Non-formal education as a tool for social change in the Nadowli district of Ghana: options of an endogenous model

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Abstract
Non-formal education (NFE) became one of the strategic windows for developing human resources for social participation and better livelihood. However, after many years of implementation through varied NFE programmes, the challenges for which they were initiated have largely remained. The main question is: What has been the conceptual and programming disjuncture in the formulation of NFE as a community empowerment tool in Ghana? The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between the NFE philosophy and the worldview of Nadowli Dagaaba of Ghana. The study used qualitative design based on both secondary and primary data. The study revealed that, despite the high aspirations of NFE, it has been plagued by numerous challenges regarding its efficacy in bringing about social and cultural change. The values and principles of the NFE and the worldview of the people of Nadowli District have both consistencies and contradictions. The study concludes that the NFE process could be relevant if the training programmes were harmonious with the participants' everyday life that is, in accordance with their goals, culture and values. An endogenous social change model was, thus, recommended as suitable for NFE programmes in Ghana and, for that matter, Nadowli District.

Introduction
Non-Formal Education (NFE) is an organised systematic educational activity occurring outside the framework of the formal school system (Adams & Sydie, 2002). It is key to any nation's development and, especially so, for developing countries responding to the challenges of becoming modern societies (Kuenzi, 2006). NFE serves as an alternative and supplementary education provision for formal school drop-outs and adult illiterates, especially those living in rural areas (Preece, 2006; Spohr, 2002). Jung and Thorbecke (2003) affirmed that NFE has the ability of empowering the poor and needy in rural societies by enabling them to contribute meaningfully to their own development, their community and their nation as a whole. Over the years, formal educational systems alone appear unable to respond effectively to the challenges of modern society, hence the need for NFE which is flexible in providing swift responses to new and changing needs.

In Ghana, NFE has been the responsibility of the Non-Formal Education Division (NFED) of the Ministry of Education (MoE). Besides, there are many NGOs involved in various aspects of NFE in health, population and developmental issues.

Despite all these efforts of using NFE as a tool for social change, Africa in general and Ghana in particular are still dogged by illiteracy, migration, poverty, disease, rural-urban migration, among other critical problems. This situation raises questions regarding NFE's efficiency and effectiveness. It raises questions regarding its capacity to address the needs and aspirations of people and communities desiring such interventions. The purpose of the study on which this paper is based was to investigate the conceptual and programming disjuncture in the formulation of NFE as a community empowerment tool using the Nadowli Dagaaba of Ghana as a case study.

Theoretical Issues

Dewey (2012) asserts that, social change occurs when there are structural transformations of socio-economic, political, family, religious and educational institutions, hence leading to a more equitable and just society. The nexus between non-formal education (NFE) and social change is one which has attracted attention and interest of scholars. These scholars conceptualise non-formal education and social change from their own disciplinary frameworks and perspectives. Often they treat education as the axis of that change (Dewey, 1997; Freire, 1997; Antwi, 1992; Agyeman, 1986). The theories of social change (evolution, functionalism and conflict) talk about the progress of society based on natural order and linear growth. For them, social change is a linear process that starts from a simple, basic stage until it reaches a sophisticated, complex level (Durkheim, 1984; Marx, 1932; Parson, 1973; Dahrendorf, 1959; Merton, 1957; Tönnies, 1957). Critics of evolutionism argue that social progress is neither a linear nor continuous process. For example, Boas (1974) is unhappy with the social change theory, stating that there is no uniform way of developing, as originally presumed, because different societies have their own ways of developing and that the growth of societies can be retrogressive and/or progressive where the conditions are favourable.

The critical theory emerged in response to the global transformations associated with modernity. It is a social theory that is oriented towards critiquing and changing society as a whole as opposed to the traditional theory that is oriented only to understanding or explaining it. Examples include correcting problems associated with modernisation such as alienation, exploitation, anomie, marginality and other ills that have to do with the rise of capitalism (Turner &Turner 1990). Another line of argument of social change is the conscientisation model by Paulo Freire (1985). Freire (1985) contended that humans are the centre of any developmental process and, therefore, human resource development should be central in this process. For instance, NFEs should eradicate poverty and disease, promote a high level of literacy and foster political action among citizens and communities. Freire's ideas have greatly influenced the thinking and works of most Afrocentric theorists such as Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana; these Afrocentric theorists add

Africanism to their arguments of development. Ntseane (2007), for example, identified the key components of African indigenous knowledge to include participatory education, informal and practical instruction and holistic lifelong learning that tend to be communal in nature. In addition, spirituality, wisdom, dreams, proverbs, metaphors, stories and visions as ways of knowing are common in many African cultures. The African traditions or model discussed attest to the fact that for society to progress functional education is very important. To them, African learning should be based on African traditions which acknowledge communalism and, hence, they rejected Western individualism. However, there is another model that embraces both African way of knowing and Western Science known as endogenous model, this model is the basis of the paper. Below is its review.

Endogenous model as a way of development
Many literatures attest to the fact that the Endogenous Social Change Model strongly supports local knowledge, institutions, priorities, cultures, worldviews and technology of rural community, that is, change is based on the the beneficiaries' own criteria of development which take into account the available local materials, as well as the social, cultural and spiritual values of the local people (Shucksmith, 2000; Hayward, Simpson, & Wood, 2004; Hoppers, 2002; Lerro & Schiuma, 2011). As Miller (2004) has indicated, endogenous ways of development means development from within. Endogenous social change is a process of utilising resources and knowledge from both internal and external sources for the improvement of the well-being of people within a local community (Boonzaaijer & Apusigah, 2008). According to Boonzaaijer and Apusigah, the main difference between endogenous development and other participatory approaches is its emphasis on the spiritual dimensions of the development process in addition to the ecological and social aspects. To them endogenous development is mainly based on local strategies, values, institutions and resources. Therefore, priorities, needs and criteria for development may differ in each community and may not always be the same as those of the development worker. Endogenous development leads to increased bio- and cultural diversity, reduced environmental degradation, and a self-sustaining local and regional exchange (ibid.). As Millar (1999) suggested, worldviews analysis within the endogenous development framework requires that the three components— physical/material, social and spiritual—are in constant interaction. The perfect state is one where the three are in balance. Besides that perfect state, there are also various combinations such as social-physical/material meanings, spiritual-physical/material, spiritual-social, and many other combinations. Hagan (1993) commented that Nkrumah was optimistic that Euro-Christian and Islamic traditions and the traditional African collective worldview could be harmonised to fit into traditional African cultural values and African egalitarianism. This development is based mainly, but not exclusively, on locally-available resources, values and knowledge. Janus and Jerome (2006) remarked that actions for development should not always be dependent on interactions between the elites and the populace, but can also ascend endogenously from changes in the participants' local environments. Endogenous development,

therefore, includes intra- and inter-cultural dialogue and learning, which can be dubbed as indigenous learning versus formal learning.

From the discussion, endogenous development constitutes a process towards sustainable development which promotes participatory process involving many people such as the government, civil society organisations, religious groups and indigenous peoples. To enhance endogenous development, we need to find ways that allow traditional or local ways of learning to be strengthened and, where possible, to be complemented by outside practices and ways of learning. Based on this argument, the paper looks at the consistencies and contradictions of NFE and the worldview of the Nadowli Dagaaba of the Nadowli District of Ghana before recommending a forward for NFE and social change.

Methodology
The study was conducted in the Nadowli District of the Upper West Region of Ghana. The District had a population of 94,388 consisting of 44,724 males and 49,664 females (RCC, 2013). The economy of the district is dominated by subsistence agriculture and petty trade activities. About 70-85 percent of the active population is engaged in agriculture (RCC, 2013).

This ethnographic study employs a qualitative design approach. Because of the nature of the problem and questions, the study found qualitative methods to be the most appropriate tools for exploring into how the Nadowli-Dagaaba view of the world can be instrumental in shaping interventions aimed at empowering them for social change. In accomplishing the objectives of the study, I have tried to compare the worldviews of the Nadowli-Dagaaba with NFE interventions through the adoption of methods and strategies that could effectively describe and define their worldviews. Both primary and secondary data were collected. Purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample of 24 respondents comprising NFE learners (6), graduates (2) and other beneficiaries (2), NFED directors (3) and collaborators (4), facilitators (3), opinion leaders (chiefs, queen mothers) (4); documents and reports of NFED and other providers of NFE within the Nadowli District. The sample size was based on Baxter and Eyles' (1997) assertion that the adequate attainment of the standards of thematic saturation in qualitative research generally becomes repetitive. The choice of the respondents is also based on the fact that they have in-depth knowledge of the study. In-depth interviews were used to collect data from the respondents. The data gathered were analysed qualitatively, that is, emerging issues and trends were grouped into like and unlike themes and analysed manually using the step-to-step guide to qualitative data analysis manual by O'Connor and Gibson (2003).

Findings
Comparing Values and Principles of NFE with Nadowli Dagaaba Worldviews

Values and principles that are consistence with the world view of the Nadowli Dagaaba
Values and principles are cherished beliefs or ideals shared by a group or an organisation whereas worldviews are ways of understanding a group of people's behaviour, their way of thinking and how these influence their interactions and relationships. Similar to people's shared values and principles, worldviews influence and shape a community's very existence. A people's worldview shapes their cultural elements such as values, meanings and institutions. Values and principles, therefore, guide the group in administering their daily routines and goals. This studyhas concentrated on values and principles, with efforts made to understand how the values and principles of NFE align with those of the community using Nadowli as a case.

One major value and principle of NFE consistent with the worldviews of the Nadowli Dagaaba is their high sense of hospitality. Hospitality is an act of being friendly and generous when receiving visitors; it also refers to the tolerance of non-natives and/or entertainment of guests, visitors or strangers. This study found that the Nadowli Dagaaba were generally receptive to strangers or visitors. They readily interact with strangers and make gifts of land to them. The Nadowli Dagaaba express their friendliness in the manner they receive visitors to their community and household. They have symbolic ways of expressing welcomedemonstrated in the form of the presentation of mashed 'TZ' water to a visitor to show that he or she is welcome and safe. One of the elders had this to say:

Whenever there is food to be taken, everyone present is invited to participate even if the food was prepared for far less number of people without anticipating the arrival of visitors. It would be a height of incredible bad manners for one to eat anything however small, without sharing it with anyone else present, or at least expressing the intention to do so (interview, November 12, 2013).

This value is also deduced from some of the topics under good citizenship studied in the NFE programme in the Nadowli District such as 'ways to settle land disputes', 'avoiding ethnic conflicts' and 'how to avoid chieftaincy disputes.' Hence, such topics are easily accepted and practised because they are in line with their way of life.

Similarly, the value of respect for other people is also common to both NFE and the Nadowli Dagaaba. Respect means showing regard and appreciation for the worth of someone or something; it means honour and esteem. Such honour and esteem include respect for self and respect for the rights and dignity of all persons. The value of the NFE is to respect all learners including their opinions even when they were different from theirs. Similarly, the Nadowli Dagaaba culture teaches its young ones to also respect every human being, especially adults. The culture also teaches its youth to keep unkind thoughts to themselves, speak kindly to leaders and other people, play fairly and wait for their turn before speaking, for example, raise

their hands before talking. One chief said: "In our culture, the words 'soribu' (please) and 'barika' (thank you) are very common and symbolise respect" (interview, November 12, 2013).

In short, the culture teaches its members to have respect for themselves, the family, leaders and other people. The NFE also values respect and demonstrates respect in and during most of their programmes. In that culture, they make their learners understand that respect for community property, elders, rules, differences in opinions and their environment is paramount in life.

Another value and principle of the NFE consistent with the worldview of the Nadowli Dagaaba is a sense of community, or communalism, which refers to developing a sense of community life, a personal identification with and within a community. This value is manifested in how the Dagaaba educate their young ones to be one another's keeper. The Nadowli Dagaaba do place emphasis on community life and communalism as a living principle of which the basic ideology is community-identity. In this regard, their culture is aimed at producing and presenting an individual as a community-culture-bearer because, to them, culture is a community property and must, therefore, be community-protected. To them the community is the custodian of the individual; hence an individual must go where the community goes. In this culture, children are educated not only by their biological parents but also by all the adults within the household, the family, the clan and the community at large. The entire membership of the community as well as the environs of the community constitutes the education system. Therefore, the socialisation process starts from the family head to older siblings, elders and eventually the chief. Under the NFE, a similar value is deduced from some of the civic education topics that learners are taken through aimed to make them develop a spirit of patriotism. Thus, selflessness is a value inculcated in the learners with the view to preparing them to love their community and nation and work hard toward their development.

Another value or principle worthy of note is that of functionality. The generation and use of functional knowledge is cherished by both NFE in Nadowli District and among the Nadowli Dagaaba. This value and principle pre-inform both NFE practitioners and Nadowli Dagaaba knowledge givers to select education or socialisation processes that are based on the concrete and usable rather than on the abstract and theoretical. For the NFE programme to achieve this aim, intensive research on the immediate needs of the people is conducted to ensure that lessons offered are based on requisite knowledge needed for solving immediate problems. Topics such as safe drinking water, teenage pregnancy, compost manure, environmental hygiene, cloth weaving, and 'dawadawa' processing are driven by the principle of generating functional knowledge for alleviating poverty, promoting attitudinal change and solving sanitation problems. Similarly, the Nadowli Dagaaba's knowledge givers inculcate in their members knowledge on land taboos, marriage rules, preparation and use of herbal remedies, productive skills such as cloth and basket weaving for immediate and everyday use. This knowledge and skills acquisition is geared towards poverty alleviation and attitudinal change useful for their members' daily living. These values and principles are said to drive social

change in the District. However, social change does not depend only on values and principles but also on the processes and strategies and, for that matter, the methodologies the NFE deploy in the learning process. The next section discusses the consistencies of the instructional methodologies of the NFE and the Nadowli Dagaaba ways of knowing.

NFE Values and Principles Contradicting the Worldview of the Nadowli Dagaaba

The sense of sacredness of life is one cherished value of the people of Nadowli District. There is always a spiritual meaning for issues that can be proven scientifically. The high sense of spirituality enshrined in rituals regarding sacred places, divine beings and life after-death is not part of the curriculum of NFEs. Instead NFE emphasis is placed on the materiality of meaning based on mechanically-verifiable proof. One elder explained the importance of spirituality in their worldview thusly:

In our worldview, spirituality has always been attached to material and social issues. There is often a spiritual, social and physical aspect to an issue. The spiritual world cannot be separated from the human and material/physical world. For example, in food production the ancestors cannot be ignored and for that matter poor harvest is not because fertiliser has not applied but because libation was not poured to the gods of the land and the ancestors to get their permission and support (interview, November 13, 2013).

Among the Dagaaba of Nadowli, the learner ought to trust and believe in the wisdom of these knowledge holders, inspiration and revelation and practical experience as the test/proof of viability and/or truth instead of questioning and contesting everything based on logical or self-rationalisation of the issue at hand. For example, most norms are attached to taboos and reasons are not given and questions asked are not given straightforward answers. Also, a young person is not to challenge an elder on views but to accept them as they are. The impositions of ideas of elders of the Dagaaba on their young ones make the NFE facilitators find it difficult to seek views from their learners. Another dimension is that the Nadowli Dagaaba worldview did not give room to a younger person to express her/his view when an elderly person is talking or teaching. Their proverb '*Bibile kyelle, o ba yelle*' literally means as 'a child only listens and doesn't talk.' The English version is "children are to be seen and not heard." In that case, there is no dialogue as far as impacting knowledge from the adult to the youth under the Dagaaba worldview. Moreover,there is no room for a younger person to talk back when an adult is expressing his/her view as doing so would be construed as rude and a show of disrespect.

The tendency to use monologue is reflected in the NFE classes. The youth in the NFE classes tend to listen and expect older participants to talk rather than share their views on issues under discussions. The youth sometimes refuse to talk, especially when they are in class with adult learners. The Nadowli Dagaaba proverb just cited is meant to encourage listening, respect and discernment on the part of learners and not just young people. A learner must submit totally to and immerse

himself/herself in the learning process instead of being distracted by engaging in unproductive talk. After all, wisdom or knowledge is not just physical or social thing but also spiritual. To reach and access spirituality one needs to be submissive.

Again, gender differentiation and division of labour are cherished in the values of the Nadowli Dagaaba. Therefore, empowering women to be involved in public life by the NFE was another contradiction to their culture. To the Nadowli Dagaaba, women's jurisdiction is in the home and men should manage public life. Whereas the NFE would combine both male and female in their classes, the Nadowli Dagaaba in their learning processes group learners according to sexes. In Dagaaba culture, there is sex division of labour with men/boys and women/girls assigned gender constructed and differentiated roles and responsibilities. Although there are times when men and women work together especially on farms, even there men do the tree-cutting while women do the sowing.

There are also complementary socialisation processes that allow for men to be good husbands and women to be good wives. The training for men also facilitates their taking up public positions whereas women focus on domestic work, which is mostly unsalaried. Generally, this disadvantaged position puts them in a subordinate position in society. On the other hand, socialising both sexes reduces the subordination of the women. The contradictions are not only evident in the values and principles but also in the methodologies. These are discussed in the next section.

Building Synergies for an Endogenous Model for Social Change
Based on the discussions so far, it is apparent that both the consistencies and contradictions in value and principles between NFE and the Nadowli Dagaaba require collaborations between the two for effective social change to occur. In other words, the NFE practitioners should take advantage of the consistencies and strengthen their operations and at the same time be ready to accept some alterations in their values and principles to minimise inherent contradictions. In the same vein, the Nadowli Dagaaba (both learners and community leaders) should also strike a compromise and accept aspects of external agencies for them to benefit from their experiences and learn useful lessons for their own social change processes toward socio-economic progress. This could be done through the making of conscious efforts on the part of both the NFE practitioners and their clienteles (the community members of Nadowli District). The combination of the two could lead to better effects on social change processes. In fact, the effectiveness of the NFE programmes in the district does not rest on NFE practitioners alone but also on community members who are beneficiaries and other organisations working for social change in the area. For instance, globalisation poses challenges such as increased knowledge and technological developments which require continuous learning for one to adopt and adapt to inevitable changes. In addition, to alleviating poverty and reducing environmental damage, there is a need to educate people on new ways for coping with the new challenges posed by globalisation.

The NFE practitioners should also recognise that the importance of education lies in helping people to become aware of their role as individuals and their collective responsibilities as active members of their society, nation and global community. In this regard, both the educator and the learner should complement each other for better results to be attained. NFE practitioners should, therefore, identify the Nadowli Dagaaba learning processes so they can add to their own for the two to go hand-in-hand. For instance, the local people's worldviews, their local resources, knowledge, ways of knowing, concepts and practices should be learned and adopted. Equally, local people should also learn from external sources to improve their own ways of learning and knowing. This complementary two-way traffic approach should be done through the assessment of the external knowledge and information so that only the relevant parts would be adopted for the improvement of their existing knowledge. Under such a set-up, the endogenous social change model would come in handy and be applied.

Therefore, in the dialogue between NFE and their clienteles, there should be reciprocal behavioural expectations that are raised to normative statuses. This means that the contradictions between the NFE values and principles and Nadowli Dagaaba worldviews could be resolved through open talk and listening, listen and be listened to, and to adopt certain norms and behaviours; each trying to convince the other of the 'better argument (Gimmler, 2010). Convincing can occur when the counter-argument happens to be better than the original argument (Mitzen, 2005). For example, the Nadowli Dagaaba can convince NFE educators on the need to add rituals of praying to the ancestors and the earth god for good yields.

On the other hand, the NFE educators can also convince community members on the need to empower women for public life. For this communicative rationality to occur there is a need for participants to express freely their reasons towards the search of the 'better argument' and to engender change in the form of human emancipation (Habermas, 1999). Therefore, for a better social change there should be social equality, the absence of coercive force, prevalence of mutual search for understanding and the compelling power of the better argument. When these rules are followed both the contents and wisdom of the NFE and Nadowli Dagaaba would be taken into account so that the eventual consensus would be a blend of the two forms of knowledge referred to here as the endogenous social change model for the NFE.

On the whole, people have a way of preventing bad habits and behaviour; these are shrouded in taboos and proverbs. Therefore, the study of such cultural norms could lead to the realisation of the rich values to adapt to modern science. Using practical examples such as family planning in my research led to the realisation that local people have local knowledge of spacing their children (allowing the mother to breastfeed the baby till such time the parents wish to have another baby or allow the mother to go and stay with parents till the child is old enough for another baby). Thus, instead of abandoning the local knowledge completely there could be an improvement in the local knowledge for better results. Moreover, there is local technology for producing higher yield on crops such as corn. Indeed, local and

traditional community have used eco-friendly technologies such as manure, inter-cropping and mulching with similar effects. This should be improved upon instead of the use of only chemical fertiliser. This could solve the problem of the people who refuse to apply chemical fertilisers citing bad taste.

Conclusion

The use of an Endogenous Social Change Model as a way forward in the operations of NFE programmes in Nadowli District when taken seriously and integrated in policy documents can lead to the realisation of the desired social change. Endogenous development can serve a way of bridging the gap between indigenous identity and forms of learning, on the one hand, and conventional forms of learning, on the other. To do this we need to take local practices and potentials consciously as the starting point. The way local people learn, how they experiment and how they teach, should therefore constitute the key for providing development support. This process requires activities that strengthen learning within cultures (intra-cultural learning) as well as exchange and learning between cultures (inter-cultural learning). For example, the teaching of modern skills of farming, processing things such asShea-butter should take into account the people's knowledge systems about those skills, so that little by little, the two would be integrated together as an endogenous learning system. The NFEs can do this by studying the people's culture and then guiding them through education towards understanding that, solving the problems of the present time requires adapting their old traditional knowledge and behaviours to the methods of modern science.

In conclusion, therefore, the NFE programmes should help bring about social change by importing science and technology from external source and infusing it with cultural, traditional beliefs and customs of their working communities. Cultural innovations and enterprises that do not undermine the cultural principles of the people are encouraging, as it can enhance elements of traditional wisdom from the culture.

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