

# Delivering a Uk Program in Ghana: Opportunities, Challenges and Risk Mitigating Strategies

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## **Abstract**

Education is the basis for development and empowerment for every nation. It plays an essential role in understanding and participating in day to day activities of modern world. It builds one's character and is a significant role in transmitting one's culture, belief and values to individuals in other societies or nations. Education helps in creating innovations and meeting the growing needs of every nation. Thus, the development of a nation can be ascribed to its educational system: not through the buildings it has put up, the roads and, bridges it has constructed, but by the human resources it has developed through a well-defined educational system. In the absence of well-defined educational system, the nation can hardly develop and maintain its infrastructure and resources. Thus, the growth of any society is not possible without education. In this paper, we elaborate on how Ghana can strengthen its educational system and promote accelerated development, by encouraging Institutions to run or deliver UK or US programs in some selected Institutions in the country.

**Key Words:** Education, Ghana, Development, UK/US programs

## **I. Introduction**

The Greek philosopher Aristotle has said that "man is social animal by nature and by necessity. Therefore, if the aim of a man's life is good, then its pursuit and achievement involve, fulfillment of certain conditions": every individual must be conscious of his/her own good and develop his/her power of action to realize it. At the same time, he/she must be conscious of the

good of the others and help in creating those conditions which lead to the development of their power of action. Education has been defined as “a social process of development, consisting of the passage of human being from infancy, to Maturity, the process by which he/she adopts himself gradually in various ways to his/her physical and spiritual environment.”

Article 26 (2) of Universal Declaration of Human Rights has also stated the purpose of Education as – “Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious group, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace”. The declaration also says that “Everyone has the right to education: education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages and elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. This points to the fact that, education plays a critical role in deciding growth of nation: educated citizens of a country bring fame, wealth and prosperity to the country which help in development of the country. Education also helps in nation building: constructing a national identity and people who are educated are aware of what is right and what is wrong. Thus, educated people are united by the sense of thinking, by the sense of right and wrong. Nonetheless, there are many factors that may affect the educational system of any country and consequently affect its socio-economic development. Culture, technology, legal, political and economic issues greatly influence the educational system of a country. For instance, regulations made by government affects how the educational system works in a particular country. Thus, whether a society is formed through contract or communication, education plays a very significant role in the preservation and transmission of social values: the process through which they are transmitted is educational, and the process through which people are brought up and made conscious of their rights and duties are social. The educational system of one nation differs from another depending on its vision, which consequently has great impact on the development of that nation. For instance, the educational system of Ghana is different from that of the United Kingdom or United States of America and this is obvious in the development of these nations. Ghana’s vision on education is to accelerate economic and

social development thus, education geared towards the needs of Africa. The aspiration and goals however include: the use of education as a tool for producing scientifically literate population, for tackling mainly the environmental causes of low productivity and for producing knowledge to harness Ghana's economic potential. Comparing the UK or USA, their educational system and the rate of development to Ghana's for the past sixty-one years, it is obvious that the educational system of Ghana is not yielding the expected benefits. A lot of factors can be attributed to this. As the critical component to the development of any nation, there is the need to either amend Ghana's educational policies or completely change the educational system for the right benefits.

The contribution in this paper is to elaborate on how Ghana can either amend or improve on its educational system and promote accelerated development, by encouraging some selected Institutions to run UK or US programs in the country. This will help address unique problems of individual, and also the nation and provide access to program that are significant but expensive to pursue. The rest of this paper is organized as follows: section I is introduction, section II is on the opportunities of delivering a UK or US program in Ghana. In section III we look at the challenges of delivering a UK or US program in Ghana. Section IV is on risk mitigating strategy. Section V concludes the paper.

## **II. The Opportunities of Delivering a UK/US Program in Ghana**

Education in the UK or USA is known to be one of the best and of high reputation in the world. This can be ascribed to many factors: infrastructure and human resources, and also programs tailored to suit the individual in the country. As a result of this, students on completion of, for example tertiary institutions in the UK or US are assured and confident in securing a job without any hassle. This has led to brain drain: citizens of Ghana prefer to travel to the UK or USA to enroll in UK or USA Universities and where they are offered job opportunities upon successful completion of their Program. The situation can be reverse, if Ghana can amend its educational system and policies by including policies that allow some selected Institutions in Ghana to run or deliver some of the programs that are run in universities in the UK or USA.

This will help promote and accelerate growth and development of the country. The benefits will include:

***Prestige for students and high recognition for Institution***

A lot of students upon interaction would jump at the opportunity to further their education after Senior High either in the United Kingdom or the United States of America: this according to them, will offer them the opportunity to enroll on their program of interest and hence be assured of jobs upon successful completion. The problem however they narrated is finance, since education outside Ghana and for that matter in the UK or USA, is extremely expensive and the processes involved very tedious and frustrating especially, VISA acquisition, flight ticket, accommodation and living expenses. Most of them however would welcome the opportunity to enroll in Universities in the country that run UK or USA programs. This will enable them cut down on the expenses involved, if they were to travel outside to these countries. Secondly enrolling on UK or USA program is seen as a prestige as they would be offered the same opportunities if they were to travel outside to these countries. Thus, the same learning experience that they would have received when studying in the UK will be provided to them with the needed skills.

For instance, students will get the opportunity to travel for exchange programs and have the opportunity to work or do their internship with recognized Industries outside. On the other hand, the Institutions in Ghana that are delivering these programs will gain high recognition in the country as other African countries might take the advantage and relocate to Ghana, to enroll in these Institutions: thus, generating revenue for the country.

***Increase in the Intake of Students.***

According to a research conducted by the Migration Advisory Committee UK, more than 750,000 students travel to the UK each year to study, some for short English language courses, others for PhDs at the frontier of scientific research. This is attributed to UK's long-standing comparative advantage in providing education to international students based on the importance of English in the global economy and the high quality of the courses or program offered. This has great impact on the UK economy as these students have to pay huge amount of money for tuition and living expenses during the course of their study to read and a negative

impact on Ghana. This situation would be eliminated or minimized if there are recognized Institutions in Ghana to deliver UK programs or coursed with the needed skills and technical know-how. As students in the country and from neighboring African countries would take advantage and instead of paying huge sums of money, enroll into these institutions instead of travelling outside. This would increase revenue generation for the country, decrease brain drain, promote and also accelerate economic development.

#### ***Exposure of Students to Foreign Cultures through Exchange Program***

The delivery of UK program in Ghana by selected Institutions will also give students the opportunity to travel for collaborations and exchange programs. Students can learn and appreciate the culture of other countries and also collaborate on different programs for development of both countries. These exchanges or collaborations must be organized by these institutions as part of the tuition package for the students. Policies must however be put into place to ensure that students return to their respective countries upon completion of their program and also contribute to the development of the economy of their countries. This obviously will decrease brain drain and ensure the retention of highly skilled and competent human resource.

### **III. The Challenges of Delivering UK/US Program and How to Address them**

#### ***Increase in the cost of tuition: Teaching and Learning Facilities***

Delivering a UK program in Ghana will require Recruitment of highly qualified lecturers and competent staff, who can lecture and manage the Institution. It would also require infrastructure with the necessary facilities and tools to help deliver these programs appropriately. All of these involves money, and so the tuition fees for students is expected to be very expensive: as the cost of advertisement and infrastructure would be factored into the tuition fee of students. Additional cost for students would include accommodation and living expenses for foreign nationals. The Government of Ghana, in collaboration with the Ghana Education Service and the Department for Education UK, should see to the provision of adequate and necessary infrastructure, teaching and learning materials such as textbooks,

stationery, computers, televisions, tape recorders, overhead and LCD projectors. These facilities should not only be sufficient in number, but should also be of good quality. Also, the Government of Ghana in collaboration with the Immigration Services should also see to provision of safe Environment for foreigners who would enroll into these Institutions.

***Wrong program will ruin the reputation of the institution***

Education must be tailored to address the needs of a country. This will ensure that students upon the completion of their studies, would secure jobs for themselves. Therefore, to deliver a UK/ US program in Ghana requires the prospective countries to dialogue and understand the needs of each countries, and how to address these needs. This will help structure and deliver appropriate programs that address such needs and contribute to the socio-economic development of the country. Failure to do this, will lead to issues such as: institution offering programs that produce graduate with no jobs and hence increase the unemployment rate in the country or graduate who will travel and seek greener pasture outside their countries. Finally, this would ruin the reputation of such institutions.

***Inefficient Lecturers due to lack of Expertise***

Institutions to offer or deliver UK program need to recruit sufficient and competent lecturers who are qualified, not only to train students but to serve as mentors to students: this will ensure that students are taught the required courses and guided on the path that will assure them of a good career jobs, upon completion of program. It is therefore imperative and the responsibility of the Human Resource Department of these Institutions, to hire lecturers both internally and from outside qualified to work in these Institutions. These lecturers must be trained, and equipped with the necessary tools and materials to work successfully. For instance, capacity building workshops and conference must be organized for them on regular basis both in the country and UK as part of their job requirement. This will help them stay abreast with modern technologies and new concept of teaching and training students such as the use of modules and online teaching systems.

***Difficulty in Acquisition of Accreditation for Programs***

Institutions in Ghana specifically Tertiary Institutions are assessed by the Nation Accreditation Board (NAB). The mission of NAB is to provide the best basis for establishing, measuring and

improving standards in Tertiary Education in Ghana: to do this, it provides a systematic and rational basis for establishing, monitoring and improving standards in tertiary education through: developing benchmarks for accreditation and quality assurance, ensuring proper operations in tertiary institutions, to facilitate the development of accredited public and private tertiary institutions towards the attainment of Presidential Charter, and to determine the equivalences of both local and foreign tertiary and professional qualifications. To be able to offer UK or US program in Institutions in Ghana, one has to subject and submit the necessary documents to the NAB for assessment. The challenge is that, it often takes a long time to get approval from the board. This situation can be due to politics or corrupt practices by some workers hence the back and forth. Additionally, the delay may be due to inadequate documentation, infrastructure, tools, materials or programs not meeting the labor requirement of the country.

#### **IV. Risk Mitigation Strategy**

To help mitigate the risks that might be associated with delivering a UK/ US program in Ghana, Institutions need to undertake extensive and comprehensive research to primary identify the need of the country where these programs would be delivered. This will ensure that program is tailored to meet the need of the country, reduce the unemployment and help promote the socio-economic development of the country. Doing this is sure to bring significant and huge benefits to both countries.

#### **V. Conclusion**

Education has no end and the standard of life of people and development of a nation or country depends on the kind and of quality education it offers. The needs of a Ghana cannot be met with Ghana's resources alone, hence collaboration through educational programs is very essential.

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