

## UNIVERSITY-BASED ADULT LITERACY IN GHANA: SCHOOL OF CONTINUING AND DISTANCE EDUCATION (SCDE) EXPERIENCES

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*This paper examines University-Based Adult Literacy in Ghana with emphasis on experiences of School of Continuing and Distance Education (SCDE), University of Ghana, Legon. Strategies to fight illiteracy and promote personal and national development are designed and implemented by many institutions, including universities. This is because disciplined, efficient and competent labour force is a priceless asset of a country. In the same manner, knowledgeable farmers and fishermen who efficiently adopt innovative, cultural and scientific practices on their farms and fishing expeditions to increase yields and forestall post-harvest losses are assets for Ghana. Industrial workers who can easily fix broken down plants and machines to keep them working day and night to increase productivity at workplaces are workers' Ghanaian economy needs. Educated electorates who cast their votes on the basis of issues are electorates this nation wants. The world now is a global village due largely to innovations in ICT, making lifelong learning and adult literacy very essential in personal and national development. In the light of this, well-planned and appropriately implemented University-Based Adult Literacy Programme as currently being executed by SCDE is a necessary pre-requisite in building the needed human capital for Ghana's development.*

**KEYWORDS:** University-Based Adult literacy, Lifelong Learning, Human Capital, ICT and National Development

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## INTRODUCTION

Globally, illiteracy has been found as a canker and is being fought through a number of strategies in many economies. This is because it is one of the biggest bottlenecks militating against improved human and national development. There are over 800 million young people and adults in the world today, almost one in five of the adult population, do not have the basic literacy and numeracy skills they require to participate fully in society (Richmond et al, 2008). Africa as a continent has a literacy rate of less than 60 percent. In Ghana, illiteracy rate is 46.3 percent. Not only that, but there was also high rural illiteracy rate of 59.9 percent, and a high female illiteracy rate of 57.5 percent (Population and Housing Census, 2000). Twum-Baah et al. (2005) revealed that, of Ghana's adult population of 15 years or more, 42.1 percent were total illiterate. Perhaps it was on that basis that Duke's (1988) earlier assertion on illiteracy and poverty should be considered. Duke aptly put it in this way;

*There is no disputing the urgency of the question for adult educators dedicated to an authentic development. For there is a profoundly disturbing coincidence whereby billion illiterate people of the world are also, in the main, the billion in absolute poverty (p. 39).*

Considering the assertion above, it was, therefore, not surprising when Bhola (2008) indicated that 'Literacy is the mother of history, midwife of civilizations, technology of the intellect, instrument of participation in politics and economy. Without literacy, we cannot pass through the portal of the modern world of print' (p. 5).

Indeed, the effect of illiteracy clearly reflected in the 2012 Presidential and Parliamentary elections held in Ghana. According to Yeboah and Dapatem (2012), out of the total votes of 11,246,982 cast, there were 10,995,262 valid votes with 251,720 rejected ballots. The rejected ballots of 251,720 was even more than the entire votes of 171,603 obtained by six presidential candidates that participated in the 2012 Presidential and Parliamentary elections. One may not be wrong to suggest that many of the rejected ballots witnessed in the 2012 Presidential and Parliamentary elections were probably due largely to illiteracy on voting processes exhibited by some voters.

Taking a traditional definition, one could say that literacy is the ability of a person to read and write a simple statement on everyday life in the mother tongue. A person is functionally literate when he or she can engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning in his/her group and community and also for enabling him/her to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his/her own and the community's development (UNESCO, 1979). But in today's world, where we read not only

words in a written text, but also a wide variety of other symbolic codes for transforming reality, literacy can be defined as “the ability of a person to code and decode, smoothly and effortlessly, and with understanding, a living and growing system of symbolic transformations of reality, including words, numbers, notations, schemata, diagrammatic representations and other marks, inscribed on paper or other two-dimensional surfaces (cloth, celluloid or the screen of a computer terminal), all of which have become part of the visual language of a people and have thus come to be collectively and democratically shared by both the specialist and the non-specialist; such ability having become part of the current social, economic, political and cultural demand system of a society” (Bhola 1984a, p. 260). Thus, reading “the word” is now connected with reading “the world” in all its multiple dimensions (Bhola, 2008).

UNESCO (2008) further added that it is common to talk of 'knowledge societies', but less common to acknowledge that the generation, transmission and transformation of knowledge almost always depend on writing, whether on paper, computer screen or mobile. Without literacy, people are excluded from access to these circuits of knowledge, and even from the most basic information they may need for daily life. Literacy is an integral part of addressing major global challenges in food security and agricultural production, poverty, HIV and AIDS and other epidemics, economic growth, and opportunities to learn and acquire new skills. It has also been observed that effective economic development requires appropriate attitudes and competencies, in addition to literacy skills.

Cummings and Jecks (2004) observed that in the global information economy, in which information and knowledge have replaced financial and physical capital as the means of creating value, nations and enterprises are reliant on an educated and skilled workforce. Such workforce could be farmers, fishermen, factory workers and sport men and women to maintain productivity in order to meet global market challenges. Thus, individual workers and unemployed adults, need to engage in continuing and lifelong learning and education to constantly upgrade their skills and qualifications to obtain and remain in employment. UNESCO (1999) cited in (Cummings and Jecks, 2004: 16) sums it up best:

*The citizens need now to enhance their capacity to take initiatives, need now to acquire new skill. It is necessary to provide learning opportunities for the present generation of adult men and women. Adult learning has become a central issue. It has become clear that the learning capacity of human beings, the unfolding of human potential and the opportunity to continue learning throughout life are central to the task of shaping the new century and the new millennium. The autonomy, the creativity and the self-expression of all citizens are not only the objectives but also the conditions*

*of democracy.*

On the basis of the assertion above, it becomes imperative for every successive government, and more especially educational institutions in Ghana, to focus attention and also place premium on ensuring that as many people as possible become literate to help promote sustainable development in Ghana.

This paper examines university-based adult literacy at School of Continuing and Distance Education (SCDE), University of Ghana, Legon. It establishes that whilst literacy education promotion is significant for non-literate adults, it is equally imperative to ensure that strategies are put in place to address challenges encountered by adult learners.

### LITERACY EDUCATION PROMOTION IN GHANA

In Ghana, programmes aimed at reducing the illiteracy have been organised by religious groups, governments, and non-governmental organisations. However, it is known that literacy programmes were started in Ghana by European Christian Missionaries during the colonial era with a vision of training and converting Africans. The aim was to help their converts to be able to read and understand the Bible, facilitate communication and interaction between the missionaries and the local people. It is also known that the most popular literacy programme in the country was perhaps the one launched by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah after independence.

In the 1940s, 50s and 60s, the People's Education Association (P.E.A) of the Department of Extra-Mural Studies of the then University College of Gold Coast, contributed in no measure to make people in the remotest part of Ghana become literate through publications of teaching and learning materials in various languages. Sensitization programmes, awareness creation, voluntary services and mass literacy and education drive dubbed 'each one teach one' were carried out to people living in remotest part of Ghana. Various governments and organisations after Nkrumah have contributed their bit to fight against illiteracy by organising literacy programmes using various approaches.

Beside formal education, attempts at other types of education are made to equip persons who are excluded from formal education. These attempts include non-formal education which is aimed at teaching those outside the formal learning system. An important component of the latter is the Functional Literacy Programme (FLP) which is meant to enable adult learners become literate and improve upon their numeracy, reading and writing skills. The Gold Coast Mass Literacy and Mass Education (GCMLME) 1951 campaign, which set the pace in literacy drive in Ghana, attached much attention to

address the problem of illiteracy. Since the programme had a focus on community development, it went beyond addressing the problem of illiteracy to attack ignorance, apathy and prejudice, poverty, disease, and isolation as impediments that hinder the progress of a community. It was, certainly, an education which was designed to teach people not merely how to read but how to live.

Education is one of the most important human resource development strategies to promote socio-economic development of a country. Hence higher level of literacy among the citizenry leads to greater economic output, higher employment levels, better social structures and healthy lifestyles. More so, education is not only a basic human right, but also a crucial tool for improving child and maternal health, individual incomes, environmental sustainability, economic growth, and for driving progress towards all the Millennium Development Goals. Literacy education, ultimately, serves as a driver in achieving both personal and national development. Perhaps, it is on this basis that SCDE, University of Ghana, has since 1948, placed premium on University-Based Adult Literacy Programmes.

Literacy programme of SCDE has evolved since 1948 from correspondence course to the development of primers in Ghanaian languages to teaching literacy and Bible reading. Newspaper called 'Kpologo' was developed in different languages and disseminated to participants to build their capacities in reading skills. Learning circles were formed in communities and organisers and resident tutors, who were principals in the regional workers colleges, now University of Ghana Learning Centres (UGLCs), monitored progress of the members. The progressive members sat for entrance examinations and moved on to the higher levels of education. The acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes impacted positively on many others at their workplaces and whatever jobs they engaged themselves in.

Currently, SCDE has a learning centre that admit students to improve their proficiency in reading, writing and numeracy so as to progress and advance their academic qualifications to diploma and even degree levels in the University of Ghana, Legon. To sufficiently make progress, widen and broaden their horizons, participants of literacy programmes are equally encouraged to place premium on not only formal education, but non-formal, informal education and even continuing education, to strengthen literacy promotion in Ghana. Currently, continuing education in the world over, is a critical tool for building and sustaining strong and virile human resource base of many economies. In many Western economies, as in other part of the world, governments support citizens to continuously build their capacities through

continuing education. So, therefore, the challenge of illiteracy makes provision of formal, non-formal and informal education accessible to adult learners particularly important in developing countries, including Ghana.

In fact, literacy and higher education has become imperative and overarching today, especially when one considers the fast pace in which new skills, knowledge and information are being churned out, thus, rendering almost useless and outdated yesterday's skills, knowledge and information. In today's globalised world, facts and skills learned in youthful days have become insufficient, if not outmoded by new Information Communication Technologies (ICTs). The mind is uniquely and authentically crafted, thus, making it possible for people to continuously learn throughout their lives.

McGrath (2008) observed that with the growing knowledge economy, higher education is no longer seen as a luxury that developing countries cannot afford, but a critical element of national development. Countries must become globally competitive through skills training, given that good quality products and services are crucial in the fight for global profits. Ghana, as a player in global economy, has to carve a niche for herself to become competitive in every aspect of development. That really means that greater number of population should be literate, and also, skilful to contribute substantially to national development.

There is certainly a great deal of relevance of continuing education to the promotion of literacy education in Ghana. All the relevant education mix – formal, informal, non-formal and distance education are subsequently being rolled out currently at SCDE, University of Ghana. That would eventually help address pertinent literacy challenges in Ghana. However, the efficient operationalisation and successful realisation of optimal results would depend substantially on sufficient budgetary allocation to not only the Ministry of Education (MoE) sub-sector such as the Non-Formal Education Unit, but also SCDE of University of Ghana, that deals with literacy education in Ghana. This is because the importance of some components of continuing education, such as non-formal and in-formal education, has not been sufficiently recognised in Africa, and for that matter, Ghana. Efforts in this area tend to be minimal compared to the attention given to the formal sector of Education.

Currently in Ghana, people are trying to educate themselves so as to take advantage of the ICT sector, oil sector, and other emerging sectors. This, therefore, makes any effort to provide and even improve existing continuing education channels available very important and welcoming. Coombs (1974), rightly pointed out that non-formal education in the form of adult education, continuing, on-the-job training, extension or some other forms of education,

can bring education to those whom he describes as 'the lost leaders of tomorrow' and enable them to find jobs for themselves. The most effective kind of non-formal education, however, takes place in the home, where children learn skills from parents and neighbours. A lot of literacy programmes must be organised to make people current and up-to-date in the development taking place globally and locally.

The need for a review of the socialisation process to ensure gender equality should not be overlooked. For instance, the Accra Learning Centre (Workers College) of the School of Continuing and Distance Education (SCDE), within 2005-2008 has organised short courses in English and Access for further education/continuing education. A total number of 3, 657 adult workers benefited from these two courses. Out of this number, 1,722 were males and 1, 935 females.

Literacy, in its comprehensive form, is more about the acquisition and use of reading, writing and numeracy skills, and thereby the development of active citizenship, improved health and livelihoods, and gender equality. Hence, the goals of literacy programmes in Ghana should reflect this understanding. The difficulty many governments in developing countries, including Ghana, have is that, child and adult education are viewed as options rather than as complementary and mutually reinforcing. "Education for all" was understood as education for children. Jomtein's "expanded vision" of basic education was reduced to formal schooling and, more specifically, to primary education. Millions of Ghanaians are still being denied access to literacy partly due to lack of effective education policies.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF LITERACY PROGRAMMES FOR NON-LITERATE ADULTS**

Illiteracy, as has been observed, is a disease that stunts personal and societal growth. It is not unusual to hear of the person who accidentally electrocuted himself because he/she could not understand the meaning of the word 'danger' or who swallowed poison instead of medicine just because he/she could not read the label on the bottle (Antwi, 1992). Perhaps it is not a mere coincidence that illiteracy and underdevelopment are bed-fellows. That illiteracy is a serious setback basically is undisputable because, it impedes progress and exposes the majority of the people to exploitation and suffering. The plain truth is that, the size of the illiterate adult population is steadily increasing, while the pace of social and technological changes is accelerating at a phenomenal rate. To eradicate illiteracy, it is essential to tackle both child and adult illiteracy at the same time. This certainly makes all forms of continuing education just discussed very germane in the sense that when genuinely



pursued, they would go a long way in addressing effectively the challenges of youth and adult literacy in Ghana.

Additionally, literacy amongst agriculturists and fisher-folks may contribute to an increase in agricultural production, which is crucial for development. This is because farmers and fishermen will learn to apply the appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and values at their work to increase yields. The view is also expressed that literate parents tend to have smaller families, and thus help to reduce the high rate of population growth which slows the pace of development. Moreover, literate parents have more awareness of the need for education for their children and therefore help to check absenteeism and dropout from school, thereby, raising the efficiency of the formal school system. Furthermore, literacy assists people to absorb information and ideas which enable them to see the need for change and development.

Literacy, from all indications, strengthens the response of people to economic and other incentives. There is the need to emphasise that literacy, through adult education, is in fact, one of the most significant forms of education for the developing nations of the contemporary world, including Ghana. Lewis (1959), cited in Antwi (1992), explains that the quickest way to increase productivity in the developing countries is to provide on-the-job training for adults. He argues that the potential contribution to output of education for children over ten years is small compared with the potential contribution of efforts devoted to improving adult skills. It has been observed that within Ghana, continuing education, has been almost wholly neglected since a multiplicity of ministries have responsibility for it yet are too busy to regard it as a major part of their functions. It is, therefore, suggested that to make a success of continuing education, it should be turned into a popular mass movement similar to the Danish folk movement or the Russian literacy campaigns so as to stir the imagination of the people and create a mass desire to learn. Alternatively, a vigorous campaign undertaken with a degree of energy similar to that which almost eradicated illiteracy in Cuba in 1961 is the only sure method of success.

Thus, in today's global economy, knowledge, skills, information and technology are dynamic and keep changing in a very fast pace. The human mind which is uniquely and authentically crafted is, however, infinitely capacious. Hence people must be encouraged and helped to learn continuously and possibly throughout their lives. No wonder, lifelong learning and lifelong education have become overarching in the 21st Century globalised economy. Generally speaking, uniqueness of education to



development can sufficiently be realised when it is properly organised and continuously evaluated. Rubin and Rubin (2008) have asserted that the success of any development programme is based more on its efficient and effective organisation. The Institute of Adult Education, now the School of Continuing and Distance Education (SCDE), has not been found wanting in the organisation of continuing education programmes, including adult literacy programmes.

The SCDE continues to provide literacy education to many, otherwise, neglected youth and out-of-school youth to continue their education through what is termed - Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE). At its literacy centres, young adults from 15 years and above are offered continuing education. Thus, young adults who could not complete basic schools and those who completed basic schools and could not proceed further were given further education to aspire further in formal education and reach their fullest potential. The 12 Regional Learning Centres (Workers Colleges) under SCDE also provides continuing education in the form of remedial studies, training in accountancy, vocational, business and computer studies and secretarial practice are also provided to clientele. In 1993, there were over 12,000 adult students reached throughout Ghana through the programmes of the SCDE by correspondence and regular classes, short residential courses and conferences. Currently, some Learning Centres have innovatively established model Senior High Schools, all in a bid to assist young out-of-school adults in their literacy drive to continue their education. Sequel to ABLE is what is termed SCDE Adult Learning Research Centre. This paper, therefore, turn its attention to the activities of SCDE Adult Learning Research Centre.

### **SCDE ADULT LEARNING RESEARCH CENTRE**

Literacy classes are a must if one wishes to fill in forms, read papers, do sums and all the other norms, especially in today's globalised world where continuing education and lifelong learning reign supreme. It is in that light that the School of Continuing and Distance Education (SCDE), University of Ghana, established Adult Learning Research Centre to commence literacy programme in August, 2007. The centre started the literacy programme with 27 participants.

According to Table 1, the number of adult learners enrolled in the literacy centre keeps increasing right from the commencement of the programme except the year 2011. That in itself is positive. Even more gratifying is the fact that between 2007/2008, 111 males and 137 females enrolled in all the twelve Adult Learning Centres throughout Ghana to learn English, Reading and

Writing Skills as well as Mathematics. Indeed, 112 students were enrolled to the literacy centre in 2012/13 academic year as illustrated by Table 1. The centre is currently undertaking English and Basic Mathematics classes throughout the country for the out-of-school youth and adults. It could safely be argued that when this programme is expanded, it would go a long way to meet the challenges of illiteracy in Ghana. There is, therefore, the urgent need for government to expand facilities at SCDE, University of Ghana, Legon, and invest more funds into the programme so that many adults could be enrolled. As Table 1 clearly demonstrates, some of the graduates from the literacy programme have managed to gain admission into the Diploma Programmes of the University of Ghana.

**Table 1**  
**Adults Learners Enrolled in Adult Learning Centre between 2007-2012 at SCDE, University of Ghana.**

Year	No. of Adult Learners Enrolled	Adult Learners who sat for Diploma Programme	Adult Learners Admitted into the Diploma Programmes
2007	27	-	-
2008	69	5	4
2009	127	10	9
2010	137	20	14
2011	65	15	13
2012	112	20	18

Source: SCDE Adult Learning Research Centre, Legon, 2012

Using innovative and traditional mechanisms, including a network of online learning and information services available through workplaces and local communities, this strategy contributes to the development of a “learning society”. As a university-based literacy centre with an initiative in promoting flexible learning, it has caught up very well with many participants. The SCDE literacy centre has access to facilities that enable participants continue learning and upgrading their skills throughout their lives. As a fundamental component of building a more highly skilled Ghanaian workforce, capable of meeting the state's future skills needs, this learning strategy enables people who are economically isolated within metropolis, to gain access to learning opportunities. It supports people who are employed in low-skill, low-paid jobs to access improved knowledge, skills and attitudes through increasing and innovative programmes in University of Ghana, SCDE, that fit in with their work, family, and life-style commitments.

Deducing from the above, it becomes imperative that a development strategy built by interlocking low, intermediate and high skills as University-based adult literacy centre in SCDE in Legon seeks to achieve, may be more viable than one based on high skills alone. This is because it helps join up different levels of education. Students who have benefited from only basic education can enrol in the literacy programme to better their lot, and even graduate to the higher education ladder as clearly depicted by Table 1. More so, this educational strategy will not only build and provide to the participants and their families social, political and economic benefits, but help produce skilled manpower base to engender increased productivity at various workplaces to ensure greater betterment of the country.

In spite of the progress so far made by SCDE, Adult Learning Centre as a University-Based Adult Literacy Programme in adult literacy drive in Ghana, there are number of challenges to be addressed, to make the programme a successful one.

### **CHALLENGES IN PROMOTING UNIVERSITY-BASED ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMME**

All over the world there are number of challenges that confronts smooth implementation and operations of University-Based Adult Literacy Programmes. Lack of financing of literacy programmes in Ghana, like elsewhere in Africa, has been and continues to a big challenge. This probably is as a result of the fact that financing adult education itself in Ghana and Africa at large is a bigger challenge. This is in spite of the immense importance of literacy in personal and national development. The largest financiers of literacy programmes in Ghana are the World Bank and Government of Ghana.

According to Aryeetey and Kwakye (2005), out of the total estimated cost of US\$46 million of the second phase of the Non-Formal Literacy Programme (NFLP) of the Non-Formal Education Division (NFED) of the Ministry of Education, 60% was funded by the World Bank and 30% by the Government of Ghana, while the remaining 10% was borne by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and communities. The Government of Ghana, in particular, funds literacy programmes through budgetary allocations to the Non-Formal Education Division. However, the amount of money being put into literacy programmes, especially adult literacy, is very insignificant compared to the developmental needs of the country.

Some of the other challenges confronting literacy and continuing education include lack of financial support, inadequate parental, spousal and family support, inadequate facilities and lack of motivation of clientele. Funding of

adult education, and for that matter, literacy programmes have not received the desired support. The plain truth is that many of these literacy and continuing education institutions, including SCDE, are cash strapped and thus affect their mode of delivery and performance. More so, many of the clientele had financial difficulties, not only in paying the fees of GH¢18.00 and GH¢22.00 for Intermediate and Adult Basic and Proficiency stages of literacy programme, but also sponsoring themselves through the programme. The backgrounds of many of the clientele are nothing to write home about and they actually need support to go through the programme. The families as well as their spouse's financial positions are not sound and solid. Hence, some of the adult learners have been absenting themselves from classes because they could not pay their fees.

In addition, recruitment and retention of facilitators of adult literacy programme is a major challenge, simply because the allowances paid to the facilitators are not attractive, and constitute a disincentive to them. No wonder the attrition rate of facilitators of adult literacy programme is high. The SCDE Adult Literacy Centre also lacks infrastructural facilities for clientele. Their learning/lecture rooms are small, thus, limiting the number of clientele to be admitted for the literacy programme. Additionally, the remote geographical location of many of the youth and adults tend to make them inaccessible to adult literacy and continuing education. All these and many other challenges affect the smooth operation of literacy and continuing educational institutions. That notwithstanding, the aforementioned challenges can be addressed through concerted efforts by governments and other relevant stakeholders.

### **STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS LITERACY CHALLENGES IN GHANA**

With its close association to poverty and social inequity, literacy cannot be dealt with effectively without a serious effort to address poverty and its causes at local, national and global levels. Adult education should be linked to civic education for all and adult learning should be linked to literacy. All policies and programmes should be defined to encourage sustained participation and celebrate progressive achievements rather than focusing on one-off provision of a single end point. This, however, calls for the need to strengthen, improve and accelerate efforts towards universal literacy in Ghana.

The Government of Ghana must take lead responsibility in meeting the right to adult literacy and in providing leadership, policy frameworks, an enabling environment, and resources to drive and accelerate literacy promotion in Ghana.

To be successful in this direction, the Government of Ghana should do the

following:

- ensure cooperation across all the relevant ministries and relevant development programmes;
- work in systematic collaboration with experienced civil society organisations;
- ensure links between all these agencies, especially at the local level, and ensure relevance to the issues in learners' lives;
- promote the decentralisation of budgets and of decision-making over curriculum, methods and materials.

The facilitators of adult literacy programmes should be paid, at least, the equivalent of minimum wage of a primary school teacher for all hours worked, including time for training, preparation and follow-up. Facilitators should be local people who receive substantial initial preparation and regular refresher training, as well as having ongoing opportunities for exchanges with other facilitators.

Government should put in place a framework for professional development of the adult literacy sector, including trainers/supervisors, with full opportunities for facilitators across the country to access this through distance education.

On the issue of material production, the Government should take responsibility for stimulating the market for production and distribution of wide variety of material suitable for new readers, for example by working with publishers'/newspapers producers. In the country as a whole, there are no post-literacy materials to retain and stabilize the knowledge and skills of literacy already gained. The Government should ensure funding for the local production of materials, especially by learners, facilitators and trainers.

Finally, the Government of Ghana should dedicate at least 30% of its national income sector budget to adult literacy programmes. It is only when government is able to do this that it can call on the international donors and development partners to support and fill the resource gap in addressing comprehensively youth and adult literacy programme in Ghana.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Considering the challenges facing the promotion of literacy in Ghana, it becomes imperative that the private sector is encouraged to contribute meaningfully to literacy programmes for the youth and adult population. The private sector must be made to give a strong support to government's initiatives in the educational sector because the private sector itself has been

known to be tapping the best human resource in the country and the diaspora to promote their business enterprises.

Adult education institutions should be made as part of national policy to develop a comprehensive programme for out-of-school youth. This will help raise the literacy levels with subsequent positive effect on productivity in all sectors of the economy. Indeed, serious attempt should be made by government to develop and expand infrastructural facilities of SCDE to enable them enrol many adults into the literacy programme.

Serious efforts should also be made by SCDE, University of Ghana, to strengthen partnerships with educational network groups and organisations to forge the promotion of literacy ahead for accelerated national development.

Finally, there is the need to adopt a multi-media approach to promote literacy as a complement through the use of community newspapers, junior news-papers to inculcate the habit of reading and writing among the general populace.

## CONCLUSION

The progressive development of modern-day Ghana thrives on the power of literacy and lifelong education and learning. All national governments since independence have viewed education as a human right issue necessary for the fulfilment of basic human needs, reduction of poverty, increase productivity, industrialisation and national development. Promoting literacy among children, youth and adults to address illiteracy must take a centre stage in the development agenda of Ghana. Efforts at local, regional and national levels as well as tertiary educational levels must continue to enhance access to quality education in the country so as to significantly reduce illiteracy and enhance personal and national development. Not only that but high literacy rate among the population leads to increased productivity in all sectors of the economy. This paper concludes by emphasising that if government wants to achieve economic growth, social and cultural development, reduce poverty, improve living conditions, reduce child and maternal mortality and HIV and AIDS infection, then it is paramount to invest a lot of financial and logistical resources towards drastic reduction of illiteracy among the youth and adults.

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