

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

NATIONAL THEATRE OF GHANA IN PERSPECTIVE



**A Thesis in the Department of Music Education,
School of Creative Arts, submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Arts and Culture)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

DECEMBER, 2018

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Johnson Kwaku Edu, hereby declare that the thesis **with** the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE:.....

DATE:

SUPERVISORS' DECLARATION

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis/dissertation/project as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

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Date:.....

DEDICATION

To my dear wife, Akosua and my children, Senyo, Sena and Yayra



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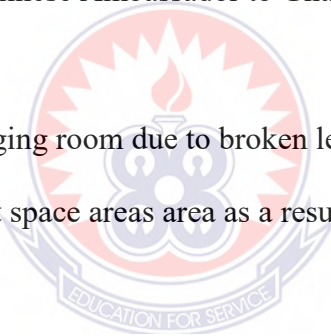


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OPERATIONAL AND CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS

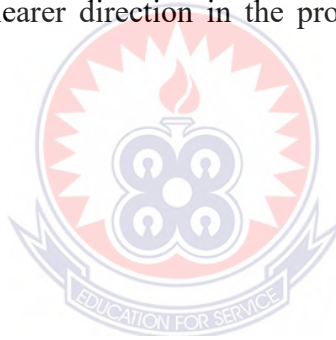
<i>Anansegoro</i>	Anansegoro is a unique genre created by Efua Sutherland based on the Akan oral traditions known as Anansesem. This is often narrated by a storyteller who is purported to own or tell the story.
Performance space	It is a designated space for the performance of a production.
<i>Kusum Agoromba</i>	An Akan drama group established by Efua Sutherland during the sixth era.
<i>Atwia</i>	An experimental community project led by Efua Sutherland. It was recognised as a pioneering model for the now popular theatre for development.
<i>Okyeame</i>	It is the title giving to a Ghanaian linguist.
Theatrical	This relates to the theatre or dramatic presentations.
Popular Theatre	This describes theatre which speaks to ordinary people in their own language or idiom, and deals with issues that are relevant to them.
Riksteatern	A theatre in Sweden funded by the Swedish Government.
<i>Abibigro</i>	Mohammed Ben Abdallah's concept of the authentic Ghanaian drama form. Loosely translated, meaning "African Theatre."
<i>Adinkra</i>	These are symbols that represent concepts or aphorisms. <i>Adinkra</i> symbols are used extensively in fabrics and pottery among the Ashantis.
<i>Sankofa</i>	A word in the Twi language of Ghana that translates to "Go back and get it."

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CISP	Cultural Initiated Support Programme
AESL	Architectural Engineering Services Limited
P.N.D.C.L.	Provisional National Defence Council Law
S.P.A.	School of Performing Arts
N.C.C.	National Commission on Culture
C.N.C.	Centre for National Culture
T.F.D.	Theatre for Development
T.V.3	Television 3
CPP	Convention People's Party
NTG	National Theatre of Ghana
GDE	Ghana Dance Ensemble
UDS	University of Development Studies
NAM	National Academy of Music
NAFTI	National Film and Television Institute
KNUST	Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
AGM	Annual General Meeting
GUT	Ghana Union of Theatre Societies
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding

ABSTRACT

After the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana, little was said of the Theatre and its contribution to culture and the performing arts in Ghana. Hence, the public gave different interpretations to the operational modes and representation of the edifice. This study therefore, identified the significance of the National Theatre of Ghana and its contribution to development. This study utilised the narrative inquiry design of qualitative research approach. For that matter, purposive and snowballing sampling techniques were employed to select respondents for the study. Semi-structured interview and participant observation were used for triangulation purposes to obtain information from respondents. The qualitative data gathered from the samples were analysed using thematic content analysis method and responses from respondents were categorized into themes. The research discovered that the National Theatre of Ghana has somehow contributed towards the development of arts and culture even though it revealed key challenges as funding and low level of staffing among others. Also, the findings revealed that the National Theatre of Ghana needs to be re-branded and positioned to ensure a more focused direction in the development and promotion of the performing arts in Ghana. The research recommends that further studies be done in the area of theatre management, marketing and promotion of the National Theatre of Ghana as an institution in order to achieve its mandates. This would provide necessary safeguards and ensure a clearer direction in the promotion of the performing arts in Ghana.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter describes the nature of the research problem and attempts to justify it. In doing so, it highlights the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations and organisation of the rest of the text.

1.1 Background to the Study

Specifically, in 1956 according to Agovi (1989, p.1) “the National Theatre Movement was initiated under the central direction of the Ghana Arts Council. Meanwhile, culture was regarded as an important factor in Africa’s liberation struggles.” Indeed, this drive was vehemently a revolt against colonial theatre practices. Culture, a strong unifying voice was a base for nationalism during the 1960(s) and as such promoted an undeniable belief in the need for the African to assert a distinct personality of his own. This experience was considered degrading in the eyes of the world.

However, the beginning stage of theatre in Ghana was based on the traditional indigenous dramatic practices which were later dominated by the colonial theatre practices. It focused on the Western British theatrical norms in the form of *Empire Day* celebrations featuring school children and workers. For that matter, Western theatrical systems promoted and showcased Western plays, such as *Macbeth* written by William Shakespeare, one of the early British playwrights born in 1564 in Stratford. He was also a businessman and a part owner of the Globe theatre in the United Kingdom.

The mentality of colonialism saw to the establishment of colonial theatres in Africa like the Accra Arts Centre in the then Gold Coast.

Agovi (1990) observes that Tololwa Marti Mullet's *Perspective of East Africa Colonial Theatres* indicates that, the young African's first intimation of theatre was at the mission school where simple Christian religious stories were dramatized and European folksongs and nursery rhymes recited in what were called, 'concerts' in secondary schools. Following the colonial system of education by then, plays were staged from set books for languages and literature studies, even though the African child knew nothing about Western Theatre. However, most African countries have since independence adopted a critical stand with regard to Western theatrical forms encouraging the study and popularisation of African plays.

The post-independence era in Ghana, however, saw Ghanaians striving to establish a new cultural identity greatly spearheaded by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah who became the Prime Minister of the Gold Coast-Ghana from 1957 to 1960 and as President of Ghana from 1960 to 1966 (Kwame Nkrumah Infobank, 2016). He was not only concerned about the political emancipation of Ghana and Africa but was equally apprehensive of the cultural emancipation of his people even in the use of the country's local fabric, *kente* and the smock at official functions which set the tone for other government officials as well. This idea was promoted to instil a sense of cultural pride in Ghanaians as indicated by the then Minister of Culture and Chieftaincy, as cited from the Cultural Initiative Support Programme (CISP, 2009). Nkrumah's significant contribution to culture was a global perspective to the liberation of the 'black' personality from entire slavery.

However, as the pace for cultural awareness began to take shape, the country's political and cultural leaders engaged themselves with the fundamental question of identity. Collins (2007) affirms Nkrumah's recognition of the importance of culture and a cultural voice in helping to define and investigate the new ideas of nationhood which he wanted to promote. Thus, the National Theatre Movement was subsequently constituted to help forge the new nation's cultural identity and create a theatrical form which was 'truly' Ghanaian; drawing on oral traditions of performance.

Botwe-Asamoah (2005) has it that African personality was a precursor to Nkrumah's philosophy of the reconstruction of Africa's identity and he also recognizes the consequences of colonial traditions destroying Africans as though they had no poetry and philosophy. In support, Legum (1962, p.21), argues "that the songs that live in our ears and are often on our lips are the songs which we heard sung by those who shouted while we groaned and lamented. They sang of their history, which was the history of our degradation." To our great misfortune according to Botwe-Asamoah, we learned their prejudices and their passion of our Africa people and thought we had their aspirations and their power. Further to his submission, he was of the strong view that if we are to make an independent nation a strong nation we must listen to the songs of our unsophisticated brethren as they sing of their history, as they tell of their traditions of the wonderful and mysterious events of their tribal national life.

In discourse, Legum (1962) recognizes the conflicting variances between the historical and cultural practices of the Europeans and those of African people. Also, it implied that the ambitions of African people were entirely conflicting to those who had once enslaved and colonized them. Besides, the inference was that it would be counterproductive to try to reinstate African personality in post-independence Africa, through the worldview of the African autocrats. Hence, the method of reestablishing the

African agency that emphasized Nkrumah's cultural belief was to be established in Africa's own creative culture.

According to Botwe-Asamoah (2005), Nkrumah's cultural policies aimed at probing into the African's personality through African drama, dance and music was resonated in "The Africa Genius during his inaugural speech at the opening of the Institute of African Studies. The core canons of Nkrumah's cultural thought provided the guiding principles towards the intellectual and artistic pursuits of the School of Music and Drama which became a framework policy for the establishment of Institute of African Studies" (Botwe-Asamoah, 2005, p.152). From the researcher's point of view, Nkrumah's promotion was to reaffirm his ideology and reinterpretation of a new assessment of Africa's past and the repeal of Eurocentric standards towards the study of African phenomena. In view of this, he "proposed the development of an African-centered paradigm in the intellectual and artistic pursuits of the Institute of African Studies and the School of Music and Drama" (Botwe-Asamoah, 2005, p.152). It however meant that the school's creative endeavors should be free from the propositions and presuppositions of the Western world, in the context of the National Theatre Movement. In this regard, he reports that Nkrumah urged the faculty to invalidate the distortions of those Eurocentric scholars who made European studies the basis of the new assessment. In addition, Nkrumah urged the Institute of African Studies and the school to fertilize the universities and the nation with their work. Their intellectual and creative work should seek to benefit the welfare of the people [Africans], in order to solve Africa's economic, cultural, technological and scientific problems. An important insight to Nkrumah's assertion was the fact that, he saw the School of Music and Drama linking the University of Ghana closely with the National Theatre Movement in Ghana. Per Botwe-Asamoah's promotion, Nkrumah was of the

view that the “school should develop new forms of dance, drama, music and creative writing out of the African traditions, which, at the same time, express the wishes and aspirations of the people” (p.152). Furtherance to Nkrumah’s thought again, the school must concern itself with diffusing their creative work in a more popular form among a wider public, and emphasize the importance of the study of achievements in classical Africa. Finally, Nkrumah called to attention the study of African arts in order to uncover the African traditional institutions and values that unite the people. Such a study, he pointed out, could illuminate Africa’s historical problems, as well as provide the data for the study of Africa’s ethical and philosophical ideas (Botwe-Asamoah, 2005).

Through Efua Sutherland’s pioneering research into Ghanaian oral traditions, she introduced onto the stage the unique dramatic form of *Anansegoro*, deriving its creative model from traditional storytelling drama. To provide an ideal rehearsal and performance space for the emerging National Theatre Movement, she mobilized funds and supervised the building of the Ghana Drama Studio which was featured at the present site of the National Theatre of Ghana, ensuring that its design was in harmony with performance demands of African theatre practice. Further to that, Efua Sutherland founded *Kusum Agoromba*, “a full drama company which was based at the Drama Studio and dedicated to performing quality plays in Akan in towns and villages all over the country, Ghana” (Anyidoho, 1997, p.19). This cultural activist provided creative leadership to the Workers’ Brigade Group and to Drama Studio Players in furtherance of the National Theatre Movement. As cultural consciousness gained grounds, emphasis was placed on other forms of cultural ideas with the introduction of authentic Ghanaian popular theatre which was a feature of colonialism. The unrest drive of the then cultural activists in Ghana brought into focus a clear sense of patriotism at its peak with the aim

of revitalizing and shaping the cultural mindset of Ghanaians. As far as the theatre movement was concerned, Efua Sutherland played a key pioneering role in Cultural Revolution and building models of cultural excellence and the training of young people who would carry the vision of authentic Ghanaian cultural forms into the far future.

In 1963 Efua Sutherland handed the drama studio to the University of Ghana to be used as “an extension division of the School of Music, Dance and Drama” (PANAFEST, 1997, p. 19). This was because she had become a Research Associate of the Institute of African Studies. Through the Drama Studio Programme and the Drama Research Unit of the institute, Efua Sutherland worked with Joe De-Graft and others to build the foundations of what was soon to become a model programme in drama and theatre studies and practice in Africa. Additionally, the *Atwia* Experimental Community Theatre Project led by Efua Sutherland was recognized worldwide as a pioneering model for the now Popular Theatre for Development. *The Village Story* was a major documentary film done in 1967 by the American television network ABC to record the success of this unique experimental project (PANAFEST Secretariat, 1997). A significant aspect of the development of culture which she also harnessed was the Children’s Drama Development Project. This multi-year project, focused on research into the cultural life of children in society, used the information gathered as a basis for writing, producing and publishing appropriate plays for children.

Consequently, the 25th anniversary programme of the establishment of the Drama Studio suffered a serious setback when the facility in Accra, Ghana was demolished to make way for the construction of the National Theatre of Ghana facility. Meanwhile, the Drama Studio which was originally sited at the current site of the National Theatre of Ghana had to be relocated to the present site at the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana, now renamed the Efua Sutherland Drama

Studio. Concurrently, as Efua Sutherland pursued the national cultural developmental agenda, considerations led to an unprecedented emphasis on the study of African oral traditions. The period was also marked by rapid institutional development in the implementation of nationwide cultural programmes.

In Ghana, a number of cultural institutions were grouped under the Arts Council. The activities and programmes were defined by a National Theatre Movement which sought to constrain the writer, playwright, the visual artists, the film maker and the television and radio producers to act together and view their achievements as a unified assertion of the African personality. This was possible because the new status of Ghana under Nkrumah decided that the assertion of selfhood, dignity and pride of place in international affairs and diplomacy was inseparable from cultural consideration (Agovi, 1989). In order to sustain and promote culture in diversity in Africa, Efua Sutherland in her final phase of work gave to Ghana and the African world, probably her grandest artistic vision for uplifting and reuniting African people through the arts, an original proposal for the Pan African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST), the Panafest movement. This gave a voice and focus to the unique African culture in diversity.

Efua Sutherland's reputation according to Anyidoho (1997), a biological sketch produced at the 3rd Pan-African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST) under the theme; "The re-emergence of African civilization." Uniting the African family for development, throws light on Sutherland's daring personality as the founder and mother figure behind the National Theatre Movement in Ghana and may best be measured by the many key institutions and programmes she was instrumental in bringing into being.

As a pioneering leader of the theatre movement in Ghana, she became the prime mover in the founding of the Ghana Society of Writer's (1957) a year later, and the Ghana Experimental Theatre Company was launched under her direction. Through dint of hard work, she helped and founded the *Okyeame* literary magazine in 1961. Sutherland was heavily supported by devoted cultural activists like, Joe De-Graft and J. H. Nketia among others who influenced, defined and promoted the Ghanaian cultural perception and distinctiveness as a way of galvanizing and revitalizing the unique aspirations of Ghanaians.

From a nationalistic perspective, the idea to build a national theatre edifice was realised in 1992 on the site of the Ghana Drama Studio, under the leadership of the third elected President Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings after ten years of military rule. Under the Presidency of Rawlings (1981 to 2001), he was able to secure a Chinese grant on one of his state visits to China. During the bilateral arrangements as indicated by the National Commission on Culture (1995), the project was financed by a loan facility and later on converted into a grant. However, it was politically shrewd as a public link between Ghana and China as pointed out by Collins (2007) in his document, *The Growth of National Form of Theatre in Ghana*. Besides, within the historical political perspective, the Provisional National Defense Council (P.N.D.C.) Government wanted to use theatre to endorse the ideals of the revolution, confirmed by Abdallah (June 7, 2017) in an interview. This meant that the idea was to create theatrical programmes, performances and contents to promote what the national revolution stood for. Basically, the revolution stood for accountability, integrity, hard work, and forthrightness, which sought to ask questions with the aim of moving forward and making Ghana a better place to live.

When the opportunity was given to President Jerry John Rawlings to choose between a theatre and a stadium by the Chinese Government, he settled on the theatre

facility as a better option as advised by the then P.N.D.C. Secretary for Culture and Education, Dr. Mohammed Ben Abdallah, who incidentally was a student of Efua Sutherland. Abdallah was very instrumental in the establishment of the National Theatre facility and happened to be at the apex capacity of the cultural ministry on the negotiating table with the Government of China for the construction of the National Theatre in 1985. On the basis of that, in 1990 a contract was signed between the Government of the People's Republic of China and Government of the Republic of Ghana for the construction of the facility to commence (National Commission on Culture, 1995). According to the Commission, apart from lending Ghana the money, the Chinese contributed construction workers for the building supervised by the Architectural Engineering Services Limited of Ghana, the Ghanaian agency responsible for the establishment of government building facilities. Later, China converted the loan facility into a gift to the arts, making the National Theatre, with its Chinese Pagodas, the iconic home for Ghanaian theatre. In 2005, China repeated the gesture by funding the refurbishment of the building, and again Ghana cleared the debt.

The National Theatre of Ghana facility is located near the junction of the Independence Avenue and Liberia Road which faces the Ghana National Children's Park now renamed, the Efua Sutherland Children's Park.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The National Theatre movement basically, was an upsurge to focus, define and give prominence to the Ghanaian culture as a result of Ghana colonial past. Additionally, the central positioning of indigenous art forms to contemporary traditions of theatre is of great importance to the African cultural heritage and development of the Ghanaian. In support of this idea, investigations on theatre movements throughout the

world have incredibly been researched into by lots of scholars to project and promote the need for cultural sustenance and development (Crow & Banfield, 1996; Agovi, 1990; Hagan, 1969). From the few scholarly presentations on theatre in Ghana, not much has been researched on the current National Theatre of Ghana facility after its establishment in 1992 by the Provisional National Defense Council Law 259 of 1991, since the National Theatre is the physical manifestation of the National Theatre Movement in Ghana.

There has been a growing public concern as to the significance of the National Theatre of Ghana as an entity in the development and promotion of the performing arts in Ghana with reference to its mandate as stipulated in the National Theatre Law, “to develop and promote the performing arts in Ghana.” Currently, as it stands it appear the National Theatre has not been able to reach out to the hinterlands. Meanwhile, this challenge has raised public upheaval and displeasure because it seems the National Theatre has focused its operations only in the capital [Accra], leaving out other parts of the country. During the inauguration of the National Theatre in 1992, President Jerry John Rawlings of the Republic of Ghana was of the view that the Theatre should not be the preserve of the elites and those who can afford. On the basis of this, the researcher deems it fit to investigate the operations of the National Theatre. Personal interaction with some Ghanaians who participated in programmes at the National Theatre evidently showed that they have mixed feelings with regard to the cultural representativeness of the building (A. K. Senyo, personal communication, May 17, 20 18). Some section of the public see the building as a Chinese representation due to its architectural form, while others could not really put a finger to it as a culturally influenced Ghanaian edifice. Even though there are yet others who say it looks like a ship, to clear such misgivings, it will be necessary to investigate its representation, especially through

seeking the expressed opinion from the architects and those responsible for the construction of the facility. Additionally, there are some pieces of documents which are not published to justify the theatre's representation. Hence, such documents will be brought together through document analysis to unravel the state of the building's representativeness. In order to find remedies to this national apprehension, it will be prudent to find out the extent to which the National Theatre of Ghana has achieved its core mandates.

Personal observation also indicated that with regard to refurbishment, ever since the inception of the National Theatre of Ghana in 1992, it has had just one (1) major maintenance in 2005 which technically appears not to be enough, taking cognisance of the fact that between the years 2005 and 2019, there has not been any other phase of maintenance. As it stands, the National Theatre of Ghana is the only standardised Theatre in Ghana, thus, there is significant pressure on the facility. For that matter, there is the need to evaluate the current state of the National Theatre of Ghana facility in order to ascertain its present state and life span. This untold story of the National Theatre of Ghana needs to be told and documented for posterity. Unravelling this story will be prudent to put into perspective the National Theatre of Ghana, to allay the fears of Ghanaians and to build confidence in them.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of conducting this research was to document the National Theatre of Ghana and how it has contributed to national development.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study sought to achieve the following:

1. To investigate the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana.
2. To find out the extent to which the National Theatre of Ghana has achieved its core mandates.
3. To investigate the symbolic representation of the National Theatre of Ghana facility.
4. To investigate the operations of the National Theatre of Ghana
5. To evaluate the physical state of the National Theatre of Ghana facility.

1.5 Research Questions

The study sought to find answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana?
2. To what extent has the National Theatre of Ghana achieved its core mandates?
3. What is the symbolic representation of the National Theatre of Ghana facility?
4. To what extent are the operations of the National Theatre of Ghana significant?
5. What is the current physical state of the National Theatre of Ghana facility?

1.6 Significance of the study

The study is important because it will enlighten the general public, lecturers, teachers, arts appreciators and indigenous art developers to gain insight into the historical facts behind the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana. Furthermore, it will educate stakeholders on the responsibility of the National Theatre of Ghana as a strong cultural institution that ensures the development of culture and the performing

arts. Through this education, the activities of the theatre could be brought into focus, preserved, promoted and transmitted to the next generation for enhancement and development. Additionally, historians, cultural officers, the performing arts educational institutions, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, the National Commission on Culture, development agencies and other institutions that are directly involved in the promotion and development of the performing arts will find it as a useful resource document.

Besides, it will serve as a reference material in the teaching and learning of the history of theatres in Ghana since it makes scholarly attempts at contributing to the documentation of Ghanaian culture. Invariably, it will contribute to increasing the knowledge base of academia. Apparently, there is little documentation on the National Theatre of Ghana as a performing arts institution and the study of this nature, hopefully, will become valuable resource materials, in this regard, a repository of cultural knowledge.

As the study seems to be the first of its kind the findings shall enable policy makers, stakeholders and other individuals to draw a mutual relationship between the performing arts and culture since the results of this study will deepen knowledge of the arts and culture. It will also enhance public understanding of theatre and culture, and in appreciating their relevance to national development.

Moreover, the research findings are beneficial to the National Theatre of Ghana and the Ministry of Tourism Culture and the Arts and the Regional Centres for National Culture in contributing significantly to the socio-cultural and socio-economic development of the country.

1.7 Delimitations of the Study

The study showed much interest in the National Theatre Movement, National Theatre of Ghana as an entity; the building facility, Resident Companies operating under the National Theatre of Ghana, architecture and facilities. The study also covered the period from 1981 to present, which were the establishing and the operational years.

Although the study was limited to the National Theatre of Ghana, references were made to other Regional Centres for National Culture (CNC) in the regions for balance, objectivity and clarity in the analysis. Additionally, it was also limited to the documents that covered the establishment of the theatre under the P.N.D.C. Law 259 of 1991 in pursuance of the Provisional National Defense Council Proclamation. It also reviewed other documents that related to those who worked to achieve the core mandate of the facility.

1.8 Organization of the Research Report

This report consists of five chapters. Chapter One is the introductory chapter, which gives a general overview of the background to the study. It highlights on the various areas of the development of the National Theatre in Ghana. It extrapolates the need and relevance of the present study. The chapter further indicates the statement of the problem, objectives, scope of the study, hypothesis and outlines the significance of the research. Chapter Two deals with the review of related literature that is relevant to the present study. The chapter attempts at reviewing such scholarly works on the theoretical perspectives on the African identity in general, the National Theatre Movement, National Theatre as an establishment, policies and related cultural institutions which shaped the study. This idea was aimed at gaining a better insight and understanding of the research objectives and research questions and situating them in

appropriate context in achieving the objectives. Chapter three, however, highlights on the research methodology employed in the study. In principle, it deals with the research design, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, data collection instrument, data collection procedures and data analysis plan. Chapter Four captures the presentation of the data which has been presented in a chronological form based on the research questions that necessitated the study. Chapter five is the findings and discussion of the result. Finally, chapter six presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the entire work.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Overview

This chapter connects the relevant literature concerning the entire study. It tackles the concepts and theoretical perspectives of some of the key works of the theatre movement. This has shaped the contextual and conceptual clarity of the research objectives and questions of this study.

Inquiries on African theatre forms all over the world have received great attention by most writers. It is well noting that previous studies have also been made extensively in the areas of theatre movements by quite a number of scholars. For instance, Agovi (1989) looks at the new directions in the Ghanaian theatre of the eighties, being emphatic on the thoughts that led to an unprecedented highlight on the study of African oral traditions. Crow and Banfield (1996) also wrote about the colonial rule and the impact of post-colonial theatre. In their assertion, they indicated that, “it is rather fashionable, in discussions of post-colonial literature and drama, to assert that colonial subjugation robbed indigenous writers of their own voice, reducing them to mimicry of silence” (p.6). Agovi (1990) espouses his ideas on the origin of literary theatre in colonial Ghana from 1920-1957, and underscored its developmental stages. He looks at indigenous drama to contemporary traditions of theatre. Hagan (1969) situates his thoughts on literary and social clubs in the past and expresses his views on its role in national awakening in Ghana. Inegbe (2013) delves into what people have been saying about the impact of Ghanaian drama spanning the period of 1957-2013. He traces the theatrical trend in Ghana and examines its socio-cultural impact as a key catalyst for social development. Agovi (1990) and Barber, Karin, Collins and Richard

(1997) agree to Ghana's distinctive drama forms such as literary theatre, popular theatre and theatre for development, dating back to about a century which tends to become characteristics of theatricalism in Africa.

In all, related literature reviewed helped the researcher in determining the relevance of the study as well as to put the work in perspective. Also, to ensure an in-depth understanding of the research problem, the study focused largely on the National Theatre of Ghana in perspective. However, the research revealed that there is limited literature on the National Theatre of Ghana as a facility and a subvented government organisation. In view of that, it is therefore imperative to review some scholarly works done in the area of Western national theatres in order to equip the researcher with the necessary resources to critically study the National Theatre of Ghana in perspective. This framework provides the foundation of the analysis for the empirical data in chapter five of the study.

Additionally, any anticipated research on the National Theatre of Ghana in perspective can only be better appreciated by comparing and contrasting collected data with existing literature. However, this chapter seeks to produce a study with relevant material that can aid further research. Scholastically, the review is led by some theoretical frameworks that inspired and underpinned the study which was subsequently organised under specific headings.

2.1 Theoretical Frameworks

The foundation of the study is based on four identified theoretical underpinnings: Post-Colonial Theory (Crow & Banfield, 1996), Theory of Nationalism (Kane, 2008), the Theory of Pan-Africanism (Martinson, 1997) and Globalisation (Dixon, 2009). Since

the development of theatre is based on a global phenomenon of standard practice alongside culture, the researcher believes that these theories provide the needed impetus for its application and promotion.

2.1.1 Post-colonial Theory

“Subaltern studies affirm that Post-colonial Theory is an attempt to allow the ‘people’ finally to speak within the jealous pages of elitist historiography and, in so doing, to speak for, or to sound the muted voices of the truly oppressed” (Gandhi, 1998, p.2). On the basis of this, Post-colonial Theory is employed to put the study into perspective in the area of theatre movement. The discourse looked at the breaking away from colonized theatre links to form a theatre that is authentically Ghanaian devoid of the vestiges of colonial theatre. According to Crow and Banfield (1996), this theatrical foundation has its basis in Hegel’s (2012) philosophy of self-consciousness and of human relationship. Per his assertion, self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself. In indication, “it is rather fashionable, in discussions of post-colonial literature and drama, to assert that colonial subjugation robbed indigenous writers of their own voice, reducing them to mimicry of silence” (p. 6). In Agovi’s (1990) comment on literary theatre in colonial Ghana around the late 1950(s), he looks at indigenous drama to contemporary traditions of theatre. Meanwhile, Hagan (1969) situates his thoughts on literary and social clubs in the past and expresses his views on its role in national awakening in Ghana. Hegel (2012) believes that in essence, the post-colonial theatrical conception that was envisaged is one that places Ghanaians and their culture to consider the Hegelian concept of self as an important significant determinate of identity. The theory underpinned the National Theatre of Ghana in perspective with retrospect projecting the activities and values of the National Theatre Movement. With the growing concern, during the post-colonial era the National Theatre Movement had the

foresight to refashion indigenous Ghanaian traditions to suit our modern theatre through creative experimentation. Thus, from all intents and purposes, traditional forms of drama should constitute the basis for a Ghanaian National Theatre (Morrisseau-Leroy, 1965).

For post-colonial playwrights, theatre has meant both traditional indigenous performances which has often had to be rediscovered and reinvented. Meanwhile, the theatre that the colonialist brought with them from the metropolitan power, usually in particularly improvised and amateur forms, was restricted to the urban areas. Hence, the former experienced an encounter with the real past and with real traditions which for many have to include.

Therefore, post-colonialist theorists Crow and Banfield (1996) promote and share corollaries with Agovi (1990) on the fact that culture was regarded as an important factor in Africa's liberation struggles. In the same breath, Agovi emphasized the importance of cultural nationalism as a strong catalyst of undisputed belief in the need for the African to assert a distinct personality of his own, in the wake of a colonial experience that dehumanised him in the eyes of the world.

On the other hand, central to Fanon's (1990) thinking, in this world of reciprocal recognitions', every individual requires the recognition of the other so as to win what Fanon calls 'the certainty of oneself. In reality, "we all in other words do recognise and experience our being through others" (p. 216). What happened between the Africans and the Europeans, was that because of its belief in its racial superiority, connected with the economic and military dominance of colonialism, the European race has disrupted the reciprocity of this fundamental process of recognition. The African person looks for the human recognition accorded him by the other; but when the other is European, that

acknowledgement is withheld, and the black personality is deprived of his 'certainty of himself'. So, the Africa appears to be abnormal and the 'white' becomes the victim of delusion.

In this process of mutual recognition and cultural relationship theatre is crucial in this case. According to Agovi (1990) a certain school of thought believes and recognises the fact that theatre originally began from Europe and does not have its foundations in Africa. Whereas the African also believes that theatre existed in Africa and was with us. Actually, per the nature of the Ghanaian economic, recreational and occupational activities and the 'life cycle' of the African coupled with our social set up, theatre happens to be part of the Ghanaian's daily life.

President Kwame Nkrumah's post-independence political policies were policy instruments that were used as means of attaining political independence and stability. Such policies according to Asamoah-Botwe (2005) are contingent on several factors. These include a clearly defined social philosophy and vision that accentuated the anti-colonial struggle, in the context of the material reality of the society, cultural and intellectual values acquired during colonialism, and the mental make-up of the people. Furthermore, institutional changes in civil and public service administration coupled with a peaceful environment that would harness cultural, social, economic and industrial transformation of the nation were an integral part of Nkrumah's post-independence policies.

2.1.2 Theory of Nationalism

According to Kane (2008), the theory concerns itself with the fundamental organising principle of the interstate order, as the ultimate source of political legitimacy, as a readily available cognitive and discursive frame as the taken for granted

context of everyday life. Apparently cultural leaders like Efua Sutherland and Joe De-Graft among others used theatre as a driving force to promote cultural consciousness (Kimble, 1963). Nationalistically, it was approached from the concept of nationalism, a strong platform to drive home aspirations, demands and perceptions. It was one of the tools that the earlier dramatist used to put forward our history, sense of belonging and who we are. Notably, others like Kobina Sekyi an African playwright and author of the book, *The Blinkards* has done an extensive work in the promotion of Ghanaian culture through his literary works. The awakening mindset and spirit of the colonized African was rejuvenated in the African personality to preserve, document, promote, and bridge the Africans unique aspirations for a more enhanced indigenous contemporary artistic culture with regard to the development of the African personality.

In reality the term nationality can be considered either a devotion to one's nation or a policy of national independence. Here, nationalism is preceded by the very existence of a "nation" but also by a sentiment or believe that produces devotion to the nation. Therefore, a nation that builds the ideology of nationalism is a gravity centre where a sort of national identity is founded. Nationalism has promoted culture in Ghana through political and sociological ideologies that galvanized Ghanaians as a nation with a common destiny which has enhanced cultural heritage.

2.1.3 Pan-Africanism

It is important to state that Pan-Africanism started as a protest movement and was dominated by African writers in the diaspora who included Ottobah Cugoanno from the Gold Coast. Martinson (1997) has it that as at that time, it was dominated by the works of scholars who were so deeply involved in theology or missionary work just as attention was given to literary theatre during the colonial era in the then Gold Coast.

It is pertinent to state that, Pan Africanism in the 19th century had radically metamorphosed from purely a protest situation to a substantial formation of movements and Associations. They were organised by black Americans and white abolitionists. Martinson (1997) scholarly puts his thoughts in an appreciable perspective from the era of “utopianism” or proto Pan-Africanism through Booker T. Washington and Frederick Douglass and Company (1787-1900), via the era of W.E.B Du Bois (Modern Pan-Africanism, or the epoch of intellectualism of Pan-Africanism (1900-1945); and the period Continental (African) Emancipation (1945-1963) of *Osagefo Kwame Nkrumah* and company, and finally closes up on the techno-scientific era of the twenty first century, or the period of “scientific Pan-Africanism.” Invariably, Martinson (1997) puts into perspective philosophical inquiry into the past, present and future of our Pan-African claims as a people. In the same spirit Dr. Kwame Nkrumah won the political independence for the Gold Coast (which he re-named Ghana) on the 6th March, 1957.

Again, the spirit of a Pan-African enthusiasm and commitment finds expression in the achievements of Nkrumah. On the eve of Ghana’s independence, declared as cited by Botwe-Asamoah (2005, p. 152) ... “The independence of Ghana is meaningless, unless it is linked [up] with the total liberation of the African continent...” Hitherto the above, in the spirit of African liberation, Nkrumah in 1958 according to Martinson (1997) brought George Padmore to Ghana to be his advisor on African affairs. With the help of George Padmore, in 1958, the meeting of seven (7) independent States in Africa by then, namely; Liberia, Ethiopia, Morocco, Libya, Tunisia, Sudan and Ghana was organised in Accra. Again, in the same year in December, 1958 Nkrumah organised the first ‘All Africa Peoples’ Conference in Accra. To Nkrumah and many others, this was regarded as the sixth Pan-Africa Congress.

It is necessary to emphasize that, the Accra Pan-African Conference of 1958 was the first and major important Assembly since it was represented by almost all Colonial African countries. For instance, Francophone black Africa was present. By 2nd October, 1958, Ahmed Sekou Toure of Guinea (Conakry) had fought and won independence from General de Gaulle of France. Equally present in the Accra conference were the Arabophone of North Africa, as well as “Lusophones African-Freedom Fighters...” Patrice Lumumba of the then ‘Belgian Congo’ and Nelson Mandela were equally present.

History indicates that this was the commencement of the ‘pre-history’ of Nkrumah’s hypothesis of a possible “Union Government for Africa...” as well as his zeal for the urgent need for the “African High Command vis-à-vis, Africa’s defence capabilities.

In a more focused direction, Nkrumah’s pan-African policy was to fulfil visions of the African leaders whereby Ghana’s independence was to serve as the catalyst for the African emancipation. African Nationalism here was pertinent to the liberation and development of the African countries and for the unification of Africa politically. In this endeavour, Martinson (1997) therapeutically establishes that the concept of twenty first century Pan-Africanism could be synthesized and historicised in the next millennium in view of realising or attaining a total universalism of the unity of the world.

2.1.4 Globalisation

Global village is a term devised by one Marshall McLuhan, a media and communication theorist in 1964 to describe the technological advancement as affirmed by Dixon (2009). In perspective the technological inventions have made it possible for people to listen and watch concomitantly within time and space. Activities could

happen thousands of miles away irrespective of one's location, yet it feels that the event is very close. Making the earth's physical geographical space and demarcation, no obstruction to human mobility, communication and transaction. The perspective in which the term *global village* was put, positions the whole world as a synergised entity where geography does not become a necessary blockade to human interaction and communication. Employing the term global which appears to be a root term for globalisation may appear to be related but different. Globalisation, on the other hand, is a commonly used term that is generally referred to as the process by which economies and societies become more closely integrated and concurrent with increasing worldwide globalisation (Irani, 2011). More so, it is used in discourses that centre on the whole universe as a body. Primarily, our focus of the study here is the contextualisation of the definition in relation to theatre practice.

For instance, the National Theatre of Ghana was giving birth to as a result of a bilateral agreement signed between the Ghana Government and the Chinese Government in 1981 during President Rawlings's visit, with the terms of reference being to establish either a theatre or a stadium in Ghana. It appears that the idea behind this gesture was to cement the friendship between Ghana and China by establishing in Ghana a Chinese monument representing the Chinese in Ghana as affirmed by a former director of the National Commission on Culture. Besides, globalization according to Irani (2011) is a process to closely integrate economies or a society together. Theatres are a rich cultural monument cited in most countries to represent their art and cultural forms as far as identity is concerned. Also, the system encourages cultural exchange among theatres and most cultural institution see this opportunity as a mobility collaboration among institutions.

In the hundred and fifty years stretching roughly between 1850 and 1990 the nature of theatre was transformed radically throughout the world as it changed from being a predominantly locally defined, practiced and experienced cultural form to one that had global reach. Basically, in the wake of colonialism, imperialism and modernization, processes that provided the political, economic and cultural foundations of contemporary global debates, Western concepts, practices and above all institutions of theatre were exported to most territories around the globe. Following the argument, Rebellato (2009) explores the inevitability of globalisation through examples like Sarah Kane's *Blasted*, in which the setting is placed in no particular locale though could be anywhere. In addition, he offers an overview of the themes of global economies explored on stage in works like Caryl Churchill's *Serious Money*, where he considered how economies are reflected as themes in performances. Also, Rebellato's book reflects on how theatre operates within and contributes to globalised economies. Following Rebellato's argument about the inevitability of globalisation, it is clear that cultural forms and influences extend to performance forms, as well as to the wider range of commodities available for purchase. Interculturalism has become a contested topic, in which performance makers make claims for the kind of cultural borrowing that results in hybrid and syncretic work on the world stage such as in Kwabena Sekyi's *The Blinkards* scenario. Sekyi exhibits the clash of cultures [both Ghanaian and Western]. A contemporary development that on the contrary does not identify cultural conflict as instanced in Kwabena Sekyi and Ama Atta Aidoo's *The Dilemma of a Ghost*, which defines a certain reality of cultural convergence in domestic theatre, even against the spirit of Sankofa and a strict Pan Africanism.

In recent times, intercultural performance has raised debates in theatre scholarships on cultural influences and impacts of creative work resulting from

collaborations. Two scholars explored how resources and spaces uphold hegemonic ideology in and through performances: Rebellato (2009) considers globalisation as a foundation to the twenty-first century milieu. Essentially, as the interaction and movement of human and non-human elements go on round the world, it breeds multiculturalism and universal culture which is referred to as global culture. For instance, theatre and entertainment are global cultures. From the economic point of view, Pieterse (2006, p. 658) defines globalisation as “economic internationalisation and the spread of capitalist market relations.” The growing of trade, of goods and service across borders, rapid development of new technologies and international capital flow, create a kind of interdependency of world economies (Shangquan, 2000). Economists refers to this as *economic globalisation*.

Today, theatre is a global artistic practice, a crucial cultural institution in many countries and a central part of transnational networks of artistic exchange. Despite its bewildering number of forms that include puppet theatre, stand-up comedy and performance art among others, audiences are connected across culturally by mutual recognition of commonality in what they do. Globalization is something we associate with; for instance, McDonalds, Gucci handbags and commercialisation. In short, it describes the homogenisation and not the diversity of culture. Globalisation has led to increased cooperation and communication between artists, audience and scholars. In areas as diverse as trade, media, legal procedures, industrial control, and perhaps even forms of thought, we are witnessing the emergence of international standards that enable us to coordinate our actions on a global scale (Grewal, 2008). Grewal claims that the standards that enable such global coordination display what he calls network power.

Tomlinson (2003) summarises some of critiques offered about the concept of globalisation. He writes, “Globalisation, so the story goes, has swept like a flood tide

through the world's diverse cultures, destroying stable localities, displacing peoples, bringing a market- driven, homogenisation of cultural experience, thus obliterating the difference between locality-defined cultures which had constituted our identities” (p.269). In brief, the term *globalisation* sounds simple yet elusive to define, and has had different opinions towards its definition (Reich, 1998). In some discourses, some scholars stand for globalisation while others go for anti-globalisation due to its varying concepts per the various definitions.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

Many are the nations that have created for themselves a national opera, national museums, a national orchestra or national theatres and enjoy all the privileges that implies [both legal and financial ones]. Somehow, the organizational set-up of a national theatre very often reflects not only the goals for which it was established but also the structures of the political system or of the country of which it is supposed to be the symbol (Van, 2015). On that note, national theatres form a formidable base for socio-cultural landscape and performative activities of countries. For as much as theatres also contribute enormously to other sectors of the economy in a country, there comes the need to discuss the values and contributions of the National Theatre of Ghana as a result of the operation of the mandate. (Figure 1) (overleaf) presents a framework of the economic, cultural and political benefits of the Ghana National Theatre as captured in the National Commission on Culture document (NCC, 1995). Per the illustration, the mandate appears to promote the socio-economic, cultural and political benefits of the Ghanaian economy and thereby producing subsidiary economic values as seen in (Figure 1). Meanwhile, these are reflected in the development of the nation.

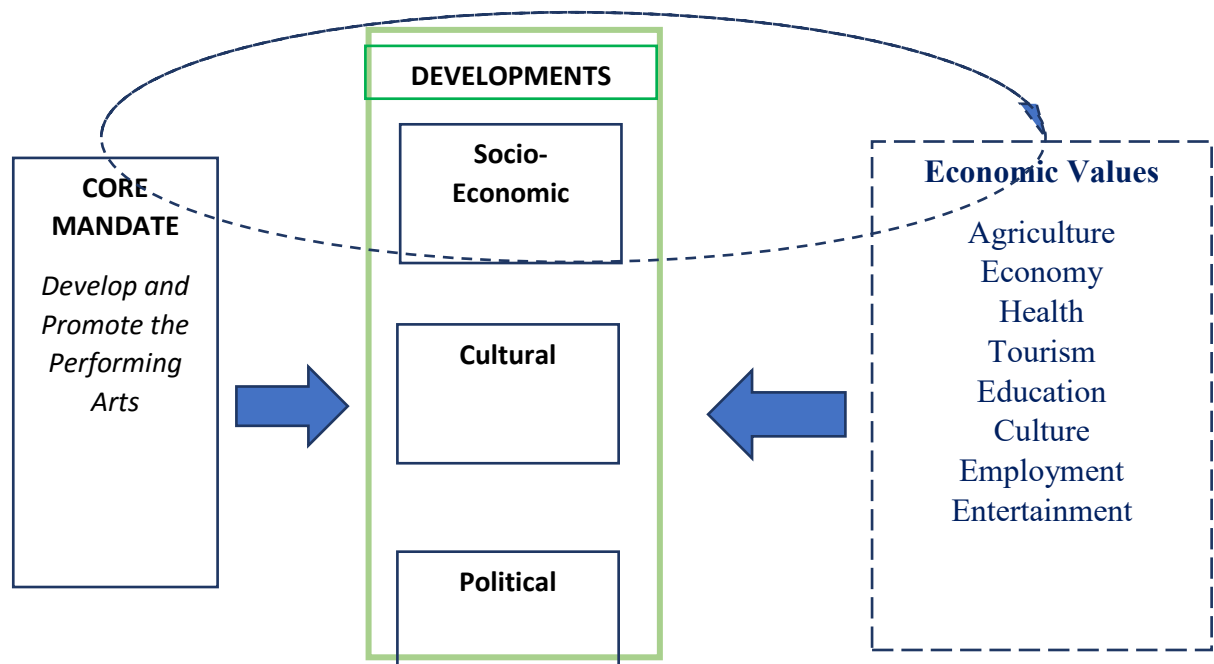


Figure 1: Core Mandates of the National Theatre of Ghana

Source: National Commission on Culture (1995).

In the economy among nations, the arts now play a central and increasing role in such areas as the media, tourism, entertainment, advertising and the recording industries. In this sector the arts make a vital contribution to poverty alleviation, job creation, informal sector commercial activities, the stimulation of trade and opening up investment opportunities. For that matter in social and economic development, the arts play an essential role, not only as one of the most effective components of participatory research and communication strategies, but also in ensuring that development efforts are appropriate and implemented with the full participation of the community. This is particularly true of development and communication strategies among rural communities. A report by UNESCO (2001), document premised on a Regional Conference on Art Education in Africa Port Elizabeth, South Africa, indicated that in the health sector, the arts play an important role in therapy, rehabilitation and healing. The researcher believes that the arts have a historical role in the struggle for social justice and human rights. In that perception, they are vital in the promotion of personal

and national identity. Therefore, in this time of globalisation the arts promote the recognition and value of different cultures and their diversity.

In view of this discourse, reference is made to agriculture, health, education, employment, entertainment, culture, tourism and economy. The idea is principled on the model of Theatre for Development (TFD), a tool for enhancing communication and influencing social change.

The connection between theatre and development are geared towards finding solutions to social problems in a bid to improve human life in a nation. In this regard, theatre as a developmental tool is seen as a medium through which development in the sense of transformation, growth and wellbeing of the society is enhanced. According to Olalekan (2010), theatre has proven to be very valuable in raising and fostering a civic minded populace which is necessary for development. The TFD model as stressed is supported through dances, songs, music, mime and dramatic enactment. On the basis of that theatre can be deployed to help people internalize core values and beliefs that are germane to development. The potential and ability of Theatre for Development model in promoting social development is its ability to capture the lives of the people and to allow for live or present communication by creating room for immediate dialogue and interaction among participants. Thus, as a theatre of social engagement, it focuses on generating impact and projects into a limit where minds meet and are stimulated to react towards a given situation to improve their lives and enables the audience to identify with the open reflection (Mbachaga, 2011).

In line with these thoughts, TFD uses performance as a participatory tool to help individuals and groups share their experiences with the intent of social transformation.

In this regard, the National Drama Company of the National Theatre of Ghana adopts the TFD model in most of its social interventional programmes, as a strategy of involving its audience in the discourse and finding remedies to social problems affecting a particular society.

For instance, in the case of agriculture, the Resident Drama Company of the National Theatre of Ghana have had quite a number of contract opportunities from the Ministry of Agriculture in the sensitization of the use of prescribed pesticides and weedicide products for farms as well as the education of quality maize products which is recommended for human consumption on the market and that of animal consumption in designated geographical areas in Ghana. In view of these arrangements, the company has over the years engaged some farmers in Ghana on new farming methods on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture to improve the agricultural sector. According to the current Artistic Director of the Resident Drama Company, they have had a long-standing working relationship with the Ministry of Agriculture and the collaboration has been beneficial to both institutions (M. Semevor, personal communication, May 17, 2018).

With regard to health, between the years of 2017 and 2019 the Drama Company again assisted the Ministry of Health in the campaign to use treated mosquito nets as one of the alternative measures of curbing the menace in the malaria related cases in certain parts of the urban and rural areas. According to the current Stage Manager of the Drama Company, the drama projects were held at some selected hospitals for reasons best known to them. On request for clarity, the Director of the Company indicated that the drama presentation could be re-enacted by such hospitals at any time by some selected committed members of staff who could stand as a public education team for sensitisation through theatre (J. Tetteh-Quartson, personal communication, May, 2018).

On that note, the hospitals visited were; the Children's Hospital in Accra, Ridge Hospital in Accra and Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital in Accra among others. Meanwhile, the health project embarked upon were maternal mortality related issues in certain parts of Accra.

With the case of the United States of America, art in health care was a field that emerged from grass roots beginning in the mid-twentieth century. Evans (2008, p.87) upholds that "the primary purpose of arts in healthcare is to use creative activities to lessen human suffering and to promote health, in the broadest sense of the word. According to him art, art making has been shown to promote competence and self-efficacy; reduces boredom, anxiety and depression and improves immune functioning; and promotes coherence between the individual and the world. Some of the programmes offered at some centres are visual art, poetry, dance and role play among others.

Projects on education in Ghana has been one of the flagship activities of the National Theatre through the National Drama Company. As part of its mandates, they are to develop, research and promote the performing arts in Ghana. In line with these core mandates, the drama company instituted educational programmes focused on first and second cycle schools. These educational programmes aimed at improving the reading and literature skills, and to offer both teachers and students a better insight into the subject area. The project is based on the dramatization of set books by the Drama Company recommended by Ghana Education Service. Basically, after each drama presentation, the programme is followed up by questions and answers in relation to the play to give a better understanding and interpretation of the story.

Similarly, per the Broadway League report 2015-2016 as indicated by Pesner (2016), partnership with the New York City Department of Education continues to introduce high school students from all five (5) boroughs to behind the scenes employment opportunities at Broadway through the High School Broadway Management Diversity Initiative. The researcher believes that this idea is remarkable whereby industry plays with the academia and builds a culture of young theatre patrons.

Correspondingly, the researcher indicates that some universities in Ghana have established a working relationship with the National Theatre of Ghana to take on students for internship during the long vacation. Feedback during the research indicate that students on attachment learn a lot during their internship period with the theatre and are able to build enormous confidence and acquisition of skills. Additionally, the programme also extends invitation to theatre arts students in some universities to tour its facilities to enhance their understanding of theatre.

In addition, drama in education is another drama technique to support learning in the classroom as stated by Philbin and Myer (1991). This informal and improvisational process ensure that participants are guided by a leader to imagine, enact and reflect upon human experiences through role play, improvisation, pantomime, movement and sound. Again, this form of Education incorporates theatrical component and dramatic exploration into educational setting to support a participant's natural tendency to learn through play, which becomes a hybrid between theatre and education.

With respect to employment, theatre happens to be the greatest employer within the performing arts industry providing jobs for over twenty (20) or more professionals. For example, currently the National Theatre of Ghana employs over one hundred and twenty (120) staff members comprising both permanent and part-time workers as stated

by the current human resource manageress (J. Engman, personal communication, July 12, 2018).

Entertainment has been a basic component of the three resident companies of under the National Theatre of Ghana; National Symphony Orchestra, National Dance Company and National Drama Company. In almost all performances rendered, entertainment has been an integral part of the presentation. In September, 2019 as it has been an annual tradition since 2009, the National Theatre of Ghana presents, *Ghana Theatre Festival* which featured both entertainment and educational segments. Besides, there have been command performances as well featuring elements of entertainments. However, most people think that performing arts is all about entertainment. Nevertheless, theatre seeks to entertain, educate and inform.

Theatre has been a unique platform in promoting cultural activities and this has been observed with the performative activities like rituals and festivals among others (Said, 1978). For instance, festivals have embodiments of theatrical elements like makeup, properties, sound and costumes among others. Nortey (2009) and Gbadegbe (2013) wrote that festivals are celebrated with the arts and these are seen clearly from the celebration to the end. Additionally, mention is made of the fact that the popularity of festivals are attributed somehow to the artistic elements involved. As a matter of fact, these artistic impressions are used to promote and give meaning to the festival concerned. A clear example is seen in the production of *Ghana's Most Beautiful* beauty pageant organised by TV3 network work in Accra. As part of the contribution by National Theatre of Ghana through the National Dance Company, the organisers of the beauty contest, TV3 annually contracts the dance company to assist with the preparation and teaching of traditional dances to the contestant to groom them for the show. Besides, the dance company also assists the participants with the choice of

costume and props for their individual presentations. The place of arts in the festivals are a necessity rather than a liability in all cultures; they form major parts and play significant roles in the celebrations. This underscores the saying that “art is life”.

In line with cultural promotion, Scollen (2008), Throsby and Withers (1979) contend that the performing arts such as plays, operas, music, dance, and musicals can promote the culture of a country, its historical legacy, the artistic talents of performers, and/or creative ideas. In such manner, the National Theatre of Ghana basically sets out to promote culture through the performing arts as enshrined in its mandates. This is achieved through the artistic presentations of the three (3) state resident companies. The promotion is seen in some of the choreographic projects rendered by the Drama and Dance company through outreach projects, command performances and state functions. It is worth noting that the various productions [KIDDAFEST, Concert Party show and Fun World] of the National Theatre at all levels make provision for the projection and promotion of culture as part of its content.

Similarly, Smith (1991) suggests that cultural representations that is performances, can strengthen the sense of place and cultural identify of a place. These correspond with the commentaries of other researchers who have indicated that performing arts function as a tool for destination marketing and assist in destination choice (Chacko & Schaffer, 1993).

Tourism and performing arts are social events people engage in after fulfilling their basic requirements in life. These events somehow use discretionary income after spending for the basic human needs. On the other hand, it appears tourism promotes the enjoyment people obtain by traveling to places away from home to encounter different cultural manifestations. Even though theatre and tourism can exist and function

separately, a close link in their activities could yield a fruitful result. Smith (2003) addresses that performing arts, in this case, the theatre is seen as the magnet for tourist destinations and tourism as a catalyst for broadening and diversifying arts markets. Simonoff and Ma (2003) share views on the fact that London's West End and Broadway theatres in New York with high patronages are seen with big tourist attractions.

As a matter of fact, per the Ghanaian policy, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts is mandated to have oversight responsibility over the National Theatre of Ghana and Tourism. Hence, it is by no surprise that tourism is a flagship programme of the National Theatre of Ghana operating through the three (3) resident companies engaged in both local and foreign tourism. Getz (1991), Chacko and Schaffer (1993) have it that performing arts are a primary attraction for any cultural tourists, especially in the urban areas. For that matter, the performing arts play a pivotal role in the traditional and contemporary life of a nation. Among its importance and benefits are transmission and preservation of cultural values.

According to the United Nations in 2017, a report was prepared under the multi-agency project "Strengthening the creative industry in five African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries through employment and trade expansion." The objective of the idea was to identify needs and priorities and recommend policies to foster employment, enhancing creative capacities, trade expansion and the linkages between culture and development. Among others was to make an analytical assessment and a policy review of the current status of the creative industries in Zambia, to identify key issues, and formulate policy proposals for a strategic plan of action. The researcher believes that the implementation of this programme would improve the policy, legal

and institutional frameworks of the sector and also to strengthen the creative arts industries.

2.3 Arts and National Identity

The identity of a nation is elicited from its arts and culture, a strong collection of traditional heritage that provides focus and identity. This viewpoint resonates in Abbey's (1997) words, "I see art as the backbone of the economy of every nation" (p.106). The account of Abbey is a clear indication that cultural practices with artistic impressions, especially the purposeful making of things, embody our values and are the basis of good mental health of the society. These practices help contribute to an individual and collective sense of identity and citizenship. So, it is imperative to know that undoubtedly, through the arts, people develop their identities.

In Abbey's (1997) proposition, he observes that identity is understood as an indication of timeless ontological qualities of either individuals or social groups, perhaps seen as a specific combination of personal inborn characteristics, in which case the artistic style represents the artist as an individual being. He further progresses his idea with regard to the artist being classified as a member of a particular social group, in which case the artistic style symbolises a shared group identity.

Geertz (1973) as cited by Yirenkyi and Amponsah (2014, p.2), defines culture as "a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about attitudes towards life." The assertion of Geertz explains the importance of culture in the life of a person. This standpoint was reiterated by Yirenkye and Amponsah who indicated that, "culture determines so many things, our outlook about life, our views about virtues and vices, how we see ourselves and how other people see us, and most importantly how we

develop our knowledge about life” (p.2). Therefore, our life largely depends on culture which is the way of life of a people with shared ideologies and beliefs. Enninful’s (2005, p.55) assessment also buttresses that “culture is itself education; and education is teaching someone certain things to bring the person to a development stage for him to be accepted in the society.” For instance, under colonial rule, the West used this ploy to rubbish the culture of others, which was achieved through western education and religious teaching. Gharbin (2013) discusses the impression that non-recognition of indigenous African performing arts and culture was very distinct during colonial rule. He was indicative of the fact that between 1920 and early independence in 1957, the colonial masters, developed a gradual but deliberate system to culturally colonise the then Gold Coast into believing that African culture was nothing to be proud of and that the European cultural activities and art forms were the standard for judging civilised people, and this idea was embraced by some indigenous people, especially, the few but loud mouthed educated and merchant class.

Agovi (1989) supports Gharbin’s (2013) view by indicating that Africans who contributed towards the colonialization process were endowed with wealth, learning and knowledge of the contemporary civilisation to provide the requisite leadership in this regard [promotion of civilised theatre]. The situation was so bad that it was wrong for anyone in the service of the church to play African musical instrument or wear African clothes. The study revealed that the late Ephraim Amu, for example, was replaced at the Presbyterian Training College, Akropong in Ghana because he wore African cloth when it was the turn for Amu to preach. The elders objected, seemingly on the ground that European ways were Christian and good, and everything African was heathen and evil. Gharbin stressed that “in Amu’s music he used the rhythm of Africa drums to promote the African art form. This was a scandal, for it was argued that drums

were used in heathen ceremonies and so were evil” (p.3). He also shared the disgust of the colonial masters by indicating that the road to the idea of cultural indoctrination changed, when by the mid-forties Ghanaian nationalism was on the ascendency and political matters had dominated all other discussions in the colony. In fact, it appeared that in the deeds of the colonizers, it was clear that the colonial masters were bent on making Ghanaians appendages of European practice and culture. Basically, the effect of European colonialism on Ghana’s art and culture was so strong that indigenous art forms were relegated to the background. On the basis of this, it was heathen for one to visit the shrine, dance to African music and even wear African clothes to church and in some cases to social functions. There was everything good about European music, dance and religion and everything bad about Gold Coast art forms and culture. In some other considerations, the colonisers did not even see the African enactment as an art form or expression.

During the inauguration of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana by Nkrumah 1967, Nkrumah’s speech as cited by Gharbin (2013) indicates that Institute of African Studies that is situated in Africa must pay particular attention to the art of Africa because the study of it can enhance our understanding of African Institutions and values, and the cultural bonds that unite us. This speech supports Gharbin’s claim that in studying the arts, one must not be content with the accumulation of knowledge about the arts. Instead, researchers must stimulate creative activity; they must contribute to the development of the arts in Ghana and in other parts of Africa. They must stimulate the birth of a specifically African literature, which explores African themes and the depth of the African soul, which will become an integral part of a general world literature.

Nkrumah’s statement per his vision for the performing arts and cultural activities as instanced above, promotes African art forms and its role for national

development and sustenance which then becomes a key building block for the promotion and preservation of the performing arts and culture. His speech was made during his ascendancy to the presidential seat in 1957 which focused on a more related cultural identity of a people, exhibiting a sense of cultural premium and urgency in order to enhance the African personality. Moreover, Nkrumah added that the Institute of African Studies should serve the needs of the people by helping to develop new forms of dance, music and creative writing, that are at the same time closely related to our Ghanaian traditions and express the ideas and aspirations of our people at this critical stage of our history.

Tyson (1999, p.3) is of the view that “human productions are not just literature but also a compilation of films, music, art, science, technology and architecture. These are as a result of human experience which expresses human desire, conflict and potentials.” National identity in terms of art fosters self-affirmative activity which helps us to interpret, think about, add to or challenge our cultural life. The account of Tyson, however, promotes the fact that these thoughts could be interpreted through productions in order to learn something relevant to ourselves as a species. In the same vein, Umenyilorah (2014) posits that, theatre as a cultural embodiment as far as identity is concerned is known to be a mouthpiece for socio-political realities of its time; a kind of platform where economic, social, political and religious issues are outlined, evaluated and judged. As a result, it brings about a better society through the theatre practitioners and in fact, all artists become precursors of social change in their respective capacities. Umenyilorah emphasizes the point that the whole idea keeps a watchful eye and an attentive ear on what happens in the society.

In the perspectives of Umenyilorah (2014) and Tyson (1999), the discourse highlights theatre as an art form that mirrors societal events or behaviour through its

medium of stage enactment of issues which could be real or imagined. Hence, the playwright uses the theatre to create consciousness in the minds of the audience to change the ills of society. Coleman (2001) carried out a research in portraying the captivating and enthusiastic characters of concert party genre, as well as showing clearly how this material could be used to rethink a number of contemporary theoretical themes and issues with regard to identity as a cultural ingredient for assertiveness. In her attempt, she took into consideration the unique perspective on the complex experience of British colonial domination, the post-colonial quest for national identity and the dynamic processes of cultural appropriateness and social change. This idea was also highlighted in the impersonation of male characters playing female roles as females also impersonated the males to dramatize the aspirations, experiences and frustration of the audiences.

With a critical observation, Osofisan (1994) also adopts several ways to instigate social behavioural change, including audience subversion and surreptitious insurrection. In his play, *Once Upon Four Robbers*, based on a real occurrence in Nigeria, Osofisan decides to create and project a social awareness of a critical social issue by writing about it. In his work, he promotes the fact that murdering the armed robbers by the government was not a remedy for a lasting solution to the increasing spate of robbery in the society. Osofisan in his view believes that theatre should be interactive, between the performer and the audience in a bid to highlight critical social issues. In his revelation, he allowed the audience at the end of his play to decide on the best solution to the problem at stake, instead of telling them what he believes they ought to do and the audience came out with the appropriate sanction.

Subsequently, under colonial rule during the 1950(s) in Gold Coast, literary theatre had gained a firm rooting with the support of the then colonial government that

took interest in its activities and the professional elites. However, Agovi (1990) shares his thought on the development of a national cultural policy document to develop theatre in Ghana as a result of the commencement of the National Theatre Movement in 1956. According to him, the policy “had the mandate to refashion indigenous Ghanaian traditions to suit our modern theatre through creative experimentation” (p.6).

Smith (2013) also deals with the foundation of nations, national sentiment, and nationalism. In *The Nation Made Real*, he focuses on the contributions of visual artists to the perception of a shared national identity and to the rise of nationalism in Western Europe as of the seventeenth century. He contends that through specific ideas formed into imageries of its people, artists help make the nation real, or tangible not only to the educated elites, but to a wider audience as well putting into perspective an ideology of a sort. The formed imagery according to Smith involved the recourse to a variety of motifs and systems which he categorizes as didactic, poetic or evocative and contemplative. His thought focuses on the broader picture of the representative nature of the imagery formed in the sub-consciousness of the African artist, culminating from his/her opinion, perception, inclination and idiosyncrasies.

According to the following writers (Smith, 2013; Osofisan, 1994; Agovi, 1990), creative expressions are a vehicle for cultural growth identity and a source of inspiration to recuperate traditional values and heritage. These ideas form identity images in the subconsciousness of the African personality resulting in a focused indigenous cultural perspective.

Despite the challenges and the broader cultural impact of the historical disturbance of African cultures, dramatists in Africa as well as artists in general enjoy at least one advantage over their black counterparts in America, the West Indies or

Australia. Even though there was a deliberate attempt to disrupt the cultural identity of Africans, the fact still remains that colonialist interference which varied in scope and effects over the continent mainly failed, even where it attempted to destroy the traditional arts of the colonized. Indigenous performance traditions over most of the continent have remained intact and often flourished at the popular community level such as in the celebration of season rituals, festivals, folk theatre and travelling theatre as that of Hubert Ogunde and Baba Sala or the *Ghanaian Concert Party* (Ashcroft, Bill, Griffith & Tiffin, 1989). Among these are Efua Sutherland's *Marriage of Anansewa*, Joe-De Graft's *Sons and Daughters*, Femi Osofisan's *Nkrumah Ni Africa Ni*, and J. P. Clark's *Ozidi*. Fanon (1990) recognizes that colonized or subjugated cultures elsewhere with dramatists, have also been concerned to recuperate and reinterpret their own histories, with varying ideological effect and in differing formal styles.

In the play, Adegbite (2005) describes the features of pragmatic tactics in the play and how they account for the source of conflict. Nasiru (1979) comments on the importance of music, song and chant in Ola Rotimi's play, and particularly the reliance of Ovonramwen's example on an approach to drama which places greater emphasis on performance than on reading the play as literature. Crow and Banfield (1996) and Throsby (2010, p.41) point out that, "...for the post-colonial playwright, theatre has meant both traditional indigenous performance which has often had to be rediscovered and reinvented." Most significantly, it appears that this form of artistic expression has been an integral part of the African social set-up and cultural education.

The historical past seems to unearth and create discourse about self-identity, who we are and what we stand for (Kidd & Teagle, 2012). The quest for identity usually stems from the fact that, there is a crisis of self-identity and as a matter of fact, in Africa the crisis has been the after-effect of our previous domination of colonial rule

which was a catalyst that subjugated our people both culturally, economically and politically. Undisputedly, independence however brought us some gains “but still our achievements in the decolonization of various aspects leave much to be desired. In that regard, we need to examine or re-examine those aspects to find out which bespeak undue influences of the colonial past” (Lauer, Amfo & Anderson, 2011, p.1). Nii-Yartey’s account indicates that to assess the impact of colonization we cannot jettison everything of colonial origin because some of the occurrences happen to be good. For that matter, post-independence decolonisation must involve pooling together resources of abstract reflection and creative imagination which calls for a study of the human culture from cognitive, normative and aesthetic standpoint. Saah and Baku (2011) are of the view that “as a first step, there was the desire to assert and affirm the dignity and worth of the African and things of Africa” (p. 74).

On the contrary, Fischer-Lichte’s (2002, p.1) espouses that “in a letter to Monsieur d’Alembert’s (1758), Rousseau rubbished d’Alembert’s suggestion (in ‘Geneva’, The Encyclopaedia, vol.7) that Geneva required a theatre in order to keep up with other European cities.” Rousseau’s main argument was that the theatre would threaten the identity of the inhabitants of Geneva, perhaps even destroy it together. His protests concerned both the structure and the content of theatre. Geneva strictly separated *circles* of men and women to gather together in public. Meanwhile, theatre basically is a social event that brings both men and women together for the sake of entertainment, information and education. This idea was meant to attack the traditional form of communal life in Geneva. Moreover, it would also contravene *natural* female modesty which forbids females from showing themselves in public. Rousseau further indicated that;

men identity is endangered by theatre. Because the main interest ...is love, it threatens to weaken the male and make him effeminate: The constant outbursts of different emotions to which we are subjected in the theatre disturb and weaken us, making us even less able to control our own passions (p.1)

According to Wright (1984), Africans are concerned, with the reality of the communal world which takes precedence over the reality of individual life histories. This primacy is meant to apply not only ontologically, but also as regards epistemic accessibility. In pursuit of that, national identity is a collective phenomenon that affects the whole. In the same vein, Burton (2015) affirms that cultural identity broadly refers to the shared beliefs and behaviours of a group, which forms the basis for creating meaning for the persons who count themselves to be a part of the culture. From the discussions, it is evident that cultural identity encourages a unique sense of oneness in traditional beliefs, norms and systems thereby enhancing the cultural pursuits of a given society.

For instance, the historical threads of twentieth century European nations and the significance of the modern nationalism's evolution in the late nineteenth century seem increasingly clear. In that, it was then that many European countries, most forcefully announced their national identities, operating in the charged political atmosphere between the dissolution of Empires and the realignment of traditional alliances leading to World War 1. As a result, bureaucrats, intellectuals, and artists strove to define unique cultural identities embodying what they believed to be the most essential and distinguishing characteristics of their nations (Facos & Hirsh, 2004).

Boampong (2011) holds the view that, national identity is founded on a given pre-existing foundations taken from traditional cultural practices to the exclusion of other influences which form part of the cultural heritage. In her account, she identifies

the need to sift from the whole important elements that are culturally fundamental to the cultural practices, systems and norms and to do away with established notion put forth by the state. The term identity could denote a given state, or a fixed condition somewhat justifiable, which could generally be seen as a process towards a condition which is not static, but rather a process under constant transformation. In the case of Ghana and some African countries the intricate nature of the formulation and construction of national identity was embedded in the literature, poetry, artistic impression and way of life.

The study also provides a historical perspective of national identity and applies the concepts developed in the ethnic origins of nations for the mainly pre-modern period to the modern world of nations and nationalism. Its underlying assumption is that we cannot understand nations and nationalism simply as an ideology of form of politics but must treat them as cultural phenomena as well. That is to say, nationalism, ideology and movement, must be closely related to national identity, a multidimensional concept and extended to include a specific language, sentiments and symbolism. In this regard, national identity is a collective cultural phenomenon as stated by Taylor and Tapp (1979).

2.4 Culture and Development

Culture is an important part of human existence and the issue of culture has always been an area of interest to many scholars; this has been observed by Yirenkyi and Amponsah (2014). They examined the various definitions by most scholars in the field of academia and concluded that, “culture is seen as the basis of a man’s life in any society” (p.2). Culture is man-made, not genetically inherited and it is made for the

purpose of living. It is socially taught and learned. He underscores the fact that it originates as human response to the local physical and biological environment.

However, one may ask, what is culture? It has been defined in myriad ways and we hesitate to privilege one definition over another (Kluckhohn & Kroeber 1963). Generally, culture is about relationality, the relationships among individuals within groups, among groups, and between ideas and perspectives. In perspective, culture is concerned with identity, aspiration, symbolic exchange, coordination, structures and practices that serve relational ends such as ethnicity, ritual, heritage, norms, meanings, and beliefs. It is not a set of primordial phenomena permanently embedded within national or religious or other groups, but rather a set of contested attributes, constantly in flux, both shaping and being shaped by social and economic aspects of human interaction. It is observed that cultural traditions look to the past for their mandates, authority authenticity as cultural traits are regarded as society's norms handed down the generations. Yirenkyi and Amponsah's (2014) observation relay the fact that culture is dynamic and so it is continually affected by local and external influences and stimuli. In fact, it encapsulates life's needs: food, shelter and clothing among others. Some scholars through investigations view culture as the fifth stage of the development of mankind and there have been numerous attempts to improve culture. Matsumoto (1997, p. 27) refers to culture as "the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviours shared by a group of people, communicated from one generation to the next via language or some other means of communication." Matsumoto, however, describes his definition as ambiguous since it does not fully capture the true meaning of the word. In his discourse he promotes the fact that it is very difficult in modern times to tell whether a person belongs to a particular culture or not. As a result, he premises his thought on the fact

that culture is a socio-psychological construct, a phenomenon that engulfs attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviours.

Thompson (1999, p.37) on the other hand, blends technology with culture indicating that “technology sets the tone for culture, influencing not only how people work but also how they socialise and think about the world.” He puts it that, some say technology is destroying indigenous culture, but for him technology is merging culture together thereby making it difficult to define a particular culture and enhancing cultural activities. In current times, culture is giving attention to by economists and lots of scholarly investigations are being conducted to enhance the quality of culture. For instance, Marana (2014) postulates that between 1970 and 1980s different experts began to draw a relationship between culture and development. It was not until the 1990(s) when some international bodies and development cooperation agencies started to promote studies and work to analyse how cultural factors could have an impact on the developmental process.

Awedoba (2007) adds to the voice of Marana by encouraging the study of development and culture in reiteration that each culture has its dignity and value, which must be respected and valued. In addition, he employs the fact that diversity of national cultures, their uniqueness and originality are an essential basis for human progress and development of world culture.

The allusion above, indicates that cultures are being recognised in recent times for their value and importance to an extent that effort are being made to promote and empower individuals and societies for development. Marana (2014, p.5) postulates that currently, “culture is taken as a fundamental dimension of the development process in which sustainable development can only be ensured by integrating cultural actors into the strategies to achieve it.” To debate the role of culture in development, it is necessary

to assess the approach in two main ways. In the first place, the need to look at how culture could be used as a tool for development where economic indicators must be considered. Secondly, the consideration of how the outlook of a particular culture could be improved and developed to fit into modern society. Imperatively, the later point draws attention to the fact that culture as well as culture in diversity and freedom has also been the object of discussion and interest as a necessary component for full development of a society.

Studies have shown that to consider culture for development, it is essential to develop culture itself. In a bid to develop culture, central to the idea, cultural policies must be keenly looked at as a means to fashion out appropriate steps. Cultural development is significant to this study since the main pre-occupation of this study is to investigate how theatre relates with cultural development (Adu-Gyamfi, 2014). Mickov and Doyle (2014) agree with this notion that, culture is a necessary part of the advancement of the personality's worldview and it opens out discourses for people to question the seemingly unchallengeable certainties that appear to exist within communities of place and shared heritage. Undoubtedly, contemporary culture speaks directly about the important probes of our time with regard to the changing global identity.

“An acceleration of cultural development is a necessity forced on the rapidly changing societies. The transformations experienced in most countries in this latter part of the twentieth century are threatening the quality of life in the industrial countries and the personality of individuals and peoples throughout the world” (Girard & Gentil, 1972, p.15). Their contribution throws light on the course of thirty years, one generation with regard to housing work, trade, transport, leisure, schooling and general standards of living have been drastically changed. Girard and Gentil argue that it appears

consumer electronics has brought the best and the worst forms of human expression into the home and is possible to wipe out years of cultural tradition. From their assertion it appears that after two decades of economic development, rapid in certain areas and very slow in some areas which appear that some individuals can no longer derive satisfaction from increased higher level of consumption. 'Man today' as the saying goes "cannot live by bread alone," any more than he could two thousand years ago.

In perspective, it follows the argument that cultural development has now ceased to be an object of luxury, an embellishment of plenty, which individuals and societies could do without. On the contrary, the situation is linked to the very conditions of general development. At the end of the day according to studies, its ultimate goals are not determined in the light of any particular philosophical conception of man; they invariably occur from the needs of societies in a bid to internal modification. An important principle that guides the society according to some cultural activist is the fact that "the right to culture has consequently been acclaimed a human right, not only as a matter of justice, but because it reflects an irresistible need of the species. Culture is the response to man's highest need, the need which gives him his dignity, which makes him man" (p. 16).

From the researcher's point of view, the discourse elicits the fact that, in order to identify the ultimate goals of cultural policies, the first essential point is to understand what has characterised this new need which societies feel vis-a-vis a civilization that is facing crisis because it is a by-product of industrialization and not the fruit of deliberate human intent. The new situation in which mankind finds itself in both the industrial and the developing countries which must be closely examined because the living conditions of a man determine the culture in which they live. Girard and Gentil (1972) close up on the fact that "cultural development is both the ultimate aim of political action and the

means of giving every individual a sense of his responsibility in the common work of mankind” (p.186).

Some scholars have it that, much of the discussions on the role of culture in development has either seen it as a primordial trap or a source of hegemonic power. These they say have not proved very useful as guides for public action. In recent years, however, development thinking has arrived at interesting crossroads. In the academic world, economists are grappling with models of how social and cultural factors shape human behaviour, and academic anthropologists, having grappled with these questions for a long time, are seeing the need to move beyond critique toward a more “facilitatory” anthropology (Sillitoe 1998). Similarly, in the world of policy, culture is increasingly being viewed as a commonplace, a malleable fact of life that matters as much as economics or politics to the process of development. However, there remains some confusion about how it matters anyway.

For as much as development is discussed within the cycles of scientific permutation and in economic terms, there are still other parameters within which the term can be defined. This study investigates how national theatre relates with cultural development as far as its significance is concerned. The study is of the view that development must be looked at in a much broader term. Awedoba (2007) believes that development should not be observed only under the ambit of economics. In explaining why development should not be viewed only in terms of economics, he establishes that, apparently, the word captures production as well as costs and standards of living.

Awedoba (2007) further points out the political dimension of the word development. He draws attention to law, order and peace as political dimensions that underpin development which are seen as civil liberties. In his allusion, when there is

peace, then the society may enjoy a serene working and a stable environment to make business. Hence, the ultimate goal promotes development. Ultimately, Awedoba sees development to include politics, economic progress, education and all other factors that ensures the progress of the individual society. In effect, according to the study one may say that the little improvement in an individual's living condition could be termed as development (Sey, 2014). In support Awedoba (2007) expatiates that, "Any activity that can be said to contribute to the enhancement of the quality of life of communities and individuals, can be viewed as coming under the preview of development" (p.8). Sey (2014) contends with Awedoba's position which points out that, "since the issue of education, health and environment are all ways to ensure the individual's well-being, it is presumed that, if the individual is of good health and sound mind, he or she can contribute to development" (p.23).

With regard to the study, it is significant not to limit development to economic factors only. Mda's (1993) definition of development may be appropriate since the study focuses on the subjects of theatre and culture. In this case, development could mean a sort of marginal positive change in a people's cultural paradigm; a change that improves the people's way of life. In this regard, it concerns how theatre is able to bring this change into a society's cultural belief which essentially promotes positive development. Through this study it appears that, if adequate analysis is employed into the studies, there would be an effort towards changing a society's view on culture thereby nurturing development. If the emphasis is positive change, then the task is how culture can be used to achieve that development. It is however not surprising that in Africa, some societies still hold to the notion that some indigenous practices cannot be done away with since they consider culture to be part of the society's identity. Thompson (1999) in support of the argument indicates that "our culture becomes so

much a part of us that we think of our own way of doing things as the only way” (p.37). It is important to take cognisance of the fact that human development is significant to growth both from the individual and societal point of view. In relation to this idea, Marana’s (2014) perception in his definition of human development, refers to “increasing the capacity of each person and thereby placing the person at the centre of the development action” (p.3). The discourse espouses that in the study of human development, the view is that, it is the individual that makes the society. Hence, for society to develop, the individuals must first develop” (Sey, 2014, p. 24).

2.5 Development of Theatre in Ghana

Theatre in Ghana began from indigenous performances which were part of the society: rites of passage, rituals performances and festival celebrations. These include traditional and modern theatrical practices. In commenting on the National Theatre of Ghana in perspective, it is imperative to look at the history of theatre in Ghana to understand the developmental trends so that possible relationships can be drawn.

Africans have a rich historical cultural legacy of the development and growth of theatre which helped in the socio-cultural development of African nations. In particular, theatre in West Africa originated from indigenous performance of storytelling which was part of the social set up. However, some scholars are of the view that in African drama did not exist before the advent of the colonialist.

According to Owusu (1988), drama in West Africa is organised in various forms. He contends that the concept of drama is informal, traditional and a spontaneous activity found in villages square and towns which may involve the whole community or some sections of it. He describes this particular form to include epic narratives or storytelling. Owusu admits the fact that storytelling offers an intense dramatic

exposition with all its traditional embellishments that heightens the presentation. He also pointed to the fact that there were initiation dances to teach the tribe's customs to boys reaching manhood; war dances to kindle bravery in the warriors; story dances to imitate events of the hunt or battle; and religious dances to appease the numerous unseen spirits that the savage felt controlled the world.

Today remnants of ancient rituals are equally evident in the American Indian dances such as the snake dance, the corn dance as well as the sun dance (Gibson, 1980). Comparatively, in Ghana, mention is made of the *Akpi* warriors' dance, an act which is performed at the climax of the hunting expedition in turn by several hunters and their wives. The purpose of the dance and drumming performance is to remember and pay tribute to the past warriors and hunters of their soil (Younge, 2011). If drama according to Tanner evolved from religious rituals, dance and pantomimic enactments among others, then Owusu's (1988) report indicates that the storytelling sections in town-squares and village gathering can certainly be deemed as drama. In fact, indigenous activities historically have drama embedded in them. In many Ghanaian societies, music, dance and drama are traditionally organised and practised as an integral part of everyday life. They pervade many activities of social life. Music and dance have dramatic orientations, while expressions of customary behaviour such as formalities governing the arrival and departure of important people, rites of transition, and certain forms of transaction between individuals or social groups may also take a dramatic form.

In the Ghanaian society, festivals and rituals form an essential part of our life cycle, from birth to death. Ritual ceremonies mostly take place during puberty rites, marriages, funerals and naming or outdoorings of a new born child. These life-stage passages usually involve the entire community, and during these celebrations, one can

identify various dramatic elements in the course of the celebration. Dankwa, Asare-Kumi and Eshun (2019) on this note identify and recognise the relevance of these elements in the Ghanaian traditional celebrations which are reflected in modern drama. They expressed the important focus on performing arts in festivals. Furthermore, they indicate that festivals are an integrative event in community life and a means of upholding a people's way of life. In their affirmation, from the beginning to the end of the public rites of a festival, one sees nothing but the dramatic enactment of belief or tradition against a general background of music, dance and drama.

In the same breath, Agovi (1989) and Bama (1985) list a few classified experiences that promote developmental strides of African dramatic forms that have evolved over the years, which took the forms of ritual enactments, dramatic stories and festivals which invariably served as a platform and a conduit to express cultural identity. Kerr (1995) on the other hand displays his displeasure with regard to the idea of not recognizing the already existence of African drama during the pre-colonial era. In his submission, he points out that there has been heated debate as to whether drama did or did not exist in pre-colonial Africa, and to what extent it could or should be distinguished from rituals. It is believed that much of this confusion is caused by using English words like 'drama' 'theatre' and 'ritual', which are loaded with meanings derived from European rather than African culture.

The contention and speculation as to whether drama and theatre did or did not exist in pre-colonial Africa has led most African academicians to delve into the pre-existence of African theatre and its related art forms (Addo, 2013). However, studies revealed that Africans had their own form of art that made them who they were, an art that talks for them and represents their unique cultural identity and belief. From the viewpoint of Eyoh (1986), theatre is one of the cultural fundamentals that best

exemplifies Africa. Long before cultural contact with Europe, Africa had its very own personal forms of dramatic expression.

The explanation given by Eyoh (1986) in his declaration points to the fact that, pre-colonial African theatre existed in its authentic traditional forms. However, the colonised was not given the opportunity to complete its own fruition per the cultural dictates due to interference and suppression of existing forms. He emphasizes the fact that it was the function of the society itself which most directly dictates artistic expressions in Africa which draws inspirations from folk celebrations, rites and myths that eternalize the belief, concepts and passions that preoccupy any given group (1986). He however, sides with Kerr that Africans did not specify terminologies to designate their artistic representations (1995). Similarly, they did not have any generic name for theatre. For instance, the African musical instruments are played without an African music score. It is normally played through improvisation or based on the western structure. Importantly, the invasion of foreigners therefore caused a devastating effect on several aspects of African life including culture and theatre.

In reaction to the European's perception, Mzo (1990), in his article *Contemporary African drama; The Intercultural trend in South Africa*, suggests that pre-colonial theatre existed in pre-colonial Africa. He further validates a constant continuity between pre-colonial African theatre and contemporary African drama, underscoring how modern context playwright employs some pre-colonial theatre traditions as a means of communicating with the audience. The traditional African theatre style of actor-audience relationship which creates an illusion of a broken fourth wall is evident in most modern western drama. Mike Amon-Kwafo, a former board member of the National Theatre of Ghana, is of the view that "indigenous art forms have existed with the African and evolved as part of his evolution (M. Amon-Kwafo,

personal communication, April 17, 2018). The discourse elucidates the fact that, Ghanaian theatre evolved from traditional performances of the indigenous people.

2.6 Colonial Africa and Literary Theatre

In reality the African continent is large with different ethnic groups with specific cultures. To deliberate on literary and theatre arts essentially, one would have to generalise due to the African population size (Wetmore, 2002). Agovi (1990) specifies that the “policy of implanting literary theatre in Colonial Ghana was targeted at educated Africans. It sought to create a target audience whose allegiance and loyalty to the British models of theatre could not be questioned” (p.19). As indicated above, implementation of the policy was aimed at instilling standard models of theatre practice in the minds of the educated African through formal educational institutions.

The British Council was established in the early forties to regulate as it were cultural matters and to underscore the official acknowledgement of the change of time, the introduction of new ideas that will redefine their cultural matters and focus the colonised in the perception of the colonisers for the future. This was necessary as stressed by Wetmore (2002) because Africa is made up of over sixty countries with hundreds of different cultures and dialects. To discuss theatre on the premise of the sheer size of Africa with regard to cultures would mean generalisation in this case.

Literary dramatic concerns surfaced in most nations where the European established and found opportunities; occupations and dominations. This move led to the integration of formal European literary theatre into African theatre. Towards the end of the nineteenth century with the full operation of colonialism at its peak, with all intent and purposes colonisers who settled in Africa wanted to feel at home where they settled, for that matter, they established structures that could make them feel at home.

Among these were, sporting clubs, leisure centres and theatres. In West Africa, schools and churches were established by missionaries through which literacy was introduced and European forms of drama such as Shakespeare among others were introduced. It was a welcoming idea for the educated elites with vigour since the colonial government had put in place the necessary structures for its development and sustenance. “However, it was not by accident that for decades throughout the 1930’s the dissemination of literary theatre in Ghana reached its highest” (Agovi, 1990, p.19). However, on the contrary, the colonisers were not fully aware of the cultural terrain in connection with African literature. The literary world was not prepared for the emergence of African writing when it did. Those who posed as its judges knew little or nothing of the true roots of written African literature support by Emeryonu (1971). The reason being that some of them were gaining their first insight into the African social scenes and approached African writing for its socio-logical rather than its literary interest.

This, however, could explain the gap in the inadequacy or absence of literature information about colonial Africa. Dethrones (1975) consequently indicates, the newly educated had been educated by the colonisers in an alien culture and endowed with new beliefs and values that were not of their own but artificially inculcated into the system. In this regard, he observed that the newly literates had a role thrust on them for which they were inadequately equipped. In as much as the educated elite were for the colonised European education, some minority group were *crying* for Africans to return to their cultural traditions and not be naive slaves to everything European. This minority group consisted of Kobina Sekyi, J. B. Danquah (both of them notable playwrights), Casely Hayford and Ephraim Amu, the ardent musician nationalist. This group which was often vaguely identified as part of the “intelligentsia” saw themselves “as the

advanced guard in the awakening of racial consciousness in Africa, and as a distinct group within the British Empire” (Hagan, 1969, p.20).

The structures of the colonisers could be seen as exploitive and this was reflected in their didactic theatre which they sought to enforce on Africans by somewhat replacing the African culture with the European culture by taking away their cultural identity and rendering the people passive and dependent on European schemes of beliefs. As a result, the Christian missionaries replaced their indigenous performances and practices with European performances and art form that promoted their religion. In effect, they made the African tradition appear to be heathen and nothing good could come out of it. Hence, particularly in Ghana, biblical stories like the birth of Christ and the parable of the sower were enacted among others. Mda (1993) underscores the fact that the colonialist intention of promoting drama among Africans was geared towards weaning them from their pagan and uncivilised ways. They conceived that an African drama must be based on dance, must be childlike and simple in form, and must involve storytelling and drumming. This presupposes that the traditional African art forms which have both the aesthetic and moral basis were not featured in the western drama, except elements that supported their beliefs and structure. By and large, they organised the European drama void of African theatrical forms without a clear definition of pre-colonial antecedents.

Due to the introduction of literacy and drama, the zeal for writing plays by some literate Africans increased. Meanwhile, writing and publication of plays by Africans were for the patronage of the colonial rulers, somewhere around the 1900’s situations began to change (Gilbert & Thompkins, 1996).

Literary prominence was first achieved by West Africa as a result of some rising playwrights. This was due to the fact that, the colonised were trained and were given the opportunity to govern along with the colonisers. For as much as the colonised had a representation in the government they mobilised interest groups to revitalise and promote their culture. For that matter, the local cultures were therefore pulsating in some areas and that created a strong sense of cultural awareness among the people, especially those educated under the colonial system in both the region and Britain. Precisely, schools and colleges were established in Ghana and Nigeria to train new writers who were interested and had access to both indigenous and foreign dramatic forms. The suppressed state in which Africans were, coupled with cultural *stagnation*, and the opportunity they had to be educated, created a state of urgency to rethink and reclaim their past history and forge ahead in order to maintain their native culture. Osofisan (2001) confirms that these western playwrights were all, without exception keenly tuned to the beating pulse of the age. The pressing problems, at least from their elitist perspectives as members of the ruling, western educated class, bore on the cultural implications the society transforms. Hence, they ploughed assiduously the theme of cultural alienation.

Cultural activities of Africa began to take shape gradually during the post-colonial era when the theme of cultural alienation was *loud* in their subconsciousness. On the basis of that, traditional consciousness and keen realisation of cultural identity and the drive towards awareness of selfhood became rather pronounced in the lives of playwrights who sought to decolonise their societies through the theatre by exploring traditional cultural structures and Africa art forms.

A cultural scholar adds to this discourse by indicating that, the development of theatre as literature in Africa is conscious and thoughtful to elevate the standards of

drama to ensure its capability of conveying perceptions and ideologies associated with Africans (Etherton, 1979). Central to Etherton's thinking is Crow and Banfield's (1996) perception of self-consciousness which concedes that in some colonised societies with rich indigenous culture for example, "West Africans or Indians remained largely intact. Whatever the colonised may have wished or done not only was cultural identity not lost, it has served as a potent weapon in the struggle for independence and liberation" (p,7).

The overwhelming consequence of colonialism left a devastating impression on the minds of Africans. Gilbert and Tompkins (1996) acknowledge that, post-colonialism agenda was to destroy the hegemonic boundaries and the determinate that create unequal relations of power based on binary oppositions between the Europeans and Africans, white and black, for that matter coloniser and the colonised. This assertion conjectures the fact that, the post-colonial writers aimed at subverting the political and cultural structures that had been imposed by colonialism. It is important to underscore the fact that, post-colonial literature becomes a cultural dramatic material for discourse and assessment. Notably, it is necessary, therefore to understand that the critical study of the African literary landscape requires setting of criteria for its evaluation. This view is gaining convincing ground in contemporary Africa that oral literature should not be judged by the criteria which have been used in the evaluation of non-African literature and cultures, though universal similarities are of fundamental importance.

Agovi (1990) stipulates that in much the same way, the earlier impression of literary drama in Africa as an alien form, totally subservient to western notions of drama has now given way to assessments which have indicated that all along, "Africa has been central to its ultimate vision and that it has in fact been supportive of the

aspirations and longing of African people” (p.1). Imperatively, during the post-independence era literary drama has had its firm footing with reference to its vision, themes and techniques adopted from its creative traditional processes that were enshrined in the beliefs and culture of the people.

Prior to independence as posited by Agovi (1990), theatre in Ghana had been classically colonial. Meanwhile, the British imposed a Western form of theatre, a literary theatre that formed the great paradox for post-independence practitioners; that is to write plays about independent Ghanaian identity, the identity of the self and the nation, in the language of the old colonial power. Basically, this led to the integration of formal European literary theatre into African theatre. With hindsight, we were very lucky that they did, as the plays of Efua Sutherland, Ama Ata Aidoo and Joe de-Graft are among the most important and insightful investigations into the search for the self-identity written in English.

Yeh (2013) argues that colonialism brought about ambiguities with regard to the history because the Europeans imposed their culture on the colonised country and that limited their knowledge of the natives. He is of the view that for natives to regain their own identities, there is the need for them to recover to discover their origin. Emenyonu (2005) promotes his thought on the idea that African literature reveals the black personality and strength under the rule of colonialism. It is a political document that unravels the remonstrance against the assumptions of imperialism with regard to the African and the Europeans

2.7 Concert Party

Undoubtedly, according to studies, major genres of popular theatre are set in their historical and social contexts which are basic ingredients to the African heritage.

In a survey of theatre forms in sub-Saharan Africa from pre-colonial times (sixteenth century) to the present day, according to Kerr (1995, p.275) “popular theatre is interpreted widely to include not only conventional drama, but such non-literary forms of performance as dance, mime, dramatized storytelling, masquerades, improvised urban vaudeville theatre, and the theatre of resistance and social action.” This form of drama was popular among the entire Ghanaian populace and as indicated by Gibbs (2012). To him, concert party is the most exciting development of theatre and dramatic art form. Meanwhile, the concert parties of coastal Ghana and the neighbouring Republic of Togo are the only professional theatres in the region.

With regard to popular theatre, the researcher is tempted to say, it is the ‘circular’ form of theatre and it began from the colonial era as described by a dramatist who was a former Director of the National Theatre of Ghana. More so, circular in this context refers to theatre moving out from the basic teaching of morals and more towards entertainment. Some scholars describe it as the traveling theatre of West Africa, popularly referred to as ‘concert party’ (Agovi, 1990). The Ghanaian concert party is one of the many art genres that have emerged in this century in sub-Saharan Africa that blends or syncretises local and foreign elements. However, Collins (1976) has it that in spite of their acculturated nature, these new art styles contain distinctive features that express the identities, symbols, aesthetic and underlying value orientations of their African practitioners and audiences. The ability of these new art forms to reflect and express the moods and outlooks of Africans undergoing rapid socio-cultural transformations is helped by their often ephemeral and transient nature: what Karin Barber (1987, p.12) calls their ‘aesthetic of change’. Bame (1969) also has it that the comic plays are a Ghanaian type of popular drama staged by itinerant’ guitar bands who call themselves “concert parties”, “trios” and so forth, and the authors are all male.

Ghanaian concert parties are professional groups of itinerant artists who stage vernacular shows for rural and urban audiences that combine slapstick musical comedies, folk stories, acrobatics, moral sermons, magical displays and dance-music sessions. This style of presentation is based on operatic structure. Besides, this style draws on the indigenous and imported ideas, both old and new, the presentational format includes, local highlife music and dance, sign painting [large adverts called concert 'cartoons'], comic literature and the film/video format. Furthermore, since the 1960's the concert party and its associated guitar band has been one of Ghana's most important influences and avenues for contemporary popular performers. Its influence has even spread to Togo and Nigeria. Although the number of active groups has reduced in recent times, it still stands as a favourite production of the masses. This form of presentation concentrated on entertainment but dealt with contemporary social issues, and was based on the improvisational method which was very vibrant. Concert party was a type of popular theatre which had a commercial base. As the name 'concert party' suggests, this genre initially developed out of the imported Western concert milieus of the early twentieth century. Indeed, two Ghanaian comedians called the 'Two Macs' performed for the black and white elite at a Costume Ball and Concert at Cape Coast Castle as early as 1903 (Braun & Cole 1995).

Research has shown that popular theatre in West Africa was developed out of colonialism based on Western models. Agovi (1990, p.1) opines that even though it is a “feature of colonialism, it seems to have come into prominence outside its direct purview and control.” It appears that the turn of events was due to the nature of the genre, how it developed and was accepted by the performing groups.

2.8 The National Theatre Movement in Ghana

The years preceding Ghana's independence were characterized by the formation of various movements aimed at promoting indigenous Ghanaian tradition, art and culture. Agovi (1989) in this direction has written extensively on the subject of theatre movements in Ghana and Africa as a matter of national concern. According to him, "in 1955, as part of a growing concern with the viability of Ghana's cultural heritage in the face of distressing social changes, a ten-man government committee of the Ministry of Education was appointed to examine how best a national theatre movement could be developed" (p.5). As per the idea by then, the need to preserve, promote and develop culture lay in the hands of the people. However, the process was to be spearheaded by the government (Agovi, 1990). In order to realize the goal, it was imperative to establish an interim committee for an arts council which was mandated to implement a practical policy for a national theatre movement. This idea resulted in a national cultural policy document to develop theatre in Ghana. Its focus was to bring into existence a theatre that will derive its energy and genuineness from ideas firmly planted in the true traditions of the people. Within that scope, the National Theatre Movement worked to adapt indigenous Ghanaian traditions to suit the modern theatre. The cultural leaders of the movement formed more theatre institutions for artists to operate within their set goals and principles.

In furtherance to Agovi's discourse, in 1956 the National Theatre Movement under the direction and headship of Ghana Arts Council, was regarded as an important factor in Africa's liberation struggles (Agovi, 1989). Through the activities of the movement, it gained grounds as a result of cultural suppression and dehumanisation of the then people of Gold Coast. Due to its propensity culture and nationalism went hand in hand to assert a distinct personality of its own in the eyes of the world. Basically, the

period between 1957 and 1960 was characterized by nationalist policies pioneered by Kwame Nkrumah (the first Prime Minister of the Gold Coast) and the CPP.

Through the ideals of Nkrumah, the CPP government projected the indigenous Ghanaian theatre through the National Theatre Movement. Agovi (1990) reiterates that while there was a clear passion cum drive to elevate the vision of theatre development, there were no corresponding concerns “to develop effective strategies to neutralize the atrophies of the colonial past in terms of theatre education” (p.4). For instance, the establishment of the School of Performing Arts at the University of Ghana, Legon was a sigh of hope to rejuvenate the ambitions of the study of an authentic African art form and practice. Unfortunately, due to the excessive influence of the western culture at that time, the movement resorted to western dramas that were readily available due to the support from the British government. On the contrary, the students had little prospect to explore with traditional forms of performance of cultural significance. A number of scholars addressed the fact that, the National Theatre Movement focused on ways of performing the western plays to indigenous audience using Ghanaian performance practice of concert party and storytelling. From great purposes and intent, the movement barely survived after the overthrow of the CPP government in 1966. The commitment, drive and passion towards cultural awareness and development began to retard, causing the movement to yield little or no results.

Although plans to rejuvenate cultural and traditional forms in Ghana did not materialise as expected, one cannot overemphasise the fact that, the National Theatre Movement through its struggles, *gave birth* to the School of Music and Drama at the University of Ghana. The school was to train and educate students to enhance their knowledge and appreciation of culture and traditional values to meet the needs of the changing times and the cultural objectives of the nation as a whole. It was around that

time Ghana Dance Ensemble was established by Nkrumah at the University of Ghana to undertake research, documentation, development and promotion of traditional and contemporary dance forms (Gibbs, 2009).

Around that time, some newly developing African states also saw the importance and need of culture to resist oppressive rule and subjugation. According to Gibbs (2009), it was generally felt that no meaningful economic, political and social developments could be undertaken without careful and systematic attention being paid to cultural development in African states. Culture was viewed as the bedrock in African policy formulations. The growth of cultural related institutions was put in place to develop and spearhead cultural programs (Nketia, 1986, p.238). For instance, the Arts Council in Ghana had oversight responsibility over the related institutions which had their activities defined by the National Theatre Movement. In furtherance to this idea, Nketia indicates that playwrights, visual artists, dancers, musicians and theatre performers among others were brought together to assess their opportunities in the promotion of the African personality. Seemingly, under Nkrumah's leadership in the new state in Ghana, he promoted selfhood, pride and dignity in the discussions of international affairs and diplomacy. Nkrumah's ideology was not void of cultural considerations as mooted by Nketia, which appears to be an important foundation for integrated development. Agovi (1989, p.2) points to the fact that the "cultural policy of the immediate post-independence era was captured by the concept of the African personality." It became the most important single idea which dominated all cultural matters in Ghana and consequently provided the central ideological framework for the National Theatre Movement. Nkrumah stresses that the African psyche involves "the efficiency and validity of our African traditional statecraft, our highly developed code of morals, our hospitality and our purposeful energy" (Nkrumah, 1969, p.5). His

ideology with regard to the study focuses on national identity and the African Personality. In Nkrumah's (1967) speech, he addresses the issue of traditional Africa signifying that with independence, a new harmony needs to be forged, a harmony that will allow the combined presence of traditional Africa, Islamic Africa and Euro-Christian Africa, so that this presence is in tune with the original humanist principles underlying African society, with such a philosophical statement he proposed to name philosophical consciencism, for it will give the theoretical basis for an ideology. Its aim shall be to contain the African experience of Islamic and Euro-Christian presence as well as the experience of the traditional African society, by gestation, employ them for the harmonious growth and development of the society.

Antubam (1963) an astute artist examines Nkrumah's line of thought. His argument is that, he observes four essential philosophies in Nkrumah's concept of the African personality. In the first instance, an emphasis on the cultural traditions of African people at revealing the common inclinations of the various forms of African culture; secondly, how this is envisioned to offer a sense of a *common identity* and a distinctive way of life for all Africans; third, the need to promote these objectives as a unifying force, at a time when the unity of Africans is not only so much on the foreground in world affairs, but has become so inevitable; and finally, the beliefs in the relevance of the African past to contemporary life and development issues on the continent. The intent of the National Theatre Movement according to some scholars was to promote national objectives, culminating into a unity of front. Agovi (1990) posits that the impact of the nationalistic idea imposed on Ghanaian artists is required of them to promote national integration through their creative and a commitment sense of responsibility to reconcile the African past with the present.

As a result of the National Theatre Movement in 1956, a cultural policy document was instituted to develop theatre in Ghana. Its aim was “to bring into existence a theatre that would derive its vitality and authenticity from roots firmly planted in the true traditions of the people” (Hammond, 1977, p.7). It had the mandate to refashion indigenous Ghanaian traditions as declared by Morrisseau-Leroy (1965) to suit our modern theatre through creative experimentation. For that matter, traditional forms of artistic expressions should constitute the basis for Ghana National Theatre.

Readily, the post-colonial era opened up for cultural revival and accentuation in the African traditional forms creating the land marks of yesteryears. Cultural aspirations coupled with its nostalgic feeling were rebirthed. Agovi (1989) espouses the fact that leaders of theatre movement of the time presumed that literary theatre was partially established in Ghana and void of African forms of drama, due to the influence of western theatrical forms. Hence, there was the urgent need of an orientation in terms of ideological allegiance and direction towards a rather unique African theatre that expresses and responds to the challenges of its cultural environment. According to Agovi (1989), the growth of theatre and cultural activities in general, needed coordination and cohesion and a systematic promotion of the arts in the country through distinct institution. “Arts centre was constituted to plan and implement cultural programs on a nationwide basis” (Nketia, 1986, pp.238-239). His argument underscored the fact that indeed, culture assumed a new importance as an area of governmental action and concern.

In the opinion of Agovi (1989), the committee set up to examine the theatre movement in the same year observed that in their view the people of the Gold Coast were so engrossed in other things to realise the threat to their traditional culture. In his

discourse the committee also indicated that even though reviving the dying culture lay with the people themselves, it was the prerogative of the government to start the process.

By and large, the National Theatre Movement, commenced in 1956 which had government backing to translate into a cultural policy document to develop and advance theatre in Ghana, a theatre that is a true reflection of the authentic cultural antecedent of the people (Gold Coast), and had the propensity to model indigenous Ghanaian traditions to suit the modern theatre through creative experimentation. Hopefully, this will serve to validate African culture for Ghanaians and African people throughout the world. The quintessential quality of the performances and exhibitions will provide celebrations for the people (the Gold Coast) of the culture and art forms that pervade their lives. Perhaps, according to Agovi's (1989) vision, viewing and participating in the extraordinary accomplishments of Ghanaian artists will reinforce for adults and children the value of artistic work and the role of the visual and performing art in their holistic culture.

In view of the great concern as regards the retooling of culture, the focus of the policy document was to initiate and grow theatre for the people, by the people and for the people, a concept that derived its strength and legitimacy from roots firmly established in the true custom and traditions of the people. Per the study, the cultural policy has the mandate to provide validation for the quest to retrieve their past and refocus their aspirations for a more authentic and constructive way through experiencing their traditional and contemporary art forms. In support with the perspective of the National Commission on Culture (1995), Hammond (1977) posits that due to the strong cultural base and traditional influence of the cultural policy, the idea had the mandate to refashion and build upon the indigenous Ghanaian traditions to

commensurate modern theatre practice. In fact, this could be done through creative experimentations of the people as endorsed by Agovi.

Agovi (1989, p.1) made it clear that “in 1956 when the National Theatre Movement was initiated under the central direction of the Ghana Arts Council, culture was regarded as an important factor in Africa’s liberation struggle.” In a bid to promote and project culture, the idea of nationalism was sanctioned as an important movement for the African to assert a distinctive personality of his own following a colonial experience that dehumanized him in the eyes of the world. Agovi further puts it that, newly emergent states in Africa also saw the need to use culture to resist internal aggression of division and disintegration within their national boundaries. In a speech delivered by the then acting Executive Director, Ossei (2012) at the National Theatre of Ghana at a press launch of its twentieth anniversary celebration stated that:

Africans cannot be oblivious of the Ghana Arts Council’s initiation of the National Theatre Movement which sought to constrain the writer, playwright: the visual artist, the dancer, musician, theatre performer, the film maker and the television and radio producers to act together and view their achievement as a unified assertion of the African personality. In his argument to underscore the contribution of the National Theatre of Ghana, he stated that, there was no doubt that in recent years, the National Theatre has logically taken on additional roles and initiated programmes that are seemingly dissonant to Nkrumah’s cultural assertion of selfhood, dignity and pride of place in international affairs and diplomacy. Ossei acknowledges the fact that they are happy to have in their midst, the long-standing partners of; the Institute of African Studies and School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana who continue to train students and research into the time-tested institutions of our cultural heritage. (p.3)

Additionally, in Agyeman’s (2012) presentation, he brings into focus the Accra and Kumasi Centres for National Culture where all this began in 1956 [National Theatre Movement], and the many amateur groups now referred to as Ghana Union of Theatre Societies who are keeping the flame alight.

On the other hand, Sen (2002) is also of the view that, for a more focused direction in the holistic provision of the general wellbeing of a nation it is important to focus on culture as a conduit for development. A general notion conceived by most cultural experts is that, culture is the *root* of a nation; it is what makes a people who they are.

2.9 Cultural Policy of Ghana

National Commission on Culture (2004) defines culture as the totality of the way of life evolved by our people through experience and reflection in our attempt to fashion a harmonious co-existence with our environment. “Culture is dynamic and gives meaning to the social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious practices of our people. Culture also gives us our distinct identity as a people” (p.3).

The Ghanaian culture is remarkably evident in our ideas, ideals, beliefs and values; folklore, science and technology, environment and in the form of social, political, legal and economic institutions. It also manifests in the aesthetic representations and humanistic dimensions of our literature, dance, music, drama, architecture, paintings, carvings and other artistic forms as stipulated in the cultural policy (National Commission on Culture, 2004) document. In totality, the nature of culture is seen as a dynamic phenomenon, symbolised in the concept of Sankofa, this establishes linkage with the positive aspects of our past and the present. The concept affirms the co-existence of the past and the future in the present. It therefore embodies the attitude of our people to the interaction between traditional values and the demands of modern technology within the contemporary international culture milieu.

Beric (2007, p.2) also puts it that culture is “the way of life or a society.” In effect it embeds the codes of manner, or, system and behaviour, dress, language, rituals

and belief for a group of people. Meanwhile, various definitions of culture reflect differing theories for understanding or criteria for evaluating human activity. Furthermore, the United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO] (2002) describes culture as follows: culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of a society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, values, systems, traditions and beliefs. Even though these two perspectives cover a range of meaning, they do not exhaust the many uses of the term, culture. However, these definitions, and many others provide a catalogue of the elements of culture. From the study, the researcher perceives that culture on the other hand is an effective instrument of promoting national and international understanding. It appears to be the best bridge between people and is the language of the soul, the heart and reason. In support to the assertion, it is the power which makes a man capable of appreciating the life around him and the power of making that life worth appreciating.

In regulation to the idea of culture, Ghana's maiden cultural policy was formulated soon after independence in 1957 and has since then gone through a number of revisions. The last key reformulation was fashioned at a national stakeholder's workshop convened by the National Commission on Culture in 2004 and Danish Centre for Culture and Development in 2011. The policy recognises culture as a tool for national development and a vehicle to promote unity amongst the country's diverse cultural and linguistic communities. It is also seen as a vital instrument to help citizens evolve a distinctive African identity and collective pride within the nation and in the global community.

In the cultural policy of Ghana published in 2004 by the National Commission on Culture and approved by the Ghana Government, according to National Commission

on Culture (2004), three key objectives were set out: in the first place, to document and promote Ghana's traditional cultural values such as those enshrined in concepts of human dignity, attitudes to nature and the environment, law and order, honesty and truthfulness, unity and peace, self-reliance and dignity of labour, family community and national solidarity.

Secondly, the policy was to ensure the growth and development of our cultural institutions and make them relevant to human development and the overall total development agenda of the country.

Thirdly, to enhance Ghanaian cultural life and develop cultural programmes to contribute to the nation's human development and material progress through heritage preservation, conservation, promotion and the use of traditional and modern arts and crafts to create wealth and alleviate poverty. However, in pursuit of the specific objectives of the cultural policy, it is imperative to recognise the traditional value, pride and respect for the nation's heritage as encapsulated in the mandate. Furthermore, the media as a channel is to promote understanding of cultural values and the rich diversity of ethnic expressions for nation building and to foster national unity among the diverse ethnic groups.

The policy also sought to underscore the contemporary relevance of tradition, enhancing the status of artistes and artistic expressions and projecting the cultural heritage as a formidable base to assist local communities mobilise their cultural resources for human and material development. By and large, it will identify and ensure the dissemination of local knowledge of the environment and support communities to sustain positive traditional concepts and practices as epitomized in the policy document.

From the researcher's point of view, at the end, the cultural policy seeks to collect, preserve and conserve tangible and intangible assets.

For an efficient operation and implementation of the said policy, per the National Commission and Culture (2004), a strategic plan is put in place to foster and regulate the activities of the commission for an effective execution. In view of this, the National Commission on Culture recognises all civil society groups, business and corporate organisations as stakeholders in the nation's cultural heritage and seek their participation in the implementation of policies and programme. Among these are the House of Chiefs, District Assemblies, religious bodies, educational institutions, social groups, voluntary associations, artistic groups, associations, non-governmental organisations as well as the media agencies and institutions.

In this regard, among the list of stakeholders, prominence is given to the Houses of Chiefs regarded as having a key role in the task of heritage preservation and cultural transformation. Other stakeholders are the district assemblies, religious bodies, educational institutions, social groups, voluntary associations, artistic groups and associations, non-governmental organisations, as well as the media agencies and institutions. In light of this, it is the duty of the National Commission on Culture to have oversight responsibility over the operational principle and budgetary provision for the implementation of the cultural policy of Ghana operating through a number of pro-cultural institutions and agencies.

In sum, the cultural policy of Ghana as set out by the National Commission on Culture (2004) argues, Ghana has over fifty (50) ethnic groups whose common values and institutions represent our collective national heritage. Each of these ethnic groups brought together by a dint of history, has unique cultural features and traditions that

give identity, self-respect, and pride to the people. Since independence, the emerging civil society of Ghana has recognised the need to promote unity within this cultural diversity and Ghana has since enjoyed relative unity, stability, and peace.

But the National Commission hopes to achieve this by promoting cultural interaction and inter-ethnic understanding through programmes that create enabling environment for national development. In reality, culture as a tool for development, in many respects, Ghana cultural traditions can be exploited for development. While some aspects of culture are already vibrant and need only to be expanded. Addy (2005, p.11) shares her thought that, “the cultural policy can thus be described as promoting a renaissance of Ghanaian culture.” This should kindle an appreciation of the need to search for the core principles, values and knowledge accumulated over time within the indigenous culture. Addy’s perception is not far-fetched from what earlier African scholars argued for. Additionally, “we are a society in transition and this offers a special challenge in making sure that the bench marks distilled from our indigenous culture remains in view” (p. 18).

The Kenyan situation is not far from the Ghanaian scenario. As indicated by the Kenyan policy statement, the Government shall take all necessary steps to ensure the protection and promotion of culture and of cultural diversity among Kenyans and shall take all necessary steps to ensure the protection and promotion of the country’s national heritage (Deisser & Njuguna, 2016). In perspective, Kenya adheres to UNESCO’s definition of culture as that whole complex of distinctive, spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features characterising a society or social group. This definition encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value accepted systems, traditions and beliefs.

Culture gives a people their identity, which is passed on from one generation to another. It is thus the totality of a people's way of life. National heritage, on the other hand, may be defined as the sum total of all the creativity in all its forms preserved, enhanced and handed over to future generations as record of human experiences and aspirations.

2.10 A National Theatre

Anyidoho (2000) comments on the fact that in 1957 Efua Sutherland ensured that the design of the drama studio in Accra was in harmony with performance demands of African theatre practice. Her perception of an authentic African theatre architecture inspired Sutherland to design and build the drama studio to promote traditional African stories that reflected our folk tales. Sutherland's vision brought pride to the theatre fraternity and formalized her theatre concepts of national acclaim. As a matter of fact, she was not interested in any performance space or building type but to put up a facility that can house traditional plays. At the end, the Ghana Drama Studio was built for a purpose; to reflect the Ghanaian artistic concepts, attributes and performance structures to further clarify and focus on the objectives of the theatre movements.

As established by Asamoah-Botwe (2005), the Ghana Drama Studio was established with three core objectives. The first was to develop, promote and to create awareness as well as controlling the new theatre movement towards the training performers by exposing them to African dramatic forms. Secondly, the idea was to create a theatrical home for the artists (directors, writers, producers, musicians and dancers among others) that it has trained. Sutherland (2000, p.49) also puts it that the "Ghana Drama Studio was established as a training centre for actors, writers and theatre personnel and as a venue for experimentation in the development of dramatic forms."

Lastly, for the drama studio to train and recruit performers into the National Theatre of Ghana facility as well as materials and to enhance programming.

Ukpokodu (2001) postulates that Sutherland's initiative in the creation of the Drama Studio, was associated with Nkrumah's ideologies on African culture. Apparently, as indicated by Ukpokodu, Sutherland tried to translate some of the early ideals of the state into a socially based programme for the development of drama and performance. These were based on traditional forms combined with professionalism. As discussed earlier, it is imperative to note that one of the opportunities of theatre is to translate ideas through sharply reconstructed dramatic nuances; meanwhile dialogues could be used as a main conduit of discourse, whereas themes could portray them. In this regard, Sutherland's drama studio was to feature and generate socially relevant dramatic presentations. On the contrary, it appears that the legal structures and the organisational set-up of a national theatre very often reflect not only the goals for which it was established but also the structures of the political system or of the country of which it is supposed to be the symbol. Van Impe (2015) puts it that:

Conversely, the fact that there is no national theatre in the United States of America, Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Switzerland among others is as a result of their federal structure, since within a federal country there exists different nations. However, these different nations may have their own national theatres as in the case of the Czech National theatre in Prague and that in Bratislava. (p. 111)

Per the structures of these nations as discussed, reports indicate that it would be difficult to have a national theatre stand as a symbol of the entire country to promote art and culture as compared to socialist countries where political and economic life is, to a large extent, under state control. In such conditions national theatre is seen as the sole

purveyor of dramatic art in the land. Therefore, looking through those lenses, Sutherland's ideology of a national theatre as a precursor of cultural development and preservation contrasts the philosophy of federal structures.

As discussed by Brown and Russell (1969) as well as Girard (1972), national theatre may be either one or all of the following: an expression of contemporary national identity, a national drama museum, a means of prestige, an instrument of cultural dissemination, an official centre for research and experimentation and lastly, a means of preserving the national funds of folk and ethnic culture among others. The discourse espouses the fact that theatre promotes culture, enhances social integration and harness unity in diversity as a catalyst for national co-existence.

In the same vein, Umenyilorah (2014) suggests that theatre is known to be a mouthpiece for socio-political realities of its time; a kind of platform where economic, social, political and religious issues are outlined, evaluated and judged. As a result, it brings about a better society through the theatre practitioners and in fact, all artists become precursors of social change in their respective capacities, keeping a watchful eye and an attentive ear on what happens in the society. The discourse highlights the fact that theatre is an art form that mirrors societal events or behaviour through its medium of stage enactment of issues which could be real or imagined and communicated to an audience which the artist seeks to contact. The models could be theatre for social change, theatre for education, theatre for communication, and visible theatre among others. The aforementioned mediums ensure sensitization and behavioural change for community development. Most importantly, such models could be an integrated manipulation of various forms of art such as dance, music, songs, mime, poetry, sculpture, paintings and technical theatre and so forth. This outcome is as a result of the arousal of the awareness of real or imagined situation of life being

presented on stage by actors in the presence of a live audience. Hence, the playwright uses theatre to create consciousness in the minds of the audience to change the ills of the society (Brockett, 2010).

In support of this argument, Owusu (2009) shares his thought on the role of drama or theatre in the promotion of culture within the context of education and its effect. The nature of drama, the representation of action in any given society, employing aspects of culture in terms of the setting, theme, writer's cultural influence and experience and general lifestyle make drama or theatre a most effective vehicle for the promotion of culture, especially in the educational realm. From the discourse above, it is suggestive that theatre plays an indispensable role in promoting and developing culture through the pinhole of education. Van Impe (2015, p.47) puts it that, "the role of theatre is to provide relaxation, or cultural nourishment, or political and social awareness." Cognisance should be taken of the fact that theatre is a strong medium for behavioural change. Besides, it uses all the five senses in conceiving and interpreting its content, an involving process of decoding.

Equally significant to the study is the account of Adedeji (1971) who stressed on the emergence of the Nigerian theatre from 1866 to 1945. In his assertion, during the colonial times, Africans were confronted with the overwhelming dominance of the missionary churches in the development of the literary theatre. He affirms that in the attempt to create a secular base for the Nigerian theatre, there were leaders who pushed for emphasising the role of the theatre "outside the church" while other leaders did everything possible to return the theatre to the church.

Juxtaposing both scenarios, one sees the struggle under these circumstances concretely evoked. Undoubtedly, the interplay of social forces; education, religion and colonialism had effects on indigenous African ideas and way of life (Agovi, 1990). On

the other hand, even though Nigerians had a lot of restrictions in the promotion of theatre, the foresight and commitment to an African centred vision of the forerunners gave good direction in the fruition of Nigerian theatre, which has since become the hallmark of the Nigerian theatre in our time. The scholarly investigation of Adedeji's survey offers an insight into continuities in this energy and vitality in the Nigerian theatre. Contrary to that, Agovi (1990) commented on the literary theatre in Ghana:

We have never had the benefit of such comprehensive documentation on the origins of literary theatre in Ghana during the colonial period. Research and publication on Ghanaian literary drama have almost always either concentrated exclusively on the *concert party* tradition or on the post-independence works of Ghanaian playwrights. (p.5)

Tendai (2009) comments on Gibbs work in progress, which supports the claims of Agovi indicating that the study of the ancient as well as modern history has been shamefully neglected by the educated inhabitant of the Gold Coast. This document was a response to a need perceived while he was teaching in the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana, during 1994. In his study he claimed he found a distressing ignorance among the student body about sources and history. In his search many knew little about what had been happening in the theatre in Ghana or about what had been written. However, Gibbs acknowledged publications such as *Okyeame*, *Sankofa*, *Pleasure and What's On?* These publications had attempted to keep track of contemporary events in Ghanaian theatre. The study shows that Angmor (1996) is among those who have produced substantial surveys of the theatre in Ghana. Nonetheless, the account of Anyidoho and Gibbs (2000) also underscores the fact that adequate documentation on theatres in Ghana has not been encouraging.

2.11 National Theatre of Ghana as an Institution

The first President of Ghana Dr. Kwame Nkrumah at the time realised early that without a strong cultural base, the country would not grow socially, economically and politically. He therefore set in motion a chain of culturally orientated programmes, and institutions aimed at projecting and maintaining a strong African personality. After the fall of Nkrumah, it appeared that succeeding governments acknowledged the importance of culture, but only paid lip service to it. At that time, it appeared culture was relegated to the background. Then, Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings appeared on the political scene according to history, and in collaboration with the P.N.D.C. Government, set culture on track to normalcy once again.

There is certainly a general consensus of opinion about what a national theatre is. However, the common image of a national theatre is of a monumental edifice located in a national capital, authorised, privileged and supported by the government, and devoted wholly or largely to productions of the work of national dramatists (Wilson, 1988). Nwanaju (2013) sees theatre as an embodiment of the performing treasures of the nation's inheritance for a glorious cause. He espouses the fact that theatre brings the best not just to its people but also to the world and further deals with artistic and creative imaginations. To add, theatre as a body preserves and promotes the cultural values of the nation rather than see it as a commercial industry. Stewart Steven in his closing remark at the English Equity Theatre Conference said that, "if you want to destroy a people, the first thing you do is destroy its culture." To underscore the significance of a theatre, a functioning and producing theatre is something that provides a heart to the nature of a nation in terms of identity, focus and sometimes diverse opinions. It is to this effect that the Social Democratic Government of Sweden in the 1930s initiated the establishment of a nation-wide organisation for a touring theatre, a

theatre that packages the national identity. This theatre called Riksteatern is the third theatre financed by government funds in Sweden. Riksteatern produced about 1,500 performances of (national) drama, music and dance a year. In addition, it has a special department that produces children's theatre called Ungariks. During the 1960(s), Riksteatern became an important moulder of public opinion through its performance.

Similarly, a 2007 Memorandum of Understanding document cited at the National Theatre of Ghana, revealed that EfoKodjo Mawugbe a former, Executive Director of the National Theatre of Ghana met the Swedish Theatre Director, Francesca Quartey who visited Ghana. The meeting led to much collaboration where Mawugbe came up with the idea of using Quartey's experience to do what is called "family performances" in Sweden, a performance as relevant to children as to adults. He suggested working on an African version of Cinderella, as the theme invited possibilities to talk about children's and women's rights. Stressing the importance of making the family the bedrock of society, drama provides a good means to make people reflect and discuss various issues (National Theatre of Ghana, 2007).

With generous support from the Swedish Institute for exchange visits, a research trip from Sweden to Accra took place in March, 2008 when discussions on a collaboration between the National Theatre of Ghana (NTG) and Riksteatern on African Cinderella" started. The researcher found this collaboration in response to the concept of globalisation.

Nwanaju (2013) brings into focus culture as a totality of identity factors, natural endowments, not excluding people in whom and through whom a nation is presented, is harnessed, preserved and exported through distinct and defined institution(s). Theatre is a strong platform of communication because it is not just drama, dance or music. It also

embraces all arts that have to do with human experience. Soyinka (1997) re-echoes this fact when he posits that theatre, despite its many masks, is the unending rendition of the human experience, in totality, and its excitement lies indeed in its very unpredictability.

The Ghanaian theatre began when there was an ‘outcry’ for cultural awareness, sensitisation, revival and identity promotion during the colonial rule as a result of imperial suppression on the traditional African values system by the colonialist. Besides, it also sought to redeem somewhat permanent foreign influence left by the crown colony administration by the British and to de-programme, as it tries to rebuild ‘African personality’ who will take pride in African cultural identity (Agovi, 1990). Against this backdrop, the National Theatre Movement activities tried to build a sense of traditional awareness for the brainwashed, the then Gold Coast people due to the legacy left by the colonial government. Indeed, the use of theatre as a formidable art form for social change particularly emerges as a subconscious element among most educated Ghanaians. It is observed in the reviewed literature of this study that the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana was largely influenced by the National Theatre Movement during the 1950(s) by some key patriots like, Efua Sutherland and Professor J. H. Kwabena Nketia “a renowned Ghanaian cultural expert who happened to be the then Director of both the Institute of African Studies and the School of Music and Drama” (Agovi, 1990, p.8).

Collins (2007) advocates that prior to independence the British introduced the Western form of theatre referred to as literary theatre that formed the paradox for post-independence theatrical practitioners. This foundation laid the premise to write plays about the colonised Ghanaian identity, that is identity of the self and the nation which was written in the language of the old colonial power. Patriots such as Efua Sutherland, Ama Ata Aidoo and Joe de-Graft were among the few who had the rare opportunity to

investigate into the search for the self-written in English. Apparently, the enthusiastic activities of Sutherland in 1958 propelled her to establish the Experimental Theatre Players, jointly founded by the Ghana Arts Council and the Rockefeller Foundation. By 1961 it was officially recognised and renamed as the Ghana Drama Studio with Joe de-Graft as the director. Politics and the arts are so linked that Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of Ghana in 1959 ordered for the creation of the National Symphony Orchestra of Ghana. Indisputably, Nkrumah recognised the potential importance of engaging with the people through theatre, a socio-cultural platform to deliberate on social and topical issues. Due to his association with the arts, he commissioned the drama studio which was sited at the current place of the National Theatre of Ghana. “Nkrumah’s politico-cultural policy came out from his vision of the National Theatre Movement, as a powerful medium for restoring African personality” (Botwe-Asamoah, 2011, p.170). He recounts the levels of his cultural policies; namely non-statutory and constitutional advancements were extraordinary in the history of Ghana. “Nkrumah’s cultural policies spearheaded a systematic institutional development intended to put his politico-cultural thought into practice. It illustrates in detail systematic cultural policies with the National Theatre Movement as the guidepost” (p.171). His dream was to have the constitutional bodies resuscitate and redefine the glorious African past, the traditional African cultural values and systems. This perhaps should be the restoration of African personality through theatrical activities and cultural promotions.

In that regard, the Arts Council’s regional offices stressed the collaborative efforts of each centre in the promotion of our cultural identity, underlying unity of the country. In line with the National Theatre Movement, they indorsed, invigorated and buttressed artistic and cultural events in their respective regions. “It held annual competitions, which culminated in the First National Festival of Music and Drama,

initiated by the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation in July 1961” (Botwe-Asamoah, 2011, p. 152). Research revealed that the National Theatre Advisory Committee set up by Nkrumah’s government to oversee the construction, as it were establishing a National Theatre to accommodate and guide the rapid proliferation of performing arts groups in the country, was not realised. “The inability to achieve Nkrumah’s said goal contributed to the replacement of Arts Council of Ghana by the Institute of Arts and Culture on October 1, 1962 to widen its scope and give it an effective direction” (p.171). The institute among others promoted and encouraged research into the arts and culture of Ghana by extension Africa. One of the activities of the institute of arts and culture was the realisation of The National Cultural Centre in Kumasi which came under the umbrella of the institute of arts and culture. However, before the setup of the institute of arts and culture, Efua Sutherland worked through the Arts Council of Ghana to construct the Ghana Drama Studio which was observed as a humble beginning of Nkrumah’s vision. A former director of the National Commission on Culture stated in an interview that, it was during the studios’ opening ceremony that Nkrumah took the opportunity to express his regret on the failure of the Arts Council of Ghana (M. Attipoe, personal communication, May 17, 2019). Meanwhile, his disappointment was geared towards the Council’s inability to influence the society with respect to his vision on the renewal of Africa’s past civilisation and the African personality through the theatre.

The establishment of the Ghana Drama Studio further propelled Sutherland in 1968 according to Collins to set up *Kusum Agoromma*, a touring theatre company, because she believed that drama is a tool for social education and change. As a result, Sutherland went on to form and consolidate her *Anansegoro*, a ground-breaking form of theatre which drew on both the Western literary form and also the Ghanaian flavour of

interactive, total theatre, and which was the fore-runner of the style of Mohammed Ben Abdallah's *Abibigro*.

From a nationalistic perspective, the idea to build a National Theatre edifice was realised in 1992 on the site of the Ghana Drama Studio, under the leadership of the third elected President Jerry John Rawlings after ten years of military rule. 'Created by law', the National Theatre of Ghana under the Presidency of Rawlings (1981 to 2001), was able to secure a Chinese grant on one of his state visits to China. On the basis of that, on 5th July, 1989 the contract as regards the construction of the National Theatre complex and the reconstruction of the Drama Studio at the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana was signed between the Government of the People's Republic of China and Government of the Republic of Ghana for the construction of the facility to commence. According to the agreement, the Chinese lent Ghana the money and the construction workers for the building even though construction workers from Ghana assisted the Chinese side. As stated in the constructional agreement, ten (10) years after commissioning the facility, the Chinese repeated the gesture by funding the refurbishment, and again Ghana cleared the debt according to a former Director of the National Theatre who happened to be the building project supervisor. Even though the building was a gift, according to a former Director of Finance and Administration, National Commission on Culture (M. Attipoe, personal communication, 17 April, 2018) affirmed that the whole idea was politically shrewd as a public link between Ghana and China as pointed out by Collins (2007) in his document, *The Growth of National Form of Theatre in Ghana*.

The National Theatre of Ghana facility is located near the junction of Independence Avenue and Liberia Road and faces the Ghana National Children's park now renamed as the Efua Sutherland Children's Park. While the National Theatre was

being built, the Ghana Drama Studio was moved to the University of Ghana at Legon and was rebuilt as an exact replica of the original drama studio. In a personal communication with Abdallah (A. Abdalla, personal communication, 17 September, 2018), he stressed that the drama studio was dismantled and relocated to its current site at the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana and rebuilt ‘brick by brick’. In his assertion, he said Efua Sutherland supervised the movement of the drama studio facilities and equipment from the current site of the National Theatre to its present site at the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana, Legon all by herself. Consequently, the loan agreement between the Chinese Government and the Ghana Government was a soft one which did not attract any interest what so ever and payable whenever.

Abdallah in his statement declared the initiative to rebuild the drama studio at the University of Ghana, Legon was a risk he took because he did not seek for approval before giving the go ahead to implement the decision to reconstruct the studio at the University of Ghana, Legon. Per his statement, “my neck was on the line.” In his desperation he broke the news to President Rawlings and to his surprise, the President thought it was a brilliant decision he took in the interest of the sitting government. In Abdallah’s own words “I couldn’t believe my eyes, in fact he congratulated me for being proactive.” In all purposes and intent Abdallah pointed out that Ghana benefited twice; the National Theatre building facility and the Efua Sutherland Drama Studio relocated at the University of Ghana, Legon. When the drama studio project was completed, a senior lecturer at the School of Performing Arts was appointed as the Director of the Efua Sutherland Drama Studio.

As indicated earlier, part of the agreement signed was to ensure a ten-year refurbishment plan which should be ongoing to maintain the facility. Furtherance to

Abdallah's communication, siting of the drama studio at the University of Ghana was agreed by the then Vice Chancellor, Akilapa Sawyer. In the discourse, he said "when the drama studio project was completed, the keys were handed over to me [Abdallah] and I also handed it over to Alhaji Abubakari later" a senior member of the University of Ghana.

Johnson (2013) in his studies showed that the demolishing of the drama studio to make way for the National Theatre facility did not go down well with some patriarchs and matriarchs of Ghanaian theatre. More especially, the perception of some members of the general public indicating that the architectural form of the new national theatre building had semblance of Chinese architecture. During the study, the researcher personally wanted to know what was wrong with the National Theatre facility. In his quest, it came to light that some scholars were of the view that the architectural design of the building did not represent the Ghanaian cultural identity. Some say the auditorium was not designed for Ghanaian productions since the configuration of the stage had great distancing between the audience and the stage, a typical style of the Eurocentric traditions. Additionally, the design also requires a very considerable expenditure on air-conditioning, a cost that has rendered hiring the hall prohibitively expensive for many groups (Gibbs, 2012). On the contrary, it appeared that the drama studio, a rather monumental structure, epitomizing the humble, resilient and professional history of Ghana theatre, was totally razed to the ground to be represented by the new national theatre, and rebuilt on the University of Ghana, Legon Campus between 1990 and 1993 by the Chinese engineers (Gibbs, 2012).

In a personal communication with the former Director of the National Theatre of Ghana indicated that the National Theatre of Ghana space has a total building area of 11,896 square metres as indicated by (Appendix I), it is a large multi-functional and

comprehensive complex structure with first class finishing. The building cost a total of \$20 million (twenty million US Dollars) and was built by both Ghanaian and Chinese personnel. In her submission, the construction of the building commenced on June 19, 1990, and was completed on December 20, 1992 and handed over to the Ghana Government on 30th December, 1992 (A. Frimpong, personal communication, August 17, 2017).

In a revelation by Abdallah, the whole idea of a National Theatre for Ghana stemmed out of a debate class in the 1970(s) at the School of Music and Dance now known as the School of Performing Arts (SPA), University of Ghana, Legon. The debate involved a student with his colleagues such as Kofi Melton Mends, Kofi Bucknor, Kofi Antobam and Saka Akwei among others. This discussion was led by their lecturer, Scott Kennedy an American scholar who was by then their acting lecturer at SPA. He indicated that ever since the idea of Ghana having a theatre got into his mind, he had never had his peace till such a time when he took office as the P.N.D.C. Secretary for Education and the Chairman for National Commission on Culture, where he felt he could realise his dream. In his speech, “Luck came on my side to advice the then President, Flt. Lt. J. J. Rawlings to choose between a sports stadium and a theatre” during his visit to China. According to him around that time, Esi Sutherland was his assistant at the Ministry who also supported the idea of a theatre.

A Director restated that, while a performer with the University of Ghana Resident Company, *Abibigromma* during the 1980(s), Abdallah and a couple of high-powered delegations visited the company at the University of Ghana, Legon and talked to some of the members of the group about the National Theatre Movement which he believed was to materialise physically into a building facility. In his statement, he declared that Abdallah and his team wanted the performing groups to be resident in the

National Theatre and that they should embrace the idea and come to the National Theatre to do theatre on a bigger professional scale, instead of featuring on a small stage in the dance hall at the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana, Legon. Also, they would be privileged to take short courses to enrich their performance skills. Mawuli Semevor stresses that even though they embraced the idea, it became an uncertain issue, where some of the members wanted to go to the National Theatre and others wanting to remain at the University of Ghana (M. Semevor, personal communication, May 17, 2018). Incidentally, around that time, some of the members of *Abibigromma* who did not go to the National Theatre had heard that around that time, Ford foundation was giving out some scholarships to deserving persons so they had applied. With reference to members who agreed to leave for the National Theatre from the University of Ghana, Legon they also felt that with this assurance given by Abdallah and his team, they needed to give their best and be devoted to the course by sacrificing to make the National Theatre Movement dream a reality.

On the contrary, another school of thought at the University of Ghana Legon resisted vehemently and was not in agreement to let the group go to the National Theatre. In Abdallah's own words, "it took the executive order from the then President Jerry John Rawlings to finally release the members to make it to the National Theatre." Unfortunately, a performer of one of the resident companies stated that "till this day all the promises made to have them acquire further training to upgrade their professional skills, hoping that things would be better has not been met." He further indicated that the turn of events made their plight worse off when the then government in power lost to the incumbent government. They had no one to speak or intervene for them and were left in the hands of the National Commission on Culture.

With regard to the option to settle on the theatre building in the decision process, the then Chief Justice Annan mooted for an Olympic village, while Kwamena Ahwoi the former P.N.D.C. Secretary for Local Government supported the idea of a theatre. When the Chinese had agreed on the option for a theatre as specified by President Rawlings, he quickly charged Abdallah to put together a committee and a document to initiate the process. By nomination Abdallah appointed Alhaji Abubakari who happened to be a seasoned architect to lead the team. The theatre idea ‘cemented’ the friendship between Ghana and China. Meanwhile, in Abdallah’s speech, he confirms that “whenever you become a friend to the Chinese, they are bound to leave a legacy or a foot print in your country.” For the Chinese this was a rare chance to build a monument in Ghana. The researcher deduced from the interview that the National Theatre of Ghana building was partly Chinese and partly Ghanaian. In a passing statement, Abdallah indicated that, “he who pays the piper calls the tune.” This kind of gesture had replicated in most African countries, especially when a nation opens up to the Chinese. In Benin the Chinese have built an awesome theatre facility that looks like a traditional drum. Also, in Burkina Faso the Chinese government built a huge Olympic size stadium as a sign of friendship just like the Ghanaian scenario.

Indicative of the study, identifying an appropriate place to site the theatre facility was a challenge. Options suggested were; the former Salifu Amankwa’s park opposite the ‘Obra’ Spot at the Kwame Nkrumah’s Circle, former Tetteh-Quarshie Circle, the enclave of the State House, the present site of the International Conference Centre and the current site of the theatre which housed the Ghana Drama Studio by then. According to Abdallah, it was very difficult to decide on the exact location for the theatre building taking into cognisance security and accessibility. “However, a decision had to be arrived at,” these were his words. In that tough moment, the drama studio had

to make way for the construction of the theatre facility, a difficult “daunting task”, sighed Abdallah (B. Abdallah, personal communication, April 17, 2018).

2.11.1 National Dance Company

The National Dance Company is one of the umbrella bodies operating under the National Theatre of Ghana. The need for establishing and maintaining performing art troupes has long been recognised in all African countries. Such troupes trained and managed by professional staff are usually attached to appropriate government departments or ministries. Nii-Yartey (2000), in his assertion, recognises the situation in Ghana where a university faculty also trained and managed performing arts troupes. This was supported on similar lines by government on a university campus which was unique in the 1980(s). It arose partly because the foresight of the university in developing academic programmes of training and research in African performing arts. Soon after its inception and the recognition by government, the contribution that the university could make to cultural development because of the expertise had developed.

As part of the movement’s development “in 1962, Ghana Dance Ensemble (G.D.E.) now National Dance Company was established as the National Dance Company of Ghana and has since been steered on behalf of Ghana by the University of Ghana through the Institute of African Studies, Legon” (Adu-Gyamfi, 2013, p.14). The ensemble was under the directorship of Professor J. H. Nketia at that time at the Institute of African Studies and Mawere Opoku was its first artistic director. Meanwhile, Opoku’s neo-traditional dances remained part of the standard repertoire of the company. Later, Professor F. Nii-Yartey became the artistic director of the Dance Ensemble in 1976. G.D.E. was mandated to develop, re-organise and arrange Ghana’s cultural policy. In contrast, the university dance ensemble focused on applied research,

pedagogy, university related programmes, performances, creation of authentic Ghanaian choreographic pieces based on social related themes and rearrangement of traditional dances embellished with modern conventional traditional theatre forms for the stage presentations which hitherto were community based rural folk dances which reflect the political, social, ceremonial and occupational activities as well as ritual dances. Since then the group as an artistic agency has promoted and furthered diplomatic ties with many countries in the area of cultural exchange programmes and promotions. According to research, its initial idea of operation was not purposed to either operate as a commercial outfit or profit-making group as indicated by Adu-Gyamfi (2013).

A speech delivered by one of the Directors of National Dance Company at a lecture was of the view that the National Theatre Company's goals were to carry forward contemporary African dance theatre tradition which began at the university by creating and developing extended works that explored the fullest technical facility of the modern theatre facility, using it as a spring board in the African dance vocabulary established by customary practice and other movements for dramatizing stories and the selected themes of work.

During the Non-Aligned Movement Conference in Accra, Ghana (1985), some energetic dancers were recruited into the dance ensemble to be trained for national assignments. These dancers were staff from the National Commission for Culture (NCC). Immediately the conference was over, these dancers from N.C.C. settled at the National Theatre of Ghana under the name The National Dance Company. This new group forged ahead the position of the 1960's theatre movement and was modelled on the 1960 socialist theatre movement, which hitherto was the preserve of the old Ghana Dance Ensemble (G.D.E). According to a respondent from the National Commission on

Culture, part of the members of the old G.D.E at the University of Ghana, Legon left to join the new National Dance Company at the National Theatre of Ghana under the directorship of Professor Francis Nii-Yartey and his able stage manager and set designer, David Amo.

Additionally, in 1992, the Ghana Dance Ensemble was transferred to the National Theatre as an autonomous resident company under the then P.N.D.C. Government. The condition under which the resident companies were transferred to the National Theatre later created an unending challenge between the resident companies and the National Theatre of Ghana on the other side. It appeared the National Theatre became the landlord, whereas the resident companies were seen as tenants within the edifice. Among others who joined the theatre from the University of Ghana, Legon were the public relations officer and a few others. According to Nii-Yartey (2011), two thirds of the staff and artistes of the National Dance Company and the National Theatre Company respectively were elected from Dance Ensemble and *Abibigromma* from the University of Ghana, Legon, to be transferred to the National Theatre as required by the National Theatre law. Also, some new dancers were recruited and trained by the Director, Nii-Yartey. Part of the Ensemble however, remained at the University of Ghana to help with teaching and research. For the purposes of differentiation, the group at the National Theatre of Ghana is known as the National Dance Company of Ghana. Under the artistic direction of Nii-Yartey, the company enlarged its repertoire to include the creation of dance-theatre productions and contemporary African dances as well as productions for Special Events.

Undoubtedly, the company has established itself as one of the most versatile and formidable dance companies in Africa today. David T. Akushey Amoo, a trained dancer and set-designer, continued with the artistic works from 2006; combining his visual arts

and dance backgrounds to give the company a fresh look. The dance company is now under the artistic direction of Nii-Tete Yartey, the son of Professor F. K. Nii-Yartey as at the time the researcher interviewed him for the study.

When the National Theatre of Ghana was being established, Dr. Mohammed Ben Abdallah at the time, was at the apex of the cultural Ministry and it was his desire and vision to kick start the operations and programming of the theatre facility, since the physical manifestation of the National Theatre Movement was evident and needed to foster its goals. For that matter, it was necessary according to the study to house professionals in the newly built National Theatre of Ghana as indicated earlier to begin operations in order to continue and fulfil the vision of the National Theatre Movement. Agovi (1989) succinctly puts, “in my view, Abdallah is an important figure in the evolution of the Ghanaian Theatre of the eighties because of his abiding concern with the African past” (p.14). Additionally, Abdallah brings the Moslem culture of the Sahel Region into sharply synthesis with the cultures of the forest south. He depicts contemporary reality (representative of the cultures of the forest south) within the historical and cultural framework of ancient Sudanic Empires located in the Sahel Region. The next entity under review is *Abibigromma* which later became the National Drama Company.

2.11.2 National Drama Company

Abibigromma was established in August, 1983 at the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana, Legon, as a model repertory troupe to facilitate teaching, research and experimentation. In 1991, *Abibigromma* was transferred to become the National Drama Company as well as the resident troupe of the newly-built National Theatre of Ghana.

In retrospect, *Abibigromma* of the School of Performing Arts (SPA), University of Ghana, Legon, has since been committed to the development and promotion of modern African theatre based on the traditional accumulated resources of oral and written performance literature of the continent of Africa. The group derives its name, *Abibigromma* from two African words: 'Abibiman' (Africa) and 'Agromma' (players). 'Abibigros' somehow translated to mean "African theatre."

In the area of cultural promotion and co-operation, *Abibigromma* of SPA has travelled extensively within Africa and Europe to project Ghana's rich cultural heritage and art forms at international festivals and conferences which has enormously led to an enhanced development between Ghana and some part of the world. This linkage programme established between Ghana and some other countries indeed have deepened the bilateral relations between the university and other institutions.

The nature and repertoire of the group's performances are well-crafted combinations of theatre, music and dance (total theatre). This is due to the versatile and talented nature of the members who are well-trained mostly from SPA with different backgrounds. In rendition, the group creates and presents both scripted and unscripted theatre works. The artistic synergy that exists among the music type, theatre and dance pieces are inspired by the oral and written literature of Ghana and Africa stimulated by history, folklore and tradition woven into an artistic expression on stage.

In focus, *Abibigromma* the resident theatre group of the School of Performing Arts (SPA), University of Ghana was founded in May, 1983 after a three-member committee comprising, Dr. Mohammed Ben Abdallah, Professor William Ofose Adinku, and Mr. Asare Newman both dance specialists had been charged earlier to come up with a proposal for the establishment of the group. Upon the setup,

Abibigromma was mandated to research into the Ghanaian and African art forms and to promote the Ghanaian culture through the performing arts.

After completion of the new national theatre facility, some members of *Abibigromma*, the resident group of S.P.A got attracted to the National Theatre and moved to join them in 1992 when it was commissioned as a corporate body by the National Theatre law 1991 under the pursuance of P.N.D.C. Law 259 (National Commission on Culture, 1995). Its objectives were clearly stated in Article 2 of the law indicating that the National Theatre was to seek to the “promotion and development of the performing arts in Ghana.” Basically, as part of the company’s focus, they seek to develop “Abibigro,” a rich blend of music, dance, mime, movement and dialogue with a strong social, spiritual and folkloric base. This type of drama is different in several respects from the usual ‘straight’ drama which was very common in the 1980(s). The company also employs the Theatre for Education (TFE) model and has developed numerous skits over the years. Per the researcher’s study, it appears that the company seems to have been doing more in this area within the past few years; this is really not deliberate. A theatre director was of the view that this “sort of request kept coming in and it is normally sponsored and cannot be turned down.” According to the National Theatre of Ghana they have positively affected lives as their skits are able to make ordinary citizens understand even the most difficult subjects and issues they sometimes have to grapple with. According to a one of its Director’s, in a public speech held at the National Theatre of Ghana on the 4th of June 2012, referred to development as “both a process and a goal of bringing about a social change in order to improve the living standards of a people. It aims at a planned change by transfer of knowledge and skills not through lectures but through non-formal education and follow-up.” Since development as a process aims at bringing improvement not only in the physical and

social conditions of the people, but also durable gains in the people's ability to control and sustain the improved conditions, theatre by its nature is a powerful, natural partner, an absolute essential in pushing developmental issues through. This is part of our company's interest affirmed by a director of the National Drama Company.

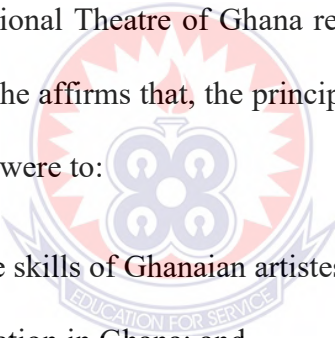
A director underscores the fact that on request, the company develops skits tailored to meet specific needs of a people in the community or of an organisation. The aim of the group is to raise awareness on and facilitate the search for lasting solutions to the social, economic or civic issues that militate against a community's steady development. In a given circumstance, the solutions more often than not require attitudinal change through public education.

Notably, it appears the country had two (2) split *Abibigromma* theatre groups in Ghana. One stationed at SPA, University of Ghana, Legon and the other in the new theatre facility in Accra. Consequently, the existence of both *Abibigromma* groups, brought about rivalry, hatred and tension among members of both sides and extended to some of the teaching staff at the School of Performing Arts. A similar scenario confronted the National Dance Companies. At the end University of Ghana housed both *Abibigromma* and Dance Ensemble while the National Theatre also had a section of these groups resident at the theatre, known as the resident companies.

A participant in reaction to the rivalry between both sets of groups stated that the estranged attitude existing between them made it very difficult for both groups operating differently to have a harmonious working relation. In the researcher's opinion both groups stand as competitors instead of collaborators in the development of the performing arts and culture. Each of them focusses their strengths in separate ways; a sad scenario.

2.11.3 National Symphony Orchestra, Ghana

At the time of conducting the study, the researcher in a personal communication with David Annor (D. Annor, personal communication, September 12, 2018), the Director of the Symphony Orchestra, in one of his responses indicated that the first President of Ghana, Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah ordered the National Symphony to be established by Philip Gbeho in 1959 by executive powers as part of President Nkrumah's cultural policies, aimed at "searching for African personality through African drama, dance and music," as hinted by (A. Anyidoho, personal communication, September 14, 2018). According to him, the Symphony Orchestra is a government organisation under the control of the Ministry for Tourism, Culture and the Arts, one of the entity bodies of the National Theatre of Ghana responsible for the development of Orchestra music. Basically, he affirms that, the principal objective for the establishment of the Symphony Orchestra were to:

- 
- a. develop performance skills of Ghanaian artistes;
 - b. promote music education in Ghana; and
 - c. project African art music.

In his assessment of the above objectives, he was of the view that National Symphony Orchestra has embarked on various performances with instrumentations of both western and African renditions throughout the years as a fulfilment of its mandate. The mandates of the National Theatre of Ghana among other things were to establish theatres in other parts of the country in order to integrate the theatrical and cultural efforts of the entire country. This idea was stipulated by Article 3 of the National Theatre law (Adu-Gyamfi, 2013, p. 14) which states that "for the purpose of achieving this objective, the National Theatre shall establish in such parts of the country as the

council may deem it.” Hence, the National Theatre by laws are mandated to establish more theatres across the country. In order to promote, develop and establish more theatres as stipulated by law, it behoves on the management of the new national theatre to focus and achieve the said target. In view of this, Section 7 of the National Theatre law enjoins the three performing arts groups to play key roles in fostering the promotional strategies to achieve the said intent. On the basis of that Adu-Gyamfi (2013) stated:

The Ghana Dance Ensemble, *Abibigromma* and the National Symphony Orchestra shall be resident performance groups of the National Theatre in areas of dance, dramatic art and music respectively. The law establishing the National Theatre of Ghana is clear about the objectives of the promotion of performing arts’ mandate and also clearly identified the agents of the resident theatre groups to achieve these objectives. The law also makes provision for funding or providing a resource base for the promotion of the National Theatre activities. (p.14)

Explicitly, the law has adequately made provisions for the operations of the National Theatre but its feasibility is what one needs to look out for as far as its reality is concerned. On the contrary, the research repository of the Ministry of Tourism Arts and Culture as documented by Artwatch Ghana (2017) indicates that the ministry has a deficit of research undone to ensure a more focused direction in the sustenance and promotion of the creative arts industry. Policy decisions would have been based on research findings if the necessary structures were put in place to foster growth and development in the industry. The researcher seeks to believe that crisis of the creative arts partly hinged on leadership failure and the underdevelopment of the creative arts to the realisation of its goals based on arguments put forward by Artwatch Ghana.

In principle, recognising the importance of the creative arts industry, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah took certain proactive initiatives that formed a good foundation for the industry to grow by establishing related institutions that will obviously promote the activities of the arts and culture. In a related speech by Elsie Amina Gombilla, Assistant Registrar of the University of the Development Studies (UDS), Tamale, in a lecture to commemorate the centenary of Dr Nkrumah in Tamale, indicated that “Ghana’s first President, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, initiated a self-reliant and self-sustaining development for the country, which was underpinned by a sound cultural system” as cited in Graphic Showbiz (Thursday 19-25, 2009). She advances the argument that through the vision of Dr. Nkrumah the country had realised the importance of culture and arts in its development since independence, “people of Africa now have consciousness of their cultural identity and possess a definite pride of culture” (p.3).

It is evident through studies that as a result of Nkrumah’s initiative, Prof. Emeritus J. H. Kwabena Nketia fashioned out a “cultural policy document for the country soon after attaining nationhood in 1957. This modern policy was adopted by UNESCO (2009, p.3) and since then successive governments have used it as a reference point. In retrospect, Nkrumah’s vision is relevant today.” To affirm Nkrumah’s drive of identity consciousness he inaugurated the Institute of African Studies in 1963, which he regarded as an intellectual wing of the pan-Africanist revolution. Dr. Nkrumah, she said, also had a personal interest and enthusiastically supported the arts and cultural institutions, including the Ghana Museums, Arts Council of Ghana, research library on African affairs and the Ghana Film Corporation.

In ensuing development, Nkrumah’s intention was to bring activities in areas such as literature, cinema, theatre, music, visual arts, as well as symposia and conferences of specific topics with “African significance” which he did (Botwi-

Asamoah, 2005). In a much more insightful perspective, he promoted mass education and encouraged the use of Ghanaian languages, including Dagbani in the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation's newscast and other programmes. Gombilla (2009, p.3) noted the "importance of arts and culture in development, and said these were the areas in which the disparities between the developing and developed countries were greatest, adding "we therefore need to take culture and the arts into account in our development discourse". However, after his overthrow in 1966, it appears that successive governments could not continue his vision. For instance, he established the National Academy of Music (NAM) at Winneba in the Central Region, National Film and Television Institute (NAFTI), Accra; Graphic Corporation in Accra; Ghanaian Times Corporation in Accra; Ghana Publishing House, Accra; School of Performing Arts University of Ghana, Legon; the College of Arts at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology; the Department of Art Education, (now Specialists Teacher Training College at Winneba part of University of Education, Winneba); and Industrial Arts Department at KNUST. Others include the handicraft school at Asante Mampong, Takoradi Technical School, Accra Technical Training Centre, Ghana Textile Printing Company, Juapong Textiles, Ashanti Shoe Factory in Kumasi, the National Art Centre, Saltpond Ceramics, Aboso Glass Factory, Ghana Rubber Company and a host of others. These institutions and companies offered industrial training to students and apprentices to equip them with life-long skills in many vocations in the creative arts. They also employed creative arts graduates and other ancillary personnel from different professions. Sadly, majority of these companies and institutions have been deserted and allowed to dilapidate and even diversified to private investors who could not manage them effectively and allowed them to liquidate (Artwatch Ghana, 2017).

“Tourism is a travel-laden sector (Gilbert & Lizotte, 1998). Its alignment with the creative arts creates further workload for the ministry. As a result, the leadership of the sector spends more time on travel aspect leaving the ground work undone. A lack of supervision of the agencies under the ministry to ensure effective productivity and service delivery retards development of the creative arts” (Artwatch Ghana, 2017, p.12). Consequently, the researcher supports the contribution of Artwatch Ghana to engage the services of a more progressive, robust and dynamic leadership with the capacity to coordinate all the agencies under the ministry to spearhead the vision and mission of the entire Ministry for Tourism, Arts and Culture.

2.11.4 Institutional Collaborations

According to the National Theatre Law 259 in pursuance of P.N.D.C. Law 1991 as cited by the National Commission on Culture (1995), there will be the great synergy between School of Performing Arts (SPA) and Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana and the National Theatre. The performance standards of SPA graduates will be enhanced by standards of quality set by the National Theatre and the artists it represents.

The researcher observed that in principle, the National Theatre Law was drawn when School of Performing Arts was the only established performing arts educational institution in Ghana at the time. Now as it stands, there has been the establishment of additional performing arts educational institutions in Ghana to play similar functions as SPA.

The additional educational institutions added on are, the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Education, Winneba, Winneba, Department of Theatre and Film Studies, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast and last but not the least, the performing

arts educational institution based at the Kwame Nkrumah, University of Science and Technology (KNUST) campus. With the addition of these institutions, it is imperative to relook at the law and make necessary amendments to cover all the performing arts educational institutions in Ghana. Linkage programmes between the National Theatre and the performing arts educational institutions are of paramount importance since the chemistry of these allied institutions promotes human resource development and the enhancement of skills. For instance, a director of the National Theatre concedes that when the National Theatre of Ghana got started, there were many non-professionals that were working in the theatre.

The question would be how do you run a theatre without the requisite professionals to run the show? Consciously, the National Theatre identified a couple of staff members who had the interest in areas that needed to be strengthened and trained such persons in identified theatres abroad for a short period to acquire the necessary skills needed to man the theatre's facilities because the theatre did not have the luxury of time to send such persons to school for two or three years of study. In her explanation, such persons within the spate of about three months had actually seen and worked in a world class theatre in their related fields. Basically, some members of staff were sent to Britain, United State of America and South Africa to mention a few and the focus was on both the technical and administrative staff. In terms of the artistes, training was achieved through the numerous travels they embarked on to other parts of the world to participate in international festivals which became one of the training grounds for them, since one learns a lot from festival situations through observation. Such opportunities made way for the study of new stagecraft forms and performance skills.

Members of the National Theatre of Ghana were enriched by the interchange between professional artists, scholars, and teachers who were refreshed by their exposure to talented students who aimed at becoming professional artists affiliated with the National Theatre.

As part of the theatre's functions, it was mandated to play a special role in fostering the development of traditional idioms of contemporary art forms such as orchestras, theatrical groups, and dance ensembles. Both traditional and conventional groups will mount performances demonstrating Ghana and Africa's cultural diversity and historical significance as well as our membership in the present international artistic community.

In furtherance to the mandate, the theatre was to serve as the umbrella for the nurturing and maturation of the National Symphony Orchestra, National Theatre Players now known as the National Drama Company and National Dance Company all of Ghana. Each should have several levels of preparatory entry with progression determined by artistic advancement as described below:

1. National performance level - This is the highest level of professional attainment for Ghanaian performers characterised by performances in the National Theatre in Accra and touring both nationally and internationally, premiering major traditional and contemporary compositions, and involvement with linkages/exchanges programme with international agencies.
2. Postgraduate mentoring programme - Intermediate level between college and promotion to the national performance level. This programme will be characterised highly talented often by performing professionals and those ready

to move into the professional performing world. Fellowships and mentoring will be encouraged as well as international study and performance abroad.

3. University linkage programme - Ensure highest level of quality in standards as may be required by the school of performing arts and national theatre.
4. Satellite programmes - Outreach to all ages and all communities in the country fostering the highest quality in arts programming and education through elementary, secondary and magnet school programmes, community education and performances and the development of national children's performance programmes for especially talented youth.
5. Preservation of traditional indigenous art forms - a second equally important aspect of the satellite programme will be the transmission of our indigenous artistic forms to future generations of Ghanaians and African children throughout the world through available technological media as well as those traditional avenues that have provided such effective cognitive processes.

2.11.5 Ghana National Theatre Law, 1991

The National Theatre Law, 1991 of P.N.D.C.L. 259 is a governmental instrument in pursuance of the Provisional National Defence Council (Establishment) Proclamation 1981 as cited in (National Theatre of Ghana, 1995, p.10). This law is hereby made among others: "There is hereby established a body to be known as the Ghana National Theatre in this Law referred to as "National Theatre."

Per the study, it revealed that the National Theatre of Ghana Law appears to be ambiguous and needs to be looked at as confirmed by a document cited at the National Theatre referred to as "Proposed amendment in the Ghana National Theatre Law 1991

(P.N.D.C. L 259) — Appendix E and Appendix F referred to as the “Reconstitution of the National Theatre Board” which seek to enable the theatre move to its expected level of operation. This action is necessary for the board of directors to initiate and develop policies that guarantee the viability of the enterprise under its jurisdiction.

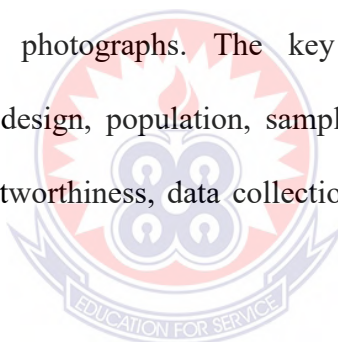


CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

The thrust of this chapter is the roadmap employed in establishing reliable data about the National Theatre of Ghana as contributing to the development and promotion of the performing arts in Ghana. It contains the methodology that was used by the researcher to conduct the study. This involved how both primary and secondary data were collected to address the research questions. The primary source included information obtained through interviews, field studies and observations. Whereas the secondary data sources were gathered from textbooks, documents, articles, journals, the internet, newspapers and photographs. The key headings explored under the methodology are research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection instruments, trustworthiness, data collection procedures, data analysis plan, and ethical considerations.



3.1 Research Paradigm

Research paradigms play a key role in every scientific research. The researcher plunged this study into qualitative research. This is because it entails vivid narration of participants' lived experiences, collecting images, perusing through documents and description of historical events with recourse to rigorous analysis and interpretation of gathered data which lead to sound conclusions. Sociologist, Krauss (2005) referred to this form as interpretive sociology. Hence, the research was based on the interpretivist paradigm to explore and analyse the National Theatre of Ghana in perspective. Interpretivism is an epistemology that advocates that it is necessary for the researcher to understand differences between humans in our role as social actors. This emphasizes

the difference between conducting research among people rather than objects. In this study the term ‘social actors’ refers to humans (people) who play a part in on the stage of human life. Interpretivists contend that only through the subjective interpretation of and intervention in reality can that reality be fully understood. The study of phenomena in their natural environment is key to the interpretivist philosophy. The nature of the research problem, the purpose, research objectives and research questions as well as the research methodology inform the reason for choosing the interpretivist approach.

3.2 Research Design

The study focused on the National Theatre of Ghana and therefore adopted historic case design which presented narratives of the participants. This design aimed at “collecting evidences from the past to help understand the past and the present and to a limited extent in anticipating the future” (Agyedu, Donkor & Obeng, 2013, p.88). On the basis of this, the design dealt with the entire history behind the National Theatre Movement, while the case study focused on the National Theatre facility as a constituent of the theatre movement.

3.2.1 Narrative Research Design

By and large, narrative research design which was used in the study focused on people’s narratives/stories either about themselves or a set of events and putting them into context and organising the study such that there exists relational engagement between the researcher and the participants (Hinchman & Hinchman, 1997). This design does not look for themes that emerge from an account but concentrates on the sequential unfolding of someone’s lived story so as to achieve coercion and understanding. Hence, the human construction of reality in this case explored the activities and operations of the current National Theatre of Ghana entity; involving the

National Drama Company, National Dance Company and National Symphony Orchestra, which are umbrella bodies operating under the National Theatre of Ghana with oversight responsibility from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts. This research tool is mostly linked to how people live and how situations unfold. Usually, qualitative researchers delve into the human behaviour and how they read meanings into the situations and the meaning people attach to things in their lives (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). In corroboration, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) advocate that qualitative researchers try to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them.

Significantly, the researcher engaged the experience contained in the lived and untold stories of the research participants and analysed them through narrative analysis in retelling the stories of the individuals in a chronological manner with a social, cultural and historical twist and focused on the important themes in the lived experience which was basically one of the ways he approached the narrative research (Creswell, 2007). The ability of narrative inquiry to transform fragments of data collected into a well-planned artistic form that employ conventions of fictional literature to present is not just a mere ordered way of life but a rich artistic one that helps to interpret information. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) posit that human lives are fragments of narratives about their daily lives and experiences which when thought about could be understood in narratives unities or otherwise. This sort of inquiry has the tendencies of focusing on certain explicit context jurisdictions (Creswell, 2007).

The data collected from the participants were organized and fused with existing *field text* (existing documents) and pictures. On the whole, the narrative inquiry tool ensured further clarification, interpretation, explored explanations and deduced ideas from mannerisms in the unfolding story (Ting, 2005).

3.2.2 Case Study Approach

The case study approach was also used in the study. The intent to adopt the case study approach for the study was settled upon because it was deemed appropriate for the aims on which the study thrived. The relevance of case study is that, it offers the researcher the opportunity to observe the characteristics of an individual unit in the community and it also examines the factors that cause the behavioural patterns of a given unit and its relationship within the environment (Yin, 1984). The data for a study in this context was gathered with the purpose of tracing the natural history of a social or economic unit, and its relationship with the social or economic factors, besides the forces involved in its environment. In this particular case, the study looks at the relationship between the National Theatre of Ghana as an individual entity and the entire National Theatre Movement in order to bring out how these two factors could be used as social and economic players to stimulate growth. By studying the National Theatre of Ghana as a single unit in this work, focus was made on its significant role in socio-cultural development in Ghana. Besides, attention was drawn to the extent to which the National Theatre of Ghana had achieved its core mandates, the representation of the National Theatre of Ghana, the extent of operations of the National Theatre of Ghana and the current state of the National Theatre of Ghana which could inform future development.

3.2.3 Historical Research Design

Selecting historical research tool as one of the research designs was greatly informed by the objectives of the study which sought to give a historical account of the establishment and operation of the National Theatre of Ghana. Besides, historical study encapsulates a systematic collection and evaluation of data to describe, explain, and

understand actions or events that occurred sometime in the past (Schutt, 2009). In this regard, the focus was to recreate the past through existing records and establish their relationship with the present which may inform the future.

Historical research represents a “systematic enquiry into the past and an attempt to separate truth from fictionalised accounts of historical events, based upon the examination of a wide range of relevant source material” (McDowell, 2002, p.5). In this case, a better understanding or insight of the past places us in a more advantageous position to appreciate change in the present and to try and learn from past mistakes. It is on the basis of McDowell’s assumption that historical research design also became pertinent in this study.

By this design, the researcher attempted to reconstruct what happened during a certain period of time as completely and accurately as possible according to the variables and information gathered. Some philosophers used the term to describe an individual’s first-person perspective on his or her own experience, culture, history, and society (Lapan, Quartaroli & Riemer, 2012).

The researcher believes that undoubtedly when history is properly written, it always stimulates interest. Similarly, a genuine interest in history usually indicates some degree of culture. Paradoxically as it may seem, the nation that looks backward is the nation that looks forward.

3.3 Population

The population for the study was made up of both past and present Directors of the National Commission on Culture, past and present Directors of National Commission on Culture and Directors of Centres for National Culture, Directors of Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts. Inclusive both past and present Directors of

the National Theatre of Ghana, performers in the theatre made up of selected members from the three (3) resident companies, journalists representing the media experts, selected heads of performing arts institutions in Ghana, clients of the National Theatre of Ghana, designers and architects who were responsible for the construction of the National Theatre building facility, as represented in Table 1. However, estimated target population for the study was fifty-four (54). These were the population from which cultural and performing arts responses to questions relating to National Theatre of Ghana could be elicited from as tabulated below.

Table 1: Categories of Population

Category A	Category B	Number in each Category
Cultural experts	Knowledgeable in culture and history of Theatre Movement in Ghana	15
Directors from the National Theatre of Ghana	Responsible for the Theatre facility and general operations	10
Performers in the National Theatre of Ghana	Members of the three (3) Resident Companies	10
Journalists from Graphic Communication Group and Ghanaian Times Corporation	Culture and entertainment reviewers (Journalists)	6
Heads of Department, Theatre Arts	Knowledgeable in development and promotion of the performing Arts	3
Production Houses [Roverman Productions and Chatter House]	Ardent clients of the Theatre and the facility users	6
Designers and architects	Experts in theatre design and architecture	4
Total		54

3.4 Sample

The sample for the study consisted of twenty-four (24) participants as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Sample for the Study

Experts	No. of participants
Cultural Experts	5
Directors from the National Theatre of Ghana	6
Performers in the National Theatre of Ghana	3
Journalists from Graphic Communication Group and Ghanaian Times Corporation	2
Heads of Departments, Theatre Arts	2
Production Houses [Roverman Productions and Chatter House]	2
Designers and architects	4
Total	24

3.5 Sampling Technique

The purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used in selecting participants for the study. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants for the study since the study focused on knowledgeable experts within the cultural and performing arts domain. On the basis of that the researcher deliberately selected participants who could provide needed important information for the study which could not be gotten from other participants. These were experts in their respective fields selected to provide adequate answers to the research questions. These participants provided both historical and technical information for the study. The intention was to secure a number of responses from the interview determined by the researcher to aid facilitate relevant and adequate information about the National Theatre of Ghana since it is a specialised institution.

For instance, under the category of cultural experts, they gave responses about the significance and history of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana, categories under Directors from the National Theatre of Ghana touched on the establishment of the Theatre facility, policies regulating the activities, the operations of the National Theatre and the current state of the National Theatre facility. Category under performers in the National Theatre of Ghana answered questions relating to the nature and type of productions developed and promoted by the National Theatre entity as well as the state of the building of the facility, Category under journalists from Graphic Communication Group and Ghanaian Times Corporation answered questions relating to the promotion and development of the performing arts in Ghana, and those under heads of departments, theatre arts gave responses about the history and development of theatre in Ghana. Meanwhile, the category under Production Houses answered questions on the nature and type of productions developed and produced by the National Theatre entity as well as the state of the building facility. Finally, categories under designers and architects also answered questions on the design and construction of the theatre facility. After the interview juxtaposed with literature, it was noticed from the responses that each category had a great deal of knowledge in the following areas that needed responses.

Additionally, the snowball sampling technique which is a non-probability sampling technique was employed to the study to identify study subjects among their acquaintances who hitherto were not known by the researcher. Importantly, snowball sampling according to Bernard (2006) is associated more often with qualitative research and acts as an expedient strategy to access hidden populations. The researcher found it convenient since at the time of data collection some of the participants who were eye witnesses of the development and construction of the National Theatre of Ghana project

had passed or retired at the time of data collection. Therefore, some informants at the theatre located other informants who provided sufficient information with regard to the development of the National Theatre among others. As a result, the researcher's sampling frame grew with each interview and got saturated, which was a good step the researcher took to locate people in the population.

Hence, the snowball sampling technique confirmed, refuted, clarified and fine-tuned the thoughts of the researcher for a better understanding of the problem (Dawson, 2002). This technique was employed by the researcher to further scout for information recommended by previous participant which to an extent works on a referral network basis built on initial responses leading to a more holistic purview as indicated earlier. For instance, an opportunity was chanced on when the researcher was referred by Mohammed Ben Abdallah to a retired cultural expert who worked with the National Commission on Culture and was involved in the decision-making process to demolish the Ghana Drama Studio to replace the National Theatre of Ghana facility. In the submission of the cultural expert, an executive order was issued from the Presidency to carry out the demolition to break the grounds to commence the construction which was a government directive. Another case of interest that employed the snowball sampling technique was the representation of the National Theatre building. With this instance, the current estate manager of the National Theatre also referred the researcher to the Ghanaian architect who worked alongside with the Chinese architect on the project to confirm the representative nature of the edifice. In line with this thought, Mohammed Ben Abdallah further referred the researcher to one of the designers who was responsible for the creation of some carvings and sculptures, both interior and exterior at the theatre premise. The researcher's intention was to find out if the creation of the

statues and sculptures were an afterthought or an integral part of the design concept and formulation.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

Data was collected using interviews, document analysis as well as theoretical research. The later included the studying of the documents establishing the National Theatre of Ghana [policies and mandates] as well as documents from the National Commission on Culture focusing on the Centres for National Culture in collaboration with the National Theatre of Ghana. To supplement the data collection instruments, participant observation was utilised to corroborate and contribute more details evidentially by watching productions at the National Theatre venues to ascertain and confirm relevant cultures of theatrical traditions sought from books and other materials. Undoubtedly, the primary and secondary sources effectively aided the researcher obtain accurate and relevant information on the issues as well as an understanding of the chronological order of events and applied same in the analysis of the interrelated events.

3.6.1 Interview

The purpose of the interview was to gather information with regard to lived experiences of the respondents. The interview type used for the study was the semi-structured interview which worked very well during the narration of the participants' lived experience. In this type of interview as described by Dawson (2002) the researcher wanted to know specific information which can be compared and contrasted with information gained in other interviews. Hence, in doing so, participants were allowed to share their lived experiences in their performing arts and cultural careers. As a result, the schedule carefully focused the interview on topics to cover on the study area rather than particular questions to ask in the interview. Brinkmann (2013)

explained that the semi-structured interview allows the interviewer directs the interview more closely, which was the order in which the researcher conducted the interview. The researcher's road map was clearly defined through a process of introduction, opening question, core in-depth questions and closure. In this regard, the researcher understood the people's perceptions and experiences.

Occasionally, during participant's interview, some questions needed follow-up questions which sought further clarification to untold lived stories during the sessions. With the permission of the participant, the interviews were recorded in an audio format and later transcribed by the researcher, it was read to the participant to confirm or refute its credibility. Imperatively, the researcher ensured that the questions asked were clear and were in line with the objective in mind. Attached is permission to interview letter (Appendix A), introductory letter (Appendix B), informed consent form (Appendix C). These were considered as the ethical issues in doing historical narrative research that revealed the personality of the participant. The semi-structured interview schedule questions are attached as Appendix D.

3.6.2 Observation

The observation method is usually used in cultural/community studies when the researcher aims to understand a number of aspects in the life of community folks; why they behave the way they do. According to Yin (2004), observation is often a useful method in case studies, especially in the study of single case study.

For that matter, the researcher employed the participatory type of observation to the study. As a result, he visited the National Theatre of Ghana severally during the study to examine the theatrical structures and facilities to ascertain its current state. His

visit also afforded him the opportunity to observe the operations and activities of the theatre as an entity.

Additionally, the researcher happened to have worked at the National Theatre of Ghana as a former technical director and a scenic designer and has had oversight responsibility over the technical department from 1997 to 2010 and was therefore abreast of certain activities in the theatre at that time. For that matter, the researcher was privileged to operate with newly installed theatrical structures and fittings since the National Theatre of Ghana was commissioned in 1992. Apparently, it was around the time the National Theatre enjoyed economies of scale with reference to hiring of the facilities, developing and promotion of the performing arts in Ghana. Since at the time it was the only standardised theatrical facility Ghana had.

Currently, the researcher no longer works with the National Theatre of Ghana but currently a staff of University of Education, Winneba as a lecturer since 2013. and does not know the state of the theatrical structures and operational levels. Hence, to be objective with the study, there was the need to step aside to investigate the current theatrical structures to come out with a fair judgement with the state of the facility as indicated by research question five (5), *“What is the current state of the National Theatre of Ghana facility?”*

Additionally, the researcher watched a couple of performances at the various venues of the National Theatre and selected regional centres for national culture to confirm or otherwise the type of productions developed and promoted in these cultural institutions to show if the mandate of the theatre is adhered to or not, as indicated in research question two (2), *“To what extent has the National Theatre of Ghana achieved its core mandate?”*

3.6.3 Document Analysis

Document analysis became appropriate in order to understand the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana within the historical context and its representation. As a result, these were revealed by the following documents: National Theatre of Ghana background documents for capitalization, 1995 as cited by National Commission on Culture (1995), Cultural policy of Ghana (2004), Ghana National Theatre Law 1991 of P.N.D.C. Law 259 as cited in the National Commission on Culture (1995), Comprehensive data on National Commission on Culture projects, 2018 as cited in National Commission on Culture (2017), the National Theatre in retrospect: An overview of the first four (4) operational years, 1994-1997 as cited in National Theatre of Ghana (2010), final report on the commercialisation of the National Theatre of Ghana as cited in Taylor and Associate (2001), Efo Kojo Mawugbe's mission statement for the National Theatre of Ghana (2011) and televised recordings of past productions. In this case, these accounts became the first-hand record of events. Inclusive were; the National Theatre of Ghana background document on capitalisation 1995 and the law establishing the National Theatre of Ghana, autobiographies, diaries, photographs, official reports and documents that provided a first-hand account of the situation under study. Additionally, the P.N.D.C.L 259 of 1991 was perused as cited in National Commission on Culture (1995) and 1992 Constitutions of Ghana of the Republic of Ghana (1992) were perused to ascertain policies with respect to the National Theatre of Ghana's mandate and establishment.

The researcher's interest to utilise both primary and secondary sources was due to the fact that the study area was grey. Hence, the primary data was the main source of

data used and supplemented with secondary data. It also included information from semi-structured interviews which offered the researcher the opportunity to ensure that participants thought aloud to gather verbal data from them about their perceptions and experiences regarding the problem. Moreover, previewing video recording of past events at the National Theatre of Ghana to ascertain the type of cultural programmes National Theatre had hosted since its inception.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

Before data collection in each scenario, the researcher had to visit each participant to submit a permission letter to interview the participant as well as an introductory letter to inform participants on the purpose of the visit. Having explained what researcher was looking for backed with the letters, appointment dates were scheduled and followed up subsequently. On different slated interview dates, permission was asked from the participants to interview and record session. The nature of the interviews were semi-structured with participant narrating their lived experience or events witnessed. The tools used were a note book, digital camera, laptop computer and an audio recorder. The digital camera was used to capture individual participants and the theatrical elements, while the audio-visual device was used as digital voice recorders to capture the narrations of the participants besides the use of a laptop computer which was used as a backup output device for the audio-visual. The researcher also made note of certain portions of the narrations for post-narration sessions.

Even though data were collected from participants, it was still imperative to source data from books containing the National Theatre Movement, culture and identity and the development of theatres in Ghana and by extension Africa. Notably, these were

accessed from the University of Ghana Libraries: African studies, Balm and School of Performing Arts (Theatre Arts), Osagyefo Library of the University of Education, Winneba, and George Padmore Research Library in Accra. Additionally, the researcher visited the National Theatre's library twice to assess past televised documented production recordings lodged at the National Theatre of Ghana library to ascertain cultural programmes that have been produced by the National Theatre and how significant such programmes were to the development of arts and culture in Ghana. The National Drama Company and National Dance Company libraries as well as researcher's personal library were sourced. Finally, data gathered were sorted and ensured that they effectively responded to the research questions and were tailored towards to the research objectives.

3.8 Trustworthiness

As in qualitative methods, researchers describe certain concepts related to reliability and validity. Guba (1981) proposed "trustworthiness" as a surrogate measure for validity and reliability in naturalistic inquiries. By structuring the study to address the four aspects of trustworthiness; that is, truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality. The researcher achieved the following outcomes: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The notion of trustworthiness also known as "validity," "authenticity," or "credibility" is "seen as a strength of qualitative research," with reference to the accuracy of the findings "from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers of an account" (Creswell & Miller, 2000 in Creswell, 2003, pp. 195-196).

In order to ensure the validity of the research instrument, the interview schedule and the observation guide were designed to reflect on the research objectives and questions. To

ensure face validity of the instruments, they were given to colleague lecturers for peer review, experts and the research supervisor for scrutiny as well as expert judgment.

3.8.1 Dependability

To give credence to the credibility that was established for this study, the researcher had to ensure dependability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) asserted that there could be no credibility without dependability in qualitative research. They suggested that dependability can be established through the establishment of appropriate enquiry decision, review of interviewer bias to resist early closure, establishment of categorical schemes and exploration of all areas, resistance to practical pressures and findings of both positive and negative data and triangulation. In this regard, information obtained from the literature review helped to develop questions that elicited responses to answer the research questions that were formulated to direct this study. This ensured appropriateness of the questions that the respondents were asked. Besides, the interview format helped to develop categories and themes used in the findings.

To deal with the issue of bias in the study, the researcher sought clarification for answers that were not clearly stated during the interview. In this way, unclear data that were obtained were resolved. Care was taken about the duration of the interview to avoid early closure and at the same time to prevent the provision of unreliable data following boredom on the part of respondents as a result of prolonged interview session.

3.8.2 Credibility

To establish validity, the data for this study must be credible. According to Creswell (2002) respondent validation is where the result of the research is submitted to the respondents for confirmation as a means of establishing credibility. In this study, the

researcher interacted with the subjects over a period of not less than one month in order to develop acquaintance with them. This was done through casual visits to the respondents at their offices and also via telephone conversation. This enabled the researcher to develop a relationship with them. In this way, the researcher was able to build trust between himself and each respondent. This trust made it possible for the respondents to readily open up for discussions of all issues that are covered by the interview schedule for the study. In all, it took the researcher not less than one and half years to assemble all the data from respondents.

3.8.3 Transferability

The transferability of a research study addresses the question of whether the findings are “context-relevant” or subject to non-comparability because of situational uniqueness (Guba, 1981, p.86). To provide a context for evaluating the transferability of the findings, the researcher used theoretical works that were reviewed by others and/or purposive sampling and developed a thick description of the data.

3.8.4 Confirmability

In order to avoid the effects of investigator bias, steps should be taken to collect data from a variety of sources and, if possible, by researchers with different perspectives. When these steps are not possible, the researcher should rely on “practicing reflexivity,” which Guba describes as revealing the researcher’s own assumptions to his audience (Guba, 1981, p.87). The researcher ensured this by documenting personal reactions and beliefs about the data.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis is a process of reducing large amount of collected data from different sources and trying to make meaning out of them (Elo & Kyngas, 2008).

In analysing the data, contextual and thematic analytical procedures were considered. Imperatively, in doing so, there were three stages the researcher considered; the data were organised, reduced through summarisation and themes and patterns and themes in data were identified and linked. At this stage the researcher created meaningful implications on the data collected. In other words, the analysis of the data focused on the identification, selection and analysis to eliminate or reduce and make sense of vast amount of information from different sources and organisation which required interpretation by the researcher so that impressions that shed light on the research questions emerged. Meanwhile, the researcher immersed himself in the data. Merriam (1998) describes this immersion process as familiarizing oneself with the data. The familiarization of the data was done through reviewing of observational notes taken on the field, listening to recorded interviews and carefully reading through all field note documents. More so, tape recorded data were later transcribed into text formats while pictures were developed into picture charts.

The focus of the study was on the National Theatre of Ghana in perspective. Subsequently, data collected were therefore categorized according to the related focus per the research questions. Preliminary coding was undertaken to establish emerging ideas and trends and later developed into final coding. Dawson (2002) however confirms this when he indicated that “thematic themes emerge from the data...” (p. 76). In this study, some of the emerging ideas were historical facts, funding, cultural development, education, socio-economic, socio-cultural, political and economics. The emerging ideas and established trends were put under themes in relation to the research question. These identified themes enabled the researcher to distil all the data for easy comprehension and analysis.

Some of the data collected were in photograph form. Hence, the researcher employed the ‘picture story’ method as a way of analysing the pictorial data. This process was quite fast and less time consuming. However, the stories about the National Theatre structure, its representation and other theatrical elements were well captured and sorted.

Since the study was historical, it was needful for the researcher to adopt the narrative analysis method to analyse the various narrative experiences of the participants because they were in line with the said method. At the end, the researcher presented the data in an orderly manner that gave a sense of what had taken place or what were believed to have existed. To this end, the narrative analysis enabled the researcher to easily identify the recurring phrases, emerging ideas and parts of the historical accounts being repeated by all/most of the participants. Through the narratives, the researcher was able to understand the phenomenon studied.

3.10 Ethical Issues

Ethical issues of research were considered as an important part of the whole study. The researcher made participants fully aware of reasons for which information were being sought from them. Participants were not coerced, tricked or under duress to provide any information. Enough notice was given to the participants by way of introductory letters which were sent ahead of time before the beginning of the data gathering process. Consent forms were administered to them for their perusal and acceptance before engaging them. The researcher was mindful of the fact that most of the issues were State’s secret and assured participants of full confidentiality on issues that were to be treated on that level, since the study was based on the National Theatre of Ghana, [a government agency]. The issues presented in this study are a true

reflection of what was gathered on the field. There has not been any deliberate attempt to hide, skew or alter any findings as presented by the participant. The researcher has tried his possible best to avoid all forms of biases concerning the information especially those about the National Theatre of Ghana which happens to be the main case for the study. Lastly, the researcher avoided plagiarism by ensuring that works of people which were used to buttress analysis of and in the literature review, were duly acknowledged in-text and listed in the reference section.

3.11 Verification / Trustworthiness of Data

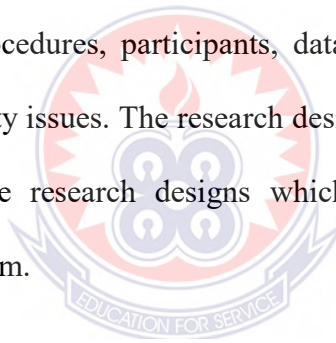
Qualitative research demands the researcher to ensure quality of work and reliability through the gathering of data in the form of rich content; based descriptions of people, events, and situations by using different, especially non-structural techniques to discover the stakeholders' views and similar, to orally analyse the gathered data, and finally to interpret the findings in the most efficient contextual way. This implies that qualitative researchers aspire to illuminate social meaning (Ospina, 2004). For this study, the researcher employed several sources of data to settle on the findings. This involved interviewing of cultural experts, theatre directors, performers, arts and culture critics, heads of performing arts institutions, clients of the National Theatre and designers, architects, structural and safety experts as well as media practitioners. The researcher also watched some productions from the National Theatre of Ghana and some Regional Centres for National Culture. These sources enabled the researcher to triangulate the emerging data gathered. Also, the researcher ensured to provide detail and vital information to confirm the findings.

To promote reliability of the data, rapport was established. Participants were made aware of the importance of the study to them. Again, they were informed of the

common professional interest shared since I was a technical director of the National Theatre of Ghana, but presently a lecturer at the University of Education, Winneba. These relationships were established to promote data reliability and validity. Peer debriefing was employed all through the data analysis process by a trusted colleague lecturer for feedback. This was informed by Creswell's (2003) proposal that peer debriefing will improve the accuracy of the account. Furthermore, there were regular communications with the dissertation committee members for potential researcher biases, review of themes and coding, and provision of insights and feedback.

3.12 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the research methodology, including the research paradigm and designs, procedures, participants, data collection instruments, analysis methods, and data credibility issues. The research designs for this study were historical-case study and descriptive research designs which were all within the frame of qualitative research paradigm.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION

4.0 Overview

At this stage data were collected, presented and grouped under each instrument; interview, observation and document analysis. The interview type used to collect data was a semi-structured one and for easy identification, pseudonyms of alphabets were used to identify the various categories. For instance, CE will refer to Cultural Experts, NTD refer to National Theatre of Ghana Directors, PNT refers to Performers in the National Theatre of Ghana, ME refers to Media Experts who were journalist from Graphic Communication Group and Ghanaian Times Corporation. Additionally, HODTA refers to Heads of Department of Theatre Arts Educational Institutions, CNT refers to Clients of the National and TE refers to the Technical Experts who were the Designers and Architects of the National Theatre project.

4.1 Results from Interview (RQ1)

According to CE1, “a nation that has no culture is almost non-existent because the culture determines the way the people live and behave with themselves among themselves and their interaction with the environment in which they live. It is a ‘driver and one of the pillars’ for development and sustenance of communities. More so, the National Theatre of Ghana was established when there were few performing arts facilities promoting the performing art, apart from School of Performing Arts (SPA) and the initiative from the university to promote culture and develop culture through education. Apparently, the only theatre existing at that time was the Efua Sutherland Drama Studio, which was a private theatre, very small and which impinged on the kind of theatre in general. Other venues which hosted dramas specifically was the Arts

Centre which also had a much smaller space. So, the concentration on theatre, therefore, was in small sprockets and that did not represent a movement. Hence, it did not really give you the feeling of a national appreciation for theatre and/or for that matter any measurable influence that the theatre itself could have on socio-economic activity in Ghana. So, the coming in of the National Theatre of Ghana (NTG) actually was an opportunity, the result of President Jerry John Rawlings visit to China and the decision to opt for a theatre instead of a stadium. The posture changed all that because it was put on a pedestal and immediately the building itself was put up, it signalled a certain new orientation more or less, for the promotion and development of the performing arts in Ghana. So yes, starting with the NTG in Accra some significant awareness was created, especially the showcasing of both stage and screen presentation of the bounced back *Concert Party* production. People were more conscious of what theatre could do for them and also what they could do with theatre. Now people started looking at monetising performances, employment opportunities were generated, theatre practitioners earning income as well as government earning taxes from the theatre productions, income from renting the facility and public education was heightened generally speaking. As a matter of fact, all kinds of other performances including entertainment were being put up. According to CEI, he presumes that this was the beginning of some kind of influence on socio-economic postures in this country. This opportunity happened as indicated by CEI when Mohammed Ben Abdallah was the Chairman of the Commission on Culture and PNDC Secretary for Education and Culture who used his limitless power to force it more or less.

In his further submission, during the 1980(s) the then President of Ghana, Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings visited China on one of his diplomatic visits and happened to

be offered the opportunity to choose between a theatre and a stadium. However, through Mohammed Ben Abdallah's influence, he chose a theatre.

CE2 indicated that culture is a catalyst for the development of a nation, it is the ingredient of harmony and identity. In his view, "unquestionably, no society can progress in the absence of culture. For that matter, the National Theatre facility is a monumental cultural edifice that represents one of our cultural heritages. "I believe it was built to provide cultural education and to promote our performing art in order to project our culture heritage and to build a theatre-going audience."

"Well, I think that first and foremost what comes immediately to mind was the development of the audiences for the performing arts" indicated by CE3. In furtherance to the statement made by him, the theatre came into being following the other spaces that were available, such as the Arts Centre and the Ghana Drama Studio, which were the main places of performance in Accra, it was very difficult to grow audience. However, with the establishment of NTG exponentially, there was a remarkable development in audience appreciation of theatre. To him, that was very significant and huge. In fact, the Arts Centre in terms of space was very small, a maximum of four hundred (400). Then the introduction of the National Theatre building was the coming into existence the huge edifice, the curiosity of the populace. In this regard, NTG started developing a new aggregate of audience, and then it became a symbol of an emerging class: those going to watch a performance, take a picture and make friends and those interested in touring the facility. It became a value issue for people. In terms of the social aggregate it became a very interesting phenomenon. So over time there was a certain audience appreciation in those who patronized theatre, for example, because they could go to the theatre and see performances of different types.

Significantly, the three resident groups had their different audiences, so, in terms of the social aggregate it was significant.

CE2 also recognised the increase in the participation of audience in the theatre's productions. Especially, popular audience began to emerge when the *concert party* tradition developed and the National Theatre began to show *concert party* programmes both on stage and on television which was hitherto productions for itinerant groups of a certain rural and semi urban elite. This was particular of a population made up of migrants who had come into the city of Accra. "They know of *concert party* and to their surprise, there was *concert party* on the stage." Meanwhile, from that stalk all kinds of people throng to the National Theatre: market women, tailors, hairdressers, food hawkers, teachers and drivers among others were coming to watch *concert party* even in their best clothes.

NTD2 indicated that *Concert Party* production could have been enjoyed nationwide up till now but for the withdrawal of sponsorship support by Unilever Ghana Limited it would have been the flagship family programme for Ghanaians. In corroboration, NTD4 was of the support to return *Concert Party* to the screen in order to encourage the non-formal stage directors and script writers.

Significantly, CE3 stated that the three resident groups had their different audiences enveloped in the theatre, so the social aggregate was significant. Also, with regard to the *Concert Party* production, certain popular audience began to emerge when the production was both shown on stage and screen which were hitherto itinerant groups of a certain rural and semi urban elite, particularly of the population made up of migrants who had come into the city of Accra. Apparently, most Ghanaians know of *Concert Party* and to their surprise, there was *Concert Party* on the stage. Meanwhile,

from that stalk, all kinds of people throng to the National Theatre: market women, tailors, hairdressers, food hawkers, teachers and drivers among others were coming to watch the production even in their best clothes. CE3 affirmed that production was well patronised because it had the Ghanaian setting and style, the use of local dialect was encouraged and it was very clear to understand amidst its comic relief. CE4 emphasized that the production had no restrictions whatsoever. It was organised as a communal production with the involvement of both performers and the audience.

The other aspect of relevance pointed out by CE3 was the ability to quantify artistic services in relation to revenue generation with particular reference to the arts which hitherto was not there. This was observed in some budget hearings as theatre activities were recognized. People now saw the performing arts as a business venture and could invest into it for returns. In fact, that is one of the things that the venue or institution gave. His submission led to the fact that in terms of the very broader idea related to development, he believes that the theatre played an important role in mainstreaming the thought process in people's appreciation of how theatre could enhance development, as one critical form. Besides, as an edifice and as a performance area, it has also over time brought attention to the place of the arts in the developmental process in this country. Sometime very imperceptible you may not put your finger on it, very fluid but people are able to point to the opportunities when planning is underway.

Even though CE4 acknowledges the fact that it appears that national theatre is making efforts to promote arts and culture, on the contrary, he does not see anything significant with the establishment of NTG because all they do was to promote elite theatre and rent the facility to clients. CE5 also submits that government funding was not sufficient for maintenance let alone programme development. In his statement, after independence we had to start from the scratch to develop our art form "but we did not

have the patience to start from the scratch, gathering information to build the kind of theatre that we can call the Ghanaian or African. We were in a hurry to have a theatre. More so, the proscenium theatre is limiting unlike the theatre in the round. Additionally, he states that the theatre building is too expensive to rent for a production.” CE1 observed that stage productions programmed for the National Theatre stage are normally very expensive to patronize. Hence, leaving out the grassroots. Meanwhile, it appears illiterates are being left out of the picture and the facility is supposed to be a national facility.

CE5 strongly indicated that the focus of the National Theatre of Ghana is to preserve our unique Ghanaian identity while projecting our Ghanaian positive values. Therefore, the concept of a national theatre is needed to significantly promote a nation’s history, traditional values and culture if you stay true to it and it was a great opportunity to have people like Mohammed Ben Abdallah push such an agenda.

CE4 thinks that the National Theatre brought opportunities in main streaming the thought process in people’s appreciation of how theatre could enhance development, as one critical form, it is an area which a lot of planners in the creative arts sector struggle with, how to link the arts to national development. CE1 believes that the theatre again as an edifice and as a performance area also has over time brought attention to the place of the arts in the developmental process in this country.

With respect to programming and ticketing, NTD5 in her stand clarified that not all productions loaded onto the National Theatre stage are priced and produced by the theatre. Therefore, some rates are determined by the client and produced by same clients.

Additionally, NTD5 indicated that the National Theatre of Ghana was set up to culturally educate Ghanaians and promote the performing arts. For instance, kids in Accra were given a role to perform to create and learn from other kids through the International Kids Festival, *KIDDAFEST*. The three (3) resident companies continue to go into the regions and into the schools with theatrical productions focused at promoting the arts and the treatment of set books in second cycle educational institutions to enhance the understanding and interpretation of the literary arts. These are all forms of promotion of the performing arts in Ghana.

NTD2 strongly believes that the establishment of the National Theatre was to promote a nation's history, traditional values and culture art forms so as to be true to it. "In fact, it was set up to project our art forms and to give credence to it. The theatre was built as an iconic monument of the Ghanaian representing our identity."

NTD3 was of the view that the National Theatre of Ghana was set up to have groups to preserve our culture, drumming, dance, folklore, theatre and music with all intent and purposes, it represents the heart and soul of the nation. These happenings have influenced a lot of people, where artistes have been sent outside to various countries to promote and project our culture through performances and workshops. The first president of our country, Kwame Nkrumah spearheaded the opportunity to inculcate into every student that entered the University of Ghana to learn something about our Ghanaian culture. It is a requirement before you graduate, which meant that you have to do African Studies.

NTD4 stated that, per Mohammed Ben Abdallah's background in terms of training and orientation, saw the use of theatre in Soviet Union and some socialist countries and even the capitalist countries like the United State of America and United

Kingdom at the time as a platform to address some social issues and to promote their cultural orientation. “Basically, theatre is a representation of the socio-cultural life of the people.” On the basis of that Mohammed Ben Abdallah felt that the theatre at the time of the P.N.D.C. revolution had a place. Hence, the agitation for a theatre started. Per the interview, a former administrator and director of finance of National Commission on Culture confirmed that the former President, Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings paid a visit to China on one of his official visits when he was confronted with the choice of a stadium or a theatre to be established in Ghana by the Chinese State Government. At the time theatre won, so the construction of the project commenced in 1990 and completed in 1992. The project was financed with a Chinese grant to the tune of twenty million dollars (\$20m). Absolutely, the reason why the theatre won was partly because Dr. Mohammed Ben Abdallah was by then the chairman for the National Commission on Culture. He had used his position and presence to influence board decisions, he got the listening ear of the government and he pushed the agenda for the establishment of the facility. Going forward, the P.N.D.C. Government also wanted to use theatre to promote the ideology of the revolution.

NTD3 affirmed that the whole idea about the National Theatre started as a movement which was by the late Efua Sutherland. In fact, she started the movement in the form of a research and later developed it into a storytelling session which led to the former President, Kwame Nkrumah showing interest and encouraging Sutherland to build the drama studio at the current site of the National Theatre. It so happened that during the era of the P.N.D.C, Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings had an opportunity which brought itself a Chinese grant to establish the National Theatre facility which replaced the drama studio. Additionally, “I believe that the theatre was also established as a result of agitations by some theatre practitioners. Notably, Efua Sutherland, Joe De-

Graft and Mohammed Ben Abdallah among others who impressed on the then P.N.D.C. Government to have a theatre established not as a movement, but as a structure that could translate into what they believed in as a theatre, a monument for posterity that tells our history.

It is a prudent thought as indicated by NTD3 for a country to have its pride vested in a cultural monument as a sign of identity and common purpose. This “I think might be one of the reasons the National Theatre was established. An institution that represented our heritage and pride of place.

PNT1 was of the view that the National Theatre was built as a symbol of the theatre traditions as a building and also as a movement of the people of Ghana. As a building we do have the structure even though the architectural design does not have any Ghanaian traditional influence. The theatre was also established as a cultural monument to showcase all what we consider as our cultural heritage. This is because, whatever happens in the theatre has to do with music, dance, drama, poetry, and praise singing among others. In fact, every aspect of the performing arts takes place at the National Theatre. Since the inception of the National Theatre, it has had lots of performances that have taken place there. Some of them have been milestone events that have been used to chronicle aspects of our history, cultural heritage or have been used to eulogise icons in the performing arts space, served as an avenue for interactive events spaces even for foreign embassies in Ghana.

ME1 stated that to him, the National Theatre of Ghana was built to educate Ghanaians and foreigners on cultural issues, and as a place to get entertained or to promote the performing arts. In his further submission with regard to education, the three resident companies also play public education roles during government

sensitization programmes occasionally by assisting the Information Service Department carry out such civic projects. The companies further raise revenue through their cultural exchange programmes and also put up productions at the National Theatre to raise some revenue, even though this form of revenue generation is not too effective due to funding challenges to support the programme unit.

Furthermore, ME2 stressed that to him, “the National Theatre of Ghana was established to provide a place for the performing artist to showcase its works, promote the arts, preserve the arts and to generate employment for the citizenry.”

HODTA1 hinted that the Chinese were supposed to put up a structure of our choice in Ghana and the choice was specifically between a stadium and a theatre facility. At the time, the Ministry of Sports was very close to the option since the country wanted a top-notch stadium. However, Mohammed Ben Abdallah managed to push for a theatre, because he was a theatre practitioner by profession and the P.N.D.C. Secretary for Education and Culture, his priority was for a theatre. Again, it was because culture is also important and the nation did not have a theatre but already had a National Sports Stadium. Having arrived at the desired option, the then President J. J. Rawlings also bought into the idea, and that brought about the construction of the National Theatre of Ghana.

According to the architect, a technical expert, who worked on the project represented by TE1, the National Theatre of Ghana was built to provide a big platform for actors and audiences to practice and witness what is actually going on in our society in a form of entertainment which ends up to be educative. In a contribution made by TE2, “the National Theatre came to emphasise the importance of our culture and to an extent also generate some income for the country.

The theatre movement of the sixties precipitated the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana facility elaborated by NTD6. In the sixties the stalwarts in the industry like Efua Sutherland and George Wilson among others came together to promote national theatre movement. It was also at that same time after independence that Kwame Nkrumah established the School of Performing Arts and the National Symphony Orchestra. So, there was that bond and understanding that theatre was essential and was critical to who we are as Ghanaians. Nevertheless, there was never really a place for performances, actually a theatre space so we had the experimental theatre which was the drama studio and the School of Performing Arts theatre, but that was not enough. The drama studio had a sitting capacity of about three hundred (300) and what the Performing Arts Theatre held was even fewer. Still at the University of Ghana, there were some halls that had performance spaces but really none of them were significant.

Then came the movement towards defining our theatre as *Abibigoro*, something that was unique to us as Ghanaians and the *Concert Party* trend that has been consistent over the years with musicians. So, there has always been a strong performing arts industry and their agitation for artistic space that would cater for all of these different genres of performances and voices. So, this building is actually the manifestation of those voices coming together and demanding and therefore finally getting a space for artistic voices and expressions to be heard.

According to NTG1, the National Theatre engages in tour for educational institutions, churches, organisations and private individuals, even though it is an auxiliary activity of the theatre. Basically, these tours expose participants to the facilities and practice of theatre. Per the study between the years of 1994 and 2005 collaborating with diplomatic missions by the theatre was fruitful. In the sense that the

staff of the theatre had the opportunity to share some of their experiences with their counter parts within the theatre practice.

NTD2 submits that the National Theatre of Ghana has participated extensively in cultural exchange programmes under the auspices of the Ministry for Tourism, Culture and the Arts. As indicated, these programmes were to afford the resident companies the opportunity to promote and share their culture with the outside world.

4.1.1 Results from Interview (RQ2)

Considering the mandates of the National Theatre of Ghana as stated by NTD1, “to develop and promote the performing arts in Ghana,” traditionally means that the theatre has to collaborate with the public to bring up such programmes that will measure to what we expect of the society and what we can get out from our culture. In perspective, in his submission he considers that in two stages, we need to look at what the National Theatre has done in its establishment in the past and what it is doing currently.

NTD1 indicated that when the National Theatre facility was new, the mandate of adding value to society and culture was clearly seen in some of the programmes that came up. In his view, this was seen in the way people participated in theatre productions in the initial stages of its establishment. So, by the participation of the public we could measure the impact made by the theatre with regard to development of the society. NTD2 stressed that during the early 1990(s) just after the commissioning of the National Theatre the then leaders of the theatre; Komla Amoaku, Korkor Amarteifio and Nii-Yartey spearheaded a series of new cultural variety productions. Among others were *Show Time* and *Fun World*, variety entertainment programmes that sought to unearth budding talents for the stage and by extension the creative arts industry. These

patriots of the theatre demonstrated the intent of the mandates by encouraging young performers to showcase their art forms. Through these enactments the theatre churned artistes with brand names such as Tic Tac, Azigiza, Samini, Kwame Sefa Kayi and Anas Aremeyaw Anas among others. Besides, stage directors, dancers, musicians and actors were produced to fulfill the part of the mandate that stated to develop the performing arts.

NTD2 attests to the fact that when the National Theatre of Ghana edifice was commissioned, with its new state of the arts equipment along an exciting group of young performers and an expectant audience, most people had the confidence that the theatre was going to bounce back a strong culture of the performing arts. Those artistes currently have used their kinds of music and activities to harness some aspects of development in Ghana and are earning money out of it. Same with *concert party* production which churned an artist like *Agya Koo* who does not have a formal education in theatre, but is now a board member of the National Theatre of Ghana, giving policy direction to the entity. Also, youth groups were formed [Indigena Africa, the Orchestra youth wing and Dance Factory the youth dance wing of the theatre]. Basically, these groups were established to nurture and develop the talents of the children and to maintain them as a standing group to feed the three (3) resident companies when the need arises.

NTD1 was indicative of the fact that, with his own experience sitting on the board and later on as a member of the Interim Management Committee Member of the theatre gave him the great insight into the management and operation of the theatre. One of his displeasure with the then Artistic Director in 2004 was with the position of the administration itself on its mandates. Because, “I think the mandate was misunderstood much as the administration did a lot of work in terms of initiatives and a

new beginning in the theatre.” They did not think that it was their responsibility to ensure that theatre as a movement was established on a national scale. That is understandable because that was the time that the government through the State Enterprises Commission was trying to re-structure the National Theatre and make them state organisations that were self-funding, because of the Abdallah posture, and therefore what was running through was that theatre ought to be funded by state. But with the new talk about monetising the facility was largely because the State Enterprises Commission itself did not understand the National Theatres Movement. They saw it mainly as a *money-making machine*, so they thought as long as National Theatre was making money from Annual General Meeting (AGM) and so on, then there was reason to cut them off and let them run their own business. On that note, one of the things that made the National Theatre partly not achieve its said mandates, was because of the conflict between the establishment of the National Theatre itself and the fact that it was under the National Commission on Culture and the fact that the commission had other agencies working under it. Specifically, the resident groups, all these were quite confusing and made the National Theatre management at that time, see themselves as an autonomous organisation that was preoccupied mainly with surviving. It appeared that they were not getting any support from the resident groups who as far as “I am concerned were the main users of the space.”

PNT2 is of the view that by and large, it appears the National Theatre is faced with challenges which might stem up from the non-adherence of its mandates. PTN2 was also of the view that the mandate of the theatre was not strictly adhered to. Meanwhile, PTN3 reported that the National Theatre did not have enough power to operate and was restricted with regard to operations. Seemingly, PNT1 observes the conflict between the National Commission on Culture and its own Centres of National

Culture which stems from the fact that they also pursue theatre and has also been given moneys to build theatre in the regions which are not complete in anyway. Similarly, the National Theatre has been given same mandate to establish theatres in Ghana. For the National Theatre to achieve its mandates, then all the powers should be subsumed under the National Theatre according to NTD1.

In further submission, NTD2 hinted that in 1995 he was part of the Board and the Interim Management Committee Member while implementing the law in 1995. Hence, from his perspective it appeared that situations changed which could not meet at that time the trend of events in terms of certain technical and administrative peculiarities. Besides, the resident groups and the National Theatre were operating autonomously as silo groups which did not help operation and for that matter focus on the mandates, stressed by NTD2. This seriously undermined the “promotion and development of the performing arts in Ghana” as enshrined in Article 2 of the supra Law even though the theatre management tried to keep up with standards. In the same vein, NTD3 also stated that the competitive nature of the theatre’s service with regard operation forced theatre to adopt certain strategies [hiring of the theatre facility] to sustain operations and to maintain the building. Hence, in the same year a proposed amendment to the Ghana National Theatre Law 1991 of P.N.D.C.L. 259 and a proposal to reconstitute the National Theatre Board was mooted and were both submitted to the Secretary to Cabinet on the 13th of March, 1995 by the then Chairman for the National Commission on Culture, Lt. General Arnold Quainoo.

Unfortunately, as stressed by NTD1 approval was not given to both proposals but then, the directors of the National Theatre at that time adopted some of their proposed ideas that they believed will move the theatre forward during their tenure of office from 1995 to 2005, and it appeared situations were quite better and that

accounted for great prospects achieved by the theatre during that period. Subsequently, the new management that took over the theatre and reverted to the old law, P.N.D.C.L 259 of 1991 to date.

However, from the year 2005 to date as stated by NTD5, the operation of the National Theatre has not been the best with regard to programme development and maintenance of the facility even though attempts have been made to stream line activities. For instance, the facility needed to be maintained due to the pressure on the facility.

Hence, to fix the challenge of refurbishment of the theatre, there was the need to break and fix the existing challenges in order to put the theatre back on track. NTD3 insisted that there was the need to shut down the facility for a major maintenance. In support NTD4 was of the same opinion to rehabilitate the theatre machinery for maximum output.

Therefore, during the refurbishment, the National Theatre facility was totally shut down for a year, honoring the contractual agreement entered into by the Chinese Government and the Ghana Government. The agreement was to shut the facility down after every ten (10) years of operations for a major maintenance task. In an ensuing statement by NTD6, during the shutdown of the theatre facility, new states of the arts facilities began to spring up which took over the performance spaces. This challenge led to the increased rentals of the International Conference Centre, which was already in competition with the National Theatre before the closure. Meanwhile, other rental spaces appeared on the scene competing in the rental of spaces. Among others were; State Banquet Hall, Kama Conference Centre, Silver Birds theatre, Physician and Surgeon Building facility all in Accra and the Accra Sports stadium.

Per PTN3's assertion, it appears the closure of the National Theatre for refurbishment led to the increased use of other competing spaces. From the point of view of NTD2, the National Theatre is still grappling with audience and major sponsorship loss as a result of the long closure for renovation (2005-2006). In her submission under the circumstances there was the need to be aggressive, proactive and above all very innovative in the kind of programmes to churn out to bring in and retain old audience and attract new ones. "To this end, this is by no means that some of the traditional programmes organized by the theatre in the past was abandoned." Rather, NTG looked at new forms of programme contents in order to make each of the programmes responsive to the artistic aspirations of the new Ghanaian audience. In perspective, educational programmes were designed for Ghana Education Service and the general public, "it was envisaged that this new direction would nurture a new generation of theatre lovers in junior and senior high schools and tertiary institutions."

In a detail statement by NTD1 as part of the strategic plan, the National Drama Company and Dance Company after the refurbishment of the theatre, repositioned themselves by making visible their activities through the dramatic enactment of the literature textbooks and workshops to be taken round the schools in Ghana to increase the passion for theatre in the children and youth in general as a sign of the promotion of theatre in Ghana. NTD3 saw this action as a strategy to rejuvenate the passion for theatre in the country.

NTD3 stated that on September 3, 2011 during the *International Theatre Day* held at the National Theatre of Ghana after the maintenance break, Efo kojo Mawugbe, the then Executive Director made a speech to promote the activities of the National Theatre of Ghana in a bid to be true to the mandates of the theatre and to recuperate from its long silence of theatrical operations. In his words he was optimistic that the theatre

would bounce back to its feet through short and long term programmes and projects both on and off the theatre's premise after the long break period of refurbishment.

Among his vision were:

- a. The sustenance and broadening of an already existing music, dance and drama annual programme dubbed, Senior High Schools Art Dot Com.
- b. The establishment of Ghana University Festival of Arts (GUFA). Before Mawugbe's demise this project was being discussed with three public universities namely Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, University of Ghana, Legon, Cape Coast University, Cape Coast, University of Education, Winneba and the African University College of Communication, Accra. He was hopeful that come 2011 the project shall be rolled out.
- c. He also promoted one major Ghanaian classic in music, dance and theatre every year, which will be spearheaded by the three resident companies of the National Theatre of Ghana. The idea was to get the three companies get together to do one major performance for the stage and television. He intended to rope in Corporate Ghana for sponsorship.
- d. International Festival of *Ananse* Drama, our folklore is an authentic Ghanaian traditional theatrical production conceived by Efo Kodjo Mawugbe who seeks to popularize the Ghanaian folk stories and to give the whole concept international acclamation on the different stages, both local and internationally.
- e. My birthday with the National Theatre. This is a programme that was intended to bring junior high school pupils from deprived areas to spend a whole day at the theatre exploring and unearthing their artistic talents as in creative writing, painting, music, dance and acting.

- f. Ga-Adangbe Arts and Culture Excellence Award. This is a triennial event the NTG wants to organize with the Ga Traditional Council as part of its social responsibility to the people of Ga-Dangbe on whose land the NTG stands.

Before Mawugbe's demise, consultations were underway. The year 2012 would have been the most likely year for the execution of the very first one to crown the annual *Homowo* Festival. Among others were a whole list of programmes/projects lined up by Efo Kodjo Mawugbe to use as leverages to rebrand the National Theatre of Ghana.

Another development by NTD6 was of the opinion that NTG sought the consent of its board and approval from the government to create a Theatre Support Fund to address operational issues that might face the theatre in line of its duties, which could sustain programmes of the theatre. This idea could be funds generated from percentage deductions from rentals to be operated as a revolving fund to also assist emerging amateur groups working with the Ghana Union of Theatre Societies (GUT). "This chance will have probably been one of the quests for the mandates of the National Theatre of Ghana, "to promote the performing arts in Ghana" (National Commission on Culture, 1995).

In a bid to achieve the mandates of NTG, according to NTD1 it is needful to observe these contributions made by Efo Kojo Mawugbe in his vision document of (2011-2015) presented to the NTG Board as the Acting Executive Director. Mawugbe further alluded to the fact of the place of ICT in marketing the NTG through the website and a marketing unit which must be properly set up.

NTD4 concedes that there should be the need to look for opportunities to retain most of the key staff, particularly those involved in the core business of the

establishment [artistes and crew]. This suggests the need for some of staff to have the opportunity to attend international festivals outside the country as part of the learning process.

According to NTD3, NTG is a sub-vented government organisation by law establishment to thrive under Government of Ghana subventions and emoluments. In his opinion, national theatre subventions are normally delayed and woefully inadequate for the theatre's general operations. Adding to NTD3's declaration, NTD6 agrees with NTD3 with the submission that funding for programming is woefully inadequate. Inadequate funding affects general operations and programme development and in the long run appear to be a conduit for the inability to achieve core mandates as stipulated by the National Theatre Law.

NTD3 states that due to the state in which theatre finds itself currently, it has developed other forms of income generating to sustain and maintain the facility as well as to develop and promote the performing arts. This challenge as stated by NTD5 may have accounted for the detour of the National Theatre somehow focusing on rentals of the facility instead of the development and promotion of the performing arts in Ghana as enshrined in the National Theatre Law. Seemingly, even though the National Theatre of Ghana is faced with such problems as funding, it has in a way created collaborative opportunities for both individuals, associations, performing arts, educational institutions and corporate organisation to promote and project the performing arts in Ghana as corroborated by NTD2. These are catered through sponsorships. Occasionally, the National Theatre organises cultural forum that seeks to deliberately address cultural related issues that focuses on the creative arts. The forum brings together stakeholders of the arts and cultural fraternity. Also, as part of the promotion of the performing arts in Ghana, in recent times, a cultural platform dubbed 'Theatre Festival' has been put in

place to showcase and project theatrical performances by the National Theatre of Ghana, rendering the activities within the National Theatre complex.

Furthermore, NTD3 in his quest to respond to the achievement of the mandate by the National Theatre referred to the fact that, there is the need to do more by reaching out to the hinterland, to make the presence of the theatre more felt. NTD2 indicated that the whole idea was to link up with the cultural centres which have districts and circuit centres that would have had model groups in the district and circuit levels so that they could train other groups to push the agenda of developing and promoting our culture. CE5 espouses that it is important for the state to encourage the creation, documentation and extensive productions of the dramatic arts in order to sustain the interest of Ghanaians in the participation of theatre programmes. The researcher believes that in so doing, preservation and promotion of traditional and contemporary dramatic arts will be well patronised and preserved for posterity.

NTD3 discusses that it is important to place premium on our art forms by identifying them at the village or regional level, and polishing and packaging them at the national level, and finally selling them out to the world since the world is now a global village. Further to his statement the Regional Centres for National Cultures must support the activities of the National Theatre of Ghana to push this national agenda through. In support of NTD3 by NTD6, the theatre must consciously involve performing arts groups from the district, regional and national levels to synergies efforts to attain the said goal. It must be noted that the National Theatre should not be seen as a building in Accra but a concept of ideas that moves round to promote the African identity and the cultural practices. Therefore, the regions must have groups representing the National Theatre who are modeled on the concepts of the National Theatre to

promote the arts. NTD3 drew attention to the fact that it appears some Centre for National Culture facilities in the regions are not completed structurally.

The Director of the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) was of the view that holistically achieving the mandate meant reaching out into all the regions in Ghana to make the theatre more felt and building the aspiration on a rather national consensus base. In so doing, the activities of the National Theatre will be decentralised and coordinated by the theatre. To him, this arrangement would gain the attention of the Ghanaian populace. NTD3 also mentions that the government in power is a key player in this situation, that is, the achievement of the said target. Hence, NTD4 found out that on the basis of that it was important to draw attention to the concepts and ideologies of the various executive directors who led the various administrations under different governments.

The Estate Manager of the National Theatre, indicated that he was one of the oldest members of staff and with authority he thinks that the theatre has done well when we talk about its mandates. He was of the view that they cannot say they have done big things but at least they have achieved an appreciable level of success. He stated that if one looks at the current cultural or artistic field, it appears to represent artistes who have passed through the National Theatre [administration, professional outlook and support staff wise]. “Through our programmes we have also inculcated into the Ghanaian citizenship the culture of Ghana.” Per his statement, “when you talk about music, those who are currently making it now in the musical field in Ghana are mostly people who accessed the facilities and programming of the National Theatre through *Fun World*, *KIDDAFEST* and *Concert Party* among others. With regard to film produced by Kumasi producers, *Kumawood* movie makers, most of the artistes featured comprise

concert party performers and these crops of persons all passed through the National Theatre programme. So, we have at least made an impact. With regard to other film genres, mention can be made of artistes such as Mawuli Semevor, Edinam Atatsi and Agnese Pamfred among others who are all from the National Drama Company.

NTD2 is of the view that the mandates of the National Theatre is still on course to be achieved even though there has been difficult times. An example of an achievement to this effect is the on-going collaborative production among Roverman production, some production houses and the National Theatre as stated in the mandates of the Theatre “to develop and promote the performing arts in Ghana.” There have also been collaborations with some production houses here in Ghana. Additionally, NTD2 further indicated that from the word go when the National Theatre was established some talents have been identified in some parts of the rural areas and developed through *Concert Party* platforms, which has been a pride to the National Theatre.

The core mandates are being developed, day in day out explained NTD3 as change management system are being observed. In NTD3’s development, the National Theatre has been under four management teams ever since its inception, and each administration led the theatre in its own administrative style. Notwithstanding, the mandates which became the reference point for its operation and administration processes. In retrospect the theatre has had its fair share of political interferences as far as rentals of the facility is concerned. In spite of that, culture as a bedrock needs to be promoted and performing arts activities developed. The National Theatre has come a long way by discovering budding artist and promoting them on the National Theatre stage. Among these artists, some of them have turned to professional musicians and promoter in the creative arts industry.

“I have also been an insider before according to NTD4 and served on the National Theatre board, worked at the National Commission on Culture and had the advantage of being there when the theatre project was under construction.” Now the mandated of the theatre is to promote the performing arts. When you talk about the performing arts it is clear, music, dance and drama. However, the largest chunk of this society consists of our rural folks who are in the various communities and who are in the various school. And so, one looks at the schools in the rural communities: student population in basic, secondary, tertiary and also looking at the working class. Therefore, if an assessment is to be made, we got to ask ourselves how we have engaged these various communities. “I can say with the little that I have observed, that the National Theatre has not done well. What do we mean by the community? Per the submission of NTD4 “we are not saying that we are going to have the National Drama Company from Accra visiting all the communities in the rural areas at the same time, no.” According to him why we need to consider the link between the National Theatre as an organisation and as a movement and the Centres for National Culture is because, these centres would be executing and implementing programmes and projects agreed by the two bodies to ensure a more integrated approach toward cultural development. We need to establish a working relationship between the National Theatre as an organisation and as a movement and the Centres for National Culture would be executing and implementing programmes so that the National Theatre would not be there in person but would be coordinating activities. This method would provide the opportunity for the National Theatre to impact the whole country with a well-focused national cultural and performative approach. According to him, “all boils down to policy direction. In his submission he was of the view that the National Theatre Law should be amended to meet current times and should be well structured. He also proposed that there should be

a reconstitution of the National Theatre of Ghana Board in order to have a better representation to make fruitful contributions to the development of the performing arts, management of the facility, legal related matters and to maintain the facility.

HODTA1 indicated that within the scope of the contemporary world, it is very important to have such cultural structures explicitly created to commemorate a person or event which has become relevant to a social group as a part of remembrance of historic times or cultural heritage. Erikson (2016, p.2) stresses that “both antiquities and cultural heritages are terms referring to man-made objects (mainly) from the past. They also convey the idea that these artefacts are in some way valuable.” CE5 stresses and corroborates with HODTA1 that that these monuments preserve our heritage.

NTD3 of the National Dance Company advocates that the National Theatre of Ghana becomes very significant in the way it has showcased the Ghanaian’s cultural identity through the performing arts and by itself. The establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana, was to promote our performative activities: drama, dance and music to showcase them nationally and internationally. Insightfully, Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah encouraged certain cultural experts like Mawere Opoku to study diverse indigenous cultures in the form of the performative arts, precisely from the hinterlands to ensure a sense of unity so that people will be able to learn from other cultures and to traditionally coexist with one another. Former President Kwame Nkrumah was so poised with the idea of culture and the performing arts so much that he pushed for the establishment of some cultural monuments in order to shape our traditional consciousness.

On the other hand, NTD5 states that personally, he does not think that the theatre has been able to achieve its mandate yet. According to him currently, even when

one observes the programmes being done, majority of the programmes held at the theatre are produced by private production houses. Some of such programmes have nothing to do with the mandates of the National Theatre.

NTD3 corroborates with NTD4 that theatres must be established in all the regional capitals in Ghana in order to grow and sustain the performing arts in Ghana. A director of the National Theatre gave an insight into the element of charges of the National Theatre facility. In his claim, he established that the nature of the theatre building lent its configuration to a rather high operational overhead cost, in relation to the utilities [electricity and water]. He added that the theatre operated on a rigid Chinese central air-condition plant which is very difficult to control as far as the type of plant installed was concerned. As at the time the interview was being conducted, the central air-condition plant had broken down and a couple of split air-conditioners were installed to sustain in coming productions temporarily a case of public concern. In view of the low operational level of the split air-conditioners, occasionally, the auditorium becomes warm due to excessive heat emission generated from the stage lights.

In a personal communication, the first Director of Operations of the National Theatre of Ghana, was of the view that since the inception of the National Theatre of Ghana started operations not many people wanted to visit the theatre because the new facility appeared to be exclusive, too sophisticated and imposing, and it was almost like a white elephant (K. Amarteifio, personal communication, August 9, 2018). Mawugbe (2011) drew attention to the fact that, for a nation's population that has a fairly illiterate majority, care should be taken not to create an elitist theatre. In view of that, in 1994 during the administration of the first theatre management when the theatre had begun full operation the management needed to create programmes that would touch every corner of society and to affect people of all ages and of all socio-cultural backgrounds.

Therefore, for effective programming and operation professionally, management of the new national theatre had to strategize by putting up certain programmes that would equip the theatre, train technical staff and to develop both children and adult programmes. In so doing, the theatre got equipped with artistic programmes in order to attract prospective sponsors and indeed touched their hearts. A case of interest was the bringing back *Concert Party*. NTD1 argues that it was necessary to strategies to make theatre an all-inclusive concept since the youths, adults, the aged and the general public in Ghana had the right to see and appreciate themselves on stage through any form of theatre.

As a matter of fact, CE1 was of the view that, the activities of the National Theatre have to be decentralised so that there could be equal opportunities with regard to the development and promotion of the performing arts in Ghana. It appears that the concentration of the performing arts activities has been limited to Accra, instead of a broad-based participatory effort which tends to be nationalistic in scope, this was a suggestion made by CE3 of one of the cultural experts.

In comparison, ME1, a Media Specialist stressed that Smashing Times Theatre Company Limited in Ireland, a professional theatre company is committed to innovation, the creative process and equal participation for all. The company's vision is for a creative society where theatre is opened for all to make or enjoy and to consistently produce work that is self-consciously political, work that seeks to provoke and engage debate about the way a society's life is organised

4.1.2 Results from Interview (RQ3)

NTD1 stated that the representativeness of the National Theatre facility stands perfectly as something more of a nomenclature that one identifies the building with. But

aesthetically the facility does not represent anything Ghanaian. Hence, the idea of three pagodas puts together and is an inclusion of space but externally does not say anything about Ghanaian culture. It is not any of our symbolism. It is alien and foreign, it does not really say anything about our national identity. There were attempts to try and see if it could be branded and decorated with Ghanaian symbols [*adenkra*], but architecture must speak and as long as the initial architecture was not branded on the idea of having a national identity, anything that was to be added was going to be a distortion. So, it was alright that it was kept like that. The cladding of course is really more for efficiency than anything. But no, in my opinion, it does not work well as a symbol of our national identity.

NTD2 was emphatic with his view that he did not see anything Ghanaian in the representation of the National Theatre of Ghana building, except the outer peripheries that has African sculptures indicating the presence of the Ghanaian identity coupled with portions of the interior designs of wood carving either isolated at vantage points or cladded on the theatre walls. He personally thinks that the National Theatre building is not a symbol of national cultural identity. “I think the facility does not really represent our cultural identity because it is a Chinese representation. Additionally, the stage of the National Theatre has been designed and constructed just like the Western stage configuration and that there is nothing Ghanaian about the auditorium. When you look at our traditional forms of performances it is more interactive with the audience performer relationship. This approach is our traditional way of living, communal based. Hence, our performance set up is driven by participants involving themselves in the production.”

On the contrary, the National Theatre stage is fashioned along the Western proscenium stage style as stated by NTD2. This kind of set up limits the involvement of the audience in a performance, because the audience are distant from the action, even though according to standards one may see it as the ideal situation. However, if we are talking about having an identity then these cultural antecedents should fall in place. Much more, they should be African forms we can easily relate to. For me, I think Efua Sutherland's concept of performance which is similar to the courtyard scenario is the best.

For me as indicated by NTD3 "when you look at the building, there is not really anything to identify Ghana with apart from the name the National Theatre of Ghana." "Yes, the building looks foreign so if you are asking what identity it has, I think it promotes the beauty of the edifice or the extent of its size. But as to whether it promotes the quality of national identity, I think no, it rather reflects its identity through its name. Well, some people say you can see the shape of a stool on observation, but this is not prominent you have to be guided to accept the notion that it looks like a stool."

The stage manager of the National Theatre was of the view that really the theatre does not look Ghanaian, moreover, it does not tell our story neither does it represent our culture.

NTD4 in his statement was unhappy with the theatre facility because he indicated that the discourse on the building is a conversation he would not want to have. Since it was a conversation that should have been discussed before the building was put in place. "The Chinese have spent money on it and will never be pulled down. This shape is going to stay forever. Therefore, there is nothing one can do about it. For me if you ask me, that ship has already sailed." For NTD4 when we talk of national theatre, we must

be thinking more of the programmes that should go on rather than focusing on the building. NTD4 stresses that:

From where I stand, I am not concerned about the building but rather what takes place inside, what is communicated inside and not the structure nor the façade but the programme. In reality we cannot do anything to that existing building but we can improve upon the Theatre as a concept.

However, NTD5 was of the view that, as a national platform the National Theatre is one of the iconic monuments of Ghana. In the first place, the architecture of the building represents a fusion of a ship and/or a giant bird and tends to be very symbolic of a Ghanaian cultural aspiration. As a national theatre and as a national monument for that matter, the facility attracts some high level of tourism activities from school children, church groups, organisations and some individuals just to acquaint themselves with the building and what it stands for is phenomenal. Currently, in Ghana most artistes in the entertainment industry have an ultimate dream to mount the National Theatre stage and do a historic performance. It has become a pride for all the known artistes that they have performed on the National Theatre stage.

One of the performers of the resident companies denoted as PNT1 indicated that the National Theatre does not represent our cultural identity. “In fact, when you are approaching the theatre facility you cannot really tell if it is a theatre, till you get closer to see the sculptures at the forecourt of the premise.” If we had a choice, the architecture should have been different from this.

According PNT2 the design of the National Theatre building looks like several ships put together. At a glance of the National Theatre building the facility talks about

itself, it is representative of our identity, very unique and stands out as a historical monument.

On the contrary, I have a different impression about the National Theatre of Ghana. To be precise, the outside aesthetic of national theatre does not tell you that it is a theatre building. The walls of the theatre should have been used to roll out advertisement of productions, the walls must be well branded to suggest theatrical activities ongoing or yet to be produced in the premise. Unfortunately, food hawkers have taken over the whole frontage and side walls of the theatre doing business. In that posture the periphery of the theatre does not reveal a structure of a theatrical edifice. “I see it as a normal building not depicting anything unique on Ghana. In fact, when you are approaching the theatre facility you cannot really tell if it is a theatre, till you get closer to see the sculptures at the forecourt of the premise. If we had a choice, the architecture should have been different from this.” This was an observation made by PNT2.

PNT3 stated that personally the theatre building does not represent anything Ghanaian to me, but on the western side close to the gift shop of the theatre building is a *sankofa* symbol which is larger than life representative of a bird that underscores the statement of going back to our roots and ensuring that good cultural practices are adhered to. PNT3 states that “maybe, if I add the *sankofa* symbol and a few sculptures around on the ground, then I will say yes, it has that representativeness feel other than that the building itself does not look anything Ghanaian.” Some are of the view that the building looks like a stool, others also say it looks like a ship that is sinking. I do not think anything about it looks Ghanaian without the statute and carvings.

Per the statement of TE1, a designer of the theatre project, affirmed that the design and construction does not reflect the Ghanaian architectural touch. “However, if you enter into the building you would see Ghanaian fine art elements to authenticate the presence of our culture in the building.” Furthermore, because the architects wanted the building to be Ghanaian, some designers were contracted to embellish the theatre building with artistic impression that will complement the concept of the theatre facility. In that regard, as stated by Sefa, “I was invited by the then head of culture, Dr. Mohammed Ben Abdallah to take up some aspects of the artistic decoration at the National Theatre.” It all happened when “I invited Abdallah to my art gallery in Aburi on a tour. He was impressed with my sculptures and right away contracted me to feature some of my best works at the theatre.” In his statement, Abdallah indicated that the works should be of international standard, relevant to our culture, not so common and to tell our story. In view of that, Sefa the designer took it upon himself to design and produce works that would enhance the theatre atmosphere and to let people know what Ghanaians can do. He also picked up themes that were in line with our cultural practices. All were to enhance and position the cultural aesthetics of the theatre facility.

In the discourse with TE2, he believes the t building is not a symbol of national cultural identity. “This seems to happen because the facility appears to be a gift, and we as Ghanaians needed to accept it in any condition, very unfortunate.” Importantly, the Ghanaian family traditional set up is usually configured in a courtyard form [*shoe formation*] where the space is created to establish an arena for performances or meetings. Specifically, it makes provision for togetherness, coercion, friendliness and proceedings to make it participatory. The whole idea is based on the open-air theatre configuration which is cost effective in all intent and purposes. “I think the facility does not really represent our cultural identity.

TE2 emphasised that “the National Theatre of Ghana was a ‘thank you project’ so the Chinese brought on board all building materials to see to the successful completion of the project, which appeared to be a grant to foster the friendship between Ghana and China “but if there are other conditions attached to it I do not know. I was the project architect so I saw the beginning till the end. Mind you with ‘thank you’ projects, the donor brings whatever he deems fit on board to assist you.” According to Ansah, for instance, the air-condition system, installed in the National Theatre complex is not compatible with the Ghanaian specification. “Basically, that was what we opted for, so they gave us [Ghanaians] what they have. Technically, most often, their equipment manuals are in the Chinese language so it becomes very difficult to understand in technical terms the specification and operation of the parts of some of the machines and facilities.” Ansah stressed that with ‘thank you projects’ you cannot say much.

4.1.3 Results from Interview (RQ4)

CE2 promotes that the theatre should play a cohesive role by working with the Centres for National Culture in all the regions to achieve the set goal. In this regard, it becomes imperative to have adequate structures to retool the efficiencies of theatre practice in Ghana in order to make relevant the National Theatre facility in the promotion of art and culture in Ghana. Additionally, even though the building appears not to look Ghanaian, we can still make the most out of its facilities by focusing on indigenous content and the promotion of the performing arts in general.

To investigate the operations of the National Theatre of Ghana, it is important to know the mandate for its establishment, stressed by CE3. “I think the theatre is mandated to develop and promote the performing arts in Ghana” as enshrined in the

Ghana Theatre Law, 1991 of P.N.D.C. Law 259. In further statement, in achieving the set goal, policies should be developed to focus around the following principles. That is to provide access to the arts to as many people as possible, to serve for excellence in the arts, strive towards economic viability of the arts, and to advocate for the arts and those who create it. In actuality, one may ask, is the National Theatre doing any of these? For the theatre to achieve its mandates, it has to play a special role in fostering the development of traditional idioms of contemporary art forms such as orchestra, theatrical groups, and dance ensembles. Both traditional and conventional groups should mount performances demonstrating Ghana and Africa's cultural diversity and historical significance as well as our membership in the present international artistic community. Per the contribution of CE3, the National Theatre is to serve as the umbrella body for the nurturing and maturation of the National Symphony Orchestra, National Drama Company and National Dance Company.

In focus on quality as stressed by NTD1, the theatre has showcased the nation's best emerging talents and established individual and collective talents. It has to an extent emphasized programmes that present true reflections of the indigenous artistic heritage of Ghana and Africa. To underscore its contribution to national development, the Ghana National Theatre has provided some sort of artistic growth and served as a symbol of excellence for young people, aspiring artists, and maturing professionals. NTD2 promotes that it is important for Ghanaians to know that the theatre has served as an outlet for Ghana's finest contemporary and traditional artists to further develop their art forms and expose the populace to new artistic expressions of the highest order. NTD3 stresses that the National Theatre is not just a mouthpiece for art and culture but a powerful platform through which the government of the day occasionally interacts with its citizenry.

For the operational mode of the National Theatre to be efficient by my standards as stated by CE5, the theatre should be seen operating three key sections efficiently which I doubt they do to the best of my knowledge. These are to have a vibrant art section, hired adequate theatre professionals [experts?] who are experienced in the performing arts, an administrative section [including public relations and marketing, finance and human resource, as well as the technical section which are vital to the functioning of a standardized theatre. These units are very important in providing services to the theatre's clientele as a whole. According to CE5, the latest time he visited the National Theatre he was surprised at the low staff strength "which is not good for the image of the National Theatre." In the submission of CE5, he was of the view that the theatre must be backed with strong policy directions to ensure quality and development in the promotion of art and culture. He also stressed that operations of the theatre must keenly involve the National Commission on Culture who should collaborate with the District Assemblies and communities to establish community theatres to serve as venues for the promotion of the performing arts.

Media Expert being represented by ME1 stressed on the point that in some cases the National Theatre has not sold their services well enough in order to attract prospective theatre lovers. Theatre should be seen advertising and promoting their services by engaging a strong media outfit to assist project sound media presence. Additionally, ME1 was of the view that the National Theatre must earnestly respond to the major needs of the performing arts communities in the country. In his bid to outline the way forward, ME1 was of the view that the theatre must create partnership with the art communities. Involving these communities in its operations as advisors on policies and programmes ensure a true commitment on the part of the National Theatre to maintain awareness and respect for the expertise within the professional art community.

A performer from one (1) of the resident companies indicated that the National Theatre and the three (3) resident companies need to work as a team in order to deliver on its mandate as stipulated by law. The reason being that it appears the companies are operating in silos which may not be good enough, even though they seem to influence society as individual entities. However, to reach out to the entire country, it is imperative for the three (3) resident companies to collectively collaborate efforts as a national entity for the development of the performing arts in Ghana. This challenge appears to be as a result of the nature of the establishment and recruitment of the various companies operating under the National Theatre of Ghana.

CNT2 lamented on the high rental charges of the National Theatre which however did not match the current quality of facilities. For instance, there is lack of adequate technical equipment such as stage lights and sound equipment. To hire the theatre facility for a programme, the prospective client needed to rent additional equipment to complement the existing one at the theatre or to hire the full complement of the equipment. In her discourse she made reference to the alternative use of other performance spaces in Accra as a result of low charges levied on such spaces. To her the high cost of hiring out the theatre could discourage professionals from accessing the theatre facility.

According to PTN1 and NTD3 currently, the National Theatre is not leaving up to expectation and the morale of most workers is very low with no incentives. Per statement of PTN1 between 1994 and 2005, the National Theatre was a place where one was proud to work, with all its motivation and dedication. PTN3 adds to the voice of PTN1 by indicating that in the initial stages the facility was new coupled with the zeal

and enthusiasm. NTD1 also states that the nature of the edifice brought joy to the Ghanaian theatre practitioners. Hence, the enthusiasm and passion attached to the work.

Consequently, as stated by PNT4 after the refurbishment of the facility the activities of the National Theatre began to slow down. Sponsorships of most programmes were withdrawn, poor audience patronage for productions, and staff morale also went down. This is the current situation at the National Theatre, even though the institution is trying its best to sustain and promote theatre in Ghana.

CE3 sees the National Theatre facility as a Ghanaian edifice established to develop and promote the performing arts in Ghana. It appears to be the preserve of the elite and those individuals that can afford to pay for a seat during a show. CE4 and CE5 corroborate with CE3 by sharing similar views about the elitist nature of programmes produced at the National Theatre. According to these cultural experts, the type of productions stage at the theatre is most often in English and attracts the literates and those who can afford to pay the gate fee. A participant, CE1 commended Roverman Production House for their quarterly theatrical productions they churn at the theatre to sustain the interest of theatre goers and the promotion of theatre in Ghana. However, he points out that, Roverman's productions appear to be elitist in presentation and for those who can afford the tickets. His concern was with the language [English] in which the productions were performed, since it appears to favour the middle class and elites. The researcher however observes that yes, indeed Roverman's productions appears to elitist in one breath but sustains theatre in Ghana. In a bid to increase the participation of audience, Roverman needs to consider the level of his production to increase the audience margin.

In a speech commissioning the National Theatre of Ghana in 1992 by former President Jerry John Rawlings, he emphasised that “the theatre should not be the elitist preserve of certain people but should be accessible to the average Ghanaian in the country. By so doing it will offer the theatre the opportunity to reach out to all and sundry with regard to the performing arts” (National Commission on Culture, 1995). Throughout chequered history of the performing arts in post-independent Ghana, it was during the “Nkrumah’s era, and to some extent during Rawlings’ administration, that specific and conscious efforts were made to use the performing arts as tools for development and to unify the people in the country’s quest for a national identity” (Nii-Yartey, 2011, p.289).

4.1.4 Results from Interview (RQ5)

To assess the current state of the facility of the National Theatre of Ghana, Technical Experts represented by TE1 indicated that there is the need to take cognizance of the year the facility was established and the maintenance history since its inception. TE1 submits that the National Theatre facility was established in 1992 during the P.N.D.C era under the leadership of Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings. It is a multi-purpose facility with the state-of-the-art theatrical equipment suitable for live stage drama, dance, musical performances, conferences and product launches. Ever since the setup of the theatre, it has had one major maintenance session, which happened in the year 2005. Since then, there has not been a major maintenance which might be the cause of the inefficiency with regard to the machinery and theatrical structures. The maintenance culture has not been encouraging. For instance, leaking conduit pipes in the walls of the structure as a result of the reaction of the overlapping galvanized utility pipes over the burnt brick blocks is responsible for oxidization of the pipes leading to cracks and thereby spillage of water into the huge walls and the malfunctioning and

obsolete state of some machines and fixtures. “As an architect and an expert in my field I can confidently say the National Theatre *is on a time bomb*. It is sad to note that the theatre building is not insured, let alone audience who patronize the facility and the staff”.

TE2 declared that the current state of the facility is not the best. In his assertion, “the culture of maintenance is a huge problem which we do not pay attention to. When problems surface with regard to the facility we wait, the challenge degenerates before action is taken, which does not help the system.” Issues of such nature has to be reported to the appropriate quarters for action to be taken in order to salvage the facility from total shut down. Or the theatre can have a standing maintenance team to arrest all challenges.

NTD3 believes that the theatre is now a death trap, because certain areas of the rehearsal dance hall floor has sunk, it makes squeaking sounds when you step on such areas. The stage of the main auditorium is no longer smooth and most of the dancers have escaped being hurt during rehearsal or during a production. During every major production at least, a dancer hurts him or herself. What accounts for such predicament I suspect, are the misuse of the stage floor by some clients of the National Theatre according to NTD3. She was of the view that, the stage is normally rented out for all manner of productions from corporate to social events. From my estimation it appears that heavy scenic or mechanical equipment dragged on stage and nailing made on stage should be discouraged. Unfortunately, it appears that nobody really cares about its damage, we need to be more responsible for such monumental edifices because of the regular human traffic.

A client of the National Theatre, represented by CNT1 was of the view that productions slated for the National Theatre space should be well vetted before load in is made unto stage to discourage such practices of dragging or nailing elements on stage that cause damage to the stage floor. In further submissions, he was worried about the poor state of the National Theatre rest rooms as well as the changing rooms.

A former Director of the National Theatre NTD2 was alarmed at the state of the National Theatre facility. She registered her displeasure at the deplorable state of the theatre facilities. She stressed that when “I am not very happy about the current state of the National Theatre to tell you the honest truth.” She also indicated that when she worked at the National Theatre, artistes who were traveling around the continent from other countries came into the theatre and were marvelled at the state of the theatre and people who worked there because the people who worked there were also abreast with artistic current trends. NTD2 promoted that the theatre got most of its technical staff and administrative staff trained abroad in other theatre to fit into the contemporary theatre world. “So, when you come to the theatre, you came to a theatre. I was shocked when I went there, not only has the building dilapidated but also, I felt like the man power has gone down. I did not feel any creativity.”

Comparing twenty-five (25) years ago when the theatre was built, a lot have changed. In the past when you rent the facility it comes automatically with certain technical facilities. Currently, when you look on our rate cards, we state clearly that we do not offer stage lighting and sound, and so when the client is coming, they will have to bring in hired equipment, which becomes extra cost to them. In the past it was not like that. Currently, the lobby does not have air-condition, in the past it used to have air-condition and so now we even have a challenge renting it out to people because you

cannot rent a place that is not up to standard. So, definitely, years have passed and so it was not in the same state as it used to be.

The Architect TE3 of the National Theatre project emphasized that at the time the National Theatre of Ghana structure was constructed, it appeared to have dwarfed almost all the structures around that place [the Ministries area in Accra close to the theatre]. It was the giant structure around that area at the time. But now the National Theatre has rather been dwarfed by all other institutions and symbolically it appears that. “I am talking about symbolically in the sense that it appears that as others are moving forward, they are moving backwards.” TE3 states that in Ghana our scheme of things is such that maintenance is a big challenge and of course facilities deteriorate. However, in the case of the National Theatre, I do not think that the rate of maintenance is as fast as the manner in which the facility is being deteriorated.

Furthermore, TE3 affirmed that the state of the National Theatre needs to be elevated through image branding; the staff, facility as well as the productions. “In doing this, it takes passion, selflessness dedication and a clear understanding of the mission and vision of the theatre on the part of the staff.”

TE4 stressed that the National Theatre has been in existence for the past twenty-six (26) years as at 2018, and it has seen only one major renovation. Therefore, when one looks at the rate at which it is been used, currently, it is not as it was built. Obviously, there are lots of challenges. The building was constructed in such a way that effective maintenance requires total shut down of the facility, and bringing in the Chinese technical team which is a lot of capital. Currently, as stated by TE4 the building has plumbing challenges, electrical challenges and cracks in the walls.

However, the problem has been reported to the Chinese for rectification and till date response is not forthcoming.

CNT1 representing the client of the National Theatre was of the view that the theatre facility is not adequate for our nature of programmes in Ghana since we find ourselves in the temperate zone which could be quite hot. Hence, there is the need to install an efficient air-conditioning plant to match the facility. However, currently, it appears that the central air-condition facility is operating at 30% according to the estate manager of the facility and leaves audience uncomfortable during productions. According to CNT1, this is a major problem facing the National Theatre of Ghana.

4.2 Results from Document Analysis

Data were sourced from *the National Theatre of Ghana background document for capitalisation 1995*. The document among others stated that the Ghana National Theatre Law, 1991 of the P.N.D.C. Law 259 in pursuance of the Provisional National Defence Council (Establishment) Proclamation 1981, established a body to be known as the Ghana National Theatre (in the Law referred to as “The National Theatre”...The object of the National Theatre shall be promotion and development of the performing arts in Ghana.

Also, per the mandate of the theatre, as indicated in the *background document for capitalisation 1995*, “the Ghana Dance Ensemble now National Dance Company, *Abibigromma* now National Drama Company and the National Symphony Orchestra shall be the resident performance troupe of the National Theatre in the areas of dance, dramatic art and music respectively” (p.10).

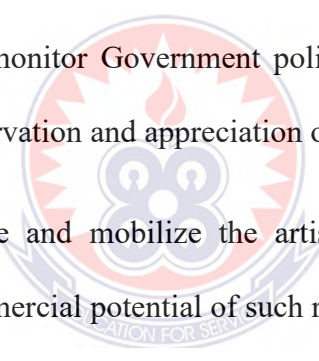
Meanwhile, the *cultural policy of Ghana 2004* posits that the State shall support efforts of the relevant cultural and performing art institutions, associations and

individuals to undertake research, documentation, development and promotion of traditional and contemporary dance forms. This is envisaged to help streamline and achieve the core mandates of the theatre. The practice, creation and promotion of all forms of Ghanaian art shall be encouraged by the State. Production of musical instruments shall be encouraged, so that all schools and communities can own their own instruments. The State shall encourage private entrepreneurs to establish production plants and support activities to document, preserve, protect, publish and promote Ghanaian music. As stipulated by the policy, “the culture trust fund, once established, shall encourage creative endeavours through grants and other kinds of resources and support” (National Commission on Culture, 2004, p.29). In so doing the “programming should be stimulating, innovative, unique and original” (p.7). It should be geared towards attracting as much audience of all ages as possible and giving them access to rich cultural life. Additionally, it should be geared towards making the National Theatre as well as the regional theatres, a training ground for professionals in the cultural sector. The programme should also be tailored toward a revival of traditional forms threatened by extinction as well as contemporary artistic practices. Furthermore, it should also be geared towards facilitating the circulation of works produced in the regional theatres within the regions and into the National Theatre as well, as well as creating a platform to facilitate co-productions between the artists in the regions, and thereby helping in the promotion and development of an integrated cultural.

By the revelation of the *comprehensive data on National Commission on Culture projects* as cited by National Commission on Culture (2018), the Regional Cultural Centres represent the focus of existence, a point where all the members of a given community meet; the departed (history), the living (contemporary and those yet unborn (posterity)). All the dimensions of time meet here and the whole drama of the life

of the people is repeated, renewed and revitalized. By the document, Regional Cultural Centre then becomes the orbit around which the life of the people in the region revolves. It is a meeting point for the preservation, development and promotion of the rich cultural heritage of the people. They include: traditional arts, literary arts, performing arts (music, dance and drama) and the visual arts. A regional cultural centre is therefore a point for the realization of the vision and aspirations of the people in harnessing their cultural assets and heritage to develop a united, vibrant and prosperous community with a distinctive identity and personality.

The functions prescribed by the Regional and District Centres for National Culture as indicated in the National Commission on Culture Law 238 of 1990 are to:

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- a) Implement and monitor Government policies relating to the development, promotion, preservation and appreciation of culture and arts in the region;
 - b) Identify, organise and mobilize the artistic resources of the region and develop the commercial potential of such resources;
 - c) Organise systematic programmes to project regional peculiarities in the culture and the arts;
 - d) Pursue such activities aimed at contributing to the development of national culture and the arts; besides, to supervise the activities of the district cultural centres.

Even though supervision of the district cultures are to be ongoing, their functions have not been commensurate with the provision of appropriate cultural infrastructure so they have become abstract liberties on paper because the benefits do not come as expected. In order to achieve cultural essence and impact, there is an urgent need to complete all

outstanding infrastructural projects so that culture can contribute meaningfully to national development. The researcher believes that investors from the private sector should assist by teaming up with the public sector and provide the infrastructure, and proceed to work on the mutually acceptable management and financial implications of such joint investments to complement the efforts of the Ministry with regard to the implementation of the cultural policy of Ghana.

It was sad to note that some of the Regional Cultural Centres and the Community Youth Cultural Centre infrastructural projects that began decades ago are still in a sorry state of incompleteness as stated by one of the directors. This problem has confronted all the past successive governments including the present government. In appreciating the extent of challenge, it is of essence to have an idea of the cultural environment situational analysis. As at 2017 it stresses that prior to the coming into being of the cultural policy, the Arts Council of Ghana was created in 1958 by Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first President as the cultural wing of the Ministry of Education and Culture. After his overthrow, the cultural sector has been made appendage to Tourism and Education Ministries, until the establishment of the National Commission on Culture in 1990. The commission undertook massive expansion and development of the cultural sector, culminating in the decentralization of the Centres for National Culture in the ten regions of the country. The culture and creative arts sector in Ghana has for some time been faced with multiple of challenges including the lack of basic infrastructure at all levels. Aside the National Theatre in Accra and the Cape Coast Theatre and to some extent the Cultural Centre in Kumasi, the country cannot boast of any reasonable facility for culture and creative arts activities National Commission on Culture (2018).

The *cultural policy of Ghana, 2004* as cited by National Commission on Culture (2004) promotes that the National Theatre was established to be sourced by performers to enhance the performative arts; that is the promotion of music, dance and drama. Furthermore, the National Commission on Culture believes that with the collaboration of the National Theatre of Ghana and the cultural state-owned institutions, such as the District Assemblies and the communities to establish community theatres to serve as venues for the promotion of the performing arts. In focus, the Regional Centres for National Culture could be key team players in this regard to sustain the development of the performing skills and promote general appreciation of the arts. The document also recommends that National Commission on Culture should encourage private initiatives in the establishment of conservatories and resource centres. Meanwhile, the preservation and promotion of traditional and contemporary dramatic arts forms should be encouraged and supported by the state as well. Additionally, the National Commission on Culture shall ensure the early identification and nurturing of artistic talent by supporting educational institutions to teach the performing arts and also creating opportunities for the youth to participate in the performing arts at the community and national levels. The document further indicates that the State shall encourage the formation of associations and groups, not only to develop and promote the performing arts, but also to seek the welfare of artists.

Article 7 of the National Theatre Law 259, in pursuance of P.N.D.C Law of 1991 as cited by National Commission on Culture (1995), stipulates that “the Dance Ensemble now National Dance Company, *Abibigromma* now known as National Drama Company and the National Symphony Orchestra shall be the resident performance troupes of the National Theatre in the areas of dance, dramatic art and music respectively.

Although article 10 (i) of the National Theatre Law provides for the appointment of directors for music, dance, and drama whose functions would be coordinated by an artistic director, the law was silent on the jurisdiction of the directors over the resident companies.

This ambiguity is further compounded by the provisions of Article 3 of the National Commission on Culture Law 1990 P.N.D.C. Law 238 under which the three resident performance troupes are listed as autonomous entities under the commission just like the National Theatre. This act has generated into a challenge where each administration finds it very difficult to resolve even though currently there is an attempt by the present administration to align administrative operations.

As indicated by National Theatre of Ghana (1998) of the document, *the National Theatre in Retrospect: An overview of the first four (4) operational years, 1994-1997*, cited at the National Theatre of Ghana revealed that “the then administration came into office in the last quarter of 1994 with the theatre not having its full complement of staff. However, permission was sought from the Ministry of Finance to employ additional staff but to no avail. Hence, management at that time petitioned the board to recruit and absorb the cost of the additional non-established positions from the operational revenues.

In reiteration, critical appraisal of the present state of the National Theatre of Ghana was looked at by Akenoo as a feature item in the Ghanaian Times issued (Thursday, February 21, 2019, p.9). According to the author, “the present state of the National Theatre of Ghana is highly questionable, and that it leaves much to be desired which cannot be denied by any sincere and honest theatre expert as well as all theatre lovers and enthusiast in the country.” In his submission, the National Theatre is

operating below expectation as far as the purpose for which it was built is concerned. According to him, the former President, His Excellency Jerry John Rawlings in his vision established the National Theatre with the conviction that theatre practice and its psyche in Ghana will experience a great boom; and consequently, accelerate the development process of the country.

According to Akenoo (2019), the National Theatre building is at the moment preoccupied with non-theatrical activities such as meetings venue for associations and organisations like Ghana Hairdresser, Ghana Tailors, Greater Accra Barbers, Ghana Lotto Vendors and Beauty pageant events among others. These relegate theatrical production and activities to the background. In his development, he was of the view that “of course, this may generate much income for the running of the theatre, but that was not what is required, and the purpose for which the National Theatre was built; and therefore, it is irrelevant and a waste in the interest of the nation” (p.9). In his words, “the National Theatre of Ghana must wake up from its present slumber and buck up in order to meet its great expected pivotal role the course of the country’s strides for progress, development and prosperity in the 21st century” (p.9).

To standardise the National Theatre facilities and operations, the final report on *the commercialisation of the National Theatre of Ghana, National Drama Company, National Dance Company and National Symphony Company, 2001* has it that the existing staff strength [manpower] needs to be augmented as well as focusing on the competence level. Hence, requisite training needs of exiting staff should be looked at. “Going forward, a staff rationalisation plan for the three (3) resident companies need to be developed to ensure that the theatre has the right quantity and quality staff in terms of skills mixes” (Taylor Forson & Associates, 2001, p.8).

The National Theatre of Ghana (1998) as stressed in the document, *National Theatre in Retrospect: An overview of the first four (4) operational years, 1994-1997*, revealed that the then administration came into office in the last quarter of 1994 with the theatre not having its full complement of staff. By the document, in view of the considerable difficulty with respect to manpower, the National Theatre sought permission from the Ministry of Finance to recruit into certain key and sensitive positions to ensure administrative efficiency. In view of that management at that time, was mandated by the board to absorb the cost of the additional non-established positions from the operational revenues. Expenditure in respect of this non-established appointments was 6.3% of theatre's own general revenue.

This paved way for a restructuring exercise involving the absorption of certain categories of seconded staff, regularisation of all appointments and the engagement of new staff on temporary and casual base to take up technical, administrative and managerial positions at the theatre. In spite of these adhoc measures, the current staffing position is still inadequate to provide the much-needed impetus for the growth and enhanced position at the theatre.

It is also important to underscore the fact that about 42% of the total labour force at the National Theatre for any of its operational years are made up of non-permanent staff and this situation has made a phenomenal negative impact on the theatre's operation.

To better understand the operations and management of the National Theatre of Ghana. there is the need to peruse and have an idea in the mission and vision statement of the theatre to have a better insight of its administration procedures. Hence, the mission statement as stated by Mawugbe (2011) indicated:

To develop and promote the performing arts in Ghana through cost effective productions of classical and contemporary live stage and televised performances which project positive national values and the African personality concept. Meanwhile, the Vision Statement states that: To become the focal point of the Performing Arts in the ECOWAS sub-region. (p.2)

NTD1 indicates that the mission and vision statements couched for the NTG at the time of its inception 1994 are valid today as they were at the time of their conception. According to Mawugbe (2011), this was due to the fact that the spirit and letter of these two statements are derived to a large extent from the mandates set by the law that established the NTG in 1992.

NTD1 affirmed that the National Theatre of Ghana, compared with major theatres around the world, is a very young establishment indeed. Most national theatres the world over are, on the average, are not less than fifty (50) years old. For this matter, NTG will have challenges until Ghanaians begin to understand and appreciate theatre. Mawugbe (2011) claims that, “young as the NTG is, it has tried to hold its head very high to reflect some of the dreams and genuine aspirations of the founding fathers and mothers of the theatre movement of this country through its programmes and artistic productions. “It must be admitted, however, that the NTG may not have fully accomplished all the beautiful ideals enshrined in its mission statement or the dreams of the founding fathers of the broader national theatre movement that gave it birth” (p.2).

The comprehensive data on National Commission on Culture projects (2018) highlights the situational overview of the Regional Centres for National Culture (CNC). The document underscored the fact that the policy to build a cultural complex in each

regional capital started many years ago but was not seen through and this has led to the scattering of those places with structures at various levels of construction.

Research revealed that, the Centres for National Culture which are the custodians of these centres lacked the funds to complete the projects and there is no expectation of them, under the current dispensation being able to raise the necessary funds to go ahead with them. Their main source of funding is Government of Ghana which obviously is not in a position to solely complete all of them as indicated by the document. From the study, the researcher deduced that lack of infrastructure has led to a virtual collapse of the creative arts in the country. Performers have no decent halls to put up drama or musical concerts or for rehearsals and fine artistes of all categories also lack craft shops to create their works or distribution outlets and exhibition halls to market them.

The document revealed a worrying situation that indicated that the effects are multi-faceted. It specified that all the artistes who would have otherwise depended on these centres to pursue their arts are denied any such opportunities. The economy has over the years suffered through the loss of potential job opportunities that the arts offer to talented people especially the youth. Incomes that could have accrued to the practitioners and in taxes to the state are also lost. The document stressed on the fact that countries all over the world that have given culture and creative arts the needed recognition have provided good infrastructure for its promotion. The document made reference to the fact that such countries have raked in millions of dollars through cultural and creative arts goods and services such as drama, musical acts and sale and exportation of crafts and other art works.

As part of the cultural environment situational analysis as at 2017, National Commission on Culture declares that the cultural sector in Ghana is not dynamic enough. There are no socio-cultural rallying points for practitioners, nationals and foreign visitors to the country and this reflection is a function of the dearth of policies designed directly to impact on the creation, production, dissemination and distribution of cultural works. Besides it seems that there are few cultural activities, goods and services which should not have been the case looking at the rich cultural endowment Ghana is blessed with. The few of them that are available are scattered at unconventional and temporarily spaces and even sometimes at unauthorized places and they are constantly on the move when the landowners claim their land “as recently happened at Osu, a suburb of Accra when cane weavers squatting on a parcel of land were attacked by some hoodlums who asked the craftsmen to vacate the premise.

Going forward, the document stresses the fact that the National Commission on Culture and the National Theatre of Ghana is to collaborate with the CNC’s to achieve this cultural goal, but research shows that collaboration does not exist between them which is best known to either party.

From a broader perspective, the National Theatre must set up satellite theatres in all the regional capitals so that those theatres would encourage the local people into performing there and to be able to collaborate with the Centres for National Culture in the regional capitals. This idea will allow the National Theatre’s presence to be felt across the regions of Ghana and also collaborate with the Centres for National Culture to be able to tap into the talent and resources that need to be showcased in the National Theatre for the theatre to promote their activities.

The study shows that indeed there have been limitations to people in the hinterland having the opportunity to showcase their talent and presentations as it were in the National Theatre and this is not good enough. The reason being that their cultural rights are being denied. In fact, the recognition of cultural rights has a lot to do with getting the populace to have the opportunity to see, listen and feel themselves in the forms of theatre productions. This prospect should not be confined to only Accra, the national capital of Ghana. Moving forward, the only way productions can move from Accra to the hinterland is for the National Theatre to have satellite theatres in the regions so that shows or programmes that take place in the National Theatre in Accra may have the opportunity of travelling around that circuit around the country. This will offer the opportunity for people all around the nation to see the productions that took place at the National Theatre in Accra. If this arrangement is firmed up, it will help promote the theatre tradition and activities across the length and breadth of the country because, once we do not do that, it implies that we are denying people in those areas their cultural rights.

4.3 Results from Observation

Basically, this process employed the participant observation instrument. Which meant that theatrical productions were watched and assessed at the National Theatre of Ghana venues. Therefore, total programmes watched at the National Theatre of Ghana from the period of April 2018 to December, 2018 were one hundred and fifty (150). Categories of performances privy to the researcher were; traditional [theatre, dance and musical productions], special events, movie premiere, religious programmes, conferences, graduations and annual general meetings of different organisations [corporate and private]. Through observation within the stated periods, twenty (20) full length cultural performances were staged. Out of that, eleven (11) cultural

performances were used as curtain raisers for some programmes [public and private] to grace various occasions. Theatrical performances [music, dance, drama] were made of twenty-five (25), special events (20), religious programmes twenty-five (25), Annual General Meetings were thirty (30) and film shows were nineteen (19). The listed categories of programmes were either produced by the National Theatre or private production houses.

It is imperative to note that all programmes were not put up only at the main hall of the National Theatre. In this regard, it is needful to know spaces within the National Theatre facilities that hosted the various programmes. Such designated spaces were; the main hall, VIP lounge, terrace bar, Chinese garden, exhibition hall, folks place, lobby and the dance rehearsal hall.



CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.0 Overview

This chapter presents and discusses logically and cogently the outcome of the study that the researcher found in relation to both the research questions and existing knowledge thereby contributing to knowledge in the general field of study. Hence, the outcomes were gotten from the transcription of the interviews of the participants per the administered interview schedules. The chapter therefore analyses, synthesises and interprets data collected to suit each of the five (5) research objectives.

With objective one, the study transformed the raw textual data into findings, using the narrative analysis and content analysis tools while focusing on the chronology of historical events in relation to the development of the National Theatre of Ghana. Furthermore, objective two, was approached with both narrative and content analysis to determine whether the National Theatre of Ghana had achieved its core mandates [to develop and promoted the performing arts in Ghana] per the Ghana National Theatre Law 1991 as enshrined in the pursuance of the Provisional National Defence Council Law P.N.D.C. L. 259. Both narrative analysis and descriptive analysis were used in handling the data gathered in relation to objective three (3) which focused on the discussing of the representation of the theatre. Objective (4) was analysed in a narrative manner, where the tool was helpful in documenting the lived experience of the directors of the National Theatre of Ghana, besides document analysis. Objective five (5) was approached with narrative analysis and descriptive analysis in order to assess the Theatre facility and the extent of dilapidation.

It is important to note that the work has diversity of experts in the performing arts and cultural industry since, the facility is a specialised entity. Therefore, emerging themes were drawn from the various data collected to position the work.

5.1 The Significance of the Establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana

5.1.1 Socio-Cultural Development

Spencer Quatey (2012, p.1) has it that “culture is the quality possessed by all people in all social groups.” Therefore, a nation that has no culture is almost non-existent because culture determines the way the people live and behave with themselves among themselves and their interaction with the environment in which they live. The study revealed that the establishment of the National Theatre was to promote the nation’s history, traditional values and culture art forms to emphasis its importance. Theatre can be observed as a driver and a pillar for development and sustenance of communities. For that matter, the researcher believes that the National Theatre of Ghana was built to provide cultural education and to promote our performing art in order to project our cultural heritage. As confirmed by CE2 the establishment of the National Theatre promoted cultural education, dissemination of information and entertainment and the preservation of culture.

According to the study, the National Theatre of Ghana was established when there were few performing arts facilities promoting the performing art and culture in Ghana, the concentration on theatre going therefore were in small sprockets and that did not represent a movement. More so, it did not really give one the feeling of a national appreciation for theatre and or for that matter any measurable influence that the theatre itself could have on socio-economic activity in Ghana. The study shows that at the time apart from School of Performing Arts and the initiative from the

University of Ghana, Legon to promote culture and develop culture through education there were no recognised institutions playing such roles. Due to this revelation, the inception of the National Theatre of Ghana was timely to augment and support the efforts of the then cultural facilities at the time in the promotion of art and culture. This idea promoted an orientation in a much more focused way to propel the national agenda. As a result, people were more conscious of what theatre could do for them and also what they could do with theatre. Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of Ghana was very keen on the cultural policy that promoted the National Theatre Movement because he saw that there were overwhelming dominance and stature of the missionaries in the development of theatre of what Agovi (1989) calls “literary” theatre. Nkrumah’s cultural policy with respect to the National Theatre Movement referred to the major structural change in the University of Ghana leading to the establishment of the Institute of African Studies and its School of Music and Drama at the University of Ghana, Legon, established in October, 1962. We must always bear in mind that Nkrumah’s educational policy at the University of Ghana was crucial to his cultural policy, in terms of African-centred orientation towards intellectual and artistic pursuits (Botwe-Asamoah, 2005). So, there was that bond and understanding that theatre was essential and was critical to who we are as Ghanaians.

It is imperative to reflect on the setup of the National Theatre of Ghana which could also be referred to as the National Theatre because following its establishment, exponentially, there was a remarkable development in audience appreciation of theatre as indicated by CE3 and CE2 as the venue was large enough to contain the increasing audience capacity. The researcher sees this scenario as significant in wake of audience development and the growth of theatre in Ghana. Adding that, the configuration of the theatre made it possible for Ghanaians to visit the theatre to watch programmes of their

choice, besides the technological advancement, given that the theatre is a state of the arts facility.

Again, CE2 indicated that it was an opportunity that brought up the establishment of the National Theatre fronted by Mohammed Ben Abdallah. By the study, he was by then the Chairman for the Commission on Culture and P.N.D.C Secretary for Education and Culture who used his limitless power to force it more or less, so being somebody from the theatre fraternity as indicated by a former Director at the National Commission on Culture, his proximity to the President was very significant. According to the research Mohammed Ben Abdallah new significance of theatre as a platform for the development of culture and the promotion of the performing arts as observed by Agovi (1991).

Furthermore, in a submission made by CE1, CE3 and CE5 revealed that during the 1980(s) the then President of Ghana, Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings visited China on one of his diplomatic visits and happened to be offered the opportunity to choose between a theatre and a stadium. Fortunately, through Mohammed Ben Abdallah's influence, he chose a theatre. As revealed through the study, at that time, National Commission on Culture was empowered as an institution so they had room to initiate a lot of cultural ideas and policies, this was confirmed by *the National Theatre of Ghana Background Documents for Capitalization* as cited by National Commission on Culture (1995).

Per the momentum with which the theatre got established around that time, it appeared that it was Mohammed Ben Abdallah's single-handed initiative that began what today has come to stay. Especially, also because of his own history since he had been very much a part of Efua Sutherland's initial pioneering theatre movement and

was more or less an exponent of traditional theatre in Ghana. Data collected points to the fact that Mohammed Ben Abdallah was very much instrumental in the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana facility and the relocation of the Ghana Drama Studio now Efua Sutherland Drama Studio from the current site of the National Theatre to the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana, Legon. Specifically, as stated by Mohammed Ben Abdallah himself, “by way of compensation to those that be, was to do a replica [Ghana Drama Studio] of it at the present site of the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana as a gift and as part of the project.” More or less as doing a physical transfer from one location to the other, so that the heritage was kept, almost like one of the origins of theatre in Ghana. NTD1 observes the setup of the National Theatre as an answer to a national call for a facility to house, promote, preserve and project our cultural heritage.

From the art writers’ point of view, responses showed that journalists were looking at just a platform. In other words, a space for performances, that was all. In fact, the media was concerned with the promotion and manifestation of the theatre structure and not a movement as envisaged by the earlier patriots. In his claim, the movement was dealt with by the earlier patriots during the latter part of 1950’s and the media’s concern was with the manifestation of the physical structure. In reality, this 21st century focuses on the National Theatre entity, its significance, development and promotion of the performing arts in Ghana. Which presupposes that the National Theatre Movement has been fought for, what still remained was the utilisation of the theatre entity and its opportunities and how the facility translates into the development of the performing arts in Ghana, cultural development and promotion.

According to Nana Banyin Dadzie who indicated that their interest as Journalist in relation to the National Theatre project was to see its completion as an answer to the

plight of the performing arts fraternity, a home for the performing arts. Hence, the journalist wrote in newspapers for the public which pandered to the ordinary people, whereas some other performing arts practitioners and cultural experts like Agovi, Hammond, Efua Sutherland, Arkhurst and Joe De-graft among others wrote passionately about the National Theatre Movement in journals for the academicians and elites. And for the arts writers, their writings looked at art as a manifestation, things they can see and touch. It was on the basis of this that the idea of the National Theatre stood strong on the minds of journalist.

NTD2, NTD1 and NTD4 were of the view that in the sixties Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of the first republic of Ghana, Efua Sutherland and Joe De-Graft among others were patriots who encouraged performers and the promotion of culture more especially, the existing *concert party* groups at the time to put up performances in the region. These groups were under the watch of President Kwame Nkrumah. He actually created Nkrumah Theatre players and set a foundation for this, and Efua Sutherland was one of the people as well as Joe De-Graft who were very key in its initiatives. This fed into the primordial, that is, the genesis of theatre in Ghana basically as substantiated by Botwi-Asamoah (2005).

NTD2 and NTD4 attests to the fact that *concert party* production has been one of the major productions that sought to bring Ghanaian audience together as an authentic African drama form. It seemed to be the most preferred form of drama since its inception. Per the researcher's search, *Concert Party* was one of the strategic theatrical genres that was produced by NTG to build an audience, harness culture and revitalise the theatre going tradition in Ghana. It is against this backdrop the researcher seeks to draw attention to the fact that *Concert Party* production is a family

entertainment programme that unites Ghanaian and theatre goers with a common purpose and destiny.

It has been identified as a crucial factor that when the National Theatre got established, then came the movement towards defining our theatre as *Abibigoro*, something that was unique to us as Ghanaians just as the *concert party* trend that had been consistent over the years with musicians (Collins, 2007). According to Barber and Richard (1997), Ghanaian forms of theatre has been sought for all these times during and after the colonial rule and there has always been a strong performing arts industry and their agitation for artistic space that would cater for all of these different genres of performances and voices. By and large, it appears that the National Theatre has become the manifestation of those voices coming together and demanding and therefore finally getting a space for artistic voices and expressions to be heard.

Even though CE4 argues that the National Theatre promotes culture and the performing arts, on the contrary, CE5 disagrees with CE4's submission. This is an indication that the theatre rather focuses on hiring of the facility to prospective clients to raise revenue to maintain the facility. In support of CE4's submission, CE3 emphasizes the fact that the National Theatre hires out its facility because it appears government funding is not enough to support the development and promotion of the performing arts in Ghana. Funding in the area of the creative arts industry has to be looked at, since there are no endowments fund facilities to source for the creative arts industry here in Ghana.

Even though we acknowledge the essence of cultural development and the promotion of the performing arts in Ghana, according to responses obtained during the interview, it appears the productions put up by the National Theatre are too elitist to the

extent that they do not attract audience as indicated earlier on. Most of their programmes leave the auditorium almost empty, even when complementary tickets are given out for free. It is important to identify reasons why the theatre's programmes leave the auditorium almost empty but other private production fill up the auditorium. Meanwhile, these might not be culturally authentic productions. The study shows that the marketing department and the front of house units need to *whip* up their operation and embark on audience feed backs in order to improve on services delivered.

Respondent NTD5 sought to clarify the fact that it is not all productions loaded onto the National Theatre stage that are solely produced and priced by the theatre. In a submission corroborated by CNT1 "most productions stages at the National Theatre are privately produced by individuals or production houses." The researcher believes that the National Theatre needs to come out clear as to the type of productions they produce and pricing levels in order to meet the ordinary citizen's pocket and aspiration. It is necessary to state this premise because the National Theatre of Ghana is to preserve our unique Ghanaian identity while projecting our Ghanaian positive values. Therefore, the concept of a national theatre is needed to significantly promote a nation's history, traditional values and culture if one stays true to it. These values could be channelled through the existing resident groups and the impact felt locally and internationally as affirmed by (Botwi-Asamoah, 2005).

Fact still remains that every country has the opportunity to have a facility that will conserve, preserve and promote its indigenous culture and the National Theatre of Ghana appears to be one of such facilities. As it were monuments are a replication of our past and an evidence for what we stand for as a nation, and are revealed in our way of life; our music, dance, theatrical forms and general artistic expressions. In addition, CE2 underscores the relevance of a monument as symbols of traditions, a movement of

a people and as a showcase of all what we consider as a cultural heritage. Connecting theatre to culture, the researcher realized that it is evident that theatre is a cultural institution that preserves the artistic heritage of a society for posterity. It is against this backdrop many countries have established monuments to tell histories of the past and to discuss social issues confronting them with the use of the theatre space. In light of these, Ghana is positioned as a unique country to project our culture to the present generation and to have them culturally educated, and to make it meaningful to the diaspora and other countries for them to know where we belong as a nation and what we fought for as a people. This comes in the wake of creating common values for the state and the people of Ghana as buttressed by Nketia (1976).

Through the studies it was revealed that within the scope of the contemporary world, it is crucial to have such cultural structures explicitly created to commemorate a person or event which has become relevant to a social group as a remembrance of historic times or cultural heritage. CE2 adds that the National Theatre of Ghana becomes very significant in the way it has showcased the Ghanaian's cultural identity through the performing arts and by itself.

NTD1 and NTD2 sought to clarify the role of the National Theatre of Ghana because to them, when people talk about the National Theatre, they referred to the building and what happens within. But the National Theatre according to them is more of a concept. Hence, the content should move to meet people, regardless of geographical, financial background or social pursuit for that matter. In furtherance to NTD1's submission, for the past twenty-six years from the date of establishment up to the date when data was collected, the theatre has done some great work, in that "it continues to engage children stay loyal to our uniquely Ghanaian art forms and then showcased culture."

Basically, HODTA1 agrees with CE5 and CE4 that the National Theatre was established for the promotion of the performing arts and culture to be showcased and to encourage excellence in creativity and the appreciation of Ghanaian performing arts both in Africa and the outside world. The *culture policy of Ghana 2004* stipulates that the National Theatre of Ghana is established as an excellent facility to be sourced by performers to enhance their performative arts. Hence, their focus is aimed towards the promotion of music, dance and drama (National Commission on Culture, 2004). As a matter of fact, Kwame Nkrumah in his bid to promote culture, saw theatre as a platform to promote societal unity and to conscientize Ghanaians on the need to think African, so that people would be able to learn from one another's cultures and history as captured in the performative arts (National Commission on Culture, 2004). NTD6 added his voice by indicating that significantly, NTG created training sessions for some stakeholders in the performing arts industry with the view to sustain culture and promote the performing arts and to acquire individual skills needed to develop oneself and to forge the country forward. Besides, the whole idea of a national theatre has been able to make us think in terms of Africanising and remaining as Ghanaian, these obviously can be seen in the Ghanaian's theatricalism and African art forms, and this corroborates the views of Barber, Karin, Collins and Richard (1997).

An insightful revelation by Nana Benyin Dadzie emphasised Ghanaian's patriotism in the mist of cultural development and promotion when he was involved in the Miss Ghana and Dance Championship respectively at the time. He indicated that on one of the occasions the contestants of the Dance Championship who were being camped in Accra for the competition since they came from the various regions to participate in the event assisted in digging the profile of the building as part of their contribution towards the construction of the theatre facility. "This activity was a

symbolic gesture for the fact that these young dancers were seen to be helping in the construction of the National Theatre building” indicated by Nana Benyin Dadzie (N. B. Dadzie, personal communication, August 2, 2018). Their contribution in a way symbolised their expectations and the general expectation of all. The expectation at that time was that, finally Ghanaians were going to have a national place that would be accessible to artist for them to now showcase their artistic works. A place much bigger and better than the Arts Centre. Apparently, because the Arts Centre was in Accra and could boast of some theatrical facilities, it was set as the platform for various artistic endeavours. But really, research showed that there were such Centres for National Cultures (CNC) in the regions as well. Even though the Accra Arts Centre was looked at as a National Platform, it was still seen as a regional theatre and so for once, according to Nana Benyin “the nation was going to have a national theatre” and this kind of desire was expressed by everybody including the press (N. B. Dadzie, personal communication, August 2, 2018).

The concept of a place was carried on somewhere in 1990 which was reflected in the writings and reportage of journalist in Ghana within some limited perspective according to Nana Banyin Dadzie the media specialist, a place for performance not a theatre movement (N. B. Dadzie, personal communication, August 2, 2018).

In one breath, some school of thought endorsed that the National Theatre Movement was what was fought for and remains the cream of cultural events, while the other school of thought supports the assertion that the establishment of a theatre building was to showcase creative art works, which was the ultimate and not an ideology of a theatre movement and “that this has been the concept carried on until now.” These were the two contrasting views among some section of the public seeking to know background reasons for which the theatre was to be established.

The facility as it were, became a value issue for Ghanaians, in terms of the social aggregate. So, over time there was a certain audience appreciation with regard to those who patronized theatre for example because they could go to the theatre and see performances of different types. Moreover, the three (3) resident groups had their different audiences who were enveloped in the Theatre, so, in terms of the social aggregate it was significant. As a result, certain popular audience began to emerge especially when the *concert party* tradition developed and the National Theatre began to show *concert party* both on stage and on television which were hitherto itinerant groups of a certain rural and semi urban elite. Particularly of the population made up of migrants who had come into the city of Accra. They knew of *Concert Party* and to their surprise, there was *Concert Party* on the stage. Meanwhile, from that stalk, all kinds of people throng to the National Theatre: market women, tailors, hairdressers, food hawkers, teachers and drivers among others were coming to watch *concert party* even in their best clothes. In a giving circumstance, theatre may be regarded as a platform that brings people and communities together to build up their emotions and perhaps play back their experiences.

Theatres mostly house resident groups to put up performances either command or social based to entertain, inform and educate the public. It is against this backdrop that the National Theatre houses the three (3) resident groups; National Symphony Orchestra, National Drama Company and National Dance Company to perform such functions.

5.1.2 National Theatre of Ghana was set up to Educate

In addition, ME1 a Media Expert also agrees with HODTA1, CE5 and CE4 with the indication that from the media point of view, the National Theatre of Ghana was built to educate Ghanaians and foreigners on cultural issues, and as a place to get entertained and to promote the performing arts. Further to his submission, the three resident companies also play public education roles during government sensitization programmes. Occasionally, they assist the Information Service Department carry out such civic educational programmes through dramatization. The researcher submits that just as the National Theatre educates the public, cultural leaders like Efua Sutherland and Joe De-Graft among others also used theatre as a driving force to promote cultural consciousness as confirmed by Kimble (1963).

Architects on the theatre project represented by TE1 and TE2 share their thought on the establishment of the theatre. They were of the view that the National Theatre of Ghana was built to provide a big platform for actors and audiences to go there to practice and witness what is actually going on in our society in a form of entertainment which ends up to be educative (National Commission on Culture, 1995). So, per the study the researcher believes that the establishment of the National Theatre was to emphasize the importance of our culture, promote and project and to also generate income into the National kitty. Respondent TE1 and TE2 further indicated that most countries have such facilities to conserve, preserve and promote its indigenous culture and the National Theatre is one of such edifices that has been established to do this particular thing. Nii-Yartey (2011, p.283) posits that “the performing arts constitutes the most potent physical, emotional and psychological manifestation of culture.” It is very dynamic and represents our own being in its fullness.

In terms of the very broader idea related to development, it is believed that the theatre played an important role in main streaming the thought process in people's appreciation of how theatre could enhance development, as one critical form. Per submission it points to the fact that it is an area which a lot of planners in our sector struggle with, how to main stream the arts in national development. In support, CE4 and CE1 were of the view that the theatre again as an edifice and as a performance area also has over time brought attention to the place of the arts in the developmental process in this country and as a movement. Sometime very imperceptible one may not be able to put his hands on it, very fluid but people are able to point to the opportunities when planning is underway.

The theatre significantly stands as a national edifice in all purposes and intent and is also seen as the heart and soul of the nation showcasing drama, dance and music nationally and internationally reflecting ideologies of unity in diversity. Primarily, the researcher believes that culture has the propensity to promote our identity and through identity develop ourselves in terms of infrastructure, politics and religion among others. Culture is broad and encapsulates the totality of man: social, political, economic, aesthetics, religious practices, and folklore (Commission on Culture, 2004).

5.1.3 Socio-Economic Development

The other aspect of relevance was related more to the economy as indicated by CE4 and CEI, where it became possible for the government to quantify artistic services in relation to revenue generation with particular reference to the arts. For instance, currently, in the budget hearing it could be said that so much was gained through theatre performances, which hitherto was not there as one form. So, all the different things that the theatre houses at least were able to be quantified have value for their contribution to

Gross Domestic Product (GDP), very structured in that form. In fact, that is one of the things that the venue or institution gave.

Respondents CE1, CE2 and NTD1 supported the assertion that the setup of the National Theatre turned to become a conscious beginning of people looking at monetising performances, employment opportunities generated, theatre practitioners earning income, government earning taxes from the theatre productions, income from renting the facility and public education heightened. According to CE1, he presumed that this was the beginning of some kind of influence on socio-economic postures in the country. In light of these, the researcher saw it as an opportunity of relevant importance related more to the economy because then it became possible for the government to quantify artistic services in relation to revenue generation with particular reference to the arts. For instance, in the budget hearing it could be said that so much was gained through theatre performances, which hitherto was not there as one form. So, all the different things that the theatre houses at least were quantified and had value for their contribution to Gross Domestic Product, which was very structured in that form.

The research shows that economically, theatres are the largest employers in the job market in the world (Bekken, 2001). When the National Theatre was officially opened employment opportunities were generated, theatre practitioners began to earn income as well as government earning taxes from the theatre productions and income from renting the facility. According to CE1, he presumes that this was the beginning of some kind of influence on socio-economic postures in this country.

Additionally, NTD4 and NTD3 draw attention to the fact that the theatre has created jobs for some hawkers who do business with the audience in front of the theatre during productions. For instance, taxi drivers and food vendors earn income from it.

The National Theatre of Ghana facility is government funded and is required to generate income towards the national kitty and to contribute towards national development through theatre performances [education, entertainment and sensitization programmes].

5.1.4 Socio-Political Development

The current executive of the National Theatre of Ghana, was of the view that the theatre is not just a mouthpiece or a platform to promote art and culture but also a medium which the government in power utilizes to reach its electorates and also to perform a cultural façade for international activities to promote unity. From the study, it appears the governments of the day usually have their own cultural ideologies which are reflected in their manifesto that drives its cultural policies. Some political rallies are hosted at the auditorium of the National Theatre as a more secured venue. According to Mohammed Ben Abdallah who was once the former chairman for the National Commission on Culture and the board chairman of the theatre, stressed that fact still remains that in the early days of the National Theatre, the main auditorium was a venue for major national indoor events such as discussions of the economic budget programs and the occasional use of the main auditorium for political rallies. During *Independence Day* and *May Day Celebrations [Workers Day]*, the National Dance Company supports the occasion with traditional drumming and dance as curtain raisers for the programme. NTD1 indicated that during the late 1990(s) President Clinton's visit from the United State of America to Ghana was heralded amidst, dance and drumming at the Independence Square as a sign of welcome, unity and acceptance. This sign is an indication that most state functions are supported by the National Theatre's resident company.

The use of the National Theatre space by the P. N.D.C. Government in the early part of 1990s was way before the construction of the Accra International Conference Centre which currently features conference for which it was built. NTD5 has it that currently, some political parties rent the facility for political rallies.

The study showed that the National Dance Company is occasionally called upon to welcome dignitaries from other countries or foreign Presidents visiting Ghana with Ghanaian traditional dances as a sign of unity and welcome. This kind of display was established during the British rule and is still in practice presently. Recently, the National Dance Company performed in the company of Prince Charles from the United Kingdom at the Christiansborg Castle, Osu during his visit from the United Kingdom to Ghana as in Figure 2. This gesture was to cement and enhance the relationship between United Kingdom and Ghana.



Figure 2. Prince Charles joins National Dance Company to perform a dance at the Christiansborg Castle, Osu

Source: Daily Graphic, 2018.

In all these, the National Theatre of Ghana becomes a repository of knowledge, because it ensures that the public knows of the history of Ghana or of their heritage as it has been captured in dramas, dances and music so that the public got educated.

5.1.5 Promotion of Tourism

Tourism is an effective way of promoting art and culture and a platform to attract investment and development in a country. However, the National Theatre is opened to the general public for tours on days that there are no production periods. As part of the theatre showcasing some of its theatrical facilities and programmes, it embarks on tours which happen to be one of its auxiliary projects organised as a form of education. In this regard, the theatre encourages schools to visit the complex to conduct educational tours, corporate, church and private tours as a means of broadening their scope in theatre practice and the development of theatres in Ghana. Even though this activity might not be a core function of the National Theatre, it is believed that the theatre could leverage on its prospects and opportunities to sell out and publicise its activities.

Collaborations have been a feature of the operations of the National Theatre. In 1997 the National Theatre of Ghana signed a memorandum of understanding with the State Theatre of South Africa, Truck Pack to organise a mobility programme between both theatres. The exchange programme was created for the staff of both institutions to exchange professional ideas. As part of the programme culture was shared and demonstrated between both institutions.

Meanwhile, during the 1980s under the auspices of the National Commission on Culture and of late the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts the three (3) resident have had several opportunities to visit a couple of West African countries, Europe and

the some Asian countries in a form of a cultural exchange and to share their experience.

Additionally, cultural exchange programmes by the theatre have been slated with a number of the diplomatic mission in Ghana and abroad in the promotion of theatre, dance and music. This has been an ongoing activity due to support from the Ministry for Tourism, Culture and the Arts. The international programme, *Pan African Festival of Arts, PANAFEST* appears to be one of the flagship programmes of Ghana. The festival brings together Ghanaians, individuals and groups from the diaspora and tourist to participate in the international programme. During this occasion, the resident companies of the National Theatre got involved in performances at the slated venues to showcase their performances as a sign of the promotion of arts and culture. During the presentation of this historic event the National Theatre is chosen as a venue to showcase some of its activities.

5.2 The Extent to which the National Theatre of Ghana achieved its core Mandates

In the National Theatre *of Ghana Background Document for Capitalization* as cited by National Commission on Culture (1995), the object of the National Theatre shall be to development and promote the performing arts in Ghana as stipulated by the Ghana National Theatre Law, 1991 of P.N.D.C. Law 259. This document embraces the opportunity to provide access to the arts for many people as possible, serve for excellence, strive towards economic viability of the arts and to advocate for the arts and those who create it. Importantly, this is an essential part of the focus of the National Theatre of Ghana.

5.2.1 Development of Programmes

During the early 1990's just after the commissioning of the National Theatre, NTD1 and NTD1 confirmed that the then leaders of the theatre; Komla Amoaku, Korkor Amarteifio and Nii-Yartey spearheaded a series of new cultural variety productions, among others were *Show Time* and *Fun World*, a variety entertainment programme that sought to unearth budding talents for the stage and by extension the creative arts industry. These patriots of the theatre demonstrated the intent of the mandates by encouraging young performers to showcase their art forms. NTD1 described it as an added value of a sort. Through these enactments the theatre churned artistes who are presently practicing creative artists. Between the years of 1994 and 2004 the theatre appeared to be fulfilling part of its mandate to develop the performing arts along such lines. By NTD1's submission, youth groups were also formed [Indigena Africa, the Orchestra youth wing and Dance Factory, the youth dance wing of the National Dance Company]. Basically, these groups were established and trained to feed the three (3) resident companies when the need arose. CE5 in corroboration espoused that there was the need for the state to encourage the creation, documentation and extensive productions of the dramatic arts in order to sustain the interest of Ghanaians in the participation of theatre programmes. The researcher believes that in so doing, preservation and promotion of traditional and contemporary dramatic arts shall will be well patronised and preserved for posterity.

In an ensuing revelation by NTD1 around the time was the re-emergence of *concert party* production which hitherto was defunct, with likes of Bishop Bob Okala, Agya Koo and Nkomodie who did not have formal training in acting but sustained the interest of the audience at the show. For instance, in 2017 Agya Koo was nominated to

serve on the National Theatre Board in the area of policy direction, which the National Theatre saw to be a great achievement.

Additionally, *Concert Party* production toured the whole nation from the southern sector through to the northern sector together with Unilever under the first management of the National Theatre of Ghana after its commissioning declared by NTD3, the former director of operation (NTG). According to NTD1, NTD2, NTD5 in their submission, the production among others, educated its audiences on hygiene and sanitation with the prime emphasis on the use of the key soap to wash clothes and bath with. This was the idea that was used by the National Theatre and Unilever Ghana Limited to market the key soap product and to increase the sales of the product. Meanwhile, moral lessons were drawn from the performances that were stage. *Concert Party* according to Korkor Amarteifio in a personal communication impacted the lives of people: both the audiences, artistes and the technicians who worked with them (K. Amarteifio, personal communication, August 9, 2018).

Before Efo Kojo Mawugbe's death in 2013 he made a speech during the *International Theatre Day* at the National Theatre to revamp the production unit of the theatre by broadening and sustaining existing programmes both on and off theatre's premise, establishing Ghana University Festival of Arts, promotion of Ghanaian classics in music, dance and theatre, promotion of International Festival of *Ananse* Drama and Ga-Adangbe Arts and Culture among others.

On the contrary, a former Director NTD3 of the National Theatre disagreed with the assertions made by a current director of the theatre on the grounds that the National Theatre has imparted the lives of people. In his claim, direct influence of the National Theatre on the larger society has not been achieved because it appears that most

theatrical productions apart from *Concert Party* and other indigenous productions are being presented in English. This is seen in the story lines, ideas and the style of presentation. Presentation wise, it appears to be structured for the middle level personnel: university graduates or those who have had some good level of education and can appreciate the story lines, content and the style. The participant concluded that on the whole the influence on the larger society was not there because it looks as if the illiterate did not have a space there. Besides, it appeared that most of the National Theatre's productions were centred in Accra and presentations were elitist based.

In a related development, Michael Akenoo did a feature on a *critical appraisal of the Present National Theatre of Ghana* in the Ghanaian Times issued on Thursday, February 21, 2019 which puts the Theatre in the spot light. In his statement, the National Theatre of Ghana is virtually operating below expectation as far as the purpose for which it was built is concerned. Akenoo stressed that His Excellency Jerry John Rawlings took a bold initiative to negotiate for a loan to put up the theatre with the conviction that theatre practice and its psyche in Ghana will experience a great boom; and consequently, accelerate the development process of the country. Per his assessment, the National Theatre of Ghana has hitherto not lived up to this great expectation.

David Dontoh, a performer corroborates with Michael Attipoe, a cultural expert by indicating that theatre is a movement and must not be confined to a building because it is a building. For instance, people in the northern part of Ghana cannot come to the National Theatre to watch a production. It seems that the National Theatre has been clogged in the building to the extent that they have not been able to step out of the theatre into the region to promote and project our national culture through theatre in the hinterland. Dontoh's assessment shows that this challenge is a minus for the theatre.

That is why we say “theatre is a movement and must not be confined into a building” (D. Dontoh, personal communication, August 30, 2018).

Meanwhile, the theatre’s limitation in movements by means of not having buses to pursue their activities in the regions led to their relinquished role of developing the performing arts in the hinterlands. Meanwhile, the companies also have their own mandates and as such finds it very difficult to get them achieve due to lack of transport to connect them to the hinterlands. The researcher observed that the theatre has literally confined itself to running the theatre as in performances, or renting out the facility, so per Dontoh’s assessment, the theatre has not been able to really impact the country as part of their mandates to get Ghanaians from all walks of life to better appreciate and for which reason they will be able to help promote our cultural heritage through theatre performances (D. Dontoh, personal communication, August 30, 2018).

. According to Dontoh, in order to facilitate such national programmes, the theatre has to be resourced better than now and needs to be taken off the national electricity grid since the consumption rate of the National Theatre electricity power is high, considering the high voltage theatre lamps (D. Dontoh, personal communication, August 30, 2018). “Once the National Theatre begins to pay for electricity consumption, the work of the National Theatre will come to a halt, because the theatre uses between one thousand wattage (1000 watts) and ten thousand wattage (10,000 watts) of electric power since these stage light bulbs consume a lot of power.” Due to some of these utility limitations, the researcher seeks to advocate for the government to take the National Theatre off the national grid so as to focus on artistic projects. In so doing, the theatre will have the freedom and leverage to work and be able to tap into the talents and human resource in the arts around the country to be able to do its work and to be able to satisfy the mandates for which it has been set for.

In NTD3's remarks, for the theatre to achieve its mandates, there is the need for theatre to reach out into all the regions to make its presence more felt in Ghana. NTD2 in an attempt to contribute toward NTD3's remarks, stressed that the National Theatre should collaborate with the Regional Cultural Centres to develop and promote the performing arts, since some might have facilities model groups to push the national agenda. NTD6 affirms the same thought as NTD3 with regard to linkage programmes with regard to the National Theatre in connection with the Regional Centres for National Culture.

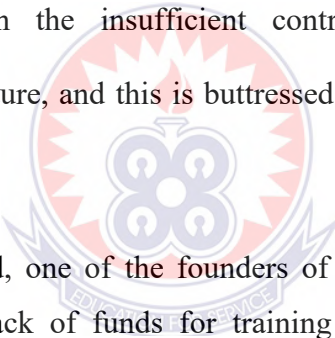
In a more prudent way, the researcher saw the already existing structures of the Regional Centre for National Culture as a good platform to collaborate with the National Theatre in promoting and fostering the development of the art and culture as mandated by the law. Even though the idea seems good, sadly most of the Regional Centres for National Cultural facilities are still not completed and seem to operate parallel activities with the theatre instead of collaborating efforts on a national grid to achieve a holistic target.

5.2.2 Lack of Funds for National Theatre of Ghana Activities

NTD3, NTD6 and NDT3 drew attention to the fact that the National Theatre is a government sub-vented organisation established by law. Per the data it appears government funds for programming and operations is woefully inadequate, therefore the researcher believes that as revealed by the study, the National Theatre saw the need to take steps to rent out the building facility, chairs and tables to generate Internally Generated Funds (IGF) to complement government subvention in order to maintain the facility and support programme development. Hence, with this current arrangement, it should be possible for the theatre to support itself to produce theatrical productions

considering the constraint on government subvention as stressed by NTD3. The study makes us understand that insufficient funds for general operations caused the National Theatre to rent out its facility instead of focusing on its key mandate, “to develop and promote of the performing arts in Ghana” as stipulated by P.N.D.C Law 259 of 1991 constitution.

Seemingly, even though National Theatre of Ghana is faced with such problems as funding, it has in a way created collaborative opportunities for both individuals, associations, performing arts educational institutions and corporate organisation to promote and project the performing arts in Ghana as corroborated by NTD2. Such funds are mainly generated through sponsorships which in a way supports productions. Efua Sutherland commented on the insufficient contribution of funds towards the development of art and culture, and this is buttressed by Agovi (1989) in an interview published in 1973 that:



Efua Sutherland, one of the founders of the National Theatre Movement lamented the lack of funds for training programmes and infrastructural facilities for theatre performances. In the 1970(s) she observed that there was the need for someone “to sit and concentrate on the problems of how to foster and maintain, in practical terms, programmes on which the realisation of the national aspirations for cultural development depends”. In her view such an exercise would require money, facilities and time to realise the aspiration. These were some challenges she identified while promoting the National Theatre Movement. (pp.5-6)

It is worth noting that Efua Sutherland finds it essential to draw attention to ‘lack of funds’ to promote the arts which seem to be the scenario the National Theatre finds itself. One may say history is repeating itself because during the seventies, funds for arts in Ghana was curtailed and there was a noticeable withdrawal of active state

support and patronage of the arts in Ghana and this took centre stage after the death of Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah [the marriage between culture and politics came to an end], this act became an economic priority (Agovi, 1987, p.146). Developing a theatre in a nation is indeed relevant to the cultural and performative needs of that nation. However, the difficulty of sustaining its survival through designated funds is the challenge we have to grapple with (Agovi, 1990). Some directors of the National Theatre said the theatre has never been adequate with regard to funds for operation let alone maintenance.

In reiteration, a former director highlighted that it may be against such backdrops the maintenance plan of the theatre has never met the desired schedule for implementation. During the early part of the year 2000, the Japanese Company, Toshiba made a gift and installed sound and lighting equipment in the National Theatre of Ghana. Five years later, the Chinese also decided to refurbish the facility as indicated by the terms of construction in the memorandum of understanding (MOU). The MOU stated that the theatre needed to be refurbished every ten (10) years after its construction. So, to honour the MOU in 2005 the theatre was refurbished.

NTD2 stated that “if the budget allocation is insignificant for running theatre operations, administration and emolument, how much shall be reserved for maintenance, let alone programme development”. According to Agovi (1990), successive administrations of the National Theatre have complained and protested against the inadequate funds needed to run the National Theatre of Ghana.

5.2.3 Conflicting Policies Establishing the National Theatre of Ghana and the Three (3) Resident Companies

Article 10 (i) of the National Theatre Law provides for the appointment of directors for music, dance, and drama whose functions would be co-ordinated by an artistic director. In relation to this it appeared the law was silent on the jurisdiction of the directors over the resident companies.

The study further revealed that there was a pending challenge with respect to the non-harmonisation of the National Theatre and the three (3) resident groups which undermines the operation of the mandate as identified by National Commission on Culture (1995) as part of the National Theatre of Ghana document for Capitalisation 1995. This ambiguity is further compounded by the provisions of Article 3 of the National Commission on Culture Law 238 in P.N.D.C. Law 1990 under which the three (3) resident performance troupes are listed as autonomous entities under the commission just like the National Theatre. This challenge has been identified by the National Theatre Management as an inherent conflictual provision of the National Commission on Culture Law and the National Theatre Law. As stressed by the National Theatre of Ghana Background Document for Capitalization 1995 lodged at the theatre. The basic ingredient of this conflict stems from the fact that under Article 3 of the National Commission on Culture Law (P.N.D.C.L 236 of 1991) the Ghana Dance Ensemble, *Aibigromma* and the National Symphony Orchestra are accorded equal status as organizations under the commission just like the National Theatre of Ghana. Even within the confines of the Commission Law, there exist two (2) discordant elements. The first of these elements is the conspicuous absence of clearly defined aims and objectives of the resident companies. Granted that the three (3) resident groups derived their legal status from the Arts Council Law, one cannot say with any certainty that

Article 30 of the National Commission Law which repealed the said Arts Council Decree and its subsequent Amendment Decree has not totally obliterated the rights of existence of the resident groups as legal entities.

The researcher is tempted to say that, under the provision of the National Commission of Culture Law, these resident groups are autonomous national entities devoid of any legal status. As cited by the law establishing the Ghana National Theatre, under Article 7 of the law establishing the Ghana theatre however, the three (3) groups were accorded the status of resident performance troupes in the area of dance, dramatic art and music respectively.

This act has generated into a challenge where each Administration finds very difficult to resolve even though currently there is an attempt by the present administration to align administrative operations.

As it stands now, it appears the management of the National Theatre of Ghana is doing its best to align administrative and operational activities in order to merge the resident companies as a single entity instead of the autonomous setting of the companies to ensure a clear policy direction to achieve its mandates. However, there is the need for policy intervention to formalise the idea to merge the groups, otherwise the challenge will continue to persist and stifle the operations of the mandates since each entity would be operating in silos. In one breath, the law setting up the National Theatre indicates that the three (3) companies are operational under the National Theatre and in the other breath, the National Commission on Culture establishes the National Theatre and the three (3) entities among others under its oversight. Both statements seem to contradict one another. This is why the entities tend to operate in silos and appear not to be responsible to the National Theatre of Ghana. NTD3 indicates that from the

hindsight to him there is the need to reconstitute the National Theatre Board to ensure adequate representation of experts on the board according to NTD3. For instance; the experts could be a lawyer, accountant or banker, a marketing expert and an advertising expert. These categories of professional added to the performing artist and cultural experts on the board would make a better theatre management mix to lead the National Theatre in the development and promotion of theatre in Ghana (Appendix F). In further submission, NTD3 is of the view that, there is the need to amend the National Theatre Law as indicated by the former chairman of the National Commission on Culture, Lt. General A. Quainoo (Appendix E). As a result, it appears the Ghana National Theatre Law does not meet the current need of theatre practice and direction, which may be the reasons for which the theatre is moving in the current direction it finds itself.

Furthermore, NTD2 had the chance to sit on the board and later an Interim Management Committee Member of the National Theatre, so it offered him the opportunity to have a first-hand experience in the activities of the theatre. In his statement, there was a misunderstanding in the application of the theatre's mandates. In that, the theatre at that time through the State Enterprises Commission was to be re-structured as a state organisation that was self-funded which would have contradicted the law setting up the National Theatre as a government-sub-vented institution. This conflicting scenario made the National Theatre and the three (3) resident groups see themselves as autonomous organisation and the resident companies were not getting support from the theatre, rather seen as competing entities. This situation alarmed the entity because per the statutes of the National Theatre of Ghana as stated in the P.N.D.C Law 259 of 1991, the theatre was established to “develop and promote the performing arts in Ghana” and not for commercial purposes as it is now. The researcher per the study observed that since the National Theatre and the three resident companies were

all under the National Commission on Culture just like the other agencies the resident companies saw themselves as autonomous organisations that were preoccupied mainly with surviving. Hence, activities showed that the National Theatre was not getting support from the resident companies, even though they were the main users of the theatre space. From the hindsight, it appeared that the mandate of the National Theatre was misunderstood because the various administrations did not think that it was their responsibility to ensure that the theatre as a movement was established on a national scale.

5.2.4 Challenges with Staffing Levels

At this time, it is important to put into perspective a review of the strength of the National Theatre of Ghana manpower in order to appreciate the study in relation to the challenges of human resource development and a succession plan.

The document on *the National Theatre in Retrospect: An overview of the first four (4) operational years, 1994-1997*, cited at the National Theatre of Ghana revealed that “the then administration came into office in the last quarter of 1994 with the theatre not having its full complement of staff of the National Theatre in 1998. As stated by the document, in view of the considerable difficulty with respect to manpower, the National Theatre sought permission from the Ministry of Finance to recruit into certain key and sensitive positions to ensure administrative efficiency. In view of that management at that time, mandated by the board absorb the cost of the additional non-established positions from the operational revenues. Expenditure in respect of this non-established appointments was 6.3% of theatre’s own general revenue.

As a result, this paved way for a restructuring exercise involving the absorption of certain categories of seconded staff, regularisation of all appointments and the

engagement of new staff on temporary and casual base to take up technical, administrative and managerial positions at the theatre. In spite of these adhoc measures, the current staffing position is still inadequate to provide the much-needed impetus for the growth and enhanced position at the theatre.

It is also important to underscore the fact that about 42% of the total labour force at the National Theatre of Ghana for any of its operational years are made up of non-permanent staff and this situation has made a phenomenal negative impact on the theatre's operation.

Currently, the National Theatre of Ghana employee record for 2018 stood at forty-five (45) at the time of data collection, this is not inclusive of the staff of the three (3) resident companies. All companies during the inception of the National Theatre of Ghana, hitherto were seen as autonomous groups with separate board of directors, which should not have been the case by deed of establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana entity (National Commission on Culture, 1995). According to the National Theatre Law 259 of P.N.D.C. the resident companies should have been under the National Theatre of Ghana.

As indicative of the National Commission on Culture (1995) in the National Theatre of Ghana *Background Document for Capitalization 1995*, the initial operation and commencement of the National Theatre of Ghana manpower budget as at 1995 was at sixty-eight (68) as the number of staff members at that time to run the facility. The assumption was synchronized with accepted standard practice to ensure efficient service delivery of theatre's programmes even though the number of staff members were not adequate. In this case, the core members of the theatre staff constituted; administration, accounts, estate, operation, technical and programmes. They also ensured the theatre

remained financially solvent, that it was well run, and that it is perceived as an asset to the community it serves. “These group of person’s holds up a mirror to our hearts, our city, and the world through their invaluable contributions to theatre practice” (Volz, 2011, p.28).

NTD4 concedes that it is essential to look for opportunities to retain most of the key staff, particularly those involved in the core business of the establishment [artistes and crew] in order to provide standard service to meet desired mandates. As indicated earlier on the current number to run the National Theatre facility needs to be augmented to obtain quality. According to NTD3, government’s current position on employment embargo has left the National Theatre with key positions yet to be filled as a result of deaths and retirements. Due to the inadequate staffing levels, the employees of the theatre, especially the technical crew double in the performance of their duties and this occurrence has a toll on their output and health.

5.2.5 National Theatre of Ghana Collaborating with the Regional Centres for National Culture

Per the National Theatre *of Ghana Background Document for Capitalisation, 1995* as cited in National Theatre of Ghana, the National Theatre of Ghana and the regional theatres must collaborate their efforts to harness the arts by making the National Theatre and the regional theatres, a training ground for professionals in the cultural sector. Advantageously, most of the regions already have existing Centres for National Culture as stream agencies under the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts just as the National Theatre of Ghana. To this end for an effective collaboration between National Theatre of Ghana and the Centres for National Culture, it is imperative for the centres to be resourced in order to carry out this national assignment.

More so, the theatre must be seen as the coordinator for such activities in a structured form.

The researcher believes that when the National Theatre partners with the Regional Centres for National Cultures, District Assemblies and communities to establish community theatres, it would stimulate the promotion of the performing arts in general. However, as it stands, research shows that some of the regions have abandoned the construction of the building facilities that are supposed to house the cultural and performing art activities. Close to a decade now some centres still have projects at the foundation level or lintel stage. Meanwhile, some cultural facilities are being used in their uncompleted state. Per the researcher's observation, even though some of the facilities in the regional centres are not completed they have stated to deteriorate as stated by the comprehensive data on the National Commission on Culture projects document, cited by the National Commission on Culture (2017). From a more focused holistic point, if these cultural centres had being in standard shape, the document promotes that the centres will then become the orbit around which the life of the people in the region revolves and a meeting point for the preservation, development and promotion of the rich cultural heritage of the people delving into a bigger picture.

In this era of globalization and technological advancement with regard to the performing arts and culture, it is believed that, culture must be supported to exercise a deep influence on national development through enhanced local technology, job and wealth creation. The researcher believes that culture and the creative arts sub-sector are bedecked with a lot of infrastructural problems in Ghana as revealed by studies. Lack of appropriate cultural infrastructure continues to hinder all efforts to achieve the cardinal objectives on which the cultural policy of Ghana is premised particularly in the regions and districts.

5.3 The Symbolic Representation of the National Theatre of Ghana Facility

Importantly, to achieve the representative nature of the National Theatre, “the design of theatres should be based on African indigenous architecture as well as African concepts and tradition of performances” (National Commission on Culture, 1995, p.29). The establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana provides the opportunity for us as Ghanaians to focus on defining, enhancing and preserving Ghana’s cultural history while promoting a national cultural agenda (National Commission on Culture, 1995).

Undoubtedly, memorials and monuments such as the National Theatre of Ghana are of increasingly interest to geographers and cultural specialists, growing out of recognition of the social nature of commemoration and the important role that space and place play in the process of cultural landscape. Dwyer (2009) confirms that such monumental evidences do not only reflect certain perspective on the past but also work to legitimate them as part of the normative social order. For that matter, National Theatre of Ghana as a monumental edifice is an important symbolic conduit for not just expressing certain versions of history but casting legitimacy upon them. TE2 states that just like the National Theatre, monumental evidences give the past a tangibility and familiarity, making the history they commemorate appear to be part of the natural and not taken for granted. It is believed that these structural monuments promote social influences by serving as tourist destinations, civic gathering places, and setting for everyday activity.

As regards to the representation of the National Theatre of Ghana, National Commission on Culture (1995, p.29) stipulates that “to achieve the representative nature of the National Theatre, the design of theatres should be based on African indigenous architecture as well as African concepts and tradition of performances”.

Emphatically, Akunu Dake a cultural expert and a former director of the PANAFEST secretariat underscored the fact that he was not sure of how much, in terms of the structure physically the facility gives credence to identifying with the value and what we refer to national identity and traditional forms, particularly of the ideas that govern our lives. He stressed that there has been over the years physical attempts made to try and modify not necessarily the structure but in terms of inputs into the building to reflect national cultural identity after the commissioning of the facility.

With regard to the representation of the National Theatre of Ghana, so many people have contended with its appearance and symbolism to the extent that, some conclude by saying it does not look Ghanaian, does not tell our story and does not represent our culture. In this regard, there has been conflicting statement to its establishment as far as design, architecture, formulation and construction are concerned. However, the National Commission on Culture (2004) makes it clear that to develop and promote the cultural monuments, structures and aspiration of the people of Ghana, it is incumbent to take inspiration from the artistic expressions, traditions and heritage of the people.

A section of the Ghanaian populace believe that the National Theatre building is a Chinese edifice, another group of individuals also think it was inspired by African traditional forms and ideas. Meanwhile, others also perceive that the facility is a hybrid of both Chinese and Ghanaian concepts. Meanwhile, the Ghanaian architect, TEI who was assigned to the theatre project from Architectural Engineering Serviced Limited A.E.S.L in the 1990(s) stated categorically that the theatre project was well thought of, considered and planned by both Chinese and Ghanaian architects very well before embarking on the construction.

In the submission of NTD2, the representativeness of the National Theatre facility stands perfectly as something more of a nomenclature that one identifies the building with. But aesthetically the facility does not represent anything Ghanaian. In his words “it is the idea of three pagodas put together and is an inclusion of space but externally does not say anything about Ghanaian culture and is not of any Ghanaian symbolism.” NTD3 advocates that it was alien and foreign, it does not really say anything about our national identity. There were attempts to try and see if it could be branded and decorated with Ghanaian symbols [*adinkra*], but architecture must speak and as long as the initial architecture was not brained on the idea of having a national identity, anything that was to be added was going to be a distortion. So, it was alright that it was kept like that. The cladding of Ghanaian art forms on the building would have been out of place since it was not part of the initial design idea as proposed by an architect. NTD2 reiterates that in his opinion, it does not work well as a symbol of our national identity because the form of the structure was based on the Chinese architectural as a reference.

Relatively, it appears the theatre has been designed and constructed within the dictates of the Western configuration style and lending a minimal reference point to the Ghanaian theatrical forms. For instance, the proscenium arch of the main stage of the auditorium and the extension of the curtain line to the apron of stage.

The researcher believes that the discussion of the representation of the facility should have been discussed before the building was put in place. The Chinese have spent so much money on it and will never pull it down. This shape is going to stay forever. Therefore, there is nothing one can do about it. One would say, “that ship has already sailed.” Going forward, when we talk of the National Theatre of Ghana, we must be thinking more of the programmes that should go on at the place rather than

focusing on the building. “From where I stand, the focus should not be about the building but rather what takes place inside, what is communicated inside and not the structure nor the façade but the programme.” Per her submission, in reality we cannot do anything to that existing building but we can improve upon the theatre as a concept.

Another school of thought shares his view that the National Theatre is one of the iconic monuments of Ghana which represents both a ship and a bird and tends to be symbolic of a Ghanaian cultural aspiration. Besides, the facility attracts a high level of tourism activities from school children, church groups, organisations and some individuals just to acquaint themselves with the building and what it stands for.

In an observation made by PNT2, the outside aesthetic of the National Theatre of Ghana does not tell you that it is a theatre building. The walls of the theatre should have been used to roll out advertisement of productions. Similarly, it would have been well branded to suggest theatrical activities ongoing or yet to be produced in the premise. Sadly, unfortunately food hawkers have taken over the whole frontage and side walls of the theatre doing business. In that posture the periphery of the theatre does not reveal a structure of a theatrical edifice. “I see it as a normal building not depicting anything unique in Ghana. In fact, when you are approaching the theatre facility you cannot really tell if it is a theatre, till you get closer to see the sculptures at the forecourt of the premise. If we had a choice, the architecture should have been different from this” The posture of PNT2 shows that the present site of the theatre appears to encourage hawking instead of the promotion of the facility and its physical preservation.

However, from an artistic point of view, recently a visual artist by name Ibrahim Mahama in 2016 attempted to drape the National Theatre building with jute sack fabrics

as a project work. The project lasted for one month to draw attention to the facility and to rebrand the structure to represent the Ghanaian architectural cum Chinese concept. It is worth noting that the contemporary artist can disrupt and merge concepts to recreate a new art form to communicate a different thought, highlighted by Mahama. “What is carried forward is that art or artefact, which is conceptual, political, religious and occupational among others derive its authority from constituency of people.” To this end, the contemporary challenge was what Ibrahim Mahama took up with his choice of materials on a theme *the journey of the sacks*. In his thought, the jute sack has done a lot [a sack for bagging cocoa beans, maize, charcoal] among others but is not regarded. Figure 3 shows the entire building draped in jute sack, given the theatre a different interpretation.



Figure 3: An Aerial Shot of the Draped National Theatre of Ghana Building in Jute Sack.

Source: National Theatre of Ghana library, 2018.

After Mahama’s project, there has not been anything added to the building in terms of modifying the theatre to suit our national cultural identity or in tune with it. The representative nature of the theatre building is still a challenge and a lot more can be done, even though it is a beautiful edifice and a number of people still talk about its

uniqueness. This was affirmed by one of the designers. However, the researcher believes that if the Ghanaian designers and architects had been more involved the theatre would not have been in the same shape currently.

For the purpose for which a national theatre should be, Brown and Russell (1969) as well as Girard (1972) has it that a national theatre may be either one or all of the following: an expression of contemporary national identity, a national drama museum, a means of prestige, an instrument of cultural dissemination, an official centre for research and experimentation and lastly, a means of preserving the national funds of folk and ethnic culture among others.

The 2004 cultural policy of Ghana, as cited in the National Commission on Culture (2004), emphasises that the Ghanaian culture shall involve the active use of the theatre, museums and exhibitions. Meanwhile, the physical and cultural environment should be presented through a culture-sensitive planning of theme parks and the erection of monument and structures. From an architectural point of view, the design of settlements, public buildings, parks and monuments should embody indigenous aesthetics and culture that express our cultural values and historical experiences. At the end these buildings and sites will promote a distinctive character that befits the Africa ideology. It is for this reason the National Theatre of Ghana building is to be representative of the Ghanaian culture.

5.3.1 The Significance of Sculptures and Wood Carving at the National Theatre of Ghana

The researcher deems it important to understand, and fully appreciate the relevance of sculptures and carvings in an environment or space especially with

reference to the National Theatre of Ghana. Kim (2006) asserts that designs such as sculptures stimulate artistic meaning and aesthetic reasons in order to create new forms of beauty within the environment. Logically, Sefa Twerefour the designer of most of the sculptures at the National Theatre and the former Director of Centre for National Culture, Greater Accra Region was of the view that it is imperative the sculptor relies on the work to promote, accentuate or reinforce visual communication to ensure the right interpretation. In a discussion with him he was of the view that in all the tasks given to him by Mohammed Ben Abdallah to design sculptures for the National Theatre premise, his concepts behind the art works emphasized traditional forms of indigenous art which thereby promoted African identity. In his words “it was necessary to do that because the theatre building had a semblance of a Chinese architecture and he saw the need to enhance the theatre surroundings and building with sculptures and other art forms to give it a more representative Ghanaian appearance.” Furtherance to his submission, the idea to give the theatre that cultural feel went beyond the exterior and was representative within [interior] as well (Figures 4-14) are carvings and sculptures sited at the National Theatre to enhance its Ghanaian representation.

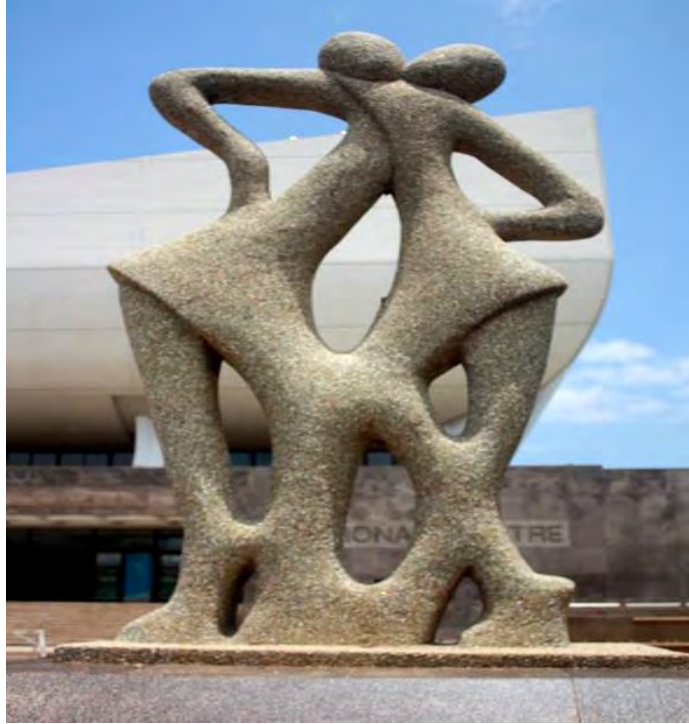


Figure 4: The Friendship

Source: Fieldwork, 2018



Figure 5: The Big Bird

Source: Fieldwork, 2018



Figure 6: Northern Big Xylophone

Source: Fieldwork, 2018



Figure 7: Slave Boat

Source: Fieldwork, 2018



Figure 8: The Dancing Lady
Source: Fieldwork, 2018



Figure 9: The Lady Washing
Source: Fieldwork, 2018



Figure 10: The Group of Traditional Musicians

Source: Fieldwork, 2018



Figure 11: The Linguist

Source: Fieldwork, 2018



Figure 12: Sankofa.

Source: Fieldwork, 2018



Figure 13: The Carving on the Glass Wall in the Foyer of the Theatre Serving as a Backdrop for the Youth Orchestra Group

Source: National Theatre Library, 2018



Figure 14: The Single Pairs of two Huge State Drums at the Foyer of the National Theatre of Ghana

Source: Source: Fieldwork, 2018

The designer of the sculptures was of the view that Mohammed Ben Abdallah, who happened to be at the apex of the National Theatre project, saw the need to enhance the theatre surroundings and building with sculptures and other art forms to give it a more representative Ghanaian appearance. The idea to give the theatre that cultural feel went beyond the exterior but was representative within [interior] as well. On the whole such artistic works could be found almost all around the theatre building. Hence, some of the physical murals so to speak among other artworks were deliberately put in the theatre to make statements of cultural representativeness of the theatre edifice.

According to the interpretations given to the art works at the National Theatre, the first design titled 'Friendship' (Figure 3) in a terrazzo sculptured cast and sited at the forecourt of the Theatre symbolizes the fact that we go to the theatre to meet friends, make new ones, interact and to get entertained.

Figure 4, which happens to be one of the designer's prominent carvings titled *the big bird*, is sited on the first landing staircase at the foyer of the theatre. Sefa Twerefour was of the view that the structure and form of the wood used in carving the bird was formulated in its original state since the contours and expression of the wood looked like a skeletal huge bird. In his explanation, during the carving stage, the prominent features of the wood that stood out like the image of a bird was emphasized to make it more pronounced and symbolic to look like a skeletal huge bird. In furtherance to his thought, after design he decided to position it on the landing of the first set of staircases of the lobby leading to the first gallery to ensure its visibility. More so, the position of the work in the foyer was basically to attract theatre goers' attention and to place prominence on the art piece as well as for appreciation.

Figure 5, the northern big xylophone also positioned in the foyer of the theatre. Basically, this instrument represents our rich cultural northern musical art form from the Northern Region of Ghana.

Figure 6 is the slave boat which reminds Ghanaian of the slave trade which took our great ancestors from our land to the Western world.

Figure 7 represents the dancing lady. The image reveals the nature of the curly rounded African woman's body and tells of our rich dance movements and patterns accompanied with our African melodies.

Figure 8 shows the lady washing. It tells of the nature of an ideal African woman with regard to the house chores. She is hardworking, industrious and cares for the family.

Figure 9 is a group of traditional musicians. This group of musicians appear to be performing with different types of traditional instruments to a particular tune and rhythm. It tells of the African musical ensemble.

Figure 10 is the linguist. He is seen as an important personality of the chief. Besides, he assists him play important roles in state and at all times and appears to be the right-hand man of the chief and does most of the chief's important translations to the public and pours libation on behalf of the chief if need be.

Figure 11 *sankofa*. The *sankofa* symbol has the birds head turned towards its back, symbolizing the need to go back for your heritage and pursue that which is good.

Figure 12 is the carving on the glass wall which illustrates a series of Ghanaian movements and dance forms of various cultures.

Figure 13 is the single pairs of two huge State drums. These drums were specifically carved to symbolically reveal our rich culture, enhance the national identity and to indicate the fact that the theatre is one of the communicative platforms for addressing social issues. In reality, the wood carvings and sculptures enhanced the interpretation of the theatre building facility and gave it a cultural impact. In reality, the drums are used as forms of communication tools during state programmes but are kept at the National Theatre.

In order to make relevant the Chinese built theatre, according to TE3, it became necessary for the designers to blend sculptural and carvings elements with the building concept significantly in order to situate the building facility within the context of the Ghanaian artistic perception.

5.3.2 About the Designer and Sculptor of the National Theatre Art Pieces



Figure 15: Sefa Twewefour the Designer and Sculptor of the National Theatre Sculpture and Carving Works

Source: Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Figure 15 shows the carving works of Sefa Twerefour who happens to be one of the sculptors and a carver of several art pieces at the National Theatre of Ghana. He is a naturalist by nature who loves to explore and create with the natural materials [wood] in its original state. It is among such principles that he adopted the use of trees in their original contours, texture and forms for his work. As a result of integrating the sculptures and carvings with the building concept, the designer picked up themes that were in line with our own cultural practices to tell our own stories in order to give credence and maximum significance to the building facility.

Sefa Twerefour is the designer of several art pieces in Ghana. Some of his works are found at the Presidential lodge; '*Two heads are better than one*, 2006 and *African Unity*, 2007'. He also has lots of his carving in the offices of most corporate institutions in Ghana and abroad. Meanwhile, a number of his artworks can be found in the Art Centre in Accra. In his submission, his concept of sculptures represented the Ghanaian cultural traits by means of games, presentations of folklore and cultural ideas to be preserved for posterity. By his statement, the functions of his sculptures at the theatre were to underscore the Ghanaian nature of the theatre and its surroundings.

5.3.3 Concept behind the National Theatre Building

In a reaction statement by Mohammed Ben Abdallah the leader of the delegation responsible for the National Theatre building project and Eric Ansah the Ghanaian Architect who worked on the project, were of the strong view that, finally, indeed the National Theatre of Ghana (NTG) building was built based on the Ghanaian concept of two boats on either side of the huge ship docking against the skyline. Reference is made to the original rendered design (Figure 16) by the Chinese architect. The design revealed the concept of two (2) boats sandwiching a huge ship in their middle.

On the other hand, Eric Ansah a former architect of Architectural and Engineering Services Limited (AESL) who technically supervised the theatre building project and worked with the Chinese constructional team was of the view that the National Theatre building is symbolic of three ships.

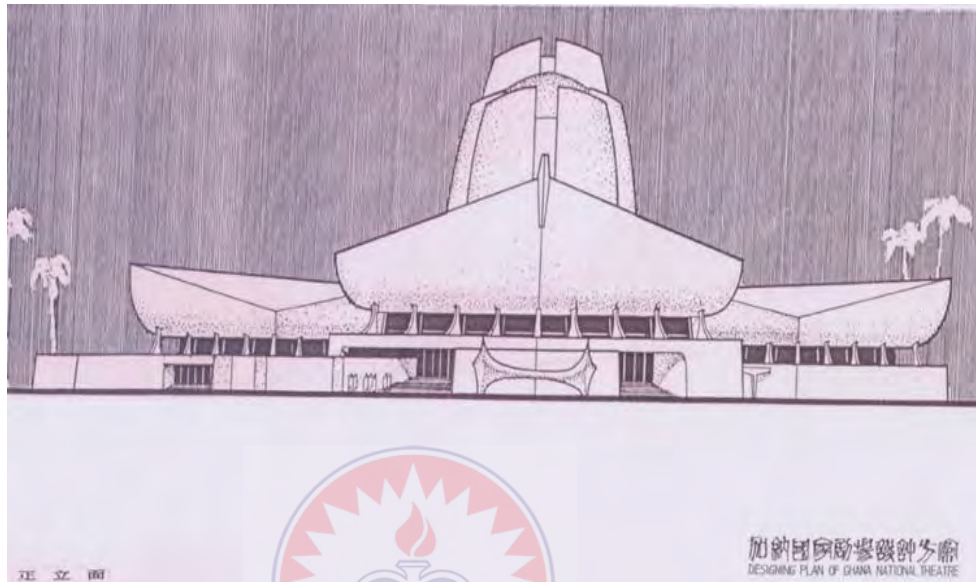


Figure 16: Final Rendering of the Theatre Project

Source: National Theatre of Ghana Library, 2018

The right-wing of the ship-like structure housed the rehearsal halls of the National Dance Company and the National Drama Company respectively, the huge middle section houses the main theatre and the left-wing structure is the exhibition hall. The three sections were designed with the concept of a boat or a ship in mind. Ansah reiterated that the whole concept was based on three ships or boats sailing with the skyline as the backdrop. He also indicated that he was aware of statements being made by some session of the public stating that the National Theatre building is not Ghanaian. “It is not true,” he struck his chest with his fist severally, “I was one of the Architects on the project” he stated.

In his declaration, both the Chinese and Ghanaian team visited the sea in Accra and observed the canoe on sail, which became the basis for the ship-like concept that informed their perception of the National Theatre structure. The whole structural idea of the National Theatre as it were, was thoughtfully planned and designed. To commence the project, both the Ghanaian team and Chinese team had to visit China to officially agree and sign the constructional drawing between Ghana and China.

In reiteration, Ansah also added that, the Chinese team that worked on the project toured most parts of Ghana to research on the cultural background of Ghanaians before they commenced design and construction. Some places visited were the Elmina Castle in Cape Coast, Arts Centre in Accra and Kumasi Cultural Centre among others in order to influence the design. As part of the selection process of the Chinese rendered designs in reiteration, two variances were presented by the Chinese team for consideration. Figure 17 was rendered in a triangular form with excessive straight lines, very simple and not monumental. The design was rectangular in shape with rectilinear features forming the structure of the building and very simple in appearance. Whereas, Figure 18 was the second option composed of curvilinear shapes and very complicated in appearance. Out of the two designs, one must be approved by the Ghanaian architectural team for onward implementation. Finally, the option which had a more complicated outlook with contours was chosen as in Figure 18. The second option somewhat subscribed to the Ghanaian artistic principles according to Ansah the Ghanaian architect. However, Ansah stressed that while construction of the project was on going, a few other addition and subtraction were considered implemented. Hence, a slight difference in Figure 18 and Figure 19 as the final project work.

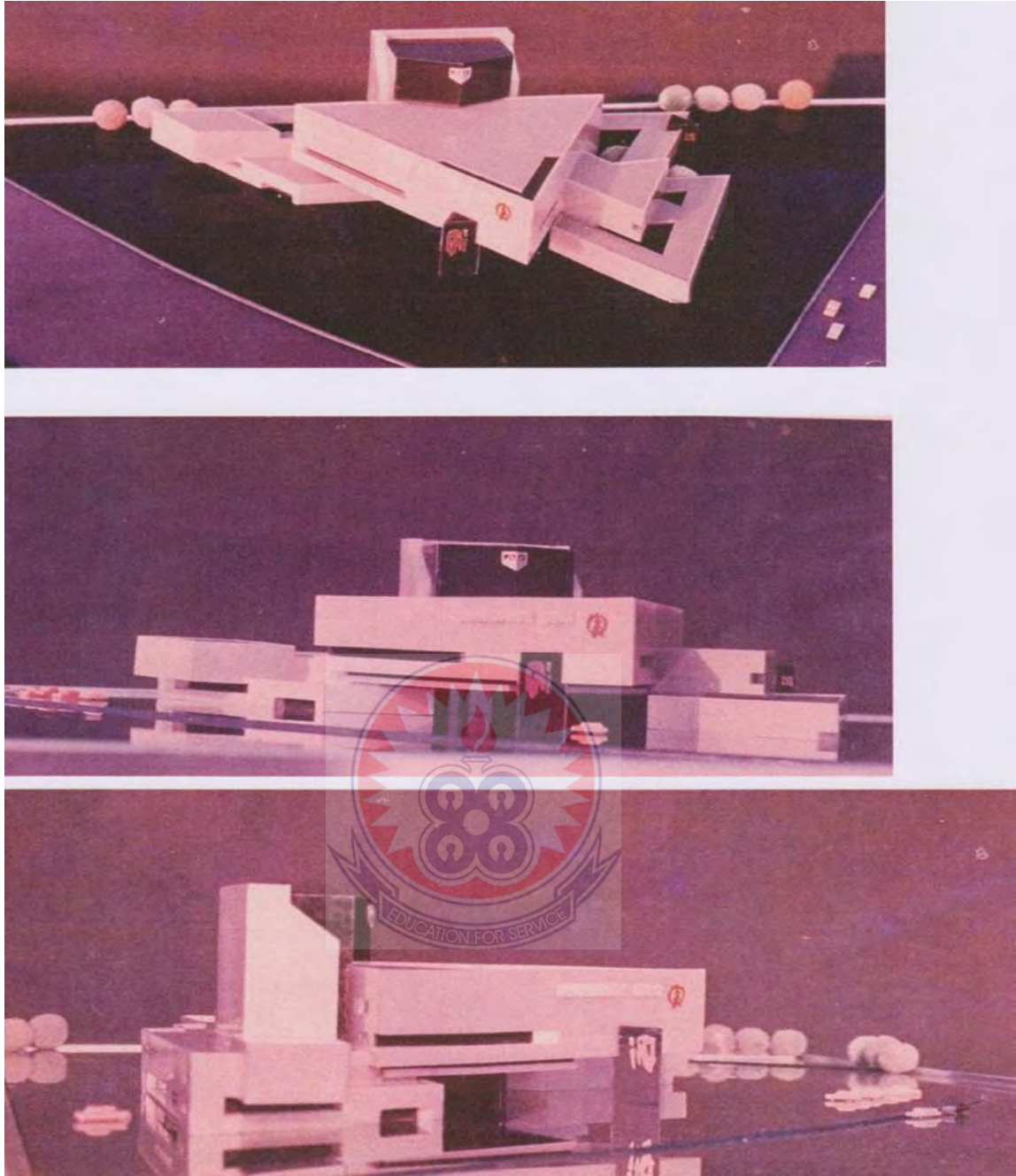


Figure 17: The initial Rectilinear Chinese Rendered impression submitted to Ghana by the Chinese Technical Team in Different Views

Source: National Theatre of Ghana Library, 2018





Figure 18: Ccurvilinear complicated Chinese Rendered impression submitted for Consideration

Source: National Theatre of Ghana Library, 2018.

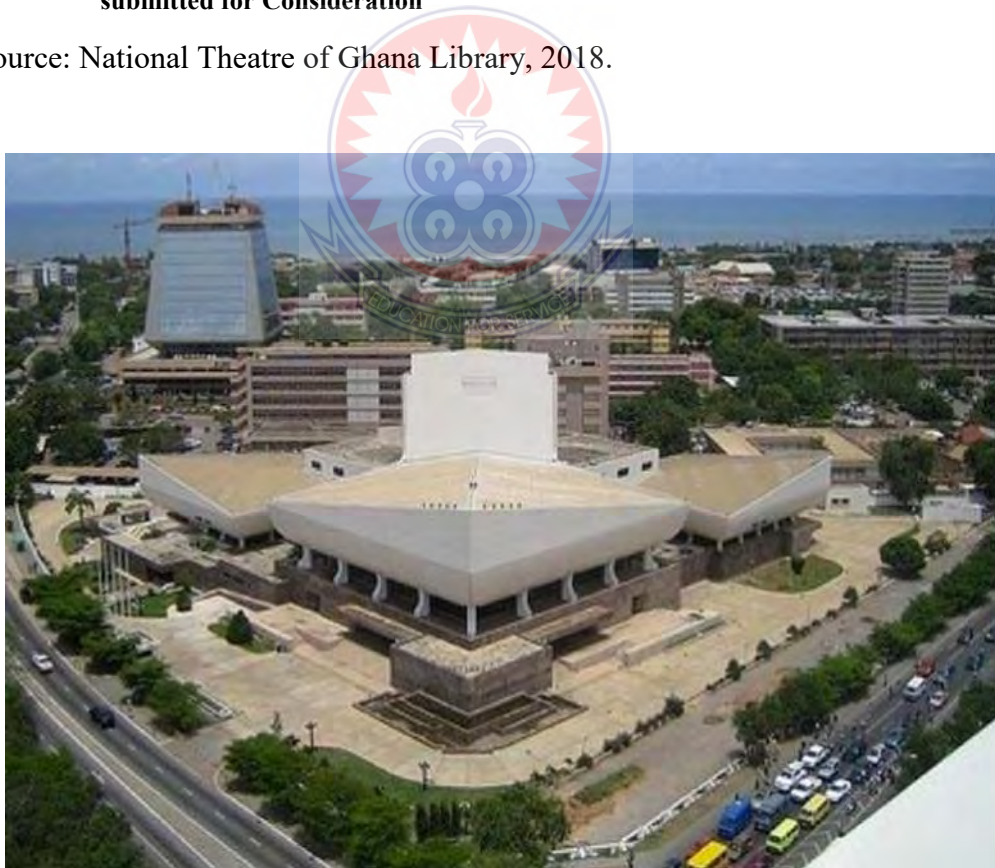


Figure 19: Final Constructed Building Facility of the National Theatre

Source: National Theatre of Ghana library, 2018.

Figure 19 shows the completed building facility of the National Theatre of Ghana in an aerial view which metamorphosed through series of concepts and recommended ideas. Therefore, critically comparing Figure 18 and 19, there seem to be a relationship in structural outlook due to the continuous update of architectural concepts and designs to reflect the Ghanaian and Chinese representation as indicated by the Ghanaian architect on the project.

The researcher observes that the misunderstanding between the two conflicting opinions with regard to the Ghanaian symbolic representation of the structure, stemmed from the fact that the public were not privy to the Chinese document on the direction of the sketch design of the National Theatre of Ghana (Appendix G). Basically, the document talks about the general overview of the basis and principle of the theatre design promoting the cultural presence as enshrined in it and other technical details.

Per the studies, it appears that all the regions in Ghana have a theatre or a site to put up a theatre facility but regrettably, the study also revealed that it seems most of these theatres in the regions are not functional or are operating under their capacities because per the National Theatre Law, the collaboration between the theatre and the Centres for National Cultures does not exist. Besides, the building facilities at the regionals are substandard and it seems there were no professional advice in the design and construction of the regional theatres in a personal communication (D. Dontoh, personal communication, August 30, 2018). The study confirms the existence and state of regional theatres in Ghana and the current state in which they are.

The study reveals that professional advice from theatre experts were not sought for before most of these regional theatres were constructed. In a discussion with some cultural experts, they were of the view that “theatre is a specialized area and as such

professionals in the field are needed to be consulted to advise contractors and those that matter to put up theatrical structures to standard specification. To achieve preferred standards, it is imperative to co-opt professionals in the theatre field to be part of the decision-making body of the design conceptualization period and not after the design has been accepted and approved. This appears to be the order of the day.

5.4 Extent of the Significance of the Operations of the National Theatre of Ghana

The National Theatre of Ghana was established under the P.N.D.C. Law 259 of 1991 as a state-owned sub-vented organization. It was mandated by law to develop and promote the performing arts in Ghana. The theatre started operation in 1992 by then with the state of the arts equipment, a number of administrative staff, technical staff and the three (3) resident companies of the National Theatre in 1995.

In view to be abreast with the operations of the National Theatre of Ghana, it is prudent to peruse the mission and vision statements of the entity to have an in-depth knowledge of the document directing and regulating the activities of the theatre.

The vision statement indicates that the National Theatre of Ghana aims at “becoming the focal point of the performing arts in the ECOWAS sub-region” (Mawugbe, 2011, p.2). Meanwhile, the mission statement stipulates that: “To develop and promote the performing arts in Ghana through cost effective productions of classical and contemporary live stage and televised performances which project positive national values and the African personality concept” (Mawugbe, 2011, p.2).

NTD1 adds that the mission and vision statement couched for the NTG at the time of its inception in 1994 are valid today as they were at the time of their conception. According to Mawugbe (2011), this was due to the fact that the spirit and letter of these

two statements are derived to a large extent from the mandates set by the law that established the NTG in 1992. According to the study, the National Theatre of Ghana is a young theatre as compared to other theatres in the world over. Per the statement of NTD1, who currently is the Executive Director of NTG has it that “the theatre has tried to hold its head very high to reflect some of the dreams and genuine aspirations of the founding fathers and mothers of the theatre movement of this country through its programmes and artistic productions.” However, it must be admitted, however, that NTG may not have fully accomplished all the beautiful ideals enshrined in its mission statement or the dreams of the founding fathers of the broader national theatre movement that gave it birth” (Mawugbe, 2011, p.2).

According to NTD2 who happened to be the former Executive Director of the National Theatre of Ghana, during the initial operation of the theatre, the technical staff recruited were retained to handle the newly installed Chinese equipment and to ensure the adherence of standard practice. Additionally, programmes were developed and strategies put in place to attract and maintain audience that throng to the theatre to watch productions. At the time, NTG had to work with children in order for them to bring their parents and families to watch productions at the theatre. Hence, the study revealed that the children’s programmes created were educative, entertaining and involving. Hence, it was around this period when National Theatre of Ghana partnered with Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) and Unilever Ghana Limited (Unilever) to produce the *Keysoap Concert Party* in Ghana. The idea brought into focus the revamped almost dying *concert party* tradition which at the end churned out a lot of patrons and performers to the new National Theatre of Ghana. The return of *Concert Party* attracted young talents like Agya Koo (Figure 20) who won several awards including, *Who is Who Concert Party* in 2003 sponsored by Unilever, Nkomode and

Bishop Bob Okalla (Figure 21) who were identified and trained by Ama Buabeng an adopted daughter of Efua Sutherland who worked at the National Theatre as a costumier and the director of *Efirititi* concert group based at the National Theatre. The formation of *Efirititi Concert Party* group became a model group for the *concert party* artistes who instituted discipline among the members of the *Concert Party* Union Association. It was not surprising to learn that *Agya Koo* has become a board member of the National Theatre of Ghana as at the time data were being collected.

NTD1 stated that the *Key Soap Concert Party* came to an abrupt end when Ghana Broadcasting Corporation and Unilever pulled out from the sponsorship deal in 2003 as a result of the high cost of production. As a result, the National Theatre lost all its *Concert Party* audience and fans because it was no longer televised.



Figure 18: Agya Koo in his Youthful days receiving a Prize at one of the “Who is Who” Key Soap Concert Party programmes organised by Unilever Ghana Limited

Source: National Theatre Library, 2018



Figure 19: Bishop Bob Okala and Nkomode in a Concert Party Production featured at the National Theatre

Source: National Theatre library, 2018.



Figure 20: Features Young Azigiza and Amele, presenters of *FUNWORLD* Production

Source: National Theatre Library, 2018

NTD2 who happened to be the current Artistic Director of the Dance Company, revealed that she was one of the kids who started with NTG as a child performer. In her submission, reference was made to some productions that shaped her into what she does today. Mention was made of *FUNWORLD* production, a children's variety entertainment programme as in Figure 21 featuring masters of ceremonies (M.C), Victor Kpakpo Addo known in show biz as Azigiza and Amele Amarteifio. Azigiza is a musician and currently a television presenter on the TV3 network, hosting the show *Celebration*, a gospel musical competition programme.

Amele Amarteifio on the right of Azigiza is currently a renowned lawyer with the State Attorney. *FUNWORLD* is currently being produced by the National Theatre and was sponsored by Fun Milk Ghana Limited.

Furthermore, NTD2 was proud to list a number of successful artistes who were groomed in Ghana and abroad, and have performed on the National Theatre stage. These includes award-winning undercover journalist Anas Anas (Figure 23) whose interest in drama was aroused as a result of the *FUNWORLD* production. It was quite difficult to get him interviewed by the researcher, however, through persuasions he finally agreed to the request to be interviewed. Kwame Sefa Kayi (Figure 24) of *Kokroko* radio programme fame who works with RADIO PEACE FM in Accra also started with the spoken word act and poetry recitals at the National Theatre with a sense of confidence and that has made him who he is today, Nana Kwaku Duah (Figure 25) also known as Tic Tac a hiplife artiste with lots of energy and ability to sustain the interest of the crowd with his poetic arranged songs, Emmanuel Andrew Samini (Figure 26) also known as Samini also blazed the thrill in his renditions with a sense of blending both English and local dialect lyrics in his song renditions and David Tetteh Quarshie (Figure 27) a famous child actor known as Kwaku *Ananse* in one of his

television programmes. David Tetteh Quarshie is now based in the United States of America doing well in his acting carrier job and attached to a theatre in the United States of America. These were some of the fond memories of NTD2.



Figure 21: The Researcher in an Interview with Anas Aremeyaw Anas

Source: Fieldwork, 2018



Figure 24: Kwame Sefa Kayi's responses to Researcher's questions

Source: Fieldwork, 2018



Figure 25: Tic Tac now Tic in a Pose

Source: Source: Fieldwork, 2018



Figure 26: Emmanuel Andrew Samini also known as Samini

Source: National Theatre of Ghana library, 2018

In the initial stages somewhere between 1994 and 2004 the former Director of NTD3 hinted that *KIDDAFEST* was very successful due to good sponsorship packages given to the Theatre by some corporate organisations both local and international. On

that note, DANIDA sponsored the 1999 Toy Competition and two (2) outstanding children who placed first and second were sponsored to visit LEGO land in Denmark (Figure 28), which was of great experience for the children. Both participants are behind their displayed toys.



FIGURE 27: David and his Colleague Actors in a Pose after a Performance

Source: National Theatre Libraries, 2018



Figure 28: Children Exhibiting their Crafts at the Toy Competition Event organised during KIDDAFEST 1999 at the National Theatre of Ghana

Source: National Theatre Libraries, 2018

However, after the management and direction of the event changed hands into a new administrative team in 2005 as stated by NTD4, according to him it appeared that the vision and direction of productions took a different course and sponsorship drive became a huge challenge. This has affected the development and growth of the National Theatre productions up to date even though the theatre is doing all its best to sustain and maintain its own programmes within its limited resources with the support of some faithful sponsors who continue to assist in their small way, as revealed by the study.

The study revealed that undoubtedly, between the late 1990(s) and the early part of the year 2000, the National Theatre of Ghana built a culture of theatre going audience of children, youths and the adults, who grew to appreciate theatre at all levels, even to the extent that some of the audience literally got involved in stage acting.

To this end, NTG tried to manage in pursuing the vision of the institution amidst budgetary and human resource constraints. In an ensuing development, a former director of operation for NTG established her point by stressing that between 1994 and 2004 NTG was able to focus activities on the development and promotion of the arts in Ghana due to the strategic involvement of corporate Ghana in support of the performing arts activities by partnering or collaborating with the National Theatre to assist with sponsorship packages. Hence, programmes developed at that time were *FUNWORLD*, a children's variety entertainment programme, *KIDDAFEST* a kid's art festival, *Arts Institute for Schools*, a programme that gave opportunities to school pupils to present theatre to their peers and *Living Legends*, a production, to honour senior citizens who contributed immensely to the development of the arts in Ghana among others.

CE3 in his contribution stated that the National Theatre of Ghana serves as the umbrella body for the nurturing and maturation of the National Symphony Orchestra,

National Drama Company and National Dance Company. Undoubtedly, the membership of the three (3) resident companies are made of individual talents put together. NTD1 shares that over the years the theatre has showcased the nation's best emerging and established individual and collective talents and has also emphasized programmes that present true reflections of the indigenous artistic heritage of Ghana and Africa. To underscore its contribution to national development, the Ghana National Theatre has provided some sort of artistic growth and served as a symbol of excellence for young people, aspiring artists, and maturing professionals. With reference to the growth of the performing arts in Ghana, NTD1 further indicates that the theatre has provided some sort of artistic growth and served as a symbol of excellence for young people, aspiring artists, and maturing professionals. NTD3 confirms that the National Theatre is not just a mouthpiece for art and culture but a powerful platform through which the government of the day occasionally interact with its citizenry.

CE5 suggests that for a high operational efficiency the theatre need to focus on three (3) key areas. In the first place, hire adequate theatre professional, a good administrative set up ad a vibrant marketing, public relation and a well-focused finance directorate.

5.4.1 Hiring of the Theatre Facility

The National Theatre of Ghana 2018 rate for facility rentals document confirms the high pricing rate for rentals, a scenario that discourages the promotion of the performing arts in Ghana. Furthermore, studies revealed that due to the high cost of renting the facility as confirmed by David Dontoh, a performing artist and a play director, stressed that it has become very difficult for some producers and artistes to rent the facility for productions. On the contrary, it appears that well to do corporate

institutions and churches have the financial muscle to hire the theatre for productions such as; product launches, beauty pageants productions and corporate promotional activities rather appear to be enjoying the facility, instead of the performing arts and the cultural institutions. The study also revealed that if an event production house does not promote the activities of corporate Ghana, then it would be very difficult for some theatrical events to be sponsored by such corporate institutions. An example of such a scenario is the Roverman productions, directed by Uncle Ebo Whyte. In as much as Roverman production house puts up theatrical productions, they continue to focus on the business aspect of theatre as well. This practice has made them stood the test of time, hence, gaining confidence of its sponsors for further support.

In a given circumstance where the prospective event production house hires the theatre with all other production cost, the resultant cost finally is passed on to the audience, which is reflected in the ticket pricing. This scenario contradicts the President Jerry John Rawlings thought to make theatre more accessible to everyone.

Table 3 shows the current rental charges of the National Theatre's facilities per each venue in the theatre complex. The hiring charge may be a motivation or otherwise giving one the reasons for the inability to develop and promote the performing arts.

Per the study, the contract instruction while renting the National Theatre of Ghana shows that the theatre has guiding principles and regulations that facilitate bookings. These are contractual agreement between (NTG) and the prospective client that wish to hire the services of the National Theatre of Ghana.

Table 3: National Theatre of Ghana 2018 Rates for Facility Rentals (Effective 1st April, 2018)

S/N	SPACE	FLOOR SPACE/ SEATING CAPACITY	WEEKDAYS (MONDAYS – THURSDAYS) Excl. PUBLIC HOLIDAYS		WEEKENDS (FRIDAYS – SUNDAYS) & PUBLIC HOLIDAYS	
			FOUR (4) HOURS	GH ₵ EXTRA HOURS	FOUR (4) HOURS	GH ₵ EXTRA HOURS
1	MAIN AUDITORIUM	1,492 SITTING CAPACITY	13,000.00	2,000.00	15,800.00	2,300.00
2	LOBBY/FOYER	1,500 sqm	6,000.00	1,000.00	6,000.00	1,000.00
3	EXHIBITION HALL *(WITH 500 Chairs)	1,000.00 sqm	3,750.00 *4,750.00	500.00	3750.00 *4750.00	500.00
4	FOLKSPLACE	450 sqm	800.00	100.00	800.00	100.00
5	FORE COURT		500.00	50.00	500.00	50.00

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

It is important to take note of the following regulations as a client of the theatre:

- a. Set-up and rehearsal and other pre-event activities on same day, attract no cost.
- b. Set-up and rehearsal on a different date, attracts cost.
- c. The rental of theatre's spaces comes with washrooms, parking and security. Within the premise, power (regular and standby generators) is assured.
- d. Technical and operational support staff facilitates production lines to the best of their abilities.
- e. The National Theatre currently does not provide sound and stage light for any of its venues.
- f. Cost of space rental is exclusive of chairs and or tables.
- g. Terms and condition apply on the use of the venues/facilities

Research shows that the inability for the theatre of late to provide such significant technical requirement, such as light and sound creates an alarming situation.

Meanwhile, attention has been drawn to the fact that most of the theatrical facilities need refurbishing and replacement to improve service delivery in order to standardize the facility as it was during commissioning.

NTD4 and the estate manager of the theatre facility share the view that the overall overhead utility consumption charges of the theatre facility and the high cost of running the facility generally accounts for the high cost of renting the facility and its services. On the basis of that, the rate per show as determined by production houses at the theatre tends to be high. Meanwhile, low income earners stand at a disadvantage which appears to discourage audience patronage for productions at the venues. Technically, rates charged at NTG to watch a performance may range between five Ghana cedis (GH¢ 5.00) to five hundred Ghana cedis (GH¢500.00) per show. In assessing the situation and its aftermath effect on the theatre audience by the researcher, it clearly shows and assumes that the cost of production is passed on to the audience.

Invariably, the researcher believes that with the attitude of charging high entrance rates for a theatrical production is enough deterrent to discourage and make theatre the preserve of the rich and those who can afford. Basically, the researcher acknowledges the fact that this attitude cannot promote the arts and culture in Ghana. Indirectly, it appears that event organizations and the high cost in renting performance space arguably are gradually discouraging the audience to fully participate in theatre in Ghana.

5.4.2 Activities of the National Drama Company, Ghana

NTD4 was of the view that the National Drama Company was initially established under the name, *Abibigromma* in the year 1983. The company engages in the creation of modern African theatre that draws from and feeds upon the accumulated

resources and heritage of oral and written performance literature of the continent of Africa. Due to the urgency with which the theatre needed artistes to occupy the edifice during the initial stages of its establishment, A former director of the National Theatre affirmed that it became necessary for former President Jerry John Rawlings to utilize his executive powers to relocate part of the company's performers [*Abibigromma*] from University of Ghana, Legon to the National Theatre through the executive powers. The focus of *Abibigromma*, as its original name implies, is to explore and develop the *Abibigro* concept (Botwe-Asamoah, 2005). The performing arts in Africa are so interrelated that there can be no real 'separation of powers' between the music and the dance, or movement and the dialogue. This inter-relationship is what *Abibigro* exploits to make the final product meaningful and in total harmony with the African personality and psyche.

According to a former director of the group, the company produces plays both scripted and unscripted, dance and musical pieces and leads in the direction of experimental work which is afro-centric in outlook. NTD4, NTD3 and PNT2 indicated that the company is a source of inspiration to the theatre art students, professional theatre artistes and also a source of motivation for the development of professional theatre in the African continent.

The study shows that the National Drama Company is mandated to promote, develop, research and preserve the Ghanaian cultural heritage (National Theatre, 1995). Among others, one key opportunity that emerged from a research conducted by the company after a school drama project was the increased passion of the students towards theatre and the way the project was well received by the entire school.



Figure 29: National Drama Company Dramatizing a Scene from the Set Book, *Ananse in the Land of Idiot*

Source: National Drama Company Library, 2018.

As a reference point, one of such productions aimed at improving their reading and literature skills and to offer both teachers and students a better orientation into the subject, literature was Yaw Asare's play, *Ananse in the Land of Idiot* (Figure 29) a set book for the second cycle institution staged at the National Theatre of Ghana that held the children spell bound. According to the artistic director of the company, that year the sale of the copies of books [*Ananse in the Land of Idiot*] at the book stand was well patronized by the school and students.

During such projects, the performance is followed up with a *talk back* [discussion] where students ask questions in relation to the play for clarifications and understanding. The whole idea is to educate students in the analysis, interpretation and understanding of set books recommended by Ghana Education Service of the Ministry

of Education to increase students' understanding and appreciation of literary text as indicated by NTD2, NTD3 and PNT2.

Per the discourse promoted by PNT4 and NTD3, this form of drama presentation opened great opportunities for students to sharpen their skills in the study of literature, especially, the understanding of the play text, and its analysis. The researcher observed that the exercise motivated students to form and join drama and dance clubs. Additionally, visits to the various schools by the drama company as indicated PNT1 also offered the students the rare opportunity to interact and meet seasoned artistes who they have been seeing on stage and in video films. By so doing, it also built confidence in the students and gave them the hope that they could be like the one day. In all it appears that the exposure made the literary text comprehensible and offered students a better interpretation of the drama they watched and the application of the performance art.

The National Drama Company as stated by NTD3 and NTD4 also provides services to communities and establishments as a means of generating Internally Generated Funds (IGF) to sustain the operations of the company and to advertise the entity. For instance, according to PNT2 among numerous opportunities they had, the company got involved in a theatre for development project contracted to the company by the Ministry of Agriculture to sensitize the public on the quality of maize (Figure 30) on the Ghanaian market.



Figure 30: A Scene on Public Educational project on the Quality of Maize on the Market by the National Drama Company

Source: National Drama Company library, 2018.

The researcher observes that the theatre for development project has been a theatrical model normally promoted by the drama company to address social issues. According to NTD2 and NTD1 apart from entertainment provided by the company, they also educate the public through choreographic pieces on social issues and on governmental policies.

Mawuli Semevor, the artistic director of the group recognized the performing arts as the face of Ghana with regard to the performances of Ghanaian brewed authentic theatre forms with inspirations from both Efua Sutherland *Anansesem* and Mohammed Ben Abdallah's *Anansegoro* concept among others. These models according to Semevor have been pillars on which the group stands. In the recognition of National Drama Company, a lot has been accredited to them by way of theatre promotion in schools and theatre for development projects within the community.

Currently, the drama company is the only theatre company in Ghana that perform full plays in three (3) different languages [English, Twi and French] due to the numerous tours embarked upon in both francophone and anglophone countries. Figure 31 also shows the performers in a theatre for education project aimed at providing remedy for child delinquency challenges and preventing school dropout challenges in a fishing community in Accra. Yet, in the mist of these successes, the company is faced with attracting and retaining top class performers which appears to be as a result of poor remuneration and government's embargo on employment. The researcher is of the view that for theatre to go far in Ghana there should be government intervention and adequate support in the promotion of the arts and also boost the morale of the group in order to achieve their mandates in order to ensure an all-inclusive national approach.



Figure 31: A School drama project performed by the National Drama Company.

Source: National Drama Company Library, 2018.

Unfortunately, inadequate funding has very much slowed down the activities of the resident drama company coupled with needed logistics to embark on both school educational and public educational projects.

According to NTD3, presently, the company is in a limbo as to the merging of the administrations and operations of the National Theatre of Ghana and the three (3) resident companies as a means of streamlining activities for shared growth and national development. For the National Theatre of Ghana as an entity to have a clear sense of direction in the achievement of its mandates, it appears a government policy need to be put in place supervised by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts to facilitate the merging of the National Theatre of Ghana and the three (3) agencies in the interest of the nation.

5.4.3 Activities of the National Dance Company, Ghana

The National Dance Company was initially established under the name, Ghana Dance Ensemble and directed by Mawere Opoku under the regime of the first President of the Republic of Ghana, Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah in the year 1962. It started in a modest way with young Ghanaians trained in dance and music who have now become an adult group where some of its pioneers have retired. History has it that hitherto, the Ghana Dance Ensemble now National Dance Company was an experiment in fruitful cooperation between the Institute of African Studies, an academic institution primarily concerned with research into the arts and culture of Ghana. It also focused on history and institution of Ghanaian societies and teaching as indicated by the artistic director of the company, NTD3.

The artistic director, NTD3 of the company confirmed that the resident group was under the oversight responsibility of the National Commission on Culture but now

has been put under the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts as the supervisory agency. It is mandated to develop, promote and preserve the performing arts in Ghana. The researcher observed that the resident dance company did not only explore African dance but also puts together two distinct performing arts disciplines of performances in Africa societies within the framework of the dance drama, an approach which has become the hall mark of National Drama Company and has opened its avenues to amateur groups and performing arts school in Ghana.

As part of its strengths, NTD4 argues that the company has conducted a unique experiment; It has not only attempted to learn the dance as they are performed in the villages, but has attempted to work out forms of presentations in the context which highlight and clarify the essential patterns of the dance without destroying their basic movements and styles. Within this new context, it has tried to keep intact the emotional, vigour, spiritual and cultural values of the dances researched.

Studies further revealed that the company has a large repertoire of dances ranging from work-based dances to ritualistic and of late contemporary dances (Botwe-Asamoah, 2005). They also perform dances based on legend and folktales, meanwhile, their repertoire is highly representative of the dances of the communities of Ghana in West Africa (Agovi, 1989). The areas of expertise with regard to the company covers many aspects: dance and music workshops, instruments-making, lecturing and demonstration in various aspects of African culture and arts.

To broaden the scope of the dance company, PNT3 a performer with the company asserts that they present concerts of various traditional African arrangements as well as original extended works. The group collaborates with visiting artists and choreographers, for it is opened to ideas and experiment. The National Dance Company

has undertaken several international tours and has thrilled audiences at festivals like “Images of Africa” in Germany, International Festival of Theatre, London and International Festival of Theatre and Expo '93 in Korea, among others. In August, 2002 the company participate in the first Qatar Summer Wonders Mega Festival and Commonwealth Games in Manchester, United Kingdom.

During this 21st century, the dance company mentors and educate some public and private institutions on matters relating to the performing arts as well as the provision of artistic services as requested by such institutions. A case in point was the *Ghana Most Beautiful 2011* (Figure 32) production produced by TV3 and screened on same network. With regard to the preparation and coaching of the contestants, NTD1 and PNT2 stressed that the national drama was contracted by TV3 Network to put the contestants in top shape in the areas of performance of selected traditional dances of Ghana, choreographic pieces, costuming and education on the various cultural practices and norms for the competition. This according to the director of the National Dance Company has been playing this role for the past ten (10) years till date. Additionally, the contestants are advised on the approach to the stage settings for each presentation.

Besides, the company also features on the programme as guest artistes to grace the occasion. In terms of internally generated fund, such productions are paid for.



Figure 32: National Dance Company Featured in the 2011 Ghana's Most Beautiful at the Venues of TV3 Studio

Source: TV3, 2011

In spite of the many successes chalked by the National Dance Company of Ghana, there have also been difficult times as well. Through observations, it appeared that most of the dancers are old and need to be replaced with younger ones. NTD4 who happen to be the current director of the company revealed that the company had not put in place a succession plan for the young dancers to take over from the older ones or to fill in vacant positions as a result of deaths or retirements. This challenge became clearer when the second management team of the National Theatre in 2005 took over leadership from the first administration. The researcher believes that for the group to be vibrant and productive, government must support the company by giving a concession to employ some dancers to fill vacant positions.

NTD2 who happened to be one of the directors of the resident companies stressed that members of the group have low salaries and are not motivated. She stressed that some of the performers retire from active service with nothing to appreciate their tireless effort. NTD4 and PNT3 share the view that the National Dance Company of Ghana is the only artistic group that has given credence to the claim that culture is exportable and translated into revenue generation when appropriate mechanisms and structures are well laid out. This assertion is supported by the cultural policy of Ghana as cited in National Commission on Culture (2004) that the Ghanaian culture is invaluable and must be well packaged, promoted and exhibited to the outside world. It must be noted however that the concept of the National Theatre is not a physical facility for performances but an entity whose primary function is to promote the National Theatre movement and to project the models of excellence in Ghanaian theatrical forms.

According to the director of the company, the non-merger of the four entities poses a lot of administrative and operational challenges. In order to effectively promote the activities of the National Theatre, then there is the need for the National Theatre and the three (3) resident companies to consider merging operations and activities with a single purpose to ensure a much more focused national agenda in the promotion of the performing arts in Ghana. Along this line, a media expert, ME3 in his report revealed that it was until recently the four entity groups finally came together to put up a huge production in view of the celebration of the twenty-fifth (25th) Anniversary of the National Theatre of Ghana. The co-production was realised through the *Agoro* project choreographed by Zelma Badu-Youngue and directed by Pascal Youngue from the Ohio State University as in (Figure 33). Per NTD3, this was a dream Mohammed Ben Abdallah the initiator of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana fought “to

involve the three (3) resident companies to produce a production as a sign of fortitude within nationalism. Besides, it was to foster the idea that each company would bring to the table its peculiar art forms and expertise melting into a single pot of ideology of strength in unity in diversity.

A unique trait of the National Dance Company the researcher came into terms with were that, the company does not only contribute to the preservation, promotion and preservation of the dance heritage of Ghana and indeed other parts of Africa in its rich ethnic diversity, but also its creative synthesis.



Figure 33: The *Agoro* Co-Production involving the four (4) Entities at the National Theatre.

Source: National Theatre Library, 2018

The researcher in an interaction with the artistic director and some dancers of the group became clear that lately, the productions and outreach projects being carried out by the National Dance Company are limited to the urban areas, particularly Accra.

This is due to lack of logistic supports and funding challenges to embark on a nationwide project. In this regard, to intensify the development and promotion of the performing arts in Ghana, through needed support from the government and corporate Ghana to make it work as a nation.

Apparently, NTD5 was of the view that the company's vision is to seek for all to enjoy and to consistently produce work that seeks to provoke and engage debate about the way a society's life is organised. The researcher stresses that there are more to be done in our nation and will be prudent for the National Theatre of Ghana to descend into communities to explore themes including political, economic and social issues relevant to the people's lives with an emphasis on the wide and varied spectrum of the society's experiences, both at local and regional levels as a way of national development and cultural preservation. In order to achieve a more holistic participatory agenda. From the researcher's point of view, the National Theatre should be seen as a tool for transformation and to promote social justice. In light of development, models of best practice in theatre is therefore needed to promote peace building and reconciliation as far as conflicts are concerned. In support, Adu-Gyamfi (2013) affirms that theatre contributes its quota to the development of every nation and no country can advance rapidly without society viewing itself in order to correct the mistakes of the past and also contribute to the economic development of every state.

As part of Kwame Nkrumah's vision that focused on societal unity and the promotion of Africa personality, theatre became a key component to his vision on African identity. This awareness harnessed tribal cohesion and unity in diversity. Primarily, the study shows that the National Theatre edifice helped promote socio-cultural antecedents through the initial promotion and keen development of the National Theatre Movement, which was seen as a catalyst to accelerate the cultural change from

the Western ideology to the African cultural system. This ideology became a fast-stimulating new sense of consciousness in our promotion of our own traditional theatre, art forms, resources and concepts (Nketia, 1976).

Nkrumah's unity concept ensured that people had the chance to learn other cultures: language, believes systems, attitudes, type of food, adornment of clothing and beads and how they revere their religion. In summation to respect each other's view, (S. M. Yirienkyi, personal communication, March 12, 2018) consideration went beyond the establishment of the building facility and put into perspective the activities that helped develop culture.

For that matter, an important aspect of President Rawlings's speech when he commissioned the National Theatre of Ghana facility was the fact that the theatre should not be the elitist preserve of certain people but should be accessible to the average Ghanaian in the country. In a personal communication with His Excellency Ft. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings, he passionately indicated that "my motive for the establishment of the National Theatre facility was to offer Ghanaian the quality of Ghanaian art forms: music, theatre and dance (His Excellency Ft. Lt. J.J Rawlings, personal communication, August 8, 2018). It was also a way to provide the nation with a cultural home to deliberate on who we are, where we are and what we will become in future."

5.4.4 Activities of the National Symphony Orchestra

NTD3 stated that the National Symphony was established in 1959 by order of the first President of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. Under its first director, the late Philip Gbeho. It was under his directorship that the orchestra learnt how to play the music of Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert among others.

In furtherance to his assertion, Philip Gbeho did not forget he was a Ghanaian, so he arranged some Ghanaian songs to sustain the interest of some of the audience who perhaps found the music of the masters too “far-fetched”. According to the director of the orchestra, the principal objective of the establishment of a Symphony Orchestra was to enrich African art music as well as to rekindle and sustain the interest of Ghanaian musicians and classical music in addition to popular music. The enactment of P.N.D.C. Law 238 brought the group under the ministry supervision of National Commission on Culture in 1989. Per the study, the orchestra has a repertoire of Western and traditional classical music. It is identified as the only Symphony Orchestra in black Africa, using both African traditional and Western type of musical instruments to promote African, African-American and Western classical music.

The National Symphony Orchestra has indeed been a blessing to the nation as stressed by one of its directors. In its submission, the orchestra performs patriotic song to maintain the calm of the citizenry and to promote unity in cultural diversity during certain State functions, especially as they render patriotic songs. Their medleys are made of both traditional and classical music and have to their credits a lineup of the group’s composition.

The director of the National Symphony Orchestra underscored the fact that, in 2017, they collaborated with the Ghana Police band, Ghana Fire Service band and a host of individuals to promote the performing arts in Ghana which created a harmonious relationship between performing groups. In furtherance to the director’s promotion they have contributed to music education in Ghana by teaching some first and second cycle educational institutions how to play the musical instruments. One of such schools is the Morning Star preparatory school based in Accra among others. The director of the orchestra also stated that they do State performances as requested by

State Protocol during national celebration as well as general command performances. As a resident group of the National Theatre of Ghana, they have collaborated efforts with the National Dance Company and National Drama Company to jointly feature on the National Theatre stage at the National Theatre *Festival* as a sign of unity, strength and excellence in the projection of the arts in Ghana. In participation was a guest group from the United State of America.

The current director of National Symphony Orchestra pointed out that, the three companies represented the performing arts groups in Ghana so to speak. In addition, he was of the view that this collaboration amongst the companies sought to ensure a healthy relationship among members and stands as a model group for performing arts institution and the amateur groups in Ghana. The director also mentioned that the company have had numerous foreign guest conductors perform with them as a form of cultural exchange and a means of promoting the Ghanaian traditional and contemporary musical forms. This the researcher believes is possible through the system of globalization in this dispensation. Adjatey Adjei (Figure 34) a German conductor had the rare opportunity to be the director for NSO for six (6) months to share his experience with the orchestra and to also gain the Ghanaian experience in African musical form.



Figure 34: A Guest Conductor, Adjatey Adjei being featured at one of the National Symphony Orchestra performances

Source: NSO Library, 2018

In spite of the opportunities stated according to NTD1, the orchestra still needs attention in some areas to boost the quality of music production. Notably, some operational logistics needed are soundproof cubicles, orchestra hall, remuneration and human resource increase.

Research has it that, most of its members are over sixty (60) years and needs to be understudied for a smooth take over if the need arises by younger musicians. “To add to this, 60% of its membership are part-time musicians, which is not good for the growth and development of the orchestra, stressed the director.

Even though the three (3) companies are based in the National Theatre and falls within the framework of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, regrettably, these companies have not been able to work closely with the Centres for National Culture in identifying and recognizing locals and regional talents in preparation of

dance, theatre and musical shows from the regions that could take place in the National Theatre.

A former director of the National Symphony Orchestra was of the view that the performing arts educational institutions should recognize the National Theatre as an institution to which interested senior staff of the performing arts educational institutions may be attached during their sabbatical leave or on secondment for limited periods. Seemingly, this provision could be applied retrospectively to the directors of the National Theatre staffs who may wish to visit any of the performing arts educational institution for similar periods. This idea therefore, would enhance teaching and learning as well as boost practical theatrical presentations. It was indicated by a director in the theatre that a critical review of the salaries and conditions of service for employees of the National Theatre staff should be looked at to ensure the retention of a contented staff. Generally, this would ensure that by the end, it would attract and retain the right mix of human resources suitable for carrying out the theatre's broad objectives.

5.4.5 Funding Challenges for Programme Development and Operation

According to the Ghanaian law, the National Theatre of Ghana is a subvented governmental organization established under P.N.D.C. Law 256 of 1991. By law, government pays emoluments [salaries] but does not fund programme development and operations. In view of that, the National Theatre supports its operations and programme development with internally generated funding order to sustain on-going operational activities even though it appears not to be enough. Hence, the key challenge faced by the National Theatre of Ghana appears to point to lack of funds for programme development and promotion. Meanwhile, to better position the theatre to carry out its mandate effectively, it needs to be supported especially by the government and

corporate Ghana. The government on this note should increase the National Theatre's allocation to make it more effective while the management of the facility is urged to continue to find new means of generating revenue to promote its activities.

5.5. The Current Physical State of the National Theatre of Ghana Facility

According to *the National Theatre of Ghana document for capitalization 1995* as cited in National Commission on Culture (1995), the National Theatre of Ghana facility was established in 1992 during the P.N.D.C era under the leadership of Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings. Prior to that the Governments of the Republic of Ghana and the Republic of China signed an agreement on 5th July, 1989, as regards the construction of a national theatre complex at the junction of the Independence Avenue and Liberia Road intersection in Accra and the Efua Sutherland Drama Studio at the University of Ghana, Legon as indicated by NTD1. National Commission on Culture (1995) further indicates that the edifice is a multi-purpose facility with the state-of-the-art theatrical equipment suitable for theatrical productions. According to the director of administration, apart from programme development and promotion by the National Theatre, the theatre also engages in other services like the rentals of tables and chairs for prospective clients in order to accrue internally generated fund to support maintenance and operation. According to her, they do not have enough funds to develop and create new programmes. "We know it is against our mandate, but what can we do?" As it stands, if an endowment fund [cultural fund] or increased government support does not come forth, then this would be the only the theatre could sustain itself, this is a reality stressed by NTD3.

In an ensuing development, a feature in the Ghanaian Times by Michael Akenoo issued on the 21st of February, 2019 under the banner headline, *A critical appraisal of*

the present state of the National Theatre of Ghana (Appendix G) confirmed some views of participants as well.

5.5.1 Construction of the National Theatre of Ghana Project

NTD1 stated that work on the theatre was to move simultaneously with the construction of the drama studio at the University of Ghana, Legon. Under the contract agreement, the National Theatre projects began on the 8th of March, 1990 and were completed on 16th of December, 1992. It was also commissioned and handed over on the 30th of December, 1992 as in (Figure 37). Whereas the drama studio project at the University of Ghana, Legon commenced on the 25th of June, 1990 and was completed on the 20th of February 1991. Soon after was handed over to the university authorities on the 14th of March, 1991.

(Figures 35) shows the Chinese site engineer in the mist of the Ghanaian engineer and the foreman in a discussion of the constructional drafting of the building. Figure 36 shows the right-wing section of the front view of the National Theatre of Ghana. Figure 37 is the top view of the second gallery seating area of the auditorium. Figure 38 is the entrance to the exhibition hall of the theatre. However, the final handing over of the theatre project (Figure 39) was made on August 1994 by the



Figure 35: The Chinese Engineer in a discussion with the Ghanaian Engineer and the Foreman on the Project

Source: National Theatre of Ghana Library, 2018

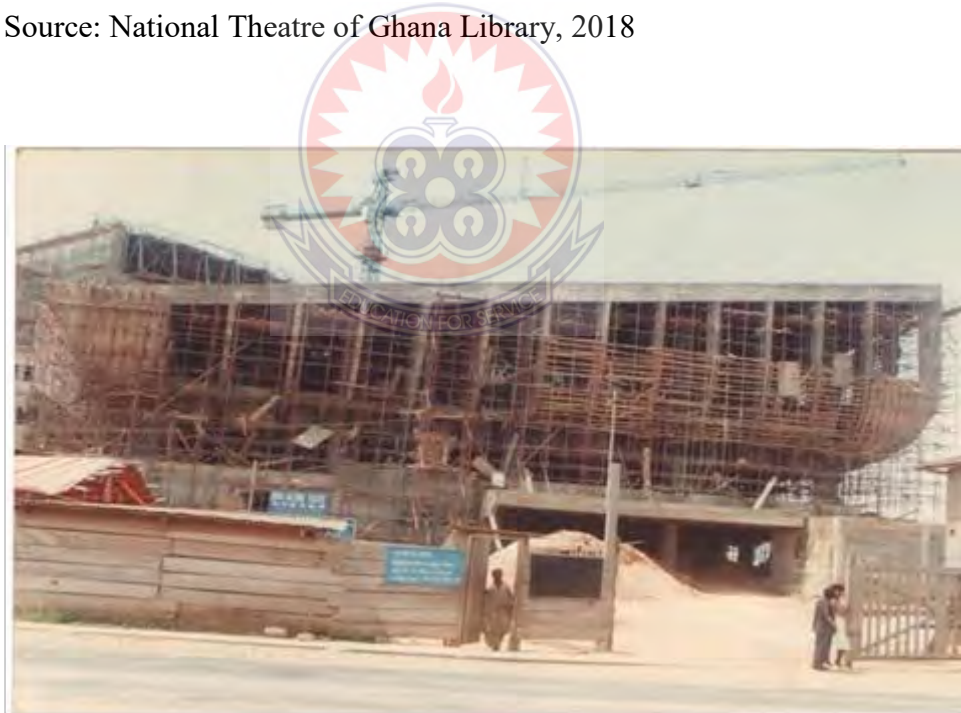


Figure 36: Left-Wing Section of the Front View of the National Theatre of Ghana

Source: National Theatre Ghana Library, 2018.



Figure 37: A Top View of the Second Gallery Seating Area of the Auditorium

Source: National Theatre of Ghanaians Library, 2018



Figure 38: The Entrance to the Exhibition Hall of the National Theatre

Source: National Theatre of Ghana Library



Figure 39: Final Handing over of the National Theatre Facility to Lt. Lt J. J. Rawlings by The Chinese Ambassador to Ghana

Source: National Theatre of Ghana Library, 2018

Generally, PNT2 confirmed that the launch of the facility commenced with performances by the three resident groups, namely National Drama Company, National Dance Company and National Symphony Orchestra, Dance Ensemble and the National Symphony Orchestra. This was followed by a performance by a Chinese cultural troupe as a sign of unity and acceptance of the facility unto the Ghanaian soil. At the time, activities were being outlined by the management of the theatre for the official take off. In a statement by a former administrator of the National Theatre, the entity was to spearhead the Theatre movement in Ghana and also provide the needed multi-functional venue for concerts, dance, drama and musical performances, screen plays, exhibitions and special events. It was to be for people of all ages and walks of life.

5.5.2 Technical Details of the National Theatre of Ghana Building

As indicated by the 1994 technical data document of the National Theatre of Ghana, the facility has a complex structure with a total area of 11,896 square metres and was built at a total cost of twenty million US Dollars (\$20,000,000.00). The current estate manager of the National Theatre stressed that the main structure was constructed with reinforced concrete and burnt bricks with the lower parts of the exterior laid with polished granite and the upper curved parts is decorated with mosaic tiles. In his further statement corroborated by one of the technical expert who was responsible for fire and safety shared his view concerning the fact that the frontage of the building is adorned with a three-tier water fountain which also doubles as a reservoir for the theatre's internal fire hydrants. Meanwhile, the compound is embellished with a number of African arts pieces nicely displayed on some of the lawns. The building has been divided into four parts for ease of reference.

The researcher's interaction with the estate manager revealed that part A of the theatre building is the main audience wing of the theatre and comprises the entrance hall made up of a three-tier lobby with eleven marble and hyedua finished pillars, marble and terrazzo floors and hyedua wooden panelled walls, a big branchy brass pendant lamp fixed with two hundred and eighty nine (289) bulbs hanging at a height of 11.4 metres from the floor, a first floor outdoor veranda, a three tier one thousand four hundred and ninety two (1,492) seater auditorium, a bar, sound control room, stage lighting control room, director's observatory, a film projection room and a Presidential box. There are also female and male washrooms on the second-floor lobby with a total of sixteen (16) water closets and eight (8) urinal pots.

Additionally, part B houses the terraced outdoor theatre which seats 300 people with its own toilet facilities and has its backstage preparatory rooms also with its toilet facilities, a space with a Ghanaian styled garden housing a privately run restaurant and bar, a set of toilet facilities with sixteen water closets and eight urinal pots serving both the auditorium and restaurant. This section has a set construction or a carpentry workshop, the theatre's main fire control room manned by staff of the Ghana National Fire Service, an air handling unit for air-conditioning of the auditorium and lobby and a fresh water pumping room which also has a five thousand 5000 litre reservoir.

Part C according to TE2 is the ground floor of the building which features the VIP with an area of 300 square metres, comprising the Presidential lounge, two (2) VIP lounges, utility rooms and a Chinese styled garden with a pond. There is also a space earmarked for a gift shop, a main electrical distribution panel room and the central air conditioning plant room.

Part D is the southern part of the theatre that houses the tallest part of the building, rising to about ten floors off the stage floor. This is the area where we have the fly bars holding the stage lights and curtains, cinema screen and other stage elements. On the ground floor is the stage with a total area of 440 square metres and two holding wings. The stage floor is covered with polished tongue and groove wood and has a moveable orchestra pit and pseudo-proscenium. At the back of the stage are dressing rooms for performers including two self-contained rooms equipped with wash hand basins, bath tubs and water closets, a reception and a small storage unit and at both ends of the floor are toilets with standing showers for both male and female.

Part E is the first floor which houses the changing rooms for the resident groups, offices for the deputy executive director, artistic directors of the three resident groups

and their administrative staff. At both ends of this floor are set of washrooms. Apparently, the first floor of this part sited within the curved structure on the eastern part of the theatre, houses two rehearsal halls, both equipped with long walls to wall mirrors, tongue and groove wooden floors, two (2) props rooms and a small washroom sited just before you enter the dance rehearsal room. Also, the first floor houses the imposing exhibition hall, with an area of a 1,000 square metres. This hall is sited within the curved structure on the western part of the Theatre which has wash rooms facilities for both ladies and gents and a small storage unit.

Part F consists both the second and third floors which houses staffs of the theatre, the library, costume construction and storage room as well as the information and communication technology room. The cooling tower and smaller air handling units for the central air condition plant are also found here.

5.5.3 Current Challenges of National Theatre Facility

The current estate manager and the technical director of the National Theatre of Ghana affirmed that since the facility began operation it had seen two major renovation works. The first was done in 1995 to service the central air-conditioning plant and the second in 2005 which was more elaborate, covering the auditorium, air conditioning, stage, and fire fighting pumps amongst others.

Kwesi Wilson who happened to be the estate manager at the time data was being collected stressed that before the National Theatre commenced the refurbishment exercise a memorandum of understanding was agreed and signed between the two parties [Chinese Government and Ghana Government] as indicated by the National Commission of Culture (1995). The document stipulates that the “National Theatre of Ghana facility is to be shut down to the public after every ten (10) operational years for

a major maintenance period” (p.21). On the basis of the memorandum of understanding, the Chinese technical team from China honoured the visit to refurbish the facility. “However, prior to the 2005 maintenance period, in 1995 there was a huge challenge with the malfunctioning of the air-conditioning plant so, a technical team from China came down to fix the problem which still persists till now”, stressed NTD2.

According to the technical director of the National Theatre of Ghana, there was the urgent need to overhaul the stage machinery and replace damaged parts to improve its efficiency. The estate officer also made recommendations for the replacement of damaged fittings and structural defect to improve the status of the building because at that time the major challenge facing the theatre complex was the deteriorating state of the edifice which is still the case, according to NTD5. In view of this the researcher believes that if care is not taken, the theatre may come to a halt as a result of the malfunctioning of some facilities that are obsolete. Hence, to keep the only National Theatre of Ghana running, there is the need to shut down the facility to the public in order to refurbish it to maintain an appreciable life span. After the refurbishment project was done in 2006, it was observed by the Ghanaian technical team that there were certain areas that were not tackled with respect to repairs and replacement of some machinery parts, even though the entire theatrical machinery needed a total overhaul due to its inefficiency.

As a result, the researcher believes that it has become necessary to assess the efficiency of the machinery and the general building facility of the theatre, because ever since the inception of the edifice in 1992 it has never been assessed to know its present condition. Knowledge of its present state will guide planners and policy makers to put measures in place to maintain and sustain the life span of the facility to ensure sustained national development in the area of arts and culture. Meanwhile, from the estate

manager's point of view, in percentage terms the current operational state of the National Theatre is about forty percent 40%, because apart from the structure defects seemingly, there are other related mechanical and electronic problems that need to be addressed. The study points out that, the facility seems to have machines that never functioned after its first installation when the project was first constructed. According to one of the theatre directors, who was involved in the theatre project mentioned that some materials fixed during the construction appeared to have short life spans during operations. Meanwhile, TE2 stated that the current state of the theatre facility is not the best and it could be attributed to the poor culture of maintenance. For instance, reference could be made of the sunk section of the dance rehearsal hall and the roughness of certain portions of the main stage floor. TE2 advocates that to elevate and re-position the National Theatre then the entity needs to be rebranded through image branding strategies.

As part of the existing challenges at the National Theatre of Ghana, according to the *stage technical report document for the first quarter* as cited at the National Theatre of Ghana (2010), there appears not to be technical equipment in good condition to be hired out to prospective clients. It is palpable that this could be one of the reasons why some clients may want to opt for other competing venue like the International Conference Centre and the Physicians and Surgeon Conference hall all in Accra.

The estate manager indicated that, the greatest challenge the National Theatre facility faced years after its construction was the leakage problems in the water utility service pipes. This challenge may have occurred as a result of the use of galvanized pipe resting on brick blocks as recommended by the Chinese technical experts during the initial construction.

Importantly, the reaction of galvanized pipes over brick blocks is not compatible, since it causes oxidation. “Apparently, that was the exact attempt the Chinese team did which they believed was the best practice but the weather conditions are different,” stressed the estate manager. In his explanation, the Ghanaian local PVC pipe could have been a better option since it was designed with the weather condition in mind to suit the temperate zone and to withstand humidity. However, after a couple of years during operations the galvanized pipes began to crack causing leakages in the walls, hence, the current problem.

A technical caution noted by the researcher from the Ghanaian architect, TE2 on the theatre project was that, galvanized pipes overlaid on brick blocks pose heavy corrosion challenges due to the humidity level of brick blocks. The researcher believes that going forward, the galvanized pipes in the whole building structure needs to be change to maintain and sustain the life span of the facility. The researcher enquired from the architect why the galvanized pipe was used for the project at that time. In the architect’s response, “The theatre was a gift and so we could not reject any thing and we were assured of the best.”

However, to ascertain the extent of crack or damage to the utility pipes, see (Figure 40). Meanwhile, due to the crack on the pipes, water from the broken part of the pipe drains into sections of the theatre facility causing intense oxidation and damage to the exterior walls (Figure 41) as well as water settling in certain parts of the duct space areas (Figure 42). Meanwhile, the leakage challenges have defaced some portions of the theatre surface walls and occasionally water sips through the walls onto the corridors and this is currently a huge challenge being faced at the National Theatre of Ghana.



Figure 40: A Broken Cast Iron Pipe

Source: National Theatre of Ghana Library, 2018



Figure 41: Oxidized wall of a changing room due to Broken Leaking Cast Pipe.

Source: NTG Library, 2018



Figure 42: Leaked water in the Duct Space area as a result of a Broken Cast Pipe.

Source: NTG library, 2018.

NTD4 was of the view that when the facility is maintained it will put the edifice back on a safe track to achieve maximum operational output. After the refurbishment period, NTD1 also indicated that plans were initiated at that time to focus the activities of the National Theatre in line with acceptable standards and practices to maintain the facility. These which were seen to be short and long term programmes as well as improving the already existing ones in order to focus and strengthen the activities of the National Theatre.

The estate manager pointed out that it seems the government delays in intervening in some crucial issues affecting certain institutions in the country and he was worried about the fact that the maintenance culture in Ghana was not the best. It appears some people do not see maintenance as an important schedule in preventing

future occurrences, which may be reasons why the operational status of the theatre is very low. In the statement of NTD3, most of the theatre's gadgets were spoilt because the theatre itself did not have a qualified maintenance team in place trained by the Chinese to handle technical challenges that may arise [trouble shoot and repairs of damaged equipment].

In support, NTD2 reiterates the submission of the estate manager indicating that critically attention should be given to the maintenance of the central air-condition facility to improve its output. However, even though attention was drawn to it, according to the estate manager, the team was unable to fix it. So, the challenge has affected the cooling output of the facility and posing problems for the operation of the theatre.

In an alleged statement by the National Theatre project supervisor, TE2 stated that the plant machinery and equipment that was brought down from China for the initial project construction were old models. So, within a very short time the theatre started having problems. Seemingly, the companies producing these spare parts that could be used to replace damaged parts of the air-condition plant had folded up according to the Chinese project coordinator. This among others began the genesis of the technical challenges faced by the theatre currently.

Same scenario confronted the lighting section of the technical department of the theatre, where the lighting instruments started developing problems just after its initial set up in 1994. The issue was reported to the Chinese economic consular in 1994 by the theatre authorities and they [Chinese authorities] indicated that there was very little they could do about the situation, because the parts were no more in production and were out

of stock on the market. Hence, at the time, the theatre should try and see what they could also do to salvage the situation. According to NTD3, it was a worrying situation.

In the midst of uncertainties seeing that 100% of the stage equipment and electricals were Chinese products, per the study, fear gripped the National Theatre technical staff, and they had to look for experts in Ghana in the field to handle the situation. Fortunately, Architectural Engineers Services Limited (AESL), the government agency that supervised the construction of the theatre building facility was contacted for expressed advice for the way forward. As a result, recommendations were made for the theatre to fall on the expertise of Strand Company to save the situation. Contact with Strand Company was made and the situation was rectified to an extent because assistance came from the company by re-cabing the stage area of the theatre with strand electrical cables replacing the Chinese cables.

In a related development, the researcher sought to know the extent to which the National Theatre adhered to maintenance practices. In response to the researcher, the estate manager was of the opinion that, January of every year the facility is shut down for a maintenance break to check the theatrical elements and all installations as well as replace damaged parts of the facility. The estate manager stressed that to maintain the National Theatre facility largely depends on funds. He was of the view that, if adequate funds are not made available, then one may have to focus on his strength as far as funds are concerned. However, he underscored the fact that the Chinese technical team have been to Ghana twice to do general maintenance activities; renovation of major works, such as changing auditorium seats, changing cooling tower pumps, office split air conditioners, changing fire-fighting equipment and polishing the exterior marbles and granites of the walls.

An alarming situation found out by the researcher was the non-insurance of the National Theatre building facility. In the estate manager's response, he affirmed that in earlier times when the facility was commissioned for operation it was insured by the government but now as it stands it has not been insured after many years. This finding should be a concern to the government and the Ghanaian citizenry because of the number of persons the National Theatre admits as audience during programmes. However, the estate manager made the researcher know that once a while some individual programmes are insured by the client who hires the facility. In his submission, that type of insurance has a limitation. In his explanation, "the insurance covers both the performers and clients of the theatre."



CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Overview

This chapter outlines the major findings of the study. To this end, findings were made and conclusions were drawn from which corresponding recommendations have been made. Suggestions have been made for further research based on the outcome of the study. On the basis of that the findings, conclusions and recommendations have been listed for ease of verification.

6.1 Summary of Major Findings

The study was based on five specific research objectives. The first objective examined the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana, while the second objective found out the extent to which the National Theatre of Ghana achieved its core mandates, followed by the third objective which investigated how the National Theatre's facility is representative of national cultural identity. The fourth objective investigated the operations of the National Theatre of Ghana, while the fifth finally ends with the evaluation of the current state of the National Theatre of Ghana facility.

Objective one focused on the significance of establishing the National Theatre of Ghana and the study revealed that:

1. The National Theatre of Ghana was established when there were few performing arts facilities promoting the performing arts in Ghana, apart from School of Performing Arts (SPA) and the initiative from the University of Ghana, Legon to promote culture and develop culture through education.

2. The National Theatre facility is the manifestation of the National Theatre Movement and a cry for a larger space to house the traditional authentic performing arts forms. It is because at the time, the only theatre facilities were the Arts Centre in Accra and the Ghana Drama Studio.
3. Additionally, it was set up to provide cultural education and promote our performing arts in order to project our culture heritage and to build a theatre going audience.
4. The establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana played an important role in mainstreaming the thought process in people's appreciation of how theatre could enhance development, as one critical form.

Assessing the extent to which the National Theatre of Ghana has achieved its core mandates happens to be the second objective which revealed that:

1. Per the Ghana National Theatre Law, 1991 of P.N.D.C. Law 259, the National Theatre is to develop and promote the arts in Ghana. However, due to insufficient funds, it appears the theatre has deviated from its core mandates to renting the facility in order to sustain operations and maintain the building. This activity contradicts the stipulated mandate.
2. Between 1994 and 2005, the National Theatre of Ghana nurtured youth groups through internally generated funds. These groups were; Indigena Africa, Pan African Youth Orchestra and Dance Factory. These groups were formed to feed the three (3) resident companies when the need arose. However, in later developments, management changed hands and it appeared priorities were considered, so it became quite difficult to support the groups. Hence, they collapsed. This appeared to be a failure on the part of the theatre.

3. Also, many years after the establishment of the National Theatre, the resident groups and the National Theatre itself were operating autonomously as silo groups preoccupied mainly with surviving and not working as a team, which appears not to help operation and for that matter focus on the mandates. This challenge per the study appeared to undermine the promotion and development of the performing arts in Ghana as enshrined in the National Theatre Law.
4. Additionally, the study revealed that the National Theatre of Ghana and the three (3) resident companies appear to be in ambiguity with regard to the National Theatre Law and therefore needs to be looked at as recommended by the then chairman for the National Commission on Culture, Lt. General Arnold Quainoo as in (Appendix E).
5. Besides, appendix F also revealed that there is the need for the government to reconstitute the National Theatre board in order to represent the adequate composition of the board members in to meet the current standards trends and practice.

The third objective looked at the symbolic representation of the National Theatre of Ghana, which revealed that:

1. The National Theatre of Ghana as a monumental edifice is an important symbolic conduit for not just expressing certain versions of history but casting legitimacy upon them and a facility that is a repository of history.
2. Most Ghanaians have different interpretations or views about the structure of the National Theatre of Ghana when observed from different angles. Some say that the building looks like a gigantic ship returning in victory from the Atlantic Ocean, others say a seagull spreading its wings, there are yet others

who say it looks like a traditional Ghanaian stool with its curved sides and straight stands.

3. With regard to the structure, a section of the populace believes that the facility does not give credence to identifying with the Ghanaian value and what we refer to as national identity and traditional forms, particularly the ideas that govern our lives.
4. Some say it is a replica of two (2) boats on the sides of a huge ship docking against the backdrop of a skyline.
5. On the contrary, a section of the public does not relate the building to any Ghanaian concept, rather they see it as a borrowed Chinese culture. Hence, the symbolic interpretation of the physical appearance of the theatre appears to remain as a conflicting idea in the minds of Ghanaians.
6. Per the study, Mohammed Ben Abdallah who was at the apex of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana commissioned artists to create sculptures and statutes to enhance the outlook and nature of the theatre facility, both interior and exterior facades to look Ghanaian.
7. As the building stands, one may be tempted to argue that the National Theatre building itself may not be Ghanaian without the carving and statutes embellishing the edifice.

The fourth objective investigated the significant operations of the National Theatre of Ghana. It was which revealed that:

1. The National Theatre of Ghana was established under the Ghana National Theatre Law, 1991 of P.N.D.C.L. 259. The facility is a state-owned subvented organization and it was mandated by law to develop and promote the performing arts in Ghana.

2. From the 1990's through to the year 2004 the National Theatre had maintained its audience level by developing new programmes [*Fun World, KIDDAFEST, theatre programme for schools and key soap concert party*] among others to develop and sustain the interest of the audience.
3. Between the years of 1994 and 2005 the National Theatre partnered with Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) and Unilever Ghana Limited (Unilever) to produce *key soap concert party* in Ghana. Importantly, it was this era that revamped the almost dying *concert party* tradition which at the end churned out lot of patrons and performers to the new National Theatre of Ghana facility. Besides, existing *concert party* groups were revived and new groups formed.
4. Through productions like *KIDDAFEST and Fun World*, the National Theatre has unearthed talents particularly with regard to child artistes into prolific performers in Ghana and abroad.
5. The resident companies appear to have provided prospects for the creative development of Ghana's national heritage of artistic forms through research and creative experiments in the forms of theatrical presentations and documentation.
6. The resident drama company engages in outreach programmes focused at second cycle schools, to improve their literature skills and inculcate the art of theatre in the students and to offer them a better understanding and interpretation of both disciplines.
7. Public education programmes are embarked upon by the National Drama Company as a subsidiary activity to educate people on health, hygiene, teenage pregnancy, malaria and other thematic areas of concern.

8. Occasionally, the National Drama Company puts up productions at the theatre to accrue some revenue for the State and to sustain some aspects of their operations [basic maintenance].
9. For some time now, employment opportunities at the National Theatre has been very slim, due to government's embargo on employment. Hence, staffing levels appear to be very low as a result of retirements and deaths of the theatre's staff.
10. The National Symphony Orchestra under the theatre promotes African art music as well as rekindles and sustain the interest of classical and popular music lovers. Additionally, the orchestra performs patriotic songs to maintain the calm of the citizenry and to promote unity in cultural diversity during certain State functions,

Evaluating the current physical state of the National Theatre of Ghana facility was the fifth objective. It was revealed that;

1. The theatre was established in 1992 and jointly built by the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Republic of Ghana. The building was to house, promote and preserve the various artistic works produced by Ghanaians and to share experiences of other cultures.
2. With regard to maintenance, the theatre had its first routine refurbishment in the year 2005. Twelve years down the lane from the time the study was being conducted, the facility has not seen any major maintenance or refurbishment even though the facility is still in operation and showing signs of urgent maintenance.
3. Consequently, attention is being drawn to the fact that the National Theatre is currently not insured [staff, audience and equipment] an alarming

situation that needs immediate attention. In the early years of operation government paid for the insurance policy according to the study but as it stands now, the theatre is required to pay from its own funds which has become very difficult.

6.2 Conclusions

The study concludes that during the independence era, theatre in Africa began to spring up as an expression of resentment for the colonial western theatre. It was as a result of these among others that the National Theatre Movement took off to redefine the Ghanaian traditional theatre form and was subsequently constituted to help forge the new nation's cultural identity and create a theatrical form which was 'truly' Ghanaian; drawing on oral traditions of performance which projected the *anansegoro* style and later developed into the *abibigoro* form. Efua Sutherland a patriot of the theatre tradition led the promotion of Ghanaian theatre by establishing the Ghana Drama Studio, an experimental project with the keen support of the then President Kwame Nkrumah who had the vision to build the African personality and pride.

To this end, theatre began to take shape in Ghana, so, Mohammed Ben Abdallah who was by then the P. N. D. C. Secretary for Education and Culture and a performing artist expert and a dramatist voiced and led the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana facility. This project was under the leadership of Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings who had the option of choosing between a theatre and a stadium, under the expert advice of Mohammed Ben Abdallah who finally opted for the theatre.

Ghana National Theatre, as a facility, was jointly built by the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Republic of Ghana. The theatre

facility was established under P.N.D.C. Law 259 in pursuance of the Provisional National Defense Council Proclamation 1991.

However, in 1992, the National Theatre of Ghana was established and mandated to develop and promote the performing arts in Ghana per the Ghana National Theatre Law, 1991 of P.N.D.C.L. 259. This has been the focus of the theatre. The resident companies [National Drama Company, National Dance Company and National Symphony Orchestra] were also formed to promote the performing arts in Ghana. However, due to insufficient funds, it appears the National Theatre has deviated from its core mandates to renting the facility in order to sustain operations and maintain the building. The autonomous nature of the three (3) resident companies of the National Theatre appears not to help operations and for that matter focus on the mandates of the National Theatre. The silo nature of the entities tends to undermine the promotion and development of the performing arts in Ghana. As to whether the National Theatre of Ghana has achieved its mandates or not is one of the significant reasons the study was being conducted to assess its significance, impact and way forward.

The representativeness of the National Theatre facility is significant to the Ghanaian identity, belief and a sense of a unique presence of the Ghanaian heritage. It is noted that monuments play important roles in the process of cultural development and preservation. However, with regard to the facility, most Ghanaians have different interpretations or views about its representation when observed from different angles. Some say the building looks like a gigantic ship returning in victory from the Atlantic Ocean, others say a seagull spreading its wings, there are yet others who say it looks like a traditional Ghanaian stool with its curved sides and straight stands. Some settle on a replica of two (2) boats on the sides of a huge ship docking against the backdrop of a skyline. Others also say the statues and carving at the National Theatre makes the

edifice Ghanaian. However, a section of the populace believes that the facility does not give credence to identifying with the Ghanaian value. Especially, what we refer to as national identity and traditional forms, particularly the ideas that govern our lives. On the contrary, a section of the public does not relate the building to any Ghanaian concept but rather a borrowed Chinese culture.

The National Theatre of Ghana is a state-owned sub-vented organization established to develop and promote the performing arts in Ghana. Hence, with regard to its operations, the performance of the National Theatre largely depends on the quality of theatrical structures within the facility. It also depends on adequate administrative and technical staff as well as the contributions of the three (3) resident companies which have been merged under one administration.

When the National Theatre partnered with some corporate institutions like, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) and Unilever Ghana Limited, among others, between the years of 1994 and 2005, the audience level of *Key Soap Concert Party* in particular appreciated and other programmes developed. However, in 2005 when GBC pulled out from the partnership deal due to certain circumstances and the television version of *key soap concert party* was no more being shown on Ghana Television; audience level began to drop and programme development became an issue. Also, between the years of 1994, 1995 and 1996 the National Theatre formed youth groups to feed the resident national companies. However, in 2005 the groups collapsed due to non-availability of funds to sustain the programme as well as a change in management at the time.

Since 2005 in the scheme of activities, the National Theatre has not seen any major maintenance. However, the facility continues to be used by the theatre and the clients that rent them, a situation that needs urgent attention. On this account, attention

is being drawn to the fact that the National Theatre has been in operation for all these years without an insurance policy and therefore needs to be covered by a policy against eventualities, a worrying situation.

6.3 Recommendations

Owing to the problems found by the researcher, the following recommendations are made for the National Theatre of Ghana, Ministry for Tourism, Culture and the Arts and the Regional Centres for National Culture seeking to project the performing arts and culture. Meanwhile, it is important for the aforementioned stakeholders to consolidate their efforts to promote, project and to preserve the cultural heritage of Ghana to ensure a much more focused agenda in the performing arts and cultural structures. It is believed by the researcher that such observations among others would precipitate national development in a broader sense.

For the National Theatre to achieve its mandates, it will be incumbent on government to establish satellite theatres or retool and mandate the regional Centres for National Culture to closely work with the National Theatre and must be backed by policy. Even though the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts is the sector responsible for the National Theatre, it is imperative for the ministry to cooperate closely with other ministries on matters of common interest such as the Ministry of Information, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Education. With regard to the Ministry of Education, it is equally important to maintain close contact with schools, universities and organisations advocating for the rights of our art communities. It is also important to liaise with world cultural policies and funding agencies such as UNESCO, Commonwealth Secretariat, African Union (AU) and others to assist promote the arts in Ghana.

Additionally, there is the urgent need for government to intervene by implementing the cultural fund as stated in the cultural policy document of 2004 by National Commission on Culture 2004 and to put in place policies that will safeguard the fund. This comes in the wake of the fact that there is no endowment fund in Ghana to be accessed by the creative arts industry as direct support from government. This would also minimize the rental option of sustaining the facility through accrued income at the expense of the development and promotion of the arts.

The researcher argues that in taking the aforementioned steps, programmes that may take place in these satellite theatres could be staged in the various local languages by the people themselves, so that we may not experience a case of ethnocide, which implies that ethnic groups within our country that do not have the opportunity of seeing themselves on stage or showcased in their languages. If this target is not met, then the researcher recognises it as a disadvantage and a disservice to the entire country and thereby goes contrary to the mandates of the National Theatre of Ghana, to “develop and promote the performing arts in Ghana” (National Commission on Culture, 1995). This is imperative because indeed Ghana is a multicultural diversified society derived from our ethnicities, which the researcher sees as an asset that helps and bonds the country together. Not only in terms of talents and cultural elements that Ghanaians can help promote to generate foreign exchange but also as a buffer that should link, weave or hold ethnicity together. In view of this, there is the urgent need to decentralise the activities of the promotion of the performing arts in Ghana.

Additionally, fundamental policies have to be developed which would guide the functioning of the theatre. Perhaps it should focus around the following principles:

- a. To provide access to the arts to as many people as possible.

- b. To serve for excellence in the arts.
- c. To strive towards economic viability of the arts.
- d. And to advocate for the arts and those who created it.

Importantly, frequent contact and exchange with the National Theatres around the world would keep the National Theatre abreast with latest developments in these institutions and provide a circuit and a network for artists. This will assist the formulation of an effective export promotion programme of works in the performing arts produced in Ghana.

The autonomous nature of the three (3) resident companies must be resolved by policy in order to achieve said targets. Such that to achieve the core mandates the National Theatre and the three entities need to merge administratively to collectively deliver on its mandates. This must be policy driven.

The awareness of the representativeness of the theatre could be made possible to a large extent if the facility is well promoted within the scope of cultural perspectives and utilising it more for cultural programmes with support from both print and electronic media, where the media would sensitise audience across the nation about the vitality of our art forms which is absolutely critical to who we are.

In relation to operations, it is mandatory on the three companies to enhance their artistic opportunities for the performing arts industry both locally and internationally in order to promote the Ghanaian face of the National Theatre of Ghana. Also, they should explore prospects for the creative development of Ghanaian national heritage of artistic forms through research and creative experiments in the forms of theatrical presentations and documentation. In as much as the three (3) entities have attempted to promote the

performing arts in some parts of the nation, there is the need to holistically reach out to the whole nation to achieve its core mandate.

In the scope of a broader picture, the researcher finds it necessary for corporate Ghana to be part of this drive to support the activities of government and other related stakeholders so that such institutions may enjoy tax holidays or incentives as a form of motivation in the support of the arts. Besides, an aggressive marketing strategy could be considered to be coordinated within the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, as well as the International Tourism Industry and the International Chamber of Commerce.

From the government's side there is the need to revamp the National Theatre and retool its structures [replacement of retired and demised staff, replacement of obsolete facilities and the adherence of a maintenance driven culture]. It also recommends that there should be comprehensive and integrated efforts toward the management of the theatre to attract audience in a quest to reviving theatre activities.

Importantly, since the performing arts is a practical programme, the National Theatre needs to open up its doors to the performing arts in educational institutions as training ground for students who may be interested in internship or attachment programmes, very necessary to develop a well-focused the succession plan for posterity.

In order to maintain and sustain the edifice, it is obligatory on the theatre management to put in place a vibrant maintenance team to take care of the facility, working hand in hand with the state supervisory agency, that is, Architectural Engineering Services Limited (AESL).

Also, since the three resident companies appear to be autonomous, government should ensure putting in place policies to integrate them into the structure of the

National Theatre [administratively, and from the operation point of view]. Or, since the three (3) resident companies are entitled to receive budgetary allocations under item 3 and 4, their contributions to the maintenance and upkeep of theatre should be regularised by policy in recognition of the need for a consistent maintenance policy to safeguard the lifespan of the facilities available at the theatre. A maintenance policy may entail a huge capital outlay over and above the theatre's maintenance budget. In the event that implementation of such recommendation delays, government in consultation with the management of the theatre, should consult and find ways and means by which the residents could complement the theatre's maintenance efforts in such areas as sanitation, utilities, maintenance of equipment among others. In effect, since these areas fall under items 3 and 4 of the budgetary allocation, such grants could be pooled together through the internal arrangement for the mutual benefits of all the major players in the theatre. In a deep reflection by the researcher on the implications and consequences of the 'cancerous' legal and administrative inconsistencies characterising the operations of the theatre and in appreciation of the apparent lack of political will as it appears to address these inherent problems, the onus may rest on management to adopt certain far reaching measures aimed at regularising the situation.

Mandatorily, the theatre must be insured against odds in order to safeguard clients, facilities and the audience that throng to watch performances in the venues and this must be backed by law and must be monitored. Insurance companies could support in this regard.

Additionally, the amendment of the Ghana National Theatre Law 1991 (P.N.D.C.L. 259) will improve managerial and administrative structures in the furtherance of operations and service delivery at the theatre. Also, the reconstitution of the National Theatre board will bring to the fore a better representation of the board

members of different backgrounds. For instance, apart from the theatre practitioners, the board may constitute a lawyer, a finance expert, a marketing professional as well as advertising expert. This will be an ideal composition to strengthen the decision making process of the theatre.

Furthermore, before an artiste mounts the National Theatre stage, he should have been prepared at the district and regional levels [Centre for National Culture] in order to get performer well-groomed for the national level, in this case the National Theatre. Just like in the case of soccer. In so doing, technically the theatre will be well sustained and undue pressure on the facility would be reduced.

6.4 Contribution of the Study to the Discipline of the Performing Arts and Culture

Through the study, the significance and understanding of the National Theatre Movement has been much more deepened in scope and interpretation, making it the base for the development and establishment of the National Theatre building facility. The study has also pointed to the fact that the theatre facility is a cherished monument that represents the identity and heartbeat of the Ghanaian personality and a cherished cultural edifice that talks about our past, aspiration and our identity.

As part of the Ghanaian economic growth, theatre plays a very significant role in the promotion of our culture both local and international. More so, it has created job opportunities for the performing artist, literary and visual artist making it one of the greatest employers in the job market. Therefore, it is important to protect and resource it in order for it to support employment in the country.

Undoubtedly, the contribution of theatre to community development is enormous and cannot be overstated. For instance, the National Theatre of Ghana

through the National Drama Company for that matter has had opportunities to work with some communities in Accra such as James Town, New Town, Labadi and Teshie Nugua among others, presenting dramatic performances with the focus on themes like, teenage pregnancy, girl child education and child delinquency among others. Besides the communities, some market squares in Accra have been beneficiaries of this form of education which focused on hygiene and sanitation. The style of presentation was based on the theatre for development model, a medium for communication and sensitisation towards a behavioural change. Through the theatre's children programmes [KIDDAFEST, Fun World, theatre programme for schools and Drama Dot Com], they have had the opportunity to work with Ghana Education Service to promote art and culture in the first and second cycle institutions. This partnership has existed for the past fifteen (15) years.

In the areas of art and cultural promotion, the three (3) resident companies have enormously projected and promoted our arts and culture both locally and internationally through the various performance activities. Findings through the study indicates that even though the National Theatre is under resourced, the researcher believes that in a giving circumstance where government and corporate Ghana comes on board to support the activities of the theatre, they could have done better.

The study has placed National Theatre of Ghana beyond a mere building facility or a home of entertainment. It has sought to recognise theatre as a platform through whom some education and community development can be achieved.

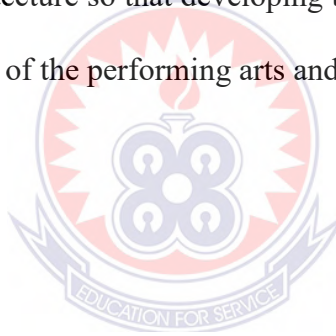
The study has brought to the fore the significance of theatre in the nation, the awareness of its activities, its cultural relevance and as a tool for national development and coercion. Notwithstanding, cultural tourism and arts marketing is a base for

national development. For that matter, it appears that the study will place arts and culture at its proper place of recognition translating into a sense of pride and belonging to the nation.

6.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

Through the findings of this study, it is recommended that culture and the performing arts historians should pay scholarly attention to the study of pre-historic art forms in rewriting Ghana's performing arts history, since pre-historic events seem to be the foundation upon which the African art forms are based.

Again, further studies should be conducted in the areas of theatre administration, theatre structures and architecture so that developing theatre in Ghana will be abreast of current trends and practices of the performing arts and theatrical structures.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW

My ref. no: JKE/18/R1

Department of Theatre Arts
University of Education, Winneba
Winneba
Ghana.

My ref. no: JKE/18/R1

1st May, 2018.

Dear Sir,

PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW YOU FOR A PHD STUDY

I am a PhD (Art and Culture) candidate in the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Education, Winneba and currently conducting a research on the topic “**National Theatre of Ghana in perspective.**”

I am humbly soliciting for your voluntary help in this research to interview you on the above subject matter at your own convenience to enrich this study whose findings may be used to formulate policy briefs and law; recognise and draw more attention to the contribution of the National Theatre of Ghana in national Development. It may also promote, preserve and project arts and culture in Ghana and the rest of the world.

Your responses would be treated confidentially.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours Sincerely,

(Johnson Kwaku Edu)
Researcher



APPENDIX B: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION



Ref: SCA/DME/ATH/Vol.1/38

1st February, 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

INTRODUCTION LETTER – JOHNSON K. EDU (9151750002)

Johnson K. Edu is a third-year student pursuing Doctor of Philosophy (Arts & Culture) at the University of Education, Winneba.

He is currently writing his thesis on the topic '*National Theatre of Ghana in perspective*' and therefore needs your assistance to enable him acquire the necessary information for his thesis.

I am officially introducing him to your organization to provide him with the necessary information and assistance that he might need.

We count very much on your cooperation and understanding in this regard.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Emmanuel Obed Acquah
Ag. Head of Department

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Project Supervisors: Prof. Victor Yankah and Prof. Priscilla Mary Dzansi-McPalm
Researcher: Johnson Kwaku Edu
Department of Theatre Arts
University of Education, Winneba.

Purpose of this research

The purpose of conducting this research was to unravel in retrospect the historical antecedents of the National Theatre Movement in Ghana which became the basis for the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana facility. In addition, a closer attention is paid to the development and promotion of arts and culture in Ghana by the Theatre and to assess the current state of the edifice in order to inform our future projections within the theatrical landscape.

What you will be expected to do

With all due respect, if you so wish to contribute in this research, you will be led through a guided interview with the researcher and this interaction will be recorded with the aid of a digital format. It is envisaged that the interview will take approximately forty (40) minutes of your time.

Your right to confidentiality

The data collected will be treated with a high sense of decorum and confidentiality. A random number or letter will be assigned to you in the study in order to conceal your identity, unless you wish to disclose your identity for reasons of authentication. In that case, with your permission, you will be required to fill an agreement form for authorisation. Importantly, it is only the responsible project researcher that will have access to the data.

Your right to withdraw at any time

Your acceptance to participate in this research is voluntary. You may discontinue, withdraw or otherwise. However, you can skip questions you prefer not to be asked. You may also request for the destruction of your data without any consequences.

You have the right to ask questions at anytime

You have the right to seek for clarification with regard to the research or fine tune your data at any time by emailing the responsible project researcher at edu_j44@yaoo.com or jkedu@uew.edu.gh or on telephone number +233 243-666-813

Benefits

Participation in this study may benefit the general Ghanaian populace, since it touches on the Development and promotion of art and culture in Ghana and also draws attention to issues of policy formulation and implementation in performing arts and culture. The research will also benefit schools in teaching and learning and a source of reference for the performing arts industry.

Possible risk

When you feel intimidated or harassed during the time of interview, you may discontinue and refrain from answering any questions if you wish.

Dissemination

The result will be published as a Ph.D. thesis and may be disseminated at conferences and in journals.

Participant consent

By signing the consent form:

- You agree that you have read and understood the above, that you have been given satisfactory answers to questions concerning the research, that you are aware that you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation in the research any time, without any prejudice.
- In case you may have any questions about your right as a participant in this study or any concerns or complaints, please contact the office of the Dean, School of Creative arts.
- **Participant:** I have read and understood the above information, and that the interview will be audio-recorded, and voluntarily agree to participate in this research.

Name (printed)

Signature

Date

Please keep a copy of this consent form for your records.

APPENDIX D: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE QUESTIONS FOR THE PARTICIPANTS

Topic:

NATIONAL THEATRE OF GHANA IN PERSPECTIVE

Your views are kindly solicited in this study in providing much needed information that can lead to making scholarly attempts on the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana and its contributions towards the promotion and development of the performing arts in Ghana and beyond. Such perspectives would be enriched by your voluntary participation in the study. The researcher appreciates your time and values the information you provide in this study on the topic “**National Theatre of Ghana in perspective.**” All your responses will be treated confidentially.

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CULTURAL EXPERTS

1. CV/Resume of the interviewee (*You may attach it*)
.....
2. What is the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana?
.....
.....
.....
3. What was the historical contexts in which the National Theatre of Ghana was established?
.....
.....
.....
4. To what extent has the National Theatre of Ghana achieved its core mandates?
.....
.....
.....
5. How has the National Theatre of Ghana facility represented national cultural identity?
.....
.....
.....

6 What are the significances of the three (3) entities (National Dance Company, National Drama Company and National Symphony Company) operating under the National Theatre of Ghana?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

6. To what extent does the National Theatre of Ghana programmes meet the cultural needs of the Ghanaians?

.....
.....
.....
.....

7. To what extent is the National Theatre of Ghana a home for the performing arts artistes?

.....
.....
.....

8. To what extent does the National Theatre of Ghana collaborate with the Regional Centres for National Culture and the Performing Arts Educational Institutions?

.....
.....

10 To what extent has the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana met the aspirations and demands for cultural revival by the National Theatre movement in the 1960s, considering the present operation of the National Theatre of Ghana?

.....
.....

Thank you

Topic:

NATIONAL THEATRE OF GHANA IN PERSPECTIVE

Your views are kindly solicited in this study in providing much needed information that can lead to making scholarly attempts on the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana and its contributions towards the promotion and development of the performing arts in Ghana and beyond. Such perspectives would be enriched by your voluntary participation in the study. The researcher appreciates your time and values the information you provide in this study on the topic “**National Theatre of Ghana in perspective.**” All your responses will be treated confidentially.

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR NATIONAL THEATRE DIRECTORS, BOTH PAST AND PRESENT

1. CV/Resume of the interviewee (*You may attach it*)
.....
2. What is the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana?
.....
.....
.....
3. What was the historical contexts in which the National Theatre of Ghana was established?
.....
.....
.....
4. To what extent has the National Theatre of Ghana achieved its core mandates?
.....
.....
.....
5. How has the National Theatre of Ghana facility represented national cultural identity?
.....
.....
.....
6. What are the significances of the three (3) entities (National Dance

Company, National Drama Company and National Symphony Company) operating under the National Theatre of Ghana?

.....
.....
.....

7. To what extent does the National Theatre of Ghana programmes meet the cultural needs of the Ghanaians?

.....
.....

8. What is the current structural state of the National Theatre of Ghana facility?

.....
.....
.....

9. To what extent has the National Theatre be insured?

.....
.....

10. To what extent is the National Theatre a home for the performing arts artistes?

.....
.....
.....

11. To what extent does the National Theatre collaborate with the Regional Centres for National Culture and the Performing Arts Educational Institutions?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you

Topic:

NATIONAL THEATRE OF GHANA IN PERSPECTIVE

Your views are kindly solicited in this study in providing much needed information that can lead to making scholarly attempts on the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana and its contributions towards the promotion and development of the performing arts in Ghana and beyond. Such perspectives would be enriched by your voluntary participation in the study. The researcher appreciates your time and values the information you provide in this study on the topic “**National Theatre of Ghana in perspective.**” All your responses will be treated confidentially.

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PERFORMERS AT THE NATIONAL THEATRE OF GHANA

1. CV/Resume of the interviewee (*You may attach it*)
.....
2. What is the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana?
.....
.....
.....
3. What was the historical contexts in which the National Theatre of Ghana was established?
.....
.....
.....
4. To what extent has the National Theatre of Ghana achieved its core mandates?
.....
.....
.....
5. How has the National Theatre facility represented national cultural identity?
.....
.....
.....
6. What are the significances of the three (3) entities (National Dance Company, National Drama Company and National Symphony Company) operating under the National Theatre of Ghana?
.....

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7. To what extent does the National Theatre programmes meet the cultural needs of the Ghanaians?

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.....

8. What is the current structural state of the National Theatre of Ghana facility?

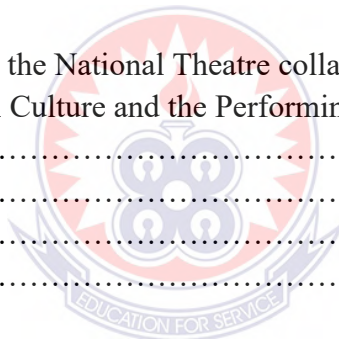
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9. To what extent is the National Theatre a home for the performing arts artistes?

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.....

10. To what extent does the National Theatre collaborate with the Regional Centres for National Culture and the Performing Arts Educational Institutions?

.....
.....
.....



11. Which other submission would you want to make from your own perspective?

.....
.....
.....

12. To what extent is the National Theatre facility insured?

.....
.....
.....

Thank you

Topic:

NATIONAL THEATRE OF GHANA IN PERSPECTIVE

Your views are kindly solicited in this study in providing much needed information that can lead to making scholarly attempts on the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana and its contributions towards the promotion and development of the performing arts in Ghana and beyond. Such perspectives would be enriched by your voluntary participation in the study. The researcher appreciates your time and values the information you provide in this study on the topic “**National Theatre of Ghana in perspective.**” All your responses will be treated confidentially.

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MEDIA EXPERTS

1. CV/Resume of the interviewee (*You may attach it*)
.....
2. As a senior Journalist and one who has severally reported on productions staged at the National Theatre of Ghana, to what extent has such activities promoted the performing arts in Ghana?
.....
.....
.....
3. From your perspective, how true is the saying that the National Theatre of Ghana is the home of the performing artist in Ghana?
.....
.....
.....
4. What has been your observation with regard to theatre practice at the National Theatre of Ghana?
.....
.....
.....
5. To what extent is the construction of the National Theatre of Ghana based on African indigenous architecture as well as African concept and traditions of performance?
.....
.....
.....
6. What type of audience do patronize programmes at the National Theatre?
.....
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.....

7. To what extent does the National Theatre of Ghana programmes meet the cultural needs of the Ghanaians?

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8. What is the current structural state of the National Theatre of Ghana facility?

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9. To what extent is the National Theatre a home for the performing arts artistes?

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.....
.....

10. To what extent does the National Theatre collaborate with the Regional Centres for National Culture and the Performing Arts Educational Institutions?

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.....
.....

11. Which new ideas would you like to recommend to the National Theatre of Ghana in the development and promotion of the performing arts in Ghana?

.....
.....
.....

Thank you

Topic:

NATIONAL THEATRE OF GHANA IN PERSPECTIVE

Your views are kindly solicited in this study in providing much needed information that can lead to making scholarly attempts on the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana and its contributions towards the promotion and development of the performing arts in Ghana and beyond. Such perspectives would be enriched by your voluntary participation in the study. The researcher appreciates your time and values the information you provide in this study on the topic “**National Theatre of Ghana in perspective.**” All your responses will be treated confidentially.

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEADS OF PERFORMING ARTS EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

1. CV/Resume of the interviewee (*You may attach it*)
.....
2. What is the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana?
.....
.....
.....
3. What was the historical contexts in which the National Theatre of Ghana was established?
.....
.....
.....
4. To what extent has the National Theatre of Ghana achieved its core mandates, that is to develop and promote the performing arts in Ghana?
.....
.....
.....
5. To what extent is the design of the National Theatre building based on African indigenous architecture as well as African concepts and tradition of performances?
.....
.....
.....
6. How would you want to see the collaboration of the National Theatre and the Performing Arts Educational Institutions?

.....
.....

7. To what extent does the National Theatre programmes meet the cultural needs of the Ghanaians?

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8. What was your estimation for the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana?

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.....

9. To what extent is the National Theatre a home for the performing arts artistes?

.....
.....
.....

10. To what extent does the National Theatre collaborate with the Regional Centres for National Culture and the Performing Arts Educational Institutions?

.....
.....
.....

11. To what extent has the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana met the aspirations and demand for cultural revival by the National Theatre Movement in the 1960s considering the present operation of the National Theatre of Ghana?

.....
.....
.....

Thank you

Topic:

NATIONAL THEATRE OF GHANA IN PERSPECTIVE

Your views are kindly solicited in this study in providing much needed information that can lead to making scholarly attempts on the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana and its contributions towards the promotion and development of the performing arts in Ghana and beyond. Such perspectives would be enriched by your voluntary participation in the study. The researcher appreciates your time and values the information you provide in this study on the topic “**National Theatre of Ghana in perspective.**” All your responses will be treated confidentially.

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CLIENTS OF THE NATIONAL THEATRE OF GHANA

1. CV/Resume of the interviewee (*You may attach it*)
.....
2. From your point of view, what do you say is the significance in the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana?
.....
.....
.....
3. To what extent has the National Theatre of Ghana served the production needs of your production house?
.....
.....
.....
4. In what ways has the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana influenced socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-economic development?
.....
.....
.....
5. To what extent does the National Theatre facility represent national cultural identity?
.....
.....
.....
6. Why do you prefer the National Theatre venue over other performance spaces?
.....
.....
.....

7. To what extent does the National Theatre programmes meet the cultural needs of the Ghanaians?

.....
.....
.....

8. To what extent are you comfortable with the rental charges of the National Theatre facility?

.....
.....
.....

9. To what extent is the National Theatre a home for the performing arts artistes?

.....
.....
.....

10. How should the National Theatre be seen as a regulatory body for the promotion of the performing arts in Ghana?

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.....
.....

11. Which types of production hosted at the National attract more patronage and why?

.....
.....
.....
.....

12. How is the National Theatre of Ghana a home for the artistic fraternity?

.....
.....

Thank you

Topic:

NATIONAL THEATRE OF GHANA IN PERSPECTIVE

Your views are kindly solicited in this study in providing much needed information that can lead to making scholarly attempts on the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana and its contributions towards the promotion and development of the performing arts in Ghana and beyond. Such perspectives would be enriched by your voluntary participation in the study. The researcher appreciates your time and values the information you provide in this study on the topic “**National Theatre of Ghana in perspective.**” All your responses will be treated confidentially.

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DESIGNERS, ARCHITECTS, STRUCTURAL AND SAFETY EXPERTS

1. CV/Resume of the interviewee (*You may attach it*)
.....
2. What is the significance of the establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana?
.....
.....
.....
3. Per the design, architecture and construction specifications, to what extent is the National Theatre of Ghana building facility representative of a Ghanaian theatrical edifice?
.....
.....
.....
4. On which bi-lateral agreement was the National Theatre of Ghana facility given to Government of Ghana by the Government of the People’s Republic of China?
.....
.....
.....
5. How many routine times has a major refurbishment of the National Theatre taken place since the commissioning of the project?
.....
.....
.....

6. When was the last time the Chinese maintenance team visited Ghana to inspect the National Theatre facility?

.....
.....
.....

7. Could you comment on the current state of the National Theatre facility?

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.....
.....

8. To what extent is the National Theatre insured?

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.....
.....

9. What is the current structural state of the National Theatre of Ghana facility?

.....
.....
.....



APPENDIX E: PROPOSED AMENDMENT IN THE GHANA NATIONAL THEATRE LAW



OUR REF.....
YOUR REF.....

10th March, 1995

30/3/95

THE SECRETARY TO CABINET
CASTLE, OSU

30/3/95

PROPOSED AMENDMENT IN THE GHANA NATIONAL THEATRE LAW 1991 (PNDCL 259)

30/3/95

I hereby seek the approval of Cabinet for Amendments to sections 4, 5, 7, 10, 11(1) of the Ghana National Theatre Law, 1991 PNDCL. 259 to reflect current trends in the 4th Republican Constitution and to enhance a more meaningful realisation of the National Theatre mandate.

30/3/95

30/3/95

2. Cabinet may find it instructive to note that the National Theatre Law (copy attached) as it stands at the moment presents certain technical and administrative peculiarities which tend to seriously undermine the "promotion and development of the performing arts in Ghana" as enshrined in Article 2 of the supra Law. The proposed amendments are, therefore, purported to dispense with certain provisions of the Law which impact negatively on the creativity, versatility and multi-dimensional approach towards the realisation of the noble objectives for which the Theatre was established.

30/3/95

30/3/95

30/3/95

30/3/95

3. I find it pertinent to mention that evaluation reports on the operations of the National Theatre for the past 2 1/2 years from highly privileged and informed sources lay emphasis on the need to restructure the whole organizational set up of the Theatre if its viability is to be ensured. This exercise involves the review of the organigram, job specification and modus operandum of the Theatre in line with international norms and practices and the proposed amendments are designed to authenticate these novel aspirations.

EDUCATION

ENTERTAINMENT

4. In light of the foregoing observations, I find it highly imperative to crave the indulgence of Cabinet to consider and approve the proposed amendments to the National Theatre Law, 1991, PNDCL 259 as specified hereunder:

A. Current: Board of the National Theatre

- 4 (1) The governing body of the National Theatre shall be the National Theatre Board (hereafter referred to as 'the Board') which shall consist of:
- a. A Chairman and 5 other persons appointed by the Council.
 - b. The Director of the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana, Legon
 - c. The Director of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon
 - d. The Executive Director of the Ghana National Theatre,
- (2) A member of the Board other than an ex-officio member shall hold office for a period not exceeding four years and may on the expiration of that period be eligible for re-appointment.
- (3) A member of the Board may at any time resign his office by giving two months notice in writing addressed to the Secretary
- (4) A member of the Board shall hold office on such other terms and conditions, including the payment of such allowances or remuneration, as the Council may on the recommendation of the Secretary determine.

Proposed Amendment

Board of the National Theatre

- 4(1) The governing body of the National Theatre shall be the National Theatre Board (hereafter referred to as 'the Board') which shall consist of:
- a. A Chairman and 5 other persons appointed by the Cabinet
 - b. The Director of the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana, Legon
 - c. The Director of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon
 - d. The Executive Director of the Ghana National Theatre; and

- e. Such other person or persons with specialised skills as the Board may from time to time co-opt. in pursuance of its mandate.
- (2) A member of the Board other than an ex-officio member shall hold office for a period not exceeding four years and may on the expiration of that period be eligible for re-appointment.
- (3) A member of the Board may at any time resign his office by giving two months notice in writing addressed to the Chairman, NCC.
- (4) A member of the Board shall hold office on such other terms and conditions, including the payment of such allowances or remuneration, as the government may on the recommendation of the Chairman of the National Commission on Culture determine.
- (5) A co-opted person or persons shall not have the power to vote.

JUSTIFICATION

The proposed amendment, section 4: 1 (e), is the addition of a new clause that allows the Board flexibility in identifying certain individuals whose areas of expertise may be considered relevant to the implementation of the Theatre's mandate.

The Board may co-opt such individuals to serve in specific capacities as determined by need.

It is also necessary to recommend amendment of titles and names in this section to reflect current designations as provided in the Constitution.

B. Current: Functions of the Board

- (5) For the discharge of the business and functions of the National Theatre the Board may:
 - a. Formulate criteria and conditions to regulate performance by Ghanaian and international artistes and troupes;
 - b. Establish theatres in such parts of the country as the Council may deem fit;
 - c. Develop and promote a strongly integrated national culture through the performing arts;

- d. Assist in formulating an effective export promotion programme of works in the performing arts produced in Ghana; and
- e. Engage in other functions as the Council may assign.

Proposed Amendment

Functions of the Board

For the discharge of the business and functions of the National Theatre, Board may:

- a. Formulate criteria and conditions to regulate performance by Ghanaian and international artistes and troupes;
- b. Establish theatres in such parts of the country as the Cabinet may deem fit;
- c. Develop and promote a strongly integrated national culture through the performing arts;
- d. Assist in formulating an effective export promotion programme of works in the performing arts produced in Ghana;
- e. Engage in other functions as government may assign; and
- f. Engage in such other functions as may be determined from time to time in presence of the Theatre's mandate.

JUSTIFICATION

The proposition of this additional clause, 5 (f), gives the Theatre Board the flexibility to explore the engagement of the National Theatre in meaningful and viable ventures, such as, investments, acquisition of property, and so on, in consultation with its Sectoral Head but not necessarily with prior Cabinet approval.

1. Current: Section 7: Resident Performance Troupes of the National Theatre

The Ghana Dance Ensemble, Abibigromma and the National Symphony Orchestra shall be the resident performance troupes of the National Theatre in the areas of dance, dramatic art and music respectively.

Proposed Amendment
Resident Performance Troupes of the
National Theatre

The Theatre shall have resident performance troupes in the areas of dance, dramatic arts and music respectively.

JUSTIFICATION

This proposed amendment shall give the Theatre the flexibility in promoting other outstanding performance troupes in the country as and when necessary.

D. Current Appointment of Administrative Secretary and Directors

Section 10:1 There shall be appointed by the Board, a Board and Executive Secretary and a Director responsible for each of the following

- a. Artistic (co-ordination)
 - b. Music
 - c. Dance
 - d. Drama, and
 - e. Technical department
2. The Artistic Director shall:
 - a. Co-ordinate the functions of the Directors of music, dance and drama appointed under subsection (1); and
 - b. Undertake such other duties as the Executive Director may direct.
 3. The Directors of music, dance, drama and the technical department shall be assigned such duties as the Board may determine.
 4. The Administrative Secretary shall be the Secretary to the Board and shall be assigned such duties as the Executive Director may determine.
 5. The Directors and Administrative Secretary appointed under subsection (1) shall hold office upon such terms and conditions as the Board shall determine.

Proposed Amendment

Section 10:1 Appointment of Executive Secretary

There shall be appointed by the Board, an Executive Secretary.

JUSTIFICATION

This proposed amendment reflects the restructuring of the Theatre's Organigram that separates the functions of the Executive Secretary from the Head of Personnel and other administrative staff.

10:2 Appointment of Directors and Co-ordinators

The Board shall appoint a Director and/or Co-ordinator for each of the following departments:

- a. Theatre Operations and Programme Co-ordination
- b. Music
- c. Dance
- d. Dramatic arts
- e. Technical
- f. Finance
- g. Personnel
- h. Educational programmes

JUSTIFICATION

The Theatre in its restructuring exercise has created new areas of operation to enable it implement its national mandate. Since there are new designations for these areas, an amendment is necessary to reflect the change of structure.

10:(3) The Board may from time to time redesignate any of the above functions, titles and/or in any manner it deems fit.

JUSTIFICATION

It may be necessary from time to time for the Board to redesignate the functions of the above areas of operation in response to the Theatre's development needs. This proposed amendment, therefore, provides the flexibility that will allow the Board to do so.

10:(4) The Director of Theatre Operations and Programme Co-ordination shall:

- a. Co-ordinate the functions of the Directors of music, dance and drama appointed under subsection (1); and
- b. Undertake such other duties as reflected in the organigram and as the Executive Director may direct.
- c. Collaborate internal and external educational programmes.

JUSTIFICATION

The restructuring of the Theatre's functional areas has necessitated this proposed amendment. This proposal primarily addresses the new designations as indicated in the organigram

- (5) The Directors of music, dance, drama the technical department, finance officer and head of personnel and co-ordinators of educational programmes and external programmes shall be assigned such duties as the Executive Director may determine.
- (6) The Executive Secretary shall be the secretary to the Board and Executive Director and shall be assigned such duties as the Executive Director may determine.
- (7) The Directors, Coordinators and Executive Secretary appointed under subsection (1) shall hold office upon such terms and conditions as the Board may determine.

Current: Other Employees Of The National Theatre

- 11(1) The Board may from time to time engage such employees as may be necessary for the proper and efficient conduct of the business and functions of the National Theatre.
- (2) The Board may engage the services of such advisors as may be necessary for the proper and efficient conduct of the business and functions of the National Theatre. and shall pay them such honoraria as the Board sees fit.
- (3) The employees of the National Theatre shall be appointed under such terms and conditions as the Board may on the recommendations of the Executive Director determine in consultation with the Public Services Commission.
- (4) There shall be transferred or seconded to the National Theatre such public officers as the Board may in consultation with the Public Services Commission, determine.
- (5) The Executive Director, Artistic Director, and Directors appointed under subsection (1) of section 10, the Administrative Secretary and all employees of the National Theatre shall be public officers

JUSTIFICATION

As in sections 10: (4) and 11

With the assurances of my esteem.

LT. GENERAL ARNOLD QUAINOO
CHAIRMAN
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON CULTURE



**APPENDIX F: RECONSTITUTION OF THE NATIONAL THEATRE OF
BOARD**

13th March, 1995.

THE SECRETARY TO CABINET
CASTLE , OSU
ACCRA.

**RECONSTITUTION OF THE NATIONAL THEATRE
BOARD**

This memo is purported to serve as an exhortation to honourable Members of Cabinet to consider and approve a special dispensation for the reconstitution of the 9 member National Theatre Board, out of turn.

2. In recommending these far-reaching measures, I took due cognisance of the performance appraisal of the National Theatre over the past two and half years, and have determined that a reconstitution of its Board of Directors is absolutely necessary to enable The Theatre move to its expected level of operation. As Cabinet may no doubt be aware, it is incumbent on any Board of Directors to initiate and develop policies that guarantee the viability of the enterprise under its jurisdiction. Indisputably, the only parameters for measuring the performance of any such Board are the ability to monitor and control the implementation of the policies so initiated and developed. While the present Theatre Board has, in a great majority of cases, been manifestly supportive, the implementation of its national mandate requires specific areas of expertise.

3. In the light of the above, I hereby seek the approval of Cabinet for a dispensation under article 2 of National Theatre Law, 1991 PNDCL 259, to reconstitute the present National Theatre Board by appointing the underlisted individuals, who have distinguished themselves as eminent personalities in their diversified fields of endeavours and could be relied upon to give the National Theatre the much needed sense of direction and business accumen:

1. Prof. Ato Ghartey
Accountant General Dept. - Finances
2. Stanley Amarteifio
Kujawu and Co. - Corporate Lawyer
3. Seth Dei
Managing Director, Lesafric - Marketing
4. Kodzo Thompson - Marketing Managing
Director, S.S.B.
5. Fritz Baffour - Media Practitioner
6. Mrs. Dinah Reindorf - Conductor/Musician
7. Director
(Dr. Hagan designee) - African Studies, Legon
8. Director
(Prof. Anyidoho) - Performing Arts, Legon
9. Prof. Kodzo Fosu - Visual Arts, UST
10. Nana Kodua Kesse
Adontehene, New Juabeng
Traditional Area and Chief
of Oyoko - Rep. of the Chiefs and
the Regions
11. Dr. W. Amoaku - National Theatre of
Ghana

I have no doubt all in my mind that this measure would create room for initiative, development and growth of the National Theatre and would soon yield dividends in every aspect of the performing arts in Ghana

With the Assurances of my esteem.

LT. GENERAL A. QUAINOO.

APPENDIX E: AKENOO'S APPRAISAL OF THE NATIONAL THEATRE OF GHANA

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2019

GHANAIAN Times

09

Features

A critical appraisal of the present state of the National Theatre of Ghana

BY MICHAEL AKENOO

THAT the present state of the National Theatre of Ghana is highly questionable, and that it leaves much to be desired, cannot be denied by any sincere and honest theatre expert as well as all theatre lovers, and enthusiasts in the country.

It appears the National Theatre of Ghana is gradually heading towards the state of being tagged as a white elephant!

This is because the National Theatre of Ghana is virtually operating below expectation as far as the purpose for which it was built is concerned.

The National Theatre of Ghana was officially opened in December 1992 for operation by Jerry John Rawlings during the PNDC era of governance of the country.

His Excellency took a bold initiative to negotiate for a loan worth 10 million US dollars with the Chinese government to make it possible for the putting up of the National Theatre building.

His Excellency Jerry John Rawlings did this great job with the conviction that theatre practice and its psyche in Ghana will experience a great boom; and consequently, accelerate the development process of the country. Unfortunately, the National theatre of Ghana has hitherto not lived up to this great expectation.

Theatre practice in the country is still in the wilderness and doldrums, much to the detriment of Ghana's development process.

The sad fact is that the gigantic National Theatre building is at the moment preoccupied with non theatrical activities such as meetings venue for associations and organisations like Ghana Hairdressers, Ghana Tailors, Greater Accra Barbers, Ghana Lotto Vendors, Ghana Olympic Committee, Ghana Beauty Contest Committee etc. and relegating theatrical productions and activities to the background.

Of course, this may generate much income for the running of the theatre, but this is not what is required, and the purpose for which the National Theatre was built; and therefore, it is irrelevant and a waste in the interest of the nation.

A National Theatre building anywhere in the world is supposed to be fully engaged in the production of plays, dances, dance – dramas, musical concerts etc. and Ghana National Theatre cannot be an exception in this direction.

The National Theatre of Ghana should be a hot spot and centre for theatrical productions to trigger and accelerate the development process of the country.

Can the gigantic National Theatre building complex be compared to national theatre buildings in other African countries, let alone to be compared to the vibrant theatre practice such as obtains in highly developed countries like Britain, France, Germany, Japan, China or better still the world famous Broadway theatres in New York, in the USA? Definitely no!

However, the Ghana National theatre must be seen doing something positive in the area of theatre in order to promote theatre and its psyche in the country to accelerate the development process of the country; as theatre is the bedrock of development anywhere in the world in the past, present and in the future.

Tareb Sadiki, the famous Moroccan dramatist, playwright and theatre practitioner once stated in his book, "Black African Theatre And its Social Function" the following.

"If you want to build a nation, start with a national theatre"

Fortunately, in the context of this assertion and belief, Ghana can boast of a gigantic National Theatre building complex which can be used effectively as the rallying point of vibrant theatre practice to galvanise, harness and direct the pace of the development agenda of the country.

To this end, the National theatre of Ghana must wake up from its present slumber, and buck up in order to meet its great expected pivotal role in the course of the country's strides for progress, development and prosperity in the 21st century.



• The National Theatre

APPENDIX F: THE BASIS AND PRINCIPLE OF THE NATIONAL THEATRE OF GHANA DESIGN



DIRECTIONS OF THE SKETCH DESIGN OF THE NATIONAL THEATRE OF GHANA

THE BASIS AND PRINCIPLE OF THE DESIGN

The design of this project is in accordance with the agreement, that the People's Republic of China helps the Republic of Ghana to constructing a theatre, signed by the government of the People's Republic of China and the government of the Republic of Ghana on 18th September 1985.

1. The scale of the theatre is 1,500 seats.
2. The floor area of the sketch No.1 is about 11500 sq.m. and No.2 is about 11070 sq.m.

During the period of investigation, the authorities concerned of Ghanaian Side requested that the theatre had to consider the performance of local drama, and the form of theatre should express the Ghanaian style of nation.

ARCHITECTURE

1. The Environment and the Building

The site of the National theatre is selected on a triangle land between the Independence Avenue and the Liberia Avenue in the city

centre of Accra, on the west is the superior hotel area, the children's garden on the east, the Ministry of Culture and tourism on the south, the traffic is good, the environment is graceful, land area is about 1.5 ha.

(1) According to the character and position of the National Theatre the thought of this design should have the characteristics been considered as following:

- A. Monumental-- the expression of the friendship between the peoples of China and Ghana
- B. symbolical-- distinguish with the buildings around evidently
- C. Localizable-- with local function and national taste of Ghana

(2) The main entrance of the two sketches are set in the east of the site, facing the Liberia Avenue, because the Independence Avenue is an expressway of the city, conflicting to the evacuation of the audience and cars from the theatre. The road on the south is the passage for the VIP and the staffs itself.

The department concerned of the city planning of Ghanaian Side agreed that the parking lot is at the two sides of the south end of the site, and the parking capacity is considered to be 200 cars.

(3) According to the planning, the National Theater is situated in the green belt of the city Accra. For the sake of saving green area, the building coefficient is reduced as much as possible to increase

The following sentence was left out during the translation, green area. The measures of courtyard and roof afforestation and the afforestation penetrating into the theatre are adopted to keep the continuance of this greenbelt,

the theatre.

(4) There is an axis from the north to the south in the general plan, this is considered in the conception of the architectural form. In fact, the east and west facades of the theatre, particularly the east which is facing to the children's garden, are the main looking facades. This confliction has been considered in the building mass composing of the two sketches.

2. Comparison of the Architecture Sketches

The two sketches are designed to satisfy the normal demands of the theatre function, nevertheless, they have their characteristics respectively been conceived in the design.

SKETCH NO. 1

(1) Based upon triangle, this sketch is composed by unsymmetrical layout, coincide with the topography. the entrances of audience, VIP and staffs are located distinctively and properly.

(2) The auditorium is on the upper floor in order to reduce the land covered by building, particularly because of the elevated space of lower floor can induce the exterior space to the interior to be the lounging and some activity spaces for the audiences, is conform to the using of localization, and make the spaces in variance.

(3) By the character of Ghana climate, the design utilizes the elevated space and courts to organize well natural ventilation.

(4) The form is clean and attractive, making the feeling be graceful and noble. Somewhere in the theatre there are Ghanaian national

designs and carvings, to show the rich heritages of Ghanaian culture.

SKETCH NO. 2

(1) Based upon square, this sketch is in symmetrical layout basically, also coincide with the topography and the demand of landscape.

(2) The auditorium is on the ground floor, easy for evacuation and make the structure simplified. Courts to be used as various activities and lounges, and are arranged some chinese landscapes properly.

(3) The form is comparatively vivid, sculpturesque feeling is emphasized. Properly using the curved lines or surfaces somewhere, the language of Ghanaian people's overflowing and cheerful characteristics are expressed in metaphor.

3. Main Data of the Architectural Design

(1) Acoustics: the medium frequency reverberation time is controlled in about 1.2 seconds to satisfy the demand of multi-functioning.

(2) vision: the distance of the farthest sight is limited within 32 metres.

(3) stage:

A. Width of the stage opening is 14-15 metres, depth of the stage is 18-20 metres, consider the demand of Ghanaian Side and conform to the actual condition, the opening is a frame type. The orchestra pool can be raised up to be the lip of the stage.

B. There are 45 manipulatory hanger rode above the stage.

C. Screen is moved by power, false opening is set on the stage.

(4) Main interior installation

A. Auditorium

Seats: soft seats in the auditorium (cover material to be decided), the space for normal seats is 52 by 85 cm. VIP seats in front is 55 by 90 cm

Floor: cement pavement (carpet on path).

Wall : Wooden board on side wall, sound reflection surface is of stucco, acoustic pegboard on back wall.

Ceiling: steel joists suspend the floating cloud type acoustic ceiling, reflection surface is of expanded metal lath with cement plaster.

B. Foyer and Lounge

Floor: Marble pavement on main floor.

Wall : wooden installation and spread plaster, marble on portion.

Ceiling: wooden ceiling (fire protected)

C. VIP room

Floor: marble or wood

Wall: wooden installation, marble on portion

Ceiling: suspending wooden ceiling

D. Other places are same as normal theatre installation in China.

(5) Exterior installation

A. Alloy aluminium windows and doors

B. Walls: sketch No.1 adopts granite facing (if the cost is exceeding then adopts non-flashed ceramic tiles or Tai-Shan ceramic tiles).

sketch No.2 adopts granite facing on the ground floor,

C. The entrance ground adopts coarse granite pavement, other places adopt cement tiles, water pool and sculptures are arranged properly, independent sculptures will be designed by Ghanaian artists.

STRUTURE

1. Foundation

According to the memorandum submitted by the Geology Bureau of Ghana on 13th Aug. 1986 that the four boring holes of the Drama Studio site indicate:

- (1) No fault goes through the site, only a fault goes through the Independence Avenue 900 feet south-west beyond the site.
- (2) The depth of the top soil is about 3.05-3.60 metres, the clay shale lays underneath. The top soil is hard (with high SPT value), average cohesion value C is 0.7-1.4kg/cm, the bearing capacity is expected to be about 30T/Sq.m.
- (3) The memorandum did not mention about the expansion character of the clay shale, therefore this character should be investigated in the final stage of surveying.

Summarizing the above condition, the natural foundation is expected to be adopting. The R.C single-spreaded or striped footings may also be selected.

2. The structures above ground:

- (1) All the structures above ground are the reinforced concrete (R.C) frames cast in site with brick wall in filling.
- (2) All the floors are the R.C. slabs cast in site.

3. Roof structures:

The roof above the stage is the trapezium steel truss, the steel spars with bolted spherical joint is above the auditorium, the precast R.C rib slabs lay on the roof. The other parts of the roof are the R.C slabs cast in site. The roof structure above the auditorium has the erosion resisting and fire protecting treatments treated in combination

WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE

According to the character of this building and the circumstance locally, the following scheme and principles are decided.

1. Principal technical data

Water quantity of living: 54 cu.m./day.

Water quantity of interior fire protection: 110 l./sec.

Hot water for living: 5,000 l./h.

Circulate water for cooling: 200 cu.m./h.

Crainage water for living: 38 cu.m.h.

2. The water source is the city water supply of Accra, water comes from the city water pipe (12" AC) on the west of the site to the main water pipe. To ensure the living and fire protection water quantity demanded, the scheme will take the city water pipe on the east of the site to be the standby water source, Please consider this measure by Ghanaian Side.
3. Because of the pressure of the city water is fluctuating and to make sure of the pressure, there is a living water pumping system be designed, to ensure the supply of the living water of the theatre.
4. Fire protection water is an important matter of the theatre. It

is the safety measure for the National Theatre. According to the Chinese fire protection regulation of multistorey building, the following fire protection systems are in design:

- (1) Every part of the theatre has the interior fire hydrant.
 - (2) Auditorium, foyer, lounge, corridor, storage and the upper part of stage have automatic sprinkler system, include automatic alarm and control system.
 - (3) The upper part of the stage has the shower equipment both manipulative and automatic.
 - (4) The mouth of the stage and the side stage have the water curtain equipment to make the partition.
 - (5) The exterior fire hydrants are set around the building, water comes from the city pipe directly.
5. The toilet of VIP room has hot water supplied as well as the makeup room of actors and actresses and their shower rooms. The hot water is from the concentrated hot water supply, use the energy of electricity.
6. For the sake of saving water, the cooling water of the air-conditioning cooled by cooling tower is in circulation.
7. The living drainage and sewage water adopt the combination drain off system, goes to the city sewage pipe on the west of the site directly. The rain water from the building and the site is an independent water drainage system, goes to the drainage ditch on the west of the site directly.
8. Inside and outside the theatre there are some water pools to make fine the environment.

AIRCONDITIONING

1. The scope of airconditioning:

- (1) Auditorium
- (2) Stage
- (3) Makeup rooms
- (4) VIP room

2. Interior design parameters of airconditioning:

- (1) Temperature $t_n=25-27^{\circ}\text{C}$
- (2) Relative humidity $\phi_n=50\%-65\%$ $\rightarrow 75\%$

3. The kinds and the types of airconditioning:

- (1) Auditorium, use the aircondition machine to treat the new air and return air, then send them into the auditorium.
- (2) Stage, use the aircondition machine to treat the return air mainly both with less new air, then send them into the stage.
- (3) Makeup rooms, use the vertical concealed wind and coil pipe machine group to treat the interior air, the machine is installed under the window, and add the new air which has been treated by aircondition.
- (4) VIP room, use both the horizontal concealed wind and coil pipe group and the new air treatment machine group.

4. Ventilation system:

- (1) The foyer, exercise room and offices adopt natural ventilation mainly, some of the places add machine ventilation.
- (2) The auditorium and stage have exhaust equipment combining with the airconditioning system.
 - A. Exhausts the smoke and the surplus heat in the upper parts

B. Exhausts the waste gas in the lower parts

3) Machine rooms (the rooms which are unsatisfied by natural ventilation), substation etc. use machine ventilation to exhaust surplus heat mainly.

ELECTRICITY

The power source of this project is from the 11KV city electrical net of Accra by two circuit, one circuit is from G55 substation to G53 substation net, another is from G61 to G57 net. Two ring main units are in the design, they are J3type oil switches, England made, set in a separate house, the dry type transformer and the low voltage switch group are in one room, located aside the stage of the theatre.

Because of the two high voltage power sources are from the circuit nets respectively, and the low voltage side of the transformer has the connecting bus operating by hand, any of the important loads are two sources at the end automatically changed, and the auditorium, stage and the important passages have the cell power emergency lamps and the conducting lamps, therefore there is no standby diesel generator be designed in this project. *

The stage lights adopt the 120 circuits system, adjusted by silicon control. The electrical sound adopts the sound adjustment system. The fire protection adopts the smoke temperature sensitive automatic alarm system (imported) and the hand operating fire protection system.

APPENDIX G: GROUND FLOOR PLAN OF THE NATIONAL THEATRE

