

**THE RELEVANCE OF STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCILS TO
THE ADMINISTRATION OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN GHANA**

by

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submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the subject

EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NOVEMBER, 2023

A thesis submitted to the Department of Educational Leadership, University of South Africa, Pretoria, in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education Management

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THE RELEVANCE OF STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCILS TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN GHANA.

I declare that the above thesis is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

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ABSTRACT

Higher education is a vital element in human development globally. Institutions offering this form of education perform this unique role of training the human resource needs of society. Contemporary tertiary education worldwide is mostly patronised by the enthusiastic and ingenious youth aspiring to acquire knowledge and skills for the world of work. One group of such institutions in Ghana is the Colleges of Education (CoE) mandated to train teachers for first and second cycle educational institutions. In an attempt to protect their interests, student teachers formed the Students Representative Council (SRC). The existence of SRC is backed by legislation and Ghana is of no exception. Such enactments include the Colleges of Education Act 847 (2012:11) and the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, (1992 Chapter 5, Section 79) as stated by (Mills, 2015:63). All the 46 CoE in Ghana have SRC, however, their significance seem to have been relegated to the background. Students' participation in decision-making is often viewed as problematic to administrators and other stakeholders. They are often perceived as minors, immature, making unrealistic demands and lacking in expertise and technical knowledge needed in running institutions (Kosgei et al, 2017:2), simply expected to do what they are told without questioning. It is against this background that the researcher sought to explore the relevance of the SRCs to the administration of CoE in Ghana.

This study explored a phenomenon, hence, was located in the interpretivist paradigm. It employed qualitative method (interviews) with office bearers of the SRCs and administrators of the four purposively selected CoE in Ghana. Observation was adopted for triangulation of data from the two categories of respondents. The study revealed that although the existence of SRC is of enormous importance, it's operations sometimes conflict with college authorities due to mistrust and imposition of unilateral decisions. The college authorities on the other hand often perceive student leadership as spearheading activities which hinder the smooth running of the institutions.

The study recommended information sharing, seminars and workshops for both student leaders and college authorities to create an atmosphere of trust, collegiality and partnership for peaceful co-existence.

KEY TERMS: Students' Representative Council; Relevance; Administration; Colleges of Education; Decision-making; Leadership; Role; Reverse mentorship; Student teachers, Association.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my children, Lily Lamley Mills and Laurene Lamiokor Mills.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My utmost gratitude goes to God for his love and support for me throughout this journey. He is the only God I have and the only one who has never forsaken me.

I wish to express my utmost gratitude to my supervisor, Professor K. P. Quan-Baffour, of the department of Adult Community and Continuing Education, University of South Africa, Pretoria, for his unflinching academic support and guidance from the beginning to the end of the project. I am forever grateful to him.

Thirdly, my appreciation goes to all participants in the study; to the management of the four Colleges of Education, the SRC members and to all staff and students in the Colleges who supported me in their diverse ways to make this study successful. I am grateful for your time and submissions to the study. Management and SRCs in the various Colleges of Education in Ghana will benefit from the study due to the information you provided to enrich the relationship between SRC and college management. May God bless you.

I am also thankful to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Nottinson, for giving me the necessary love, push and encouragement to go through this journey. I thank my three siblings, Mrs. Mercy Lawman, Mrs. Oboshie Anim-Boamah and Mrs. Paulina Amartey, for their prayers and support throughout my PhD journey.

Then to my academic inner circle who were there from the beginning, Mr. James Odartey Mills, Mr. Richard Frimpong, Mr. Kingsley Edem Wotortsi (Research Assistant), Mr. Maxwell Kontor (Research Assistant), Ms. Beatrice Mensah, Mrs. Charlotte Ampratwum, Honourable Bismark Addo (Wioso Assemblyman), Mr. James Dasinor and Mr Otor Plahar; God bless you for being my support. I also thank my fellow Pilema Unisa Associates in Ghana, especially, Mr. Seth Amedofu for your various support during the programme.

Finally, my sincere gratitude goes to Agogo Presbyterian Women's College of Education, all teaching and non-teaching staff, for their support through all the challenges and successes. This has accorded me the opportunity to mature into an outstanding personality who can fit into any working environment.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Education remains an important asset that touches on everyone and promotes individual, community and nationwide development. The significance of education in the development of any nation motivates local communities and government in the establishment of institutions to train individuals for the various sectors of the economy (Grant 2017). Western [European] education in Ghana originated during the colonial era Adu-Gyamfi et al (2016). Both the “colonial administration and the missionaries started schools in the then Gold Coast” (Pinto, 2019:5). The colonial government encouraged the missionaries like the Catholic fathers, Methodists, and Presbyterians to open schools wherever they established churches. The local community children were enrolled in the mission schools which trained them to provide assistance in evangelisation and to serve in the colonial administration as clerks, interpreters and messengers (Ubah, 1980). As the missionaries moved to the countryside to establish churches, more schools were opened and by the time of Ghana’s independence, there were schools in every district of the country. In recognition of education as the vehicle for individual and national development, Ghana’s premier President, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, established more schools as part of his “Accelerated Development Plan” (Graham, 2013:250). Thus, since independence, successive governments in Ghana have collaborated with the churches and communities to establish schools throughout the country. As more schools are opened, the need for more qualified teachers becomes an important concern as they are considered an important pillar in education. This has seen the opening of new Colleges of Education (CoE) and the expansion of the existing ones as a strategy to train more teachers for the ever-increasing number of schools. This is to guarantee access to quality education by all citizens of the country. As individuals are being trained to enter the teaching profession, students in the various colleges come together under one banner to address educational matters that concern them. The CoE are headed by Principals, who are supported by major stakeholders such as administrative staff, Students’ Representative Councils (SRC) and the governing council. This study therefore focused on the role of SRCs in the CoE in Ghana.

This chapter covers the introduction and background to the study, rationale of the study, problem statement and research questions which guided the entire study. The aims or objectives of the study, significance of the study, assumptions, delimitations and definition of concepts were clearly stated and discussed.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Tertiary education, also referred to as higher education, is a key player in human resources development worldwide (Cisneros, 2020). Institutions offering tertiary education are a vital part of national development in that, they play a significant role in society in terms of human resource development. These institutions provide the middle to top-level expertise necessary for the job market. For example, they train teachers, doctors, nurses, civil servants, engineers, entrepreneurs, scientists, social scientists and a countless number of other professionals for their respective countries. The people who are trained by the educational institutions acquire capabilities including problem-solving capabilities that influence local and national economies and support civil society. Teachers in particular, impart knowledge to students, champion effective governments and formulate vital decisions which totally influence societies (Ministry of Education, New Zealand, 2014:3).

In the contemporary world, several students in tertiary institutions are made up of the youth who form the most enthusiastic and ingenious set of individuals, (Isah, 1991) as described by Peter, Peter & Ebimobowei (2015). Higher education makes them valuable, vital and irreplaceable resources to the development of the country and the society. These writers describe the youth as delicate, vernal, susceptible and sensitive to stimulus who can easily be persuaded positively or negatively. The tertiary students form associations to discover their personal competences, attributes, worth and resilience; they assert their opinions on issues, take independent positions, ask questions about issues and express their passion in a well-organised environment. These organisations which they form seek to promote and defend their welfare; they offer stronger power than individual students. These associations are called by various names including student politics; student organisations; student NGOs; student representatives (European Students Union, ESU, 2009); students' government; students' guild or guild of students; (Ssemanda, 2016) and students' senate (Northland Community and Technical College, 2017). There are global, continental, regional and national student associations formed by students in line with the constitutions within

which they operate. All over the African continent, student associations exist in all tertiary institutions and CoE are no exceptions.

In Ghana, the training of teachers is of particular importance because through them, knowledge is imparted to the populace, hence, some tertiary institutions exclusively specialise in this endeavour. The CoE are particularly devoted to the training of teachers for the pre-tertiary level which includes kindergarten, primary and secondary levels of the educational ladder. Therefore, their engagement in the administration of institutions through student associations is of great importance as this goes further to influence the training of children who will develop into future leaders of the country. One of such student associations in relation to teacher education is the SRC. Undeniably, students are the integral part and mostly, the major element of every institution in Ghana and globally. They are in the majority as compared to faculty, administrative and support staff of any higher educational institution. The successful achievement of every institution is dependent on the strength and quality of its staff and management and the student body is key to the survival of the educational institution. Learners have generally had a restricted role in the organisational structure or governance of Colleges and Universities in Africa (AAU Concept Paper, 2018:1). They have always been at the receiving end of vital decisions and directives which affect their educational and personal development. These decisions are mostly taken without their active participation, thereby relegating their significance to the background. This research study focused on the relevance of Students' Representative Councils to the administration of CoE in Ashanti region of Ghana.

1.2.1 Legislative Framework Establishing SRCs in Colleges of Education

The following enactments establishes the existence of the SRCs in the CoE in Ghana. The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, 1992, Chapter 5, Section 79 allows all citizens the freedom of association. This is for the advancement and safety of their economic and social welfare. All persons therefore are free to join any association, including the freedom to establish or be part of either local or global associations for the safety of their well-being. The rights and freedom to form or attach themselves to any association of their choice is subject to the two main limitations on all the rights, that is, acknowledgement of the rights and freedom of others and respect for the public interest (Mills, 2015). Additionally, the Colleges of Education Act 2012, Act 847, Section 21 and sub-sections one and two (1&2) acknowledge that every single college of education shall have an

SRC with the obligation of representing students who have been appropriately admitted and registered to study in those institutions (Government of Ghana, 2012:11). This Act provides the firm foundation for the formation of this students' union in all the Colleges of Education in Ghana. This section concentrated on the composition and objectives of SRCs in the Colleges of Education in Ghana.

Colleges were established by both the government and the missionaries (Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian and Islamic) and were initially allied to the University of Cape Coast, (Princof Secretariat, 2008:141-143). Each local SRC in the colleges is affiliated to the Teacher Trainees Association of Ghana (TTAG) and the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS) respectively. Currently, these colleges have been affiliated to the five public Universities (Ministry of Education, 2018) namely: University of Ghana; Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology; University of Cape Coast; University of Education and University for Development Studies. This affiliation to the traditional public universities has its basis on Cabinet decision of greater engagement of universities in initial teacher education in Ghana, (GoG, Cabinet Memo, 2017).

Currently, there are 46 public Colleges of Education in 15 out of the 16 regions of Ghana with their unique SRCs on the respective campuses by means of similar constitutions. The composition of the SRC in the various CoE include core executives such as: the President; Vice President; General Secretary; Assistant Secretary, Public Relations Officer; Financial Secretary; Treasurer; Organiser; Assistant Organiser; Women's Commissioner; Hall Presidents' Representative; Chief Whip and The Coordinator (a non-voting member) and other College Prefects: General Compound Overseers; Mess Prefects; Academic Prefects; Sports Prefects; Disciplinary Committee Chairpersons; Entertainment Prefects; Stewards and Stewardesses; Gadgets Prefects; Library Prefects; ICT Prefects; Hall Presidents; Hall Secretaries and Utility Prefects. The total number of executives vary from college to college. The various functions of the executives, committees, commissions and boards have been clearly defined in the constitution. Tenure of office of all students' executive officers is one academic year while newly elected officers assume office after a month to the declaration of results. Grounds for the removal of officers have also been outlined in these constitutions. These associations are mandated to work closely with the administration in each of the colleges they are present, (Presbyterian College of Education, 2012)

Chapter one of the constitution, constituting the preamble, enacts and adopts the very constitution while chapter two spells out the actual name of the college for which the constitution belongs and the supremacy of the Ghanaian Constitution above that of the SRC (Presbyterian College of Education Constitution, 2012:4). As indicated in the National Council for Tertiary Education (2015:28-29), the SRCs are established to achieve the following aims and objectives:

- i). Promote the total well-being and benefits of students, organising the social, cultural, intellectual and recreational activities of the students of the college;
- ii). Present ideas of students to relevant organisations for consideration;
- iii). Create contacts and maintain friendly relations with students from other colleges and other tertiary institutions both local and international;
- iv) Nominate students' delegates to function on relevant college committees;
- vi). Promote friendly relation between every sector of the college community as well as maintain cordial relations with alumni;
- vii). Publish records of students' activities;
- viii). May appeal to the Principal of the College on all matters relating to their welfare, through the Students' Affairs Officer and eventually to Council, whose conclusion shall be binding.

Membership of the SRC is automatic, thus, students become members immediately after they enroll in the institution. The student association serves as connection between the entire students' body and the college authority, that is, administration. The college administration or management is logically and carefully organising and integrating the human and natural resources existing in any establishment for the aim of attaining set targets, Amadi (2008:6). The human resources of the colleges include the academic and non-academic staff and all other stakeholders for which students form the central part. This group of people can also mean individuals who are in charge of developing and implementing rules and regulations or those in leadership positions who complete important tasks. Amakye et al (2015:26) attest that administration involves cooperative efforts and goal accomplishment, and since students are in the majority and as such the major stakeholders of a college, their input should be recognised in the life of the institution. Some institutions, however, seem to sideline the contributions of their students' views. Lamenting this situation, Klemencic

(2012) points out that good governance through students' representation has become one of the most disenfranchised aspects of the advanced level of education both in principle and in action (Tamrat 2016:3).

1.2.2 Importance of Students' Representative Council

Akinboye and Eesuola (2015:148) observe that many countries in the world have not really understood the purpose of students' association as a force in the management of the higher education and the improvement of their governance as a whole. Effective students' governance in institutions can contribute to forming a stronger sense of community, thereby minimising students' misbehaviour. The SRC has often been responsible for preventing potential students' unrests in many institutions. Research conducted by United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the Ministry of Education in Kenya (MOE) in 2006, discovered that learners' engagement in the management of institutions was absolutely associated with improvement in learning outcome and reduction in students' unrests (Karanja, 2010) as cited by (Kosgei et al., 2017:86). In some case, some distinguished and high-ranking individuals in the student association frequently engage the high-level officials of the institution since they form part of some committees and the college's governing council where policies are formulated. This therefore develops a positive organisational relationship between the students and the leaders of the institution. Students' associations also assist the college authorities to maintain openness to students by building their faith and believing that the authorities will not fail in the solution of their problems through interaction. However, the college environment sometimes creates some suspicion between students and the institutional authority. This often emanates from the charging of fees, imposition of levy and formulation of policies concerning housing, transportation, admission, scholarship, examination, discipline and many more by the administration that inevitably affect students. Such funds are often channelled to advancing the developmental projects in the institutions. These issues may sometimes lead to contestation between SRCs and college authority.

An important outcome of student associations is that very often, students who take on leadership roles in students' governance could become future leaders of the country. Their involvement in leadership roles equips them with the skills to handle current issues which improves their

capability of thinking for themselves in the solution of societal problems. This promotes the awareness of obligation with respect to their students and the college administration.

The SRCs of the various colleges assist in the infrastructural development of the institutions. Students' associations embark on several projects in their various institutions. These include the construction and repairing of students' dormitories or halls, lecture theatres and computer laboratories, provision of means of transportation and other such fine projects through students' leadership participation (Afful-Broni, 2006:197).

The various committees of the SRC see to the specific areas of concern for the entire students. The SRC makes it possible for an effective interaction between administration, staff and students. Thus, students' grievances are carried on through meetings to administration and vice versa, (Afful-Broni, 2006). Lack of inadequate students' participation in decision-making denies students the valuable, intellectually challenging experience and deprives institutions of useful students' perspective, Mager and Nowack (2012). Although the greatest number of institutions have SRC, very little has been accomplished which raises the awareness as to what level of involvement of these student associations is to the administration of institutions (Kosgei et al., 2017).

1.2.3 Some Cases of Students' Instabilities in Colleges of Education

Several student unrest cases have caught the attention of the general public, and the media in particular, over the years in Ghana. For example, in 2015, it was reported that the Mampong Technical College of Education was closed by reason of students' riot. During the riot, the students destroyed college property by smashing louvre blades. The students were agitating against a fresh directive from the examining body, the University of Cape Coast, compelling all students to write elective Mathematics as a compulsory subject without any course as a substitute, which was in existent during admission (Donkor, 2015). According to students, formerly, a technical discipline or any other general course was accepted as an alternative. Management firmly insisted students would be denied promotion until they wrote and passed before joining the next batch of fresh students for the 2016 academic year. One student was arrested and granted police enquiry bail which infuriated other colleges. This was followed by several demonstrations of students at the Wesley and Akrokeri Colleges of Education as reported by Adjei (2015) and Adogla-Bessa (2015) respectively. As a precautionary measure, the colleges were closed down to prevent serious damage to properties. Reports indicate that negotiations between the University of Cape Coast

with college authorities broke down and in the event of the new policy's implementation, the riots ensued. The students believed they were enrolled under a different policy for which they were accountable. Therefore, where there were changes in the prevailing policy, they ought to have been communicated to through discussion for them to understand the reasons for such changes, and prepare themselves mentally towards the new changes. However, this was not done.

Bonzana (2017) also reported of students of Agogo Presbyterian College of Education being stranded as they were being required to pay second semester fees as a condition for admission into halls of residence and access to the dining hall. It could be recalled that in September 2016, the final year students of the college were subjected to similar treatment for expressing dissatisfaction towards their high fees in comparison to other CoE. In a related development, about 250 third year students in the same college were denied entry into the campus because they refused to sign a 'bond of good behaviour' for allegedly engaging in an unnecessary demonstration without permission against the authorities of the college in June, 17, 2016. They were also to pay their fees before being allowed to enter the campus. The demonstration was their reaction to halting additional arbitrary dismissal of some lecturers by the principal.

Notwithstanding the fact that the SRC's involvement does not necessarily mean that students will always attain fulfillment in their deprived conditions, but inasmuch as they understand the reasons for such deprivation, peace would prevail. It can be argued that without students, there can be no institution. They form the pivot around which every decision revolves. Thus, if institutions exist because of these students who are members of the SRC, then neglecting their involvement in administrative matters, which directly or indirectly affect them, leaves much to be desired.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Administrations in the various CoE in Ghana which control all activities seem to ignore the contributions of students in the achievement of institutions' objectives. Students' involvement in decision-making may be perceived as challenging to school authorities, parents and the public in general. They are frequently considered as lacking maturity, seeking unreasoning claims but deficient in capabilities and experiences needed in managing institutions (Kosgei et al, 2017) and therefore expected to simply do what they are told without question. Chemutai and Chumba (2014) affirm that in spite of the current global stress on democracy, authorities have persisted in their autocratic way of managing their institutions as students barely get the chance to voice their

opinions. To them, proper institutional management requires involvement of students in decision-making, however, what is found on the ground is the opposite of this assertion. Prolonged years of silence by students can lead to students' unrest as occurred in some colleges within the past years in Ghana which were triggered by what some people regard as insensitivity by management to the desires and requests of students. Such unrests lead to disruptions in the academic calendar, thereby, extending semester and prolonging of lecture periods till late in the night to cover outstanding lectures. These may tremendously affect both students' and lecturers' health as well as their performances. The college as an organisation could be equated to a tripod that includes the academic staff, support (non-teaching) staff and students. It is difficult, perhaps impossible for a tripod to stand or function without all its three legs. Therefore, each group has a significant duty to perform as contribution towards the college's operation for the achievement of its objectives.

Over the last ten-year period, the Ministry of Education in Ghana undertook the responsibility of reforming the Education system by transforming the Training Colleges into Colleges of Education. There have been assumptions that the SRC has substantial contributions to make in the Colleges of Education, however, these roles are not well defined by the college authorities, thereby, creating friction between the college administration and the SRCs. In spite of assisting, directing and guiding management in taking countless decisions on students' affairs, the association's role appears to have been downplayed by some college authorities. The central question which this study seeks to answer is:

Do management of Colleges of Education in Ghana value the contribution of student associations for the efficient operations of the Colleges?

There has been much research on relevance of students' leadership in other tertiary education institutions apart from the Colleges of Education. It is for this reason that this researcher focused her attention on the relevance of Students' Representative Councils to the administration of Colleges of Education in Ghana.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to determine the role of Students' Representative Councils to the administration of CoE in Ghana. In particular, this research sought to examine the challenges that hitherto hinder the smooth relationship between authorities and student leadership in order to

mitigate them. Conceptualising the various leadership roles of the CoE is of great concern which needs critical analytical study, since the type of relationship between management and students' representatives have a bearing on their training in terms of the human resources produced in the country. It is believed that the literature analysis and data collection in this project will assist in developing comprehensive strategies to evaluate students' leadership in tertiary institutions.

1.5 AIMS/OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to ascertain the role of Students' Representative Councils to the administration of Colleges of Education in Ghana.

The study was specifically designed to:

- determine the relevance of the SRC in the improvement of CoE in Ghana;
- explore the challenges students' leaders face in executing their roles in the CoE;
- investigate the major challenges administrators encounter when working with student leadership;
- determine the degree to which SRC activities influence the administration of CoE;
- explore ways and means of improving the relationship between the SRC and college administration.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To resolve the above stated problem, this study was directed by the following research questions:

- What is the relevance of the SRC to the improvement of CoE in Ghana?
- What challenges do student leaders face in executing their leadership roles in the CoE in Ghana?
- What challenges do administrators face when working with SRC leadership on CoE campuses in Ghana?
- How do the activities of the SRC influence the administration of CoE in Ghana?
- In what ways can administrators and SRCs' relationship be improved in the running of the CoE in Ghana?

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research elicited information from students and administrators regarding the relevance of the SRC to college administration and how students can be involved in the administration of their various institutions. It was also meant to motivate students' leaders to exhibit confidence in the execution of their responsibilities for which they were voted as they would be more aware of their significance in the Colleges of Education.

The findings of the research may offer proof for formulating policies with the aim of promoting the effectiveness of the SRC in Colleges of Education in Ghana. Authorities of the Colleges of Education might benefit from the research as they could gain an in-depth knowledge of the involvement of students in college administration as a means of preparing them for future leadership roles. Furthermore, the students' awareness of their relevance to administration is expected to assist management, lecturers and other interested parties to improve the SRC for more participatory management.

1.8. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Delimitation refers to the scope that the researcher set for the study. It is associated with the designations that the researcher resolves to set as the boundaries or parameters of the study to avoid the possibility of not achieving the study's aims and objectives (Theofanidis & Fountougi, 2018). It may also assist other researchers to restructure a study or advance imminent research work on similar topics.

There are a number of matters in relation to students' associations that could be studied, however, this study specifically focused on relevance of the SRCs in CoE in Ghana. It is presumed that the challenges facing SRCs and college administrators are similar in many cases and as such, the findings from this study of four colleges can be useful to other CoE in the country.

The researcher considered only participants in Ghana, explicitly in Ashanti region due to its cosmopolitan nature. The study was therefore restricted to four out of the eight public CoE located in the Ashanti region for this case study. Among the core SRC executives, only eight participated in the study viz: President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

In qualitative research, interview, observation and the combination of other instruments could be employed but this study concentrated on interview and observation. This is to present findings as quickly as possible.

This study was funded by the student herself and for time and logistics, the study focused on four colleges in the Ashanti Region which has more colleges than any other region in Ghana. The researcher's curiosity to appreciate the value and challenges of the SRCs in the CoE motivated her to undertake this study. Her objective was to utilise the findings of the study to make suggestions in improving the standards in the management of these institutions.

1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

1.9.1 Educational institutions:

Educational institutions are considered as entities that provide education and supportive services to students and other community members (Elston-Hurdle, 2000). They can also be referred to as organisations or establishments dedicated to providing formal instructions and learning experiences to students of various age groups (Bidwell, 2013). In this study, they are places where people of different ages are exposed to a wide range of academic programmes in acquisition for knowledge and skills for living.

1.9.2 Higher Educational Institutions:

These are institutions where individuals acquire advanced training and obtain diplomas or degrees to enter into various careers (Gallagher, 2022) or can be referred to as third level educational establishments providing postsecondary level academic instruction leading to the award of academic degrees (Brock, 2010). There are many types of higher institutions such as Colleges of Education, community colleges or universities, trade and technical schools and military colleges.

1.9.3 Public Institution:

This is an institution established exclusively or in part from central or local government funds (Smith, 2023) or any entity owned, operated and funded by state government, local government or municipality (Ruiters & Matji, 2016).

1.9.4 Students' Representative Council (SRC):

It is the representation of students elected to leadership positions to work collaboratively with College Management. In other words, it is the legitimate representative organ of the student body and the only recognised mouthpiece of the student body (Van Gyampo et al., 2016).

1.9.5 College of Education (CoE):

Tertiary institution or higher institution mandated to train preschool, primary and secondary school teachers in Ghana (Yakubu, 2015) besides, it is an institution specifically dedicated to the training of teachers.

1.9.6 Student Association:

It is a body representing and promoting the general interests of students at a university or a college. It may also be considered as a society or organisation operated by students at a university, college or other educational institution whose membership typically consists of only students.

1.9.7 Student leader:

It refers to a student elected by their peers to lead them and work collaboratively with the college management for the achievement of institutional goals (McNair et al., 2022). This can also describe any student who influences, motivates and guide their peers towards the achievement of a goal.

1.10 METHODOLOGY

The research questions were addressed by means of detailed literature review as well as extensive empirical investigation in the form of interviews and observation. The study was qualitative in nature and included the main stakeholders thus, students and management in the four institutions under study.

1.10.1 Research Design

The researcher adopted the qualitative research method which primarily explores a situation, phenomenon, problem or event. This means that in a qualitative investigation, the researcher examines events in their original settings, attempts to understand or clarify events as expressed by others (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). A detailed understanding of phenomenon was proven by communicating with participants directly and permitting them to express their views clearly against what was expected in the literature (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Descriptive survey design was appropriate for this study in that it only elicited the ideas of students (SRC executives) and

college administrators of the institutions under study. Purposive sampling method was selected for the semi-structured interviews which involved individuals and focus groups.

1.10.2 Population

The population consisted of all the 46 CoE in Ghana which were homogeneous in nature. Research was conducted in four CoE in Ashanti Region, Ghana, due to the vibrant nature of their SRC compared to the rest of the regions. These institutions have similar administrative set ups, goals and challenges. It was assumed that whatever findings the study made could be shared by the other CoE in the country. The sample of seventy-two (72) participants were involved in the research. After a detailed presentation of the study to management and SRC executives, invitation letters were sent to the various colleges and the participants. The researcher did a follow up by means of telephone calls to further clarify all procedures including data-collection methods, research ethics, the benefits of the study, audio recording of interviews and how the data would be handled in addition to the principle of non-payment for participation.

1.10.3 Instruments for Data Collection

Semi-structured interview and observation were the instruments employed in the study. Individual interviews were conducted on College Management (Council Chairpersons, Principals, Vice Principals, Students Affairs Officers, Finance Officers, College Secretaries (Registrars), Internal Auditors, College Librarians, Quality Assurance Officers and Heads of Departments) whilst focus group interviews were conducted on the Core SRC Executives (Presidents, Vice Presidents, General Secretaries, Assistant General Secretaries, Finance Officers, Public Relations Officers, Treasurers and Organising Secretaries). For the purpose of triangulation, observation was adopted for the two categories of respondents.

1.10.4 Analysis of data

The researcher organised the data under specific themes which permitted massive reduction in data collected through qualitative means to manageable bits. The data was organised by logging the types of data according to dates, names, times and places where, when and the exact participant whom the data was obtained from (Marshall & Rossman, 2006) as cited by Kusi (2012:111).

During the interviews and observation, field notes were taken and transcribed. Once the data was transcribed, the researcher familiarised herself with the data by reading the complete interview protocol again and again until its broad underlying meaning became clear (Cropley, 2019).

Furthermore, similar themes or categories were assembled to create a major idea in the database using the MAXQDA 2020 version which were generated to guide the analysis (Creswell, 2008:252).

A detailed description of each of the issues or codes under a particular theme was provided by the researcher. This was done as brief but significant quotations from the transcript were employed in order to add realism to the description. Data was interpreted regarding how those emerging themes addressed the research questions and whether initial suspicions were supported (Belotto, 2018:7).

1.11 CHAPTER DIVISION

Chapter 1: Orientation to the study

Chapter 1 is the orientation to the study and comprises the introduction, background to the study and the statement of the problem. The research questions which guided the study were also stated. The chapter also provides the aims, significance, delimitations and limitations of the study. Brief overview of the methodology employed in the study was also presented.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

This chapter discusses the relevant theoretical framework which formed the foundation for the study. The implications of the theory for the work were also clearly discussed.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Chapter 3 reviewed the relevant literature to the study. It examined the relevant literature on the role SRCs play in educational institutions. Their relationship with institutional leaders, challenges and how the SRC can work with institutional leaders for the achievement of educational goals.

Chapter 4: Research Design and Methodology

This chapter provided a comprehensive description of the methodology employed in the study. It covered the research approach, research design, sample and sampling procedures and data collection methods.

Chapter 5: Presentation of Results

The chapter analysed and discussed the data collected from the field through individual and focus group interviews. Data was analysed and discussed conforming with the stated objectives of the study.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

The last chapter focused on summary of findings from the data-collection tools—individual and focus group interviews and observation. This chapter drew conclusions and provided recommendations based on the findings of the research.

1.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This research points to the fact that administration in a broader sense is the capacity to organise many resources including challenging situations so creatively that they operate as a component. That includes developing the institution with every available resource no matter how little and taking responsibility for all the components that coordinate the work of an administrator. Since students are the centre around which institutions revolve, they must be involved in the decisions which are likely to affect them. The assumption of the researcher is that the involvement of students in decisions affecting them can minimise the numerous students' unrest on campuses. This study unravelled the relevance of the SRC in the administration of CoE in Ghana.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The field of leadership in organisations, including educational institutions, has been extensively investigated by many, both in general and in details, in terms of its distinctive natures and their applications. In any organisation, having effective leadership is essential since it is connected to the effectiveness, viability, success, and job performance of employees. The ability to inspire a group to realise a predetermined vision or set of attainable goals is at the heart of leadership (Lao 2020). Leadership is the science and art of influencing and directing people through fostering integrity, compliance, respect, and active cooperation in order to achieve the goal. People who are leaders "hold others' hands to lead the way, who show the way for those they lead" (Rodin, 2010: 8). Leaders are those who symbolically lead; they teach, educate and instruct so that eventually those they lead can work independently Ekaningsih (2014:1). Four theories were adopted in this study, namely: the stakeholder's theory; transformative theory; distributive leadership theory and the empowerment theory which are directly related to the topic under study. These theories are briefly discussed in the following sections of the chapter.

2.2 THE STAKEHOLDER THEORY

The term "stakeholder", was first coined in an internal memo at Stanford Research Institute (now SRI International, Inc.) in 1963 (Freeman et al., 2010:4). The term implied to defy the perception that stakeholders are the sole group to whom organisation require to be answerable to as they can affect or are affected by its activities. Therefore, dealing with them means dealing effectively with the interconnected challenges with regards to business (Freeman et al 2010). There are different meanings ascribed to the term stakeholder (Kaler, 2003) and "even the postulator of the concept changed his definition over the time." (Fontaine et al., 2006:4). It is opined as an individual or group with an ultimate concern of achieving favourable outcome of an organisation in accomplishing its goal, thus, providing anticipated outcomes while maintaining the sustainability of its products and services over time (Abubakari & Al-hassan, 2016:51). These writers further associated stakeholder as "anybody who can affect or is affected by an organisation, strategy or project" (Abubakari & Al-hassan, 2016:54). In this description, reference was only made to just

an individual which is highly undesirable, taking into consideration many groups whose activities can promote the development of establishments because they have a stake in them.

In the education domain, the word stakeholder usually denotes anyone who has a stake or attaches importance to the wellbeing and accomplishment of an organisation such as an educational institution. Stakeholders here include administrators, teachers, staff members, students, parents, families, community members, local business leaders and elected officials such as board members, city councilors, state representatives and alumni associations (Abubakari & Al-hassan, 2016:51-52). The Singapore Ministry of Education (2013) included organisations to individuals and a group of people as opined by others and cited by (Abubakari & Al-hassan, 2016: 54). In sum, stakeholders are bodies, such as local businesses, organisations, advocacy groups, committees, media outlets and cultural institutions, in addition to organisations that represent specific groups, such as teachers' unions, parent-teacher organisations and associations representing superintendents, principals, school boards or teachers in specific academic disciplines who have a stake in the institution and its students. These are individuals who have private, specialised, civic or fiscal interest or concern towards the institution. This theory usually elaborates on large number of individuals involved in making important decisions related to an institution such as a college, its operations and staff. Stakeholders may be partakers in governance teams, assume leadership duties in an educational institution, or express their thoughts, views and beliefs during community forums or institutional-board meetings. Abubakari and Al-hassan (2016) and Asiyai (2015) categorise stakeholders into two, namely: internal and external, while Yaro et al. (2016) categorise them as direct and indirect participants. Others have differentiated opinions and thus, classify them as primary and secondary stakeholders (Freeman et al., 2010). Primary stakeholders refers to groups whose contribution is highly essential in the existence of the firm, and to whom the firm may have special duties towards them. Secondary stakeholders on the other hand do not possess any official claim to the firm, besides do not have any special duties relating to them; however, firm may have regular management moral duties, such as not doing them harm (Carroll & Bucholtz, 1993; Gibson, 2000) as cited by Freeman et al. (2010:412).

All policies made by government on behalf of society regarding education impact directly on the students, hence, as stakeholders, students should be consulted for their inputs on issues that affect them directly. This study takes cognisance of the role of both internal and external stakeholders.

Internal stakeholders, as noted by Abubakari and Al-hassan, are those who work within the institution on a daily basis and who largely control what goes on there. They include all staff, district staff, students and to some extent, College Board members. External stakeholders, however, are those outside the day-to-day work of the institutions who have a strong interest in the institution's outcomes but who do not directly determine what goes into producing those outcomes (Paine & McCann 2009:5). They include employers, parents, society at large, local government agencies and international organisations. This is slightly different from the assertion by Asiyai (2015:68) who identifies the components of internal stakeholders as "government which owns tertiary education institutions or service provider, students—on whom all the activities of an institution are centered—academics, who are constantly engaged in teaching and research and community service, administrators, who manage the affairs of the institution by providing leadership, non-academic staff and other management staff, principal officers, senators, directors of institutes, heads of departments and internal members of governing council." The researcher is of the view that the external stakeholders of higher educational institutions in Ghana include National University Commission (NUC), non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, parents and guardians, employers, trade unions, alumni associations, student associations, industries, the private sector, development agencies (domestic and intercontinental) as well as the entire society which are quite similar to that in Ghana.

The emergence of stakeholder involvement in public education is due to the fact that educational institutions, aided by both local and national authorities, are not merely part of and liable for the societies they serve, but are similarly responsible for involving the wider community in important decisions relating to the management, operation and development of the institution. Progressively, educational institutions in Ghana, in particular, are very deliberate and preemptive in involving a greater number of stakeholders, mostly stakeholders from deprived communities and upbringings or within historically undeserved communities by institutions or communities that do not excel academically.

Several individuals and organisations that collaborate with public institutions also firmly believe that effective tactics for engaging stakeholders are essential to improving educational institutions (Boaz et al., 2018:1). In view of the fact that increasing number of educational reformers and reform organisations support more inclusive, community-wide participation in the institutional-

improvement process since some communities may be relatively ignorant about or estranged from their local educational institutions. The observation by this researcher indicates that educational leaders may strengthen the sense of ownership among participants and among the larger community by involving more members of the institutional community in the process. Consequently, when individuals within a community or organisation realise that their thoughts and perspectives are valued and have the chance to engage in authentic participation in forecasting or developmental process, the feeling of responsibility toward whatever task performed as a result of their participation in the attainment of goals is likely to increase the success.

“All stakeholders have interest in their organisation” (Benn et al., 2016:6). For example, students may be concerned about their knowledge and skills acquisition which may have a bearing on the quality of their future lives and careers. As a result of their understanding of students, their professional knowledge and experience, their perceptions of themselves as teachers, the quality of their work and their standing in the community, teachers or lecturers may also have a stake. Clearly, families care for the future of their children in terms of learning, health and education. Public investments in education constitute part of an investment into the future, and are responsible for ensuring that its quality is maintained. The administrators of the asset involves management and legislators. Provision of quality education is a huge burden which requires the participation of all stakeholders, in a democratic society. (Abubakari & Al-hassan, 2016:54). In this regard, communities, government departments, administrators, students, parents and the general public should come together in order for the goals of education to be achieved.

At times, when institutions consider a major programme as well as educational changes, especially when parents and local authorities are not pre-informed or engaged in the process, this may create opposition, obstruction and, surprisingly, coordinated resistance. As a change procedure, involving different stakeholders from a wider community can further develop the spirit of collaboration and public comprehension. It also integrates the view points, experiences and capabilities of participants in the community towards the improvement of reform proposals, approaches and procedures. Additionally, stakeholders are persons who have authority or impact in a community therefore, institutions are compelled by regulation or social expectation to communicate effectively and collaborates in their administration.

The administrator of the CoE, designated as principal, is thus, the most significant stakeholder in the institution who performs very essential roles by enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, research, provision of community services and other related functions of the institution. The principal initiates the educational tone of the institution for students, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and members in the community through provision of effective leadership. This individual is assisted in administering the college by other members of management including the vice principal, college secretary, dean of students, college finance officer, college librarian, internal auditor and other heads of academic departments. The principal has the duty to contribute to institutional development through the formation of a collective team approach to college decision-making process and solution of problems. This is achieved by “employing a distributive approach to routine operations of the institution to ensure maximum involvement of other internal and external stakeholders” (Spillane, Camburn & Pareja, 2007) as cited by Asiyai (2013:164). Adopting this leadership strategy involves other internal and external partners in the administration of activities which may improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the decision-making process of the institution. It may also contribute to a better policy implementation associated with improved learning outcomes of students. For satisfactory improvement in the quality of training to be accomplished, principals and board members ought to be performance and result-driven by aiming at the vision and mission of the institution while dedicating to infrastructural advancement through the use of internally generated fund.

Through stakeholder participation, good leadership is attained through the creation of favourable institutional climate where students, teaching and non-teaching workforce and management function harmoniously. In this form of interrelationship, collaboration of concepts, knowledge, information and skills can be enriched for improved quality of academic activities while disharmony, antagonism, mutual suspicion, acrimony and crises of various dimensions hostile to improved tertiary education system and development are avoided. Additionally, the principal must be highly committed to pursuing excellence in all service delivery. The college administrator must ensure relevant curriculum is implemented to enhance students’ learning and the curriculum must emphasise talents that are usually required by employers. The skills which are of importance to students include communication, problem solving, critical thinking, critical analysis, thinking inventively, logical reasoning, confidence and ability to see things from different perspectives (Asiyai, 2014:718). The principal, focused in the achievement of outstanding college education,

must be in constant collaboration with members of the governing council in ensuring that only high-quality staff, especially academic personnel are employed. The most important determinant of excellence in tertiary education is the presence of a critical mass of outstanding teaching staff, researchers and students. Through combined efforts involving different stakeholders, colleges could sponsor lecturers and other staff to attend training programmes such as workshops, seminars and conferences both local and international to update their knowledge and skills. Such training programmes could involve trade unions, employers of labour and public assistance. This can help in shaping education and training to make it more relevant to the needs of the market. The principal, who is the chief administrator of the college, must ensure that lecturers continue to learn through continuous education and training via professional development programmes for continuous capacity building. Continuous professional development activities can keep them abreast with modern teaching technologies as well as innovations and changes in teaching and learning so that they are able to guide students in learning experiences to meet world-class standards.

The government finances public Colleges of Education in Ghana and influences their improvement by ensuring that relevant funding, policy formulation and relevant curriculum is implemented. The curriculum should be constantly reviewed in line with market demands with input from all the major stakeholders—Ministry of Education, Governing Council, staff, students and community members. The council has the duty to perform numerous roles in ensuring continuous improvement in quality of education in the colleges by providing strategic direction to programmes and activities, recruiting members of management and approving educational programmes developed by the academic board. The council also monitors the college finances by allocating funds for various uses; borrowing, selling, buying, exchanging and leasing college assets and to enter into and cancel contracts on behalf of the college (Harmonized Statute for Colleges of Education, 2015:5). In other words, the council makes important contribution in defining strategic vision and is responsible for policy formulation and monitoring institutional performance through decision-making.

Lecturers are the teaching or academic staff in the Colleges of Education in Ghana. Their role is vital in the development of high standards of teaching and learning as they constitute the frontliners. The lecturer is a pace setter with the overall objective of ensuring students' effective

learning by creating learning experiences which stimulate students' interest and motivate them to work assiduously to become innovative-problem solvers. Universally, the teacher is considered a key factor in implementing educational-reform programmes aimed at improving the quality of education (Asiyai, 2015). Lecturers (including teachers) are central players in the process of educational change and institutional development, who are not just confined to the delivery of the curriculum, but are involved in defining and interpreting it. The educators' activities in the classroom can assist in igniting the interest of students and instill in them positive attitudes towards their studies. Their duties, aside teaching, include setting and marking assignments and examination questions, invigilating examinations, supervision of students' projects, conducting research and publications, assisting in administration of the departments, supervision of students' internships and extension services (National Council for Tertiary Education (2015:7)b. The lecturer's role as a stakeholder in improving the quality of tertiary education is that of a manager charged with the provision of a stimulating and conducive learning environment for students' productive learning as well as ensuring effective classroom management.

In the CoE setting in Ghana, the students' union which is the SRC is an internal stakeholder. The SRC is an integral stakeholder whose actions and inaction affect the perception on the institution. They represent the focal point around which the college revolves and every decision made is centred on them. The essence of the establishment of any institution of higher learning is to ensure the sound development of students academically, morally, socially, politically and spiritually. Students being the prime stakeholders towards the success of any educational institution must be incorporated in the decision-making process of the institution. For quality education, the SRC must be encouraged to exercise their decision-making roles in the education process especially participation in the decision on issues pertaining to their academics. The SRC must organise students to work with the college authorities in such a way that educational goals are achieved. As representatives of students, they can assist in ensuring discipline or enforcing college rules in order to avoid disruptions in academic programmes. Lots of improvement can be recorded in Colleges of Education through contribution of the different stakeholders both internal and external. External stakeholders such as parents, community members, political leaders and others can influence improvement in quality through the donation of funds, implementing reform, participative decision-making, institutional-policy making, construction of buildings, donation of health facilities and textbooks, construction of access roads to institutions and monitoring performance.

Organised-transformation efforts must encompass both internal and external stakeholders whose contributions are influential in reaching the desired changes in the functions of the institution. To accelerate development, students who represent the focal points of institutions must be encouraged through active participation in decision-making and funding for the development of physical facilities. The relevance of the SRC in the achievement of the vision of the institution cannot be over-emphasised.

2.3 TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP THEORY

An alternative theory which has relevance to this study is the transformative theory. Given the important role of leadership in determining the outcome of work, transformational leadership is carefully examined as a key element in promoting employees' perception of meaningful work (Christensen-Salem, 2013). Transformational leadership was propounded by Burns (1978) who initially presented the concept of transforming leadership in his descriptive research on political leaders. Burns (1978:20) explains that transformational leadership exists where one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. The transforming leadership approach generates substantial change in the life of people and organisations as it reforms perceptions and values, and changes expectations and aspirations of employees, Roberts (1985:1).

A different researcher, Bass (1985), expanded the work of Burns (1978) by using the terminology transformational instead of transforming (Roberts, 1985). This was an additional view to the initial concepts of Burns to help in clarifying how transformational leadership could be measured and how it influences motivation and performance. Bass opines that at the transformational level a leader ability is measured in terms of his influence on the followers—the followers feel trust, admiration, allegiance and respect for the leader and because of the leader's qualities, followers are eager to work beyond initial expectation. The above mentioned outcomes occur as the transformational leader provides followers something further than just working for self-gain; they offer followers with an inspirational mission and vision as well as providing a sense of identity. The leader transforms and motivates followers through his or her idealised influence (charisma), logical stimulation and individual consideration. The leader then emboldens followers to develop fresh and exclusive techniques in challenging the status quo while altering the environment in support of success. In sum, a transformational leader is associated with leader behaviour which

concentrates on widening follower ambitions, objectives and principles, in addition to offering them the opportunity and confidence to perform beyond the expectations specified in the implicit or explicit exchange work agreement.

Transformational leadership incorporates diverse skills within four components as documented by Avolio, Bass and Jung (1997) in Bass & Riggio, (2006). These qualities comprise idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1993) as cited by Alkhaja & Miniano (2019). The above qualities of a transformational leader can work effectively in the implementation of change in any establishment.

The qualities are briefly discussed in the following paragraphs.

2.3.1 Individualised Consideration

Individualised Consideration describes the level to which a leader takes care of each follower's needs and as a mentor, coach or guide. A transformative leader addresses challenges and necessities of each follower by providing support and compassion towards every single person's circumstance, and upbringing (Gomez-Leal et al., 2022, Yin et al., 2020). When a leader demonstrates individualised consideration, she/he may be conscious of the distinctive talents that each follower exhibits to the workplace in order to support them in developing and demonstrating these exclusive abilities and conducts. In the end, the follower may be encouraged to aspire to develop further as they show intrinsic motivation when performing their duties.

2.3.2. Inspirational Motivation

Inspirational Motivation is the extent to which a leader communicates an exceptional vision that inspires and motivates other persons in performing beyond their potentials. Transformational leaders often raise the bar while encouraging followers to perform beyond their expectation (Gilbert et al., 2016:165). The enthusiasm towards their followers' capability to meet goals are unquestionable and constantly offering meaning to their followers by acknowledging the prominence of all duties and responsibilities. Certainly, transformative leaders motivate their followers to possess a powerful sense of determination in order to give purpose and meaning to advance in their quest for success Burns (2004:79). This encourages followers to devote more effort in their tasks and to be optimistic about the future while investing in their own abilities.

2.3.3 Idealised Influence

Transformational leaders who demonstrate idealised influence act as mentors for their followers, exhibiting high standards of ethical behaviours (Christensen-Salem, 2013). This category of leaders takes the needs of their followers into consideration as well as prioritises them. Followers identification with such leaders results in their desire to emulate them (Seloane, 2010). Transformative leaders usually have very high standards of moral and ethical conduct and can be considered doing the right thing. Sosik & Jung (2010) describe them as authentic, exhibiting high moral standards and an enduring work ethic. They are genuinely respected by followers, who trust them completely. Providing followers with a sense of vision and mission is their hallmark.

2.3.4 Intellectual Stimulation

Intellectual Stimulation is the degree to which transformational leaders challenge assumptions, take risks and seek followers' concepts (Liu et al., 2021:154). Such leaders encourage their followers to be original and resourceful by interrogating theories, reframing problems and confronting old situations in new ways. When followers fall short or make mistakes, such leaders do not criticise them publicly (Avolio & Bass, 1995:212); rather, they solicit their views to understand what caused the problem and work with them to find solutions to the problems from a follower's perspective (Christensen-Salem, 2013:4). The leader inspires followers to be independently-minded persons to achieve autonomy. As a result, they are able to tolerate their followers' mistakes, while encouraging them with the belief in their contribution towards the promotion of growth and improvement within the organisation. Transformative leaders develop learning opportunities and do away with outmoded practices for their followers.

Transformational leaders possess extraordinary vision and purpose, bearing in mind that individuals are not only dependable and purposeful but can remarkably contribute to the success of any organisation (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Accordingly, this group of leaders attempt in developing workers full potential by allowing them to take on greater responsibilities (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Such leadership actions and behaviours are expected to lead to increased work meaningfulness because they signify to employees that their efforts are valued and respected. In the Colleges of Education, the Principal being the CEO of the institution, can engage SRC in decision-making and solicit their views on issues. The SRC must be seen as a partner whose opinions matter to the institution if management wants to engage them fully as in the case of

transforming the institution. For example, they must be encouraged to engage in council proceedings and their views respected in order to own all decisions surrounding them as they are at the receiving end. The SRC's personal identification with the leader being, the principal as well as social identification with their work unit is positively linked to transformational leadership, (Kark et al., 2003).

The visionary nature of transformational leadership such as the principal and core members of management may assist them to convince subordinates to support the initiatives to move the institution forward. These leaders should exhibit high moral standard to serve as role models to the entire student population. Both college and student leaders should show empathy towards the members of the college community. The leadership of the college should mentor and coach the student leadership to enable them to play a productive role in the development of the institution. Acting as the lead consultant at any client site, council and the academic board must keep track of the less experienced student leaders and their work and engage with them on a regular basis. This can empower student leaders to perform beyond normal expectations through inspiration.

2.4 DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP THEORY

Distributed leadership, which is also called team leadership, shared leadership, collaborative leadership, dispersed leadership, collective leadership, or democratic leadership (Bolden, 2011, Spillane, 2005, Tian, 2016) came to light in the 1950s (Wan et al., 2017). Even though the concept of distributive leadership was adopted during this millennium, its origin has been extensively integrated by academicians and researchers over centuries ago. Oduro (2000:4) suggests that the theory existed nearly 1250 BC, which makes it one of the earliest leadership concepts utilised to achieve organisational objectives in the ancient times. Harris (2009) affirms that it was a concept that could be tracked as early as the mid-1920s or perhaps even earlier. Gronn (2000) cites Gibb (1954) as the premier writer who proposed distributive leadership when he described leadership as a collective quality, a set of responsibilities which must be accomplished collectively. Distributed leadership may be defined as the interactions between people and their situation (Spillane, 2005) and (Bolden, 2011). These authors describe distributive leadership as involving people interacting with other people or situations to achieve the goals of an organisation. Distributed leadership focuses on leadership practice rather than specific leadership roles, functions, routines and structures which occur when those in authoritative and subordinate

positions interact with each other (Spillane, 2005). It is argued that “distributive leadership is not something done by a person or a set of individual actions but a group activity that works through and within relationships” (Ansheb, 2017).

The practice of distributed leadership mostly pertains to various patterns of delegated, dispersed, collective and shared leadership practices as embedded in the processes and interactions within an organisation (Wan et al., 2017). Distributed leadership addresses the totality of human resources in organisations. This leadership model is fundamental to develop leadership potentials among members of organisations such as the Colleges of Education. It provides equal chances and statuses for all to realise the goals of an institution. The basic philosophy underlining this theory is the mobilisation of shared wisdom and common sense by creating collaboration among all stakeholders in an organisation to maximise organisational efficiency, productivity, and competence. Distributed leadership model considers the management and operations of organisations in its entirety as complex and complicated processes. The institutional management, which is a complicated and hard task, cannot therefore be left to a single leader or leadership approach because college structures are not easy to be managed effectively by a single person (Göksoy, 2015). Spillane and Diamond (2007) support this idea when they describe the concept of distributed leadership as a collaborated, collective and coordinated distribution of duties. The important characteristic of distributed leadership is based on the distribution of leadership between formal and informal leaders. Thus, it does not signify how an individual undertakes a specific task compared to others but a system of practice comprising a collection of interacting components: leaders, followers and situation. These interacting components must be understood together because the system is more than the sum of the component parts or practices (Spillane, 2005).

Distributed leadership is the sharing and distributing of leadership practices for leaders and the audiences to interact in this type of leadership (Spillane, 2006) as cited by Goksoy, 2015. In this theory, individual expertise rather than position is the focus (Malloy, 2012). This leadership approach addresses leadership along with teams, groups and organisational characteristics and oppose the assumption that individuals should lead others to ensure change. Advocates of this idea argue that shared leadership is necessary since educational institutions are too complex to be led by a single person (Heller & Firestone, 1995). The responsibility for managing the quantum of multiple tasks should therefore be distributed among many individuals and roles (Hoy & Miskel,

2012). Leadership is delegated through distribution of duties to mentor the less experienced to take on full leadership role in future. The basic principle of the theory is its effort to share the leadership load of an organisation. Distributed leadership is shared institutional leadership which is more than the sum of knowledge and actions of individual leaders. It however involves structured courses, selected which are organised as a result of dynamic interaction between many leaders and audiences. This means institutional leadership represents the use of social, physical and cultural resources to obtain identity, acquisition, distinction, coordination and learning in teaching conditions.

In the case of CoE, distributed leadership could be perceived as responsibilities distributed among multiple staff members and students through a committee system to improve its governance. The committee system which includes the SRC, should ensure that members are involved in all decisions pertaining to the administration of the colleges through in-depth analysis of issues to generate solutions to problems. This can improve on communication and interaction between management and students in the institution. As Day et al. (2016) undeniably assert, “there is a strong linkage between increased distribution of leadership roles and responsibilities and the improvement of students’ output” which is relevant in the Colleges of Education. It can be argued that Colleges of Education cannot rely on one leader for the solution to all its complex challenges as very few individuals have these qualities. This therefore requires the engagement of a wider group of staff and student leadership in implementing effective change initiatives.

Furthermore, any policy formulated by management would be heading towards doom during the implementation period when student leadership is ignored. This is because their involvement enables them to own the policy, thereby, being committed to its outcome. Nonetheless, it should be noted that soliciting skills and experience from more diverse individuals promotes successful leadership as implementation of policies can be enhanced by several others (both management and student leadership). This contributes to staff and students’ perceived autonomy and organisational commitment, leading to the achievement of organisational goals. Since this leadership style is about mobilising expertise at all levels, increased SRC’s engagement through the sharing of ideas can improve their sense of collective responsibility in the success of the institution. In some cases, they can be made to set agenda and take responsibility for a conversation they are leading and allowing opportunity for assessment.

Distributed leadership performs better where people are responsible for their leadership actions in the newly developed leadership roles. In distributed leadership, collaboration is the modus operandi and inter-dependency in working is a tradition. (Squires, 2018) and Northouse (2016) note that, it enables each team member to adopt leadership behaviours to inspire and to maximise the team effectiveness of the team. Decision-making by leaders should engage other people with diverse knowledge and perspectives because diversity in a group leads to enhanced problem solving (Squires, 2018) & (Northouse, 2016). If “distributed leadership strongly determines the motivation of teachers” (Emmanuol et al., 2014), then this same principle will apply to students and the SRCs in institutions. This motivation can lead to a strong bond between colleagues, mutual trust and support, thereby promoting development in the organisation, as Sibanda (2017) opines. This leadership approach also encourages a sense of belonging among leaders where they feel they are valued members of the institution (Hughes and Pickeral, 2013) and this may lead to a commitment to collaborate for the institutional system to work effectively.

Authentic distributed leadership entails extraordinary stages of confidence, clarity, and mutual respect; in so doing, distributed leadership must be carefully planned and intentionally orchestrated (Harris, 2013). This connotes that persons in formal leadership roles have a strategic role in creating the environment for distributed leadership to be practiced. They must create the opportunities for others to lead and by so doing share responsibilities and mentor future leaders. Furthermore, distributed leadership is an essential element of, and contributor to, better organisational outcomes. Although there are undeniable variations in the nature, features and levels of distributed leadership in different institutions, it remains within the scope of factors contributing to high performance. Research evidence also indicates that certain forms of distributed leadership have a modest but significant indirect effect on student achievement (Mascall et al, 2008). In summary, leadership is inherent in anyone who performs as such, and not entirely those at the top of the management ladder or an individual (Goleman et al., 2002).

2.5 EMPOWERMENT THEORY

This theory has been in existence under various names from the social and political upheavals of the 1950s, and 1960s era of civil rights in the United States and human rights, liberation and independence movements around the globe (Perkins, 2010). Thus, the term “empowerment” has been somehow political and vague and its clarification is in the eye of the beholder.

Rappaport (1981) as referred by Perkins (2010), is best accredited in promoting the model. His argument was that specialised and professionally controlled prevention and mediation programmes and services tend to interpret individuals in misery as non-existent needs, as if they are inactive and naïve objects who are unable to effectively handle issues to benefit themselves. He called for governments, programme leaders and scholars to desist from a patriarchal stress on people's needs or interceding in distress situations on their behalf, toward an empowerment model. In recognition that, while individuals may intermittently require support, information, or professional advice, they should play active role in planning and controlling their own life and destiny.

As stated by Perkins (2010), empowerment is a deliberate continuing process centered locally, comprising mutual respect, analytical thinking, compassion, and engagement with people, where individuals in unfortunate positions gain greater access to and control over those resources they lack. He further defined empowerment as a process by which people gain control over their lives, democratic participation in the life of their community and a critical understanding of their environment (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). The common elements in this definition are that empowerment is a progression of events occurring in communities or organisations, involving active participation, critical reflection, creation of awareness and understanding, access to and control over important decisions and resources. As observed by this researcher, the second definition did not comment on the creation of environment for mutual respect and caring, which may be especially important for organisational leaders to include in their understanding and practice of empowerment (Gutierrez & Ortega, 1991) as cited by Perkins & Zimmerman (1995).

Rappaport, who made immense contributions to the theory of empowerment, is calling for its adoption as the focal concept in developing community psychology. Cattaneo and Chapman 2010 defines the term as an instrument by which individuals, establishments and societies gain control over their matters (Rappaport, 1987). This description reflects the sense of gaining personal control that is intuitively central to the concept. However, the "mastery" notion of empowerment provides insufficient attention to the relevance of the subject for community well-being and gives more credibility to the promotion of a conflict-based model of empowerment and marginalises the human need for social integration. It has no social connection whatsoever for which this concept stands for.

Rappaport later endorsed the Cornell Empowerment Group's definition as involving respectful, caring and reflective participation in a community group to gain equal access to and control over resources (Rappaport, 1995) as cited by (Cattaneo, & Chapman, 2010:248). This definition, however, involves shallow description of social connection, but rather towards greater control of resources.

Empowerment is also the phenomenon whereby powerless personalities, organisations or groups develop awareness of power dynamics affecting their lives, cultivate skills and capacity for gaining certain control over their lives, exercising this control devoid of infringing on the privileges of others and assisting the empowerment of others in their community (McWhirter, 1991). This description aligns with the notion of enhancing power of the marginalised populaces for social justice rather than a description of a process that may assist but may not be necessarily based on such beliefs. Accordingly, failure of this model may not necessarily mean absence of empowerment as substantial number of people will not be ready for or interested in empowering others. Mechanic (1991) as cited by Catanao et al. (2010) defines empowerment as a way persons learn to view closer relation concerning their objectives, how to achieve them, and a correlation between their labour and achievements. This definition embraces the essential element that, empowerment comprises of anything meaningful to a person but involves no actual changes in power thus, a sense of being empowered and the increase in actual power (Riger, 1993).

Empowerment has been described as an interactive process by which a powerless person sets a peculiar goal-oriented vision to increase power, implement, observes closely while reflecting on the impact. This can be accomplished by reflecting on the evolving success, knowledge and skills connected to the objective. It is important for people to take charge over their fears, obsessions, pessimistic or catastrophic thoughts and behaviors and the most effective way to master these habits is through participatory activities with others. These actions possess essential individual benefits, including improvement in health, well-being, life satisfaction and happiness (Prestby, Wandersman, Florin, Rich & Chavis, 1990; Wallerstein, 1993) thereby promoting our communities and institutions in building a more just society as cited by Perkins (2010:215).

2.6 IMPLICATIONS OF THE THEORIES TO THE STUDY

Leadership, which has always been important in organisations and particularly the administration of public and non-profit human service agencies, has rarely been thought of as empowerment for

their staff, clients or even their leaders. In realising this theme, the CoE in Ghana, in order to change the status quo, could adopt the process of empowering the SRC in a variety of ways. The SRC could be empowered through promoting awareness, respect and appreciation of the values, history and norms of students. Likewise, the development of structures spanning the boundaries between groups by supporting inclusion and activation of member resources in all related activities in the administration of the institution. This was agreed by Perkins when he said, empowerment and collaboration of both groups synergised board functioning which enables an organisation to accomplish more than when one group dominates (Perkins, 2010). In conclusion, Kieffer (1984:22) established that “the longer participants extend their involvement, the more they come to understand; the more they understand, the more motivated they are to continue to act; the more they continue to act, the more proactive they are able to be.” Besides, the more they can further their skill and efficacy, the more likely they would want to continue.

Learners remain clienteles in the education fraternity with the determination of receiving the best training. The purpose of any institution of higher learning is to ensure the total transformation of students academically, morally, socially, politically and spiritually. Students must be made an integral part of the management of any educational institution to achieve success. Successful institutions encourage significant participation by students, teachers and parents (Assiyai, 2015:64s). Short and Greer (2002) intimate that, empowering students with shared decision-making increases the choices and responsibilities of their own learning as cited by Assiyai (2015). As a result, students develop requisite skills, knowledge, principles and attributes necessary for fruitful and sustainable living in the society through such participations. To achieve quality education, learner must be inspired to practice their decision-making abilities in the management process especially involvement in decisions on issues pertaining to their academic welfare. The attainment of quality requires that students resume at their institutions at an expected date, regularly attend their lectures so that they can learn and avoid issues of academic misconduct.

2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

A leader is an inspirational person, a person who leads and directs his/her followers towards realisation of some specific goal or outcome. Leaders have different leadership styles through which they lead or influence their subordinates. Some might be democratic, others are achievement-oriented while many others may vary from organisation to organisation and even

within the organisation. Leadership in higher education should motivate, inspire, direct, empower, mentor and lead all members of the organisation towards the achievement of shared objectives. There are various stakeholders in academic institutions including students, faculty members, administrators and other supporting staff. The leadership of the institution should ensure that all the stakeholders are brought on board to ensure the smooth running of the institution and achievement of its goals. This requires qualities such as being honourable, brave, supportive and an enthusiastic person; networking skills, relationship building and practising participative and consultative management style. Other qualities such as being credible, building formal and informal channels of communication for information transfer, sharing experiences and ideas, adaptation to internal and external environment are valuable. Additionally, encouraging transformation and change, to have selflessness and awareness of issues, developing people and making collaborative partnerships with others, creating collegial working atmosphere and being able to get necessary support from others are equally essential in the management of any institution. Thus, every leader might not have all of these qualities, but good leadership demands for these qualities as leadership has become very challenging in the contemporary world.

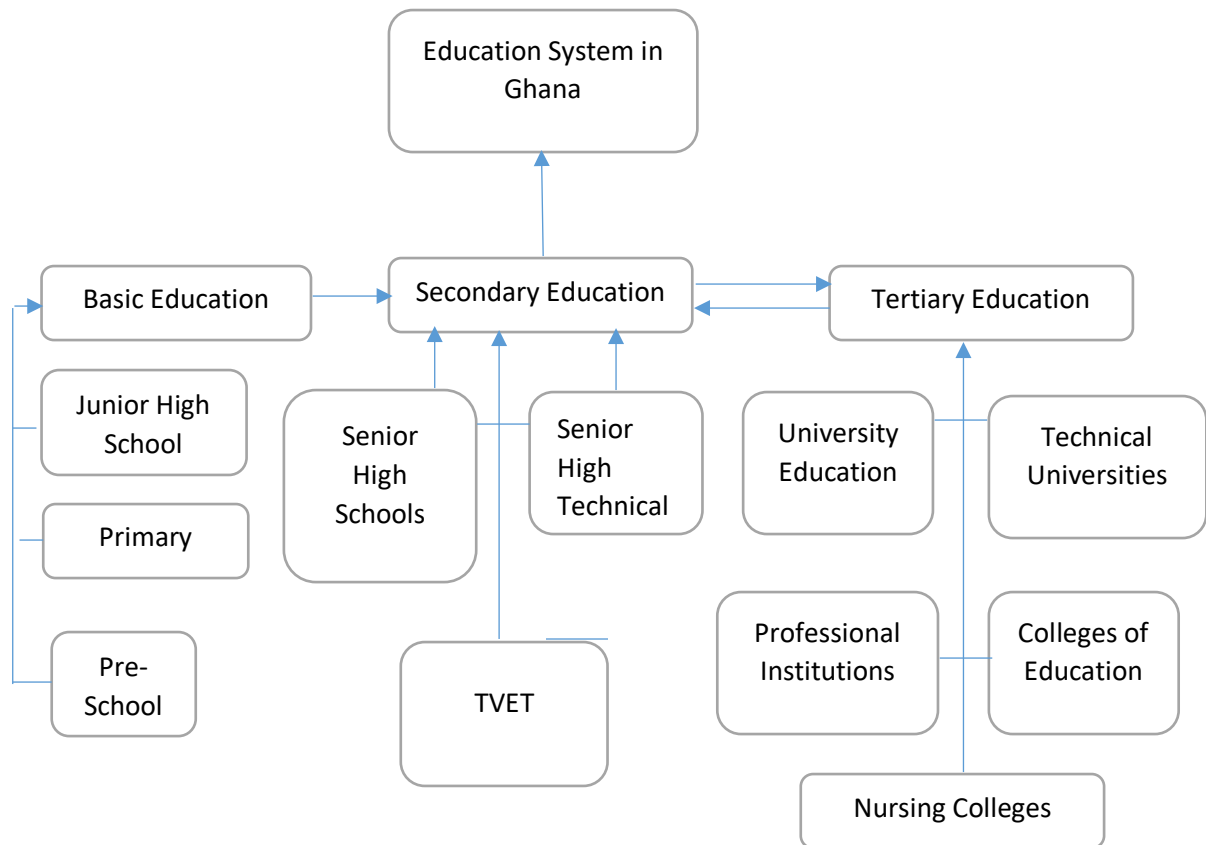
CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Ghana, the educational system is manned and controlled by the Ministry of Education which is enshrined in the Education Act of, 2008. This body has established various structures and guidelines to be used in the administration of the various educational phases in Ghana. The figure below indicates the various levels in Ghana's educational system. The sole objective of Ghana's educational system is to provide every individual with a well-balanced requisite knowledge, skills, values, aptitudes and attitudes to become functional and productive citizens for the development and the democratic advancement of the country.

Figure 3.1 System of Education in Ghana



The system of education is organised into three progressive levels, comprising, two years of kindergarten, six years primary and three years in the junior high school, summing up the basic education to be eleven years. The average age to begin basic or pre-secondary level education, which is the kindergarten, is four years. The secondary level or second cycle comprises senior high school and technical, vocational, business and agricultural education or apprenticeship training of not less than three years. The tertiary education includes the Universities, Technical Universities, Colleges of Education and Nursing Training Institutions, which were established by the Act of Parliament or accredited by the National Accreditation Board. Their duration for studies varies depending on the qualification one seeks to attain ranging from a minimum of three years and above (GOG, 2007).

3.2 ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF EDUCATION IN GHANA

Education in Ghana, through the Ministry of Education, implements policies by its numerous agencies; Ghana Education Service (GES); National Inspectorate Board (NIB); National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA); West Africa Examination Council (WAEC); Council for Technical and Vocational Education (COTVET); Education Management information System (EMIS); National Board for Professional and Technical Examination (NABPTEX); Ghana Library Authority (GLA); Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences; Funds and Procurement Management Unit; Ghana Commission for UNESCO; Ghana Book Development Council (GBDC) and Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) which replaces both the National Accreditation Board (NAB) and National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) by Education Regulatory Bodies Act, 2020 (Act 1023) Ministry of Education website (2021). Education policies are implemented in collaboration with the local offices as Ghana is divided into 16 regions and 230 district offices. The Ghana Education Decentralisation Project (GEDP), which was launched in 2010 and ended in 2012, has increased the influence of local authorities over management, finance and operational issues with respect to educational matters. In this study, “administration and management are used interchangeably owing to their closeness in meaning” (Amakye et al., 2015).

3.3 THE GENESIS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN GHANA

The development of Ghana’s higher education system began with the recommendations of two Higher Education Commissions namely, Asquith & Elliot Commissions. These were appointed by the British government in 1943 to investigate the formal university education modelled after the

British system of higher education (Yusif et al., 2013). Recommendations made by the commission assisted in the establishment of the maiden university in Ghana (University College of the Gold Coast) by 1948 awarding degrees from the University of London (Effah & Senadza, 2008).

Through an Act of Parliament in 1961, “the public university system in Ghana received full autonomy and power to award its own academic credentials with a mandate for international recognition” (Teferra & Knight, 2008). The National Accreditation Board (NAB) later in 2006 accredited many private institutions of higher learning to pursue different degree and diploma programmes. The swift expansion of private tertiary institutions in Ghana indicates high demand for higher education and training in the country (Yusif et al., 2013). Currently, Ghana’s system of university education is geared toward liberal studies which lack practical education and skills required at the job market for economic growth and development in the competitive 21st century world economy (Alagaraja. & Arthur-Mensah, 2013).

Boateng (2012) places “emphasis on programmes in science and technology” aimed at training young adult students in Ghana’s higher education system which could be useful for building a vibrant local labour market. Moreover, challenge with youth joblessness in the country has generated anxiety, as almost 50% of young adult leave tertiary institutions without finding jobs after their completion of national service two years and beyond (Owusu-Ansah & Poku, 2012). This appalling situation requires urgent transformation of the institutional programmes and courses mounted by tertiary institutions to address the recent social and economic challenges of the country. The revision of U.S. community college education may provide critical pathways for Ghanaian students to earn associate and bachelor degrees to qualify them to participate in Ghana’s economic development (Strayhorn & Johnson, 2014).

Tertiary education system in Ghana was designed to consist of universities, technical universities, colleges of education and other professional and specialised institutions of higher learning for preparing competent labor force in response to Ghana’s labour market (Alagaraja. & Arthur-Mensah, 2013). Through the then Ministry of Education, Science and Sports, now Ministry of Education, the Ghana government is the only institution with the oversight responsibility of providing administrative guidelines for higher education in the country (Atuahene & Owusu-Ansah, 2013).

3.4 HISTORY OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN GHANA

Western formal teacher education began with the advent of European trading merchants who established the Castle schools as their place of abode, security and for trading activities (Baafi-Frimpong, 2019). The Dutch took over the Elmina Castle in 1637 after defeating the Portuguese to continue with the Castle school education. They started to send some African children abroad to further their studies amongst whom was Jacobus Capitein. He made considerable contribution, being appointed as the first African Protestant priest for the Dutch Company at Elmina. He established a Dutch school in 1740 and was regarded as a pioneer of vernacular translation and a teacher of literature. This activity was sustained by the Danish government when they took over the governance of the Gold Coast, now Ghana. The British also followed suit but “only Philip Quaque returned to become a teacher, catechist and schoolmaster between 1766 and 1816” (Antwi, 1995:30).

It must be acknowledged that though the development of teacher education began with the Castle schools, much meaningful contribution was made by the missionary bodies. The Basel Mission was mainly a German society which arrived at the request of a Danish governor to work in the castle schools. They started a seminary at Akropong Akuapem in 1848 to train teachers and catechists. Presbyterian Training College, PTC, then became the first teacher training institution in Ghana. A second one was opened at Abetifi in 1898, but in 1924, it was merged with the seminary at Akropong. The only institution offering teacher education till 1909 when the government opened the Accra Training College was the Basel mission (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). Reverend Thomas Birch Freeman, a Wesleyan, arrived in 1838 after the death of the first missionary in 1835, who established a school at Cape Coast. To train teachers, Freeman, a mulatto (a child born of a European father and African mother), started a Theological Seminary at Accra which was abandoned after the death of the principal. The rest of the teachers were then sent to Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone for training (McWilliam, 1962). Later, a seminary was opened at Aburi to train teachers and catechists but was later transferred to Kumasi, which became the famous Wesley College. The Wesleyans attempted solving the issue of shortage of teachers by instituting the monitory system, thus, selecting the intelligent boys as monitors who can be educated to assume teaching responsibilities (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975) as cited by (Atakorah, 2019).

The Bremen Missionaries arrived in the then Gold Coast in 1847 and settled at Peki and later Keta. They opened a mission and seminary at Amedzofe to train teachers, which now serves as the Amedzofe College of Education. The Roman Catholic mission, originally the first mission to begin teacher education, failed severally but were able to establish St. Francis and St. Theresa's training institutions as their contribution towards teacher education in the country (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). The Anglican mission also contributed to teacher education by establishing the St. Monica's Training College at Cape Coast in 1930, which was later moved to Mampong in 1936 at the request of the Asantehene in the Ashanti Region. In recent times, the Muslim missionaries also contributed their effort towards teacher education through the establishment of Nusrat Jahan Ahmadiyya and Al-Faruq Colleges of Education in 1982 and 2017 respectively (Baafi- Frimpong, 2019).

Since 1848, basic schoolteachers were trained in school-level institutions or by some form of apprenticeship such as the pupil teacher system in Ghana (Antwi, 1995). These include the original two-year programmes which were changed to four-year programmes. Prior to 1951, there were nineteen pre-university training colleges offering a variety of courses leading to the award of various certificates. Following the implementation of the Accelerated Development Plan for Education in 1951, Pupil Teacher Centres were opened in Ghana to train more teachers. Many more policies were formulated in the education arena which have affected teacher training institutions including the award of first degrees at the Colleges of Education now.

Colleges of Education are the main teacher training institutions in Ghana. Currently, there are forty-six (46) public CoE across 15 regions out of the 16 regions of Ghana. They offer four-year programmes that lead to Bachelor of Education and Diploma in Basic Education (DBE) qualifications as a three-year programme, which had gradually faded out especially in the public Colleges of Education. The curriculum is described as uniform and with a national focus even as Colleges of Education are present in almost all the regions in Ghana. The final examinations granting the degrees and diplomas are conducted by the public universities currently serving as mentor institutions. The holders of the Diploma in Basic Education are allowed to teach at every level of the basic education (Kindergarten, primary and secondary schools) awaiting the fading out of the three-year Diploma programme.

The rapid expansion of enrolment in the CoE together with insufficient means to cope with the increasing demand for educational provision have turned managing colleges into a very complex and a difficult business in Ghana compared to some years ago. After upgrading all the 46 public CoE into tertiary status, the admission of students into the institutions grew without enhancement in infrastructure to commensurate with the increment of over 13,000 students. With this, the SRCs were charged to venture into physical and tangible projects in the various colleges. To ensure effective and successful operations in these institutions, the heads of the colleges (Principals) were mandated in creating a conducive atmosphere for taking collective decision in managing their respective colleges. The achievement and development of these colleges depend on the way they are managed.

The benefit derived from effective administration of the colleges have placed much emphasis on the type and standard, skills and competencies of the principals as the “Chief Executive Officers” leading a team of professionals in education. As a head of such a team, he/she is to perform all the functions by different managers existing in other jurisdictions. These principals have been assigned as guardians of both monetary, human and non-human resources. As they cannot solely perform all the duties, chances should be given to staff and students in order to participate in the college governance to ensure its smooth administration.

3.5 THE BIRTH OF STUDENTS’ REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL IN GHANA

In the middle of 1952 to 1970, the Student Representative Council (SRC) was born to students in Ghana, Agbodeka (1998). The establishment of SRCs in tertiary institutions happened at the time when students’ lives were directly and indirectly impacted by government and conditions in the country’s economy. In the bid to protect their interests, students started to form associations in their respective institutions. Notwithstanding the overwhelming difficulty in this battle of interest, the students were determined in their pursuit. They fought relentlessly alongside others with similar interest through the formation of groups and independently. The adage used then was “together we stand, divided we fall”, which underscored the importance of unity, Agbodeka (1998:8). This longing for unity led to the formation of SRC, as a stage for group representation of learners in taking decision. The association developed as a full force to contend with during the period of military dictatorship as they clearly expressed the interests of both students and nation at large, (Benson et al ,2021).

At the moment, the SRC has evolved, embracing additional responsibilities and seemingly referred to as co-partners in development, notwithstanding its former responsibility as representatives for students' interest. All tertiary students' associations concern themselves with the wellbeing of students in the institutions. Furthermore, they serve as coordinator of academic, cultural, religious, political and recreational activities and societies besides linking students with other institutions such as non-profit and non-governmental organisations.

Immediately an individual becomes a registered student in any tertiary institution or other educational levels, that person automatically becomes a member of the SRC as stated in chapter one of the constitution (Akrokerri College of Education students' handbook, 2016). With respect to this, every student is qualified and motivated to partake in any of the various positions and activates of the SRC. Juxtaposing the above assertion to the earlier establishment of students' union tracing its root from the West African Students' Union (WASU) in 1925 to 1960, it could be said that one key area it sought to achieve was in the case of their welfare, Idi (2019). As Mensah et al (2020:51) describe it, student leadership is the enlisting and guiding the talent and energies of teachers, students and parents towards achieving common educational aim. More often than not, the SRC team portrays an exceptional skill in leadership qualities, strong appreciation of dynamics related to change, recognition and submission to principles of the group. Characteristically, the SRC exhibits academic prowess and is capable of connecting with masses to demonstrate loyalty towards enhancing and circulation of new ideas and knowledge. Seemingly, other activities of the SRC include: demonstrating compassion, showing fairness in daily activities, portraying trustworthiness, instituting a road map, communicating effectively, showing flexibility when taking decisions and ability to persuade others. As such, these are needed for effective achievement of the objective associated with the positions assumed (Day et al., 2014).

Students' participation in institutional governance appears to have transformed into significant level with regards to developing responsible attitudes in students in addition to promoting better awareness towards self-control. Through the SRC, student leadership complements the operations of management and members of staff in fostering peaceful implementation of policies in the colleges. The key responsibility of the SRC is to operate as an agent of collective control in the colleges. Among its duties include: guaranteeing total involvement of students in every group meetings; maintaining orderliness of students in the colleges, organising cleaning activities on the

college compounds and overseeing the application of college procedures. The executives of SRC generally reinforce their authority through formalisation. In order to support the idea of inclusion, government through GTEC has formulated policies for some statutory committees in the colleges to have SRC representation on them. These measures have been adopted to introduce the leadership of the association into the managerial level in future.

After the election of the SRC executives, members' operate as a unified group with similar determination to abide by the customs of the group besides forging ahead to achieve their collective goal. Leadership of SRC is responsible for building solid relationship and ensuring transparent regarding group cohesion. Where there is unity, the relationship between members is often attractive.

In its pursuit to support these institutions, the then NCTE in its statute (Colleges of Education 2012, Act 847, in 2015), acknowledged the value and the need for SRC to be accepted as one of the stakeholders in the College. The functions of SRC as stated in this statute are: presentation of students' concerns to the relevant institutions for consideration; establishing connections and maintaining cordial relations with students in other tertiary institutions within and outside the country.

3.6 RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN IDEAL STUDENTS' UNION LEADERSHIP

As adopted from David (2013: 383), the activities of a student association include the following:

3.6.1 Students' Welfare

This responsibility behooves on leadership to monitor costs of goods in the institution, enhancement of commercial transport system around the campus, awarding scholarships through support from others, upgrading infirmary services provided and assisting members during incidences such as death.

3.6.2 Social Activities

Enriching socialisation on campus by way of organising celebrations, promotional excursions, recreational drive to beaches, expedition to game reserves and arts centers; sale of cheap tickets to shows, concerts, theatres and traditional events and scrap days are added activities of the SRC.

3.6.3 Community Service

In contributing to community and society as a whole, the students' association coordinates voluntary activities as blood donation, creation of awareness in the protection of the environment, presentation of gifts to homes and the most vulnerable, cleaning of drains, provision of vocational training to basic schools within the communities where in institution is established.

3.6.4 Sports Development

Students groups also organise sporting competitions for inter-faculties or inter-schools, departments, programmes (degrees, masters, hall of residences) for students to participate and unearth skills suitable for the formation of institutional teams. Competitions are organised for the sporting activities including swimming, football, handball, volleyball and athletics between student groups tertiary institutions which are keenly contested.

3.6.5 Infrastructural Development

Construction of building for students' restaurants, entertaining facilities for watching football matches, listening to newscast, union secretariat, building of road signs, students' parks, information centres and notice boards.

3.6.6 Military Training (Cadet)

Student groups promote cadet training for physical fitness while providing security, mostly, throughout the time of elections and other occasions.

3.6.7 Information Dissemination/ Orientation

Student associations share ideas with new and continuing students via seminars, workshops, notice boards, campus magazines, banners and broadcast news from information centres. They also conduct orientations on ethical conduct and general aspects of the institution.

3.6.8 Engage in Economic Activities

Students' associations generate money by collecting dues, establishment of profitable enterprises, charging rents from purchases at stores, investing in transport business and selling of printed shirts. These funds are used in supporting the developmental agenda of the association.

3.6.9 Giving of Awards

Student associations give certificates of service to hardworking members and also confer awards of excellence to deserving lecturers, staff, student leaders and individuals in government and politicians that have distinguished themselves in different walks of life.

From the above activities of the association enumerated by David (2013), it seems the involvement of students' leadership portrays the essential nature of the student groups as vital stakeholders (Abubakari and Al-hassan, 2016) in delivering products and services to the development of colleges of education in the country.

In addition to the above listed actions, the leadership of students' associations must:

- represent the interest of all its members at all levels;
- be accountable to its members;
- anticipate and respond to students' needs and demands to ensure continuous improvements;
- operate efficient, high-quality services and activities;
- promote constructive relations between students and the wider community;
- act professionally and responsibly to all external bodies.

It is from these trajectories that the researcher seems to perceive the role of students' leadership as a vital area of study. There are various debates from different authors which suggest students' leadership may not necessarily practice their leadership duties in full vigor, but the institutional heads apply their model of leadership trait in some representatives. More often than not, management would want student leaders to toe the line of their objectives which is often in the interest of management rather than the overall student body. Juxtaposing the list of activities above with characteristic student leadership in colleges today, it is not surprising that there is agitation amongst the student body and complaints of its representatives doing the bidding of the institution. Some management may seem to over shadow the existence of the students' leadership making it difficult for their operation to be successful. Student leaders who appear to serve the interest of its members are often frustrated by management, leading to underperformance of duties. However, it seems students' leadership in Colleges of Education in Ghana slightly varies from institution to institution; whereas some institutions have better systems in operation, others leave much room to be desired.

It can be concluded that substantial number of tertiary educational institutions with their governing councils, concentrate on important research, education and teaching today and disregard connection with enterprises, employment, technology transfer and innovation in the economy. This emanates from the benefits obtained from such strong executive leadership (Kogan & Hanney, 1999) as cited by Askling & Kristensen (2000).

3.7 CHALLENGES IN THE LEADERSHIP OF STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

Over two decades now, the contention of the SRCs in the tertiary institutions has seen its ups and downs. These facts have transcended into the socio-economic and political system in the administration of operations of various institutions. The following, according to Akomolafe and Ibijola (2011), bedevil effective Students' Representative Associations:

- rift arising from welfare issues and refusal of audience by government and management of institutions;
- poor financial base to execute articulated programmes;
- expulsion, suspension and rustication of student representative leaders and the disbandment of students' association activities on campus;
- elongation of tenure without congress approval and disposition to management;
- failure to extensively deliberate and consider alternatives before declaring a protest action on campuses;
- gross loss of confidence in the student leadership;
- constitutional breaches and refusal to call for congresses and subsequent impeachment;
- some candidates are driven by personal and economic gains and not service;
- management and government interference in sponsoring some candidates through the instruments of the institution. Elections are often rigged in favour of some candidates;
- some good candidates are marginalised along ethnic, religious and tribal considerations.

These enumerated factors and many more are seemingly responsible for the occurrence of students' crises on campuses. In the Colleges of Education in Ghana, communication gap may aggravate students' unrests. Communicating effectively disperses anxiety in institutions yet, some managements close their doors to students' concerns (Odu, 2014) while students and their leaders

have also not been able to explore all the avenues available to them that might probably end in students displaying certain unacceptable behaviour. Ezike (1993) identified the emotional effects of not giving a listening ear to students' concerns and made these remarks: "they feel they are being processed by a system to which they strongly object but are powerless to challenge or change." When students are deprived the opportunity of being part of policy making decisions in related matters to their welfare, they feel degraded. The blockade of this legitimate avenue which causes a sense of loneliness and expulsion may generate into crisis.

Internal politics within the campuses relating to the appointment and dismissal of key administrative officers and student leaders may also result in conflicts and various forms of student unrest. The case reported in 2016 at Agogo College of Education is a clear example. This was when students demonstrated as their reaction to prevent further indiscriminate dismissal of some lecturers by the Principal. Additionally, external politics outside the colleges may brew students' unrests. For instance, regulation of the education system by government concerning managerial policies may result in disagreement between the colleges and the institutions representing the political system. This can be likened to the change in policy (admission requirement) by the University of Cape Coast (formally the examining body of all the colleges in Ghana) which students from various colleges in Ghana demonstrated against, Adjei (2015) and Adogla-Bessa (2015).

Inadequate provision of funds to colleges for the payments of allowances and other emoluments and delivery of essential facilities may result in students' unrest. As such, loans, grants and allowances that students receive often instigate them to protests against authorities. In the CoE in Ghana, government subventions are disbursed for their operations, therefore, delay or non-payment of such funds could result in mayhem. This was confirmed by Anho (2017) when he discovered a relationship between fiscal and physical resources as administrative variables and competency in funding of institutions prevents crises and unrest.

Youthful exuberance, especially the negative characteristics, is another serious issue that sparks students' crises in our institutions. Peer influence and activities resulting in emotional instability affect students' concentration in studies and loss of interest in education. These include hostility, objects of academic egotism, unstable emotion among others and overstretching these distinctive features could result in devastating effects. Management finds it difficult in predicting the duration

of a semester or academic year depending on frequency of such students' crisis, which Omede, 2011 described as a serious challenge (Efe et al., 2023).

Contributions of Anho (2009), and Anho, (2011) point to the fact that some administrative heads of institutions' leadership style directly and indirectly affect everything on campuses (Efe et al., 2023). In CoE in Ghana, in as much as some heads exhibit leadership qualities which are in conformity with harmonious administrative environment, others are identified with the introduction of irrelevant rules, embezzlement of funds, misplaced priorities, adoption of frequent threats and many more. In other instances, some staff and lecturers are also involved in continuous absenteeism, lateness to class, fraudulent activities, prejudiced and authoritarian type of governance which could lead to unrests on campuses. The need to explore the relevance of SRC in maintaining a peaceful system motivated this study.

3.8 STUDENTS' POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

The Ministry of Education describes SRC as a group of elected students who are mandated to represent the interests of all students in accordance to the tenets of the association's constitution (MOE, 2014). They act as parliament for students where every leader represents a constituency, such as a class or hostel in the case of boarding institutions. These student representatives bring out different problems affecting their classes or hostels as well as other matters affecting the general welfare of students in their schools or colleges. The act of instituting student councils is a move towards a learner-centered leadership style entrenched within the democratic governance of institutions (Mboyonga, 2018). As a management model, the effectual democratic involvement of students in governance bodies can be beneficial to individual learners and the entire institutional community. However, it should not just be emphasised as a model of college management, but also as a means of enabling students to realise and enjoy their rights.

Students' bedrock of leadership is channelled through the mandate of the Students' Representative Council. This is emulated through national leadership or mainstream politics. The administration of this leadership is seen in the participatory orientation manner. At a certain stage in one's life in the educational level, depending on the constitution of the said institution, students feel the need to participate in leadership activities since there is this personal interest to connect socially, politically and economically to certain networking (Mulford, 2003). The agenda compelling them can be augured as the first substantive studies probing the formation of students' organisation. As

a sense of belonging, the association and institution of the students' representative council become an area of thriving by the students who deem it necessary.

The trend exhibited since the 20th century by Ghanaian students shows the impetus ideology for unifying strategies and intellectual dialoging. Student politics between the 1980s and the 1990s exhibited a form of active citizenship as students tend to join groups that stand for certain objectives (Adams, 2022). Student politics has changed in Ghana because of the growing acceptance and tolerance of various individual group participation and the co-existence of diverse interests and needs in democratic spaces (Boateng, 2014).

Understanding the system of leadership for both the SRC and management through accurate clarification and execution of higher education legislature can ensure the effective and efficient participation of SRC in the management of the public higher education institutions. For the SRC to perform its meaningful role, there should be access to information, consultation, dialogue and partnership between the SRC and management.

3.9 THE ROLE OF STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCILS IN INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE

As David (2013:11) observes, the "SRCs are significant in appreciating the impact of students' "voice in the life of the school and learners." This is equally true in the higher institutions such as the colleges and universities. Studies on causes of deviant behaviours amid tertiary students in Ghana, it was recommended that administrators of educational institutions must accept total involvement of students that are in the representative councils in order to enhance behavioural trends among students. In this respect, it is vital that students are given space to effectively participate in the governance of their institutions so that their voices are heard and considered in decision-making. Such structures provide a basis for consultation with the management of the institutions, facilitate communication between teachers and students and also serve as a resource for the provision of educational opportunities and community linkages. They play a significant role in enhancing the students' involvement in decision-making in their institutions. Mboyonga (2018) opines that students' associations are necessary for representation, mediating conflicts, class work supervision and monitoring; maintaining discipline and in channelling of student grievances to the administration for further action. To this effect, there are suggestions that college authorities should be attuned to students' learning experiences so as to promote commitment

towards learning and ownership of their institutions. The establishment of SRCs is also instrumental in promoting student voices and enhancing communication in colleges. In strengthening student voices in these colleges and other institutions, the SRCs are critical to the facilitation, communication, consultation, debate and dialogue between students and management.

Four roles mentioned above are fundamental in making sure educational institutions operate steadily by way of engaging students in managing the institution. This can be achieved when teaching staff as well as management abandon their conventional duties which does not allow students to express their view on issues affecting their academics and overall welfare. In situations where student associations are well utilised by managers, there is the likelihood of improvement in information dissemination hence, reducing tensions which could have resulted in student riots.

3.10 FORMS AND LEVELS OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Contribution of students in college affairs may be placed under different categories and for diverse objective (Love and Miller, 2003) which constitutes empowerment. Adopting students' participation may calm students' intended disturbances, improving the degree of accepting decisions made by the authorities of the institution, allowing students to challenge existing conditions. Love and Miller (2003) note that involving a student serve as a device in checking and balancing the influence of administrators and staff in an institution. Observation by Lansdown (2009) reveals that participation differs with respect to a person's developing dimensions however, participation on various levels may be done by every child and the youth in their primary stages of life. The skill is basically not innate during a particular stage but rather acquired through interaction (Lansdown, 2009). Due to this, engaging learners in taking decisions and creation of conducive environment for practice must be promoted.

As involvement occur at various levels, students can be engaged in college and community development sectors, as in Chile (Prieto, 2001) or as research assistants during the study of college activities as in England (Bragg, 2007; Robinson & Taylor, 2013). Many of such endeavours produced favourable outcomes which are influencing programmes and life in the community whereas others are inhibited by different elements. After observation, it was realised that several assignments were led by adults, besides, empowering students to take control over their lives is not achieved (Lansdown, 2009). Additionally, establishments which are engaged in and assist in the rights of student matters usually perform this duty for them rather than operating with them.

Comeau (2005:6) also notes that “one of the difficulties that organisations face in developing students’ participation is the attitude and culture that views them as too young or vulnerable to be capable of being included in decision-making.” In other settings, engaging students to take decisions is totally absent. Comeau (2005) further cautions that operating on behalf of students as against working together results in their vulnerability, defenselessness and feeling of defeat as they lack knowledge or have any say in whatever is done on their behalf. This assertion deters leaders from utilising their skills, learning from their mistakes and maturing into future leaders who can handle issues critically.

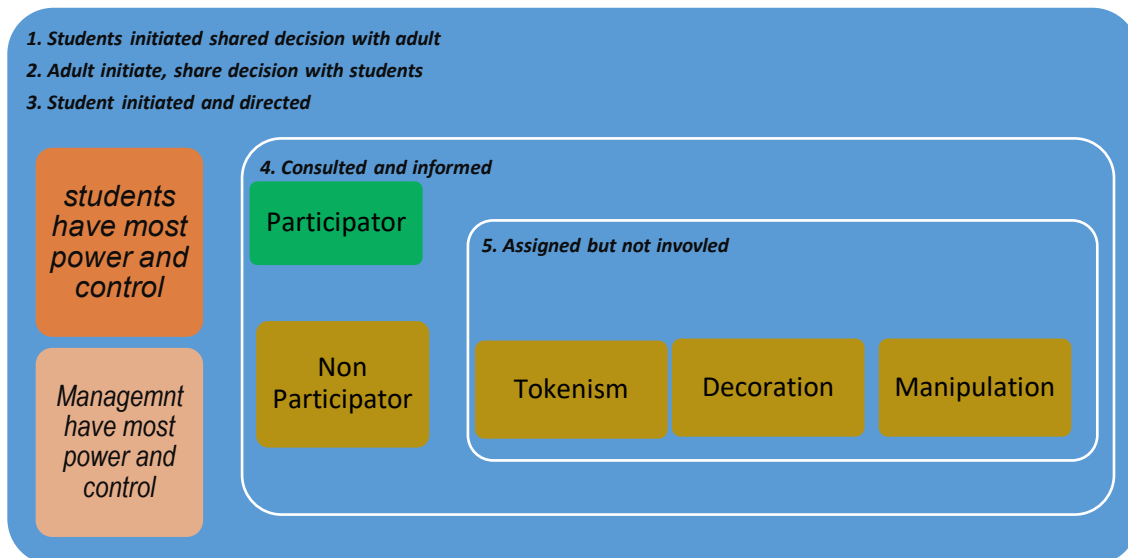
After carefully examining students’ involvement in communities and organisations in the UK, Morrow (2005) differentiates between latent participation (having a share in or taking part) and active participation, (engaging students at every level of decision-making). She admits that active participation (students’ engagement in every level of decision-making which must be promoted) is not existent in several educational institutions. As a result of this, experts in the field take responsibility of decision-making, policy formulation and events which are considered unsuitable and occasionally detrimental to youngsters, though the primary objective is the promotion of their wellbeing. Morrow’s account resonates with Comeau’s (2005) statements that the behaviour of adults place emphasis on the belief that youngsters are immature for any meaningful contribution to decision-making.

In identifying initiative by students towards their participation in addition to linking towards significant transformation, Hart (1992) mentioned different levels and kinds of participation, (figure 3. 2 below) to illustrate the interaction stages between adults and learners. Hart’s ladder of participation was initially about children but it was adapted for this study because of its relevance to learning in general – children and adults alike. This procedure depicts interactions existing among adults and young people and their influence on shared authority and governance. Hart (1992) classifies the two key parts referred to as participatory and non-participatory. These two parts contain numerous phases representing the extent to which students’ participation in decision-making activities in the institution is measured. The non-participatory level as indicated in the lesser domain contains three levels of interaction including tokenism, decoration and manipulation which is the lowest among the three. Initiated events on these rungs are controlled by authorities in the institution. Participation in the three lower levels implies that occasionally, consultation with

students is done however, no feedback is given. In some cases, issues may be understood yet students do not have any contribution as to its planning. In other instances, direction is given for students to act devoid of their understanding on the outcome. As a result, students seem to be going through the participatory process, even though its effectiveness is questionable due to lack of influence on any decision. Although the essence of participation is for empowering students to be involved in deciding on matters that affect them, they seem to have been restrained. Cases of such restraints is the appointment of students on committees without necessarily affecting decisions being taken during meetings except for agreeing or consenting to decisions already made. Any newly established systems tend to be restrictive while promoting the entrenchment of existing conditions. Effect of the activities of students' at the various stages assist management in the achievement of its objectives.

The second part consists of four stages depicting various levels of student participation. In this domain, students are well-informed and charged with responsibilities. Although certain degree of participation takes place within this level, management initiates it. The topmost level of participation at this stage indicates decisions initiated by student which are often distributed among college or school authorities. The levels allow for negotiations and distribution of power between college management and students. Decisions are completely followed as students exert influence in bringing about transformation and development. This participatory level empowers students to initiate actions and share with the management.

Figure 3.2: Chart of Participation



Adapted from Hart, R (1992), Ladder of Participation from Tokenism to Citizen

In adopting this diagram, it must not be systematically complied with, but considered as a form of interactions with each consisting of a unique objective (Comeau, 2005). It is of great importance to emphasise that systems in education are generally dictatorial. As a result, advocacy groups and organisations engaged in empowerment of the youth are suggesting that management in institutions must determine and create conducive environment for students to participate effectively in decision-making (Nthontho, 2017, Comeau, 2005; Backman & Trafford, 2006). Hart's (1992) diagram of participation is intended to assist stakeholders in measuring interactions and events that students are involved in during their lives in the institutions. The greater the level on the diagram, the likelihood of change being initiated through interactions and subsequently meaningful to students (Fletcher, 2005).

3.11 SOME BENEFITS OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN INSTITUTIONAL DECISION-MAKING

Study revealed that student involvement in decision-making yields enormous results exclusively to the student, the institution and finally, the community, (Mati et al., 2016). The outcome of participation is the total human development, including cognitive, social, political and moral development (Patmor & McIntyre, 1999:75). Learners who frequently cease the opportunity engaging in participatory decision-making obtain knowledge to effectively engage in issues of life, develop a sense of responsibility and functional adulthood with emotionally optimistic lifestyle (Oliver et al., 2006). Additionally, participating democratically afford students the chance to improve their self-confidence while enhancing their social life and learning condition (Rudduck & Fielding, 2006). It is further noted that young people should discover themselves, affirm their personal perspectives and gain attitudes of cooperation and negotiation (Ruddock & Fielding, 2006). In describing learners who have ever experienced democratic practices, Prieto (2001) records their autonomously firm resolutions and critically reflecting on issues. When interacting with other people, there is a feeling of confidence and straightforwardness, leading to respect of their opinions (Prieto, 2001). Furthermore, their views on subjects improve as they visualise them from other's perspective. Through dialogue and discussions, their concepts also become developed above their personal environments (Clever, 2007). They start observing issues from diverse angles including becoming extra conscious of their empowerment and working towards being

responsible for their decisions and activities (Oliver et al., 2006). This equips them with the knowledge and skills for leadership in various aspects of the country's economy. They similarly learn the appreciation of valuing dialogue, persuading and compromising democratically (Chapman et al., 2006) as cited by Glover (2015). On the other hand, the degree of democratic participation by students or their representatives is influenced by opinions management have about their significance (World Youth Report, 2003). In the same way, students' personal knowledge and awareness of their relevance in taking decisions influence their engagement activities (Lewars, 2010) exposing them to the likelihood of exhibiting control and authority negatively when not offered adequate chances (Marques, 1999:1) as cited by Glover (2015).

Where students are not given opportunities or platform to air their grievances, they could go on strikes. Such strikes or demonstrations might be the result of mistrust and resentment among students towards their institutions (management and teachers). In the worst-case scenario, the strikes or riots could be violent and cause damage to school or college property and subsequent, interruption of academic work (Marques, 1999) as cited by Glover (2015).

Sometimes, many students and management's disagreements ensue due to the feeling of deprivation in expressing themselves. Other riots that occur in some educational institutions in Ghana could be connected to lack of transparency with information by management and the possible disrespect for students' issues. When chances are offered for students to express their opinions and management is willing to address these issues appropriately, student governance can be effectively considered a tool towards achievement of success in college administration. As noted by Oliver et al (2006) "democratic governance could offer the most practical and effective means of improving the institution's moral culture, the operative moral norms that shape the behaviour of its members." Omodan & Tsoetsi (2018) opined that relationship between student and teacher is improved, marginalisation become less and there is increased confidence towards the educational institution that allows for student participation in its management.

Regarding the practice of student engagement, the college can develop a consistent institutional tradition through compromise and negotiation (Chapman et al., 2006). Indicating the recognition of the student as an exclusive stakeholder with knowledge, experience and perspective (Chapman et al, 2006), which is operational during institutional decision-making. This will enable students to recognise and appreciate challenging situations. The development of this constructive outlook

towards democracy in managing institutions might promote transparency and accountability in the institutions (Sigudhlas, 2005) as cited by Glover, (2015).

3.12 DEVELOPING STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Abbas and Asghar (2010) contend that leadership qualities have become indispensable for anyone to succeed in the highly competitive environment of today, to the extent that anyone who has a desire for promotion or aspire to higher positions in any endeavour, needs to demonstrate good leadership qualities. Most individuals in the corporate world aim at reaching the top management position in their respective organisation. Logically, before one is nominated as a leader, that individual should have acquired some leadership skills which can advance the operations of the respective organisation. Mittal and Dhar (2015) in their article laid out a few reasons for the need in developing qualities in leadership among students. They maintain that individuals in the position of leadership are likely to gain skills such as: a sense of obligation, developing self-confidence, building connections, capacity to hone problem-solving skills, ability to motivate and become accustomed to publicity.

Strong leadership has many characteristics that are based on the needs of the organisation or institution. SRC executives must demonstrate a strong sense of moral development, leadership qualities, a clear understanding of the dynamics of change and an understanding of and adherence to group norms. The SRC should exhibit academic and emotional intelligence, the ability to connect with people, showing a commitment to developing and sharing new ideas and knowledge. These skills should be developed through education since leadership is the process of influencing groups or individuals to reach their common goal. Institutional leadership is the process by which the talents and energies of teachers, students and parents are utilised and directed toward a common educational goal. Dampson (2019) and Kiral (2020) believe that educational leaders are people who shape the goals, motivation and activities of teachers, students and other stakeholders in an educational institution. Clearly, SRCs are among the students in higher education who are expected to learn to acquire those leadership skills for institutional success. Many of these leadership skills and attributes can be developed in colleges and help students become advanced leaders in the future. As outlined by Mensah et al (2020), the basic meaning of leadership in organisation and human life are as follows:

- effective leadership helps our nation through times of peril;

- it makes a business organisation successful;
- it enables a non-profit organisation reach its goal;
- effective leadership of parents enables children to get stronger and healthier and become productive citizens in future.

Absence of functional leadership can result in catastrophic consequences. Additional leadership qualities comprise: demonstrating compassion; showing consistency in one's dealings; depicting integrity; be goal oriented; communicating timely and effectively; flexible in taking decision and persuasion. In emulating and exhibiting effective leadership, SRC executives must be able to demonstrate the outlined qualities above. Responsibility of leadership include relating human and non-human resources as well as programmes to achieve institutional goals. Leadership style involves a leader's general personality, demeanor and communication patterns in guiding others towards reaching organisational and personal goals. Dampson (2019), acknowledged types of leadership styles as: charismatic, social justice, gender, race, moral, authoritarian, democratic and laissez-faire. Scholars have not agreed on any of these as the best leadership style. The success of each depends on the leader in question. For one to become a good leader, it entails a combination of character traits and a sum of acquaintances from professionals and experienced leaders, Mensah et al (2020).

Mutual connection promotes resilient student leadership. Currently, the position of leadership does not comprise of just a person, but subordinates who must be influenced in achieving common goal hence, management must readily share ideas about common issues concerning the institution. For this reason, all stakeholders should perform its central duty of managing the college effectively. Generally, administration is motivated by the more complex nature of new reform which must be taken into consideration. Each person has the need to act actively and tolerate freedom of speech of members. One of the most important responsibilities of SRC leaders is to identify, promote and develop student leadership skills to complement and help fill the leadership gap. There are stakeholders such as alumni, Ashanti Brong Ahafo Conference of Principals (ASHBA), community leaders/supporters, staff (academic and non-academic), students and parents who come together to look after the total development of students. It can be said that timely involvement of students in leadership activities provides opportunities for volunteer services, collaboration and group projects. Currently, students are expected to exhibit effective time management, the ability

to set realistic goals, build positive relationships, use effective conflict resolution skills and the expression of interest in helping others develop their leadership skills.

Referring to the argument of Mensah (2019), it is difficult to overemphasise how important skills in leadership are. Kevin's (2017) opinion on the benefits of student governance remains that the ultimate method of preparing learners for business is to develop skills through student leadership. This assertion by Kevin (2017) highlights the importance of developing leadership qualities in college students through the SRCs. Kevin (2017) finally documented five benefits of developing qualities in leadership for college students: strengthening leadership skills, building a team, creating a unique experience, an inspiring network and establishing role models. Team building and student leadership at colleges equip students with skills to build relevant connections with key stakeholders, including students. Student leaders become acquainted with many people, including lecturers, leaders of student clubs and organisations who create the opportunity to initiate development projects. It is a fact that student leaders later become leaders at workplaces more often than those who were not exposed to prior leadership experiences. In Ghana today, a number of former student leaders are members of parliament and represent their constituencies. Some of these former leaders are even Ministers of State in the previous and current governments.

Gabbert (2022:3) quotes Eisenhower (2012) who states that "leadership is nothing more than taking responsibility for everything that goes wrong and giving subordinates credit for everything that goes right." He noted that student leadership had to do with servant leadership and being a socially responsible citizen within the institution and the world at large. Gabbert (2022) further states that our future leaders are presently in our classrooms, meaning, the students that are currently being taught in institutions today would become future leaders in positions of responsibility. If the nation wants to have good leaders, it is time to put a lot of effort into equipping them with all the necessary skills at a young age (Mensah et al., 2020). This assertion was buttressed by Comenius (2005) as cited by Ampadu and Ofosu (2007) that leadership should begin in the early years of a child's life to fulfil nature's obligation before their minds get corrupted. Therefore, future leaders should be offered the necessary attention before it is too late. Teachers and authorities should not wait until students graduate from educational institutions before acquiring leadership skills.

Colleges have a difficult task of equipping the younger generation with the necessary and appropriate skills to assume responsibility in the absence of current leaders. Young people, who are the future leaders of the country, acquire leadership skills that prepare them for the task ahead as they take responsibility through elections and the appointment of prefectural candidates. The college is expected to produce good leaders who will fill open positions of authority and responsibility in their various communities. As students take on a variety of leadership roles across clubs and societies and compete for college prefect positions, they gain skills that enable them to act effectively and efficiently when they accept positions of trust.

The rapid growth in enrollment in Ghana's higher education institutions especially in Colleges of Education, coupled with insufficient resources and an ever-increasing demand for educational services, has made the management of colleges a much more complex and difficult undertaking than it was a few decades ago. When all 46 public Teacher Training Colleges were converted into Colleges of Education, the number of students increased without a proportional increase in infrastructure. With this, SRCs were encouraged to initiate physical and tangible projects for the various colleges to increase the infrastructural shortage. Also, to ensure effective and successful management, authorities headed by the principals are expected to create a favourable environment for making participatory decisions in the management of the institutions. The success and improvement of these colleges depend on the way colleges are managed in collaboration with their main stakeholders, the student body.

The importance of effective management of colleges emphasised the character and qualities, skills and capabilities of the Principals as the Chief Executive Officers of a team of professional educators. As heads of such a team, principals are expected to supervise all the tasks performed by various units in all sectors of the college. They are the custodians to both financial, materials and human resources, (NCTE, 2015), as such they cannot handle all the duties alone. Hence, the more opportunities given to members of staff and students to participate in the college administration, the greater the probability of success at the educational institution.

Involvement of students has turned out to be an effective step in promoting responsibility and self-discipline among the student body. Through the SRC, student leaders support the work of management and staff to promote efficient operations as it acts as agents of social control in the colleges. Other duties of the SRC include ensuring full participation of students in all social

gatherings, seeing to the orderliness of students in the colleges, organising clean-up activities on the college compounds and seeing to the implementation of college rules and regulations. The power of SRCs is usually strengthened through the formalisation of the Tertiary Regulatory Authority (GTEC), as they are represented on the Council and other committees. All these are done to bring the SRC to management level in the future.

As a result of the important role they are expected to play in colleges, much time and resources seem to be spent selecting the best possible student leaders to direct the affairs of the student body. In one College of Education known to this researcher, the newly elected SRC executives are given week-long orientation to educate them on expectations of the college community (i.e., management, academic and non-academic staff as well as students) and their responsibilities. The executives of the SRC are often held accountable by the entire student body. They are required to render account to the student body and the college management from time to time. Also, before they embark on decisions relating to funds, the Dean of Student Affairs must agree on such major spending decisions. Sometimes, the SRC may overstep their boundaries because they may not be very familiar with their roles. In rare cases, the lack of confidence in their traditional roles and responsibilities as leaders of the SRC causes them to falter.

The elected leaders of the SRC work together as a group with a common objective to represent the student body at all times. They are expected to follow the norms of the group and move forward towards a common goal. They should build a strong relationship with the surrounding community and show openness to achieve coherence. Development of leadership among college students is one of the goals often mentioned in the operational ideas of educational institutions.

The positive qualities of a good leader can be explained as follows: they are inspiring, courageous and confident in what they know. Good leaders are optimistic, passionate, knowledgeable and know how to use their knowledge to help others; they are trustworthy, loyal, reliable, devoted, responsible, genuinely interested in people and their needs, encouraging and empathetic. Good leadership skills include the ability to take criticism positively, stand out as a person, lead teams, enjoy being a leader, lead and support people. Others include being balanced and ethical, speak openly, avoid uneducated assumptions and use of intelligence. A good leader must always be ready to learn new ideas. Leadership development in the student body is a positive way to increase students' personal, academic and well-being outcomes, as well as an additional opportunity to

increase socio-economic benefits. Teachers reported that their own leadership training increased their confidence to deal with daily challenges and improved their skills that can provide positive instruction to students.

A growing body of research shows that students are more successful academically, socially and emotionally when they are meaningfully engaged and supported by members of an institution with a positive, caring and a just campus climate (Mensah et al, 2020). Consistent and informed support of students to become leaders and learners is an essential condition for successful institutional climate-change efforts. A key component is inclusive youth leadership—both as a result of a positive institutional climate and as a building block. When students are valued and actively involved in their school or college community, the culture of the institution benefits. The more students are involved, the more they become planners of activities and initiatives in their schools or colleges. Most students are ready and willing to follow rules or guidelines that they helped create because they understand that their opinion is respected. In order to recognise the views of the entire student population in administration, some universities organise consultative meetings between students and staff, where students have the opportunity to ask questions that concern them occasionally.

3.12.1 Students' Representative Councils; Politics and Power

Brooks et al (2015:168) point out that “students’ voices are heard when their elected leaders represent them at the institutional level”. By focusing on representation, student leaders inevitably focus on challenges affecting the daily lives of mainly students as against wider socio-political issues which might be easily associated with activism. The growing union regarding the beliefs and main concerns of students’ associations and management (due to the bearing of related pressures) submits the limiting number of opportunities currently existing in Higher Education Institutions (HEI) within which to propose a revolutionary opposition to policies of both domestic or nationwide nature. The effect of deviation from the norm, including performances, introduction of higher tuition fees and lack of adequate residential accommodation and lecture halls might alter the focus of students’ associations in tertiary institutions like the Colleges of Education in Ghana. A situation like this may lead to changing priorities, an illustration of the close relationship between higher education policy and the nature of political activity on campus (Giroux, 2011).

While students' associations may provide an important space within HEIs for like-minded people to get together to pursue collaborative projects, they also play a significant role in facilitating political engagement, or instilling a more 'activist' orientation on campuses. The space of student associations has been important as in the organisation of students however, usually for the representation of the entire student body and to deliver services and events in the wider institution (Brooks et al., 2015). From the discussion so far, it may be suggested that the student 'voice' is often articulated in relation to concerns about 'the student experience' rather than any more political agendas. It is interesting to note that sometimes these elected representatives might lose touch with their student body which provided them with the democratic mandate to represent them and even the management of the institution. One cannot claim that the voice of all students has been domesticated in the ways they operate in their respective institutions as there are often some wider political undertones in their actions. Indeed, evidence of recent student occupations in the UK (Rheingans and Hollands, 2013:558) suggests that there remain some spaces within higher education for students to engage in party politics—even if not within the day-to-day practices of students' associations—within which more radical critiques can be expressed and students can engage politically. The discussion above points to the fact that the power of those holding elected positions in the student associations is often hijacked by external political interests, however, such changes in focus may often relate to the student leaders' own hidden agenda. There are extensive revelations made in other areas in that student councils and youth parliaments' initiative to give 'voice' to students often fail to promote their main objectives because they are unable to initiate genuine authority to be exercised (Williamson, 2002:11; Wood, 2012:16) as cited by Brooks et al, (2015).

3.12.2 Developing Student Leadership in Colleges of Education in Ghana

The extent to which SRC leaders are made to take initiatives, to find out the opportunities provided to expose them to attain requisite leadership skills in their colleges, and for future roles in their respective communities and the country, is dependent on both the association and management. Since the main objective of SRC in the colleges is to offer the students with the opportunity to participate in college matters, it may serve as a training ground for the young men and women to assume future leadership roles outside the institutions. Management may sometimes feel they are guarding against negative attitudes or errors, but it is noted to be discouraging student leaders from taking initiatives which is a very important aspect of a leader. The SRC leadership is seen not to

be allowed to solve their own problems (Mensah et al, 2020). In a nutshell, it could be argued that often the student leaders do not have many opportunities in taking initiatives in the execution of their leadership roles. To enable the SRCs to remain focused, they need a tailor-made orientation to educate them on their roles in the institutions. To assume that the usual way of organising orientations should be the same throughout might rob the student leaders of new ways of going about their activities since we are in a dynamic world with more innovative ways of performing tasks.

Student leaders' inability to ensure that their colleagues in their year group abide by college rules becomes an issue. This might mean that the SRC leaders are only able to manage the students in the lower levels but not their own mates, hence, the interference of management. Since no one is above the law, it then behoves on management to step in to ensure that every student abides by the rules set by the institution without favouritism. The inability of some SRCs to manage all students in their institutions may seem that, in assuming community and national responsibilities, they might lack the courage, confidence and leadership skills to manage all categories of subordinates. For future leadership roles in nation building, this perceived weakness in the leadership of the student body needs to be addressed through relevant training. Bowman (2014) observes that leadership is a huge responsibility for our education system that is faced with global challenges such as self-centredness, vulgarity, greediness, coercive power, fanaticism and violent extremism. He was of the view that leadership must be perceived as a way to help students make a difference in this world. SRC executives have the opportunity to fully participate in various committees in their institutions which helps them learn from the college management, academic and non-academic staff. Guidance and counselling are a major component of student development which should be given the needed impetus to develop students in leadership roles.

The major short-coming of SRC leadership is the seemingly absence of clear-cut duties to be performed. Although some of them might try to perform their duties efficiently, they rely on trial-and-error approaches. This is because they may lack initial skills and expertise towards the tasks on their hands. By the time they are corrected, harm might have been done. Some of the SRC executives may always depend on their lecturers for instructions and direction, therefore, their interest might be reduced. There might be the perception among some college community members that most SRC initiated projects are those that favour the college management and not

necessarily the student body. This situation could put the SRC leadership in a dilemma as they might not know whether to serve the interest of students or the college management.

3.13 BUREAUCRACY AND POWER RELATIONS AS FACTORS THAT MAY CONSTRAIN STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION

Many people have expressed support for allowing students to participate in decision-making in their respective colleges. The research points to a few variables that may limit and even eliminate students' ability to participate in decision-making. According to the World Youth Report (2003), the bureaucracy and power relations within the colleges might pose as a limitation to students' engagement in a variety of ways. The college is a “bureaucratic institution, which has clearly defined lines of authority” (English, 2007:39) thus, the degree to which students may communicate with management is impacted by its bureaucratic structure. Research has shown that students may find it more difficult to participate if they are positioned at the bottom of the organizational hierarchy of the institution (Martin & Franklin, 2010). This assertion indicates that the position students occupy influences the power they exert. This tends to affect the level of participation and the implementation of the outcome therein. Student leaders do not see themselves as autonomous regarding decision-making as they rely heavily on management to excel in the direction they intend to go. It can be observed that some conflicts are seemingly equated to management being bossy over the students' leadership without giving them a listening ear. This confusion may appear to be imbedded in the scarcity of resources (financial resources), hence, the bureaucracy. Furthermore, student leaders often complain that in their quest for resolution on matters affecting the entire student body with management, their interests seem not to be taken into consideration.

Students' opinions and participating events are progressing in most institutions in Ghana in recent times. However, Ngussa and Makewa (2014) question if the current state of affairs is truly novel, thrilling, and liberating, drawing on illustrious histories of transformational and democratically renewing. Furthermore, if proponents of student voice are utilising student voice as an extra control mechanism to oversee the deeper entrenchment of preexisting beliefs and objectives. The idea is that institutional frameworks and bureaucracy may prevent students from fully participating in forums for decision-making, even in cases when it seems that students' voices and involvement are valued. As a result, although it seems like students are participating in decision-making processes, the actual reality seems to be different. This situation might have led to apathy among

some students in SRC matters. In recent times, however, many students may like to participate in student association activities on their respective campuses (Heller, 2013). This could reduce the lukewarm attitude which previously characterised membership of student associations. There seems to be a shift towards a much greater emphasis on representation in the role and function of the students (Brooks et al., 2015).

3.14 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The genesis of higher education served as a milestone in the advancement of education in Ghana. As teacher education is regarded as key to the human resource development of every nation, its welfare is deemed essential to the existence of this institution, hence, the institution of SRC. Although the association is constantly saddled with numerous challenges, its presence is highly beneficial to the survival of the institution and the country in general. This chapter outlined the birth of higher education, teacher education, its challenges and benefits of SRC as an association with key reviews on the Ghanaian education system at the tertiary level in relation to leadership. The next chapter focuses on the overall research design adopted for this study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the research design and methodology employed by the researcher for data collection. The chapter covers the research paradigm, approach, design, population, and sampling processes. It discusses the issues of reliability and validity of the instruments employed in data collection. Pilot study and data-collection procedures are also adequately discussed. All the study phases focused on determining the role of SRC to the administration of Colleges of Education in Ghana.

4.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A research paradigm is described as a researcher's thoughts and beliefs about any problems discovered that consequently guide their actions (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). It is an all-inclusive belief system that guides the researcher in the overall process of investigation including the selection of research problem, setting research questions, determining the nature and types of reality, knowledge, methodology and value of the research work (Willis, 2007:8). Khatri (2020) affirms that a research paradigm is the researcher's holistic perception or shared beliefs that inform the meaning or interpretation of research data. It determines the researcher's position on how truth is viewed, how it is gained by what methods and how these values are addressed. The way a researcher chooses to go about the research or to answer the research question is influenced by the research philosophy and the research approach employed. Scotland (2012), Shah and Al-Bargi (2013) classify research paradigms into three, namely: Positivism, Interpretivism/Constructivism and Critical theory while Guba and Lincoln (1994) classify it into four, viz.; positivism, post-positivism, constructivism and critical theory as cited by (Ugwu et al., 2021). On the other hand, Saunders et al (2019) classify paradigm into five, which they referred to as positivism, initial realism, interpretivism, post-modernism and pragmatism as cited by (Ugwu et al., 2021). Thus, the concept, paradigm, means different things to the various authorities as it does not seem to lend

itself to be easily defined. For this research project, the researcher opted for the interpretivist paradigm in line with the nature of the study.

4.2.1 The Choice of Interpretivist Paradigm

For the benefit of this study, the researcher adopted the interpretivist paradigm. The fundamental principle of the interpretivist paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). This approach makes an effort to delve deeply into the subject under study and to appreciate and interpret what the subject is thinking, or the meaning being made of the context. In a research of this nature, where the experiences of the participants are pertinent to the investigation, every effort is made to understand the views of the subjects being observed and the world around them, thereby considering the principle of this paradigm that reality is socially constructed (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998:68). Also called the Constructivist or anti-positivist paradigm, the interpretivists paradigm posits that, since human beings think and reflect, scientific methods are inappropriate for the study of society because humans can change their behaviour if they know they are being studied (Tichapondwa, 2013). For this reason, better understanding of social action requires exploring the reason and meaning that a particular action has on people which is to be grounded on the data generated by the research act. The interpretivist paradigm assumes a subjectivist epistemology (nature and form of knowledge), a relativist ontology (level of reality), a naturalist methodology (systematic process) and a balanced axiology (ethical issues). In sum, this paradigm is originally rooted in the fact that humans interpret their world and then act based on such interpretation (Hammersley, 2013). The researcher attempted to develop an in-depth subjective understanding of the lives and experiences of people by viewing them in a holistic manner, taking into consideration the context of their experiences (Pulla & Carter, 2018:9). The characteristics of research within the interpretivist paradigm according to Lincoln and Guba (1985:74), and Morgan, (2007:50) include:

- the admission that the social world cannot be understood from the standpoint of an individual;
- the belief that realities are multiple and socially constructed;
- the acceptance that there is inevitable interaction between the researcher and his or her research participants;
- the acceptance that context is vital for knowledge and knowing;

- the belief that knowledge is created by the findings, can be value-laden and the values need to be made explicit;
- the need to understand the individual rather than universal laws;
- the belief that causes and effects are mutually interdependent;
- the belief that contextual factors need to be taken into consideration in any systematic pursuit of understanding.

The interpretivist paradigm is embedded in the following assumptions:

i). Ontological assumption: this assumption relates to the nature of reality (Creswell & Poth, 2018:54). It maintains that the individual develops a subjective meaning through his personal experiences and these experiences are versatile and multiple (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Pham (2018:3) posits that a single phenomenon may have multiple interpretations rather than a truth that can be determined by a process of measurement. The researcher considered different realities but not narrowing them to a few ideas and categories. To accomplish that, she relied on the participants' views of the phenomenon being studied. This was made possible using open-ended questions whereby the participants constructed their own meanings of the situation or phenomenon under study. The researcher listened to what the participants said or did in their real-life setting. This subjective meaning was negotiated socially, through interaction with the participants but not just imposing ideas on them. The researcher acknowledged that her own background might shape the interpretation and move from personal, cultural and historical experiences.

ii). Epistemological assumption: epistemology is a branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge and the process by which knowledge is acquired and validated (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003) as cited by (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). This is concerned with questions such as “what do you know?” and “how do you know it?” It embodies how knowledge can be created, acquired and communicated (Don-Solomon & Eke, 2018:3). With the epistemological assumption, in conducting this qualitative study, the researcher tried to get as close as possible to the participants being studied to get authentic information from them. Therefore, the subjective evidence was assembled based on individual views (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The fact that knowledge is within an individual, suggests that the researcher and the researched should be interactively linked to permit construction and explanation of meaning. The researcher addressed the process of interaction among individuals and focused groups on specific context in which the respondents

lived and worked in order to understand their historical and cultural setting. To understand management's perspective about SRC's relevance to the administration of the Colleges of Education, its benefits and costs, the researcher accounted for the social, cultural and historical implications of the participants' perspective. This was done by eliciting responses through interview and observation of participants and deducing conclusions from them.

iii). Methodological assumption: this assumption refers to the study and critical analysis of data production techniques (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). The planning of the investigation needed to be articulated very clearly by the researcher under a methodological assumption. This guides the researcher in deciding what type of data is required for a study and which data-collection tools would be most appropriate. The awareness of the above fact assisted in the logical flow of procedures. The researcher clearly mitigated assumptions made and limitations that could be encountered (Kivunja & Bawa-Kuyini, 2017). She applied the interpretivist approach which is rooted in the fact that methods used to understanding knowledge related to human and social sciences cannot be the same as its usage in physical sciences because humans interpret their world and act on the basis of such interpretation (Hammersley, 2013). The interview method which was employed for soliciting responses from the participants in the study included all the elements of conversing, questioning, listening, reading, writing and recording of data (Kivunja & Bawa-Kuyini, 2017). It was therefore the researcher's desire to adhere to the above-mentioned methodological assumptions which were fulfilled.

iv). Axiological assumptions: this relates to the role of values and ethics within the research process (Saunders et al 2015). It includes how researchers deal with both their values and that of the participants. Kivunja and Bawa-Kuyini (2017) suggest that values, fairness and intrinsic moral issues need to be adhered to by the researcher. As values guide every action taken in one's life, so it is in relation to research if the findings are to be considered credible. The researcher, therefore demonstrated axiological skill by articulating the values as the basis for making judgements about what research was being conducted and how to go about doing it (Heron, 1996) as cited by (Saunders et al., 2015:128). There could be other areas to investigate, however, choosing the relevance of SRC to the administration of Colleges of Education in Ghana was of more importance to the researcher, who valued the ideas of others towards the achievement of goals in the colleges. The choice of philosophy also reflected the researcher's belief in respect for group ideas in the

administration of colleges. Furthermore, data collected through interview suggests that the researcher believed in personal interaction with the respondents. During the data analysis, the researcher followed a path of analysing the data to develop an increasingly detailed knowledge of the topic being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2018:54).

The researcher adopted the above paradigm to obtain the appropriate data and suitable interpretation to create public awareness and to assist in attaining academic success in the Colleges of Education. The interpretivist paradigm was appropriately adopted for this study because of the researcher making meaning of the data collected through her own thinking and cognitive processing of data informed by her interactions with the participants. The researcher constructed knowledge socially because of the personal experiences of the real life within the natural settings with the subjects who were engaged in interactive processes in which they inter-mingled, dialogued, questioned, listened, read, wrote and recorded research data. Additionally, the researcher believed that the situation studied has multiple realities, and that those realities can be explored and meaning reconstructed through human interactions between the researcher and the subjects of the research. In sum, the researcher utilised data gathered through the interviews, discourses and reflective sessions, with her acting as an observer to obtain the appropriate findings and suitable interpretation to create public awareness and to assist in attaining academic success.

4.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

There are three approaches that can be used in social research as the mode of enquiries. These are: “quantitative, qualitative and mixed method approaches” (Kumar, 2014:68). He further distinguishes the three approaches as follows: quantitative approach is based on the philosophy of rationalism, which follows a firm structured and pre-determined set of procedures and ways of exploring with the intent to quantify the extent of variation in a phenomenon. Kumar (2014) stresses that qualitative approach as implanted in the philosophy of empiricism is flexible, and an unstructured approach of inquiry with the intent to explore diversity of participants’ understanding rather than quantifying results. Qualitative research stresses on depiction and narrating of feelings, perception and experiences.

The mixed method approach utilises the strength of both the quantitative and the qualitative approaches by combining both. The application of either approach will depend on the rationale of certain situations. The interpretivist paradigm was adopted for this study.

4.3.1 Justification for the Qualitative Research Approach

In situating the study in the interpretivist paradigm, the researcher employed qualitative research methods in data collection. The researcher's choice of qualitative approach was based on the belief that when one wants to explore the in-depth perceptions, feelings and attitudes of participants, one needs to adopt a subjective stance with the aim of interpreting and re-interpreting events portrayed by the participants.

The researcher deemed the qualitative approach appropriate for this study because of the ontological belief that reality cannot be separated from an individual. This design describes social phenomenon as they occur naturally (Koul, 2013). Thus, the approach focuses on an inductive, open and flexible approach that views events, actions, values and beliefs from the point of view of people who are being studied in a holistic frame. This emphasises the dynamic, holistic and individual aspects of the human experience, and attempts to capture those experiences in their entirety, within the context of those experiencing them. The researcher followed a qualitative research process to explore the relevance of SRC to the administration of University Colleges of Education in Ghana. Through this approach, it was possible for the researcher to deeply engage and interact with student leaders as well as administrators through interviews for the collection of data generated from their experiences. The use of interviews and observation to collect data is in line with the interpretivist paradigm which argues that truth is negotiated through discussion. The data for the proposed study were appropriately provided and presented in words because the approach allowed participants to discuss their experiences of a particular phenomenon.

4.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is considered by different social scientists in different terms. Akhtar (2016) maintains that a research design can be considered as the structure of research, the "Glue" that holds all the elements in a research project together. In short, it is a plan of the proposed research work, the processes one can use to collect data, analyse and interpret them using quantitative or qualitative design (Creswell, 2012). In sum, a research design expresses what data is required, what methods are to be adopted in the collection and analysis of this data, and how all of these can contribute towards addressing the problem identified.

In an attempt to discover something new and interesting from the views of those who have experienced the phenomenon (Creswell and Poth, 2018), this researcher's choice was

phenomenology. Phenomenology ideology enabled the researcher to penetrate deeper into reality as it studies phenomena in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring out (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) As the lived world is revealed, the researcher suppressed personal judgement regarding the phenomenon under study in order to ensure objectivity during the data collection. The researcher adopted a hermeneutic phenomenological stance which sought to study and interpret the personal experiences of the participants. This method defines reality through interpretation of the phenomenon (Padila-Diaz, 2015:101) and allowed the researcher to enter into the world of the participants to understand their perspectives and experiences.

4.4.1 Research Population

Koul (2013:206) comprehensively defines population as “any collection of specific groups of human beings or of non-human entities such as objects, educational institutions, time units, geographical areas and prices of items or salaries drawn by individuals.” The researcher considered population as the total number of people from which data were drawn. Thus, management and students from the forty-six (46) public University Colleges of Education in Ghana where the study was conducted determined the accessible population. To collect the data for the research problem, the researcher selected a sample population concerned, since it was not possible to cover the entire population to devise tools and administer them accurately (Koul, 2013:205).

4.4.2 Sample and Sampling Technique

Sampling describes the process of selecting a portion of the population that conforms to a designated set of specifications to be studied. It is the process by which a relatively small number of individuals, objects or events is selected, studied, and analysed in order to find out something about the entire population from which it was selected (Koul, 2013). The sample in this case must be a true representative of the entire population. For example, it must be the true characteristics of the entire population. The non-probability sampling was more convenient for this study since the units are selected at the discretion of the researcher and has no theoretical basis for estimating the population characteristics (Koul, 2013). The category of non-probability sampling which was adopted for the study was purposive sampling. In purposive sampling, the researcher handpicks the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of her judgement on a particular knowledge about the issues under study. It's appropriateness to the study is in relation to the fact that the

researcher intentionally chose subjects, who in her opinion, were thought to be relevant to the research method and thus considered to be information rich (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

In this regard, the target population for the study included the core management and core SRC executives of four (4) CoE in Ghana which were purposively selected to participate in the study. The colleges with their SRC executives, administrators and council chairpersons were chosen due to their outstanding vocal and vibrant nature among their institutional counterparts in the country.

The purposively selected participants comprised all the Council Chairpersons (4), Principals (4), Vice Principals (4), College Secretaries (4), Finance Officers (4), Internal Auditors (4), College Librarians (4), Quality Assurance Officers (4), Heads of Departments (4) and Students' Affairs Officers (4) with core SRC executives: Presidents (4), Vice Presidents (4), General Secretaries (4), Assistant General Secretaries (4), Finance Officers (4), Public Relations Officers (4), Treasurers (4) and Organising Secretaries (4) from each of the four Colleges of Education in Ashanti Region. The management members in the colleges were selected due to their position and their constant contact with the leadership of SRC and the entire student body in their schedule of duty. They represent the symbol of authority as they implement policies formulated by Council and the Academic Board respectively. The core SRC executives also represent a symbol of authority for the entire student bodies. They have a closer contact with management in the institutions as well as the students they represent. They, in effect, assist the college management in the implementation of policies. The total number of respondents was seventy-two (72).

4.5 SELECTING AND ACCESSING RESEARCH SITES

4.5.1 Selecting the Research Sites

Ghana is a country in West Africa; it shares borders with Côte D'Ivoire to the West, Togo to the East, Burkina Faso to the North and the Gulf of Guinea to the South. Ghana covers 238,533 square kilometres, with a population of 24,658,823 (Anim-Boamah, 2021). Before the demarcation, there were ten administrative regions in Ghana, zoned into southern, middle and northern zones (Figure 4.1). In 2019, the country's ten regions were re-demarcated into 16 new regions (Figure 4.2). This study adopted the current sixteen regions in figure 4.2 since the study was designed and approved after the re-demarcation.

Figure 4.1: The three zones of Ghana (Pre-redemarcation 2019)



Key



[Source: adopted from (Nortey et al., 2015)]

Figure 4.2: The New Ghana Map (The Sixteen Regions of Ghana)



[Source: Permanent Missions of Ghana to the United States]

<https://www.easytrackghana.com/travel-information-ghana-maps.php>

Table 4.1: Regional Distribution of Accredited Colleges of Education with their Respective Towns in Ghana.

S/N	COLLEGE OF EDUCATION	SITUATED TOWNS	REGION
1	St. Joseph's College of Education	Bechem	Ahafo
2	Agogo Presbyterian College of Education Akrokerri College of Education Mampong Technical College of Education Offinso College of Education Seventh Day Adventist College of Education St Louis College of Education St Monica's College of Education Westley College of Education	Agogo Akrokerri Mampong Offinso Agona Kumasi Mampong Kumasi	Ashanti
3	Atebubu College of Education	Atebubu	Bono East
4	Al- Faruq College of Education Berekum College of Education St Ambrose College of Education	Wenchi/ Dooboso Berekum Dormaa Akwamu	Brong Ahafo
5	Fosu College of Education Komenda College of Education Our Lady of Apostle College of Education	Fosu Komenda Cape Coast	Central
6	Abetifi College of Education Kibi College of Education Mount Maries College of Education Methodist College of Education Presbyterian College of Education Presbyterian Women's College of Education Seventh Day Adventist College of Education	Kwahu Abetifi Kibi Somanya Akim Oda Akropong Aburi Asokore	Eastern
7	Accra College of Education Ada College of Education	Accra Ada	Greater Accra
8	Bagabaga College of Education Evangelical Presbyterian College of Education Tamale College of Education St. Vincent College of Education McCoy College of Education	Tamale Bimbilla Tamale Yendi Nadowli	Northern
9	Gambaga College of Education	Gambaga	North East
10	Dambai College of Education Jasikan College of Education	Dambai Jasikan	Oti

11	None	None	Savannah
12	Gbewaa College of Education St. John Bosco College of Education	Pusiga Navrongo	Upper East
13	Nusrat Jahan Ahmadiyya College of Education Tumu College of Education	Wa Tumu	Upper West
14	Akatsi College of Education Evangelical Presbyterian College of Education Peki College of Education St. Francis College of Education St. Theresah's College of Education	Akatsi Amedzofe Peki Hohoe Hohoe	Volta
15	Bia Lamplighter College of Education Enchi College of Education Wiawso College of Education	Sefwi Enchi Sefwi-Wiawso	Western North
16	Holy Child College of Education	Secondi-Takoradi	Western

4.5.2 Accessing Research Sites

The researcher purposively chose four colleges from Ashanti Region which are located in the middle portion of Ghana, and it is the largest of 16 administrative regions in terms of size. The region lies within longitudes 0.150 East, 2.250 West and latitudes 5.500 North and 7.460 South respectively. It occupies a total land surface of 24,389 km² (9,417sqml) or 10.2 percent of the total land area of Ghana. The region is the second most populous with 5,924,498 inhabitants, Dokua, (2020). Ashanti Region has a total number of eight (8) Colleges of Education in the country. The capital is Kumasi, and the region has Osei Tutu 11 as its king (Asantehene). Sharing boundaries with Bono East Region to the North, Western Region to the West, Eastern Region to the East and Central Region to the South, majority of the population is ethnic Akan. Administratively, the region is divided into forty-three (43) Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies. The researcher deliberately chose the region for the study because it has the largest number of Colleges of Education.

4.5.3 Brief History about the Four Research Sites

The first is St. Louis College of Education in the city of Kumasi. The Saint Louis (Roman) Sisters arrived in 1948 from Ireland when Bishop Hubert Joseph Paulissen was the Vicar Apostolic. The Sisters were to continue the running of the already established St Bernadette's Elementary School now Roman Girls' Demonstration Junior High School and St. Louis Secondary School on the same

compound. It became obviously expedient that a Training College be opened to train female teachers, hence, St Louis Training College was opened at the request of the Ministry of Education on 23rd September, 1960 by the Catholic Diocese of Kumasi. The sisters ran the college with funds partly mobilised from their allowances, the Catholic Diocese of Kumasi, funding agencies abroad and other well-wishers. Since the college's inception, it has gone through certificate "A", a 3 year Post Secondary, a Diploma in Basic Education and now Bachelor of Education (St. Louis College of Education, 2020:11). Over the years, it has remained a female Catholic faith-based institution.

Mampong Technical College of Education (MAMTECH) is located in Ashanti Mampong. It was established in 1967 as a teacher-education institution on the premises of Trades Training Centre by the British Colonial Government which was turned into a Borstal Institution in 1937. It was converted into an army recruitment camp during the Second World War and became Government Trades School from 1945. It was then run as a Junior Technical Institute and later into Handicraft Teacher Training Institute. The institution was re-named Mampong Technical College of Education after assuming tertiary status in 2007 (Mampong Technical College of Education Graduation Ceremony Programme, 2019:12). At the moment, they boast as being the only male tertiary institution in West Africa (Mampong Technical Training College Students Handbook, 2017:12).

The Akrokerri College of Education was established in 1962 to cater for some of the surplus number of candidates who could not find places in the then existing two-year teacher training colleges in the country. The Teachers' Certificate 'A' four-year programme began in the same year. It is located at the Adansi West District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana and often called the 'Adansi University'. This is a mixed-sex institution (Akrokerri College of Education, 2016:6).

The Offinso College of Education was established in February 1955 by the Gold Coast District of the Methodist Church of Ghana. The college was established purposely for the training of women catechists for the church. It traces its history from Mr. Andrews Krakye Denteh, who was a tutor at Wesley College in Kumasi but hailed from Asamankese-Offinso. The institution started with very few students before student enrollment increased in 1971. The college was turned into a mixed-sex institution in 1974 when the two-year Post Secondary Certificate "A" programme was introduced. This was replaced with three-year Post Secondary Programme and later three-year Diploma in Basic Education, beginning from the 2018/2019 academic year. This programme was

also faced out with the introduction of a four-year Bachelor of Education programme (Offinso College of Education, 2015:23).

4.6 PILOT STUDY

A pilot study is the first step of the entire research work as it is often a smaller-sized study which assists in designing and making adjustment to the main study (In, 2017). This was done on the interview items with neutral participants to determine the effectiveness of the instrument and any difficulty it may pose on the actual participants during data collection. It helps a researcher to determine whether the individuals in the sample could complete the session and that they could understand the questions. The pilot study is a procedure which assists the researcher to make changes to data collection instrument based on feedback from a small number of individuals who complete and evaluate the instrument (Creswell, 2012). In this study, the comments from the participants in the pilot study enabled the researcher to make the necessary adjustments to the instrument to ensure their flawlessness and their appropriateness for the main study. The pilot study was conducted in Accra College of Education, in the Greater Accra Region. This college was not part of the four which were selected for the main study but as an institution that trains teachers, it was deemed relevant for a pilot study. The Accra College was appropriate for the pilot study because it is a mixed-sex public institution with similar characteristics as the four sites selected for the study. This involved ten management personnel (Council Chairperson, Principal, Vice Principal, College Secretary, Finance Officer, Internal Auditor, College Librarian, Quality Assurance Officer, Head of Department and Students' Affairs Officer) and the eight core SRC executives (President, Vice President, General Secretary, Assistant General Secretary, Finance Officer, Public Relations Officer, Treasurer and Organising Secretary) in the institution, totalling eighteen (18).

4.7 INSTRUMENTATION AND DATA COLLECTION

4.7.1 Research Instruments

The researcher adopted the qualitative research approach which primarily explored a situation, phenomenon, problem or event. This means, in qualitative research, the researcher studies things in their natural settings, attempts to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring out (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). A detailed understanding of the issue was established by talking directly with the people and allowing them to tell their stories, unencumbered by what

was expected in the literature (Creswell & Poth, 2018). An exploratory design was deemed appropriate for this study in that it elicited or explored the views of all participants—college authorities, administrators and students’ representatives of the selected colleges.

The researcher employed the semi-structured interview guide involving individual and focus group interviews. Magaldi and Berla (2020) attest that a semi-structured interview requires the participant to answer a set of pre-determined questions. It allows for probing and clarification of answers and the interview schedules basically define the line of enquiry. For the purpose of triangulation (to check for consistencies and biases associated with a single qualitative data collection procedure), the researcher also undertook observations at the four study sites.

4.7.2 Data Collection

Collection of data refers to the process of finding relevant material or information from the selected participants in a study. For the researcher to deeply engage and interact with management and core SRC executives, interviews and observations were adopted for the data collection in this study. Interviews and observations are two relevant qualitative methods of collecting primary data in that, they provide much more detailed information to answer the research problem under investigation. The above research methods enabled the researcher to study the behaviour, experiences and views of the participants and get an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. These methods of data collection are suitable for participants who might refrain from expressing their opinion publicly (Showkat & Parveen, 2017). They helped the researcher to explore issues that might need further investigations and descriptive analysis. Tichapondwa (2013) maintains that in using interviews, the researcher can immediately validate the data when sensing that the respondent is providing false information through non-verbal cues, including facial expressions and tones of voice. In this study, the researcher employed one-on-one and focus group interviews in addition to observation in data collection.

4.7.2.1 Individual interviews

Interviews form the backbone of primary data collection in qualitative research designs (Adhail & Anozie, 2017). It is a data collection technique whereby the researcher draws data from participants by asking them specific questions. This process is done face-to-face or one-on-one where the interviewer and the interviewee are in the same room (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Under the new world order (COVID-19), the one-on-one interview could also take place telephonically

to avoid the interviewer and interviewee coming into contact in the same physical venue. The data collection for this study took place in 2022 when COVID-19 restrictions were removed. Interview is an inter-personal encounter and important for the researcher to establish trust and rapport with participants so that the interview process can be friendly and unbiased. Although the interview was unstructured to remain focused and flexible, the researcher used an interview guide during the one-on-one discussion. This provided participants with the opportunity to fully describe their experiences in their own words, rather than being forced by pre-established lines of thinking developed by the researcher. The use of interview guide therefore provided the process direction. The sessions were audio-recorded to eliminate omissions, distortions, allowed for elaborations and other modifications of data usually found in written interviews (Koul, 2013). Management of the four Colleges of Education were interviewed one-on-one in agreed venues. The number of the interviewees totalled 40 participants (Appendix 9).

4.7.2.2 Focus group discussion

Another method used in collecting data for the study was focus group discussions. Focus groups are mainly data collection methods which adopt interview guide to collect data where the groups are usually supervised by a group leader (Adhahil & Anozie, 2017). Focus group is defined as a small gathering of individuals who have a common interest or characteristics, assembled by the researcher who uses the group and its interactions to gain in-depth information about a particular topic (Kirk & Williams, 2002) as cited by (Tichapondwa, 2013). This involves interviewing groups of individuals in a conducive location to gather information for the study. The researcher adopted the semi-structured interview guide as the interview tool during the in-depth interviews combining participants of the same college in each group. There were four (4) focus groups in all the four selected Colleges of Education which means each college had a focus group discussion. The researcher developed a list of logical questions that covered the entire discussion with the participants. She constructed ten (10) semi-structured questions which were open-ended, using English language (Appendix 10), the official language of Ghana, to collect the data. The items asked were similar to the face-to-face, one-on-one interviews in order to obtain similar information as well as divergent views. Both interviews were conducted in venues that were preferred by and suitable for the participants. The duration for each interview was between 45 minutes to one hour. After the signed informed consent form had been collected, the SRC participants were put in a group of eight (8) for the discussion in each college. The students were welcomed and provided

with the information sheet to read the purpose of the study and asked for some clarifications. They were given the consent forms to sign for participating and for the discussion to be recorded. The researcher engaged the students initially to create a conducive environment before the commencement of the actual interview process. Student participants were allowed to introduce themselves whilst the researcher asked questions from the semi-structured interview guide. Participants were allocated numbers to ensure anonymity. After each session, the researcher thanked the participants for their time, cooperation and assistance.

4.7.3 Observation

Observation is one of the methods used to collect primary data for this study. Observation is a focused, logical and careful way of watching and listening to interaction or occurrences as they take place (Kumar 2014). In other words, it is the process of noting a phenomenon in its natural setting, environment or situation through the five senses of the observer, often with a note-taking instrument, and recording it for scientific purposes (Angrosino, 2007) as cited by Cristwell & Poth (2018). There are two types of observations: participant observation and non-participant observation. For the purpose of this research, non-participant observation was employed. Non-participant observation is when the researcher does not get involved in the activities of the group but remains a passive observer, watching and listening to its activities and drawing conclusions from it. The researcher used observation guide to ensure that she only took note of things which were related to the research questions and could assist in acquisition of relevant data for the study (Appendix 11).

Observation is appropriate in situations where full and accurate information cannot be elicited by questioning alone, because respondents are either not co-operative or unaware of the answers as they might find it difficult to detach themselves from the interaction. In the observation, the researcher was more interested in the behaviour than in the perceptions of participants and because they were more involved in the interactions, they were unable to provide objective information. For this reason, the researcher adopted observation as another data-collection tool to enable her to collect the required information (Cresswell & Poth, 2018). She spent two days at each site to conduct interviews and also watched the physical settings, participants, activities, interactions and conversations using the senses to seek information based on the research questions. The technique

allowed the researcher to observe the participants, record what was happening and took relevant notes for the study (Tichapondwa, 2013).

4.7.4 The Use of a Research Assistant in Data Collection

In the preparation leading to this study, the researcher needed support of research assistants with respect to the degree of knowledge about the research; insiders who are familiar with the study context people who can facilitate the process of data collection (Deane and Stevano, 2016), encourage and shape the future generation of researchers and complement her effort by collaborating with people with different skills. The researcher engaged two Research Assistants from the Agogo Presbyterian College of Education. The research assistants performed supportive functions to assist in the overall project conducted by the researcher voluntarily. The assistants, engaged for the study, were from the Departments of Information and Finance, who are also involved in extensive research, hence their understanding of the confidential nature of information to be obtained. As far as linguistics (some expressions), cultural barriers and respondents' apprehensive feelings when giving information to outsiders (Liamputtong, 2010) were concerned, research assistants were employed to minimise the effect of these factors (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

The assistants supported the research project by conducting literature searches, maintaining the files and assisted in conducting interviews and analysing the data (Deane and Stevano, 2016), entering data, coding data, conducting qualitative analyses, performing statistical analyses, organising documents and references, photocopying, preparing tables and charts, searching for references, editing or formatting papers (Kuckarts & Radiker, 2019).

4.7.5 Data Collection Procedure

There are two main types of data collection procedures: primary and secondary (Taherdoost, 2021). Primary data-collection methods can be either qualitative or quantitative methods or both depending upon the nature of data collected. This study focused on qualitative methods and procedures of conducting individual and focus group interviews and observation.

4.8 MEASURES TAKEN TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS

In a qualitative research, trustworthiness relates to validity and reliability of data and the processes of collecting them. The researcher should therefore be mindful of these two factors when designing the study, analysing the data and judging the quality of the study (de Vos & Strydom, 1998).

Reliability refers to “the extent to which the study results are consistent over time and accurate” (Quaye, 2020). In other words, if the study can be repeated under a similar methodology, similar results can be obtained. Reliability essentially deals with repeatability of results. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985:290), trustworthiness in a research study should answer the question, “How can an inquirer persuade his or her audience that the research findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to?” For qualitative research to answer the above question, measures must be taken by the researcher to ensure that the process of data collection and the data collected were credible (believable or convincing), confirmable (supports trust), consistent (dependable) and transferable (can be generalised) (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this current study, the researcher took a number of steps to ensure trustworthiness of the study. In collecting the data, she evaluated the validity and reliability of her tools through their evaluation by the study promoter and a pilot study. In order to withstand the scrutiny and ensure trustworthiness, the researcher spent time giving serious consideration to the following: credibility, reflexivity, dependability, confirmability, peer debriefing and audit trail.

4.8.1 Credibility and Trustworthiness

Holloway and Wheeler (2000) as cited by Anney (2014:276) opine that “credibility, often called internal validity, is the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings.” It establishes whether the findings represent plausible information drawn from the participants’ original data and is a correct interpretation of the participants’ original views (Anney, 2014). Credibility in this study was ensured by the researcher’s demonstration of an accurate picture of the phenomenon under study. There was a prolonged engagement with participants at various sites, ensuring that adequate and better information was received from them. Participants were presented with the information sheet and guiding questions for the interview and discussions. This, therefore, “equipped the participants with knowledge about the purpose of the study so that they could contribute extensively” (Ferero et al., 2018). Adequate interaction with the participants before the data collection began, enabled them to become acquainted with the environment, which enabled them to relax throughout the process.

The researcher also presented the semi-structured interview guide to resolve any possible misinterpretation and misconstruction. During the interviews and discussion, prompts were also used by the researcher to clarify some of the participants' responses (Ferero et al., 2018). The

researcher also did member checking by verifying the participants' responses during the data collection process; their comments were summarised to corroborate or otherwise, which was then represented and documented. This depended more on the richness of the data gathered than on the quantity of the data. The researcher allowed only the participants of the study to decide if the results reflected the phenomena being studied as it was important for the participants to feel the findings were credible and accurate.

4.8.2 Dependability

This is also known as reliability. Citing Polit et al (2006), Moon et al (2016:2) describe dependability as the consistency of the research findings and the degree to which research procedures are documented, allowing someone outside the research to follow, audit and critique the research process. In other words, dependability answers the question whether the research instrument would produce the same results and conclusions when used by different researchers. To achieve this, the researcher checked the interview questions for content and face validity to ensure clarity and to avoid ambiguities in wording. During the interviews and focus group discussions, the researcher asked clear questions to enable participants to understand, contribute and provide adequate and relevant information. This informed the reader the rigorous processes the study went through to ensure dependability.

4.8.3 Transferability

Transferability which is often called external validity refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents. In citing (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), Korstjens and Moser (2017) point out that the researcher facilitates the transferability judgement by a potential user through thick description with other respondents. This means that the results are generalisable and can be applied to other similar settings, populations and situations, notwithstanding its peculiarity. Transferability was ensured by presenting a thick description of the setting, methodology and participants in the study. Three different sources of data (individual interview, group discussion and observation) were used to ensure that the study was representative of the context. The researcher ensured that participants had experiential knowledge with SRC executives and management, hence, the use of core SRC leadership who are at the helm of affairs for the students' body and the institutional authorities represented by management who run affairs of the institution. Each group thus lead either the students' body or

administration. To ensure that the study sample was as representative and diverse as possible, one male only and one female only and two mixed-sex colleges were purposively selected for the study. This is to avoid preference as similar sex colleges may exhibit similar features which may not unearth the uniqueness of responses for which this study sought for. All the four categories of institutions may have different characteristics issues with respect to their gender peculiarity.

4.8.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the degree to which the findings of the research study could be confirmed by other researchers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) as cited by (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). In this study, the researcher ensured confirmability by presenting the findings and the actual data from the interaction with all the participants. Verbatim quotes were provided for all important responses given by the respondents to ensure that the data was tracked to their sources. The researcher used multiple data-collection tools (individual and focus group interviews, and observation) to collect data to ensure confirmability. The logic used to assemble the interpretations into structurally coherent and corroborating wholes was both explicit and implicit in the study's narrative. The researcher ensured a smooth presentation of data from the study. Verbatim quotes supported themes and sub-themes from one or more participants to ensure transparency and authenticity. Participants shared their views on the relevance of SRC in the administration of Colleges of Education without intimidation. The interviews were recorded, and verbatim transcription was used in the analysis and presentation. Enough opportunity was given to all participants to confirm or refute comments that they made through member checking.

As an educationist and an administrator, the researcher might have different interpretations of some of the study findings. She therefore ensured that the participants' experiences and perspectives during the data collection and interpretations of the findings were not fabrications of the inquirer's imaginations, but clearly derived from the data (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). As a result, the researcher documented the procedures for checking and re-checking the data during the entire research as she also engaged the services of research assistants in coding the data. Similarly, participants were also asked to review their results and peers were involved in the review of findings to prevent possible biases in the study. Since all data needs to be tracked to its source, transcribed data and field notes were kept for verification.

4.9 ETHICAL ISSUES CONSIDERED IN THE STUDY

Ethical considerations are critical in qualitative research. Ethics is a branch of philosophy that deals with the conduct of people and guides the norms or standards of behaviour of people and relationships with each other (Akaranga & Makau, 2016). It refers to an “ethos” or “way of life”, “social norms for conduct that distinguishes between acceptable and unacceptable behavior” (Ongong’a & Akaranga, 2013:15). It is the branch of philosophy that deals with morality. As this research involved human participants, the researcher tapped into other people’s territory personally, emotionally, physically and otherwise, hence there was an obligation on her part for ethical considerations. The following ethical principles were adhered to:

4.9.1 Voluntary Participation

Recruitment of participants for the study was voluntary (Arifin, 2018, Cacciattolo, 2015). The nature and purpose of the study was described in detail by the researcher to potential participants. The participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any penalties. Furthermore, they could withdraw at any time without having to give a reason and without prejudice.

4.9.2 Adherence to COVID-19 Protocols

This study involved key informant interviews with selected individuals and focus groups. Data collection for critical informants' interviews and focus group discussions with students and administrators were done during the second part of 2022 when the COVID-19 restrictions were relaxed in Ghana. Due to the researcher’s compliance with all COVID protocols, a 50-seater conference room was used to accommodate the four-member students for the focus group interview and all the windows and doors were opened for adequate ventilation. Hand sanitisers and paper towels were provided for each participant. Again, before each interview session, body temperatures of all participants were recorded in line with COVID-19 protocols. A two-metre space radius was kept between the participants and the researcher during the process. The information sheet and consent form gave the participants a choice to participate or not and withdraw from the study at any time they wished without any penalties.

No participant received any material or financial benefits for participating in this study which were carefully explained (Yip et al., 2016). They were however provided with lunch after the session.

The researcher ensured that participants understood the importance and implications of the study so that any presentation was not considered as an inducement for participation.

4.9.3 Incorrect Reporting

Incorrect reporting of findings is where changes may be made to information to suit one's own interest which is unethical. Correct and unbiased reporting of the findings is an important characteristic of ethical practice in a research project. To ensure correct reporting, with the permission of the participants, the researcher recorded all the proceedings which she played back many times during the data presentation, analysis and discussions. She also quoted participants verbatim where necessary to avoid incorrect reporting and sought for other qualified researchers to assist in the interpretation of recordings.

4.9.4 Ethical issues in Collecting Data from Secondary Sources

Ciuk and Latusek (2018) indicate that, confidentiality issues reach further than primary research and are just as complex when using data in secondary analysis. Plagiarism is one key issue to be considered when using secondary source. It is unethical and illegal to use someone's work and pretend that it is yours which could have serious academic implications on the research. In this regard, all ideas and citations were properly acknowledged.

4.9.5 Reflexivity

According to Lincoln and Guba, (1985) cited by Korstjens and Moser (2017), reflexivity is the process of critical self-reflection about oneself as a researcher (own biases, preferences, preconceptions), and the research relationship (relationship to the respondent, and how the relationship affects participant's answers to questions). The researcher acknowledged the importance of being self-aware and reflexive about her own role in the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting the data, and the pre-conceived assumptions brought to the research (Korstjens, & Moser, 2017). This might occur when personal beliefs, values and biases that could shape the investigations are reported. To ensure reflexivity in the study, the researcher discussed the findings in such a manner that participants' experiences and perspectives were well represented in the findings.

4.9.6 Peer Debriefing

As reported by Anney (2014), peer debriefing provides inquirers with the opportunity to test their growing insights and to expose themselves to searching questions. It is a way to put firm base on

the credibility of the study. In this study, the researcher sought support from other professionals willing to provide scholarly guidance, such as members of academic and non-academic staff of Agogo Presbyterian College of Education as well as three officials from the Ministry of Education in Ghana. She also discussed the preliminary findings with the participants so that they could confirm, refute or correct some of the information where necessary. In other words, the researcher presented the findings to her peers and some of the available participants for their comments and inputs before finalising the report. Feedback from these peers helped the researcher to improve the quality of the findings. This procedure was used after the process of the data collection. The process provided support to the researcher by playing the devil's advocate.

4.9.7 Audit Trail

The purpose of audit trail in research is to examine the process and the procedures of the study. Citing Bowen (2009), Anney (2014) reports that an audit trail involves an examination of the inquiry process and product to validate the data, whereby a researcher accounts for all the research decisions and activities to show how the data was collected, recorded and analysed. In the study, an audit trail was maintained throughout the collection of data, transcription and analysis. Individual interviews and focus group discussions were documented immediately after they were conducted. Changes to the interview guides, such as new probes, were made to the original copy after the pilot study.

The researcher ensured a smooth presentation of data as she was guided by the data-collection tools during the interviews and focus group discussions. During the process, she often referred to the guide to prevent omission of significant questions. The researcher, as the moderator, ensured that all participants in the focus group discussion contributed to any issue without being stopped because of time constraints. Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim and used in the presentation and analysis. Participants could either confirm or refute comments made during the individual interview and the group discussion. The aim of providing formal audit was to examine both the process and product of enquiry to determine the trustworthiness of the findings and to minimise any possible biases.

4.9.8 Permission to Conduct Research

Approval of the research topic was done by the Graduate School of the University of South Africa, Pretoria, before ethical approval was sought. Ethical approval was also obtained from the same

university for the study. Formal written permissions were obtained from each of the four Colleges of Education selected for the study (Appendix 3). This included the Council Chairpersons, Management members as well as the SRCs in the various colleges.

4.9.9 Informed Consent

This is an important component of ethical consideration as it indicates the willingness and voluntary participation of selected people to be involved in the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Cacciattolo, 2015). A research project should be grounded, as far as possible and practicable, on the freely given informed consent of those under study (Moore et al, 2018). Written informed participant consent was obtained from all participants for both members of management and the SRCs of the four selected sites before the individual interviews and focus group discussion were conducted (Appendices 5/6). Participants were presented with the information sheet (Appendices 7/8), which introduced the researcher, affiliation and the purpose of the study. The researcher explained fully, reasonably and appropriately to the participants the aims and nature of the research, who was undertaking it, its likely duration, why it was being undertaken, the possible consequences of the research and how the results were to be disseminated. The researcher also explained to the participants what would happen to the data from recordings (for which permission was sought), once the research project was completed. She assured all the participants that the data would be kept under lock for a period of five (5) years before being destroyed. Also, participants who did not understand some parts of the information sheet requested clarification before the interviews and discussions began. The participants were informed that they could decide whether or not the interview should be tape-recorded and that there were no consequences for not consenting for the interview to be recorded. All participants consented to the interviews and discussions to be recorded. They were assured that they were under no obligation to participate if they did not feel comfortable due to the researcher's position as an administrator in a different College of Education, however, their views were protected from third parties (Polonsky, 2019). Before the interview began, the consent forms were collected, and participants were asked to keep the information sheet if they needed to contact the researcher.

4.9.10 Anonymity and Confidentiality

The interviews were conducted at venues chosen by the participants within the colleges. No personal identifiers were used in the transcriptions of the interview as codes were assigned.

Recorded information from the tapes was transcribed and the transcripts were coded by the researcher. During the focus group interviews, participants who wanted to contribute to the discussion introduced themselves with the code number such as “FGD1-FGD10” before they spoke. In a situation where they wanted to support responses from other participants, they were requested to mention the code of the person and not the name. Participants were assured that their identities and views would be kept in confidence and not shared with any other person (Akaranga & Makau, 2016). Since confidentiality cannot be guaranteed during focus group discussion, participants were told that data collected would be for research purpose only and would not be given to a third party. They were also encouraged to keep all information they had heard during the discussion and not to divulge it to anyone (Fouka, & Mantzorou, 2011). All possible identifiers that participants gave during the interviews were redacted from the transcripts (Polonsky, 2019). Privacy and confidentiality were ensured as codes were used to identify participants, and only the researcher and her supervisor had access to the transcripts and recordings. Participants had pseudonyms (ID1-ID10 in the case of individual interviews), thus, participant 1 -10 based on their sitting arrangement. All documents related to the study were kept under lock.

4.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the methodology and research design used in the research project. The discussion included data-collection instruments and methods such as individual interviews, focus group discussions and observation. The qualitative phenomenology design which explored views from key participants such as management members, council and SRC executives were discussed. The chapter also focussed on how data was checked for trustworthiness, and how the ethical issues related to the research project were addressed. In other words, strategies to ensure ethical considerations and trustworthiness of the study, during data collection, analysis were discussed into sufficient details. The next chapter focuses on the presentation of data, analysis and discussion of findings.

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION OF DATA, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the research methodology and the design used in collecting data for the study. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section focuses on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the field through focus group discussions, individual interviews and observations conducted on the sites selected for the study. The second section deals with the discussion of the findings from the data collected from the field.

As it might have been alluded to in the chapter, the qualitative tools adopted for data collection in this study were focus group discussions, one-on-one interviews and observation. The data from the above tools were analysed after collecting them from the participants who comprised representatives of students and management of the selected colleges. The results from the individual and focus group discussions were combined and presented under common themes to compare the views from the different categories of data. Themes were identified at the starting point of the presentation, analysis and discussions of the data. The study sought to explore the relevance of SRC to the administration of Colleges of Education in Ghana. The themes used as the basis for data presentation and analysis emerged from the research questions and responses from the participants.

Semi-structured interviews and observation were employed in the collection of an in-depth information from staff members who worked directly or indirectly with students in the colleges where the study was conducted, while focus group interviews were used to obtain information from the students' representatives. The observation was conducted on all relevant activities pertaining to the study at all the four study sites.

Thirty- two (32) SRC executives and forty (40) administrators from the four sites participated in the study. Four themes emerged from the thematic content analysis (Table 5.1). These included relevance of SRC; challenges of SRC; influences of SRC and improvement of relationship between

SRC and management in the various colleges. The data was described and supported by verbatim quotes in the presentation, analysis and discussions.

5.2 CODES AND THEMES

The researcher used the thematic data analysis approach based on the information derived from the responses in relationship to the research questions and the relevant literature reviewed. The researcher summarised the progressive structure of the narration given by the participants immediately after the data collection to minimise twisting of information and wrote it in a form of anecdotes (texts) (Akinyode & Khan, 2018). To achieve immersion and obtain a sense of the whole, the data was read word by word to derive codes (Mills & Huberman, 1994, Ulin, Robinson & Tolley, 2005, Vaismoradi et al., 2013). As described by Saldana (2021), coding is the initial step toward an even rigorous and evocative analysis and interpretation of data. In coding the data, the researcher made a list of allied information and arranged them under categories from which she formed the themes. In other words, labels for codes emerged or reflected more than once and often coming directly from the anecdotes, became the initial coding scheme. Codes were then sorted into categories (formed when similar codes were merged to get a broader sense of the data) based on how they were related and linked. The researcher organised this larger number of categories into similar and allied responses under a specific theme to make the presentation and analysis logical and less difficult.

Themes were major and recurring dominant subjects that appeared in the work i.e., the research questions. These same codes were used for both staff and student participants because the codes which ultimately led to the formulation of themes were derived from the same research questions. All the audio-recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher who read the transcripts several times to familiarise herself with the data. Two transcripts were inductively coded independently, using MaxQDA version 20, which were later reviewed to develop a coding system. The researcher then coded all the scripts using the coding system agreed upon in MaxQDA version 20. The total number of individual interviews comprised 40 participants from management members (staff). The participants were identified from 1-10 and presented as ID1-ID10 (Individual interview 1-10). The focus group interviews were used to collect data from the student participants. The total number of focus groups were four (4) with a maximum of eight participants in each group. In order to distinguish the responses from participants on comparable issues, the following labels were assigned as pseudonyms: FGD 1-10

(focus group discussion participant 1–participant 10. These alphabets represented the four colleges respectively under study: a, b, c, d.

5.3 THEMATIC PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

5.3.1 Demographic Information

The ages of the SRC participants ranged from 21 to 26 years; they serve as students' representatives for a two-year term. At the time of the study, SRCs in the various colleges had a one-year term to complete their tenure but for the COVID-19 period, their term was extended for another year hence, the two-year period. The selection procedure for the SRC adopted by the two gender-biased colleges indicated the assumption of various positions by their gender specifications. Meanwhile, the heterogeneous colleges depicted most positions being occupied by predominantly males.

Majority of the age range of the administrators who participated in the study was between 41 and 50 years with fewer younger members who have been serving in that capacity for five years and above. This clearly indicates their high level of experience on the job. The administrative participants were more gender sensitive, as an appreciable number of males and females were involved in the study. For example, of the 40 administrators who participated in the study, 15 were females and 25 were males.

5.3.2 Themes and Sub-themes of Group Interviews

The study sought to explore the relevance of SRC to the administration of CoE in Ghana. From the focus group discussions, four (4) themes emerged on the basis of the research questions and nineteen (19) sub-themes were identified for the sessions as in the table below:

Table 5.1 Themes and sub-themes (SRC)

Themes	Sub-themes (SRC)
Relevance of SRC	Importance of SRC in CoE: Organisation of student-front while liaising between management and students and serving as mouthpiece of the student body. Partners in college infrastructure development Solve student related problems Major stakeholders Contribute to decision-making
Challenges of SRC	Challenges SRC encounter when executing their responsibilities: Mistrust from junior students Disrespect from colleagues in student body Disrespect from management and staff Inadequate consultation from management Inadequate support from management Imposition of ideas on SRC
Influences of SRC	Influences of SRC activities: Fundraising for infrastructural development Provision of janitorial services Decision-making
Improvement of relationship	Improvement of relationship with management: Empowerment of SRC Constant engagement with SRC to build understanding and good relations. Desist interference in SRC affairs Update of students' handbook Management to lead developmental projects and reduce demand for special levies.

5.3.2.1 Relevance of SRC

Since the student participants were all part of the student association, gathering this information was part of their routine tasks and therefore exciting to them. When interviewed on their relevance to the administration of Colleges of Education in Ghana, they enumerated their functions which unveiled their significance in the institutions as indicated below:

5.3.2.1.1 SRC as Organisers of Student body while Liaising between Management and Students and Serving as Mouthpiece of the Student Body

The general belief is that “unity is strength” and this can only be achieved through the organisation of people with common interest. Organisation enables the student body to prioritise activities, set

meaningful goals and achieve them within a specific period without so much pressure. The above response indicates that all participants affirm one of the main roles played by the SRC as an organisation of the students' front. The respondents indicated that organising students in the institutions involves expressing support for association members in the event of death, organising excursions and fun trips and selling tickets to finance programmes. To make their presence felt in the community, the SRC organises the student body to embark on clean-up activities in the various communities prior to the celebration of festivals and "SRC Week". In times of unrest, they also organise their members to protest against management or government. To improve relations with the community, they also engage in activities such as blood donations, clearing of drainages in the community and the presentation of gifts (Peter & Ebimobowei, 2015). Organisation is one of the most complex tasks of the SRC due to the unique nature of human beings, but it unites members at the end. Some of the responses with respect to the above theme are stated below:

"Yes, we're relevant. We organise the students' front, yea. We attend funeral services in support of our members in times of death and present items to the community. You know, during festivals in the community, we organise the students to clean the community." FGD3b

"Technology is essential but can never replace the human efforts as SRC" FGD4c

"Organising students is no small work, madam, technology makes things easier for us as humans so if SRC is not there, who will this technology benefit? We are very relevant to the college and Ghana" FGD7a

The relevance of the student association could also be deduced from its liaison between management and student body through the responses. Participants admitted that the SRC serves as a connection between the college management and the students' body. Being a liaison means the SRC is the channel of communication between the student body and administration as the authority. As a popular saying goes, "mediation is one of the most important tools of non-violence means, it can turn parties away from conflict, towards compromise" (Low, 2021). The respondents agreed in their responses that SRC is an effective tool in the liaison process in the Colleges of Education in Ghana. The response below, reproduced verbatim, reveals the SRC's mediatory nature and role:

“Very relevant madam. An institution without student leadership is quite difficult to run. We link the student body to administration and so we are very relevant.” FGD4b

Other responses made on the liaison role of the SRC indicate that the relationship is sometimes formal for which reason, procedures are followed and correspondences referenced while informal relationship is also encouraged especially in times of emergencies. Every assistance needed from management is mostly channelled through the SRC and vice versa as indicated below:

“Sure madam, we are very relevant. We are the centre around which other stakeholders revolve. And being student leaders, we link the other stakeholders”FGD2b

“SRC is very relevant, without us all students cannot write letters individually or speak to management on many issues. We are indispensable”FGD7a.

All the student respondents admitted that the SRC acts as a spokesperson for the student body. The SRC voices the opinion of the entire students either to management or to the general public as a whole. The voice of the SRC is the voice of all students for which reason, it has relevance to the administration of Colleges of Education in Ghana. The respondents indicated this assertion below:

“As my colleagues have said, the institution cannot exist without students. The SRC is the mouthpiece of these students so we are very relevant. We speak for all the students and so being in such a position makes us so important” FGD7d

“It’s very relevant, I mean the SRC as we play a major role being the mouthpiece of the student body” FGD2c

“Yes, SRC is very relevant to college administration. This is because SRC serves as the link between the whole students and the administration. Without SRC, information discussed at management level could be difficult to disseminate to the entire student body.”FGD1b.

5.3.2.1.2 SRC as Partners in College Infrastructure Development.

The progress and expansion of any institution depends largely on the vibrant nature of various organisations in an institution. The relevance of the students’ association can be seen in the contributions it makes towards the improvement of infrastructure, policy implementations and other services in the institution. All the 32 respondents from the four focus group sessions recognise the important role of the SRC as agent of development in their respective colleges. Being

an agent of development means the SRC represents students in the institution, and are elected to act on behalf of the student body. As the elected body to lead students, the SRC has the mandate of the students' body to act as its representatives on matters affecting students and the college at large. In this regard, the SRC works towards the improvement of the entire welfare of the institution. As leaders of the student body, the SRC shares in either the progress or retardation of the institution. The developmental projects which are either initiated or funded by the students' association range from infrastructural to services related which include the construction of buildings, provision of vehicles, internet services and many more. Some of the responses from the student participants are stated below:

“We represent the student body as the institution is basically made up of students. Due to this we are very relevant. Most of the projects are being initiated by us or even funded by us. Madam, government subventions may not be frequent but as for SRC dues, no way. We pay so that developmental projects can go on for this is our alma matter. Who will do it, if we don't. hmmm”
FGD7d

As some of the SRC respondents indicated, the administrators of the colleges are aware of the contribution of the student body as development agents. The respondents mentioned the annual projects undertaken by each year group to uplift the image of their respective institutions through levying of the student body, thereby making their relevance very visible. The following views expressed by three of the participants were very audible during the focus group discussions:

“Yes, we see ourselves as relevant members of SRC due to the day-to-day duties we perform for the students and the college. Many visible projects are our initiatives. We have done lots of them for the college and the administration recognizes our importance. Sometimes we encourage our fellow students to pay additional levies for certain projects. Every year group has a particular project” FGD4c

“We do several constructions with the help of the SRC dues and administration is very much aware of that.” FGD8b

“Several projects are being initiated by the SRC ranging from the payments of service renders, purchasing of electronic devices and construction of roads to the institution; all to improve the college. So, are we not relevant at all after performing all these? Yes we are. FGD6b

5.3.2.1.3 SRC as Problem Resolution Body

Several participants agreed that the SRC contributes to the solution of student-related problems. To the respondents, since problems affect the overall academic performance of students, their solutions remain paramount to the SRC leadership. After all, they were elected by the student body for that. To them, the SRC was set up mainly to solve students' problems before every other business that the association represents. The challenges that face students may range from personal, administrative, economic, social and mental concerns. In the Colleges of Education today, issues relating to feeding, allowances, residential accommodation and examination results represent students' major concerns. As *"the grasshopper which is near its mother eats the best food"* (Ghanaian proverb), the SRC's responsibility is to fight for the solution of feeding (quality and quantity) and other related concerns confronting the student body. This is done through the use of their positions as representatives of the student body to request college authorities to handle students' challenges proactively. Accordingly, personal issues which directly affect the performance of students such as those related to the family are solved by the SRC when they surface. Where problems become overwhelming, the matters are referred to the college authorities for redress. The following are some of the responses from the focus group:

"Yes, we do go for the solution of their concerns. Some are personal and others general and needs group discussions before solution. Personal issues sometimes include financial, relationships and family. Some we discuss as SRC members but with personal issues, we solve them. The general ones include results, allowance and so on" FGD5b

"We solve most of the problems which are within our capability, but the rest are directed to the dean then to management" FGD7b

"Student associations are formed to solve problems of their members and that is exactly what SRC stands for. What is our relevance if we aren't able to help each other in solving our problems? We are happy to be in this position to help in whatever means possible." FGD4c

Other responses reveal the tackling of problems relating to teaching and learning. Respondents claim, the lecturers who default in attendance, teaching, assessment of students during their lecture periods are reported by members even though this falls under management's responsibility. In order to protect the image of members involved in this activity, the SRC approaches these

defaulting lecturers when such allegations are made. These interventions have yielded considerable results as expressed below:

“SRC sees to students’ affairs, thus the overall well-being of students. So, if students are having issues, with food, teaching and learning or with lecturers, we come in” FGD3a.

5.3.2.1.4 SRC as Major Stakeholders in the College

There was consensus among the focus group discussions that the SRC, including the student body, is a major stakeholder in the Colleges of Education in Ghana. It remains the main stakeholder and portrays the central nature of the student body of which the college revolves. With or without technology, the students remain the most vital stakeholders in the institution and SRC represents this group of people. The SRC is an interested party involved in all matters relating to the college’s organisation, operations and academics needed for long-term sustainability. One must not underestimate their importance as their engagement benefits massively the students and the institution. As a stakeholder of the college affairs, the SRC empowers students, initiates change, builds new relationships or strengthens old ones, increases the success of the college by turning them into supporters and advocates and a valuable source of information. Meaning, the SRC is financially or physically better or worse off when things change for the good or bad. These are the views of some of the participants:

“Ok, I think the SRC is very important in institutions especially in an academic institution like ours. Without students, the management will not be there and without management, students will not be there. But for the effective management of the college, you have to get SRC who is going to represent the students to report to management on the things they are facing in the college. SRC is an important key body in the management of the Colleges of Education” FGD1d

“SRC is an important key body in the management of this College of Education” FGD1c

“Relevant, we are. We are the major stakeholder as every decision taken ends up to affect us negatively or positively and goes a long way to affect the government. Every decision lands on us as an association” FGD5b.

“Being students alone in an institution makes us central stakeholders as without us, the institution ceases to be one” FGD8a.

5.3.2.1.5 SRC's Contribution to Decision-making

The relevance of the SRC can be established from the responses made by the student participants. Decision-making is the ability to make choices by gathering information and assessing alternative options. Many respondents from the focus group discussions admitted to the importance of the SRC in contributing to decision-making in the colleges. The SRC is a permanent and a voting member of the Governing Council in the Colleges of Education in Ghana and therefore represents its constituency well in decision-making at the college level. The Council has the mandate to recruit and dismiss both students and staff. This is the council which the SRC has a representation on, hence its significance as a contributor to decision in the college. The responses below indicate the assertions by the respondents.

“SRC is very relevant, without us students cannot all go to management for their issues to be solved. We are important because we contribute to taking decisions at the council” FGD7c

“Taking decisions is one of our core mandates. We are to take them at the lecture hall level and that of the residences. The SRC is part of some committees set up in the college. We are to share our views for the smooth running of the institution. We are relevant indeed” FGD8b

“Student association is all about taking decisions that affect the lives of members in it and that's what SRC is supposed to be doing now. It's even more done at the student level since we understand each other. FGD6a

5.3.2.2 Challenges of SRC

As indicated by the responses from the focus group discussion, the challenges the SRC faces can be grouped under student body, staff and management.

5.3.2.2.1 Challenges from students at the lower level

The responses from the focus group sessions indicated that the junior students in the institution are suspicious about the work of the student leaders. The responses indicate that many of the students who belong to the lower-level view the SRC as deceitful leaders whose main aim is to pocket the dues or levies they have contributed with the help of the college management. The response below is a case in point:

“They sometimes see us as liars as my colleague said. For example, last academic year, the administration introduced an endowment fee. The students at the lower level became furious that

we were aware of such fee but didn't inform them. That we colluded with administration to levy them, which was not so." FGD4b

As per the responses from the SRC participants, some students at the lower-level are respectful while others expressed extreme negative reaction towards them perhaps due to the connection these students have with some lecturers in the College. They claim the mistrust among the students at the lower-level may be due to family relations or staff who assisted them in their admission to the college. Therefore, whenever there is any misunderstanding, they just report the leadership to these staff who reprimand them. The following responses reflect the suspicions of the students who are at the lower level.

"Our fellow students at the lower level respect us. However, those who do not respect sometimes are as a result of their relationship with some lecturers. Some students were admitted through the help of these lecturers so some issues are referred to these lecturers who intimidate us. In witnessing these acts, it gives them the encouragement to disrespect and suspect us." FGD3b

In addition to the above response, some students are naturally disrespectful, so SRC try to accept such people and work amicably with them. As it came out from the group discussion:

"Some people are disrespectful by nature so I see it like that and I have accepted it like that" FGD4a

5.3.2.2.2 Challenges from colleagues in the student body

Responses from the group discussions indicate that some of the non-SRC members who are colleagues are ignorant about the duties of the SRC as they always expect things to be done their way. As it was heard from the respondents, their colleagues are uninformed about their roles and duties, have little knowledge of their engagement with management and assume that the SRC must heed their call at all times. As some of the respondents indicated:

"With the challenges, most of our students are ignorant about the duty of the SRC because they think the SRC should know everything management is doing and sometimes it is not like that " FGD3a

“Our colleagues are only on good terms with SRC when they realise that we are on their side, little do they know that being in leadership position means more than siding with them all the time but seeking the best for the whole students’ body in the institution” FGD2c

“The colleagues are sometimes interesting, our friendship with them sometimes come between our duties. Several attempts to explain to them has been taken as betrayal which is so frustrating”

FGD 7c

There are some students who suspect that the SRC is ‘in bed’ with administration and so accepts anything proposed by the management. They also consider their colleagues in the SRC as traitors and extortionists who defraud them and keep the proceeds in their personal accounts for purchasing of cars in the future. To the respondents, resorting to name calling is the order of the day especially when they refuse to offer gifts to their colleagues when they request for money. The following verbatim quotation obtained from the session indicates that:

“Thank you, madam, as my colleagues rightly said, it’s not easy. They have derogatory names for us. They say am a bully, am having their money in my personal coffers and saving them to spend when I leave this place and will be buying some cars and other things with them although audits are conducted upon leaving office. Just refuse to give them money and they’ll begin the name-calling. They believe you automatically loaded with money but seem we want to spend the money in the future. It has not been easy for us at all madam” FGD5b

The SRC is considered ineffective by their own colleagues. To them, the SRC lacks the ability to perform, thereby not producing the intended results. Others view them as not forceful enough to penetrate through administration, that the SRC is always siding with them. Even though the student body does not see the SRC as opposition to the college management, the frequent agreement on almost all issues by these two bodies, especially decisions that are obviously unacceptable by the student body, portray this ineffective attitude. These were some of their responses to buttress this fact:

“Hmm, they always want their issues to be solved in their own way so when the solutions go against them, they see us as irrelevant to them. They sometimes say we are incompetent; we are not working; we are only seeking for our individual gains. They sometimes say we are spending their money and seeking to please administration” FGD6a

“I will like to say that our colleagues see us as betrayers, liars, traitors because they think we are not treating them fairly. They think we’ve formed an alliance with administration, and we’ve left their concerns. We don’t deal with them. They see that whenever there are issues that we need to stand with them, we rather go to the side of administration” FGD 3b

To conclude, few respondents claimed that their senior colleagues were good sometimes, especially, when it came to disciplining juniors and according them the needed respect before the students at the lower levels.

“Our colleagues sometimes discipline some of the students on our behalf and especially when they misbehave. Their attitude toward us as SRC is different but when it comes to reprimanding students at the lower level, you’ll be amazed. In extreme cases, we even have to plead on their behalf” FGD 8b

“Our people can be very difficult to deal with, but I tell you, they have been of great help to us by checking on their fellow students who are recalcitrant” FGD2a

5.3.2.2.3 Challenges from Management and Staff

5.3.2.2.3.1 Disrespect from management and staff

As revealed by the participants, some lecturers treat SRC as they treat the rest of the student body. Their assertion is that they are not acknowledged during official programmes to the extent that they are not accorded special privileges befitting executives of a student body. In addition, participants claimed they are not considered as ‘special students’ who sometimes partake in meetings and therefore might require extra periods to cover up with their studies. Whenever they are absent from classes due to official duties, they are considered as absentees and sometimes reprimanded before other students as indicated in the responses below:

“Some staff members think we are just leaders so they can do whatever they want. They refuse to acknowledge us before other students. They treat us in the same way they treat other students” FGD4a

“We have to be treated differently, a bit special, because we lead the whole student body which is very important to the institution. How do we lead an association and be treated as any other student? We certainly deserve better; it is about time the staff accord us that respect. FGD 4b

“Constant humiliation before our fellow students by staff in the college is so unbearable. Can you believe this, when we do not attend classes for association meetings, could you believe we are marked absent in the register and are not given time to do the classwork. This has been affecting our assessment often.”FGD7b

The focus group discussions also indicated that management treats SRC as ceremonial leaders who have no idea of what leadership is all about. These SRC members have been made to see themselves as leaders who are only available for no reason and are not considered in anything making them feel useless. The discussions indicated that public disgrace is sometimes very frequent. Two of the participants said:

“Most of the time we are not respected at all. They treat us as if we don’t know our left from our right” P04d

“We are not offered any opportunity to operate. The schedule officer sometimes become[sic] angry over issues, shout [sic]at us and sometimes not recognised as such. I was once intimidated when I requested for accountability. It was said that “even the dog is more important than you,” “I quote” FGD5c

“I told you they have been treating us like children from the beginning. Like shouting, scolding intimidating etc. especially in front of people”FGD8c

Very few participants admit they are given the opportunity to operate to some extent as they affirmed:

“Few members of management believe in us. They sometimes give us the opportunity which the rest who are in the majority don’t however to prove their solidarity, they operate at the background” FGD6a

“Hmmm, very few of them are objective, they give us the opportunity and make sure we take responsibility for our actions. Sometimes it makes some of their colleagues uncomfortable”FGD7a

5.3.2.2.3.2 Inadequate consultation from management

With regards to consultation, there were some SRC members in the focus groups who provided divergent views. Three SRC members from three focus groups said that contrary to what their colleagues agreed on, they claimed that sometimes management does not involve them in some

decisions which affect the welfare of the students. To the participants, the SRCs participation is minimal as they are not consulted on almost everything. They indicated that management is smart and only consults them when they need their help with respect to funding of projects and convincing the student body on issues. The three students reported that some of the College Principals think about what they feel is good for the College without any discussion whatsoever with the SRC, seemingly acting autocratically. Therefore, the principals' sole ideas end up becoming management's ideas which are relayed to the student body. The idea of consultation is almost absent in some of the colleges. The following were picked up from the focus group discussions:

“Management is smart. They hardly consult us. They only do so when they want the SRC to team up with them either to support or initiate a project. Rating at 0%. FGD3d.

“Management will not consult us in almost everything. Sometimes I begin to feel our presence in the committees were just to satisfy the requirement and nothing else. We are seen but not heard, that's the reality in this college. FGD1a.

“Everything is planned already and implemented by management, as I've been saying, they rarely ask us for anything” FGD7b

5.3.2.2.3 Inadequate support from management

Majority of respondents indicated that management offers inadequate support for SRC in most of the colleges. Many of the participants in the focus groups agreed that there has never been a time that any SRC project had been approved without setbacks. Many laudable projects initiated by the SRC ended up on the shelves without approval because management disagreed with SRC. Most agenda are thwarted if they are not in conformity with the opinion of the principal, and the College management team. Some projects are only approved when they are awarded to a management member or some scheduled officers who benefit either directly or indirectly from the contract unless it is of emergency nature. Most projects undertaken by the student association had to be defended consistently to solicit support from management. The following verbatim statements from some of the participants tell it all:

“For SRC, you don't have your total power or freedom to operate independently. They don't allow us to work independently. They direct you as to what to do. When SRC comes out with its ideas,

management will tell you to do this or that in their favour. No matter what, yours won't be accepted. They only involve us when they realise students are agitating and there is a serious problem" FGD6a.

"We are only supported when we have executed whatever plans management agrees on, period, if it's not supported, forget it" FGD7b.

"Don't dream of any support when you want to go ahead with what the association has planned, ever. It is not there. You'll be disappointed" FGD4c

The SRC does not administer the college, neither is it accountable to the government or the public. It is therefore surprising that they like to dictate to the college authorities. Defending a project proposal is a normal democratic practice and management may or may not support projects that are not sustainable or might not be in the interest of the institution or the country. This is what the SRC should understand that not all projects initiated by it would be supported.

5.3.2.2.3.4 Imposition of ideas by management

All respondents indicated that it is difficult for the SRC to come up with independent ideas on welfare issues even on the students' level, let alone issues related to management. Participants revealed that almost every single concept is forced on them and even wonder why they were selected if not to satisfy requirement of the Harmonised Statute for the Colleges of Education, one of the working documents of the Colleges of Education. The participants' opinions were that, management operates autocratically as they go ahead to do anything they wish whether SRC is in agreement or not. For respondents, constant intimidation through the scheduled officers had prepared the platform for such act to be perpetrated. Even to the extent of being treated merely as children. The following were recorded from the focus group discussions:

"With the principal, its mother and child relationship. They treat us like children, they don't respect our views on many occasions. Management thinks about themselves and when they make up their mind to do something, we are not heard at all. Mostly we are not heard. The issues we take there, mostly they don't accept". FGD5a

"Imposition of projects is the order of the day, as clearly stated "do as you are told, that's all." Management does this so well that I wonder whether SRC should be in the college" FGD1b

“Don’t count on any new ideas from the association, everything is imposed. When you resist, trouble for you. Strong intimidation” FGD1c

For example, most of the respondents indicated that issues with respect to the type, quality and quantity of meal is determined by the matron and management without input from SRC. This, they consider unacceptable as they are the final consumers of the meal. The disregard for SRC’s input sometimes causes agitation which mire the image of management even though feeding is funded by the central government.

Regarding the timetable, respondents claimed it is from the mentor institutions (traditional universities overseeing the transition of the Colleges of Education to tertiary level), therefore, there can be no adjustment. Moreover, students’ allowances come directly from the government, as such, students’ input cannot be solicited for. Respondents’ request for components of their fees (allocated itemised cost of goods and services being charged as fees) was greeted with disgust as management claim tertiary institutions around the country are not provided with any breakdown. Accommodation is also allotted by management notwithstanding the physical condition of the students. So, for most respondents, imposing decisions is most prevalent in the colleges.

“Madam, as for timetable, it is given to us by the administration. I later found out that when it is released by the mentor institution, adjustment is then made at the college level by the assessment officer but asking for our opinion, is a no-go area” FGD8b

“For breakdown of fees for students, forget it madam. Once in a meeting, this request was made and I tell you, the meeting did not end well. Students were demanding for this so we took the opportunity to ask in the course of the meeting but it seemed management was already prepared for us” FGD7c

“We are not consulted when it comes to feeding and allowances. We were told the amount the government releases determines the food we take and then, the allowances too are directly from the government”FGD4a

5.3.2.3 Influences of SRC

The influences of the SRC per this study are the contributions the student body makes in the Colleges of Education.

5.3.2.3.1 Fund Raising and Infrastructural Development

Responses from the focus group discussions indicate that the SRC is involved in seeking voluntary financial contributions by engaging individuals, businesses, charitable organisations or governmental agencies. Raising of funds is usually embarked on as a way of hastening the developmental agenda of the institution and speeding up infrastructural development programmes. Most respondents attest to the fact that the SRC sometimes leads the institution in lobbying for projects from the government due to their political affiliations. The following responses were picked from the focus group discussions:

“During SRC week celebration, we are able to access funds to support the college and the celebration” FGD3c.

“We raise funds through the payment of dues every academic year. You see, SRC pays dues which serve as funds to embark on projects which are approved by management” FGD3b

“Another way in which funds are raised is through the payment of special levies which we as a student body often disagrees with management. It could be in support of anniversaries or uncompleted projects by management” FGD7d

The discussions further revealed that the SRC is also involved in infrastructural development in the various institutions to improve the quality of residential accommodations, roads or lecture halls. Facilities such as roads, water supply and resources, internet accessibility, buildings, refurbishment of existing facilities, transportation, solar system for constant generation of electricity and leisure facilities are embarked on by the SRC. The following responses reproduced below affirm the views of the participants:

“We have embarked on a very good water project. There are wells that we took upon ourselves to dig and have it mechanised and everyone is enjoying it. We have also been helping in tilling of our halls and washrooms. We help in weeding the environment, bought an automatic mower for the compound, recruiting casual workers in complementing what the government provides. Most projects in the college are being funded by us. Even if it’s not our initiative, we fund all projects because management has no money. The students’ fees also help in some way. We have also put up an SRC complex. We have also provided large ‘poly-tanks’ (water reservoirs) for the halls”FGD4d.

“The SRC with the help of the students’ dues have purchased vehicles, built apartments, refurbished some buildings and many more; we have so many projects for the college.” FGD3a

5.3.2.3.2 Provision of Services

The SRC leads the student body to render services such as tuck shops and grocery shops to the college community. The discussions revealed that the SRCs operate supermarkets and other profitable services in some of the colleges to generate funds and to reduce the tendency of students moving out of campus against government’s directive and college policy. Students can shop for fabrics and grocery items right within the colleges without spending money to travel to town for basic personal needs such as airtime, soap and other toiletries. The participants also indicated that the SRC provides expert advice and counselling sessions among themselves and to the student body. In order to improve on the accountability, SRC has opened an account for each hall of residence which were previously attached to the college’s account. It has also improved on the accessibility of money in times of need. Some participants made the following remarks:

“I will like to add my voice to the hall level issue. Since our time we’ve been able to open a hall account. At first it was merged with the college’s account so it was very difficult to get money when there was a problem but now each hall has its own account, we operate a store and sell goods to our members” FGD4c

“In this college, SRC has been operating a supermarket to provide for the needs of the students to prevent students from going out often. That’s a way of supporting the government and institutional policy” FGD 8b

“SRC here has adopted a counselling session for the student body to provide a listening ear to them. This is done by the mature students to help in releasing the stress on campus.” FGD1c

5.3.2.3.3 Divergent views on Contribution to Decision-Making

While three of the focus groups indicated that their colleges’ administration does not involve them adequately in decision-making, one group reported otherwise. That SRC group recounted that they are involved in some form of decision-making in their college and this contributes to the effective administration of the institution. Respondents admitted making decisions which are mostly at the classroom and halls levels, hence, the student-body level. Administration would have been saddled with so many problems without the existence of the SRC owing to the numerous issues that are resolved at the SRC level before referring the unsolved cases to management. Respondents believe

this was one of the reasons they were voted into power. The views expressed by some members of the groups are presented below:

“You know, without us, management would have had more problems they cannot handle. We make decisions at the classroom and hall level without the knowledge of management so we live happily as one family here on campus. Just imagine all these students with various individual and group issues referred to us. Sometimes, we ourselves are shocked by it, how much more adding this to management work; I think it will be too much for them” FGD7d.

“Decisions contribute to the development of institution and student leadership should be engaged in some form of it. Everyday with its issues requiring decisions from halls and other sub committees which administration in this college do not allow SRC to take part in especially those that affect the student body” FGD8c

“At least, the little decision that the SRC takes without having problems with administration are made. They include those in the halls and during student programmes”FGD5a

“It is more difficult to be heard at the council level since we sometimes feel overwhelmed by the personalities present. We most often had to agree with whatever is said at the meeting in order not to offend those representing management. This is because, when council leaves, we’ll be in the college with management and disagreeing with their submissions may not auger well for the association” FGD1a

5.3.2.4 Improvement of Relationship with SRC

This section was to elicit ideas from the focus groups on how the relationship between SRC and management can be improved. The views expressed by the members of the group are presented below:

5.3.2.4.1 Empowerment of SRC

Respondents advocated for the training of SRC to equip them with the requisite skills to confidently perform their duties effectively. Orientation before assumption of duty can provide the SRC with accurate information and knowledge to adapt faster to the job and assist them to perform duties satisfactorily. The participants added that provision of constant in-service training could empower the SRCs to understand the policies and the dynamics of the colleges and afford them with the opportunity to exercise their duties and responsibilities in performing the roles assigned

to them. This could be organised by either the association itself and, or, the college. During such sessions, clear boundaries for SRC and management respectively are set to afford each the opportunity to work without inhibition. Additionally, the duties of management can also be communicated to the leaders to avoid unnecessary ignorance which might make them go beyond their limit. The respondents believe that when SRC is given the opportunity to act, they can do tremendous work instead of being intimidated and accused of trying to take over the administration of the colleges. Three of the participants aired their views as follows:

“If there is a seminar to train management on the roles of SRC, I think it will help. And SRC too must know the roles of college management so that each one is allowed to work independently to some extent to help build our colleges and the nation at large” FGD5a.

“I suggest the college and the previous executives organise a workshop of some sort so SRC and management activities are imparted unto each new executives elected. After all, when the association succeeds, the whole college also succeeds. This will go a long way to improve leadership in the country since there is a high chance of student leaders assuming power in the country later in life”. FGD4b

“I suggest more seriousness should also be attached to the orientation given to the SRC which takes about a few hours upon their assumption of duty in this college. The programme should be intensive to equip the leadership on what to do. Credible resource persons must be invited to assist” FGD 6c

“If the administration wants to manage the college effectively, I don’t see why programmes cannot be organised to prepare us for the work ahead. This is because, the students will finally enter the society and will contribute to its development” FGD8c.

“If truly the institution is to prepare us holistically to impart on the children, why can’t it train to empower us to work well as student leaders but take advantage of us and do as it wants” FGD1b

5.3.2.4.2 Constant Engagement with SRC to build Understanding and Good Relationship.

Constant engagement of the SRC in managerial process was identified as a means of improving the relationship between management and SRC. All respondents were very clear and passionate about this because that will enable the SRC to be aware of their role in the college. They were of the view that when management consults SRC frequently, it will erode the notion of mistrust that

might exist between these stakeholders. As well, management should release information on the fees for the student body to address them appropriately in order to earn their trust. Perhaps, the association fails to understand that the fees are not decided by the college alone but the Ministry of Education and the college authorities are the implementers. Some respondents affirmed this by saying that:

“Management should engage the SRC in decision-making, this will make things clear and much easier. They must reveal the component of our fees so we can be involved in the management process” FGD2b

“It is easier for management to involve the SRC in decision-making as most meetings are organised by them especially being the authority. All management had to do is to call us or send messages through and we will respond if good relations had to be built” FGD8a

“How can we trust management when our views are mostly not sought even on issues that affect SRC in the long run? As I said earlier, in this college we are seen but not heard. Do we trust such a system which cannot provide break down of fees being paid” FGD5c

Moreover, relationship based on mutual respect encourages cooperation and value for capabilities (Bundy et al, 2018). It involves seeing people’s unique contributions, recognising and understanding differences and celebrating different opinions. This means that the abilities and views of each are respected for the sake of the achievement of a common goal. The respondents believe that the management of the colleges are not opening up to the SRC by communicating effectively, hence, they are left to figure out things for themselves. The lack of adequate communication encourages rumours and misunderstanding, as goals and expectations may be misconstrued. There is also little trust as respondents believe management always has something to hide from them. While other participants claim management treats SRC as children who do not know their left from their right, others claim otherwise. However, if mutual respect is fostered through effective communication, respondents believe their relationship will improve even though others were calling for the maintenance of the current relationship which they assume is the best. Below are some of the divergent views shared by some of the participants:

“In this college, things are a bit better when it comes to consultation by management. We sometimes see management calling on us to discuss issues especially on student body and rarely

money related. I know this can be improved if communication is improved for peaceful coexistence” FGD 8d

“There is a fairly good relationship with the SRC but this can improved [sic]to be based on mutual respect”FGD1a

“The current relationship must be maintained as it is very cordial already” FGD3c

5.3.2.4.3 Reduce Interfering in the Affairs of SRC

Another solution to the improvement of relationship between management and SRC as specified by respondents is to reduce interfering in the operations of the association. Participants indicated that management must allow SRC to organise themselves, take decisions and conduct their activities without meddling in their affairs. Some respondents claimed management tries to gain control of the student association because it is a reliable source of funds to the institution as compared to government subventions which are not forthcoming. The respondents alleged that in some cases, management undermines the SRC by offering bribes in the form of gifts or money to some members to further their agenda. While few colleges have the principal and, or, the Dean of Students as a signatory to the SRC’s account, in other colleges, cheques are only signed when management has only approved such projects or have an interest in the project. There are some of the participants who agreed that public funds must be handled with sensitivity and honesty and if the colleges allow the SRC freedom without limits the management could be called to account. The SRC should therefore work with the college management but not to see itself dictating to the management what it must do. Some of the participants also are of the view that management should devise strategic ways of auditing the accounts of the association after providing guidelines on options. These were some of the verbatim responses from some of the student participants:

“Management should hear us out to make the place better for all. Management should abstain from the signatory role as their interferences may pose possible conflict as some request for some form of benefits” FGD5d

Others indicated that management should allow SRC to operate autonomously as this will improve the relationship.

“Reduction in interferences. If they are able to do that then the relationship can be improved. We should be allowed to operate autonomously and be guided but not to be intimidated” FGD3a

“We need guidance in our activities to succeed and management’s ideas are welcome, but almost complete interference deprives us from being proactive since most of our proposals are disapproved anyway, why make new proposals”FGD7c

5.3.2.4.4 Update of Students’ Handbook

Every educational institution has a student handbook that serves as a guide for peaceful and successful stay of students on campus. This is normally provided by administration and contains directives, rules, regulations and agenda that are basically supervised by management. Respondents believe the contents of the current handbook is outmoded but management of the colleges continue to refer all students to it. For instance, they claim that the use of ‘exeat’ (a permission note) when leaving campus and other directives are undermining their rights as tertiary students as compared to the traditional university students who are with minimal restrictions. Other respondents claim lecturers are also mandated to prevent students from writing an examination if students have absented themselves for three consecutive times from class. This is why they are calling for its review with immediate effect. Some remarks made by respondents included:

“Management should hear us out. Management should revise the students’ handbook and stop treating us as children. We are not minors. There must be change in the system”FGD4c

“The handbook which the college depends on so much is outdated as the college is now a degree awarding institution so getting a new one will address the current status of the college.” FGD6b

“The handbook even is not readily available. Most of us as leaders don’t have it how much more the student body we are leading. Reference to some content such as taking “exeat” before leaving campus and prevention from writing an examination in a course after absenting oneself three times should be scrapped”FGD2a

5.3.2.4.5 Management to Facilitate Development Projects to Reduce Special Levies

The respondents were of the view that management should initiate, champion and fund development projects instead of depending solely on students’ funds. Management should provide basic amenities for students and not the other way round. This is because the SRC is only complementing the development effort of the college management. During the focus group discussions, most of the respondents alleged that the only sources of funding for projects in most of the colleges under study are student dues and other levies. This, however, discourages the

student body from honouring their fees as the added levies inflate the overall student fees. Participants were entreating management to be proactive in soliciting for funds from benevolent organisations and strengthen the old students' association (alumna) who may be in a better position to initiate and fund a series of projects. These were what three respondents had to say on that:

“ . Finally, the development project should be spearheaded by management and not the other way round which inflates our fee for payment” FGD2d

“We are made to pay dues as well as special levies to aid development projects in the institution. Why this? Most of us fend for ourselves before getting funds to pay the fees and SRC dues so when additional levies are added, how do we pay for everything?” FGD4b

“...and when you hear some of the conditions attached to such payments, you'll be surprised. Sometimes you don't even get to see your results or given a supervisor for our project. I think the association is only helping with projects, but it seems it's rather the sole financier of almost everything.” FGD5b

“With this college, both management and SRC fund projects so our fees are ok especially when the funding is from management but genuinely not all students are able to pay fees on time due to their economic conditions” FGD4c

5.3.3 Themes and Sub-themes for the Individual Interviews

Individual interviews were conducted on ten office holders (Council Chairpersons, Principals, Vice Principals, College Secretaries, Finance Officers, Internal Auditors, Librarians, Quality Assurance Officers, Heads of Departments and Students Affairs Officer). The same items for the focus group discussions were used for the individual interviews to assist the researcher to find out consensus and divergent responses on the problem under investigation. From the individual interview with the administrators, four themes and 18 sub-themes emerged as indicated on the table (Table 5.2) below:

Table 5.2: Themes and Sub-themes (Management)

Themes	Sub-themes (Management)
Relevance of SRC	Importance of SRC in CoE: Organisation of students' body to serve as their mouthpiece Liaison between management and students Partners in development. Solve student-related problems Major stakeholders Contribute to decisions
Challenges of management working with SRC	Challenges administrators encounter when working with SRC: Financial issues of SRC and student body Demonstrations Resistance to imposition of policies due to misinterpretation of information
Influences of SRC	Influences of SRC activities: Fundraising for infrastructural development Janitorial services Decision-making
Improvement of relationship	Improvement of relationship with management: Need for constant engagement to foster mutual respect Empowerment of SRC Desist from discriminatory criteria for SRC positions Reduce demands for development levies Practice culture of maintenance Embrace reverse mentorship in managing institution

5.3.3.1 Relevance of SRC as seen from the Individual Interviews with College Administrators

The relevance of SRC as indicated in the study depicts the significance of the student body by the respondents.

5.3.3.1.1 SRC as Organisers of Students' Front to Serve as their Mouthpiece

Majority of respondents (30) from this group of interviewees claimed that the SRC's relevance is recognised through the organisation of students' front. The respondents admitted that management would have found it very difficult to organise the students on several occasions and issues especially during the period of students' unrest. Organising students to create conducive teaching and learning is important in the achievement of college and government objectives. Without stability, college programmes cannot run, hence, the need for the SRC to work in partnership with

college administration to ensure a calm atmosphere on the campus. Organising students, therefore plays an important role in safeguarding this stability in the colleges. The responses of three interviewees below illustrate their views on the SRC as organisers:

“They (SRC) are relevant ooh especially in organising students in the college”ID02b

“Being in an association is the ability to organize one another to seek the welfare for all. This is what SRC is all about” ID01a

“Unionism is a matter of bringing people of similar aspirations together to fight for their course and SRC is no exception”ID06c

“SRC has been an association over some time now. It seeks to bring students together in order to form a formidable force to protect their welfare and to support the college administrators” ID04d

As part of organising students, the SRC is the mouthpiece for the student body as it speaks on their behalf on matters related to decision-making in the institutions. During deliberation on issues either inside or outside the college, the SRC represents their respective colleges. As a representative, it provides feedback to students on meetings and decisions taken by the college. The following are some extracts from the interviews:

“SRC has been the mouthpiece of the student body” ID06d

“As I said earlier on, they can go to management through their president. They sit and discuss everything with their president who sends it to the dean of students. They do formal communication most times and in emergency cases they do verbal with the dean of students”ID02b

“The SRC president is part of council, the president is a full member of the governing council so whatever is discussed at council, the SRC president relays them to students and the SRC problems and issues are channelled to the council by the rep”ID04a

5.3.3.1.2 SRC as Liaison between Management and Student Body

The responses from individual interviews also indicate the relevance of the SRC in terms of the liaison role it plays in the institutions. The respondents stated that the SRC’s role is the interaction it does between management, staff and Council on one side and the student body on the other. Activities are coordinated between these two groups by SRC through excellent communication

and negotiation skills as their position demands. The SRC sometimes resolves issues to benefit all parties through its liaison role. The responses below affirm the following:

“The SRC president is part of council, the president is a full member of the governing council so whatever is discussed at council, the SRC president relays them to students and the SRC problems and issues are channelled to the council by the rep”ID07a

“SRC has been very tactical, especially when liaising between management and students. I must admit this is a sensitive situation as the neutrality of the leaders must be called to bear in this phenomenon. Linking and coordinating activities between these two groups who sometimes have their peculiar interest in the institution is no joke. Even as management as we are, we sometimes don’t agree on many things how much more being in the position of these two sides?”ID03d

“It takes very determined persons to stay neutral on decisions which tend to affect them however it may be. This is what SRC has been doing over the years and it’s been very challenging. “ID06c

5.3.3.1.3 SRC as Partners in Development

Another relevance of SRC is being partner of development. The SRC as perceived by almost all respondents is their ability to engage students in sourcing for funds to develop the institution as described below:

“They have their SRC dues, and they have projects they embark on every year. Even the visitors building, their predecessors put it up. There are many monumental structures done by the student association “ID03b

“SRC has been doing so well in the college. Let me start by saying that they have recruited casual labourers, they weed around, some also sweep the compounds. They do [sic]to keep their place of residences tidy. So, the monies that they used to pay these workers, the SRC pay for them. Aside that, they have also purchased a mower and other equipment to keep the college in good shape. You know, look at how vast the environment is, the administration alone cannot bear the cost so they are helping. Every year, they have a project that they undertake. They are doing well, let me say it.”ID02b

“Developing an institution such as ours cannot be done by just the government or administration, this is where SRC comes in. the student body through its leadership as it serves as a source of funding in embarking on developmental projects, hence their relevance to the college”ID05c

5.3.3.1.4 SRC as Solution to Student-Related Problems

Every human institution is saddled with numerous problems which need to be solved on a daily basis. The student body elect their leaders to solve various problems ranging from both student-to-student and student-to-lecturer, which might prop up from time to time. Most respondents indicated that almost all student-related problems are resolved at the student level and SRC constitutes the committee for that matter. Thus, any other issue is directed to the Student Affairs Unit headed by a management member. This happens only when the problem is beyond the capability of the SRC. The following were some of the responses from the interviewees:

“SRC really solves all the welfare issues of students. Hmm, all problems related to students are referred to the SRC, however, when they are unable to do so, they are then referred to the Student Affairs Unit. Sometime ago in class, I was called out to solve as little as a quarrel between two students. I became so furious as such a trivial issue could make me skip classes just like that. At that time SRC wasn’t as it is. Now I can just relax as many issues are solved at their level” ID04b

“They are closer to the students, and can determine the immediate needs of the students and solve their petty squabbles”ID02d

“One of the main functions of leadership is the solution of problems. As human as we are, there may be so many frictions which are inevitable and always negatively affect the well-being of its members, and this is what SRC has been doing over the years”ID07c.

“I must say disagreements are part of life especially where two or more are present. I wonder if management and staff will appreciate being present in their solutions. There, the SRC does this easily and speak in the language they understand. They have their way of handling such things here” ID06a

The respondents commented on how several cases are reported to administration especially when the SRC is in no position to resolve. These are often in relation to staff. Some respondents had these to say:

“They (SRC) are the ones who report cases and sometimes solve issues before it comes to our attention” ID05a

“SRC normally refers cases which are difficult to solve to us and we take it from there. These include those that involve members of staff which SRC is in no position to solve. They sometimes range from extortion to sexual relations”ID03a

“Management sometimes receives such reports through noise making and petty gossips before they are made officially by the SRC through the Student Affairs Officer”ID08c

5.3.3.1.5 SRC as a Major Stakeholder in Communication with Students

The SRC is a major role player in the administration of the colleges of education when it comes to communication with students. Although technology has influenced communication, the human aspect cannot be ignored. As one interviewee put it:

“Technology or no technology, students remain the most important stakeholders”ID03c

As indicated by the response above, the use of technology does not change the significance of SRC as an important stakeholder in the Colleges of Education. Technology will advance daily, however, SRC remains a vital stakeholder in the Colleges of Education in Ghana. Participants indicated that the student body, which is the most critical component in any institution has direct and most impact of policies and decisions either by the government or the institution, hence, the SRC being their representatives. With the current economic condition in the country, the Colleges of Education cannot function without the contribution of SRC being the leadership of this student body, therefore, effective communication can play a vital role in keeping them on board to avert unforeseen circumstances. These viewpoints collaborate with other participants as indicated above.

“No matter how technology is engaged in the teaching of students, student body’s status can neither be underestimated nor replaced. SRC serves as leadership for this irreplaceable unit in this college” ID01b

“As for the student body, information is relayed to them by the SRC either via technology or at student meetings because they understand their language better”ID06d

5.3.3.1.6 SRC as Contributor to Decision-Making

The above sub-theme yielded the following responses from the interviewees:

“They remain relevant just as management of the college is relevant. Definitely you need people to take decisions which affect others and here we have the SRC” ID02b.

“In decision-making, we cannot take out the students. By the statute of our college, student representation is evident in some of the college committees. Provision has been made at these levels of decision-making” ID04d

“SRC contributes positively to decision-making of the college. They take decisions on students’ behalf as well as any other business in the college. They take decisions at their level as well as the college level” ID06c

“On daily basis, decisions are made in the operations of this college. These decisions are taken from the council level, management level, hall level, classroom level and association level. SRC being the reps for the student body has a responsibility to contribute in taking decisions especially those pertaining to its members. Failure to do so renders the association irrelevant as it is a matter of duty” ID06a

“We all take decisions in our lives and this college is not different. SRC has its related decisions to take and so do management in order to keep this college running” ID05b

From the above quoted responses, it can be inferred that the SRC is relevant to the decision-making of the colleges. The interviewees indicated that the working documents, being the Statute, Condition of Service and the Scheme of Service, clearly define the decision-making role of the SRC. This is because, decision-making is relevant to the administration of the Colleges of Education in Ghana and the SRC has a significant role to play here.

5.3.3.2. Challenges Management Encounter Working with the SRC

The participants from the individual interviews enumerated the challenges they encounter when working with SRC. Some of the challenges are presented in the paragraph that follow:

5.3.3.2.1 Financial Issues of SRC and Students’ Body

Respondents lamented that the government subvention and allowances for students are not regularly forthcoming. More so, levying students is a challenge to college administrators who

know how some of the students struggle to pay their fees. Participants' responses were that frequent engagement of the SRC must be done before they table such issues for their members to prevent dire consequences such as students' unrests. A respondent's statement was that recently, there was a students' levy for development agenda which management thought was a viable venture. Students were not enthused about it leading to interference with the peaceful atmosphere on campus; the project had to be boycotted. Finally, management had to invite the SRC for further deliberations for acceptance by the student body. In some cases, students resort to ill health of their parents when they have spent their money on their friends. Respondents had these to say:

"Issues relating to collection of money are very sensitive. Sometime ago, there was this project that management felt beneficial to the college. We concluded on the amount each student was to pay and quickly added to their bill. This did not go down well with them until it was taken off. Eventually, we had to call for a meeting and that's why they're present in their numbers today" ID02c

"Could you believe some of the students spend their fees on their friends and therefore default in its payment? They return with so many stories including the bereavement of their parents and guardians only to realise later that it's all a lie, how then does management determine the genuine needy students and those of this nature" ID08b

"Subventions for colleges are difficult to access. There may be promises but actualizing this sometimes poses some challenge for the government. Since the institution has to operate, management falls on students for help, thereby levying them for initiated projects" ID05c

Delay in payment of allowances without engagement with the SRC has become one of the main challenges. Most delays are not communicated by management because information may not be available to explain to students the cause of the delay. This sometimes leads to unnecessary student agitations. Students sometimes believe non-submission of students' data by management to government within schedule is the sole cause of the delay in payment of their allowances, notwithstanding government's position on this matter. Participants had this to say:

"The students await their allowances with so much enthusiasm to the extent that when it delays, every aspect of their lives is affected. Most of the current crop of students got enrolled basically

because of the allowance and can say for a fact that some depend on it solely for their survival. Therefore, delay or non-payment of the allowances create untold hardship to students”ID06b

“Touching students’ allowances is a no, no, no. When there is a delay, students expect management to explain things to them whereas management has no knowledge since it’s a government policy and it’s disbursed solely by a mandated institution. This is one of the major challenges since it reoccurs every now and then” ID04d

5.3.3.2.2. Demonstrations

Students’ protests sometimes affect the academic calendar and smooth running of the Colleges of Education. The respondents cited students’ demonstrations or strikes as another challenge management faces when working with SRC as it is widely believed they are spearheaded by the SRC. When management delays or enact resolutions which are not favourable to the student body, the SRC may lead its members to protest and boycott lectures. The respondents enumerated some reasons that trigger these protests as wrongful deductions from students’ allowances, inadequate meals served, refusal to pay fees and issues with students’ results.

“Students desire tend to demonstrate sometimes on very trivial circumstances. This could be because of quality or quantity of meal served, deduction or payment of money or issues with their results which affect their academic performance”. ID04a

“As for students, their most effective language is demonstration. I guess is their way of exhibiting their energy and exuberance. They rather resort to demonstration whenever they feel they’ve been taken for granted or cannot get their way through and SRC is always behind them” ID06c

“Students have ways of making their voices heard and in extreme cases, they tend to rioting, which are mostly led by the SRC in this college. While some of their cases seem very genuine, others may be so trivial, but one cannot say it” ID8b

“As for demonstrations, we cannot ignore them. Sometimes, students organise it to register their displeasure on issues. But management over the years have tried to prevent it when there are indications. We’ve been able to prevent at least two incidences over two years and that is no mean achievement. One wonders how the SRC, and its students, organise themselves but they do. Such issues could be strict enforcement of policies without any education or sometimes orientation”ID05d

“To add to that, matters on feeding are very sensitive in nature. This is the most common reason for demonstrations in this college. You just cannot prepare anything, and students will be happy. In as much as the economy is not good, feeding easily causes such riots in the college. An incident was prevented recently and occurs almost every year “ID06c

5.3.3.2.3 Resistance to Imposition of Policies due to Misinformation

The generation gap also seems to highlight differences in how management is made up (adults’ verses SRCs young adults). This might affect the way issues are viewed by both sides. The responses indicated that management views SRC as too young to make credible decisions concerning operations of the institutions. To enforce either government or college policies in the colleges, management faces challenges as some information may be misconstrued by students. Three of the interviewees had these to say which seem to cover all the four colleges studied:

“Let me say this, you know students, when they approach for direction, they think our perception is outmoded as they haven’t developed the patience to understand things from our angle. They want everything to be done in a hurry which may be unacceptable. To them, their opinions are always right”.ID02b

“In some cases, SRC and the student body assume management sometimes drags its feet when attending to their issues. They feel we impose some policies on them without taking into consideration the fact that the students need explanations. Students then resist vehemently due to lack of understanding but not necessarily the outmoded nature of the policy” ID04a

“Our students don’t like reading from the notice boards, I must admit. Some of the policies are communicated to the students but students only read anything that has to do with their assessment and nothing else. Due to this, they assume the policies have been imposed on them ID08c

In some instances, SRC finds it difficult to understand certain issues discussed or misinterpret some information from management. Students also develop wrong perception on issues which often affect the communication on the campuses. Participants alleged that the SRCs sometimes misinterpret information passed on from management and instead of seeking for further clarification, they rather turn to other sources which alter the main idea. As the following verbatim statements portray:

“Students oh students, they listen to all sources and come back to misinterpret us. They think we’re too old for the system. They want their things to be done the way they like per what they’ve heard from places. All they do is misinterpret you on matters after taking the pain to explain to them. Hmm, sometimes, you can’t tell where they get their information from, and they’ll stand by it no matter what” ID02b

“You know students, they are more interested in the information they receive from their mates and most of the time they are either misinformed or misinterpreted. They just feel more comfortable with explanations from their colleagues which sometimes end up twisting the main content being communicated “ID03d

“Don’t be deceived, students twist information to suit themselves sometimes. Management is right here where their leadership can seek for further clarification but no” ID08a

5.3.3.4 Influences of SRC

As elected representative of the student body, the SRC has some influence in its constituency. The information elicited from respondents which indicate SRC influences are presented below:

5.3.3.4.1 Fundraising for Infrastructural Development

A number of respondents indicated the fundraising role played by the SRC in the four CoE. These participants described how the SRCs use their influence to ensure the success of the infrastructural projects in the colleges through the support they offer management. Some responses include:

“The SRC in this college is very supportive to the extent that they are ready to use their influence to lead the college to solicit for funds during programmes. We have a school plant which the student body provided. There are also ‘lover benches’ under the trees, also by them. There are also student notice boards around and joined the college to put up a 24-seater lavatory” ID06d

“Ok, there have been many projects in the college just as you came from the main road. Some were solely initiated by SRC while others were done in collaboration with SRC. Aside the levies they pay, SRC also go round to solicit for funds for these projects”ID04c

“In this college, SRC has led the student body to provide solar operated water booster station. So, where there is no electricity, solar works for us”ID07b

“We have a school plant which the student body provided through the influence of the SRC. The SRC has been very supportive in this college and I can say with authority that, without the contributions of this association, this college wouldn’t have been as it is now. ID03d

“Some members of SRC in this college are very influential. They have connections with the political elite and so some projects are directed to this place”ID06b

These were some contributions respondents outlined as activities the SRC embark on through its influence to give the colleges a face lift. This aspect was paramount as all responses indicated the acknowledgement of this role by SRC in the colleges.

5.3.3.4.2. Janitorial Services

“Cleanliness is next to godliness” is a well-known adage. The SRC leads the student body to clean the compound and other places such as the surrounding towns and villages to maintain a healthy environment. Through the SRC’s initiative, students clean the compound by weeding, scrubbing, dusting, and sweeping areas to augment the services of the casual workers engaged by the colleges as stated by a respondent below:

“They sometimes sweep, scrub, dust and gather rubbish on the compound. They do this always to keep the place clean. Sometimes, the classrooms and the offices are cleaned by the SRC led students, especially, when the casual workers are engaged somewhere else. During college programmes, SRC leads the students in cleaning the towns and villages around. This is how sometimes the community feels their presence.”ID03c

“The student body actually keep the college neat with the help of their leaders. They have been sweeping a lot and gathering rubbish to burn. While others scrub washrooms and other places. They maintain some of the classrooms too” ID06c

“You can’t imagine, some of their leaders joining their members in scrubbing for which names have been jokingly given to them. An example is ‘Zoomlion’ (a company in Ghana involved in cleaning activities). To the extent that they clean the surrounding towns during programmes as a way of helping administration. You can just imagine this. ID05a

5.3.3.4.3 Decision-Making

Decision-making is the core of every organisation and the SRC in the Colleges of Education in Ghana is no exception. Every facet of life on campus requires careful decisions to advance the course of the institutions and the welfare of the students who are being led. Respondents identified the decision-making ability of the SRC in their daily activities. These were what participants had to say:

“They contribute positively to decision-making in the college. They take decisions on students and any other business in the college. They take decisions at their level as well as the college level” ID03c

“In that regard at college council and statutory committees, SRC is fully represented, and they contribute on these platforms” ID04b

“SRC decides on the feeding, all that is entailed in their monumental projects as well as Hall Week matters. The SRC does this with the help of the student body through the committees they set up. Sometimes management come in to streamline activities when the need arises” ID09b

5.3.3.5 Improvement of Relationship with SRC

Improvement in the relationship with SRC revealed the information as discussed below:

5.3.3.5.1 Need for Constant Engagement to Foster Mutual Respect

When interviewed on how management intends to improve on the relationship with the SRC, respondents indicated that when mutual respect is encouraged, both SRC and management will enjoy each other in the college. During the individual interview sessions, it was revealed that some members of management do not value SRC for what it represents. This category refuses to acknowledge SRC as an association let alone to respect it or recognise it and understand its diversity to capitalise on its strength. Thus, they view the association as made up of young people, perhaps ‘children’ for whom things must be done. A respondent had this to say:

“Sometimes, students extend their childish behaviours to the college and we must make them more responsible. They are used to getting things their way but this is an institution and they must grow up” ID05a

Other respondents had these to say:

“Continuous involvement of SRC in matters on campus most especially, those directly relating to the student body enable the association to feel more comfortable as management is perceived as more open so that change is achieved easily”ID05c

“There should be a relationship based on mutual respect not mother and father type”ID02a

“Some of our members should be engaging the SRC frequently to solicit for their inputs on matters, as “one head doesn’t possess all knowledge” as the adage goes” This is good for the college”ID03b

A section of respondents also believes that enhancing information flow is a way of showing respect to the SRC. Their responses indicated that frequent flow of information to SRC would keep it abreast with the operations of management and thereby encourage the student leaders to contribute positively to the activities in the college. Some respondents expressed the views below:

“We have to enhance the information flow with students here. If this is done I think there will be peace and cordial relationship on our campus” ID08b

It could be concluded that constant engagement of management with SRC will certainly improve the relationship considerably as this might have been a problem for management sometimes. The participants believe that frequent engagement and communication with SRC on college operations is a recipe for peaceful environment, thereby springing development.

“Constant dialogue, regular consultation with students will help to improve relationship”ID04d

“...we must listen to them because sometimes, hmmm, it’s difficult to say that it’s one challenge of management, we must invite them for meetings especially on issues that concern them directly” ID06a

5.3.3.5.2 Empowerment of SRC

The SRC needs to be empowered to do the work effectively. This will make them confident to approach the college management to discuss important college matters. As one respondent remarked,

“...and they shouldn’t be afraid that when something is going on and they voice out their feelings, they will be intimidated”ID01a

As indicated above, a respondent suggested the empowerment of the SRC on all issues so the association will not be intimidated by the actions of management especially when things are not in their favour. Respondents encouraged the SRC to be ready to voice their grievances without entertaining any fear as this will send a signal that the leadership is ready to take up any challenge towards the improvement of the college. Some other responses are stated below:

“Some of us want SRC to be bold enough to approach management with all their grievances but they are not able to do so. Becoming close to them sometimes raises eyebrows as unnecessary meanings are sometimes read into it” ID06a

“These student leaders need to be aware of what their positions entail before assuming their duties. I must say some of them have no knowledge at all and they must be prepared” ID07b

“Intensive programmes can be organised for them anytime new leadership is sworn in to equip them with requisite knowledge and understanding of their roles. Most of them are too reserved for the positions they occupy” ID08d

5.3.3.5.3 Desist from Discriminatory Criteria for SRC Positions

Religious, ethnic and political affiliations were cited as an impediment to the improvement of relationship with management. Some respondents indicated that management of faith-based institutions often prefers the candidature of SRC positions to emanate from students who are of the same religious denomination as of the institution or from the students who are known to some management and staff members. They feel such leaders would be sympathetic to their administration. Accordingly, this stifles the selection of credible leaders who may contribute immensely towards the achievement of the college’s goals but may not belong to any of those categories. Respondents were calling for the abrogation of such acts as management finds it difficult to cooperate with such students for fear of victimisation. Responses in support of this include:

“...The way the selection of positions for SRC executives are restricted to students of the same religion in some of the faith-based institutions leave much to be desired. This is because it hinders the leadership of students who are not of the same faith. Management should accept students as SRC based on their leadership qualities” ID02b

“As for this question, I cannot say it’s totally false, but I presume there could be an amount of truth that some of the executive positions are reserved for relations perhaps members who belong to the same fraternity” ID01d

“Am very much aware of some of these facts that some student leaders were chosen based on their relationship with some staff members but one cannot say so much about it. Well, it makes leadership conform to the norms of management and sometimes they are taken as “being in bed with management”. You know, this doesn’t bring innovation into the college” ID08a

5.3.3.5.4 Reduce Demand for Development Levies

Another way of improving relationship with SRC is through reduction in demand for development levies from the student body. Respondents stated that most of the time, management demands so much from the student body that it places the SRC in a very difficult position to discover ingenious ways of convincing its members from reacting negatively. These were some of their responses:

“You know, management has no other choice than take something small for projects in the college, forcing SRC to overwork themselves in convincing the members to accept. Management should do well to decrease the pressure of levying the student body, we end up overburdening their parents” ID02d

“Instead of depending on students as our main source of funding, we can solicit for it as well. This is because, this is a tertiary institution and must be capable of sourcing for funding for development projects. There are many avenues we can adopt in doing so that will be more effective than depending solely on the students ID03c

“Expanding our tentacles as an institution I believe will increase our source of funding. Yes, students are levied after all, this is their alma mater, therefore contributing to its development is not such a bad idea but we cannot depend on them alone, we can go out of our comfort zone for some funds” ID07b

“Collection of little money to support the college is ok. As such it’s the students and their leaders who take the credit for it. The frequency of levying can be reduced though” ID07a

5.3.3.5.5 Practice Culture of Maintenance

One of the SRC's annual ritual in some colleges is the destruction of cooking utensils at the canteen for whatever reason no one knows and all effort to end this practice had proven futile. To replace these items, the SRC and the student body are levied every year which increases their fees substantially. Respondents were calling for the maintenance of these and many other items to prevent annual levying which will go a long way to improve on the relationship as some of the destructions are very terrifying. Individual respondents called on the SRC to educate their members to desist from this act. Here were some of their responses:

"Students should also be made aware of owning the properties in the college. They should own the items and protect them so there will not be the need for billing them for these items to be replaced which overburdens them. SRC should lead this campaign" ID04d

"An annual ritual of this institution is the destruction of cooking utensils at the end of every academic year. All attempt to stop this practice has not yielded any results, therefore, to replace them, all students are levied. Other items in the college which are destroyed by students are equally replaced by the culprits. Sometimes, replacing them is of no issue as compared to the panic these actions are felt on campus" ID05c

"The student body can sometimes be very rowdy, which is blamed on SRC as we believe they have a hand in it. In an unusual day, vehicles and other items can be destroyed without any reason, no reason at all. One cannot tell how they organize themselves but before you realize, they are causing commotion" ID04d

"On such days of destruction of utensils, the female staff on campus are the most affected. Some even vacate their residences for fear of attack. They are not able to maintain the scarce resources in the institution which makes me wonder, things are expensive these days "ID06c

5.3.3.5.6 Embrace Reverse Mentorship in Managing the Institution

As difficult as this notion may be, respondents are calling for reverse mentorship. They described it as the adoption of some of SRC procedures which management deem applicable to its day- to - day administration of the Colleges of Education. This means creating the environment for individuals from senior positions to learn and adopt leadership skills it considers worthwhile

from the SRC. This will in turn broaden its ideas and experiences for successful administration of the institutions. Their comments included:

“Management should tap on some of the leadership skills of the SRC. Some of them are very experienced leaders “ID03c

“It would surprise you the way and manner some of the student leadership in this college handle issues, persuasions and straight to the point. I had a chance of taking them out on a sponsorship trip, really, they were good. But is management willing to adopt some of their leadership styles”? hmmm”ID05b

5.4 PRESENTATION OF DATA FROM OBSERVATIONS

The researcher conducted observations on development projects, organisation of students and interaction between students and management led by the SRC to ascertain and triangulate the validity of responses from both the individual and focus group interviews. This was done to avoid possible biases and to make the findings more credible. She also observed the challenges the SRC faced as the representatives of the student body in working with the management for the college students.

5.4.1 College Climate

On her visit to the four research sites, the researcher observed that the climate in the colleges under study appeared to be very calm with students and management attending to their normal duties. Most students were walking in groups and in pairs while few were moving individually in serenity. In some of the colleges, the atmosphere seemed welcoming, and students were ready to assist visitors whilst in other settings it felt a bit unfriendly. Another observation indicates the vibrancy of the college when students and their leadership are on campus especially during programmes as observed in two colleges. During their inter-hall games, which occurred on different periods of my visit, the entire compound was full of people who were very entertaining. Students and their leadership were seen interacting and in joyful mood. Different jerseys indicating the various halls of residences were seen all over, and the two colleges visited during this period, were very colourful with students from other colleges also present to grace the celebration. One might think it is only about students but some members of management staff were also around the compound enjoying and monitoring the student activities. A visit to some offices of the Principals, College

Secretaries and Sporting Departments revealed the display of medals, cups and some photographs indicating the college's participation in sporting activities within and outside the colleges. This confirms the assertion made by some respondents that the SRC's relevance cannot be underestimated as they bring life and excitement to the college community. The mood in a college seems formal with very little interaction between management and SRC. In this college, it was observed that approaching the administration was of difficulty to some student leaders as they were in a state of contemplation. They remained at the entrance for some time, before finally they had to return, disagreeing among themselves, indicating some form of restriction in communication between management and the association.

5.4.2 Organisation of Students

It was observed in the colleges visited that the SRC assembles the student body for breakfast, lunch and dinner through the ringing of a bell, addressing them through megaphone and clapping of hands after which students were seen trooping into the dining hall for their meals. This happened for all the three-square meals provided by the college. This system of assembling or organising the students in the colleges seems to be the norm whenever there are official ceremonies as well. This observation indicated the cooperation between the student body and its leaders in responding to all calls to assemble. It also indicated the influence the SRC has on the student body it represents.

5.4.3 Demeanour of Students, Staff, and Management

Differentiating between students at the lower level and higher level was challenging in the colleges since the same uniform is worn by everyone. This was minimised when students were in their house dresses as each level has a peculiar attire. Observing the relationship between SRC and the student body seemed cordial from afar. It was just a student who the researcher observed being reprimanded by two of the student leaders over an issue she was not privy to, otherwise, everything seemed normal. This points to the fact that SRCs' assistance in maintaining discipline in the various colleges is very significant. Some management members also were seen interacting with some SRC members while some staff members were also seen walking with some of the students interacting after a class session.

5.4.4 Misinterpretation of Information

Understanding the actual idea communicated to its members fosters unity in organisations (Harraf et al., 2015). The enactment of the notice board is of great use to the student body, management

and staff. However, the misinterpretation of notices posted remained a challenge. In two of the colleges under study, I observed students arguing about information on the notice board. A careful look at the notices revealed that all information was accurate, yet, their interpretations seemed different to different students and their leaders. This phenomenon could cause students' unrest if very sensitive information is misinterpreted as some students react violently on hearing any information without seeking for clarification. Some of the items on the board included allowance disbursement list, assessment results from examinations and quizzes, academic calendar, various announcements and more. It is possible that those students who misinterpret information on the notice board have very little skills in English, the official language of communication and instruction in the colleges. A careful look at the external examination results and internal assessments indicated some areas had been blocked with black ink making it difficult for students to read. This confirms the reaction of some management interviewees that defaulters assessment result areas are blocked to force students who are in debt to settle their fees.

5.4.5 Imposition of Levy and other Policies.

As stated by respondents during the focus group interview sessions, the delay and non-payment of government subventions often made management to seek for funding from SRC dues and other special levies. In one of the colleges, I observed that management had invited the SRC for a meeting over the levying of students without prior notice. On hearing the agitation of students and subsequent non-payment of the said charges which had inflated their fees, the SRC was called for this meeting for negotiation. This means, if students had not reacted, management would have gone ahead to levy the students for whatever project it intended to undertake. Clearly confirming the views expressed by students during the focus group discussion that sometimes the college authorities imposed levies and other fees on the students without any agreement with them. In another instance, as the status of the colleges changed to university level, restrictions were still upheld. It was also observed that most students in the colleges became frustrated when they approached the main gate as security personnel demanded for "exeat" (official pass) before exiting the campus. This resulted in altercations with personnel, with the security insisting it is a directive from management, therefore, they should engage with their leadership. The student leaders who were called to intervene on the issue were seen receiving insults especially from their colleagues who accused them of being in bed with management, confirming the responses made by some interviewees on the challenges they face as members of SRC in their line of duty. In contrast,

management interviewees were of the view that the security of the students is hinged on that policy aiming to protect the students at all cost in the confinement of the institution, therefore, this should not be taken as an imposition of policy.

5.4.6 Fundraising

Internally, SRCs in the various CoE raise funds through the payment of dues, issuance of coupons and other special levies. A careful observation in a college, revealed some letters in circulation soliciting for funds from various institutions to undertake development projects such as repairs on students' halls of residence, provision of street lights and construction of roads. The requests were addressed to political parties, non-governmental organisations and other institutions which may have family relations to some members of SRC or established links through acquaintances. Some college notice boards clearly indicated where funds and any other assistance could be channelled to for proper accountability. This confirms the assertion by respondents on fundraising capability, initiating and maintenance of new and existing projects of SRC in developing the colleges.

5.4.7 Infrastructure Development

The main entrance of one of the colleges' gates, through to the security post, had been constructed by a particular year group of SRC, it was observed. It was also noted that a walk on a one-two-kilometre tarred road, from the entrance to the dormitory block, was also constructed by the students' association. Buses procured and bearing the name of various year groups of SRC were seen packed at the garages as affirmed by respondents. Some are specifically for teaching practice purposes, to enhance teaching and learning process of the student teachers and other services as had been visibly embossed on them. Furthermore, the guest house that accommodated the researcher till the study was completed, was constructed by a particular year group of SRC. This was replicated in the other colleges studied. The water flowing through the taps in this college was the result of the mechanised borehole made by the student body under the same SRC. This is the building which houses visitors who are on an official assignment at the college, as I was told. An SRC building was observed in another college. It was in that building that the focus group discussion was held. In the morning, I spotted the labourers mowing the weeds from the large compound making the work so easy. Through a casual conversation with one of the labourers, I learnt the mower was purchased by the SRC. I was informed that anytime the grass grows, workers perform the task even without being called upon. The workers seem happy when driving the mower

to clear the long grass. There was no supervision as of the time of the observation, but the grass seemed green and fresh and trimmed.

The 'leisure benches' which were also sighted, clearly indicated they were funded by the SRC, having the year-group's name embossed on them. Students relax and attend to their visitors here. Some students were seen resting on them in wait for their next lesson while others were busily interacting with their colleagues. This clearly indicates SRCs infrastructure contributions to the colleges.

5.4.8 Maintenance of Clean Environment (students and workers)

Early in the morning, the engaged casual workers were seen mowing and cleaning the compound, classroom blocks and the offices prior to the commencement of teaching and learning activities and office duties. Some students were also seen cleaning their hall of residences and the near surroundings to augment the services of the casual labourers. This is to maintain the neatness of the environment. As a result of this, the colleges under study had neat surroundings, classrooms, halls and offices.

5.4.9 SRCs' Cooperation with Management

The researcher observed the SRCs' cooperation with management as students were on campuses without going to town at lecturing hours. They did not move out of campus without permission. It also observed one management member giving directive to an SRC member to undertake an activity. The SRCs were also seen directing some students towards some management members.

5.5 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS FROM THE DATA

5.5.1 Introduction

The previous section of the chapter presented and analysed the data collected from the field through focus group discussions, individual interviews and observation. The present section discusses the findings from the data, and the literature review, in an integrated manner to ensure the credibility of the results. As alluded to in the previous section of the chapter, the discussion has been arranged under five (5) objectives below:

- i). Relevance of SRC to the improvement of Colleges of Education in Ghana;

- ii). Challenges student leaders face in executing their leadership roles in the Colleges of Education in Ghana;
- iii). Challenges administrators face when working with SRC leadership in Colleges of Education campuses in Ghana;
- iv) Activities of SRC influencing the administration of Colleges of Education in Ghana;
- v). Ways administrators and SRCs' relationship can be improved in the running of the Colleges of Education in Ghana.

5.5.2 Relevance of the SRC to the Improvement of CoE in Ghana

The SRC represents the students in the Colleges of Education in Ghana, and therefore constitutes one of the key role players of the institutions. The importance of SRC in the Colleges of Education in Ghana cannot be overemphasised. As the study revealed, the association coordinates many students' activities on the campuses of the colleges. The activities include academic and social, liaising between students and administration regarding teaching and learning programmes, lectures, assessment and work integrated learning, assembling of students, financial and other resources needed to achieve specific goals. The SRCs of the various Colleges of Education are involved in specific responsibilities, grouping jobs into work units and allocating the available resources to achieve such goals as sporting activities, formal ceremonies and community or national engagements. As the elected representatives of the student body, the SRC is an important role player in the organisation and participation of sporting activities which mostly comprise football, volleyball, table tennis, long tennis, javelin and all manner of track events for both inter-halls, inter-colleges and inter-regional groupings. Matriculation and graduation ceremonies, which are the most critical academic events in the life of students in the colleges rest on the shoulders of both the college administration and the SRC. They prepare the students for the events. The two verbatim statements from the interviews below affirm the relevance of the SRC in improving the colleges.

“We organise most of the students' related activities in this college. I say apart from academic programmes organised by administration for the student body, all other programmes for students are organized by us” FGD5a

“Some of the programmes they organise in this college include Hall Week, sporting and cleaning activities. They do these to entertain the student body and keep the compound and the community clean. As for the sporting activities, am sure is for promotion of their health and, also serve as a form of entertainment” ID02c

Similarly, the researcher observed some students who had washed their hall jerseys and track suits while a few students were wearing their sport jerseys. There were more than four cups and medals being displayed at the Sports Departments or Principals’ offices in some of the colleges under study. Again, photographs of team members for track events and javelin were exhibited on the walls at the Staff Common Room indicating the involvement of the institutions in sporting activities. A closer look at the compounds in the colleges is a clear indication of neatness without littering of papers, rubbers, food wrappers and cans, demonstrating cleaning was done earlier in the day. This was affirmed by David (2013:383) who intimates the SRC engages in the development of sports by organising sports competitions at the Hall and Departmental levels to discover the talents of students to form formidable teams. These teams then represent the colleges during inter-colleges and inter-sectorial sporting events which serve as opportunity to be selected for national engagements.

The SRC also organises inter-college tournament meetings and programmes with the support of the college sport divisions. Such inter-college sports activities foster regional and national unity. As indicated in the Harmonised Statutes for the Colleges of Education in Ghana (2015:28), the aims and objectives of the SRCs are to “promote the total well-being and benefits of students, organising the social, cultural, intellectual and recreational activities of the students of the college.” This makes organisation of the student body a critical role performed by the SRC. The responses from two of the interviewees reproduced below verbatim confirm the relevance of the SRC in the colleges of education.

“SRC in this college is vital to the survival of the college. We have been able to co-exist with management over many years as it organises the student body for all college activities. This we do by organising and attending meetings and programmes with management, other sister colleges and other organisations even though we can do more if not for the restrictions” FGD4c

“Management sometimes attends meetings with SRC just as we also call them for meetings at any point in time. During sporting activities for instance, we discuss all their proposals with them to

prevent injuries and other accidents. You see, they are in our care and management wouldn't want to be liable for any exigencies in and outside the compound"ID07b.

The findings above are confirmed by the observation conducted by the researcher. She observed vibrant sports activities on the campuses of two of the colleges in the study. She was greeted by singing and dancing on her visit to the two college campuses where everyone seemed to be freely spirited moving up-and-down, chanting, singing and dancing to register their hall's superiority. This is the time students socialise among themselves while beautifying the college with their unique hall jerseys.

Furthermore, the SRC's relevance can be perceived through its partnership with the management for development projects in the colleges. There are many facilities and services needed by every college in Ghana for its successful operations. These include construction of new buildings to accommodate the influx of fresh students as a result of the "Free Senior High School" policy implemented by the government. The colleges, therefore, need to rehabilitate old buildings as a form of maintenance, construction of roads, provision of tools and equipment and provision of services to improve the effective teaching and learning in the colleges. The SRC encourages the student body to contribute financially to such important projects in the colleges. The findings from both the focus group discussions and the individual interviews indicate the cooperation between management and the SRC to improve the physical infrastructure of the colleges. Indeed, the SRC is credited for the new physical outlook of the colleges, as they are helping in the infrastructural development of institutions (Afful-Broni, 2006:197). The SRC does not seem to rely on previous glories but continue to embark on several projects in the various institutions. These include the construction of students' dormitories or halls, lecture theatres and computer laboratories, provision of means of transportation and other such fine projects through student-leadership's participation. The response from one interviewee which is reproduced below sums it all;

"Management cannot underestimate the work of SRC. Construction and rehabilitation work, provision of services and other amenities are made possible by them. Can management therefore say it is not relevant even now more than ever?"ID07c

The findings from the focus group discussion corroborated those from the individual interviews which revealed that the relevance of the SRCs can also be attested through the liaison role it plays between management and the student body. The SRCs in the College of Educations serve as

mediators between management and students during negotiations. This, they do by creating the awareness for students to understand management's point of view and vice versa. This important role of the Students' Representative Council was validated by Bess and Dee (2012:58) in their assertion that students' associations assist authorities of educational institutions to maintain openness to students by building their faith and believing that the authorities will not fail in the solution to their problems through interaction. The SRC is involved in networking with other institutions and organisations such as Teacher Trainees Association of Ghana (TTAG) and National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS) outside the colleges to make them aware of the support the colleges need from them.

The SRC is a major stakeholder in the life of the colleges as it represents the student body in teacher education institutions. As indicated by the responses below from each side of the interviewees, the SRC is a recognised stakeholder in the Colleges of Education.

“The relationship between SRC and the college is more of stakeholder type. The college management cannot do without the presence of the students who are represented by their leaders as they are the reason for the college's existence” ID02a

“The college is all about students who we represent. The college actually revolves around us. We are directly affected by any decision made by management and other government institutions, however, our negative action can bring the whole college to an abrupt halt”FGD1c

As affirmed by the above responses, it is clear that, without the Students' Representative Council, the Colleges of Education might not be able to function optimally as institutions for training of teachers. The students have total interest in the colleges and are affected by every activity engaged in by the institution. They form the pivot around which the institution revolves because they (are admitted, oriented, taught, assessed and awarded with degrees) give financial support to contribute towards college infrastructural programmes. As it was remarked by one administrator, “when students are on recess, the compound seems empty and without life, however, upon their return, their presence radiates through every facet of the institution, bringing life to the institution.” This is an affirmation of the fact that the SRC and the entire student body form an important social entity whose performance ultimately affects the success of the colleges in fulfilling its mission (Abubakari & Al-hassan, 2016:51).

Lack of adequate students' participation in decision-making denies students the valuable, intellectually-challenging experience and deprives institutions of useful students' perspective, (Terrell & Cuyjet, 1994:56) as cited by Bambenek & Sifton (2003). In a genuine administration, student association partnership is invaluable for addressing key issues, as both institutions convey such exceptional and extremely valuable qualities (Shaw & Atvars 2018: 16). As affirmed by responses from both interview groups, some student leaders are involved in decision-making because they represent the student body at the college council which is the highest governing body in the college. They also serve on statutory meetings and other auxiliary meetings. Being the representative of the student body, the SRC enhances the acceptance of many outcomes from meetings between the college authorities and the student body. They are part of the decision hence they ensure its acceptance and implementation. This role of the SRC is confirmed by the extracts from the interviews below:

“As I represent SRC at council level, I contribute to some extent to the decision-making process in the college. Some of the motions I table are sometimes at the blind side of the council. Sometimes, due to the personalities involved at council, I feel a bit overwhelmed especially when it involves decisions relating to management and staff members. However, the awareness of my participation on council by the student body makes implementation of some decisions a lot easier”
FGD1d

It is worthwhile to note that the relevance of the SRC relates to its involvement in making vital decisions related to the students and operations of the colleges as indicated by Abubakari & Al-hassan (2016: 54).

The SRC is the mouthpiece of the student body as affirmed by most of the respondents in the discussion above. In a college of over one thousand (1000) students, direct communication between each individual student and management can become an impossible task. The SRC as the representative of the student body, steps in to communicate effectively to both students and management on issues affecting them as students. The SRC, as a mouthpiece, makes it easier to communicate to management and all other stakeholders which the students engage with as expressed by the respondents. In describing the stakeholder theory, Abubakari and Al-hassan (2016:54) and Asiyai (2015:64) reiterate that stakeholders may take on leadership responsibilities in an organisation such as the institution, or give “voice” to their ideas, perspectives and opinions

during community forums or school-board meetings. This is exactly what the SRC as a major stakeholder does in the colleges of education in Ghana. As the representative of the entire student body, the SRC liaises between the students and management to ensure proper communication and support for the management, and in support of the smooth running of the institutions.

5.5.3 Challenges Student Leaders Face in Executing their Leadership Roles

There are numerous challenges faced by the SRC while executing their duties in the CoE. A major obstacle is mistrust from their own constituency—the student body—which it represents. Mistrust weakens organisational set up (Tschannen-Moran, 2001:313) and in the CoE settings, the SRC. It has a damaging effect on communication to the extent that a student or an executive member who is privy to certain delicate information may distort it for personal interest (Roberts & O'Reilly, 1974:180). Participants expressed mistrust by the student body as a challenge to SRC and its operations. This is because, the student body believes SRC always sides with administration for which reason, there is no use in communicating vital information which will end up at the doorstep of administration to attract victimisation. Even though this assertion was refuted by some participants, the level of mistrust is so high that friends are sometimes lost for the mere fact of being in a leadership position. A participant expressed the view below which supports this finding:

“They sometimes see us as liars as my colleague said. For an example, last academic year, the administration introduced an endowment fee. Our fellow students became furious that we are aware of such fee but didn't inform them. That we colluded with administration to levy them, which was not so.”FGD4b

It takes time to build trust and once it is eroded it may be very difficult to repair it. As elected representatives, the SRC members should always be honest and show transparency in order to build trust among their fellow students. In a situation where a leader's lifestyle changes as soon as he/she assumes a public office, people may suspect them of dishonesty. Some of the participants asserted that although this can be avoided, it has an indelible mark on public office bearers like the SRC executives. The general consensus among the participants is that mistrust could be avoided to ensure stability and smooth running of the institutions. The quality of open communication has been linked to the building of trust at every level in all organisations. People with high degree of trust are likely to disclose more accurate, relevant and complete data on issues in addition to their thoughts, feelings or ideas. Even though it is a requirement by the SRC constitution, the

willingness of the leadership to go beyond the minimum capability of their respective roles is linked to trust (Podsakoff et al, 1990). This means that in such establishments, members are more comfortable and are able to devote their energies to contributing to its goals rather than self-protection (Tschannen-Moran, 2001:313). Thus, if the SRC will exceed the target set by its constituency, trust from the students' body is very vital to obtain the relevant information to fight the course of the members.

Lack of courtesy exhibited by the student body may also demoralise the SRC, as revealed by some of the respondents. Disrespectful words and actions such as verbal threats, swearing, throwing objects, faultfinding, insensitive jokes, sexual harassment and many more, which are rude and show a lack of respect (Ngwokabuenui, 2015); might discourage the SRC members. This could cause fear, anger, confusion, uncertainty, isolation, self-doubt, depression and even physical ailment among the student leaders. Many students lack understanding and respect because their experiences with these important character traits have been minimal while some have been caught by watching others exhibit the trait. Institutions play a role of exposing students to several traits which they may choose from. A respondent had this to say on the matter

“Our fellow students at the lower levels respect us. However, those who do not respect us [sic]it’s as a result of these same lecturers we are talking about. Some students were admitted through these lecturers so anything about us is reported to those lecturers who intimidate us. In witnessing these acts give them the power to disrespect us.” FGD3b.

These days many young adults in society have become negative and disrespectful; perhaps due to equality and rights advocacy, some subordinates feel they are equal to those in authority. If supporting management in implementing a policy (exiting campus with “exeat”) could attract so much insolence as was observed, then how much more very sensitive matters. For this reason, one may often observe sarcasm, ridicule and put-down statements just to humiliate others and their corresponding practice (Kaufman et al, 2012:74) in the colleges. One way to maintain posture is to keep to the respectful behaviour since these same students voted the SRC into power. As the following verbatim statement confirms,

“Some people are disrespectful by nature so I see it like that and I have accepted it as it is ”FGD4a.

As students are regarded as young adults at this stage of their lives, it is expected that the SRC accord them the necessary respect without condition for being their representatives. It was also observed that leaders who were found interacting within the colleges with some students maintained their posture throughout the communication process. The SRC must realise that the responsibility of student leadership comes with insults and wrongful accusations and there can be success only when one develops ‘thick skin’ to whatever is levelled against them and focus on the responsibilities that come with the position.

Demeaning stature from management can be a challenge to the SRC. The respondents described this attitude as contemptuous to the SRC as a student association. Many leaders desire respect to operate effectively. When asked to rate the desirable characteristics in any organisation, one common thing that might come to light could be respect—defined as the perceived worth accorded to a person by one or more others (Spears et al., 2006). Respect was ranked among the highest above income, career opportunities and leisure time afforded by the job. Similarly, in a study of what employees view as characteristics of excellent managers, “it was found that trust and respect dominated all other categories of “managerial behavior” (Drehmer & Grossman, 1984). This points to the fact that respect is a core value within an organisation (Burchell & Robin, 2011). It plays a very important role in organisational recognition, engagement and strong culture (Jacobsen, 2013). When the SRC is supported and treated with respect by administration, it can respond positively to job experiences by developing a greater sense of commitment (Rehmat et al, 2020) and identification with the institution. If respect is a reflection of how employees perceive themselves as being viewed by their employing organisation (Tyler and Blader, 2002) as cited by Bartel et al (2012) then the SRC, which feels it is respected by the administration, has a greater level of status and self-esteem. This was absent in some of the colleges under study as revealed by a respondent:

“We are not offered any opportunity to operate. The schedule officer sometimes becomes angry over issues, shout at us and sometimes we are not recognised as such. I was once intimidated when I requested for accountability. It was said that “even the dog is more important than you,” I quote”
FGD5c

A respectful atmosphere generates a positive work environment which resonates the belief of individuals that they are valued by the organisation. Workplace respect has a number of positive

outcomes. It can become a source for reinforcing an employee's self-esteem which is grounded in positive appraisal for employee's participation by colleagues. An individual's perception of being valued also creates a strong relationship with others which results in a stronger identification of being part of a collective organisation (Rehmat et al., 2020: 449). This applies to the SRC in the colleges and can lead to the development of trust with administration. Trust gives a perception of respect within the organisation which is an important indicator of the quality of relationships in the organisation as a whole (Rogers & Ashforth, 2017). Drawing on social exchange theory arguments, it can be argued that when employees are treated with respect, it promotes a greater level of trust among colleagues (Rahmat, 2020) juxtaposing this position with SRC in the Colleges of Education in Ghana. When this finding is applied to the SRC and administration, receiving respect in the college can assist the student association to identify themselves with the colleges and ultimately contribute to the achievement of the institution's objective.

Engagement between the SRC and management should begin early, that is, immediately after the election of the executives to orientate them on their duties and responsibilities to the college, fellow students, college management and the staff. There are several rules, regulations and programmes which may be appropriate to engage the SRC in different ways at different stages for the effective administration of the colleges. There can be different reasons for and types of consultation. Some may be radically different from simply inviting responses from the SRC leadership by management. It was revealed by the data that the SRC is sometimes informed on whatever decision had been made on an issue without consultation and sometimes too, those accorded the opportunity are also given very limited time to come up with solution. Participants agreed that sometimes there is no need for consultation at all when SRC has no knowledge on the issue at stake or when it has already been engaged with similar situation in which case, the decision could be adopted. Time frames for consultation should be fair and realistic to allow the SRC sufficient period to provide an informed input. This is because, the amount of time required will depend on the nature and impact of the issue under consideration. This was what a respondent had to say about the above finding:

“Everything is planned already and implemented by management, as I've been saying, they don't ask us for anything from us” FGD7b.

The SRC should be aware that not all matters relating to their welfare have to be discussed with them. For example, when a lecturer is to be reprimanded for any misconduct, SRC cannot sit in that meeting. There are times when some decisions are made instantaneously and most of the time in their absence. Even though it might be appropriate to consult the SRC for students' opinion on issues for implementation, management can do otherwise in the interest of the entire student body.

Information provided to SRC should be easy to comprehend, that is, simply understandable through the use of plain language. The written communication should be in simple language to avoid misinterpretations. In an educational environment such as the Colleges of Education, the engagement of students and even staff should be done via a variety of ways such as public meetings, working groups, focus groups, and surveys rather than mostly focusing on written communication. Depending on the situation or subject, an appropriate medium can be employed in reaching individuals whose opinion matter (Gov.uk, 2013). Consultation improves the quality of rules, programmes and compliance. Where there is compliance, there could be reduction in implementation costs, increasing level of transparency while improving regulatory quality by helping regulators to balance divergent interests (Rodrigo & Amo, 2013:2). It also identifies unintended effects and practical problems, enhancing voluntary compliance as changes are announced in a timely manner to enable adjustment to changes. In the end, proper consultation increases the sense of legitimacy and shared ownership that gives consultation that could motivate the affected parties to comply (Rodrigo & Amo, 2013). One respondent aired his view on the lack of adequate consultation thus;

“Management will not consult us in almost everything. Sometimes I begin to feel our presence in the committees were just to satisfy the requirement and nothing else. We are seen but not heard, that’s the reality in this college” FGD1a

Most of the participants were of the view that in the absence of adequate consultation, management might take major decisions without the knowledge and inputs from an important stakeholder as the SRC. The principal should not occasionally act as the sole management member in taking decisions. Where a decision is taken in an emergency situation, he/she should inform the stakeholders what caused it to ensure transparency. The general view of most of the respondents is that the scheduled officers prepare the ground for management to maneuver. As one respondent lamented:

“With the principals, it is mother and child relationship. We are treated as children; I take it that respect for our views is absent. They do sometimes but other times they respect. Management thinks about themselves and when they make up their mind to do something, we are not heard at all. Mostly we are not heard. The issues we take there, mostly they don’t accept”FGD5a.

Issues ranging from feeding, timetables, fees, allowances and many more are solely handled by management as remarked by the focus group participants. Responses regarding feeding was highly refuted by the individual interviewees who claim the Dining Hall Prefects and their Dean of Students jointly perform this role. During the observation in one of the colleges, as the researcher mingled with the students, she heard some of them talking about how the SRC and the student body could find some way to improve the menu instead of expecting everything from the management. One student had this to say to her fellow students:

“We are the consumers of the food provided but I have never heard our leaders suggesting that we should find ways to improve the quality of the food. We often complain the menu is imposed on us but we do nothing to improve it. In our next Hall meeting, I will make this suggestion to the colleagues”

In as much as the feeding grant provided by the government is inadequate, SRCs input on the type of meal on each day could save the college from the unnecessary agitations by the student body. With the exception of the examination timetable, which is similar to all the Colleges of Education because they were prepared by the affiliated universities, daily classroom schedules can be modified to suit both students and the lecturers as well as the conditions on specific campuses. In the case of allowances which are directly from the central government as well, the SRC should be aware that issues surrounding their consistency and other related matters cannot be clarified by management in the Colleges of Education but the disbursing institution. It is therefore not fair to blame the college management for the delay as it has no control over it. All information and clarifications must rather be directed to the appropriate quarters to avoid misunderstandings and false accusation of the college management. This was confirmed during the observation as data on disbursement had been published on some students’ notice boards for verification. The lists clearly indicated that they were sent directly from the disbursing institution, affirming the wrong perception of students about the allowances:

“We are not consulted when it comes to allowances. We were told the amount the government releases, determines the food we take and the allowances too are directly from the government.”FGD4a.

As if management in all the colleges had decided on the fee components issue, responses from both focus group and individual interview sessions confirmed that authorities were not willing to provide the components that make up the total fee being paid by the student body. As the breakdown serves as a yardstick for students to make further demand, it seems management came to the realisation that this could lead to misunderstandings, therefore, only a comprehensive amount is presented to students as fees to maintain peace on campuses. Notwithstanding this, accountability is the focus of the above assertion. To be totally convinced on this stance by managements in the Colleges of Education in Ghana, the SRC must engage Parliament and Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) which regulates the activities in these institutions.

The findings also confirmed that management has very little support when SRC is being attacked by the student body even though their activities are geared towards supporting the management’s programmes. As acknowledged by a respondent;

“Supporting us especially when our people gang against us is absent ooo. Hmm, during such times, we are left to our fate when everything we do is to assist administration”FGD7c.

Some respondents recalled incidences where SRCs were ignored. An instance was when SRC in one of the colleges supported management to bill the student body for the purchase of effective teaching and learning materials. When students expressed their displeasure through agitation, management claimed it had no knowledge about the billing, and students were referred to SRC for clarification; forgetting that the association is also not the final determinant of the components of the total fees to be paid by students, which include the SRC dues and levies, nor does management accept all input made without SRC’s approval. This placed the student leadership in a fix as they had no defense and felt betrayed by management who the SRC supported. These and other accusations had been levelled against the SRC. To the student respondents, management very often leaves the SRC to its fate when students begin to agitate, leaving the leaders in a state of shock, anger and betrayal. Research reveals that having a strong support system has many positive benefits such as higher level of well-being, better coping skills and a longer and healthier life

(Portis, 2017:1). It is in the interest of management to support the course of SRC to achieve more in the improvement of conditions in the colleges.

5.5.4 Challenges Management Encounter Working with the SRC

The study revealed that management has very little problem working with the students' association. The usual challenge relates to the late or non-payment of fees by the students which management from some colleges believe the SRC does not do enough to ensure that fees are paid in time. The smooth running of the college depends on money and so when students delay payment or are reluctant to settle their fees, it puts a strain on management which expects support from the SRC. As learnt from the interviews, there are some students who genuinely cannot pay fees while most students intentionally misappropriate funds provided by their parents, creating inconveniences with suppliers of items to improve teaching and learning. Yet, these same students complain of inadequate or lack of maintenance amenities and poor-quality teaching and learning materials for effective work. Late payment or non-payment of fees render the colleges bankrupt, therefore, items are acquired on credit leading to extra expenses as a result of crediting. This depletes the colleges accounts which could otherwise be channelled into other productive ventures. In most cases, attempts at recovering these fees create resistance between management and SRC to the detriment of the colleges' operations. The SRC in some colleges supports their fellow students knowing very well that the college cannot run without student fees. Government subvention alone is not enough to run the institution; hence, students should do their part. Observation on some notice boards indicated some names and examination results from affiliated universities were blocked to force students who owed fees to settle them. The SRC at this point can only do little as affirmed by a respondent:

“Demanding fees from their members is very difficult but SRC can also do little as we are dealing with students who determine what they want to use their money for” ID03c.

The SRC's dues are paid together with college fees and are only released to the student association for projects after full payment of fees is made by the students. The funds are disbursed in tranches, delaying SRC's access to money needed for students' projects. The SRC and the management charge students' special levies for infrastructure development and or maintenance of existing facilities.

The study revealed that sometimes students in cahoots with the SRC, cause unrests when they disagree with management on some specific issues. Such strikes could be attributed to both internal and external factors (Onivehu, 2021:10). Internal factors include feeding (quality or quantity of food), fees adjustment or increment, wrongful deductions from student allowances, communication gap and suspicious quiz results, while external factors include government policies and massive failure in examination results by mentor or affiliated universities. In most educational institutions in many countries, exorbitant transport fares, poor management policies, increase in fees and a lack of social amenities were the causes of student unrest (Adegun and Ojo, 2016:167) which could be similar to the situations in the Colleges of Education in Ghana. The following statement from one of the interviewees reproduced verbatim, affirms the above finding;

“Matters on feeding are very sensitive in nature. This is the most common reason for student demonstrations in this college. You just cannot prepare anything, and students will be happy. In as much as the economy is not good, feeding easily causes disturbances in the college. Some incidences had been intervened over the years, almost every year “ID06c.

In Ghana, as the status of the Teacher Training institutions have been upgraded to tertiary institutions, matters of national and international significance could gradually be potential drivers of student protest. Student demonstrations have numerous consequences for various stakeholders. Apart from the disruptions in institutional academic activities, it contributes to poor educational standards. For example, closure of educational institutions can adversely affect the scope and curriculum of the programmes offered (Davies et al., 2013). Closure of colleges might lead to, suspension and punishment of students and their leaders, and the conducting of examinations without completion of the course contents (Chiluba, 2019). For this reason, the onus rests on management and the SRC to work assiduously together to prevent this phenomenon because of its negative consequences.

Educational institutions may transform, sometimes due to external pressures, some of which could be negative influences. It is therefore important to sustain stability of Colleges of Education to give place to effective education. In view of this, the onus is on all the major stakeholders—college administration and the student body—to work in tandem to increase the level of transparency in their operations to ensure stability on their campuses. Very often, the SRC may oppose many initiatives from the management, even if the final outcome of the initiative would be in their favour.

Even where they are aware of the reasons for a particular decision, so long as it does not emanate from their quarters or favour the student executive, they could resist its implementation as it is viewed as imposition. As the findings indicate, some student leaders often lead their fellow students to resist the implementation of such college policies. The resistance manifests itself in many ways, from foot-dragging and inertia to petty sabotage to outright rebellions. The policies in the colleges include different approaches to curriculum, management structures, educational programmes, fees, management of students and lecturers. Most of the policies are made by external bodies such as the universities of which the colleges are affiliated, National Teaching Council, Ghana Tertiary Education Commission, Ministry of Education and many more for which the college management are to implement. These should not be seen as imposition from the college management since it is employed to implement policies. Therefore, proactive student leaders would need to engage with the college management to assist the students to negotiate with external bodies in addressing issues contextually rather than accusing the local management of imposing policies on them. The college management should try to find out and understand the anticipated, general causes of resistance in each situation and then strategise around them. As indicated by Yilmaz and Kilicoglu (2012), some common reasons for student resistance include interference with need fulfilment, selective perception, habit, inconvenience or loss of freedom. Others include economic implications, security in the past, fear of the unknown, threats to power or influence, knowledge and skill obsolescence, organisational structure and limited resources. Specific methods for helping in overcoming resistance that management uses are education and communication; participation and involvement; facilitation and support; negotiation and agreement; manipulation and co-optation; explicit and implicit coercion (Yılmaz & Kılıçoğlu, 2013). In as much as SRC has the right to be informed of activities that affect the association and its members, policies and practices are sometimes brought down from superior authorities who may not have educated management thoroughly to relay information to SRC as required. It is therefore necessary for the association to exercise restraint on matters for congenial environment on campus. The impatience to explore issues and understand before they react negatively is what might affirm some of the responses that students are immature or naive and cannot take any good decision. Some extract from the findings stated below affirms the above perception:

“They are like our children; we treat them just as our children because they are of the same age range. We need to streamline activities as they are inexperienced and need guidance”ID03d

In a situation where information flow is limited, rumours, misinformation and mistrust do the rounds, hence, management has the duty to ensure that information is shared with the SRC and the entire student body. Information is knowledge shared or obtained from study, instruction, investigation or other sources through communication. Without communication with people, human life as a social being becomes meaningless (Yolanda et al., 2021). Effective communication is one of the most basic functions of management. The manager can make a good decision, think out well conceived plans, establish a sound organisation structure, and even be well linked by his associates but without effective communication, support may not be achieved for the good intention. In every organisation, a two-way communication (vertical and confidential) is essential for achieving managerial and organisational effectiveness. In an institution such as the College of Education, effective communication may help students and management to become more involved in their work. It can also help them develop a better understanding of their duties and responsibilities to the institutions. Clear, precise and timely communication of information also prevents the occurrence of organisational problems. Nevertheless, there are times when communication might happen not in accordance with the intent and purpose to be delivered. Misunderstandings generally occur because of an inaccurate expression on the part of the speaker, or the receiver's unintended misconception of an utterance (Thomas, 1983). Students may misinterpret information when the hearer fails to understand correctly the intention conveyed (Yus, 1999). Several factors may contribute to misunderstandings: the context and circumstances within which the speech event takes place, stress factors or fatigue or the level of interest that the topic generates. At times, misunderstandings occur because of under-developed communicative competence in a particular language. In educational institutions, policy documents may contain some technical expressions and terms which students might not understand and thus give wrong interpretations. The responses from the interviews and the observation conducted confirmed this point of view of the SRC's misinterpretation of information, which seems to be a challenge to the management of the colleges. Management communication occasionally leads to misinterpretation by the SRC who sends wrong information to the student body which can cause unnecessary friction in the institutions. Often students do not choose leaders who are academically good and godly; they instead elect people who might be academically weak but popular with them because of their looks, tribe or political affiliations. Such people could be mere demagogues who often find it difficult to comprehend documents from the affiliated universities, Ministry of Education or

National Teacher Training Council, and as a representative of the student body, he/she may present to them wrong information which they believe as their spokesperson. It is therefore, in the interest of the student body and the college, for students to choose leaders who are comfortable with or have command of the English language. That is, their mastery of the language is adequate; are fluent and understand documents or policies to be able to explain them to their fellow students naturally (Evans & Cleghorn, 2012). Similarly, when management uses higher level language or bombastic words in communication with SRC, it could lead to communication breakdown. It is therefore important for the college stakeholders to communicate effectively towards the achievement of the institutional goals.

In general, the findings do not indicate any serious frictions on the college campuses. As observed by the researcher, it seems the authorities of the colleges have managed to neutralise the negative behaviour of the student body and their leaders, hence, there is normality on the campuses. On the face-value, there seemed to be no peculiar problems with the SRC as an association in the various colleges under study. This is because most individual interview respondents indicated that they preferred to maintain the status quo on their campuses.

5.5.5 Influences of SRC Activities

The SRC uses its influence to seek financial support from external donors and the student body to engage in development projects in the colleges of education. The respondents revealed that due to the good relationship some SRC executives have with the community and some political affiliates, it is able to lead the institution towards raising funds to support development programmes. Some ministers of state, members of parliament, assemblymen, political party members and benevolent organisations visit the colleges to ascertain their developmental needs. Through the SRC's initiative, many projects have been undertaken, thus, bringing influential and important stakeholders much closer to the colleges. This means it is essential for the student body to choose leaders who are not only academically good but also have influence to foster collaboration with others for the physical development of the colleges. The colleges are essential national assets as they produce teachers for schools, hence, they need student leaders who have the interest of the nation at heart so that they can work together with the management and external organisations to improve the institutions. As the findings indicate, the SRC is a formidable partner in influencing the finances of the institution. Peter and Ebimobowei (2015) affirm that students' association

funds are obtained through dues, established commercial outfits, collecting of rents from stores, engagement in transportation business, printing of T-shirts for sale and many more. The observation by the researcher confirms the efforts being made by the SRC. She saw copies of correspondences between the SRC and some external organisations on the notice boards of some colleges which solicited funds for specific projects including maintenance of tarred roads, extension of the library and painting of student halls of residences.

Although education remains the backbone of the development of any country, and especially in developing countries as the source of human resources development, lack of infrastructure development hinders the efforts of educational institutions. Governments in the developing world are finding it difficult to provide the needed infrastructure in institutions (Badu et al., 2018). Therefore, the efforts of the SRCs in the Colleges of Education to augment government projects are laudable. As intimated by Barnawi (2012), educational infrastructure is all objects or facilities that directly or indirectly facilitate and expedite the process of education and teaching such as classrooms or buildings, tables, chairs, roads, blackboards and books. The efforts of the SRC in the various colleges affirm the fact that facilities and infrastructure are very important supporting factors of education besides educators. Thus, without them, institutions will never be able to run well (Sholihah, 2017) as cited by Syafaruddin (2022). Infrastructure remains a critical issue in most developing countries, including Ghana (Badu et al., 2018). Its development underpins any strategy of human development and productivity since it is through education that the necessary skills, knowledge and aptitudes are acquired and the creative abilities of individuals are released to open the way to a better life and society (Republic of Ghana 2005). Poor and inadequate institutional infrastructure adversely affect student-learning and schooling outcomes and numerous factors have contributed to an infrastructure gap in the education sector in the colleges of education in Ghana. These include rapid increases in enrolments, poor maintenance and aging capital stocks, rural to urban migration, and inefficient government planning and school construction. (Gershberg, 2014). The Government of Ghana is currently facing enormous challenges when it comes to infrastructure development in the educational institutions because poor public service delivery, global forces and corruption constrain the growth of the economy (Shendy et al. 2013). Even though it prepares minimum standards for facilities and infrastructure for schools as mandated by law, this is inadequate, so participation and assistance from the SRC, communities and external organisations are still needed to support the fulfillment of institutional

facilities and infrastructure needs (Badu et al., 2018:1). The findings from the study indicate that the SRCs of the Colleges of Education have embarked on water, roads and halls projects. In two of the colleges, the SRCs have used their influence to source funds to drill and mechanise bore-holes, provide water-tanks, construction of roads, buildings and parks, maintenance of facilities such as tiling of halls of residences and washrooms and painting of buildings.

As revealed through the findings, many projects in the college are funded through the leadership of SRC. Peter and Ebimobowei (2015) affirmed that students' union embark on building of students' cafeterias, viewing centers to watch matches, listen to news, union secretariat, construction of road signs, students' park and gardens, information centers, notice boards and so on.

Still on the influence of the SRC, the study revealed that janitorial and other services are led by SRC in the various Colleges of Education as contribution towards a safe and clean environment. These services are deliverables or utilities provided to another which is non-tangible in nature and do not result in any ownership whilst its production and provision might be related to a tangible material product (Aldomor, 2005). Until migration to tertiary status, the SRC led the cleaning activity with students but now the association has engaged the services of community members who are paid by the students from SRC funds. The study also revealed that, the SRC leads the student body to support the cleaning in the various colleges on specific days, varying from college to college. Another service rendered by the student body under the leadership of the SRC is the establishment of college shops on campuses to sell provisions at cheaper prices to students. As one interviewee put it:

“SRC lead the student body to clean the campus and its surrounding especially during programmes as their Hall Week which is so dear to them” They sell basic items in the college shops to assist students in need of groceries ID04b.

5.5.6 Ways Administrators and SRCs Relationship could be Improved in the CoE

As the major stakeholders in the college, the management and the SRC should have a good working relationship to ensure a conducive climate for academic activities in the colleges. The responses from the participants in the study indicate the need for regular meetings and engagement

with SRC to ensure cordial relationship between the SRC and management. This was an important concern raised by both groups of participants as revealed below:

“Continuous engagement, continuous engagement since decisions are about the students, continuous engagement will improve relationship” ID04d.

It is generally believed that constant engagement with others on development projects would ensure cooperation and progress in the colleges. Stimulating ideas from other people is connected to, but stronger than, notifying them of ongoing development (Schwartz & Deruyttere, 1996). Therefore, consultation that goes beyond stimulating consensus is usually effective, efficient and equitable as it widens people’s variety of choices. When individuals are consulted on projects, they devise means of making them effective and productive. Management in the CoE must be proactive on a variety of actors, interests and conflicts and regularly improve on their consultation techniques with SRC. This may take time, practice and confidence to overcome its overdependence due to generational gap but the outcome is tremendous. Additionally, attitude of the youth may pose difficulty in consultation but this must be done on a regular basis to prevent and resolve many problems facing the institution amicably. Through this, important decisions can be taken and misunderstandings or conflicts minimised.

The study averred that due to the differences in ideology, that is, management utilising available resources to administer the entire institutions while the SRC fights for the welfare of the student body, there is always a possibility for disagreements. The lack of regular subvention from the Ministry of Education sometimes compels the college managements to end up interfering in a specific project to be embarked on by the SRC in order to redirect the funds for more urgent needs of the institution. The management might hold the view that every project must be beneficial to all and not just the student body and must be awarded to a credible contractor for money’s worth. This might drive management to interfere in some SRC initiated projects which students often seem to disagree with the college authorities. Furthermore, although management has the mandate to perform its duties, the provision of less quality meals, additional levying of students, payment of dues and how elections are organised in some of the colleges, creates the impression of management’s influences or interference. This is the main reason some SRCs are agitating for the elimination of undue interferences in student leadership race. As resonated from the focus group discussions, students sometimes do not get the freedom to choose the candidate of their choice as

college authorities employ tactical means to undermine support for candidates with different denominational membership. They might covertly influence the election process to favour candidates who might be sympathetic to management or pay allegiance to a particular faith-based organisation. The SRC and the student body deem this as a calculated scheme to weaken the association and establish it under the direct manipulation of administration (Olamide, 2014:1). It was revealed by the focus group discussions that some members of college management sometimes offer bribes to influence the student body to vote in favour of specific group of people/ This might often lead to the selection of ineffective leaders who many of the students cannot relate well with. There were also divergent views from the focus group discussions on this issue of some College Management members influencing the student voting. Some participants argued that sometimes, some of the participants who are popular among students have bad records in the institution. Management, however, finds it difficult to allow such dubious students to be elected as leaders to man the affairs of students. After all, when things go wrong in the institutions, it is management who is called to account to the government, the public and parents. As one divergent voice made it clear:

“We are here to learn and to achieve our objective, we cannot choose leaders who have problems with management, many of us and the college rules. We need leaders with good records and can cooperate with management to minimise misunderstandings. Good SRC leaders can show compromise when need be”FGD5c

The above remark echoes the sentiments of respondents who perceive the college authorities have a duty to ensure stable climate for studies and for the achievement of their goals for coming to the college. To these respondents, there might be many students whose parents struggle to support them financially and these students cannot accept leaders who have a different agenda—opposing every initiative of the college management to further their own narrow interests. It is possible some of these SRC candidates are financed by politicians to oppose the administration and those who are not much into politics and would want to complete the programmes on schedule would not vote for such candidates.

To ensure that some of the student leaders do not embezzle student funds, the college administrations have the duty to put some checks and balances in place. They do this by scrutinising invoices before approving payments to the SRCs. This did not auger well with some

of the participants in the focus group discussion as they referred to it as undue interference from the college administration in their affairs. These participants seem to ignore the fact that management is accountable to all stakeholders in the operations on campus for which SRC is also a part. The SRC must be made to understand that it does not render any account to the public or government for whatever might go wrong in the institution. What is important is for management to be transparent in taking actions that are in the interests of the majority of the student body and the general public, whose taxes finance the colleges. The association must be aware that all funds including dues, levies and fees which are considered as public funds must be accounted for by management in the various colleges. As a result, the college authority is under every obligation to approve and supervise the expenditure of the association for the sake of accountability. The college has its rules dictated by the policies of government and other regulatory institutions, therefore, the SRC and the entire student body cannot get absolute freedom to do as they please. SRCs must have their freedom, yet operate within their limit which must be well established among these leaders. Therefore, in as much as management is the authority and can regulate the operations of SRC, the freedom of the association must be respected to improve the relationship between these two primary stakeholders.

The students are in the institutions to be trained to become competent teachers and future leaders and should study some of these managerial skills needed for public administration. The training of the SRC should therefore be planned and designed to equip them with knowledge and skills to prepare them to meet varying and challenging needs of any organisation or institution they find themselves in. It may help in perfecting existing skills, increase productivity and make them better leaders. Voelker et al, (2019) contend that, although most institutions provide ample leadership opportunities, some institutions simply place students into leadership positions without appropriate support, structure or training. Winchester (2018) points out that when the students find validation in who they are and are empowered to recognise their own intervention in addressing issues that impact them, they accelerate their leadership development as well as their potential to have a positive impact on society. Therefore, the onus is on the college authorities to train their SRCs to make them effective, objective and responsible leaders for their institutions, communities and the nation at large.

Indeed, some of the participants indicated the existence of training and support programmes in their institutions to assist the SRC to be abreast of their roles and responsibilities in line with government and college mandate. Participants noted that formal leadership training could equip them with confidence to contribute effectively to college programmes. Whatever determines who a leader is, is the ability to influence others to change their actions in order to accomplish significant outcome (Grenny et al., 2013). This assertion does not mean that a leader is one who basically imposes their will on others, but leaders inspire and empower others to do beyond their expected capability. The skills to do this are not found naturally in most leaders but, are deliberately nurtured by seeking out mentors and coaches and by continuous learning and training (Grenny et al., 2013:68). As discussed in Chapter 1, Mittal and Dhar (2015) identified that leaders should be equipped with a sense of responsibility, building of confidence, learning to network, ability to sharpen problem-solving skills and be able to inspire others to develop the institutions and the society as a whole.

Leadership skills do not naturally develop out of a person when they are placed into a position of authority or influence, but are cultivated. The SRC would tremendously benefit from leadership training that is intentional and targeted specifically for them as emerging leaders. As affirmed by Kosgei et al (2017:87), management considers student leadership as lacking maturity, seeking unreasoning claims but deficient in capabilities and experiences needed in managing institutions. For this reason, advocating for training will empower SRC to be active participants in the governance of their institutions.

The study similarly revealed that management should spearhead developmental projects and provide the most basic amenities so the SRC does not exert pressure on the student body to overburden them. The SRC on the other hand must also be more proactive in seeking for funds from various sources aimed at augmenting the enhancement of infrastructure and equipment provided by government and the institution in the Colleges of Education. Just as a respondent said:

“We will try our best to look for ways of generating funds to improve the development of this college since government and the college can’t do it alone but as for very basic amenities, madam, at least, the college must provide for us. We know our good grades are as important as the infrastructural development here but our authorities should lead the way and we will follow”
FGD5c.

Another respondent then added:

“The achievement of the student body and its leadership is what gives the college a name as well as raises its standard and not necessarily the performance of students alone,”FGD5c.

It therefore behoves on the SRC to lead the student body in the achievement of this goal and this must be embraced wholeheartedly. Cost-sharing policy is a global occurrence functioning in both industrialised and emergent nations (Johnstone & Marcussi, 2007). In developing countries, it affects all levels of education but used in solving financial problems in the institution (Johnstone et al., 2008:12). Extra levy is part of cost sharing in institutions. In the context of the colleges of education, cost sharing can be described as an arrangement whereby the costs of programmes or projects are shared by the involved parties according to an agreed upon formula (Wambugu, 2012) as cited by Wambugu and Mokoena (2013) or monetary or ‘in kind’ contributions, over and above the legally determined school fees required of parents or sponsors to pay (Pillay, 2012). The levies are meant to fund projects that the collected-authorized fees do not address; for example, funds for remedial teaching, co-curricular activities and developmental projects, in the case of the Colleges of Education in Ghana. As learnt from the focus group discussions, extra levies however, pose financial burden to students from deprived families who may even not be able to afford the payment of fees, let alone additional levies, leading to debts accumulation for the college administration. Failure to make such payments may result in withholding of examination results of students by the college finance office. This means, the higher the additional levies added to the overall fees charged, the more difficult it is for students to fulfil their financial obligations, leading to the graduation of fewer students. Such an incident could lead to student unrests, resulting in the closure of the institutions with untold consequences for the students, parents and the country at large. The fact that students share cost with the government requires the college authorities to make them aware of all expenditure as a form of accountability and transparency.

What comes clearly from the findings and the discussion is that younger generations enter the college with new perspectives, expectations and values which gives management of institutions new opportunities and challenges that they need to adapt to (Chaudhuri & Gosh, 2012). The respondents agreed that the old have something new to learn from the young due to their exposure and experiences. This can be achieved by listening to the views and appreciating the contribution of the younger generation on issues. This is what some researchers refer to as reversed mentorship

(Gadomska-Lila, 2020). The respondents prosed that reverse mentorship can improve the relationship between management and the SRC in the Colleges of Education. It is possible that some of the student leaders possess some essential leadership skills which could be adopted by the authorities for effective administration of their institutions. It behoves on management to identify such skills of the student leaders which can be adopted to improve the conditions of the institutions. (Clarke et al., 2019). According to Murphy (2012:562), even though “there are five major challenges when establishing a reverse mentoring relationship: individual differences; cross-generational differences; reversed roles; frequency of interaction; and trust and comfort, the outcome outweighs the challenges.” It is important to note that the current generation desires ways of being challenged and to feel that they are being seen, that their ideas are heard and appreciated (Meister & Willyerd, 2010). This is part of what Burns (1978) refers to as transformational leadership which occurs where one or more people are involved with others in such a way that leaders and followers nurture one another to higher levels of motivation for development.

As indicated by Ogunbodede et al (2020), many countries are yet to acknowledge the responsibilities of student associations in the effective administration of their tertiary institutions, as many are regarded as impediments to peaceful administration by their institutions. Consequently, the SRC that cannot address the concerns of its members is also considered irresponsible and ineffective. The activities of the SRC should be determined by its members in line with the institutions’ statuses and rules and not something else enforced by management to appear as a system of secondary school prefecture (Olamide, 2014). As indicated by the findings, mutual respect between student leaders and management is what the institutions need to achieve its mandate.

5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the data collected from the field through focus group discussions, individual interviews and observation. It analysed and discussed the findings through cross-references to the literature. The data from the three sources were analysed and discussed together to show where they collaborated or differed. The researcher adopted the observation to triangulate the data from these two types of interviews. Discussion of data was done together by comparing responses from the group interviews with that of the individual interviews conducted. The major issues that came out from the findings included the role the SRC plays in the colleges to meet their part of the

government's cost sharing policy. It also revealed that sometimes the SRC seems to over step their mandate by ignoring the legal position of the college authorities. On the other hand, the college management is accused of interfering in the SRC activities, although the college is managed by the principal and his council and not the SRC. Some of the SRC members lack information, skills and training for their role as the students' representatives and this sometimes creates conflicts between the management and the student body where the SRC gives students wrong information. The management should be transparent on how college projects are financed and to train the SRC to understand and know its role as a stakeholder in the institution. The next chapter draws conclusions and makes recommendations based on the findings.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of findings drawn from all the phases of the study. The data was elicited from individual interviews, focus group discussions and observation conducted by the researcher. The results presented are based on the interpreted data collected from participants who were directly involved in the administration of the colleges as well as core SRC executives to obtain their views, opinions and perceptions on the research topic under study. The chapter also provides a general conclusion to the study and makes recommendations arising from the findings.

6.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

The involvement of SRC in the administration of tertiary institutions in Ghana is a great challenge especially in the Colleges of Education. Even though the student body under the leadership of the SRC forms one of the components in the constitution of the college governing council, its contribution to college management is sometimes beset with conflicts with the administrators of the institutions because of different perceptions of the two role players. The purpose of the study was to determine the relevance of Students' Representative Councils and the roles they play to support the administration of Colleges of Education in Ghana. With this aim in mind, five objectives were outlined to guide the study: administrators and SRC shared three similar objectives while the fourth objective differed. The study explored the:

- relevance of SRC in the Colleges of Education in Ghana;
- challenges student leaders face in executing their roles in the Colleges of Education;
- challenges administrators encounter when working with student leadership in the Colleges of Education;
- the degree to which SRC activities influence the administration of the Colleges of Education; and
- ways and means of improving relationship between the SRC and the college administration.

Chapter 1 threw more light on emergence and overview of student associations, the rationale for the formation of SRC, the main topic under investigation, taking into account the reasons behind the choice of topic. The chapter highlighted the youth who form the most enthusiastic and ingenious set of individuals constituting students' associations in the contemporary world institutions of higher learning. These young adults could be assets to the development of their countries when given adequate training. The aims of the study were clearly emphasised in this first chapter. In addition, the legislative framework establishing the formation of SRC and incidents of students' riots in some colleges were also underlined. This chapter further covered the problem statement, the purpose of the study, research objectives and research questions. The key concepts used in the study were also defined in the Chapter.

Chapter 2 presented and discussed the theoretical frameworks underpinning the study. A few relevance theories to the study were discussed for clearer overview on administrative processes and leadership which invariably influence the climate in any institution. These include stakeholder theory, transformative leadership theory, distributed leadership theory and empowerment theory. The theoretical framing focused on the relationship with the research and their implication to the study.

In Chapter 3, the genesis of higher education and specifically teacher education in Ghana were briefly traced and deliberated. This was to delve further into the beginning of this area of education in the country. The review of the literature, which formed the second part of the chapter, focused on the structure of education, overview of tertiary education and history of teacher education in Ghana. This chapter also highlighted the birth of SRC in Ghana, its challenges and the role it plays in the governance of the colleges. The review finally concluded with discussions on solutions to effective SRC and administration partnership and some benefits of students' participation in institutional decision-making.

Chapter 4 of the study covered the design and methodology and the paradigm adopted for the study. The interpretivist paradigm, which aims to explore deeply into the subject under study and provide the meaning made of the context by the participants were discussed. The paradigm which is embedded in assumptions as ontological, epistemological, methodological and axiological were all discussed in detail. The study used the qualitative methods to conduct the empirical investigation since it was based on the interpretivist paradigm. Purposive sampling was employed

to select management members as well as core SRC executives because they were deemed information-rich. The SRCs from the four colleges participated in the study. Semi-structured interviews involving focus group discussions with the SRC, individual interviews with the management of the four colleges and observation were adopted as data collection techniques. The observation centred on administrators, the student body, the SRCs and the colleges to be used for the triangulation of the interviews. Interview guides were adopted as data-collection tools for both the focus group discussions and the individual interviews. The study made use of thematic and content analysis methods to analyse the data. During the study, ethical requirements were observed by applying for ethical clearance from UNISA, obtaining consent from participants, and safeguarding the rights and welfare of all participants.

In Chapter 5, data presentation, interpretation and discussion were covered under several themes in relationship with the objectives. The findings of the study were derived from the codes and categories which led to the emergence of the themes. Observation was adopted to triangulate the data from semi-structured interviews and focus group sessions. Some relevant verbatim responses from the participants were used to support the discussion of the findings. The discussion of the findings also made use of cross-referencing to the literature to make the findings more authentic.

This final chapter (6) provides the summary of the major findings from the literature review, the interviews and the observation. The implications of the study in the field of students' associations in Colleges of Education in Ghana are also captured in this final chapter. The chapter ends with the limitations of the study and makes a general conclusion, offering recommendations for the college administrators and further research.

6.3 SUMMARY OF APPLICABLE THEORIES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STUDY

The relevant theories adopted as the foundation of the study included stakeholder theory, transformative leadership theory, distributive leadership theory and the empowerment theory. Their various implications for the study have been summarised below:

The stakeholder theory suggests that there is a relationship between a business and the groups and individuals who have an interest in the performance of the business (Parmar et al., 2010). These are individuals or groups who can affect or are affected by the organisation's operations directly.

They have constant demands and determined engagement that can lead to improved returns. In this case, their consistent engagement means soliciting for opinions from different sets of individuals or groups of people in the solution of problems that may arise in the course of its operation. Since these key individuals operate with the business, there is a better chance to deal effectively with the problems when it arises from their domain. In the CoE in Ghana, one of the key stakeholders is the student body, represented by the SRC, whose actions and inactions affect the institution both directly and indirectly. Their position in the college is very vital as their presence keeps the colleges running. Every decision by any group or individual such as government, civil society, community, management and staff are centered on the institution and its students. Invariably, decisions made by the SRC on their welfare as well as academics represent the opinion of the whole student body, which must be considered as their action that can impede or develop the institution. Acknowledging the impacts, contributions and interests of the SRC to the administration, its engagement should not be taken for granted, for the peaceful operation of the Colleges of Education in Ghana.

Another important theory which was discussed and related to this study is the transformative leadership theory. This type of leadership approach causes change in individuals and social systems, creating valuable and positive change in the followers with the goal of developing them into leaders (Puni & Asamoah, 2018). The model relies on motivating the team to develop their self-confidence in realising the overall success in the organisation, thus, a transformational leader motivates followers to accomplish more than what is usually expected; this, consequently, makes the team more powerful than its individual parts. The four elements of this leadership style indicated by Bass (1985) are Individualised Consideration (when a leader is aware of the unique talents that each follower brings to the workplace and support them in developing and demonstrating these exclusive skills and behaviours); Inspirational Motivation (when a leader has high standards and expectation for his followers by articulating a remarkable vision that inspires and motivates them to perform beyond expectations); Idealised Influence (leader acts as role model for his followers because he exhibits high standards of ethical behaviour, compelling followers to emulate him) and Intellectual Stimulation (leader encourages followers to think independently so that followers become autonomous). The CoE in Ghana need the leaders who can identify the uniqueness of the SRC members' actions and inactions and how they affect the smooth operations of the institution and support them to develop and demonstrate these behaviours. The institutions

serve as a preparatory ground for some of the students with leadership ambition to exhibit all their inner qualities for future leadership roles in the country. Management's values, standards and expectations, which are communicated effectively are considered worthy of emulation by these student leaders, who as young adults at this stage of their lives can inculcate for their future endeavours. Finally, giving student leaders the opportunity to think independently, affords them the opportunity to act autonomously and prepare them for adulthood. It is believed that when the SRC is supported to excel in their leadership positions, they in turn can support other upcoming student leaders, thus, applying the same methodology accorded them during their learning process.

Distributed leadership theory was considered as relevant to this study as the practice of shared-leadership responsibilities. This leadership style builds the capacity for change and improvement. Management in Colleges of Education can instill this form of style in student leadership by creating conditions where expertise can be shared across, through interaction to improve individual and collective tasks. Management with this leadership skills are able to mobilise expertise at all levels including the SRC, through decision-making at the committee level to create more opportunities to improve conditions in the institutions. The Committee system with some representatives from the SRC, can ensure that members are involved in all decisions pertaining to the welfare of academics of students to generate solutions to problems.

The final theory used in the study was the empowerment theory. It is considered as the process by which people, organisations or groups who are powerless, become aware of the influences at work, develop the skills and capacity for gaining some reasonable control over their lives, exercise this control without infringing upon the rights of others and supporting the empowerment of others in their community (McWhirter, 1991). In sum, it is the adoption of intervention methods to guide people towards achieving a sense of control over their lives. In the CoE in Ghana, management can empower student leadership through the organisation of seminars and workshops to equip them with the prerequisite skills to handle leadership positions. Such programmes could foster unity among the student leadership and management, as well as instill trust leading to creativity.

6.4 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS FROM INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS, FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

After an extensive exploration into the relevance of the SRC to the administration of Colleges of Education in Ghana, and based on the objectives set, the study made findings which were

presented, analysed and discussed under five main themes. The major findings of the study are summarised in the following paragraphs:

6.4.1 Relevance of SRC

Under the relevance of the SRC in the Colleges of Education in Ghana, the study found various functions to confirm the value of the students' representative councils in the management of the institutions. The summary of the findings is indicated in the following paragraphs:

The SRC leads, organises and assembles the students' front in all the Colleges of Education under study. It is seen as a formidable strength in forging unity among the student body. The SRC is the mouthpiece of all the students in the college and as such, leads students to set achievable objectives to support the management of the college. The student body discusses their requests and grievances and mandates the SRC to present them to the college management or the Ministry of Education to be addressed. It is a pressure group in the college to ensure students' welfare.

The SRC's relevance can be felt as it organises social activities such as support for members in times of death, injuries or stand in for students who get into trouble with the college. Since education is not only classroom based, the SRC initiates and partners with the relevant college department to take students on excursions, fun trips and sporting outings for learning outside the campus. Within the campus, the SRC leads in the clean-up activities to make the physical environment beautiful. With over a thousand students in a college, it would be very difficult for the college management to attend to students' problems individually without the support and assistance of the SRC.

The student body, under the leadership of the SRC, is an agent of infrastructure and other services in the institutions. The SRC levies students to repair dilapidated buildings such as lecture halls, halls of residence, libraries, broken chairs and tables as well as damaged roads on the campuses. This is in line with the government policy of cost-sharing where students and the Ministry of Education together foot the bills of education cost.

The SRC plays a liaison role between students and the college administration. It serves as the channel of communication between the students and administration with or without technology. As the students' liaison, the SRC negotiates students' challenges with the college management and communicates feedback to the entire students. The college authorities also communicate to the

students on some important general issues via the SRC. The coordinating role enhance communication between students and the college management. By playing the coordinating role, conflicts among students and between management and students is minimised through proper understanding and compromises. Through the liaison role played by the SRC, individual and collective problems of students such as late payment of fees, allowances, delayed examination results and feeding issues are addressed amicably to reduce tensions which can lead to disruption of college academic programmes.

Managing an institution is coupled with taking numerous decisions which can make or mar its operations. The association serves on the decision-making body of the college, called, the college council. By representing the student body on the council, the SRC is involved in the decision-making of the college and are in a better position to communicate policies, rules and regulations to students at their meetings. The position of the SRC on the council offers the student body a voice on all decisions taken by the college.

6.4.2. Challenges of SRC

Mistrust is one of the major challenges facing the SRCs in the CoE. Many of the students perceive the student leaders as corrupt people who defraud them of their funds. They are accused of collaborating with the college finance office to embezzle the additional levies often called SRC fund. This is due to a lack of transparency on the part of the SRC; some members' lifestyles change on assuming the leadership of the students. The suspicion often leads to strained relationship with many students who fail to support the elected representatives.

Some of the SRC members sometimes overstep their mark because of ignorance emanating from lack of training on the roles as students' representatives. There may be instances where the SRC feels it is equal to the college management and may take decisions as if it manages the institution. As the elected representatives of the student body, the SRC should speak on behalf of the students but not in a disrespectful and confrontational manner. The college officials are appointed by the government through the College Council to manage the colleges and the SRC is elected not as an opposition but, to assist the management, for the smooth running of the institutions. Suspicion and mistrust by the SRC for the management, coupled with lack of knowledge of its role sometimes cause conflicts between the two stakeholders, that is, the SRC and college management. The issue of mistrust and suspicion among students are often mere speculations and might emanate from

poor communication and wrong interpretation of information that come from the college, council, Ghana Tertiary Education Commission or the Ministry of Education.

There is some perception among the SRC members that the college authorities do not recognise them and are treated the same way as ordinary students. As part of the distributed leadership, the SRC is a voluntary service to fellow students in the institution, its members should not see themselves as above their fellow students and therefore, if they bunk lectures, they should not be sanctioned by the lecturers. As representatives of the students, there could be some situations that could make their absence from lectures unavoidable, but lecturers should be informed for them to know what happened. Lack of adequate communication in all cases could be the cause of misunderstandings in the colleges.

Sometimes, too demeaning attitude from management could demoralise the SRC members. Some management team members have the tendency of reprimanding the SRC members in public, which makes them a laughing stock among their fellow students.

Inadequate support from management is also a challenge to the SRC. The members are not trained and often lack skills and knowledge regarding their responsibilities. A support from management in the form of workshops could equip them with the knowledge and skills to excel in their duties to the college and fellow students. Support and guidance from the management could also encourage the SRC to complete important projects in the colleges.

6.4.3. Challenges Management Encounter Working with the SRC

The perception that management levies students arbitrarily without adequate consultation, poses a challenge to the college administrators as students under the leadership of the SRC always use this as a reason for contestation. It is not always that students and their leaders may agree with management when it comes to the payment of additional levies, but where government subvention is not forth coming or inadequate due to economic crisis facing the country, the college management considers it necessary to levy students which in most cases lead to conflict between the SRC and the management. Lack of adequate consultation with students, especially on levies, has resulted in constant disagreement, preventing management from raising funds to support the activities of the institution. The SRC often encourages the students not to pay fees when the government delays in paying them their allowances. This flimsy excuse used by students creates financial challenges to the running of the institution when students refuse to understand the

realities on the ground. Even though the management might explain the situation to the students regarding the delay in government subvention and student allowances, the SRC sometimes refuses to accept such explanations and accuses the management of lack of communication. Decisions that do not favour the SRC could lead to conflicts with the management,

Lack of understanding of how the college is run emanates from a generation gap which is a challenge to the management. The SRC consists of young adults who do not have time to digest and engage with issues and often send wrong information to the student body. This could pose some challenges to the college management when dealing with partners who do not want to compromise on issues.

The misinterpretation of information is one of the major challenges being faced by management when dealing with the SRC. The SRC members often do not understand the wording of policies from either the government or the college management and communicate wrong information to students. This is because students often elect people who are popular with them because of their personal interests and not the clever ones who can engage with issues or policies and communicate adequately with them. The lack of adequate command over the official language leads to misinformation because the student leaders may not have the ability to read and explain issues well to their fellow students.

6.4.4. Influences of SRC Activities

The SRC renders immense contributions that influence the smooth operations in the CoE. It provides services to the college community, including the provision of janitorial services such as cleaning, scrubbing, washing, mopping, weeding and clearing. Since the colleges migrated to tertiary level, the student body under the leadership of the SRC hires workers to perform the janitorial activities under their supervision. The hired workers are paid from the student fund. To ensure that students do not frequent town to look for basic items such as sanitary pads, soap, air time, data, groceries and other necessities, the student body under the SRC leadership in some colleges operates a medium size supermarket on campus. The supermarket is patronised by the entire college community—students and staff alike. As one can observe, every college community member purchasing from the supermarket generates income internally for the benefit of all.

The positive influence of the SRC is also seen in the appeal for funds it makes to individuals, businesses, charitable foundations or government agencies, to raise funds in aid of programmes and projects including rehabilitation of old buildings and many more.

6.4.5. Improvement of Management's Relationship with SRC

As a human organisation, the SRC and the management sometimes come into some conflicts and ways must be found to create a healthy-working relationship between them. The study found that workshops and seminars organised by the college for the SRC executive could equip the leadership with the knowledge of their roles and responsibilities to adapt to their new positions. Knowledge and skills in management, negotiations, good communication, interpretation and understanding of policies could go a long way for the SRC to better appreciate how the systems in the college operate and improve the working relations between the SRC and the college authorities. The study found out that the training of the SRC members will enable them to understand policies and become aware of their role and limit of operation in the college which could minimise inefficiencies.

Where the college management is consulted for support in student-initiated projects, this should not be considered as interference by the SRC. Management, as the office with the national mandate to manage the college, is accountable to the government and the general public and may interfere with projects they have not been consulted or deemed as not urgent in the college programmes. Therefore, the training of the SRC members is a very significant step to create a cordial working relations with the college management.

Students Handbook and conduct rules of the college must be updated and distributed to students on admission for students to read and understand their rights, duties and responsibilities to the college, staff and fellow students. This can reduce friction which might occur as a result of misinformation from either the SRC or some external force. Soliciting for funds from external donors by the management for college projects seems inadequate and has now been shifted to the SRC. In the absence of sufficient funds for college projects, the student body under the leadership of the SRC, agrees with management for special levies, in addition to students' dues to provide urgent amenities. Such persistent levying of students overburdens them financially and might make students revolt against the SRC and the college management, as students may find it difficult to meet the financial demands.

6.5 CONCLUSION

This study, which explored the relevance of the SRC to the administration of CoE in Ghana, generated important findings based on the research questions and objectives. The study revealed the contributions of the SRC in supporting to manage the total affairs in the colleges. The importance of the SRC in the CoE in terms of liaising between the students and the management and provision of infrastructure for the institutions, has been made very clear by this study. The student leadership's intention is to operate as an autonomous entity within the college which contradicts with provisions in the College Statutes. This often leads to the SRCs accusation of being treated as children and the interference with their programmes by management. The findings from the study indicate inadequate information and effective training on the roles of the SRC, leading to the feeling of independence of the college management. The study submits that common grounds need to be found for the two key role players to work together for the achievement of a common goal.

The study concludes that the SRC and the college management cannot see themselves as opposition parties but should iron out their frictions and work in tandem to achieve success in their respective institutions. The mixed relationship between the SRC and college management can be harmonised through the mentoring of the former. Mengistu (2017) as cited by Enaifoghe and Dlamini (2022:209) avers, "when the right conditions are set for youths, such as creating favourable ground for them, they can invest their skills, efforts and knowledge in decision-making in the institution and invariably, reflect in the society". Consistently, most of the respondents asserted that the relationship has been mixed, thus, harmonious sometimes, but at other times acrimonious.

6.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This was a case study which focused on only four (4) out of the forty-six (46) Colleges of Education in the country. The findings from the study may therefore be limited to the few colleges studied and may not be an accurate representation of all the 46 Colleges of Education in Ghana. It is suggested that further studies should include a sizable number of Colleges to represent the entire population to unearth unique challenges which this study may not have addressed.

Another limitation was the researcher's reliance on self-reported data from students and management members. This might have caused some personal biases as a result of a tendency for

social desirability or interest from some participants. Going forward, responses from participants could be more structured to curtail these biases.

Again, out of the four council chairpersons selected to participate in the interviews, only two were available. Although all of them agreed to participate in the interviews, the two were not available for the interviews on three occasions. The reduction in the size of the planned interviewees affected the sample size and the amount of information the researcher obtained from field. Timely consultation and adoption of communicative devices could mitigate this limitation.

Finally, the study was not funded by any organisation, therefore, all expenses were borne by the researcher limiting her to only four Colleges in Ghana. To mitigate this limitation, sponsorship could be sorted from various stakeholders to increase the scope of the sample size.

6.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings the study made, the following recommendations for the college stakeholders-management, SRC, Ministry of Education and the general public:

- i. The administration should improve the level of involvement of SRC in the decision-making process and other college affairs.
- ii. There should be mutual respect between the college management and the SRC which is the elected representative of the student body.
- iii. The SRC should be effectively trained on their roles, duties and responsibilities in the college so that they do not compete or see itself as an opposition to the management which is the mandated authority of the institution.
- iv. The Ministry of Education should honour its subventions to students and the colleges. If there are anticipated delays, it should be communicated to the students and the institutions. Changes in policy should be articulated in advance.
- v. Improvement in the communication system between the SRC, student body and management must be given full attention. Regular reports on students must be given priority by the administration.
- vi. The administration should facilitate seminars and workshops to new student leaders, students and faculties to create awareness of their roles and responsibilities.

- vii. Management should educate the SRC on procedures to follow in forwarding their concerns. Internal structures of resolving challenges are more effective and must be exhausted before attempting the external remedies.
- viii. The colleges should put in place strategies for identifying factors which may precipitate unrest. Offices such as the Dean of Students Affairs could handle such responsibilities very seriously and be accountable for such.
- ix. Selection of student leaders should be based on merit and not on political, gender and religious affiliation.
- x. Suggestion boxes should be placed at vantage points to allow students to raise concerns and suggestions anonymously. A team of counsellors needs to be established to assess these concerns and act on them swiftly.

6.8 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

It is recommended that the following areas be further investigated:

- Financing the Colleges of Education in Ghana;
- Contributions of other associations or groups existing in the Colleges of Education in Ghana;
- Influences of informal leaders (colleagues who are well known for their intelligence, wisdom and interpersonal qualities) in tertiary education in Ghana;
- Investigation of the relevance of instituting of Education Management, Leadership and Moral Education as compulsory courses for all students in the Colleges of Education in Ghana.

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
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APPENDIX 1: ETHICS APPROVAL

UNISA 
university
of south africa

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2020/06/10

Dear Ms FA Nottinson

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2020/06/10 to 2025/06/10

Ref: **2020/06/10/66100682/08/AM**
Name: Ms FA Nottinson
Student No.: 66100682

Researcher(s): Name: Ms FA Nottinson
E-mail address: florencianottinson@gmail.com
Telephone: +233 024 485 9130

Supervisor(s): Name: Prof K. P. Quan-Baffour
E-mail address: quanbkp@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: 012 4842808

Title of research:

**The Relevance of Students' Representative Councils to the Administration of
Colleges of Education in Ghana**


Qualification: PhD Education Management

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2020/06/10 to 2025/06/10.

The low risk application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2020/06/10 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.
2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.

 Open Rubric

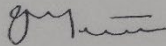
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3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
8. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2025/06/10**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.


Note:

The reference number **2020/06/10/66100682/08/AM** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,



Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za

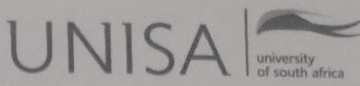


Prof PM Sebate
ACTING EXECUTIVE DEAN
Sebatpm@unisa.ac.za

Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017

University of South Africa
Pretter Street Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

APPENDIX 2: PROOF OF PAYMENT



2101

AIRMAIL
 NOTTINSON F A MISS
 C/O P O. BOX DK 951
 DARKUMAN-ACCRA
 ACCRA
 GHANA

STUDENT NUMBER : 66100682

ENQUIRIES TEL : 0861670411
 FAX : (012)429-4150
 eMAIL : mandd@unisa.ac.za

2023-03-15

Dear Student

I hereby confirm that you have been registered for the current academic year as follows:

Proposed Qualification: PHD (EDUCATION) (90019)

CODE	PAPER	S NAME OF STUDY UNIT	NQF crdts	LANG.	PROVISTONAL EXAMINATION	
					EXAM.DATE	CENTRE(PLACE)
Study units registered without formal exams:						
@ TFPEMB1		PhD - Education (Education Management)	**	E		
TFPEMB1		PhD - Education (Education Management)	**	E		
@ Exam transferred from previous academic year						

You are referred to the "MyRegistration" brochure regarding fees that are forfeited on cancellation of any study units.

Your attention is drawn to University rules and regulations (www.unisa.ac.za/register).

Please note the new requirements for reregistration and the number of credits per year which state that students registered for the first time from 2013, must complete 36 NQF credits in the first year of study, and thereafter must complete 48 NQF credits per year.

Students registered for the MBA, MBL and DBL degrees must visit the SBL's ESOOnline for study material and other important information.

Readmission rules for Honours: Note that in terms of the Unisa Admission Policy academic activity must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the University during each year of study. If you fail to meet this requirement in the first year of study, you will be admitted to another year of study. After a second year of not demonstrating academic activity to the satisfaction of the University, you will not be re-admitted, except with the express approval of the Executive Dean of the College in which you are registered. Note too, that this study programme must be completed within three years. Non-compliance will result in your academic exclusion, and you will therefore not be allowed to re-register for a qualification at the same level on the National Qualifications Framework in the same College for a period of five years after such exclusion, after which you will have to re-apply for admission to any such qualification.


Readmission rules for M&D: Note that in terms of the Unisa Admission Policy, a candidate must complete a Master's qualification within three years. Under exceptional circumstances and on recommendation of the Executive Dean, a candidate may be allowed an extra (fourth) year to complete the qualification. For a Doctoral degree, a candidate must complete the study programme within six years. Under exceptional circumstances, and on recommendation by the Executive Dean, a candidate may be allowed an extra (seventh) year to complete the qualification.

BALANCE ON STUDY ACCOUNT: 0.00

Yours faithfully,

Prof M S Mthata
 Registrar

0108 0 00 0



University of South Africa
 Pretoria Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Johannesburg

APPENDIX 3: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS IN THE COLLEGES



Department of Educational Leadership
UNISA
Pretoria, 0002
South Africa

30th September, 2021
The Principal
..... College of Education
.....

Dear Principal,

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS WITH MANAGEMENT AND SRC EXECUTIVES RESPECTIVELY IN YOUR INSTITUTION

I am a doctoral student from the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of South Africa, Pretoria. I am doing research on SRCs in the Colleges of Education in Ghana under the supervision of Prof Kofi Poku Quan-Baffour of UNISA. The title of my research: '*The Relevance of Students' Representative Councils (SRCs) to the Administration of Colleges of Education in Ghana*' aims to provide evidence for developing policies to improve the effectiveness of SRC in Colleges of Education in Ghana. I humbly request your permission to collect data in your College through individual and focus group interviews. I also request for the Management and the SRC to participate in the data collection.

The identity of participants and all information provided will remain anonymous, private and strictly confidential. There would be no disruption of the institutions' activities, as I will carry out the interviews in the evenings when academic activities are over. Participation in the study would be voluntary and participants' withdrawal from the study at any time is allowed without any negative consequence. The interviews would be audio recorded with participants' permission. In case there is a need for clarification, my supervisor can be reached through his email- quanbeninyenal@gmail.com.

Kindly find attached the participants required in the collection of data from your institution.

Hope my request would be considered and approved.

Thank you

Yours sincerely,



Florencia Adai Nottinson

College Management (Individual Interview)

Council Chairperson

Principal

Vice Principal

College Secretary

Finance Officer

Internal Auditor

College Librarian

Quality Assurance Officer

Heads of Department

Students' Affairs Officer

SRC Executives (Focus Group Interview)

President

Vice President

General Secretary

Assistant General Secretary

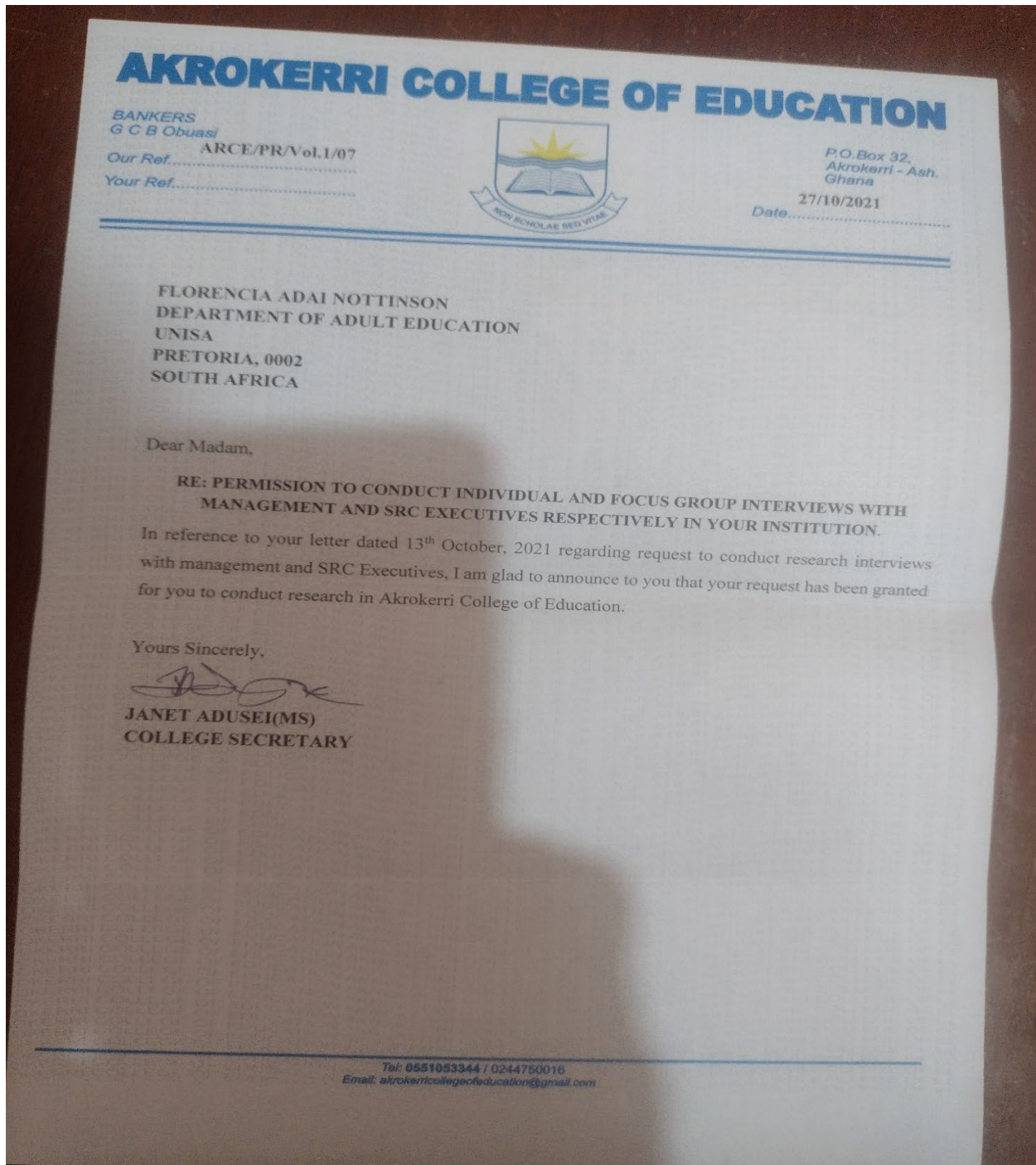
Finance Officer

Public Relations Officer

Treasurer

Organising Secretary

APPENDIX 4: DATA COLLECTION APPROVAL LETTERS FROM THE COLLEGES





Mampong Technical College Of Education

P.O. Box 31 Mampong - Ashanti Tel: 0501389354 Email: mttcemampong@gmail.com

Bankers:

Ghana Commercial Bank
GTEC/ASH/MTCE/RAP/002

Our Ref: Your Ref: Date: 5th NOV., 2021

FLORENCIA ADAI NOTTINSON
DEPARTMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION
UNISA
PRETORIA, 0002
SOUTH AFRICA


Dear Madam,

**RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS WITH
MANAGEMENT AND SRC EXECUTIVES RESPECTIVELY IN YOUR INSTITUTION**

I acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 13th October, 2021, in respect of the above mentioned subject.

In response to your letter I wish to inform you that College Management has granted your request to conduct a research in Mampong Technical College of Education.

Thank you.


COLLEGE SECRETARY
MAMPONG TECH. COLL. OF EDU.
MAMPONG - ASH.
SAMUEL OPOKU
(COLLEGE SECRETARY)



THE METHODIST CHURCH GHANA

**OFFINSO COLLEGE
OF EDUCATION**

Banker's: Ghana Commercial Bank (G.C.B) Offinso

Post Office Box 7,
Offinso-Ashanti
Ghana, W/A



Your Ref.

Our Ref.

62/mis/ofcc

Date

14 / 10 / 2021

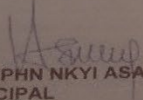
Floencia Adai-Rottinson
Department of Adult Education
UNISA
Pretoria, 0002
South Africa

Dear Madam,

**RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS
WITH MANAGEMENT AND SRC EXECUTIVES RESPECTIVELY IN YOUR
INSTITUTION**

In reference to your letter dated 30th September, 2021 regarding request to conduct interviews with management and SRC Executives, we are glad to inform you that your request has been granted for you to conduct research in the College.

Yours Sincerely,


JOSEPH N KYI ASAMOAH (VERY REV.)
PRINCIPAL

E-mail: offinso.college@yahoo.com

Tel: 0204577350

Scanned with CamScanner



St. Louis College of Education

P. O. Box 3041. Kumasi - Ghana Tel: 03220 28081 Fax: 03220 28185

Our Ref: GTEC/SLCE/GC/G-53/35

Date: 23rd December, 2021

Your Ref: _____

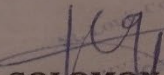
FLORENCIA ADAI -NOTTINSON
DEPARTMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION
UNISA
PRETORIA, 0002
SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Madam,

**RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS
GROUP INTERVIEWS WITH MANAGEMENT AND SRC
EXECUTIVES RESPECTIVELY IN YOUR INSTITUTION**

In reference to your letter dated 13th October, 2021 regarding request to conduct research interviews with Management and SRC Executives, we are glad to announce to you that your request has been granted for you to conduct research in St. Louis College of Education.

Yours Sincerely,


**SOLOMON SARFO
(VICE PRINCIPAL)**

APPENDIX 5: CONSENT FORMS FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW (MANAGEMENT)



CONSENT FROM MEMBERS OF MANAGEMENT PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY

I, wish to confirm that I have voluntarily agreed to participate in this study. The researcher has disclosed the following information to me: (a) her identity; (b) purpose of the study; (c) and data collection methods. The researcher has explained my rights to withdraw from the study at any time without negative consequences. She has also promised not to disclose my identity when reporting the research findings.

The researcher has my permission to audio-record the interview.

Participant signature-----

Date -----

APPENDIX 6: CONSENT FORMS FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (SRC)



CONSENT FROM SRC EXECUTIVES PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY

I, wish to confirm that I have voluntarily agreed to participate in this study. The researcher has disclosed the following information to me: (a) her identity; (b) purpose of the study; (c) and data collection methods. The researcher has explained my rights to withdraw from the study at any time without negative consequences. She has also promised not to disclose my identity when reporting the research findings.

The researcher has my permission to audio-record the interview.

Participant signature-----

Date -----

APPENDIX 7: INFORMATION SHEET FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW (MANAGEMENT MEMBERS)



INFORMATION SHEET FOR MANAGEMENT MEMBERS

TITLE: THE RELEVANCE OF STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCILS TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN GHANA

Introduction: Hello, my name is Florencia Adai Nottinson, a doctoral student from the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of South Africa, Pretoria. I am conducting research on the relevance of SRC to the administration of Colleges of Education in Ghana. My supervisor is Professor Kofi Poku Quan-Baffour from UNISA. I would appreciate it if you could participate in the study. All information gathered from this study is purposely for academic research.

Background and Purpose of research: SRC is a core component and an integral part in the colleges' administrative system in line with management decision-taking in Ghana. Students generally, seem to have restricted role in the institutional structure or governance of colleges in Africa (AAU Concept Paper, 2018: 1) and as such Ghana. They seem to have always been at the receiving end of vital decisions and directives which affects their educational and personal development. These decisions seem to be taken without their active participation thereby relegating their significance to the background. This research study intends to identify the relevance of their existence to the administration of the colleges in which they exist.

Nature of research: This is a single method study involving qualitative approach. I will utilise interview guide, and individual focus group discussion to collect the data. Interviews will be recorded and therefore, your consent will be sought to participate in the study and also to record the interviews.

Participants' involvement: Principal, Vice Principal, College Secretary, Finance Officer, Internal Auditor, College Librarian, Quality Assurance Officer, Heads of Department, Students' Affairs Officer.

Duration /what is involved: I would like to invite you for an interview on the relevance of SRC to the administration of your college. The interview will take between 40-60 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary. I am interested in your opinions and experiences on the subject- so there is no right or wrong answer. You may request for an elaboration of any question, refuse to answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering or you could withdraw from the interview at any point.

I am also asking for your permission to audiotape the interview because I cannot write as fast as you talk. This will enable me analyse the information you have provided accurately.

Potential Risks: There will be no risks or negative consequences for individuals who wish to participate in the interview

Benefits: There will be no direct benefits or compensation for anyone who completes the interviews. However, your participation will unearth your relevance to the administration of your college.

Costs: No cost will be incurred by participants. Transportation and any other cost incurred by participants who commute to the site will be paid for.

Compensation: There would be no compensation, however, participants will be provided with refreshment after the interviews and discussions.

Confidentiality: The interviews will be conducted at a private location chosen by the participant. No participant personal identifiers will be used in the interview. Recorded information from the tapes will be transcribed and transcripts will be given a code and participant name would not be mentioned.

Voluntary participation/withdrawal: Clarify that participation is voluntary and participants have the right to decline to participate and also withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without having to give any reasons.

Outcome and Feedback: Outcomes of the study will help to recognizing the significance of SRC to the administration of Colleges in Ghana.

Feedback to participant: Feedback of findings would be provided to participants who participate in the expert review.

Funding information: This research is self-funded.

Sharing of participants Information/Data: The recorded tapes and the completed rating tools would be kept under lock and key at the Department of Education, University of South Africa and can only be accessed by the research team for analysis purpose. The tapes and the completed rating tools would be destroyed two years after the publication of the findings or otherwise as prescribed by the Ethics Committee of the University of South Africa.

Provision of Information and Consent for participants: You will be provided with copies of the information sheet and consent forms after it has been signed or thumb printed.

If you have questions about the research, you may also contact me or my supervisor as follows:

Florencia Adai Nottinson
Department of Adult Education

University of South Africa
Tel: +233 244859130

florencianottinson@mail.com

Prof.K. P. Quan-Baffour
Department Of Adult Education

University of South Africa
Tel: 002 0823522703

quanbkp@unisa.ac.za/quanbeninyen1@gmail.com

APPENDIX 8: INFORMATION SHEET FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (SRC)



INFORMATION SHEET FOR SRC EXECUTIVES

TITLE: THE RELEVANCE OF STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCILS TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN GHANA

Introduction: Hello, my name is Florencia Adai Nottinson, a doctoral student from the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of South Africa, Pretoria. I am conducting research on the relevance of SRC to the administration of Colleges of Education in Ghana. My supervisor is Professor Kofi Poku Quan-Baffour from UNISA. I would appreciate it if you could participate in the study. All information gathered from this study is purposely for academic research.

Background and Purpose of research: SRC is a core component and an integral part in the colleges' administrative system in line with management decision-taking in Ghana. Students had generally, seem to have restricted role in the institutional structure or governance of colleges in Africa (AAU Concept Paper, 2018: 1) and as such Ghana. They seem to have always been at the receiving end of vital decisions and directives which affects their educational and personal development. These decisions seem to be taken without their active participation thereby relegating their significance to the background. This research study intends to identify the relevance of their existence to the administration of the colleges in which they exist.

Nature of research: This is a single method study involving qualitative approach. I will utilise interview guide, and focus group discussion to collect the data. Interviews will be recorded and therefore, your consent will be sought to participate in the study and also to record the interviews.

Participants involvement: SRC executives (President, Vice President, General Secretary, Assistant General, Secretary, Finance Officer, Public Relations Officer, Treasurer and Organising Secretary).

Duration /what is involved: I would like to invite you for an interview on the relevance of SRC to the administration of your college. The interview will take between 40-60 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary. I am interested in your opinions and experiences on the subject- so there is no right or wrong answer. You may request for an elaboration of any question, refuse to answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering or you could withdraw from the interview at any point.

I am also asking for your permission to audiotape the interview because I cannot write as fast as you talk. This will enable me analyse the information you have provided accurately.

Potential Risks: There will be no risks or negative consequences for individuals who wish to participate in the interview

Benefits: There will be no direct benefits or compensation for anyone who completes the interviews. However, your participation will unearth your relevance to the administration of your college.

Costs: No cost will be incurred by participants. Transportation and any other cost incurred by participants who commute to the site will be paid for.

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Confidentiality: The interviews will be conducted at a private location chosen by the participant. No participant personal identifiers will be used in the interview. Recorded information from the tapes will be transcribed and transcripts will be given a code and participant name would not be mentioned.

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Outcome and Feedback: Outcomes of the study will help to recognizing the significance of SRC to the administration of Colleges in Ghana.

Feedback to participant: Feedback of findings would be provided to participants who participate in the expert review.

Funding information: This research is self- funded.

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Provision of Information and Consent for participants: You will be provided with copies of the information sheet and consent forms after it has been signed or thumb printed.

If you have questions about the research, you may also contact me or my supervisor as follows:

Florencia Adai Nottinson
Department of Education
University of South Africa
Tel: +233 244859130

Prof.K. P. Quan-Baffour
Department Of Adult Education
University of South Africa
Tel: 002 0823522703

florencianottinson@mail.com

quanbkp@unisa.ac.za

**APPENDIX 9: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW
(MANAGEMENT MEMBERS)**



INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW (MEMBERS OF MANAGEMENT)

BIO DATA

Gender of interviewee.....

Position of the interviewee in the College.....

Name of Institution:

Date of interview.....

Telephone:

E-mail:.....

1. Relevance of SRCs to the improvement of Colleges of Education in Ghana.

- i. How important is SRC towards the improvement of your college?
- ii. What is the relevance of the SRC in the current dispensation in the management of college administration?

2. Challenges administrators encounter with SRC when managing the College.

- i. What setbacks do you encounter with SRC during implementation of government policies in the colleges?
- ii. What kind of relationship exist between the college administration and the SRC?
- iii. How often does management consult the SRC on matters related to government policies, increment in college fees, stipends, time table, residence, feeding, academic etc?
- iv. How are students' funds managed in the College?
- v. What agenda of the SRC might pose possible conflicts between students and college management?

3. Influences of SRCs activities in the college.

- i. What role does the SRC play to ensure that the college programmes run smoothly?
- ii. What are the SRC's major contributions to this college?

4. Improvement of relationship with management.

- i. What do you recommend will improve management and SRC relationship for the college goals to be achieved?

NB: Is there any other information you would like to add?

APPENDIX 10: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (SRC)



TITLE: THE RELEVANCE OF STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCILS TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN GHANA

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GROUP INTERVIEW (SRC)

BIO DATA

Gender of the interviewee.....

Age group: 20- 25 (), 26- 30 (), 31- 35 (), 36-40 (), 41-45 ()

Institution:

Current position:

Date of interview:.....

Telephone:

E-mail:.....

1. **Relevance of SRC to the improvement of Colleges of Education in Ghana.**
 - i. In your view what are the importance of SRC to this college?
 - ii. Can this college operate without the presence of SRC in this technological era?

2. **Challenges student leaders face when executing their leadership roles in the College.**
 - i. What setbacks do you face when working as a leader?
 - a. With the students body
 - b. With management
 - ii. What type of relationship exist between management and SRC?
 - iii. How often does management consult the SRC on issues affecting students e.g. courses, time table, feeding, stipends and residential accommodation?
 - iv. How is SRC funds managed?
 - v. To what extent would you say management offers you with the opportunities to perform your student leadership roles expected of you in the college?

3. Influences of SRCs activities in the college.

- i. What are the contributions of SRC in your college?
- ii. How do your activities influence your college as a whole?

4. Improvement of relationship with management.

- i. In your opinion, hoe will the relationship between SRC and management be improved in this college?

NB: Is there any other information you would like to add?

APPENDIX 11: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

	Items observed	College A	College B	College C	College D
1	Day-to-day activities (starting and knock off time, week days)				
2	Relevance of SRC Infrastructure (projects from the entrance with SRS inscribed in it, accommodation, classroom and furniture)				
3	Challenges of SRC (Characteristics of students (gestures, dress), non-verbal behaviour, participation in activity, demeanour of staff).				
4	Challenges of staff/ management (demeanor of management members, characteristics of staff, relationship with students, SRC cooperation with management).				
5	Props 1.Observe wall hangings and statues for information 2. Check on notice boards for information (How do students react after being communicated to? 3. Where do students receive clarifications?)				
6.	Influences of SRC 1. How is SRC contributing toward effective teaching and learning? 2.Cleanliness of college environment				
7.	Improvement of relationship				

APPENDIX 12: ORIGINALITY CHECK SOFTWARE REPORT

Turnitin Originality Report



- Processed on: 09-Nov-2023 02:35AM (UTC+0200)
- ID: 2222231110
- Word Count: 64,049
- Submitted: 1

THE RELEVANCE OF STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCILS TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN GHANA. By Florencia Nottinson

Similarity Index
21%

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Internet Sources:

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The screenshot displays the Turnitin Originality Report interface. The main document preview shows text from 'Chapter 5: Presentation of Results' and 'Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations'. The right-hand panel, titled 'All Sources', lists the following sources and their similarity percentages:

Source	Similarity
Submitted to Unicaf Un... (Student Papers - 2 papers)	<1%
Submitted to Queen's U... (Student Papers - 3 papers)	<1%
Submitted to HotChalk ... (Student Papers - 4 papers)	<1%
Submitted to Glasgow ... (Student Papers - 2 papers)	<1%
www.sciencegate.app (Internet Source - 3 urls)	<1%
www.imjst.org (Internet Source)	<1%
eprints.qut.edu.au (Internet Source)	<1%
Lizette de Jager, Rineel... (Publication)	<1%
Submitted to University	<1%

APPENDIX 13: LANGUAGE AND TECHNICAL EDITOR'S REPORT

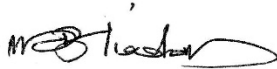
MAVIS'
EDITING &
PROOFREADING
SERVICES

Professional
EDITORS
30 Guild
1993-2023
Promoting excellence in editing

Mavis Boachie-Yiadom
Associate Member
Membership number: BOA001
Membership year: March 2023 to February 2024
082 787 5817
mavisyiadom@gmail.com
www.editors.org.za

To Whom It May Concern

This is to state that the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY in the subject EDUCATION MANAGEMENT titled *THE RELEVANCE OF STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCILS TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN GHANA* by FLORENCIA ADAI NOTTINSON has been proofread and edited by me, according to the tenets of academic discourse. The final responsibility for applying any proposed corrections lies with the student.



Mavis Boachie-Yiadom(Mrs)

27 September 2023