

Abstract

Known as one of the strongmen of sub-Saharan Africa, Jerry John Rawlings' rule spanning both military and democratic regimes have witnessed significant policy shifts from his initial rhetoric. Proclaiming himself to be a populist, he declared his rule as a people's democratic government, with the aim to involve the populace in decision making which culminated in a comprehensive program of decentralisation. However, his government also superintended the implementation of one of the most stringent economic policies under the direction of the WB and IMF, which introduced a fee for service popularly known as 'cash and carry' for various social services including education and health. Although bastardising the West he collaborated with the West extensively in various policy fields especially beginning with the Structural Adjustment and Economic Recovery Programs. His tenure in government has significantly shaped policymaking in Ghana. Most of his policies are still shaping Ghana's policies today. This study, therefore, aims to examine the trajectories of policymaking under Rawlings spanning 1981 to 2000 to tease out the contrasts and the reasons behind the marked shifts that were observed. Methodologically, this is a qualitative study based on primary and secondary data. Primary data includes interviews already granted by Rawlings, which can be sourced from local and or international media houses and those available on Youtube. These will be complemented with published material comprising scholarly work and governmental reports.