UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS

CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF GHANA (CCG) AND PUBLIC POLICY

BY GBANDE YAW DANIEL

THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS, THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS (MA) RELIGIONS DEGREE.

JULY, 2009
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own research work, except for literature cited which has been fully acknowledged; the work is in no way a reproduction, in part or in whole, of any work ever presented for the award of a degree.

GBANDE YAW DANIEL
(CANDIDATE)

MRS. ERNESTINA NOVIETO
(SUPERVISOR)
DEDICATION

To my parents, wife and daughters, Christiana, Eunice and Susana.

To the Church in Ghana and all past and present leaders of the Christian Council of Ghana.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to thank God Almighty for making it possible for me to complete this piece of work. I wish to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Mrs. Ernestina Novieto, who directed and guided me to the end of this work. Her useful suggestions and comments have made an invaluable contribution to this study.

I also wish to acknowledge the warm reception and support of Christian Council of Ghana, and Rev. Dr. Deegbe, the General Secretary, and the dedicated staff of the institution, who gave me audience and the needed attention during the interviews and responded to the questionnaires administered.

Mr. Michael Ansah, the former program Officer and now the Assistant registrar of University For Development Studies (UDS) in the Accra office, has been very corporative. Mr. Ansah did not only grant me audience in the interviews, but also provided enough of the scarce material and resources on Christian Council of Ghana. His long serving experience at the Council secretariat positioned him to supply most of the information needed for the completion of the script. May God richly bless him.

Finally, to my dear wife and others of the Christian fraternity; especially head of Evangelical Church of Ghana, a member church of the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) who in one way or the other made an input through warm and earnest discussions we had, I wish to express my profound gratitude.

May God richly bless them all.
Abstract

Diverse views are expressed about the role of the Church in Society and the relationship between religion and politics for that matter. One view is that, our world is God’s world and the Church’s role is not just preparing people for the world here after but also serving as the agent of making life better in the present. The other, is for the Church to concentrate on preparing people for heaven and leave the rest to the social structures of society. These views are further complicated by the general observation of many that politics is a dirty game and whether or not, the church must be involved in the political process of the country remains an issue of debate.

The Christian Council of Ghana since its formation has demonstrated how Christian ecumenical bodies could play important roles in the political, social and economic processes of the country. This research investigated the Christian Council of Ghana and public policy of the nation. The main objective of the research is to examine the level of participation and impact of Christian Council of Ghana on public policy in the country. The research also examined the theological bases for the advocacy role of the Christian Council of Ghana among others.

The research employed a historical approach and the main research tools were interviews, administration of sets of questionnaires and participant observation. The main findings of the research revealed that the Christian Council of Ghana has attempted to influence public policy through the top hierarchy of the institution. The findings also revealed that the Council has succeeded on many occasions to influence the Government to suspend
certain policies that were not in the interest of the public. The research also showed the methods or strategies of the Council in influencing public policies.

Based on the findings, the researcher made some recommendations for improvement in the relationship between the Council and Government and how the Council could still influence public policies in Ghana.
## TABLE OF CONTENT

Declaration i

Dedication ii

Acknowledgement iii

Abstract iv-v

Table of Content vi-x

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION 1-15

1.1 General Introduction 1

1.2 Statement of Problem 3

1.3 Objectives of the Study 4

1.4 Definition of terms 4-7

1.4.1 Advocacy 4

1.4.2 Christian Ecumenism 5

1.4.3 Interest Groups 5

1.4.4 Kingdom Theology 5

1.4.5 Lobbying 5

1.4.6 Policy 6

1.4.7 Public Interest 6

1.4.8 Public Policy 6

1.4.9 Social Transformation 6
1.4.10 Child Trafficking

1.5 Scope of Study

1.6 Data and Methodology

1.7 Literature Review

1.8 Organization of Study

1.9 Limitation of Study

1.10 Relevance of the Study

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES AND CONCEPTS

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Church and State Relationship

2.3 Typology of Church and State Relationship

2.4 Brief History of Church and State Relationship in Ghana
   (Pre-colonial, Colonial and Post-Colonial)

2.5 Theological basis for Church involvement in Public Policy

2.6 Concept of Public Policy

2.7 Public Policy Making Process
   2.7.1 Agenda Setting/Problem structuring
   2.7.2 Policy Formulation/Forecasting
   2.7.3 Policy Adoption/Recommendation
   2.7.4 Policy Implementation/Monitoring
### CHAPTER 3

**CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF GHANA (CCG) AND PUBLIC POLICY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Brief History of Christian Council of Ghana</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Basic Social Principles</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Roles of Christian Council of Ghana</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.1</td>
<td>Prophetic Witness</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.2</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.2.1</td>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.2.2</td>
<td>Child Trafficking</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.3</td>
<td>Awareness Building and Education</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.4</td>
<td>Transformational Role</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Christian Council of Ghana engaging in Public Policy</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.1</td>
<td>Public Policy Implementation – Social Services (Health and Education)</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.2</td>
<td>Religious tolerance and Inter-faith relationship</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.3</td>
<td>Voice of Member Churches on National Issues</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.4</td>
<td>Family Life Education</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.5.5 Workshops, Seminars and Consultations on Church and democracy

3.6 Conclusion

CHAPTER 4

SUCCESS AND CHALENGES OF THE CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF GHANA

4.1 Introduction
4.2 Success
4.3 Capacity to Influence Public Policy
4.4 Political bias/Non-partisan position
4.5 Potential at the Grass Roots
4.6 Challenges
4.7 Conclusion

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction
5.2 Summary
5.3 Suggestions
5.4 Conclusion
BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BOOKS
- ARTICLES
- PASTORAL LETTERS AND COMMUNIQUES
- INTERVIEWS
- INTERNET SOURCES
- OTHERS

APPENDIX A  Interview Questionnaire  73

APPENDIX B  Profile of Christian Council of Ghana  74-77

APPENDIX C  List of Member Churches and Organisations  78-79
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Introduction

In any society, governmental entities enact laws, make policies and allocate resources. This system of laws and regulatory measures, courses of action, and funding priorities can be generally termed as Public Policy. Individuals and groups often attempt to shape public policy through education, advocacy, or mobilization of interest groups. The shaping or influencing of public policy takes different forms under different forms of government. But it is reasonable to assume that the process always involves efforts by competing interest groups to influence policy makers in their favour. The different interest groups employ advocacy and lobbying techniques in attempt to influence policy direction. The Christian Council of Ghana likewise attempts to influence public policy, using advocacy and lobbying based on Christian principles.

The person of Jesus Christ provides a model and basis for the involvement of Christians in advocacy; namely, His identification with the poor, the afflicted, the oppressed and the marginalized; His special concern for children; His respect for the dignity God bestows on women and men; His willingness to challenge unjust attitudes and systems; His call to share our resources with each other; His love for all people without discrimination or conditions; His offer of new life through faith in Him. It is from this premise that a holistic understanding of the gospel of the Kingdom of God can be fully appreciated and therefore the need to respond to human need.
The Bible states ‘How long will you defend the unjust and show partiality to the wicked? Defend the cause of the weak and the fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.’ (Psalm 82:2-4)\(^1\)

In another scripture of the Bible, it reads ‘Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly, defend the rights of the poor and needy.’ (Proverbs 31:8-9)\(^2\)

Jesus Christ taught the believers that they are the salt and light of the world.\(^3\) The implication of these teachings could also mean that in preaching, teaching, healing and evangelizing, the Church plays a role in the affairs of the State. To be discussed later in the research work are four main roles: prophetic, advocacy, awareness building and education, and transformation.

The Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) as a representative of sixteen National Churches has made many efforts until now to accomplish this vision. Educating the general public as well as public policy makers about the nature of problems, what legislation is needed to address problems, promoting interactions of policy makers, interest groups and individuals to improve the public policy process. In her prophetic role, the Christian Council of Ghana continues to promote and call the nation to moral values that should inform public life and influence legislation in Ghana.

\(^1\) Holy Bible, New International Version (NIV)
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Ibid. Matthew 5:13
1.2 Statement of Problem

Government policies have goals that become the ultimate purpose for spending the resources of the state and this makes it imperative that such policies receive the necessary inputs from stakeholders. It is very essential for the Christian Council of Ghana to engage in policy issues or influence policy direction as the Council plays a representative role for a number of key churches in the country.

The democratic process provides for open communication and this has created an enabling environment for the Christian Council of Ghana, like any other representative body or interest group in the country, to make an input into public policy.

In the developing Ghanaian political culture of open government, the process of policy-making is as important as the product of that process. Public participation is imperative for public policy making. With the Christian community representing over sixty percent (60%) of the citizens of this country, according to the 2000 population census, they represent a major stakeholder in the affairs of Ghana.

The silent majority which includes children, women, oppressed, suppressed and generally, the marginalized in society must be heard and to what extent the Christian Council of Ghana has responded to this need, has been appreciated in this study. In this research work, the prophetic, educational and advocacy role of the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG), as an ecumenical body of sixteen member churches has been investigated to substantiate the claim that the marginalized are being heard, and fairness, justice, respect for human dignity among other virtues are being pursued.
1.3 Objective of the study

The General objective of this study is to assess the level of participation and impact of the Christian Council of Ghana on public policy in Ghana. As a representative body of Churches, this ecumenical body has a responsibility that could otherwise not be carried out by a single denomination or individual Christian member. It is obvious that the voice of individual Christians and denominations will not be heard as it were, compared to an ecumenical body which represents thousands of Christians across the length and breadth of Ghana. Other specific objectives will include;

a. To examine the theological basis for the advocacy role of the Christian Council of Ghana
b. The essential contributions made by the Christian Council of Ghana to public policy so far, through advocacy, education and awareness building, prophetic, and transformational role
c. The challenges and the way forward for the Council to be responsive and vibrant.

1.4 Definition of Terms

1.4.1 Advocacy

Advocacy is the pursuit of influencing outcomes – including public policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions – that directly affect people’s current lives.
1.4.6 Policy

Policy is typically described as a deliberate plan of action to guide decisions and achieve rational outcome(s). However, the term may also be used to denote what is actually done, even though it is unplanned.

1.4.7 Public Interest

Public Interest refers to the common well-being or general welfare of the people. Public interest is central to policy debates, politics, democracy and the nature of government itself. While nearly everyone claims that aiding the common well-being or general welfare is positive, there is little, if any, consensus on what exactly constitutes the public interest.

1.4.8 Public Policy

Public Policy is generally defined as the course of action or inaction taken by government entities (the decisions of government) with regard to a particular issue or set of issues. Other scholars define it as a system of “courses of action, regulatory measures, laws, and funding priorities concerning a given topic promulgated by a governmental entity or its representatives”. Public policy is commonly embodied “in constitutions, legislative acts, and judicial decision”.

1.4.9 Social transformation

Social transformation is the process by which an individual alters the socially ascribed social status of their parents into a socially achieved status for themselves. However, another definition refers to large scale social change as in cultural reforms or transformation. The first occurs with the individual, the second with the social system.
1.4.10 Child trafficking

Is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, detaining, or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study particularly examines some proposed public policies such as the legalization of prostitution and abortion, registration of religious bodies, exclusion of Religious and moral Education from the School curricula among others and interventions of the Christian Council of Ghana. The theological basis of the involvement of Christian Council of Ghana as an ecumenical body was discussed. The assertion that the Church is the Moral Conscience of the State means it provides the moral values for the public life and therefore the basis for public policies. As an ecumenical body, the Christian Council of Ghana is proactively contributing to making and implementing policies to address public interest of the citizenry through advocacy, education and prophetic witness. The Christian Council of Ghana has played an advocacy role since its inception and in her restructuring efforts seeks to approach this role from a research point of view. This work examines the advocacy, prophetic, educational, and transformational role of the Christian Council of Ghana as an ecumenical body. Even though there are other ecumenical bodies such as the Ghana Bishops Conference (GBC), the Ghana Pentecostal Council and the Council of Charismatic Churches, this study is limited to the role of Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) in Public Policy.
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1.6 Data and Methodology

The study employed the use of both primary and secondary data. The use of a self administered questionnaire, interviews and observation provided primary data. Content analyses of existing literature provided some secondary data for most of the discussions in the research work. Attendance of conferences of Christian Council and a number of member denominations was arranged. Respondents were drawn from the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) Secretariat and Council members. A review of periodicals, reports, communiqué and pastoral letters, and other historical records, spanning at least a ten year period from 1997 through 2007 was carried out. The sample population includes Reverend Ministers of Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) member institutions, scholars, and leaders of Christian Council of Ghana (CCG). Rev. Dr. Deegbe, the current General Secretary of the CCG, Mr. Michael Ansah, a former program officer of the Council and other officials of the Council were interviewed for a better understanding of the sociopolitical role of the Christian Council of Ghana.

1.7 Literature Review

A review of the literature on religion and politics in Ghana reveals that since the 1980s, the church has taken a more activist role in national politics than any other time in her history. In Ghana, much of the church's political activity was initiated collectively under the umbrella of the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) and Ghana Bishops' Conference (GBC), with its related body, the National Catholic Secretariat (NCS).

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Elom Dovlo, has written extensively on the situation in Ghana, describing the relationship between religion and politics in Ghana as inextricably linked since pre-colonial times.
Christianity, as he wrote, was almost the primary religion during the era of colonial rule and English common law underpinned many new laws that have guided the state since that period. The engagement of religion and therefore Christianity and politics in a dialogue results in laws to enhance human rights that harmonize with cultural and religious values rather than collide. He discusses four laws that have created challenges but have also generated opportunities for dialogue between religion, customs, and tradition on the one hand and lawmaking in Ghana on the other. These laws include the Intestate Succession Law of 1985, the Religious Bodies registration law of 1989, the Criminal Code (Amendment) Act of 1998 and the Draft Domestic Violence Bill. The Christian Council of Ghana was not silent and especially on the Registration of Religious Bodies, which was rendered unconstitutional because the law contradicted the provisions of the 1992 Constitution which guaranteed freedom of worship.

Policy is about the intent of government expressed in broad guidelines and they form the basis on which the resources of the nation are expended. It becomes even more imperative, as advocated by many, for a greater participation of the Church in the process of public policy making. Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah state: ‘We ourselves are clear in our mind, that the church has a valid case to be involved in the affairs of the state in all aspects including national politics’.

The Christian Council of Ghana as a fellowship of a number of churches in Ghana also serves to complement the social task of the Church in Ghana. The State and the Church have some common tasks. On the one hand, the Church preaches the good news of reconciliation to God

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5 ibid
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\(^5\) ibid

through faith in Jesus Christ, heal men in their bodies, minds and souls, and the broken relationships among men, and also teach all people how to live in order to please God. The State on the other hand seeks to maintain order in public life of citizens for the promotion of the common welfare of all, ensures social justice, restrains and punishes evil people, and defends the weak against the strong, makes and enforce laws that will safeguard the rights of citizens, to represent and to guard citizens in relation to other nations or authorities. These tasks are interrelated.7

The term "moral conscience of the nation" as used by Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah, is a mandate claim of the church as projected in her memoranda and Pastoral letters. In supporting Christian participation in politics, Peter Sarpong (the Roman Catholic Bishop of Kumasi and social anthropologist) writes: "Christ wants his church not to be meaningless in society or to be pushed to the periphery ... [but] ... to be right at the centre of things, right where the action is".8

The two educational goals of the Church, to include the political education of the masses through seminars and its prophetic role as the conscience of society, are inseparable. Pobee has characterized the church's dual role as follows: "They [i.e., the CCG and the GBC] spoke and continued to speak against the evils of the government and the nation. ... They took steps to educate the people and the government on the issues at stake; ... they discouraged violence, chaos and bitterness".9

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In a paper entitled: "The church and state: Christian Council and national affairs," the CCG defined in clear terms its moral and prophetic role in some specific socio-political issues from 1941-1994 (A Call to Citizens 1992; Communiqué 1994, 1993, 1991). The Council sent two memoranda urging the government to "exercise justice, fair play, and respect for human rights" and also advised against "arbitrary death sentences" (CCG & GBC Pastoral Letters, 12, 22 June 1979). In the second memorandum, the Christian Council of Ghana expressed grave concern about executions and persons who were arrested for various charges against the state to be given the opportunity of public trial.\(^{10}\) Many of such memoranda and pastoral letters on a variety of issues include issues of justice, insecurity coupled with frustration of citizens, socio-economic deterioration, education, and attacks on churches have been written and submitted by Christian Council of Ghana single handedly or jointly with the Ghana Catholic Bishops Conference. In this way, the Christian Council of Ghana has expressed views and positions about Government actions or inactions.

Sixty letters were sent by the Christian Council of Ghana within the period 1941-1994, and forty of them were sent in the 1980s alone. This regular dialogue with the governments of the day indicates the advocacy role of the Council and its concerns over the welfare of the citizens of Ghana. As a result of these Pastoral letters and communiqué, the church was seen as interfering in political matters.\(^{11}\) These letters affirm the church's self-assertion as the "moral conscience of the society."

\(^{10}\) Ibid, p61

Pobee writes: "... the historic churches have continued to be 'the voice of the voiceless,' they have championed for freedom, integrity, and fair play in national politics." He further points out: "... the churches stood guard over human dignity and justice with a human face ... it was a courageous stand to take in a context of immense violence, intolerance, and recklessness of soldiers" (1991:62). According to Assimeng, the act of brutality that intimidated the masses led the church to act collectively. It became necessary for established bodies such as the Christian Council, the Catholic Bishops Conference, and the Association of Professional Bodies, to collectively express condemnation of the wrong practices in regimes (1989: 242).

Just as the Church was making efforts to carry out her moral responsibility, she was open to the risk of facing government resistance especially when the decision of the government of the day was challenged or spoken against.  

Apart from the church, students, and the Association of Professional bodies who frequently spoke against injustices, the rest of the Ghanaian society adopted a culture of silence. This silence was characterized by "apathy, indifference, refusal to accept appointments from the government, premature retirements from the public service, and refusal to register and/or to vote." If the assertion that military brutality and general indifference to human rights turned Ghanaians off from local and national politics is true, it is ironic that the same brutality which turned them off also brought them back to politics when the repression was severe in the 1980s.

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The Church boldly came out to break the culture of silence on the unfair and dehumanizing practices. Alongside these issues was the economic downturn of the 1980s which led to the church's role as an instrument of change through protest and conscientization.15

In most of the available literature, there has been much generalization and focus on religion to comprise Traditional worship, Islam, Christianity and other forms in the country. This work however focuses on the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) as a representative ecumenical body of a section of Christianity in Ghana and the many and several engagement with various successive governments.

Other writers on the international scene express the undisputed need for religious-based values for public policy. As stated by Dallin, “We need the help of churches to rebuild the moral base of our country....”16 Some question the legitimacy of religious-based values in public policy debates. Some question the appropriateness of churches or religious leaders taking any public position on political issues. But the role of religious-based values and religious leaders in public policy debates cannot be dismissed.

1.8 Organization of the Study

Chapter one presents the background information on Christian Council of Ghana (CCG), the problem statement, methodology, literature review and organization of the work.

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In the second Chapter, historical perspectives and concept of Church and State policies are examined and discussed.

Chapter three (3) presents a brief history of Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) and critically examines the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) in relation to specific Public Policy issues. The fourth Chapter will present the challenges, limitations and success story of Christian Council of Ghana.

Chapter five (5) is the final chapter with a summary and conclusion on the role of Christian Council of Ghana in Public Policy issues in Ghana. This chapter will provide some objective suggestions for successful involvement of the Council in Public policy.

1.9 Limitation of study

The main limitation of this study was the lack of sufficient documentation on the enormous roles Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) has played in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policy in Ghana. However, the Communiqué and Pastoral letters became the main source of information and previous literature on religion and politics in Ghana. The success story of Christian Council of Ghana cannot be overemphasized but very unfortunately, most of these events have not received the appropriate documentation in the past. The limited time period and difficulty in reaching different Local Council of Churches across the country to assess grassroot participation was a limitation. There are a number of Local Council of Churches dotted across the country such as in Nkwanta in the Volta Region, Saboba in the Northern Region and a few other places, whose participation in CCG programs demonstrate grassroot participation in national issues.
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1.10 Relevance of the Study

In Ghana, there have been times when the media; to include the press, public newspapers and the national radio have suggested that the Church must confine its activities to the spiritual welfare of its members and must not get involved in matters that come under the state such as political or economic issues. The Church on the other hand has claimed a right to have a say in what happens in the country. Historically, the Church has been involved in the affairs of the Ghanaian community in various ways. From earliest entry of missionaries into Ghana, the Church has been involved in the establishment of schools and hospitals and even roads and agricultural stations. Religion and politics are different but not incompatible. The two are key role players in determining the total well being of society. The Church’s political participation is crucial and more so being the largest religious group of Ghana’s population, her contribution to public policy must be significant in this democratic dispensation.

In fulfilling her divine mandate of being salt and light, the Church has introduced its flavor of Christian ethics through advocacy, prophetic witness and awareness creation and bid for transformation. Since public policies are based on values of the society, the intervention of the Church through ecumenism provide the moral base to increase the influence on the course of development, justice, peace and order in Ghana.

A comprehensive exploration of the achievements and discoveries through this study will not only endorse the Church’s role but also inform her in future interventions. Not withstanding the numerous opportunities of many ministers and parliamentarians who throng the Church every Sunday and during special programs only to project their interest, a well informed Church can explore channels to promote effective and efficient public policies.
This study will also inform the reading Christians of their dual role as both citizens and worshippers and the need to participate in policy decisions of the country, based on sound moral values.
2.1 Introduction

The Church and the State relationship takes the institutional form of the relationship between religion and politics. This relationship has taken a variety of forms historically, from state dominating religion to religion dominating the state. The complexities that exist between the Church and State are predominantly manifested in the attempt to harmonize social responsibilities and moral values with national values. In contemporary times, the move is towards Christian political activism, a trend moving away from a strict Church/State separation as found in secular states such as the United States and Ghana. This chapter examines the typology and history of this relationship, and the concept of public policy, its process and the theological basis of the Church's involvement.

2.2 Church and State Relationship

Conflicting views of church and state have been with us down through church history. At one level the struggle has been between the legitimate claims and powers of political and religious authority; at another the question is how to achieve a balance between spirituality, social and political involvement. In their quest for spirituality, monks and mystics through the ages attempted to transcend not only human affairs but the material world itself. In contrast the Roman Emperor Constantine became a Christian and saw no conflict in attempting to Christianize secular government (and in the process substantially politicized the church)\(^\text{17}\).

Earlier in the twentieth century conservative Protestantism in North America, especially, tended
to drive a wedge between religious experience and matters of economic and public policy.
Adherents often turned inward, sharply dividing the spiritual and material realms. Yet the trend
today is toward political involvement.

While most media attention has focused on such conservative new-right groups as the Moral
Majority, not all Christian political efforts are on the side of political conservatism. Evangelicals
for Social Action (ESA) are a broadly based coalition working for greater sensitivity and
activism on issues of social justice, poverty, and international peace. ESA is organizing local
chapters across the country. Bread for the World, another primarily Christian organization,
lobbies for legislation and policies that will provide adequate food for the world's peoples.
Sojourners magazine and the Sojourners community agitate for international justice and promote
a new abolitionism against nuclear weapons. And in 1986 a new broad-based political action
committee, Justlife, was formed to advocate a "consistent pro-life stance," particularly on the
issues of poverty, abortion, and the nuclear-arms race.18

As Christian political involvement expands to include far reaching issues such as foreign polity
and the earth's resources, a crucial question is whether or not Christians can distinguish between
kingdom priorities and narrowly nationalistic interests. The issue can be summed up in this
simple question: Will tomorrow's Christians be able to see, and persuade others to see, that the
priorities of God's kingdom are ultimately more in one's own national interests than are narrower
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Ghana as a State is vested with the ultimate social authority and power necessary to maintain order and to give direction to the life of the nation through a political system. The government therefore derives its authority from the total will of the people and is subordinate to God and His law for there is no authority except which God Himself has established.\textsuperscript{19} It is based on this understanding that the relationship between the Church and State is considered compatible though different institutions. The common grounds being the moral values which are both individualistic and community based.\textsuperscript{20}

\subsection*{2.3 Typology of Church and State Relationship}

Jesus’ command to “render unto Caesar what is Caesar’s and unto God the things that are God’s” (Mark 12:17) does not necessarily deepen the separation between Church and State institutions. In the late Roman period, the relationship was between the Emperor and Pope and this has been a key influence on politics in Europe in the Middle Ages. There have been disputes over power, property, law, education and authority among others.\textsuperscript{21} The abuse of Papal authority intensified the irreconcilable conflicts of interests and led to the secular authorities limiting the powers of religion, either bringing them to submission as happened in Protestant countries after the Reformation or establishing separation between Church and State as in the United States, so as to guarantee freedom of religion and independence of government.\textsuperscript{22}

The Church and state have related in several ways and the typology of this relationship has taken different forms and the following classification is one of the many forms;

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{19} Holy Bible, Romans Chapter 13:1-7
\item \textsuperscript{20} See Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah, \textit{Christian Social Ethics}, p.10
\item \textsuperscript{21} \url{http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/church_and_State} 15/02/09
\item \textsuperscript{22} ibid
\end{itemize}
i. The State dominating and using a religion for its own purpose. Erastianism in Lutheran Germany and Petrine Russia where the Church was a department of the State and expected to support and legitimizes the government. The Churches in both countries however failed their prophetic responsibility to criticize the unjust actions of the State. A variant of this is Caesaropapism where the King ruled both crown and church.

ii. Religion dominating the State as occurring in Western European history as the Pope using a forged document called the Donation of Constantine claimed that he had authority to appoint and depose Kings and would excommunicate those who did not obey him.

iii. Theocracy, a form of government in which divine power governs an earthly human State. either a personal incarnation or more often, via religious institutional representatives replacing a dominating civil government. Examples are Calvin’s Geneva and the Vatican

iv. The State which tries to suppress or eliminate its traditional religions which it regards as false and socially subversive rivals as in the Communist countries.

v. A separation of Church and State in which there is religious freedom and all religions are treated equally, which is the case in the United States of America and Ghana, and no religious body has any official influence over the State. The result can be the formation of a civil religion with a pledge of allegiance and where the symbols of the State, such as the flag, take on a quasi-religious status.
vi. The Eastern Orthodox Churches conceive of the relationship between Church and State as a symphony. The State defends the Church by oppressing other denominations while the Church supports the State by encouraging patriotism and acceptance of State policies. Each has its own domain in caring for the needs of the people.

vii. The State and religion as rival sources of authority and identity which can be in conflict with each other. This was the situation in the Roman Empire before Christianity became the official religion as well as much of Medieval European history.

viii. The religious State where the ruler is believed to be god and whole of society is oriented to the worship of the ruler and the State is seen as sacred and not secular as was the case in Ancient Egypt.23

It is evident from these perspectives and patterns that there has not been a perfect relationship but both institutions have had to deal with the complexities, ambiguities and overlapping realms in which practical discernment must find workable principles to guide, that are also compatible with fundamental Constitutional imperatives as human reason can devise.

2.4 Brief history of Church and State Relationship in Ghana

The Church in Ghana has been involved in the affairs of the community in various ways from the pre-colonial through the post-colonial to the post-independence era. In the advent of missionaries in Ghana, the Church or Christianity for that matter did not only preach the gospel, but was also involved in the establishment of schools, hospitals, roads and Agricultural Projects. During the Kwame Nkrumah regime (1951-1966) and later, some Ministers of the Church and

23 ibid
devout laymen entered Parliament on political party tickets. Some of these became cabinet
Ministers and others were appointed Ambassadors to foreign nations.

In 1968, 1978 and 1979, the Christian Council of Ghana and the National Catholic Secretariat
issued Pastoral Letters advising Christians to participate fully in the general elections; the letters
gave them advice on how to choose their parties and vote for the right candidates. In 1969 and
1979 both the Christian Council and Catholic Secretariat as well as the Muslims representative
Council were given seats in the Constituent Assemblies that prepared the 1969 and 1979
Constitutions for the nation.

In 1978, the then Government of General I. K. Acheampong – The Supreme Military Council
proposed what came to be known as the Union Government (UNIGOV) in which Heads of
Churches of The Christian Council of Ghana and the National Catholic Secretariat met with the
Head of State and Chairman of the Supreme Military Council on Wednesday, March 15, 1978 to
appreciate what the Church had to say about the search for a new form of Government; Union
Government (UNIGOV)24. It was to be made up of the Army, the Police and civilians (APC) in
equal proportions. The campaign did not give room for opposing view.

It was also clear from all signs that General Acheampong wanted to be the President of the new
Government, if it came into being. The Christian Council and the Catholic Secretariat issued
memoranda and Statements in which they condemned the one-sidedness of the campaign.25

24 See ‘Ghana Bishops Speak’: A collection of Communiqués, Memoranda and Pastoral Letters of the
Ghana Catholic Bishops’ Conference, compiled by The Department of Social Communications
(DEPSOCOM) of the National Catholic Secretariat, p 20. (January 1999)

25 Ibid. p21; ......the one-sidedness of the campaign which was supposed to educate people on the
forthcoming Referendum: as evidenced by the fact that apart form members of the Government and other
personalities who openly campaign on behalf of Union or National Government, the only people who are
They rejected the Union Government proposal and advised Christians on how to exercise their vote in the impending referendum to decide on the proposal. Consequently, the UNIGOV agenda of the Supreme Military Council did not come on.

Since the Independence of Ghana in 1957, the Church has interacted with successive Governments on major national issues affecting the economic, social, political and religious life of the people. Sometimes these were done in quiet consultation and dialogue, sometimes in open confrontation.

2.5 Theological basis for Church Involvement in Policy Issues

As salt and light of the world,26 the Church can be considered an agent of God for the preservation of moral values or quality of life, graciously given to the world and this role is so crucial that the body of Christ will need to uphold and consciously fulfill in totality with the spiritual mandate of preaching the gospel of the Kingdom among others. In effect, salvation is all inclusive; the world today and the world to come.

God’s mandate to the Church for social action has probably been influenced by the following:

a. Creation Story – God created man in His own image and likeness and this is translated into the dignity and worth of man. Therefore, anything that lowers the dignity and worth of humans becomes an affront to God. Consequently, issues such as injustice, poverty, oppression, brokenness, suffering, disease, pain and abortion

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26 Holy Bible. Matthew 5:13
affect the image of God in His people. The Church is called to finish what Jesus started, that is, to combat this lowering of dignity and worth whenever and wherever it is found.

b. The fall of man - Man's fall brought about corruption of all God's creation. God's image in man became distorted. This meant that not only was man alienated from God but also from ourselves, from others and from the environment. The realities of this alienation, for instance, are that instead of bringing God's image of justice and peace, we rather exhibit violence on ourselves, on others and on the environment. Sicknesses, suffering, death, pride, loneliness, abuses, addictions and bondages of all kinds are indications of man's alienation. The Church is called to minister in this environment by participating actively in policy making that seeks to address the above mentioned human problems.

c. Redemption Plan of God - In the redemption story, Christ through His death on the cross and His resurrection, has redeemed us from bondage and the mandate of the Church is to live a life reflective of this new state, calling for love of justice, peace, mercy and humility through the spreading of the Good News.

d. Completeness of Salvation - The fourth reason is that the fullness of our salvation will be realized in the second coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ and aftermath where perfect peace and justice will be established. Until that day, the Church is called to work out on earth our salvation.

e. Church in the World is not of the World - Anything that affects the world also affects the Church and that is the reason why the Church must be concerned about social, political and economic issues. Besides, the Church must be the light of the world and
the salt of the earth. One way the teachings and virtues of the Church can be translated into action is through her active involvement in Public Policy processes.27

God cares profoundly about the poor, the downtrodden and oppressed. In Psalm 146:7-8, God upholds the course of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. In Proverbs 14:31, he who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their maker. God takes the concern of the poor very personal. In Ezekiel 22:29-31, God says there is punishment for those who oppress the poor.

In Psalm 9:18, God does not forget the poor. He hears them (Psalm 69:33) and He maintains the rights of the poor (Psalm 140:12). The Prophet Micah presents a litany of such abuses and admonishes the people to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God (Micah 6:8).28

As an ecumenical group, representing a number of churches and members, the Christian Council of Ghana, seeks to improve the quality of life of the people and if this statement is anything to go by, it will be appropriate to be involved or contribute to public policy, which has a similar objective.

Public policy is made for the people of the state and by the people of the state as a means and not an end in itself, to make life better. Invariably, some people involved in public policy making are Christians or of other religious affiliations and their views on public interest and what is morally right is influenced by their religious beliefs.

27 Interview with Mr. Michael Ansah (Development Practitioner)
28 ibid
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\textsuperscript{28} ibid
The Church for some people should probably limit her activities to getting people into the Kingdom of God only and to leave their social well being to the social structures. Wholistic living is all embracing the present and the future. People live today in a physical and sinful world to inherit a perfect and holy eternity. The life lived today leads to a life to be lived tomorrow.

The concept of the Kingdom of God brings to the fore, the concept of Kingship which is almost alien to modern or post modern man but quite home in the Ghanaian context. For many, the Kingdom is about another world up there above in the sky and life on earth is basically to enable preparation for life to come. The combination of technology, issues of governance and developing political theories has influenced the perception of a Kingdom and the Kingdom of God for that matter. The need to effect change for the better in life present has become a great concern especially from the socialist point of view.

In the Christian context, God desires good things for humankind. The good of the people is the good of the people of God’s Kingdom too. It is said that ‘good breeds more good than evil ever can’. Things can get better as well as get worse from the Christian perspective of a sinful and corrupted earth and the global warming episode is a case in point that improvement in one aspect of life can lead to a worsening situation in the other situation. Thus it cannot be taken for granted that development and progress can take place automatically. However, God in His divine wisdom at work brings the best for His creation out of the predominant evil. Notwithstanding the fact that this good is towards people of His Kingdom with eternal qualities, He does not delight in the evil. Improved health, housing, education, enhanced standard of living, and general development of the total person does not come out of chance but from a conscious effort and its price must be paid.
Christian organizations and other Non-Governmental organizations are engaged in varied interventions with this purpose at the background, that life and living can be enhanced. Admittedly, it must not also be taken for granted that improved quality of life guarantees perfection.

God is interested in the well-being of the total human being and this can be seen in His relationship with the Children of Israel. Their choice was not at the neglect of the rest of humanity, but a choice of inclusion; He chose them with the interest of the rest of the world. Psalm 24 reads that the ‘earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. It is convincing that the call on the Church to contribute to Public Policy cannot be denied. However, the type of pronouncement and language to carry the authority of the church is an important issue to settle.

The Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) as an ecumenical body representing a section of the Church in Ghana has often presented to the Government, pastoral letters and communiqués on issues to explain the position of the Christian Community they represent. This approach is probably not enough or sufficient to make the desired impact and influence. It is imperative that the Church as a Community of Faith must adopt the most effective means and medium of communication that carries the authority of the Church, on policy issues in the country. It means a concerted effort by all stakeholders will make the required impact.

The Christian Council of Ghana calls for a more conscious ecumenical political engagement; one shaped by the moral conviction of well informed conscience and found in the dignity of every human being, the pursuit of the common good and protection of the weak and vulnerable in society. Political participation and public service is a worthy vocation.
With this background, I now turn attention to some concepts involved in public policy making.

2.6 Concept of Public Policy

Generally, the Church practices Christianity and the State practices politics. Just as the Church is within the State, religion will continue to encounter politics and the common grounds is the issue of moral values in the society. As a result, political directions and legislative decisions which form the core of national policies are normally based on moral values.

Policy refers to the broad guidelines a Government adopts to improve on the quality of life of her populace and this by all intent and purposes takes a political toll and the process has political underpinnings. Therefore in considering the role of the Church in Public Policy, it is expedient to venture into the Church and politics and also the Church and Public administration.

Public policy also refers to what Government chooses to do or not do. Comprehensively, a public policy can be defined as 'a relatively stable, purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern'. This definition emphasizes, what is done and not just what is intended and that differentiates a policy from a decision. A public policy is essentially a specific choice among several or a number of alternatives. These policies are made by Government bodies and officials but the influence or input into the process include Non-governmental organizations and interest groups.

Public policy is formulated by those who are daily engaged in affairs of a political system; they are recognized within the system as having the responsibility for such matters. Their actions are therefore accepted as binding so long as they act within the prescribed limits of their role in the system.
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Public policy is formulated by those who are daily engaged in affairs of a political system; they are recognized within the system as having the responsibility for such matters. Their actions are therefore accepted as binding so long as they act within the prescribed limits of their role in the system.
Policies are linked to purpose and also goal oriented. Even though these goals are loosely stated and allow some ambiguity, they make provision for compromise and reduce conflict. They are generally phrased but clear about courses or pattern of actions to be taken or not taken. Public Policy is a response to policy demand or claims for action or inaction on Public issues and the players in the public policy formulation process must be such that they are all inclusive; private citizens, group representatives, legislators and Public officials.

As a result of these public demands, a policy statement is issued. These are formal expressions or articulations. Public policies take different characteristics or forms such as legislative instruments and statutes, executive orders and decrees, Administrative rules and regulations, Court opinions, speeches from public officials indicating Government intentions and goals among others.29

Public policy involves what Government is actually doing and not just what they intend to do and so policy output. These may be positive or negative and fall under categories of substantive and procedural policies. A policy is substantive when it involves direct allocation of advantages and disadvantages, benefits and costs. Procedural Policies prescribe how something is going to be done or who is going to take action; laws providing the creation of Administrative Agencies, and determining over a matter which may have an important substantive consequence.

The typology of public policies includes distributive, regulatory, self-regulatory or redistributive forms. Policies may also be material or symbolic. Material policies provide tangible resources, substantive or impose real disadvantages on those who are adversely affected. On the other hand, policies are said to be symbolical when little or no material impact is imposed on those

affected; they do not deliver what they appear to deliver but appeal to peoples cherished values such as peace, patriotism and social justice. These typologies differentiate policies by their effect on society and the relationships among those involved in policy formulation\textsuperscript{30}.

Public Policy making process involves a number of systematic but overlapping stages and this include the setting of the policy agenda, policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation and policy evaluation. Each of these stages is very much demanding and crucial is the issue of moral values of the people, vis a vis public interest. The complication is trying to answer the question of moral values and public interest. Diverse views would have to be consulted and appreciated in the process technically.

2.7 Public Policy Making Process

There are different models of public policy making process but the most common is the ‘stage model’ which is made up of five main parts to include agenda setting that involves problem structuring, policy formulation that involves forecasting, policy adoption, implementation and assessment. The last two stages involve monitoring and evaluation of the policy to complete the cycle of the process\textsuperscript{31}.

These stages are discussed below;

2.7.1 Agenda Setting / Problem Structuring

Elected and appointed officials place problems on the public agenda. Many problems are not acted on at all, while others are addressed only after long delays. Policy analysis would employ

\textsuperscript{30} ibid

\textsuperscript{31} ibid
problem structuring which challenges the assumptions underlying the definition of problems reaching the policy making process through agenda setting. It helps to discover hidden assumptions, diagnosing causes, mapping possible objectives, synthesizing conflicting view and designing new policy options. It is said that everyday understanding and common sense are poor guides when dealing with matters as complex as policy problems. It must not be taken for granted, what a policy problem is in order to avoid wrong assumptions.

A policy problem can be defined as unrealized needs, values or opportunities for improvement that may be pursued through public action\(^{32}\). The nature, scope and severity of a problem are produced by applying the policy analytic procedure of problem structuring. It is a regular inquiry into competing problem formulations of different stakeholders. Problem structuring minimizes the error of solving the wrong problem because the right solution may be applied to the wrong problem. Problems can rarely be defined and resolved independently of one another. A system of interlocked problems will therefore require a holistic approach; one that views problems as inseparable and immeasurable apart from the whole system of which they are interlocking parts.

2.7.2 Policy Formulation / Forecasting

Alternative policies to deal with a problem are formulated. Alternative policies assume the form of executive orders, court decisions and legislative acts. In forecasting policy, relevant knowledge is provided about future state of affairs which are likely to occur as a consequence of adopting alternatives, including doing nothing, that are under consideration at the phase of policy formulation. It examines plausible, potential and normatively valued futures, estimate the

\(^{32}\) ibid
consequences of existing and proposed policies, specifies probable future constraints on the achievement of objectives, and estimate the political feasibility (support and opposition) of different options.

Analysts in the Health care finance administration, for example, will employ statistical projection to estimate that unless additional revenue is generated, the Health Insurance Scheme fund for medical care will be exhausted and the likelihood of it collapsing. In the absence of new health care policy initiatives benefits under the scheme in later years would need to be reduced by a specific amount and ultimately, the program would need to be cut by a percentage. In the meantime, populations who have no health insurance are likely to increase in number.

2.7.3 Policy Adoption / Recommendation

A policy alternative is adopted with the support of a legislative majority, consensus among agency directors, or a court decision. Recommendation helps estimate levels of risk and uncertainty, identify externalities and spillovers, specify criteria for making choices, and assign administrative responsibility for implementing polices. For example, recommendations to change speed laws (national maximum speed limit) have focused on the cost per fatality averted under the different options. One recommendation based on the conclusion will account for no more than a percentage that will be averted, proposes the expenditure of existing funds on smoke detectors and other preventive health and safety measures.

2.7.4 Policy Implementation / Monitoring

An adopted policy is carried out by administrative units which mobilize financial and human resources to comply with the policy. Policy relevant knowledge about the consequences of previously adopted policies is provided through monitoring. Many agencies regularly monitor
the outcomes and impacts of policies by means of various policy indicators in areas of health, education, housing, welfare, crime and science and technology. Monitoring assists in assessing degrees of compliance, discover unintended consequences of policies and programs, identifies implementation obstacles and constraints, and locates sources or responsibility for departure from policies.

2.7.5 Policy Assessment / Evaluation

Auditing and accounting units in government determine whether executive agencies, legislatures and courts are in compliance with statutory requirements of a policy and achieving its objectives. Evaluation yields policy relevant knowledge about discrepancies between expected and actual policy performances, thus assisting policymakers in the policy assessment phase of the policy making process. Monitoring not only results in conclusions about the extent to which problems have been alleviated, it also may contribute to the clarification and critique of values driving a policy and in the adjustment or reformation of policies and establish a basis for restructuring problem. A good example of evaluation is the type of analysis that contributes to the clarification. Critiques and debates on values challenge the dominant mode of technical reasoning which underlies environmental policies for example.

2.8 Conclusion

It is revealing that so long as society remain dynamic and continues to practice religion and politics, the relationship between them will also continue to take different forms in an attempt to address common public issues. The Church and State both complement each other based on the moral values of the society to address public problems. Public policy making process does not
define roles of the state and the church but as means to an end, draws input from the entire society.
CHAPTER THREE

CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF GHANA AND PUBLIC POLICIES

3.1 Introduction

There is a general opinion that there is little or lack of knowledge of the political process and therefore, many in the country will readily enumerate the problems and not the successes of government. The government in the country, established by the citizenry must not be seen as a foreign body occupying power, but rather a sense of shared responsibility for the performance of the government through meaningful community participation by the citizenry. The role of Christian Council of Ghana engaging government and policy makers in public policy issues at various stages of the policy process increases access to government and fosters that connectivity to the community. Therefore, it is imperative to discuss the history, mission, objectives, activities and roles of Christian Council of Ghana which impact on public policy.

3.2 Brief History of Christian Council of Ghana

The Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) is a member of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and was founded on 30th October 1929 as a result of the coming together of five Churches: African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church, English Church Mission (Anglican), Ewe Presbyterian Church now Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast (now Ghana) and Wesleyan Methodist Church (now Methodist Church, Ghana). The Council is a fellowship of Churches that have agreed to witness together in fellowship and service to the glory of God. Currently, the membership consists of sixteen churches and two
Christian organizations; Young Women’s Christian Association and Young Men’s Christian Association.

The purpose of the formation of The Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) was the search for unity and to work with members on issues of Social concern and be the voice of the voiceless in society. The Council has also served as the mouth piece of the member churches to engage governments and the political system of Ghana on national issues regarding justice, respect for human life, good governance for the interest of the citizen among others.

3.2.1 Mission

The Christian Council of Ghana seeks to strengthen the capacity of members to contribute to achieving justice, unity, reconciliation and integrity among various sectors of Ghanaian society and provides a forum for joint action on issues of common interest. In seeking to achieve this, the council is guided by biblical principles in handling matters of national interest. The Council also remains non-partisan.

3.2.2 Vision

The Christian Council of Ghana has the vision, to be the Triune God’s instrument for change in Ghana where the highest value is placed on Peace, Justice, Unity and Respect for the dignity and integrity of creation.

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33 Christian Council Brochure
3.2.3 Concerns of Christian Council of Ghana

Current concerns of the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) and its member Churches are to be pro-active in making their contributions to:

i. The fight against HIV/Aids pandemic

ii. Ensuring that conflicts and violence are minimized

iii. Leading the fight against corruption and promoting Good Governance

iv. Championing the advocacy for quality Education, quality Health care and general poverty reduction

v. Championing respect for the rights of the underprivileged including migrants and displaced persons

vi. Combating environmental degradation among others.

The primary role of Christian Council of Ghana has been to strengthen and support member churches to improve and expand the scope of their witness and service within the world wide ecumenical fellowship. The Council in supporting the activities of its member Churches acts according to the teachings of Jesus Christ. The political democratization process in Ghana has been a concern of Christian Council of Ghana with a number of interventions to sensitize the people on their civil rights and responsibilities. The Council continues to play a non-partisan role in the political history of the country through the statements and pastoral letters on various issues. No wonder, Dovlo writes; "......it proposes that, the current confluence of religion and politics in Ghana is largely due to ..."

34 ibid
the role the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) and the National Catholic Secretariat played in setting the scene for the current democratic governance'.

In a brochure published in 1978 in connection with the 50th Anniversary of the Christian Council, the following was stated by the Council;

a. The critics of the Church would restrict her to things spiritual and exclude her from the material aspects of life in the society. However, the Church has been called to fulfill a mission in society, and obedience to this call means full participation in the life of the State.

b. The Church is serving the State of which she is part; she owes it both as a civic duty and a valid form of ministry to be concerned about the general welfare of all the citizens; Christian and non-Christians – of the State.

c. The Christian Council thirdly states that the Church has every right to be involved meaningfully in the political, economic and social life of the State. But the Church should remain non-partisan even though individual Christians can. Obviously, the Church cannot live apart from the State. Neither can the State live apart from the Church. The Church has contributed enormously towards the upliftment of society and State, and it continues to do so.

d. The provision of hospitals and clinics to serve the rural and urban communities and the establishment of educational institutions throughout the country are signs of the Church’s initiative in serving society as a whole.

What the State is today will depend on the quality of individual Christians who form the Church. The quality of the Church determines the quality of the State.\textsuperscript{36}

These fundamental ideas have constituted the efforts of the Christian Council of Ghana in its endeavor to fulfill the prophetic, educational and advocacy role in the changing political systems.

3.3 Basic Social Principles

At the background of the social action of the Christian Council of Ghana, are some basic social principles and these have become the primary concepts for the Council’s involvement in advocacy and national issues.

a. Personal and social piety; the believer is not different in his private life from his public life. Apart from what happens in his everyday life as an individual, he is also involved with people’s lives, with political and social struggles, having local to international implications. Such involvement is an expression of the personal change that takes place in the believer who is born again.

b. God’s love for the world is an active and engaged love, a love seeking justice and liberty and so the Christian Council of Ghana cannot just be an observer but must care enough about people’s lives to risk, interpreting God’s love, to take a stand, to call all into a response, no matter how controversial or complex. The church must think and act out a faith perspective and not just respond to all that is described as right or wrong by others in the entire society.

c. The entire community of faith is equally responsible for the use of the Lord's creation and therefore should support social policies that promote the wise use of water, air, soil, minerals, and plants. Energy conservation is necessary though, but any usage of technologies that will threaten human existence must be opposed based on the need for quality life.

d. Community life is an essential and its quality stems from the family unit. All efforts to strengthen its relationships to create the needed environment for proper upbringing and nurturing are essential for life today and the future. The sanctity of marriage and shared fidelity between a man and a woman must be guarded and upheld notwithstanding the fact that divorce may occur sometime; the biblical provision for such unfortunate circumstances must be followed to the later.

e. Sexuality is a good gift of God and that sex between a man and woman is only to be clearly affirmed in the marriage bond. Even though the tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion is considered, prayerful consideration by all parties involved is essential because it is asserted that every person has the right to die with dignity.

f. All persons are equally valuable in God's sight and must be treated alike. Discrimination and racial, tribal and other forms of segregation is unacceptable. There must be equal rights to life and equal opportunity to employment, education, voting, housing, and leadership.

g. Social practices must uphold the rights of children, youth, young adults, and the aged, of women, and of disabled persons. The Church must promote abstinence from alcohol and illegal drugs, and manifest love by supporting the possible rehabilitation of drug-dependent persons among others.
h. The principle of stewardship is primary and highly discussed in the scriptures. Hence, all economic systems are under the judgment of God. The principle of stewardship defines private ownership of property as a trusteeship under God and must be responsibly managed. The worker deserves the fair wage and equally, the employer, the return for his expended resources. The three legged structure of vocation or work include safety at work place, meaningful work and creative leisure. Hard work is biblical but gambling and members of the society becoming victims of societal menace are unacceptable.

i. Even in trading business, the morals of truth in pricing, packaging, lending, and advertising; and the need for consumers to evaluate their consumption with quality of life in view

j. God appoints kings and rulers and therefore governments are held responsible for the protection of people's basic freedoms. The Church and state should function separately but complement each other. There must be freedom of access to information and quality education in the formal and informal way.

k. As a last resort, individuals may practice conscientious, non-violent civil disobedience. As a government response to ensure safety and harmony, measures to reduce crimes consistent with the basic freedoms of persons may be pursued. Nevertheless, the rule of law and respect for humans must permeate all rank and file of society including prisons supposed to hold criminals in check.

l. God's world is one world. The sovereignty of each nation does not permit irresponsible actions but each are held accountable for unfair and unjust treatment meted to its citizens, whom they must protect and cherish. Each nation should have the liberty to
shape their own destiny in the most humane way and the establishment of a more just international economic order is acceptable.

m. Peaceful co-existence and conflict resolution without the use of arms is a basic moral responsibility of every society. All can be involved in a world without war. As an international human institution for world order, the values pursued by the United Nations must be endorsed and respected by all.

3.4 Roles of the Christian Council of Ghana

In general terms, the role of the Christian Council of Ghana can be grouped under four main headings; prophetic witness, advocacy, awareness building and education, and transformation. Among these, the advocacy and prophetic witness roles have been high on the organization’s agenda with wide prevalence of depravity, injustice and other socio-political concerns.

3.4.1 Prophetic Witness

As individuals and corporately, the Christian is called to play the prophetic role and that is to call the people back to God by revealing the mind and will of God. The prophet in the past did not only proclaim the word but also gave advice, warning and exhortation concerning the acts of the people. The prophet also interceded and enquired for direction for the people among others to ensure success and prosperity. The people experienced God’s blessing in the form of plenty, success and victories over their enemies as a result of obedience. On the other hand, they suffered loss, defeat and lack when they disobeyed.

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37 Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah: Christian Social Ethics; P.41-46
The Church as the body of Christ and representing Him on earth must continue the role of declaring His marvelous deeds and bring all things into perfect unity, with Christ as head.

By the voice of its hierarchy and laity, the Christian Council of Ghana has taken an uncompromising stand in defense of justice and against exploitation, repression and injustice of any kind. The deep concern for justice, peace, development and prosperity has not been restricted to being the voice of the down-trodden and oppressed in the country, but for all.38

The Christian Council of Ghana’s participation in National issues is to ensure pro-poor policies in order to have a decent and dignified living as well as character formation that promote the attributes of faithfulness, honesty, humility, and justice among others.39

Ghana has been declared a secular state by the provisions of the 1992 Constitution and this means there is no law to be passed for a State religion; there is freedom of worship and no one religion dominates over the government. This gives the leeway for moral relativism instead of moral absolutes.

But from the Christian perspective, there are moral absolutes that must form the basis of government actions or policies and laws. The society is guided by moral values and the more morality is judged as relative, the higher the tendency to promulgate laws and formulate policies that violate moral values. The legalization of abortion and homosexuality in some countries is a clear evidence of the relative perception of morality in those societies.

38 See Ghana Bishops Speak; P 62
39 Interview with Michael Ansah
The Christian Council has fought hand in hand with other interest groups, especially from the religious background against the legalization of abortion and prostitution, and the holding of a conference of gay and lesbians in Ghana among others.

As God's people and with a prophetic witness, the Church stands between the people and God to warn, exhort, advice and proclaim the mind of God. In so doing, the Church faithfully reflect what is happening in society, help forecast what is yet to happen, judging from prevailing circumstances and responds to changing situations and actively act in the way to bring desired conditions for the welfare of the society in a sinful evil dominated world.40

3.4.2 Advocacy Role

Advocacy has to do with speaking or acting on behalf of another and Christian Council of Ghana in influencing public policy has become the voice of the voiceless; the marginalized in society to include People Living with HIV/AIDS, poor, innocent children who are being enslaved, women who suffer unjustly because they are suspected to be witches among others.

By the enabling of the Holy Spirit, the Church advocates for policies, measures and laws that remove social injustices and their root causes by standing by the poor and needy in society to bring comfort and justice to bear on the underprivileged and marginalized of society who are also voiceless but need to be heard.

In 2004, Global Ministries and Christian Council of Ghana held some programs dubbed HIV/AIDS Compassion Training Session to address the HIV/AIDS situation. Two three-day seminars were held to address topics such as; "Basic facts about HIV/AIDS situation in Ghana.

40 ibid
Many of the participants saw for the first time the seriousness and the reality of the pandemic and pledged to wage a relentless war against the disease. Two separate associations were immediately formed as a result to begin teaching compassion for People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in the towns that hosted the training.41

Still about advocacy, the Toronto-based World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) embarked on a three-year project with the Christian Council of Ghana to combat the stigma of HIV/AIDS. The project promoted a range of communication strategies and tools. These included theatre, music, dance, sport, competitions, community radio and television, as well as sermons, reflections, storytelling and testimonies.

The Centre for Communication Program (CCP) – Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in conjunction with the Government of Ghana Launched a National Program to Encourage Compassion and Support for People Living with HIV/AIDS. It was estimated that approximately a half-million people were living with the virus that causes AIDS. Muslim and Christian Leaders were to help implement Phase 2 of Stop AIDS, Love Life, which is ‘Reach Out, Show Compassion’ for people living with HIV/AIDS. The Christian Council of Ghana coordinated the religious groups in implementing the ‘Reach Out, Show Compassion’ campaign, which began in February 2009.

On 21st of August 2008, the Daily Mail, one of the Ghanaian News papers carried a story entitled, ‘God, Save Country’. The Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) expressed concern about foreigners taking hold of the economy and other strategic national entities. "The country is being run by foreigners; it's becoming increasingly difficult for Ghanaians to run business in their own country. but developed and advanced countries were built by the indigenous people..... Foreigners come here and assume control of the economic sector, from banking through to petty trading...and are now infiltrating into the political terrain; this is dangerous for the development of the country," the Council stated during an interaction with the leading members of the Democratic Freedom Party (DFP) in Accra.

The Rt Reverend Dr Yaw Frimpong Manso, Chairman of the Christian Council, who led the discussion also expressed reservation about the political tagging of personalities who spoke their mind.

According to the Ghana News Agency (GNA) on 29 January 2009 – UNESCO launched a Bioethics Committee of 16 members to play an advisory role regarding national issues pertaining to bio-ethics facilitate the simplification and dissemination of information for the benefit of stakeholders and the general public and provide a platform for reflection and discussion on the subject. The composition of the Committee included the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Ministry responsible for Science; Ministry of Food and Agriculture; Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR); a philosopher from the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences; Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (NMIMR) and the Centre for Research into Plant Medicine and Ghana Medical and Dental Council. Other members were the
Christian Council of Ghana (CCG); Ghana Islamic Council, Ghana National Commission on Culture and the Natural Science Committee of Ghana National Commission for UNESCO.

3.4.2.1 Conflict Resolution

The Church has not stood aloof from grave inter-ethnic conflicts. Without taking sides and without seeking or receiving any material reward, she has tried to be a refuge for all victims. The Christian Council of Ghana in collaboration with other peace brokers and stakeholders in resolving conflicts have contributed a great deal along these lines. In other instances, the Council has worked closely with the Government on committees and in consultations. The Yendi Abudus’ and Andanis’ conflict is a case in point.

In other spheres, inter-tribal conflicts such as the Konkomba – Nanumbu conflicts in the Northern region of Ghana have drawn the attention and intervention of Christian Council of Ghana.

Apart from serving as peace brokers, valuable contributions to inform the government of the day have helped shape directives, programs and proposals in handling and resolving these conflicts. Critical as it was, the consequences of these conflicts included the lost of many lives, destruction of hard earned property and worsening the already low level of development.

3.4.2.2 Child Trafficking

Christian Council of Ghana has been involved in the education and awareness building on the Child trafficking menace in Ghana. Documentaries have been done for educational and awareness building purposes by the Christian Council of Ghana. Radio and television programs have been done to bring to public domain, the reality of Child Abuse and trafficking.
In some cases, rehabilitation and re-integration programs have been carried out to settle enslaved children and bring them back to their family life. Even though the Christian Council of Ghana does not claim to have done enough, nor that it has done everything by itself, in all fairness, it may be said that the Council has greatly contributed in restoring dignity and respect for humanity. The Christian Council of Ghana in collaboration with the Government, in an atmosphere of solidarity and mutual respect and other institutions and Ghanaians of good will, fought the menace.\textsuperscript{42}

\textbf{3.4.3 Awareness building and Education}

Ignorance is said to be a disease as the old adage goes and the developing world is suffering from many setbacks and injustices because of ignorance. The Bible states that ‘...my people perish because they lack knowledge... ’. The fact that many in the country are not well informed about their environment and the consequences of actions and inactions, they daily fall victim to numerous plights.

The Christian Council of Ghana has taken initiatives to create awareness and educate the public on issues including elections. For example, according to a news item titled ‘Electronic Voting advocated for future elections’, The Accra Mail, a Ghanaian Newspaper dated 11\textsuperscript{th} June, 2009.

Mr. George Sagoe-Addy, the Technical Advisor, Governance Programme of the CCG, said the Council, since the inception of the Fourth Republic, had contributed to the efforts of civil society organizations in building a local election observer base for the country.

\textsuperscript{42} See Ghana Bishops Speaks
He said the Council organized capacity building workshops for about 317 local observers drawn from the Local Council of Churches in the Northern, Eastern and Greater Accra Regions to educate the public on their civic rights and responsibilities.

Lack of knowledge of civic rights and responsibilities has left many distant from Government policies and programs, not to mention laws and statutes of the country. They are not able to participate effectively in governance or contribute to meaningful decisions for their benefit. The awareness and education programs of Christian Council of Ghana has contributed to making the people aware of the socio-political and socio-economic environment, their role as citizens, and how to solve their problems on the micro and contribute to the macro solutions. In this way, the Council contributes to hasten development.

It is essential for the people to know and understand what goes into policy making and how they can contribute to making those decision that affect them directly or indirectly, government policies and programs to address specific public interests.

The Christian Council of Ghana has engaged in diverse ways to create awareness and educate the public in the different areas of National interest. There are HIV/AIDS programs, Family life programs, Leaders of local Council of Churches workshops and seminar on various topics, among others.

3.4.4 Transformational Role

The society is transformed when the individuals are changed. This calls for a total re-orientation of mind and mind set. It calls for change of attitude and way of life. The Church is God’s agent for change in the lives of the individuals. II Corinthians 5:17, ‘...if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old is gone and everything has become new... ’
3.5 Christian Council of Ghana Engaging in Public Policy

As iterated by Michael Ansah, the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) uses its structures at the individual, grassroots and national levels to engage policy and decision makers. At the individual and grassroots, the celebration of the Christian Home Week and the use of Civic Education materials are carefully researched and produced by the CCG to discuss economic, social, moral, ethical and Civic issues that affect the family, to make an input into the policy process.

Public Policy is crucial in determining, shaping and improving the livelihood of people. The ideological and philosophical orientation, values and belief system of policy makers greatly affect the kind of policy initiatives that are formulated and pursued to address a particular issue for the good of society. Hence, the individual Christians who are also engaged in policy making also consciously or unconsciously impact on the type of policies that are formulated.

At the National level, CCG uses the following structures to discuss pertinent and topical issues;

i. CCG Annual General Meeting (AGM)

ii. Direct engagement with Government and Policy Makers

iii. Annual Women Conferences

iv. Workshops, Seminars and Forums

v. Press Releases and Statements

vi. Launching of important reports like the Millennium Development Goals shadow reports and the call for Christian Churches to question instruments for effective and successful decentralization process of the MDG.
vii. Radio and Television discussions
viii. Pastoral Letters
ix. Documentaries
x. Joint Ecumenical Meeting between the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference and Christian Council of Ghana (CCG)
xii. Representation of CCG on Committees and Boards of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), Non-Government Organization (NGOs), and other Government Institutions
xii. Mid-year Seminar for Local Council of Churches.

Over the years, the CCG has gone through series of restructuring and renewal processes in a bid to develop relevant, efficient and effective organization that is pro-active and responsive to challenges facing the member Churches. In the search for relevance and common witness, the determining factors have been global, national macro socio-economic and political trends such as political governance ranging from military rule to multi-party democracy.43

The tension in the relationship between Church and State is always heightened by the opposing view about the church's role in politics and state matters. The Christian Council of Ghana continues to promote and facilitate the achievement of the role of the Church in providing moral values that should inform public life and also influence the legislation process in Ghana.

On the basis of biblical injunctions, the Christian Council of Ghana has spoken vehemently in the past against the following issues;

43 See Christian Council Profile.
a. Godlessness of the Young Pioneers Movement of the Nkrumah regime in August 1962


c. The encouragement of lottery in February 1968

d. Registration of Religious Bodies

e. Complete take-over of management and control of Missions schools by the Government

f. UNIGOV and the silent undertone of control

g. Military dictatorship under the PNDC era

Similar to the above, several Public Policies have attracted the attention of Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) in the immediate past and present. These include;

i. Legalization of Prostitution and Abortion

ii. The use of condoms by unmarried persons as a means of preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS. The CCG has advocated for abstinence for the unmarried.

iii. The operations and activities of a group calling itself the gay and lesbian association of Ghana, coupled with their intention to play host to an international Conference in Ghana.\(^4^4\)

iv. The sale of Ghana Telecom in 2008

v. Exclusion of Religious and Moral Education from the Basic School curriculum in 2008

vi. Privatization of Water etc.

vii. The New Education Bill and Voting on Religious Day

The Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) has been a key stakeholder in the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy One and Two (GPRS I and II).\(^4^5\) As one of the key areas of CCG’s advocacy

\(^4^4\) General News of Tuesday, 5 September 2006: Christian Council Calls for aluta.
work, the hierarchy has always represented the organization on committees, consultation for the way forward among others.

It is also significantly important to note that the Ghana National Population Policy and other agencies of population policy formulation have used statistical data and information initially prepared by the Christian Council of Ghana.

3.5.1 Public Policy Implementation – Social Services (Health and Education)

The Christian Council of Ghana through the member Churches has been involved all over the country in social and economic development programs. As implementation agents, member Churches have engaged in social services such as rural and urban education, agricultural development projects and health.

At a great cost, both in funds and personnel, the Church in Ghana has contributed enormously to health care and hospital services with particular emphasis on primary health care. The Christian Health Association of Ghana (CHAG) institutions, the majority of which are Christian Council of Ghana member Church facilities, have provided invaluable services to many deprived and less privileged rural areas and it is estimated that they contribute to almost forty-five percent (45%) of total health services, dispensing medical personnel, drugs and equipment, especially to the rural and remote areas of the country.

45 Interview with Mr. Michael Ansah
3.5.2 Religious tolerance and Inter-faith relationship

The State promotes freedom of worship and this is enshrined in the 1992 Constitution for the purpose of peaceful co-existence. In the interest of peace, the Christian Council of Ghana has been involved in promoting religious tolerance and inter-faith relationship.

In the year 2000, the Christian Council of Ghana was very instrumental in preventing conflicts that threatened in Accra when the ban on drumming was imposed prior the Homowo Festival. It initiated the statement that helped to maintain peace between the Christian and the traditional communities.

Similarly, The Council has also been a catalyst in bringing together various traditions of the Christian Church to present a common witness on national issues. Cordial co-existence among the Moslem and Christian communities in the country has been promoted by the Christian Council of Ghana.

3.5.3 Voice of member Churches on National Issues

The Christian Council of Ghana recently registered disapproval in response to proposals submitted by IEA on the Public Funding of Political Parties Bill 2008. Such a submission has called for a review of the two and half percent (2.5%) of National Tax revenue proposed. The Council has stated that it is a ‘colossal’ amount of the tax payer’s money that should not be spent on political parties.46

3.5.4 Family Life Education

The main Educational activity is the Christian Home Week. Awareness is created and civil society is educated about various vices. For instance the 2009 material for this celebration was on Child Labor and Child Trafficking. Christian Council of Ghana has promoted the fight against these vices in collaboration with other organizations like Christian Aid.

The Church, as partly represented by the Christian Council of Ghana is the ‘Moral Conscience’ of the Society or State and this assertion can be substantiated by the fact that the Church is called to preach and teach the virtues of the Kingdom including Honesty, justice, uprightness, holiness, and Godliness. As salt, the Church must preserve the moral value of society and as light, show the path and guide the feet of society.

5.5.5 Workshops, Seminars and Consultations on Church ecumenism and democracy

Workshops and seminars for Leaders of Local Council of Churches are organized by the Christian Council of Ghana to sensitize them on issues of governance and the Christian position. This has contributed to both knowledge acquisition and ability to inform the grassroots, Christians and the society at large. These programs re-enforce the primary objective of strengthening the knowledge and skill base of the member churches and empowering them for positive engagement with the political processes.47

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47 See Reports of the church leadership seminar on church, ecumenism, and democracy, January 1993; Report of the Workshop on the role of local Councils of Churches in promotion of ecumenism and democratic culture in Ghana, October 1993; Report of the follow-up workshop on the Church, ecumenism, and democracy, November 1993.
3.6 Conclusion

The Christian Council of Ghana is not only involved in public policy at the formulation stage but also makes input into the process at different stages, through its programs. The Council's prophetic witness, advocacy, education and awareness building, and transformation programs makes her a key stakeholder in Public Policy in Ghana. Christian Council of Ghana has been involved in diverse programs that include HIV/AIDS, issues of governance, Child trafficking, conflict resolution, and reconciliation programs among others at the National level and also in partnership with other stakeholders. In pursuing these, the Council has had some successes as well as challenges. This is the focus of the next chapter.
CHAPTER FOUR

SUCCESS AND CHALLENGES OF THE CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF GHANA (CCG)

4.1 Introduction

The Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) has made successes in influencing and contributing to Public Policies. These achievements have not been without challenges. Yet the dedicated efforts of leadership of the Council in the past and present, who themselves exhibited high qualities of dignity and objectivity and guided by biblical principles have maintained a tradition of sound advocacy.

4.2 Success

In Ghana, the on-going interaction between Church and State since the colonial periods continues to create positive opportunities for sound moral basis for public policies. To mention a few of such areas Christian Council of Ghana has made a significant impact include;

a. The Change from Military rule to Constitutional Democracy
b. The Drafting of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana
c. Abrogating the decision of registering Religious Bodies by the Government
d. Review of the Sale Ghana Telecom now Vodafone
e. Inclusion of Religious and Moral Education in School curriculum
f. Abrogating the decision of legalizing Prostitution and Abortion.
The motivating factor in engaging with Government on National issues is the basic respect for human dignity and welfare. It is imperative that society takes responsibility for good stewardship of all God’s creation and resources.

As part of the fallen nature of man, individuals who wield power and authority take advantage of the vulnerable to seek their own personal aggrandizement. Invariably, political systems seem to fail in the ultimate purpose of managing the state resources for the common good of the people.

Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) recognizes her prophetic, educational, transformational and advocacy role which must not be compromised. If the prophet does not speak the mind of God, there will be no direction for society and therefore, she serves as the mouth piece of the Churches she represents.

The current controversies over the ex-gratia of GHC 82,000 paid to Parliamentarians for a four year term, compared to the civil and public servants like the teacher who serves several years all his or her life and is not paid even GHC 6,000 for serving to build the human resource base of the country is a case in point for the Church to call the State to fairness and equity.

Other current issues deserving advocacy and lobbying by the Christian Council of Ghana and other interest groups, include the non release of funds for:

i. National Health Insurance Scheme

ii. Personnel of the National Youth Employment Program

iii. Capitation Grant

iv. School feeding grants
v. Ghana School Feeding Program

vi. Quarterly fuel allowances of GHC 75 for Junior Doctors since 2006 among others.

It is obvious that there must be such bodies as the Christian Council of Ghana to serve as pressure groups on Government and her apparatus to perform appropriately. Not to mention the colossal amounts misappropriated annually as revealed in the Auditor General’s Reports. Church Leaders must be sensitive to these happenings and speak for the poor citizenry whose sweat produces the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

4.3 Capacity to influence Public Policy

The Christian Council of Ghana has the structures, expertise and numbers to engage meaningfully, constructively and objectively in policy dialogue and debates but unfortunately, lacks the capacity to harness and mobilize a critical mass for its policy advocacy work. 48

4.4 Political bias / Non-partisan position

Very crucial is the conduct of the Leaders not to be branded as wearing a political color to be able to deal with national issues. When politicians begin to associate Council or member Church leaders with a particular party color, it can adversely affect the interventions of the Christian Council of Ghana in policy initiative. The enormous potential to effectively engage public policy can be substantiated by the fact that Church members serve at different levels of Government Departments, Ministries and Agencies. They form a pool of expertise in their areas of specialties and could serve a good purpose in the endeavors of the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG). Special forums and consultations involving such technical people can be very useful.

48 Interview with Michael Ansah
Failure of the Christian Community to see the need to participate and make valuable input into public policy as part of the prophetic mandate of the Church will minimize the extent of impact. For many, the age old philosophy of contaminating their sacred mission if they were to engage in policy issues still holds. Energies of the Churches are concentrated on the traditional functions of soul winning and preparing people for heaven; there is little contribution to making life better for them on earth.

Even though Social Services such as in education, health and relief programs are vital, the Church need to consider Social Action which is the approach which deal with the causes of the problems the Church seeks to solve; the causes of diseases, poverty, injustices and other forms of human sufferings.

4.5 Potential at the Grassroots

At the grassroots of the Christian Council of Ghana are branches of the member denominations and their members who form the majority of the population. This huge potential lacks the ability to meaningfully engage in policy issues at the grassroots. Plagued by ignorance and illiteracy, they lack knowledge about public policy process to be able to make an input. The lack of understanding and appreciation of their role as potential contributors to Public Policy makes them latent and non-respondent. Generally, the majority of members of denominations which belong to Christian Council of Ghana lack the capacity to engage public policy makers, hence the involvement of top leadership at the National Level in most cases.

Strategically, Christian Council of Ghana can mobilize the resources from the pool of members to make greater impact on policy direction. Even though some form of education goes on
through the Christian Council Home Week and other workshops and seminars, there has not been a conscious follow-up and means of ascertaining effectiveness and extent of impact.

The mobilization of member churches at the grassroots through the Local Council of Churches is a great potential yet to be exploited. To be more successful is to empower the people by creating the awareness and also equipping them with advocacy skills among others. For many, where to begin in an effort to participate in the political process has eluded them because of ignorance and lack of knowledge. Empowering is most often associated with ‘women’ but there is more to it than just ‘women’; people at the grassroots must have the knowledge and know-how to engage the political system on national issues. The local Government system does not seem to address these issues as less education and less involvement are being promoted.

4.6 Challenges

Among the challenges Christian Council of Ghana is facing are;

a. Acceptance of Moral Values as absolute or relative. The conflicting issue being the difference between social values and moral values

b. Religion as a means of exploitation – political elites makes use of religion for the purpose of mobilizing votes, creating clienteles or organizing constituencies.

c. The widespread illiteracy of the members of the denominations which form the Christian Council of Ghana. Education to create the awareness and prompt the needed action is necessary for effectiveness in influencing public policy at the periphery.

d. The lack of funding for projects and programs to achieve goals of the Council cannot be overemphasized. Member denominations’ assessments and contributions is low and even
not forthcoming, leaving the Council hard pressed and unable to fulfill credible proposals.
e. Linked to the challenge of funding is the inability to hire and pay competitive salaries to qualified and competent workers with the expected expertise to support the Council. It goes further to mean training and education interventions to improve on the worth of personnel become difficult.
f. Research skills, policy analysis, lobbying and advocacy skills are crucial for successful engagement in policy issues. The Christian Council of Ghana in a research approach to advocacy faces the challenge of sourcing these skills for the interventions.
g. Mobilizing and sustaining commitment of member Churches to CCG activities and programs remain a challenge for the Council. These member Churches themselves are battling with their local problems and tend to give less attention to the ecumenical objectives of the Council, if not neglecting their roles.

4.7 Conclusion

The Christian Council of Ghana has successfully contributed to the socio-political process in the country and thereby influencing development and peaceful co-existence. These successes have reflected in Education, Health, Politics and economic issues. Despite the enormous challenges the Council is facing, there is great potential available to the Council, from member denominations. Maintaining neutrality of party colors and non-partisan identity in its leadership and activities warrants credibility and authority to address any sector of the political system.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Religion has a double function of legitimating both the status quo and protest. This study reveals the success story of the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) as an instrument of social change. Important as it is, civil liberties such as the protection of human rights, concern about the poor and the oppressed, and freedom of expression among others have been zealously fought for by the Council using diverse means at her disposal.

5.2 Summary

The Christian Council of Ghana has insisted on performing its prophetic role in the political arena, by challenging injustice, unfairness, oppression and suppression in different forms. Through political participation on non-partisan lines, the Christian Council of Ghana has championed advocacy for justice and fairness, and promoted the education of Christians about civil rights and responsibilities. Both directly and indirectly, Christian Council of Ghana has motivated the Christian Community and especially those who belong to the Council to participate in the democratic process.

Ghana pursues a secular political system which allows religions to exist but does not allow for any particular one to dictate the political process. The institutional relationship between religion and politics does not really make the Church and State incompatible. The section of the Church
in Ghana represented by their ecumenical body, the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) continues to promote effective and efficient public policies.

It is observed that the capacity to engage in public policy making is very low among members of the local Council of Churches.

It is observed that the level of knowledge of what goes into public policy is little known or not known at all by the member churches at the grassroots of the Christian Council of Ghana or Local Council of Churches.

In the past and present, Christian Council of Ghana has engaged Governments through communiqué and pastoral letters, in some cases through consultation in collaboration with the Ghana Bishops Conference and National Catholic Secretariat on policy issues. The democratic dispensation has offered an enabling environment to make this invaluable contribution to the democratic governance of the country.

This is not to say it has always worked but at least in several cases, governments have listened and reconsidered such issues. Until now, bills such as the legalization of prostitution, abortion and the like have not gone through, indicating that the moral values of the society is significantly recognized.

The Ghanaian clergy have often refused to use the pulpit to address political issues or directly involve themselves in politics. This attitude is an indication of the ambiguity of the Christian Community’s view of the relationship between Christianity and Politics. Nevertheless, there is increasing political activism from a social justice perspective by the Church because she stands for justice.
The resilience of the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) in her involvement in political and national issues is a sign of hope for the Church in Ghana to fulfill her prophetic role today and the years ahead. The church has a claim, the right to participate in the political process and to make their voices heard on social policies as individuals or collectively.49 Yirenkyi writes that ‘Looking toward the future of religion in a nation where 99.7 percent claim to be religious it is most likely that religion’s prophetic and educational role will move to the center of Ghanaian national debate.50

The experience in 1994, in relation to the encounter between Rev. Asante Dartey, a Presbyterian clergyman and the General Secretary of the CCG and the Government of the day, and also previous General Secretary’s experiences indicate that clergy activists face similar problems when they act as prophetic ministers who criticize what they perceive as wrongs in society. The general need is the moral support of other ranks of the clergy and laity.

Christian Council of Ghana and Church leadership become ineffective on political issues when they are partisan because meaning is read into their pronouncements. The Right Reverend Dr Yaw Frimpong Manso, Chairman of the Christian Council, expressed reservation about the political tagging of personalities who spoke their mind..."Anytime you express your candid opinion depending on what you say, you are either tagged as New Patriotic Party (NPP) or National Democratic Congress (NDC) activist. This is dissuading meaningful non-political persons to genuinely contribute to national debate and offer alternative ideas."51

49 Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah, 1994
51 Daily Mail, God Save Country: 21 August 2008
Many laws are based on the absolute moral values most people affirm, and these values cannot be compromised in any form. Despite the changing trend, secularism will continue to pose a challenge to the Church as some moral values will be seen as relative by some politicians.

Christian or religious-based values are just as legitimate a basis for political action as any other values. Likewise for policies and Government actions and these places the Church in an important position to provide these moral values when they are needed.

Church and church leaders' participation in public policy debates are on the same basis as other persons and organizations, and therefore, they may favour or oppose specific legislative proposals if they choose to do so. The political participation freedom does not limit the Church in any way.

Politicians sometimes seek to use religion for political purposes, and they sometimes even seek to manipulate churches or church leaders. Ultimately this is always self-defeating. Whenever a church (or a church leader) becomes a pawn or servant of government or a political leader, it loses its status and the credibility it needs to perform its religious mission.

The relationship between church and state and between church leaders and politicians should be respectful and distant, as befits two parties who need one another but share the realization that a relationship too close can deprive a pluralistic government of its legitimacy and a divine church
of its spiritual mission. Despite that desirable distance, government and Church need not be hostile to each other. Government, no matter how secular must not pretend to ignore God.52

The Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) celebrating the eightieth (80th) anniversary this year 2009 deserve commendation for the prophetic role played down the years and the excellent leadership, programs and effective approaches in dealing with National Issues until now. In one of the ways to improve on documentations, Professor James Anquandah, a noted historian of the CCG is coming out with a comprehensive document on Christian Council of Ghana and this publication is yet to be launched during the Christian Council of Ghana at eighty (80) celebrations. This publication may be more informative about Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) activities for the past eighty (80) years but is not yet ready as at the time this dissertation is written.

5.3 Suggestions

Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah discuss three very important avenues which are powerful but so far have not been used much in advocacy. They mention mobilization in various churches and congregations, Christians in influential and decision making positions, members of Government, directors, politicians, managers, heads of institutions, business executives etc. Special seminars and studies could be organized for this category of Christians and they will be a pool of ideas and solutions for various issues and problems. If such persons are persuaded, they will be able to bring them to bear on policies and programs.53

53 Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah, Christian Social Ethics, Accra, Asempa, p.43, 44
The second is to encourage Christians at the helms of affairs such as councilors, assemblymen, parliamentarians, members of government, directors, pressmen etc to form pressure groups and to influence matters with Christian values.

Thirdly, the establishment of study groups for different issues within their professional and technical competence, and being guided by the Holy Spirit, to prepare memoranda and action papers. These documents may contain original proposals on specific issues or alternatives to government proposals or analytical comments on proposals, policies, or programs that are being worked out by other bodies. These well thought out documents can be shared with Government, public bodies, private entrepreneurs, philanthropist or other entities that have something to do with projects that affect the public.

The section of the Church as represented by the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) must be fully involved in public policy issues. This intervention must be continuous and comprehensive, extending to the grassroots of the Church. For this to happen, both clergy and laity have a role, as well as other levels of public representatives. Participation and influencing public policy can take place in diverse ways to include:

1. Pastors, theologians, academicians and community leaders should be identified to serve as potential allies for public policy formulation and influence
2. Appreciating the challenges and opportunities to establish a network of Christian Churches that have been involved in public policy and Social justice initiatives and issues
3. A systematic examination of recent public policies and identified priorities and what methods are most appropriate to engage in public policy
4. An explanation of strategies for organizing and building consensus for researching public policy issues for local Church use.

5. Involve government representatives, Church leaders and others in dialoguing on the role of the Church in public policy activism and reforms.

5.4 Conclusion

As salt and light of the world, the Christian Council of Ghana will be failing in her God-given mandate if she sits on the fence for policy makers to formulate policies which by moral standards are found to be unacceptable and lacking moral values.
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Mr. Michael Ansah (Development Practitioner and Assistant Registrar of UDS), 12th April, 2009

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questionnaire

1. What is the theological basis of the Church’s involvement in the Public Policy process?

2. In which ways has the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) been involved in Public Policy Issues?

3. Is there any public policy education in CCG Member Churches?

4. How true is the assertion that the Church is the ‘Moral Conscience’ of the Society or State?

5. What Public Policies have attracted Christian Council of Ghana’s attention in the past?

6. What current Public Policies have received attention from the CCG?

7. What stage of the Public Policy process has CCG often intervened; agenda setting, Policy formulation, policy implementation, Policy evaluation?

8. How successful has CCG been in influencing Public Policy direction? What Policies can be identified in the past or currently?

9. What is the capacity of CCG to influence public Policy? What about Member denominations?

10. What are the motivating factors in engaging with Government on National Issues?

11. How far can CCG go in engaging in Public Policy Issues? Are there any limits and why?

12. What are the Challenges of CCG in engaging on public Policy issues?

13. With the restructuring process of CCG, how will Public Policy issues be better addressed?
APPENDIX B

PROFILE OF CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF GHANA

History

The Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) was founded on 30th October 1929 by five churches namely African Methodist Episcopal (AME), Zion Church, English Church Mission (Anglican), Ewe Presbyterian Church (now Evangelical Presbyterian Church); Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast (now Ghana) and Wesleyan Methodist Church (now Methodist Church of Ghana). The purpose was the search for unity and to work with members on issues of social concern and be the voice of the voiceless in society. Currently the CCG comprises of fifteen member Churches and two Christian Organisations.

The CCG has over the years gone through a series of restructuring and renewal processes in a bid to develop a relevant, efficient and effective organization that is pro-active and responsive to challenges facing the member Churches. In the search for relevance and common witness, the determining factors have been global and national macro socio-economic and political trends such as political governance ranging from military rule to multi-party democracy.

Vision

To be the triune God’s instrument for change in Ghana where the highest value is placed on peace, justice, unity and respect for the dignity and integrity of creation.

Mission Statement

To strengthen the capacity of our members to contribute to achieving justice, unity, reconciliation and integrity of creation among various sectors of the Ghanaian Society and
provide a forum for joint action on issues of common interest. In seeking to achieve this, we are
guided by the Holy Bible and in all matters of national interest, remain non-partisan.

Goal

The goal of the Council in its new focus is to contribute to the development of a peaceful, just
and equitable society in Ghana, where there would be an increased realization of social and
economic rights of disadvantaged women, men and children in Ghana. The Council seeks an
increased engagement of itself, member churches and citizen groups with local and national
government on social and economic policy and practice. This would assist to enable the
Ghanaian Government to be more accountable to its citizens

Officers of the Council

Chairman       Rt. Rev. Dr. Yaw Frimpong Manso
Vice Chairman   Rev. Stephen Asante
General Secretary Rev. Dr. Fred Degbe
Honorary Treasurer Mr. Joseph Nii Budu Tetteh

Areas of Work

We are a Research Based Advocacy institution in these four areas

a. Good governance

b. Human Rights and Gender

c. Social and Economic Justice
d. Interfaith and Ecumenism

Offices

Christian Council of Ghana comprises of the;

1. Southern Sector (Head Office) and the

2. Northern Sector Office (NSO)

Senior Management Team

Rev. Dr. Fred Deegbe General Secretary

Rev. Albert B. Kwabi Director, MDGs/CSOs

Mrs. Diana Amankwa Director of Fin. And Admin.

Prof. Clara Fayorsey Honorary Advisor for Prog. And Advocacy

Advisory Committee Northern Sector

Rt. Rev. Joseph Atto Brown Chair, Meth Church

Rev. Adai Naami Presby

Rev. Isaac Wuni Baptist

Rev. Joseph Salifu Evangelical Church of Ghana (ECG)

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Fax: 071-23502

E-mail: ccgnso@africaonline.com.gh
APPENDIX C

LIST OF MEMBER CHURCHES AND ORGANISATIONS

1. The Methodist Church of Ghana

2. Presbyterian Church of Ghana

3. Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana.

4. The Salvation Army

5. African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

6. Christian Methodist Episcopal Church

7. EDEN Revival Church

8. Ghana Baptist Convention

9. Evangelical Lutheran Church

10. Religious Society of Friends

11. Ghana Mennonite Church

12. Greek Orthodox Church

13. Christ Evangelical Mission

14. Evangelical Church of Ghana

15. Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA)

16. Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA)