ghana Before and After the 2020 Elections

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Introduction

Multi-party elections are generally accepted as the hallmark of representative democracy to thrive for the transfer of power from one democratically elected government to another (Fjelde & Höglund, 2016).). However, many countries in Africa experience both violent and non-violent conflicts during elections. Ghana has experienced this challenge in eight national elections since 1992 (Bob-Milliar, 2014). The Upper West Region in Ghana has had its share of this conundrum, including the Jirapa Municipality. According to the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) (2018) survey, as well as Police Report on the 2020 general elections, the Jirapa Constituency recorded 35 cases of electoral violence out of 105 in the region, which made the constituency the highest violence-prone area in the region and also one of the highest in the country. Using the Social Identity Theory (SIT) relative to groups' interest in multi-party elections, the paper examines violent elections that have been experienced in Jirapa Municipal in Ghana over the years.

Methodology

Relying on mixed research approach, cross-sectional research design was adopted. Cluster and simple random sampling were used to select a sample size of 400. These participants were the ones questionnaires were administered to while 15 key informants were interviewed. The SPSS version 20 and thematic analysis were used to analyse both quantitative and qualitative data respectively.

Findings

The results showed that, multiple causal factors are responsible for the periodic violence and the preponderance of this conundrum have had effect on the social structure of the community relative to communal cohesion, loyalty to traditional leaders, weak public institutions, slow down economic activities and general distortion of democratic development. Also, the violence becomes rife due to suspicion between the political parties and with the Electoral Commission itself.

Conclusion and Implication

The study concludes that there are multiple causal factors for electoral violence in the Jirapa Municipality due to competing interest among political parties to capture political power. The study recommends that the dictates of chapter nine of the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution should be strictly followed by public institutions in charge of electoral governance without biases.

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Bride Price and Marriage Stability: An Ethnographical Study of the Brifors in Jenebob Community in the Upper West Region, Ghana

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Introduction

Marriage is often described as a union between man and woman. This union is mostly consummated through bride price payment, which creates an unending bond for married couples in Africa and beyond. The bride price payees provide reasons for its payment: it ratifies the marriage, giving a certain degree of self-respect to both husband and wife and it entitles the husband to adultery fees in the event of unfaithfulness by the wife (Sarpong, 1974 & Bonye et al, 2020). Significantly, this gesture is key within the Brifor cultural milieu though such payment over the years has been burdensome. In view of this, Forkuor et al (2018) argues that bride price forces women to stay in abusive marriages either to avoid stigmatisation or in the name of elusive marital stability. This paper examines bride price payment and its impact on marriage stability among the Brifors in Ghana.

Methodology

The study adopted ethnographic design in qualitative research approach. Purposive and snowball sampling were used to select husbands, wives, unmarried, divorcees, clan heads, community chiefs, women groups' head (pognaa), Youth Leaders, priests and imams (Christian and Islamic community). In-depth interviews were conducted with ten (10) Key Informants in two communities. Four (4) Focus Group Discussions were also held with women and men's groups separately. The interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, gleaned and analysed using thematic analysis where the themes were presented in quotes.

Findings

The results from the study showed that bride price assigns paternity right to children born out of marriages with paid up bride price and an honour to women. Negatively, the practice places huge financial burden on the married couple. resulting in unnecessary strife and creating instability in the marriage. Finally, it increases the incidence of violence against women because husbands view them as wives bought.

Conclusion and Implications

The study concludes that although most participants felt the payment of bride price should be reviewed, it was evident that both payment and non-payment of bride price affects marriages adversely, hence marriage instability among the Brifors. As a matter of policy, and in the face of social change, the study recommends that traditional authorities

(Chiefs) have a cultural policy that institutes rules and bye-laws in order to develop a standardised form of bride price request that is affordable to prevent exploitation.

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First Degree is Enough for Me: Views of Junior High Schools' Teachers on Formal Professional Development in the Upper West Region of Ghana

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Introduction

The educational landscape evolves in response to the changing needs of society where formal professional development (PD) becomes inevitable (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017). Sustainable Development Goal 4, which aims at ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all (United Nations, 2016) requires that formal PD of teachers (Redman, Wiek & Redman, 2018) be enhanced. As a result, the study sought to assess the formal PD avenue (s) that teachers prefer in Junior High Schools in the Upper West Region (U/WR).

Methodology

The study adopted cross-sectional design (de Vaus, 2001) and a sample size of 310. Multi-stage cluster sampling, simple random sampling and purposive sampling were used in selecting participants. A semi-structured interview guide and questionnaires, which are qualitative and quantitative instruments, respectively, were used to collect the data. These were anchored in Schultz's (1961) Human Capital Theory. Thematic Analysis and SPSS were used in analysing the qualitative and quantitative data, respectively.

Findings

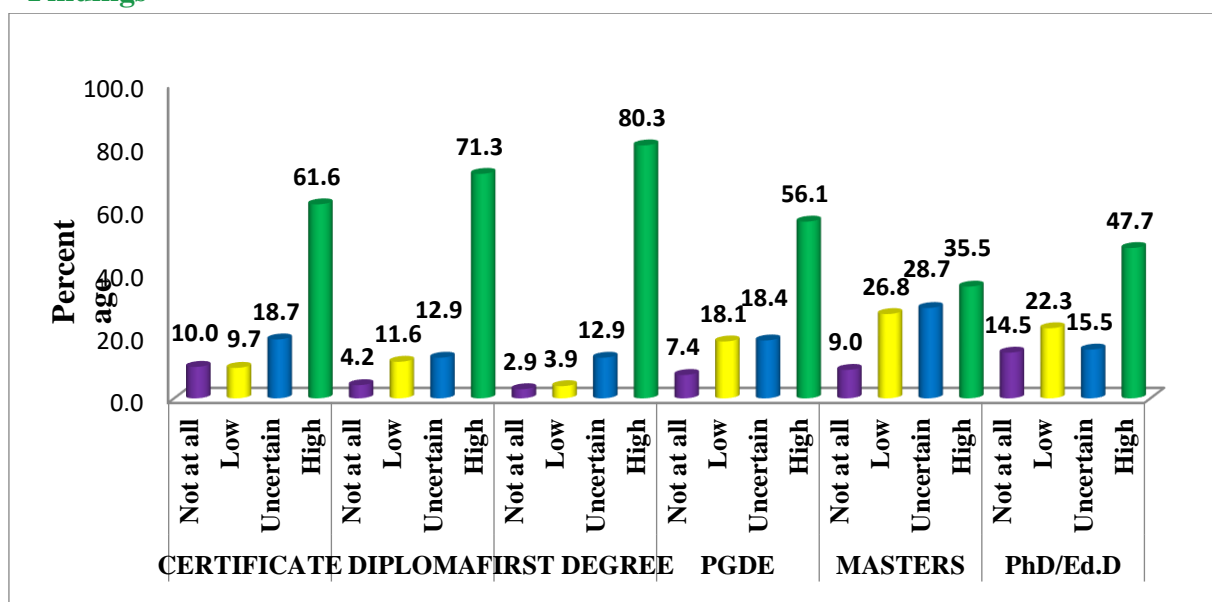


Figure 1: Formal Professional Development Avenues

*PDGE: Postgraduate Diploma in Education

First Degree, in Figure 1, was one of the formal PD avenues which 80.3% of the teacher-respondents said had high influence on their professional needs. Affirming this, a teacher said:

'First degree is the highest professional certificate with rank and salary level in GES'

This gave a positive impression that this qualification has a specific rank and a specific salary scale, which entices the teachers.

Masters' Degree, in Figure 1, was one of the formal PD avenues, which only 35.5% of the teachers said had high inducement in their PD needs. In an interview, a teacher bemoaned:

'Masters... certificate has no immediate effect on increase in your salary in GES...'

There is no specific rank or position designated for holders of this qualification in the GES unlike the other qualifications below the rank of Masters' degree.

Lastly, in Figure 1, pursuing a Doctorate was another formal PD avenue which 47.7% of the teachers indicated contributed highly to their PD. In the words of the Jirapa Municipal Director of Education:

'Doctoral degree is not part of the qualification required in teaching in Junior High School or at any level within the Ghana Education Service...'

This stance was categorical that the GES has no rank and salary scale for teachers who hold Doctorates.

Conclusion and Implication

The educational landscape evolves where formal PD become inevitable. Formal PD is inextricably key to improving the competences of teachers. The available formal PD avenues that teachers preferred were First degrees and below because these qualifications had ranks and salary scales in the GES. They saw that having First degree as their highest qualification was enough. This has the propensity of undermining the Pre-Tertiary Teacher Professional Development and Management (PTPDM) Policy objective of making continuous PD mandatory.

Recommendation

GES should institute a rank and salary scale if not for the PhD but Masters' degree as a way of incentivising teachers to pursue formal PD above First degree.

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Social Vulnerability to Floods in Intermediary Cities in Africa: Evidence from the Wa Municipality, Ghana

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Introduction

The growing incidence of floods and their devastating impacts across the globe and all sectors, is widely acknowledged. The dominant explanation for this trend is climate change and rapid urbanisation (Vazhuthi & Kumar, 2020). Whilst scholars are explicit about the causes and devastating effects of floods within the urban landscape (Echendu, 2020), suboptimal representation is made on social vulnerability to flood (Derbile et al., 2021). Marginalised groups with lower incomes and lower levels of socio-economic security are often vulnerable and more exposed to flood (McLennan, 2021). Drawing on Indicator-Based Flood Vulnerability Analysis (Schanze et al., 2006) and GIS, this study explored how vulnerability to flooding is socially differentiated in the Wa Municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana.

Methodology

Using an exploratory sequential mixed methods approach, the study employed focus group discussions, key informant interviews and survey involving 270 participants to collect data. Thematic, descriptive and buffer zone analyses were used to analyse qualitative, quantitative and geospatial data, respectively.

Findings

The findings show that communities and households along low lands and valleys are socially more vulnerable and susceptible to flooding compared to those located on high lands. Furthermore, the study revealed that vulnerability to flooding varies among social groups with children being the most vulnerable, followed by women, aged, the physically challenged and men in that order.

Conclusion and Implication

The study concludes that vulnerability to floods is socially differentiated in the Wa Municipality. Therefore, the study recommends that adaptation planning to floods through the local government system be prioritised and/or target households settled along flood-prone river banks in the municipality with a special focus on children and women, the aged, the physically challenged and men for achieving inclusivity and sustainability in adaption capacity.

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Prospects of the Youth Employment Agency Job Centre in Ghana: A Case Study of Upper East Region

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Introduction

One of the most pressing issues confronting most countries, especially those in developing regions, is the creation of jobs for young people. There is a rising number of unemployed youth in most countries and this presents a danger to society (Jumpah et al., 2020). The government of Ghana has had many initiatives and dating back to the early years of independence to create job opportunities and growth for the youth to address unemployment problems. The Youth Employment Agency (YEA) is government-sponsored programme that has helped address youth unemployment in Ghana at various stages of the country's growth (Jumpah et al., 2020). Despite some gains from the YEA, the problem of youth unemployment persists, and the increasing number of unemployed young graduates is of particular concern. Some economists and social analysts believe the situation is dangerous for the country and a threat to national security (Gyampo, 2012). The unemployment situation in the country needs a sustainable solution to minimise it. This study seeks to examine prospects of the YEA Job Centre in the Upper East Region of Ghana.

Methodology

The descriptive research design, which includes quantitative approach, was used in the research in addition to the case study. Quantitative data was presented and analysed with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). However, the prospects of the YEA Job Centre were analysed using Kendall Coefficient of Concordance.

Findings

The study revealed a statistically significant ($p < 0.0001$) Kendall's W of 0.042, which signifies that there is very little agreement among job seekers concerning their rating of partnership with stakeholders, effective matching strategies, robust technological systems, reduction in job search cost, reduction in time spent unemployed, strong private sector growth, reduction in job search time and administering of unemployment allowance, as the prospects of the YEA Job Centre.

Conclusion and Implications

The study concludes that the YEA job centre in Ghana has high prospects, including effective matching strategies; partnership with schools, companies, and local actors,

robust technological systems, reduction in time spent unemployed; reduction in job search time, strong private sector growth, and reduction in job search time. Effective liaison with other employment agencies, organisations, and stakeholders is, therefore, key to improving the prospects of the Ghana YEA job centre.

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Exploring the Effects of uncontrolled Spatial Development on the Geographical Landscape, Livelihood Activities, and Adoptive Strategies in the Sagnarigu Municipality

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Introduction

Globally, human settlements continue to take up a significant proportion of urban and peri-urban areas to the detriment of agricultural-based livelihood activities (Silva et al, 2020). Adam (2020) and Suya et al. (2020) stress that inadequate spatial development control and scant management of land use change results in unhealthy competition. For land in peri-urban areas, which affects the landscape, has a significant negative impact on peri-urban land conversions. Despite studies on spatial development controls (Seitebatso, 2015; Bonye et al., 2021) there is a limited scholarly discourse on intersecting how agricultural livelihood activities are affected by uncontrolled spatial development and the adoptive strategies thereof. This study critically explores the effects of uncontrolled spatial development on the geographical landscape, livelihood activities and adoptive strategies in the Sagnarigu Municipality to enable sustainable urban and peri urban ecosystems.

Methodology

Concurrent mixed method research design was used. A sample size of 397 was used out of a total number of 23,447 household's heads with the Cochran sample size determination algorithm domain. Subsequently, with a margin of error of 10% and non-response rate of 10%, a total of 437 households were sampled for the quantitative survey using multi-staged sampling. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 23) and QGIS Desktop 3.18.1 computer software were used to quantitatively analyse the data and illustrate the findings using frequency distribution tables, graphs, and charts. Complementarily, a saturation point was reached for the qualitative in-depth interviews with purposive sampling, a total of eighteen (18) participants were reached. From September 8 through December 17, 2021, data was collected using a questionnaire and an interview guide.

Findings

Systematic analysis of satellite images from the study indicated that whilst vegetative area within the research location significantly declined from 102.7 km² in 2010 to 92.7 km² in 2020, the build-up environment increased from 63.8 km² in 2010 to 97.5 km² in 2020.

Hence, spatial development control practise employed appeared to have no statistically significant effects on efforts to maintain agricultural based livelihood activities ($\rho = 0.010$; $p\text{-value} = 0.834$). The study also established that households that adapted migration as a livelihood strategy had a significantly less positive association with diversification ($\rho = 0.330$; $p\text{-value} = 0.000$).

Conclusions and Implication

The study concludes that there has been a significant decrease in the vegetative cover, a change in the land cover, decrease in arable land with a vast increase in the built-up area where buildings have taken-over farm lands with agricultural livelihood negatively affected. However, households adopted multiple strategies as measures to safeguard their livelihood despite the effect of uncontrolled spatial development. It is recommended that traditional authorities and the planning unit of Sagnarigu Municipal Assembly hold discussions in order to control physical development.

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E-Government ICT Infrastructure Investments in Ghana: An Overview

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Introduction

Today, electronic government (E-government) information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure development and policy implementation is seen as one of the major mechanisms towards the attainment of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals and the realisation of the benefits of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. In Ghana, digitisation is very high on the national development agenda and, sometimes, generates heated political and economic debates. This paper deals with the trend analysis of e-government ICT infrastructure investments toward enhancing public service delivery in Ghana.

Methodology

The paper is a qualitative study based on desk review with integration and analysis of secondary data. It is guided by the five-stage UN Model of E-Government development.

Findings

The *Ghana ICT for Accelerated Development (ICT4AD) Policy* 2003 envisioned development and implementation of a comprehensive e-Government strategy. Consequently, the *Ghana E-Government Implementation Strategy* was developed in May 2005 for execution over a 15-year period in five phases (GoG, 2005). The major investment programmes include: firstly, the eGhana Project valued at US\$116.84 million secured from the World Bank Group, the European Union and Bilateral Partners (Independent Evaluation Group, 2016). The second is China Export and Import (EXIM) Bank grant of US\$30 million for the first phase and a loan facility of US\$127.5 million for phase two of the eGhana national fibre optic infrastructure. *The third project is the Eastern Corridor National Fibre Optic infrastructure project and its extension from Ho to Accra funded by the Danish Government at estimated cost of US\$42.1 million. The e-Transform Project for Ghana financed by the World Bank to improve the efficiency and coverage of government service delivery using ICTs at US\$97.0 million with IDA additional financing of US\$115.00 million for the continuous scale-up of the digitalisation drive is the fourth. Finally is the GOG funding of the Western Corridor fibre Optic project at the cost of US\$42 million and the Ghana Card Project with an initial joint investment of US\$293 million but projected to reach US\$1.2 billion in 15 years. Analyses show trends in continuity of ICT infrastructure investment outlays to enhance service

delivery in resource mobilisation across the various government regimes, showing political leadership.

Conclusions and Implication

The key investment projects that are driving the e-government ICT infrastructure expansion include the eGhana, eTransform, the Eastern Corridor Fibre Optic, Western Corridor Fibre Optic, projects as well as Ghana Card project with connections to the undersea fibre optic cable networks. The World Bank, IDA, Chinese EXIM Bank and DANIDA are major funders of e-government infrastructure in Ghana. A perusal of the e-government ICT infrastructure investments and development evidence establishes that there is always a concerted effort within change and continuity under different administrative regimes showing commitment of political leadership.

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Availability of Community Health Planning and Services (CHPS) compounds to Users in East Mamprusi Municipality, North East Region, Ghana

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Introduction


The Community-Based Health Planning and Services (CHPS) initiative is a national programme for reorienting and relocating primary healthcare from sub-district health centres to convenient community locations. The CHPS organisational change process relies upon community resources for construction labour, service delivery, and programme oversight. As such, it is a national mobilisation of grassroots action and leadership in health and family planning. The CHPS initiative enables the Ghana Health Service (GHS) to reduce health inequalities and promote equity of health outcomes by removing geographical barriers to healthcare. Despite improvement in investment in the infrastructure in scaling up CHPS in healthcare services to come closer to many communities and households, there is no improvement when it comes to access to the CHPS facilities. The provision of quality healthcare remains the goal of the municipality, hence significant progress has been made over the years, though much still has to be done to improve access to quality healthcare delivery. This study sought to examine the availability of CHPS compounds to selected residents of the East Mamprusi Municipality.

Methodology

An explanatory mixed method design and a cross-sectional sample of 376 respondents from five selected communities in the East Mamprusi Municipality were considered for this study. Quantitative data were descriptively analysed, while qualitative data were processed to identify narrations to support the quantitative findings.

Findings

All the CHPS compounds have health personnel actively working in all five communities and Nagboo had the highest number (133) of personnel. However, Namangu, Tuuni, and Wundwa reported inadequate health personnel. A large number of respondents (104) in Nagboo preferred services provided at the CHPS compounds compared to traditional or herbal health services. Averagely, all the communities have one hour of travel time or eight kilometers to the nearest CHPS facility in the selected communities. Community members largely prefer to walk to the various health facilities with a few using motorcycles. Commonly, shortages of medicines and some basic equipment were



reported in all the CHPS of the study communities. Also, malaria and fever were the most frequently reported illnesses in the CHPS compounds.

Conclusion and Implication

CHPS compounds are understaffed in the municipality. Notwithstanding, respondents across the communities preferred services provided at the CHPS compounds as they are relatively close to residents in the municipality. Residents usually present themselves with malaria at the CHPS compounds. These facilities are the main primary healthcare facilities in rural communities that provide individuals and families with basic needed health services. One key resource to effectively operate these facilities is provision of required basic medicines, equipment, and the appropriate health personnel. These resources were identified as insufficient in the selected communities in the East Mamprusi Municipality. It would be worthwhile for Ghana Health Service and the East Mamprusi Health Directorate to train and equitably deploy community health nurses with a regular supply of medicines and equipment to these communities.

Indigenising a Developing Country's Digitisation Agenda – Reflections on the Efforts of the Ghanaian Government

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Introduction

Undoubtedly, stronger societies are made possible when all citizens are accounted for and empowered to participate fully in the world economy. Technology is vital in this venture. It is against this backdrop that digitisation has gained traction in recent times. While digital technologies continue to transform people's well-being, serious gaps and questions remain in the areas of indigenous innovation and ownership. This paper critically assesses the Ghanaian government's digitisation efforts against global digital inclusion best practices. It addresses specific questions: What strategies have the government adopted to ensure digitisation and digital inclusion? To what extent do digitisation strategies reflect digital inclusion best practices?

Methodology


The paper adopts a desk research methodology. It used both theoretical and empirical literature drawn from journal articles and books relevant to the subject matter of the study. The process commenced with framing crucial search phrases to help identify relevant literature for review. Specific examples of key phrases that were used included 'digital inclusion', 'digital exclusion', 'digitisation in Ghana', and digitisation in developing countries. A search process pooled out close to 105 peer-reviewed articles. After sorting out, abstracts were independently reviewed by all the authors. The study finally relied on some 65 relevant literature materials, which formed part of the process of the write-up and analysis. The evidence that emerged from the content analysis technique of the accessible literature greatly informed the thematic arrangements of the study

Findings

Digital inclusion initiatives influence how we live and work in the digital society, which has implications for the everyday life of citizens. Introduction of the Ghana National ID (GNI) brings the citizenry into a new dimension of digital life; unpacking its intended uses and application to life gives us a glimpse beyond its embedded security and digital address features. Today the GNI not only serves as a default ID of choice, but a digital document that seeks to bring together national ID datasets of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT), and the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) ID cards.

Conclusion and Implication

The Ghana government has initiated several digitisation strategies to encourage digital



inclusion. The aim of digital inclusion is to create an informed society by including the digitally excluded. Although incremental progress is being made as far as the first three levels are concerned, much more effort and political will are needed. This is because, in a digitally inclusive society, where most people are informed and skilled to participate in all facets of a technology-driven society, meaningful progress is expected to be realised, particularly in the area of political governance.

Urban Planning Challenges in a ‘Chiefly’ City from a Collaborative Planning Lens

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Introduction

Collaborative and communicative planning has gained prominence in planning discourse mainly due to the multidisciplinary and multifaceted nature of planning (Brisbois & de Loë, 2016; Choi & Robertson, 2019). However, there is limited empirical examination of collaborative planning in a chiefly city context as Tamale. Using principles of collaborative planning, this study analyses and interprets the problems of urban planning in Tamale, Ghana.

Methodology

A case study research design under the qualitative research approach was used as the strategy of inquiry. The target population of the study were divisional chiefs, secretaries of chiefs, physical planning officers and land surveyors. The sample size was made up of 12 key informants consisting of five divisional chiefs, two secretaries of the divisional chiefs, two physical planning officers, one development control officer and two land surveyors. The study used three main data collection methods: in-depth interviews, observation and document analysis. Narrative analysis in which reflections are made on people's experiences, circumstances, situations was used to analyse the data.

Findings

Ineffective communication, authoritative and non-persuasive posture of regulatory authorities, strong inclination to old practice and weak motivation to change, self-interest seeking on part of actors; weak knowledge on collaboration and communicative planning processes, incapacity of the assembly to play its critical role, and limited trust among actors were the source of the challenges of urban planning in the city.

Conclusion and Implication

The study brought to the fore the need to emphasise partnerships and collaboration and adherence to the tenets of collaboration by the relevant stakeholders if the activity of planning were to deliver efficient and effective urban development in Tamale. The study

recommends the establishment of town and neighbourhood planning committees as part of the structure of physical planning at the local level to oversee physical development in towns/neighborhoods. Orientation and training on the rudiments of collaborative and communicative planning for all actors and stakeholders involved in the process should also be provided by the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC). We recommend further research on inclusive planning approaches to broaden the approaches, tools and processes for enhancing collaborative planning.

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Objective and Subjective Assessment of Climate Change in North-western Ghana: A Comparative Analysis

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Introduction

Climate change is perceived mainly by smallholder farmers in terms of changes in weather elements such as rainfall, temperature, sunshine, and wind (File & Derbile, 2020). These changes are usually observed over a considerable period and within the context of the immediate environment, the extent of the impacts on livelihoods and daily activities of smallholder farmers. It is within this context that smallholder farmers can make meaning and develop response mechanisms over the short- to long-term. Although studies have suggested that smallholder farmers' perceptions of the trends of rainfall and temperature changes somewhat corroborate with scientific (meteorological) data (Elum et al., 2017; Kupika et al., 2019), much has not been done in terms of comparative analysis to appreciate the extent of changes over the years. This study involved conducting a comparative analysis of scientific data and smallholder farmer perceptions of changes in rainfall and temperature in North-western Ghana. It examined the implications for climate-compatible agriculture planning.

Methodology

The study was conducted using mixed methods research approach where quantitative and qualitative methods were employed for data collection and analysis. A household survey was conducted among 305 household heads using a questionnaire. Critical participants were engaged in in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were conducted among selected participants in Lawra and Sissala East Municipalities.

Findings

The results showed observed changes in rainfall and temperature from the perspectives of both smallholder farmers and meteorological data. Total rainfall was observed to have decreased over the years with significant uncertainty and unpredictability about its onset and cessation. Temperatures were also believed to be increasing over the years in intensity and duration. The results further suggested increasing incidents of droughts/dry spells, pests, and disease infestation, and decreasing but severe impacts of floods.

Conclusion and Implication

The study concludes that smallholder farmers' perceptions mostly corroborated with scientific recorded data, which indicated changes in rainfall and temperature. These

changes manifest in extreme events such as floods, droughts, pests and diseases, and extreme heat conditions, which present significant adverse implications for smallholder crop farming and food security in North-Western Ghana. It is suggested that local perceptions and knowledge of climate change be interfaced with scientific data and information to enhance climate-compatible agricultural planning in Ghana.

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Gender Intersectionalities and Climate Change Adaptation Among Smallholder Farmers in the Lawra Municipality, Ghana

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Introduction

It is undoubtedly true that climate change remains one of the world's most pressing issue to address. As global and national leaders continue to reflect on the possibility of addressing the threat of climate change in comprehensive and sustainable ways, gender has emerged as an important discourse. This has become relevant considering that different people within and across contexts are impacted differently by the vagaries of climate crisis (Twyman et al., 2014). Consequently, scholars from the global South have called for deeper reflections on the possibility of harnessing local knowledge as a means to mitigate climate change threat (Ahmed et al., 2016). Despite this, the debate has largely concentrated on climate change adaptation strategies broadly without recourse to understanding how gendered subjectivities triggered by climate change are experienced and negotiated by men and women along the smallholder agricultural value chain. In this paper, we argue that developing a fuller understanding of climate change and the range of gendered adaptation techniques available to smallholder farmers may offer some potential in contributing to social transformation and enhanced livelihoods under climate change.

Methodology

A qualitative research approach with constructive philosophical underpinning was used to collect primary data from smallholder farmers across four communities in the Lawra Municipal. The methods of data collection included in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. An inductive coding technique was used to develop and collate various codes, which were subsequently grouped into themes. A thematic analytical framework was then used to make sense of the findings.

Findings

Our findings indicate that smallholder farmers are aware of climate change threat and explore ways to adapt to the situation. Female smallholder farmers tend to engage in petty trading, harvesting, and processing natural resources, while male farmers are much involved in irrigation and off-season migration. Both male and female farmers also

participate in mixed farming under rain-fed regimes, resort to the use of fertilisers, agro-chemicals, drought-resistant seeds, animal rearing, and raising funds from Village Savings and Loans Associations. Smallholder farmers' adaptation strategies were strongly informed by local gender norms based on masculinity and femininity. With men having the ability to own and control large farm related resources, and making independent decisions as compared to women smallholder farmers' inability to own and control farmlands and other farm-related resources. Participation of both gender in these differentiated activities has helped promote unity, coexistence, and complementarity in climate change adaptation in communities.

Conclusion and Implication

In response to the negative climate change impact of smallholder farmers livelihood, gendered patterns in smallholder agriculture and non-farm livelihood diversification have become imperative for men and women adapting to climate change. It is recommended that Climate Change Adaptation Planning through the local government system should address gender intersectionality for promoting inclusive climate change adaptation, social transformation, and sustainability in rural livelihoods in Ghana.

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Gender Dimensions of Protected Area Conflicts and Peacebuilding Strategies in Northern Ghana

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Introduction

Globally, conflicts are intrinsic to protected areas (PAs) given the multiple actors, varying interests and institutional structures connected with their management. It is argued that participatory approaches to natural resources management, especially when they incorporate the views of women, reduce conflicts, promote equity and build local capacities (Leisher et al., 2016). Despite this, many natural resources conflict management policies and practices worldwide have failed to acknowledge the different preferences and impacts natural resource use and PA conflicts have on rural men and women (James et al., 2021). Focusing on the Mole National Park (MNP) and four communities surrounding the park, this study examined how men and women differently experience and are affected by PA conflicts.

Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative case study approach and drew on Feminist Political Ecology theory to guide the collection and analysis of data. Two focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with men-only and women-only groups in each of the four study communities to elicit participants views on the sources of conflicts between the MNP and communities, avenues for addressing the conflicts and the impact of the conflicts on their socio-economic lives. Interviews were also conducted with key informants including chiefs, ‘Magazias’, park managers and local government officials in the study communities. The data was analysed using a deductive analysis process whereby key themes and questions that guided the FGDs and interviews were used as a priori codes. Content analysis was then used to analyse similar sets of texts as well as compare content across different texts. Quotes from the interviews and focus groups were then used to support the findings

Findings

Men and women in the study communities experienced PA conflicts in a similar manner through the loss of farmlands, restricted access to the PA resources, and raiding of locals’ farms by wildlife from the park. Although the impact of these conflicts on men was mainly economic, for women, it was economic, psychological and socio-cultural. Social norms that alienated women from accessing land and making decisions relating to natural resources played a key role in exacerbating the impact of PA conflicts on women. While conflict management strategies employed by the MNP such as the Community Resource Management Area initiatives provided economic incentives mainly to women, other

strategies such as the use of the Police and armed patrol teams only further antagonised men against the MNP.

Conclusions and Implications

Social norms played a key role in exacerbating the impact of PA conflicts on women. Therefore, continuous dialogue and advocacy targeted at traditional authorities is necessary to help change social norms that are detrimental to women. Conflict management strategies should focus on addressing livelihood challenges brought about by PA conflicts, rather than employing deterrent strategies, which often resulted in resentment and led to the escalation of the conflicts.

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Exploring the Implications of Urban Land Use Change on Food Security in Nkoranza Municipality, Bono-East Region

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Introduction

The impact of agriculture on global economic development is undisputed; nevertheless, the effects are geographically varied. Notably, rapid rate of loss of arable lands in the global South, which is attributable to the exceptional levels of uncontrolled urbanisation and urban growth, burdens food security in the region (Abass, Adanu, & Agyemang, 2018). Since Ghana became more urban than rural in 2010, critical discourses on how to ensure sustainable food security have been in the limelight (Antwi-Afari et al., 2021), but limited focus on the implications evolving from the urban land use change. This study critically examines the dynamics of land use change on food security in the Nkoranza Municipality to twinkle influence in policy outcomes, practice and future evidence-based research.

This is a descriptive cross-sectional survey within the domain of concurrent mixed methods design. Primary data were collected from a systematic sample of 270 registered farmers; ten key informants (community/religious/opinion leaders); three focus group discussions and purposive synthesis of satellite images. The quantitative method was useful in collecting data on land use change using satellite images for 2000, 2010 and 2021. Qualitative data from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were useful in seeking comprehensive understanding of the fundamental reasons for the change in land use forms and the food security situation in Nkoranza, hence a systematic comparative analysis of satellite images for 2000, 2010 and 2021, in addition to descriptive statistics and thematic analysis grounded the data analytic strategies.

Findings

The study revealed a continues decline in arable land, but a rise in bare land and settlement areas from 2000 to 2021, which appears to contribute to daunting realities of food security situation in the Nkoranza Municipality. The results suggested no statistically significant difference of association among farmers in the study localities regarding the amount of arable land used for food production decreasing due to change in land use ($X^2= 8.095$, $p\text{-value} > 0.05$), food only being sufficient in the rainy season ($X^2=1.120$, $p\text{-value} > 0.05$).

Conclusion and Implication

Extensive growth of residential, commercial and infrastructural facilities is fast rolling over food crops cultivation zones in the municipality, and food was only more readily available throughout the study communities during the rainy season as opposed to all other times. The use of enhanced knowledge, skills and appropriate technology will instructively stimulate and sustain food security in the Nkoranza Municipality.

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Citizens' Participation in Local Governance in Ghana: A Myth or Reality?

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Introduction

Local governance, which seeks to involve citizens in the governance and development planning process has been operating in Ghana since the 1980s. The adoption of this approach was in response to demands of the changing global administrative, socio-economic, political, administrative, and financial matters to meet the development needs of citizens (Arkorful et al., 2021). The system was designed to accommodate different levels of governance. responsibilities, resources, accountability, and rules transferred from Central Government (Rosilawati et al., 2018). Although a plethora of studies exist on the local governance system in Ghana, issues relating to locals' awareness of where and how to participate in local governance processes and consequent effects on inclusive governance, community initiatives, accountability, and the ability of local authorities to solve problems have escaped scholarly research. To address these knowledge gaps, we draw evidence from the Wa West District, the poorest in Ghana, to explore the nuances of these issues using the qualitative research approach.

Methodology

The study employed a maximum variation purposive sampling technique to select chiefs, assembly persons, officials from the district assembly, residents, and civil society groups to elicit the data. The data were collected through interviews with the aid of an interview guide. Responses obtained from the interviews were analysed using a six-phase thematic analysis approach.

Findings

The findings indicated that citizens know little about the specific areas of participation in Ghana's local governance structure except for the election of assembly representatives. This was compounded by the non-existence of deliberate structures at the Assembly to involve the people in the process. Time and financial constraints limited the ability of the Assembly to provide the required structures to support local participation in the local governance processes. However, a community-based civil society organisation in one of the area councils is championing initiatives to improve the living conditions of the people through lobbying for projects and undertaking development initiatives.

Conclusion and Implication

We conclude that citizens' participation in local governance processes at the district level is a myth as most of the activities were carried out without their adequate involvement. It is recommended that NGOs working in advocacy to support the setting up of community-based organisations at the various area councils to mobilise the people for development. Further, the District Assembly should create support structures to promote involvement of the people in the local governance process. In doing so, the development needs of the people would be adequately captured in development plans.

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Can Water Kill? Micro Bacteriological Analysis of Stored Drinking Water among Households in North-Western Ghana

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Introduction


Microbiological contamination of water at the point of consumption is a hotly disputed issue (Adelodun et al., 2021). Drinking water should, in theory, be free of germs that cause illness. The most prevalent and pervasive health concerns connected with drinking water are infections caused by bacteria, viruses, and parasites. This paper analysed water samples from rural drinking water sources (hand-pumped boreholes, mechanised boreholes, piped water systems, hand-dug wells and reservoirs/dams) and storage water facilities (clay pots, plastic containers, metal barrels and poly tanks) among rural households in four districts in north-western Ghana. The aim was to determine the levels of microbacterial contaminants and their impacts on faeco-oral diseases outbreaks.

Methodology

The convergent mixed method research design was used for data acquisition and analysis. Quantitative data collection method included collecting drinking water samples from respondents' water sources and storage water facilities for microbiological analysis using 500ml plastic bottles. During the same time period, qualitative data was obtained by conducting 13 in-depth key informant interviews with the help of interview guides to elicit information from key informants such as staff of the Environmental Health Unit within four sampled districts in the Upper West Region (Jirapa, Wa West, Wa East and Daffiama/Issa/Bussie). Water samples were analysed using the membrane filtration technique. Pearson correlation analysis was performed to determine the relationship between the level of bacterial contaminants in water sources and storage facilities. The qualitative analysis in this study took a narrative form.

Findings

The findings showed that only two hand-pumped boreholes recorded total coliform values of 40.0cfu/100mL and 2.0 cfu/100mL, which does not conform to the World Health Organisation water quality standard of 0.0cfu/100mL. However, water in storage facilities were contaminated with varied levels of faecal coliform, total coliform, E. coli, salmonella and shigella. This was attributed to poor household water handling practices



such as dipping of unclean hands in storage water facilities as well as the use of large-mouthed containers for water storage.

Conclusion and Implication

From the study, water can only kill when it is contaminated with bacteria. It is obvious that Sustainable Development Goal 3, which seeks to achieve good health and well-being by 2030, will be an illusion if immediate steps are not taken. Consequently, the study recommends periodic testing of household drinking water samples, intensive and quality public education on household water handling practices by relevant government agencies as well as the use of small-mouthed water storage containers.

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Role of Climate Services in Climate Change Adaptation Among Smallholder Farmers: A Case of Agricultural Extension Service Delivery in Sawla/Tuna/Kalba District, Ghana

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Introduction


The agricultural sector of Ghana predominantly consists of smallholder farmers, most of whom are peasant farmers. Estimates from Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA, 2011) show that they constitute over 90% of agricultural land holdings in Ghana and provide close to 80% of the country's food needs. However, climate change in recent years continues to threaten production in the agricultural sector since the agricultural sector of Ghana is primarily rain-fed, with smallholder farmers' livelihoods strongly reliant on the weather conditions. The overarching aim of this research was to determine the roles of agricultural extension services in facilitating climate change adaptation among smallholder farmers using Sawla/Tuna/Kalba District as a case study.

Methodology

The study employed the concurrent triangulation mixed methods design, which allowed for separate but concurrent collection of qualitative and quantitative data using questionnaires and interview guides. The study recruited a total of 150 smallholder farmers and 12 extension agents. The data were largely collected from the respondents using structured questionnaires, unstructured interview guides, and field observation. The study relied on the diffusion of innovation theory.

Findings

The analysis of the study showed that both extension providers and farmers in the district possessed some good perceptions and appreciable levels of awareness regarding issues of climate change, particularly its causes, effects, and available adaptation strategies. The smallholder farmers were found to be responding to climate change and variability using a variety of self-initiated and externally supported adaptation measures. The most common strategies the smallholder farmers used to adapt to the threats of climate change included the use of improved crop varieties, crop diversification practices, shifting planting dates/calendars and use of chemical fertilisers. The study also found that despite the numerous challenges bedeviling agricultural extension organisations, they still played crucial roles in supporting smallholder farmers in dealing with climate change. Some



important roles included transfer of appropriate agricultural technologies and innovations, supply of farming inputs and promotion of improved farming practices.

Conclusion and implication

Smallholder farmers are some of the most vulnerable groups to climate change and its impacts. This category of farmers usually have limited adaptive capacity, hence the need to ensure they have access to agricultural extension services. Based on the findings, it is recommended that extension providers, especially MoFA, strengthen their extension agencies by recruiting more extension agents to reduce the farmer-to-extension agent ratio and ensure quality extension service delivery in the district. Extension organisations should also collaborate with the Ghana Meteorological Agency to make available yearly climate and weather forecasts to farmers to help them in making their planting decisions.

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A Review of Government Policies on Entrepreneurship Emergence and Development: The Case of China

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Introduction

Policies are crucial in directing the path of development. A country's entrepreneurial policies are fundamental in spearheading its entrepreneurial success story. The recent Covid-19 pandemic made it even more important for governments to formulate policies that will create an environment that drives entrepreneurial activities. For governments to effectively promote entrepreneurship, there is the need to build strong institutions through policies that support entrepreneurship development. Although it is obvious that government policies are crucial to the emergence and development of entrepreneurship in nations, not much research activities have been conducted in this field (Dosi, Roventini & Russo, 2021). This study, through a review, sought to uncover key contributions of public policies to the emergence and development of entrepreneurship in China, beginning from the opening up policy.

Methodology

The study depended on exploratory research in the collection and analysis of data and, therefore, relied on retrieval of recent articles mainly from Web of Science, Google Scholar, Researchgate, Academia, Springer, Taylor and Francis and Science Direct, which focus on entrepreneurship, small businesses and innovation in China from the period covering 2011 to 2021. Twenty-eight articles were retrieved for the study. Search words and phrases used were “government policies” AND “China” AND “entrepreneurship emergence” AND “evolution” AND “development”. Application of the snowball approach was employed to discover relevant hidden publications/articles important to the study.

Findings

The study found that educational policies influenced the level of firm emergence and growth in China where “siyingqiye” firms are relatively more often present in regions with economic antecedents conducive to knowledge production and knowledge spillovers whereby the prevalence of college graduates in a region is positively associated with the rate of “siyingqiye”. Again, the study showed that policies influenced women willingness to become entrepreneurs targeted at promoting women entrepreneurship. The study

further highlighted that improvement in legal property rights contributed to the success of entrepreneurship in China.

Conclusions and Implication

Findings of the study could assist the Chinese Government to focus on implementing policies that will enhance provision of an enabling environment necessary for knowledge production. The findings might also allow policy makers to focus on designing and implementing policies with specific interest in empowering women.

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Access to Healthcare Under National Health Insurance in the Wa Municipality: Implications for Universal Health Coverage in Ghana

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Introduction

Although researchers have been interested in exploring how individuals access primary health care (PHC) services through the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) (e.g., Aduo-Adjei & Owusu, 2015; Seidu et al., 2020; Anaba et al., 2022), little attention has been given to how the location of healthcare facilities affects the cost of accessing them on-site. Accordingly, this study examines the geographical distribution of health facilities and their proximity to residents of Wa Municipality, the distance health seekers cover, and the cost of travelling from home to health facilities to access PHC services. The study is important and opportune because the original aim of introducing the concept of Community-Based Health Planning and Services (CHPS) in the country was to reduce travel distance and costs to access health care facilities in rural communities. However, since establishment of CHPS, a thorough search of the extant literature suggests there is no known study that has purposefully validated the geographical distribution of health facilities and the health system's structural deficiencies in achieving universal health coverage (UHC). The purpose of this research is to establish whether the establishment of CHPS is indeed achieving its intended purpose of improving access to PHC services.

Methodology

Four hundred and thirteen (413) insured residents of Wa Municipality were interviewed using a cross-sectional survey design. The Global Positioning System (GPS) was used to determine the coordinates of 47 healthcare facilities and residents' location. Euclidean distance and mean cost analysis (MCA) were used to determine the impact of residents' access to PHC services in the municipality. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20 was used to carry out the analysis.

Findings

The results showed that proximity of accessible health services to residents' homes was moderate on the CHPS site, but far from hospitals, medical diagnostic centres, and health centres. While health clinics and health centres were rated slightly less distant, CHPS connections were rated very close to homes on average (11.20 minutes < WHO 15 minutes). As a result, the study established a statistically significant ($\rho = 0.026$; p-value

= 0.001) association between proximity to healthcare facilities and where people live. Compared to other healthcare facilities, travel costs to the CHPS compounds were lower (mean cost = Gh¢ 2.56, standard deviation = Gh¢ 4.09) for residents to access PHC services. However, when the patients arrived at the site, CHPS facilities lacked basic human resources such as midwives and nurses to deliver the PHC. Also, CHPS did not have adequate basic equipment like thermometer, scales, cords, beds, blood pressure monitors and medication such as paracetamol, antacid and diclofenac to treat patients. These highlighted the inherent flaw of the entire CHPS model in providing PHC services in Ghana.

Conclusion and Implications

According to the study results, differences in healthcare supplies at various health care levels is a key factor affecting access to healthcare and utilisation of PHC services. It is proposed the whole concept of CHPS in PHC service delivery be revisited to remove inherent barriers to achieving UHC.

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Perception of Climate Change and the Adaptation Strategies of Rural Smallholder Women in the Nadowli-Kaleo District of Ghana

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Introduction

One of the most daunting problems confronting the world is climate change. It affects all sectors including agriculture, which is one of the most exposed. Women in Africa are among the first to notice how climate change affects the farming cycle, human and livestock, food supply, and security (Steady, 2014). Studies in Africa and semi-arid Ghana have shown that climate change effects are gendered, with women being the disadvantaged group due to their structural position in the society (Lawson et al., 2019). The conundrum of smallholder women and climate change in the Nadowli/Kaleo District (NKD) and their adaptation strategies have not yet been fully understood (Rademacher-Schulz & Mahama, 2012). Thus, it is imperative to fill knowledge gaps by investigating and learning from local climate change understandings of smallholder women to improve food security and lessen gender inequality. This study focused on smallholder women and their perceptions on the changing climate, adaptation strategies they resort to and factors driving these adaptations.

Methodology

The study used a variety of strategies in collecting and analysing data. A total of 415 smallholder women from sampled communities in the NKD were selected using both qualitative and quantitative selection procedures. First, twenty communities in the District were purposefully selected and three communities randomly selected. Finally, 415 smallholder women were conveniently contacted and surveyed using a semi-structured questionnaire. Furthermore, three (3) focus group discussion sessions were held in each community with smallholder women.

Findings

The findings showed that women were aware of climate change and variability and, consequently, connected them to variations in rainfall patterns and temperature increases. Smallholder women admitted to petty trading, agro-processing, and livestock rearing as examples of off-farm activities. Non-farm adaptations included relying on money sent from friends and family, eating less and changing what they ate, and relying on government programmes like the LEAP Programme and temporary migration. On-farm adaptive measures adopted by respondents included soil management techniques, changes in planting time, use of improved seeds, and crop diversification. However,

climate change awareness highly motivates such adaptive measures using indigenous knowledge, financial capabilities, Village Savings and Loans Association/Farmer-Based Organisation membership, and labour support from spouses or households. Interestingly, there were differences in the climate change adaptation of smallholder women, and these differences were influenced by age, education, and marital status. The study found that widowed smallholder women were perceived to be more vulnerable than married smallholder women because widows, unlike married smallholder women, were constrained in employing adaptation strategies that required financial resources and labour.

Conclusions and Implication

The study recommends transformative gender-mainstreaming of climate change policies and interventions, such as the PFJ and GASIP project, which should not only focus on closing the inequality gap between men and women, but also among women. Prioritisation of smallholder women or have smallholder women-specific interventions is essential, rather than one-size-fits-all interventions for all smallholder farmers.

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Building Synergies between the Traditional and Western Political Adjudicatory Institutions in Conflict Resolution in North-Western Ghana

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Introduction

The global spread of conflict is unimaginable and the international spotlight on Africa has helped to portray and define Africa as the sick continent of the world (Oquaye 1994, p. 1) due to the preponderance of conflicts. In the West African sub-region, traditional and western adjudicatory institutions operate independently of each other in the same environment irrespective of the fact that both institutions function to create an ordered society for the same group of persons. Evidence shows that efforts made over the years to integrate the operations of the two institutions in the context of conflict resolution in North-Western Ghana have proven unsuccessful. In this light, the purpose of this paper is to proffer an appropriate framework that could enable traditional and western adjudicatory institutions build synergies to resolve conflicts. The paper applies the theory of Legal Pluralism in justifying the existence of normative legal system and the need to harness the relative strength of both institutions to resolve conflicts.

Methodology

A qualitative case study research approach was used to collect data from eight communities selected across the four zones in Nandom. Purposive sampling techniques was adopted to select communities and key informants. A structured interview guide was also used to elicit information from 28 respondents that included lawyers, court administrators, personnel of the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and the Municipal Coordinator (MCD). In-depth interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with chiefs, *tengandem* (earth priest), the youth and women leaders. Interview guides developed were grounded on the Theory of Legal Pluralism relative to the normative views on western and traditional *Dagara* adjudicatory processes. Data from interviews were cross-checked to ensure their accuracy and reliability. Data collected during group discussions with local “experts” were transcribed and thematically analysed. Clustering of themes were used in writing the narrative account.

Findings

The research results indicated that traditional adjudicatory institutions dispensed justice through mechanisms such as swearing to the gods, ritualistic role of the earthpriests, inter-

clan play, ash throwing, inter-clan marriages, women's role through ululation, va-kor, norokpukpub ("mouth washing") and role of elders. Western institutions relied on the police, the Municipal Security Committee and particularly the magistrate court. It was also found that the binary adjudicatory institutions have not been able to build synergies to resolve conflicts due to mistrust, lack of recognition, power play, misconceptions and lack of familiarity with each other's operational domain.

Conclusion and Implication

The separate existence of legal pluralistic institutions in the context of traditional and modern conflict adjudicatory processes does little to resolve conflicts irrespective of their relative strengths. It is recommended that Parliament enact legislative instruments to support the coming together of the binary institutions to adjudicate on communal disputes. Further, all law schools and faculties should introduce legal anthropology in their curricular for students to learn customary and traditional laws.

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Contestations Over Neo-Customary Land in Ghana: Seeing Events in Peri-urban Kumasi Through the Lens of Paulo Freire

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Introduction

Humanisation is, or is perceived as, a state of being fully human mostly through enjoyment of human rights, including the right to property. In the customary land tenure system in centralised areas of Ghana, indigenes are entitled to usufruct (land use) rights as the main source of their livelihoods. In any way that their access to these rights is constrained, dehumanisation, a distortion of being fully human, occurs. According to Freire (2000), this causes the oppressed to struggle against the oppressors. In the context of changes in customary land tenure in sub-Saharan Africa, the emergence of exclusionary tendencies in neo-customary land tenure is an active discourse in the literature. A prevailing consequence of this exclusion is emerging contestations by indigenes of mostly centralised communities in Ghana (Ubink & Amanor, 2008). Using the ‘oppressor-oppressed’ framework of Paulo Freire’s ‘pedagogy of the oppressed’ underpinned by critical theory, this paper analyses these contestations in peri-urban Kumasi.

Methodology

The study used a qualitative research approach with Pramso in Greater Kumasi peri-urban area as a case study. Pramso represents centralised customary tenure system in which these exclusionary tendencies and resultant indigenes’ contestations have been reported. Existing literature on the contestations were reviewed to compliment in-depth interviews with traditional authorities, representatives of state institutions involved in land management in Ghana, indigenes and stranger-settlers in Pramso. The data were manually processed using colour coding and thematic analysis.

Findings

A low level of engagement was found between traditional authorities and indigenes before and during the conversion on customary land to neo-customary land in Pramso.

Indigenes perceived that decisions and actions on the part of traditional authorities were unidirectional and that traditional authorities abused their power. This triggered indigenes to agitate against authorities' actions and for inclusion, indicative of Paulo Freire's antidialogics. To offset indigenes' activity, traditional authorities in Pramso and in the literature parted with certain benefits to indigenes, thus representing false generosity. The paper contends that further contestations by indigenes in neo-customary land tenure in centralised areas should be anticipated based on indigenes' perceived oppression by traditional authorities and exclusion from perceived jointly-owned customary land.

Conclusions and Implication

The Freirean framework helped to draw important lessons: (1) there is inherent oppression in neo-customary regime; (2) lack of successful dialogue in the conversion of land makes indigenes' agitations inevitable; and (3) indigenes, in their quest for liberation, must not become oppressors. Therefore, the hope of addressing inequities and avoidance of possible full-blown conflicts in neo-customary land could be achieved when both indigenes and traditional authorities recognise that the concrete situation which begets exclusion must be transformed and, thus, cooperate to safeguard their respective livelihoods.

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Financial Sustainability of Social Protection Programmes in Ghana: A Trend Analysis of Financial Resources Allocations to LEAP for the period 2009 to Date

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Introduction

Social protection initiatives (SPIs) contribute to critical life outcomes, including health, employment, and education, among others. They play an essential role in ending poverty, achieving healthy lives and well-being, gender equality, decent work and economic growth, and reducing inequality as envisaged in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Sabharwal et al., 2014; United Nations 2019). Sustainable funding of social protection is a centrepiece for planning and designing strategies for the implementation of universal social protection systems. Without adequate, reliable and sustainable funds and financing arrangements, government interventions in social protection initiatives will face dreadful difficulties in achieving their ultimate goals (ILO, 2014).

Methodology

Anchoring on the pragmatic paradigm with a mixed method design, the study analyses financial resources allocation to the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty Programme from 2009 to date (2022) and the implication the sustainability of the initiative. In particular, the study examines government and donor funding arrangements for this laudable initiative in Ghana towards achieving the SDG1.3. Budget Statements from the Ministry of Finance and Parliamentary Select Committee Reports on Budget Allocations of the Ministry of Gender and Social Protection for the period under consideration were analysed. An interaction with staff of the Social Welfare Department was also done to solicit their views on financial sustainability of the programme. Views from the focus group discussions were synthesised with quantitative data from the budgets and reports for analysis. A pedagogical sketch of funding arrangements of similar interventions in South Africa and Brazil is presented for comparison and analysis.

Findings

The impact of funds towards the sustainability of the LEAP initiative in an increasing demand of other sectors of the economy cannot be underestimated. The study also suggested that withdrawal of donor funding for the LEAP intervention could affect its sustainability. In addition, sustainability of the LEAP intervention could be threatened by inadequate budget allocations by government. The study indicated that governments'

budget allocations to the intervention are high in election years and during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Conclusions and Implication

The results of this study are intended to contribute to the knowledge base of funding social protection programmes in Ghana and the world at large and to influence the financial sustainability of the LEAP intervention. The study envisages that funding is key to the sustainability of social protection initiatives in Ghana. It is, therefore, expected that pathways towards attaining the SDG1.3 could incorporate funding arrangements into existing social protection frameworks and strategies.

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Do customers/Clients Really Benefit from E-procurement Implementation?

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Introduction

Customers or clients (public institutions) ought to be the main beneficiaries of procurement. The Internet has altered the way businesses are conducted in the world. They maintain that it has multiplied market shares, widened the customer network, and also decreased the cost of its subscribers. Furthermore, the existence of the Internet has improved information and communication technology; it has made a relevant impact on the speed and efficiency of the procurement process. In the view of Lewis-faupel, Neggers, Olken, and Pande, (2016), electronic procurement ensures the transfer of electronic data to assist operations and planned procurement. Evidences from previous studies suggest that the adoption of e-procurement does benefit suppliers and their customers globally. As such, this study seeks to ascertain whether clients/customers really benefit from e-procurement implementation in public institutions in Ghana.

Methodology

This paper adopted a combined quantitative and qualitative design to unravel whether clients or customers benefit from e-procurement adoption in public institutions. A case study was used in this instance because it provides researchers with sufficient understanding of the situation or entity under study. A purposive sampling technique was used because of the specialised nature of the study. A questionnaire was used for the quantitative study and an interview guide for the qualitative study. Overall, the sample size was 62 respondents (42 respondents for quantitative study and 20 participants for qualitative study). The sample size for the quantitative study was determined by a thumb rule, which states that for a population of less than (1000) people, a sample ratio should be 30% ($SR = n/N$). Based on this, with a target population of 140, the sample size was 42. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) v20 was used to analyse the quantitative data. Participants for the qualitative component of the study were conveniently sampled. We analysed the qualitative data through the three stages of data condensation. Field data obtained that had linkages with relevant literature were used to enhance the analysis.

Findings

The study found that technology-related factor enables e-procurement system adoption through data quality and data harmonisation to enhance customer satisfaction. The study revealed that organisational-related factors do enable e-procurement adoption through improved procurement lead time, reduce prices and administrative costs, which benefits clients or customers. The study also found that environmental-related factors enable e-procurement adoption through reduced human involvement and increase public confidence.

Conclusion and Implication

The study, thus, established and concludes that e-procurement adoption enhances customer/client satisfaction through technology, organisation and environmental factors. It proposes the government of Ghana endeavour to provide the needed infrastructure in these public institutions for the implementation of electronic procurement and that Parliament should provide a legal framework to back electronic procurement activities in Ghana.

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Heutagogy as an Alternative in Higher Education: Conceptions of Lecturers and Students.

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Introduction

The needs of today's higher education have changed and higher education need one-way communication from teacher to student; rather, the student learning to appreciate the new role of the teacher as a facilitator with a responsibility towards creation of knowledge. Considering current trends in education, pedagogical and even andragogical educational, methods are no longer sufficient in preparing students for work, which requires a more self-directed and self-determined approach (Patel & Khanushiya, 2018). Students are now lifelong learners, learning their profession throughout life in chunks as and when they need it (Blaschke & Hase, 2015). In order for our students to construct knowledge and also become capable of lifelong learning, they need to be taught in a way that makes them agents of their own learning (self-determined). A heutagogy learning environment can provide for the development of students' competencies as well as their capacity to learn, but the question is: do Lecturers and Students have the conception and ready to embrace heutagogy as a teaching and learning approach in the classroom?

Methodology

The study adopted the concurrent triangulation design under the mixed method approach to elicit and analyse the data. Census technique was used to select 513 Students and 30 Lecturers of the School of Education and Lifelong Learning. A four-point Likert scale questionnaire with both closed- and open-ended questions were developed to examine the conceptions of Lecturers and Students towards embracing heutagogy in teaching and learning experience. Quantitative data were analysed in percentages, mean and standard deviation, whereas qualitative data were read through, coded, categorised into themes, and presented using narrations and quotations.

Findings

Lecturers and Students both showed positive response that students should be more active and self-determined in teaching and learning experiences. Lecturers also showed a negative response that Lecturers should be more active and directing the teaching and learning experience. However, students also showed positive response that Lecturers should be more active and directing the teaching and learning experience.

Conclusion and Implication

Lecturers and Students expressed willingness to embrace a self-directed and self-determined approach, which the learner reflects on what is learnt, how it is learnt and where Lecturers teach the learners how to teach themselves.

However, it was also observed that students had doublethink about who determines and directs their learning. The doublethink and inadequacy of students' preparedness requires a shift in students' attitude about the development of student autonomy skills to meet the challenges of the 21st century knowledge economy.

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Implementation of School Observation Programme at University for Development Studies: Perception of Pre-Service Business Studies Teachers

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Introduction

Classroom observation is widely regarded as an effective means of teaching because it enables observers to identify the nature of teacher behaviour such as the way classroom activities are structured and how teachers and students interact (Blackmore, 2005; Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2004). Generally, individuals' perceptions make up their beliefs and influence their attitudes towards any activity. This means students' prejudices around any curriculum activity impacts on how best the activity is approached. Scholars have researched on the benefits and supervisors' perception of school observation. This study set out to assess the pre-service business studies teachers' perception towards the implementation of a school observation programme at University for Development Studies, with specific objectives: getting students to rate the aims of the programme, how beneficial it was to them and challenges encountered in the programme.

Methodology

The convergent mixed methods design was employed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data concurrently and analysed to address the research objectives. The census technique was used to obtain data from 148 respondents, comprising 140 third-year business students and eight (8) business studies lecturers in the Department of Social and Business Education. A questionnaire, students written observation reports, and an interview guide were the instruments used to collect data. Descriptive statistics and thematic analyses were employed to present the results.

Findings

It was found that pre-service business studies teachers understood the aims and objectives of the school observation programme, which was to help them develop favourable attitude towards teaching. Additionally, students slightly gained benefits from school observation in terms of teaching planning, managing classroom environment, teachers' communication with students, and sound pedagogical knowledge. In sum, pre-service business studies teachers expressed a positive perception towards the school observation

programme, but indicated some challenges confronting the programme. These included language barrier, inadequate supervision and mentorship, and non-extension of the programme to cover senior high schools.

Conclusion and Implication

The implication of the findings of this study is that pre-service business studies teachers appear not to have enjoyed the optimal benefits of the school observation programme due to the main challenge of not observing sessions related to their teacher development subject area. Implementers are, therefore, informed to reshape the policy direction of the school observation programme to give coverage to senior high schools, strengthen supervision and mentorship services.

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The Sponge City Model for Urban Redesign: Reflections on the Perennial Flooding in Accra, Ghana

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Accra has been plagued with severe flooding events in recent times. In the last decade or so, hundreds of thousands of people, especially those living in suburbs such as Adabraka, Kwame Nkrumah Circle, Achimota, Teshie, and Kaneshie have been affected by flooding. It has been reported that between 1968 and 2014, over 3.9 million people have been affected and about US\$780,500,000 has been spent in dealing with damage caused by flooding in the city. The sponge city strategy/model was developed and used in China to deal with perennial flooding and has been successful thus far. The main idea is to move away from over-reliance solely on grey infrastructure to a more integrated and robust system of grey-green-blue infrastructure. This paper aims to present highlights on adaptability of the sponge city model/strategy to city planning in Accra as a solution for the perennial flooding, presents some possible challenges, and proffers recommendations.

Methodology

This study relied on secondary data from the Ghana Meteorological Authority, geospatial data from Google Earth coordinates of geographic and anthropogenic features affecting flooding in selected suburbs, and the Delphi approach. It used the climograph to analyse the quantitative climate data for trends in climatic elements over the period under investigation. The Euclidian and network analytical approaches were used to analyse key elements of Accra City within its spatial configuration. Lastly, a thematic content analysis was employed for the qualitative data.

Findings

The traditional causative factors of perennial flooding in Accra include climate change, resulting in increased average annual rainfall figures in recent times. It also includes the low-lying topography of the affected suburbs, the sandy- and clayey-loamy soils with silty alluvial deposits, and the city's semi-circular structure due to the Gulf of Guinea occupancy to the south. However, proximate factors that precipitate flooding in Accra through hazardous to-crisis events in recent times are: high population density due to rapid urban growth; development of informal or unapproved structures, particularly in waterways; poor infrastructure for managing hydrology of the city; improper solid waste, particularly plastic waste management; and overemphasis on gray infrastructure development to the neglect of green and blue infrastructures.

Conclusion and Implication

In proposing the sponge city model/strategy to planning Accra and other emerging cities in Ghana, where perennial flooding has become commonplace, the authors advocate for redesigns, resettlements, demolition and rebuilding drainage infrastructure to accommodate the grey, green and blue infrastructures. Challenges envisaged include huge financial capital requirements, the need for advanced modern technology, land litigations, bribery and corruption, and civil society and human rights activism. The key strength for adopting this model lies in the already existing inter-ministerial approach being adopted by the government to resolve environmental challenges, and the existence of large water bodies. We propose harnessing resources from the National Infrastructure Fund, special levies from companies and businesses, funds from philanthropists, and broad-based policy-

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Religiosity and Climate Change Awareness Creation: A Review

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Introduction

Climate change effects have been felt globally across all sectors, societies and people. It has been identified as the greatest threat to humanity and future generations (Jan et al., 2020). The pangs of this global problem have attracted interventions from many international, national and local bodies to help ease the consequences and adapt to changing terrains. A key element in the fight for a liveable climate is awareness creation (Ekpo & Aiyedun, 2019). However, beyond the global and local efforts to combating climate change through scientific and technological measures, many people across the tiers of society are not awake to this global threat. Given that religion and faith are fundamental to how most human beings and societies understand themselves and their place in the world (Clingerman & O'Brien, 2014), religious leaders' active role in sensitising their followers, is one promising way to get more educated and be alert to climate issues and consequences, particularly the less educated. However, there is little research on religious leaders' communication of climate change effects to their large number of followers.

Methodology

This paper employed a narrative desk review to cascade scholarly works on religion and climate change across journals and publications to examine the synergy that exists between them and pointers that leave space for awareness creation by religious leaders on the effects of climate change. The search was done using the terms 'religion and climate', 'Climate', 'change awareness'. An exclusion criterion was used to select only journal articles; then an abstract assessment was employed to select articles covering environmental attitudes, climate and religion, and climate change awareness creation. The review was then organised into themes for analysis and discussion.

Findings

The paper finds, among other things, that environmental attitudes can be shaped by the views of religious authorities and presents an optimistic view that environmental stewardship could be used to improve concern for climate change among religious believers. Indigenous religions provide a valuable and integrated set of institutions that could potentially facilitate adaptation to climate change. The findings show that people's religious beliefs have great influence on how they treat the environment.

Conclusions and Implication

The findings point to the pertinence of engaging a devoutly religious majority of the global population in awareness creation on the effects climate change towards mitigation and adaptation. Since religious leaders are the gate to this global majority, the paper recommends that religious leaders need to effectively informed and encouraged to actively champion climate change communication to their congregants and followers to increase awareness on the effects of climate change across all tiers of society; especially reaching the less educated.

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Accountable Utilisation of District Funds for Development, Perspectives from Composite Budgeting in the Nanumba South District, Ghana

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Introduction

Accountable and transparent use of district financial resources are key in the practice of composite budgeting by Metropolitan Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in Ghana. The composite budgeting system ensures better coordination, ownership, control, and accountability of the budgeting process at the MMDA level to grant control over their development resource management. In cognisance of the stewardship and managerial role of district management to the financial resources of their operational jurisdictions, there is a need for tracking and reporting on allocation, disbursement and utilisation of financial resources, using tools of auditing, budgeting and accounting to enhance prudent management of available funds with great interest in sound financial reporting and control. From the piloting of the composite budgeting to its post full implementation, studies have been conducted to assess its potential and challenges, implementation, contribution to fiscal autonomy, enhancement of citizen power through representational participation, among others (Katongo, 1993). However, about a decade into full implementation of composite budgeting in the MMDAs, little is known about how accountable districts have been in utilising available funds for development within their jurisdictions.

Methodology

A case study design was used to examine accountable utilisation of district financial resources under the practice of composite budgeting in the Nanumba South District, with the lens of agency and stewardship theories (Eisenhardt, 1989). Data was collected from interviewing 21 key actors in composite budgeting (central administration departments/units, decentralised departments, assembly members and revenue collectors) within the District.

Findings

It was found that allocation of funds under composite budgeting is based on planned activities and that money is not allocated to each department to manage independently;

rather, it is made available as resources for tasks to be accomplished. The results show that the District Management spends strictly according to the approved budget by the General Assembly and ensures all funds released for the execution of activities under the composite budget are well accounted for.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The paper finds that while managerial accountability is common, and effectively upheld across all levels, public/political accountability is weak. In view of this, it recommends strengthening a balance dimension of accountability to encourage constituents' positive response to their tax obligations. Delivering in the interest of constituents forms the basis of the District's mandate. Consequently, a balanced dimension of accountability will help elicit the support of the citizenry in decision making concerning the use of their resources, build a sense of ownership and appreciation and create the desire and willingness among residents to give their due in support for more development in the District.

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Infrastructure Development and its Impact on International Trade: A Sub-Saharan African Perspective

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Introduction

International trade ensures free flow of commodities, services, and developmental factors across boundaries. Trade is extremely important as countries strive for sustainable development and globalisation goals in the modern era. Countries can collaborate and exchange commodities based on their individual requirements and preferences through trade (Bankole et al., 2015b). Studies on infrastructural development and international trade have received numerous attention in recent literature, especially in Africa. However, all these studies failed to investigate the Sub-Saharan African region. This study re-examined the effects of infrastructural development on trade in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Methodology

The study adopted the use of panel data sets covering forty-three (43) Sub-Saharan African countries and data from 1985 to 2020. Additionally, the study proxied International trade with import (IM) and export (EX); Infrastructure development with gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) and Port Development (PD). It controlled for Government Expenditure (Gov Exp), Inflation (Inf), Population (Pop) and Real Gross Domestic Product (RGDP). It is worthy to note that all data were gleaned from World Development Indicators (Davies, Sare & Agoba, 2021).

Findings

The findings indicated that GFCF significantly affects international trade positively. However, the effects of port development on international trade, though highly significant, depends largely on the volume of trade. This positive and significant impact could be because taxes are charged on goods imported, which serves as revenue for goods that will aid in undertaking developmental projects. Infrastructural development plays this essential role by making goods readily available to final consumers in every part of the country through good roads (transportation), which increases the market for imported goods.

Conclusion and Implication

Export increases with port development as infrastructure is crucial to trade. As emerging economies in sub-Saharan Africa with a keen interest in improving trade, countries in sub-Saharan Africa must develop policies that are geared towards the development of infrastructure, which has the tendency of improving trade. Such policies could be a developmental plans geared towards improving infrastructure within a specific period to

which all successive governments must be committed. Further, governments must spend more to improve infrastructure, but must be cautious of inflation.

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Farmers' Coping Strategies to Artisanal Small-Scale Mining Activities in Ghana: Welfare Improvement or Deterioration?

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Introduction

Artisanal Small-Scale Mining (ASM) in Ghana presents both opportunities and threats to local economic development. On the one hand, the contribution of ASM to wealth creation, employment and the economy makes it one of the nation's most important livelihood activities (Hilson & Maconachie, 2020). On the other hand, ASM contributes to loss of agricultural land, food shortage, pollution of water bodies and destruction the vegetation and biodiversity (Hilson, 2016). Previous studies on ASM in Ghana such as Hilson (2016), Aragon and Rud (2015), Amponsah-Tawiah & Dartey-Baah (2011), among others, have focused on its impact on the environment. At present, there is no empirical work on coping strategies households in mining communities are using to deal with the negative effects of ASM and how adoption of these coping strategies affect the welfare of households. To this end, this study fills a knowledge gap.

Methodology

The study was conducted in the Asutifi North District in the Ahafo Region. Descriptive statistics were used to identify the various coping strategies used by farmers whilst endogenous treatment effect regression model was used to investigate the effects of adopting coping strategies on farm households' welfare. A two-stage sampling technique was used to select the respondents. In the first stage, ten mining communities were selected out of twenty, using simple random sampling. In the second stage, 316 households were selected using proportionate probability sampling and systematic sampling techniques. A semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents.

Findings

The highest coping strategy adopted by farm household was diversification (36.08%), followed by social networking (34.18%), land reclamation (31.01%), borrowing (31.01%), dependence on market for food (30.38%) and, finally, resettlement to a different community (29.11%). The average treatment effect on the treated results from the endogenous treatment regression reveal that farm households that adopted land reclamation, social networking and borrowing were more food secure than their counterparts that did not adopt these strategies. It was also established that using, at least,

two coping strategies by farm households simultaneously had a positive impact on welfare, unlike the usage of, at least, three coping strategies.

Conclusion and Implication

It may be concluded that adoption of coping strategies has mixed impacts on food security as some coping strategies improve food security of adopters, whilst others decrease the food security status of adopters. It is, therefore, recommended that farm households be encouraged to form cooperatives in order to increase their social capital which, in turn, can help to ensure easy access to joint resources. Also, civil society organisations and the government of Ghana, through Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, should consider programmes that support and encourage land reclamation practices in mining areas to ensure sustainable food production.

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Rural Approaches to Early Childhood Education and Sustainable Rural Transformation in Sagnarigu Municipality

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Introduction

Urbanisation induces spatial and environmental changes in both rural and urban areas across the world (Asabere et al., 2020). In rural areas, such transformation also include public services. When the context and realities of rural people are considered in planning development, sustainable rural transformation [SRT] can be attained. Based on problems that confront rural areas and their populations, the concept of education is very important in delivering SRT. However, Ahmed (2015), asserts that the premise and rationale of education for rural transformation [ERT] has not received due focus in the future development agenda discourse. As such, this study focused on early childhood education [ECE] to throw more light on ERT in the context of rural areas of Sagnarigu Municipality of Northern Ghana.

Methodology

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from teachers in selected rural areas, local opinion leaders and other local people through focused group discussions (FGDs). In all, five detailed FGDs involving seven participants each, were conducted in five different rural communities of the Sagnarigu Municipality. The FGDs concentrated on rural people's conceptualisation of education, specific approaches to implementing ECE and essentials of SRT in the research area. Participant observation was also done to record key teaching and learning activities of the various approaches to ECE, and spatial manifestation of ECE in the rural areas under consideration. Analysis of relevant documents, including enrolment registers, ECE centres' attendance records and the Sagnarigu Municipal medium-term development plans was conducted. Content analysis and descriptive statistics were employed in the data analysis.

Findings

It was found that three key approaches exist at the early childhood level to coordinate ERT in the research area. They are: regular formal government type school system [RSA]; semi-structured Makarnata system [MAS]; and informal type cultural-traditional approach [CTA]. The RSA is the most popular and most friendly, socio-economically.

Both MAS and the CTA share and advance a counter epistemology to the popular Western scientific-based one, which is founded on the RSA. Altogether, these approaches have not succeeded in triggering desirable SRT, despite internal and external strengths they all possess. At the same time, the conception of SRT in the research area, essentially connoting provisioning and interventions, poses serious challenges for external stakeholders, leading to poor state of SRT.

Conclusion and Implication

ECE and SRT are linked in several dimensions, but not so well as the link between SRT and other issues like agricultural mechanisation, transport and communication development and electrical energy extension. Therefore, more efforts are needed if ECE is to be relevant to the SRT agenda. Researchers are, thus, called upon to produce an empirically relevant model for ECE that fits rural West Africa, and relevant to SRT. In addition, African academics should promote other existing epistemologies in the African context and accommodate them alongside the Western made one, for a harmonious integration of knowledge in the rural child. A religious village project could also translate into a relevant ERT.

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Confronting the Challenges of Forest Resources Governance in Ghana: Can *Batho Pele* be the Answer?

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Introduction

Environmental problems have been on the ascendancy in recent times because of excessive exploitation of states' natural resources for economic gains. Thinking globally and acting locally has been proposed over the years as a solution, but has not made any significant impact. In Ghana, for instance, the forest sector continues to be a major contributor to the economic development of the country. However, within the last century, it has reduced from 8.2 million ha to 1.7 million ha (Ayivor et al., 2011; Adom, 2017). In order to address the dwindling forest cover, relevant policy frameworks have been developed over the years (1948, 1994 and 2012). Despite these policy frameworks alongside their implementing strategies, the outcome has not been encouraging. Against this backdrop, the search for alternative approaches to confront the environmental challenge is crucial. The *Batho Pele* Principles (BPP), which originated from South Africa, and seek to improve the quality and accessibility of government services, are proposed in this regard. These principles are: (i) consulting users of services (ii) service standards (iii) increasing access (iv) ensuring courtesy (v) providing more and better information (vi) increasing openness and transparency (vii) remedying mistakes and failures, and (viii) getting the best possible value for money. With this as the backdrop, this study explored the following questions: what challenges could be identified as working against sustainable forest governance in Ghana? How appropriate or otherwise are *Batho Pele Principles* in addressing the identified challenges?

Methodology

The study adopted a desk review approach as it synthesised both empirical and theoretical literature to deepen and advance knowledge in natural resource governance. Data collection commenced with the framing of key search phrases and questions to help identify relevant literature to review. Search phrases included 'forest resource governance challenges', 'forest resource governance in developing countries', 'Batho Pele Principles and 'public service delivery', 'forest governance challenges in Ghana', among others. Domains for the search consisted of Science Direct, JStor, Tandonline, and Google Scholar. A large pool of literature was obtained, which was further sorted out by scanning through their abstracts for relevance. A short list of about 46 relevant pieces of literature remained, which formed part of the process of the write-up and analysis.

Findings

From the analysis, challenges working against sustainable forest governance in Ghana include: minimal stakeholder participation as far as policy formulation, adoption, and implementation are concerned; weak enforcement of policies; sidelining fringe communities in the distribution of forest resources benefits, among others. The study demonstrates that despite the inherent challenges of the BPP, it has utility in helping address forest resource governance challenges in Ghana. The *BPP*, if well implemented, could put citizens in a position to check government and demand better service delivery. They could also make the government sensitive to people's needs be responsive at the same time.

Conclusion and Implication

The BPP could be effective in helping address forest resource governance challenges in Ghana, particularly if factors like a well-laid-out implementation plan, adequate resources to carry out such plans, monitoring systems, and clear sanctions accompany its implementation.

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Determining Compliance with Environmental Assessment Requirements in the Wa Municipality

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Introduction

Compliance with environmental assessment (EA) requirements is one pointer towards achieving sustainable development. Public and private sector undertakings are key players in the development arena in Ghana, like in other countries. These undertakings have ramifications for the environment and sustainable development (Domfeh, 2003). Even though some studies have explored the effect of public and private sector undertakings on the environment, there are no studies that compare the extent of compliance with EA requirements between the public and private sectors. This study was conducted to fill the identified gap. It investigated: (i) the extent of general compliance with EA requirements and (ii) the degree of compliance with EA demands between public sector and private sector undertakings in the Wa Municipality.

Methodology

To achieve the objective of this study, concurrent mixed methods research design was employed as the methodology. Simple random, purposive and convenient sampling strategies were used as sampling frames to conduct the study. A semi-structured questionnaire was administered to 44 respondents, while 13 public and 17 private sector undertakings, respectively, were inspected. Further, 11 key informant interviews with relevant environmental regulators were conducted. Data collected were analysed using Microsoft Excel, the descriptive statistics component of SPSS version 20 and qualitatively determined themes. Indicators of compliance or non-compliance with EA requirements employed included project owners' possession or non-possession of environmental permits (EPs), submission or non-submission of annual environmental reports and the extent of compliance with EP schedules and conditions (Appiah-Opoku, 2001).

Findings

The key undertakings the study identified were energy, hospitality and health facilities. Hospitality facilities accounted for 36% of projects requiring EPA EPs with energy-related undertakings, health facilities and construction/other undertakings representing 29%, 16% and 19%, respectively. Again, private sector undertakings were more compliant with EPA permit requirements (67%) than public sector projects (33%). The relatively high rate of compliance among private sector undertakings was precipitated by effective inter-agency collaboration, possible closure of illegal operations and limited

political influence. The low conformance to EA requirements among government projects was attributed to bureaucracy, political influence and the notion that EPA cannot punish the undertakings because they are also government entities like the EPA itself.

Conclusions and Implications

The study concludes that general compliance is moderate; private sector undertakings being more compliant with EA requirements than public sector projects. This has implications for EA policies and enforcement of EA regulations. To improve compliance, sensitisation of stakeholders about EA requirements, amendment of the Environmental Assessment Regulations to make them punitive enough and making EPA an autonomous authority.

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Siting of Fuel Stations within Residential Areas in Ghanaian Cities: Perspectives of Residents of Wa on Fire Disaster Risks

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Introduction

The proliferation of fuel stations in residential areas in recent years has been fuelled by urban population growth, increase in vehicle traffic and demand for petroleum products (Mäkkä et al., 2021). However, sitting fuel stations in residential areas poses significant fire disaster risks to inhabitants and property. Studies on siting fuel stations in residential areas and the related disaster risk have focused on health and safety of fuel attendants, and spatial distribution. This study explores fire disaster risk associated with the sitting of fuel stations in dense residential areas in urban Ghana. Specifically, it addresses residents' perceptions of why fuel stations are located in residential areas, their exposure to fire disaster risks, and safety behaviours.

Methods

The study adopted a mixed methods research approach involving 182 research participants. Stratified alongside simple random sampling techniques were used to select tenants, landlords, and business operators, while purposive sampling was employed to select relevant state institutions. A structured questionnaire was used to elicit data from the residents and operators of business establishments. Additionally, an observation checklist supported with a camera was used to validate claims of research participants. Further, an interview guide was used to collect data from relevant state agencies on their role in reducing fire disaster risk and their experiences and engagement with residents and fuel station operators regarding safety of human beings and property. Pictures from Google earth maps were used to establish the location of fuel stations in residential areas in the city. The survey data were first cleaned after being entered in SPSS version 28 for analysis. Thereafter, descriptive statistics, and Likert scale analysis were applied to the quantitative data, while thematic analyses was applied to the qualitative data.

Findings

Although the relevant state institutions indicated all fuels stations were granted permission, residents were of the opinion that the permits were not obtained before commencement of establishing the fuel stations in residential areas. The respondents

indicated that fuel stations were sited in residential areas because of ease of accessibility and competition, but they also admitted that their proximity to the facilities expose them to fire disaster risk. Also, residents' perceptions of the likelihood of a fire disaster occurring and the severity of the fire disaster at fuel stations are both sporadic and catastrophic, respectively. Finally, residents agreed with the idea that practising appropriate fire safety behaviours near fuel stations could prevent a fire event, but did not invest in the appropriate fire prevention and safety measures that could reduce their vulnerability in the event of a fire.

Conclusion and Implications

Fuel stations are established within the context of poor planning and regulation enforcement and weak evaluation of fuel station projects in residential areas. It is recommended that residents be encouraged to invest in fire extinguishing equipment and adhere to fire safety behaviours at both household and immediate environment levels to avoid fire disasters and their catastrophic consequences.

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Does Financing Healthcare through the National Health Insurance Scheme Improve Health Status? Evidence from Ghana

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Introduction

Ghana's National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) has been operating since its inception in 2003. The Government of Ghana created the NHIS as a social intervention programme to give citizens of Ghana financial access to high-quality healthcare. Health improvement is one of the foremost goals of health insurance. Several studies on the effects of health insurance on health status are quasi-experimental, with only a few observational and experimental studies. This study examines the impact of the NHIS scheme on health status in an observational study, specifically a cross-sectional study.

Methodology

This study used the Ghana Socioeconomic Panel Survey (GSPS) datasets and employed endogenous switching regression for ordered outcomes to account for self-selection bias and endogeneity in health insurance decisions.

Findings

The findings indicate that NHIS membership improves health status while decreasing poor self-assessed health status. Gender, age, education, chronic illness, physical activity, risky behaviour, type of sickness, wealth index, and location influence self-assessed health status.

Conclusion and Implication

The study has demonstrated that with advances in econometrics modelling, it is possible to use non-experimental techniques to estimate causal effects in non-randomisation studies. Acknowledging that NHIS membership improves health status, the study suggests additional public education to promote enrolment to enable the citizens benefit from the scheme and enhance their health status. However, because NHIS participation may not be the only factor that improves health status, it is vital to proceed with caution when interpreting the study's conclusions. A healthy lifestyle, including good nutrition, routine check-ups with the doctor, and exercise, among others, could enhance health status. The caveat of this study is that government's efforts to encourage NHIS enrolment should not come at the expense of other health improvement measures.

Assessing the Effect of Sponsored/Contract Farming on Sustainable Livelihood Outcomes of Maize Smallholder Farmers in Northern Ghana

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Introduction

Contract farming (CF) or sponsored farming has become an increasingly popular institutional tool to ensure quality and quantity of inputs or raw materials for processors, exporters, distributors, and supermarkets (Barret et al, 2012). It can help farmers overcome production constraints such as financial constraints, poor access to inputs, lack of technical and managerial capacity, or assure a market for their harvests (Bruntrup et al., 2018). However, if not properly managed, contract farming could lead to losses and other livelihood challenges among farmers. This study sought to assess the effectiveness of contract farming on sustainable livelihoods of smallholder maize farmers in northern Ghana. The study answered the following questions: What factors influence smallholder farmers' decision to participate in contract farming? How does contract farming affect the vulnerability context, livelihood assets, livelihood strategies and livelihood outcomes of affected farmers?

Methodology

Cross sectional research design was adopted with concurrent mixed-method sampling technique employed to solicit data from 288 respondents in four (4) communities. A questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data from the sampled farmers, whilst in-depth interviews were conducted among key informants to obtain qualitative data. Qualitative response models, which are strongly linked to utility theory, were utilised to investigate factors affecting an individual's choice from two or more alternatives (Amemiya, 1981; Greene, 2000). The logistic regression model was used to analyse the effect of CF on various aspects of farmers' livelihoods.

Findings

The study found that farmers were influenced by the cost of farm implements and cost of seeds being subsidised through contract/sponsored farming to participate in farming schemes. Also, being a contract farmer does not have a significant effect on the livelihoods of farmers in terms of livelihood outcomes, strategies, assets as well as vulnerability context because of constant weather variability, which destroys crops and reduces farm yield. It was further found that farmers believed contract farming had the prospect of accessing credit for crop production, but provision of inputs were at higher

rates which, in turn, increases their indebtedness. Some of the challenges found were delayed payment for their crop produce and the problem of scarcity of labour during peak periods.

Conclusion and Implication

The study recommends that farmers strive to diversify their source of income (irrigation farming, rearing and trade) so that they do not solely depend on rainy season farming. Moreover, contract farming needs government intervention and regulation in order to improve the livelihoods of farmers and their households. For example, if the Ghana government's one-village-one-dam initiative is properly implemented with reliable water source, it will help farmers engage in profitable contract farming schemes in the dry season.

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Deficit of Digital Orientation Among Indigenous Service-based Firms in an Emerging Economy: A Resource-based View

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Introduction

Digital technologies are essential tools that firms can integrate into their business to transform operations. It is worth noting that digitalisation (that is, digital information and communication technologies) is empowering firms to employ and incorporate e-business models. Many expect that the implementation of new means of business operation, especially using the Internet to promote sustainable business practices, will facilitate access and competitiveness of these firms in emerging and developing countries in the global market space. Despite the continued interest and growing investments in digital orientation systems for the facilitation of business development efforts, evidence on organisational-level factors that influence users' resistance to these systems has rarely been explored (Akpan, Udoh, & Adebisi, 2022). In other words, while empirical evidence of the gains attained from digital evolution has been unprecedented, questions related to factors impeding digital infrastructural deficit among service-based firms, particularly in emerging and developing economies, remain unanswered. This poses a question to scholars as to why the adoption of digital orientation is relatively low among developing economies. The purpose of this article is to examine impediments to digital infrastructural deficit among service-based firms in an emerging and developing country.

Methodology

Inspired by a resource-based view, a survey using a structured questionnaire was administered to 466 respondents (management and employees) of service-based firms, ranging from micro to large firms, in the financial services sector via a convenience sampling method in Ghana. Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to test the study hypotheses.

Findings

Findings indicated that the perceived knowledge gap, perceived cost, and infrequent upgrading of existing technology positively and significantly create digital infrastructural deficit among service-based firms, limiting the optimum use of the technology. The authors admonish that indigenous service-based firms be oriented on the use of digital technologies through appropriate training programmes to enhance their adoption. The study further recommends management of these firms cultivate the habit of investing in human and technical capacities to optimise the benefits of the evolution of digital technologies.

Conclusion and Implications

There is little doubt that digital technologies such as cellular phones, social media, and online transactions are critical tools with enormous potential that service-based businesses can use to integrate, develop, and maximise profit. Given the competition among service-based enterprises, technology continues to revolutionise how businesses operate in modern times. As a result, adopting creative business tactics is critical to revolutionising how firms connect with their stakeholders. For instance, the recent Covid-19 outbreak and its effects have hampered corporate operations, which have altered how businesses run. Given that this new trend significantly increases productivity and promotes sustainability, digital evolution has been sluggish in most emerging economies due to a lack of focus on this development.

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LIST OF ORGANISING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The conference was organised under the Directorate of Research, Innovation and Consultancy (DRIC) on behalf of the University. Members of the committee who participated in organising it were:

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