THE ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANCY AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN GHANA

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ABSTRACT

Despite its humanistic values, organisation development consultancy practice appears to be facing implementation challenges, especially regarding development programmes in the public and private sectors. OD's agenda for development programmes is to ensure its values yield benefits that could be translated into effective programmes. This is because all the development programmes involve change, which in one way or the other had not been managed effectively in the past, given the many fads of change management.

The main objective of this study was to assess the benefits and challenges of OD as a consultancy practice, and create the needed awareness to enable consultants; policy makers and managers encourage its use in development programmes. This case study, through snowball sampling procedure, recorded the perceptions of 35 respondents, 16 of which are OD practitioners and 19 non OD practitioners.

The findings confirmed that OD as a consultancy methodology has enormous potentials to facilitate development programmes in Ghana. However, challenges such as reliance on 'expert' consultants and opposition by policy makers need to be overcome through education and awareness creation if OD is to survive as a consultancy practice. Far reaching implications for OD practice were provided.

Key concepts: development; organisation development, development programmes in Ghana; values of OD; benefits of OD; consultancy practice; organisational culture, change.

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

Organisation development's enormous benefits to development programmes in developing nations, need to be given the centre stage on the development agenda. This is because OD practice is value laden (OD Institute, 1991; Yeager, 2002; ODNetwork, 2003) and could aid effective delivery of development programmes. Notwithstanding the ample benefits that OD practice and its values have to offer development programmes in the third world, it is faced with challenges that inhibit its rightful role in the delivery of development programmes. The practice of OD appears alien to prospective clients in developing nations, apparently, because of institutional bureaucracies that pay lip service to participation in problem-solving. The Ghanaian case, which has attracted the attention of the World Bank /the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and related development agencies, is one of such cases, which prompted this study to ascertain the extent OD, as a consultancy method, could benefit the effective delivery of development programmes.

Ghana, a developing nation with an estimated population of over 20 million, lies on the west coast of Africa. Her neighbours are: Burkina Faso on the northern border with Cote d' Ivoire and Togo on the western and eastern borders respectively. A former British colony, Ghana's first post-independence government was led by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. Dr.

Nkrumah and his government concentrated on major infrastructural projects and achieved some milestones, including the building of a hydro-electric dam to supply electricity, and the construction of a harbour to facilitate imports and exports of goods. Between 1966 and 1992, the greater part of the political period was occupied by military regimes. Development programmes were frustrated by the frequent military coups at the time. Notwithstanding attempts at instituting development programmes at the national level by succeeding governments, by 1983, the rate of economic decline had become disturbing. The government in power had to accept IMF/World Bank conditions for the much expected economic recovery programmes. Consultants of these development programmes were selected by the IMF/World Bank. These consultants were mainly "expert" consultants,(economists, accountants, lawyers, engineers,etc) most of whom were not familiar with the cultural terrain of Ghana. Some OD consultants, however, found themselves in this big task of facilitating institutional reforms.

1.2 OD in Ghana

Kumawu (2006), one of the foremost OD practitioners in Ghana reports in the International Organisation Development Association's newsletter that, OD as a discipline is new in Ghana. Its emergence was as a result of the World Bank bringing OD consultants to assist in the institutional renewal programmes in the mid 1980s, but "expert" consultants had operated in the country for decades. It must be noted that the World Bank's influence in bringing OD practitioners could have been the beginning of OD practice in Ghana. These OD consultants were initially linked to institutional programmes, which formed part of the economic restructuring of Ghana. The practice of OD encountered implementation challenges at various levels of these development programmes. Kumawu further groups OD practitioners in Ghana into 3 main generations:

a) Those trained outside the country and recruited by the World Bank to help in the economic reform programmes.

b) Those trained by partnerships between organisations such as Organisational Capacity Improvement Consultants (OCIC) and European technical assistance programmes before 2003.

c) Those who have recently been trained through the partnership programme between the OCIC and the University of Cape Coast.(UCC) (This is the only accredited OD programme in Ghana that awards diploma, masters and doctoral qualifications.) Ibis and the OD centre in Ghana are also actively training OD practitioners.

Thus, OD practice has produced three generations of OD practitioners. Each group may have their own peculiar challenges in practicing OD but they all share common implementation challenges of practicing OD.

1.3 The Problem

The foregoing unveils the background of a growing cadre of OD practitioners who are practicing or about to practice in an environment which does not subscribe fully to the values of OD as an emerging consultancy practice. The problem constitutes the yawning gap of lack of acceptance and implementation of OD: a viable consultancy methodology that could inculcate humanistic and cultural values in contemporary economic contexts leading to sustainability of development programmes. The existence of this problem is not unknown to the World Bank Knowledge and Learning Group in Africa. The former head of the World Bank, Paul Wolfowitz, succinctly puts it this way:

> "...We often talk about building institutions or building capacity. ...that sort of suggests you can come in like an outside contractor and bring some bricks and mortar and you construct capacity. It doesn't work that way. You grow it. It's got to be indigenous. It's got to have indigenous roots... you can help people do it. But they need to do it themselves." (World Bank, 2005).

The Bank reveals that, data from 78 client feedback surveys undertaken Bank-wide during the period 1995-2003 confirms countries perceive the Bank as less effective in empowering stakeholders so it needs to improve on certain behaviours. Major issues were empowering the country partner, adapting knowledge to local context and behaving as enabler. (World Bank, 2005)

The main purpose of this study was to assess the benefits and challenges of OD as consultancy practice and create the needed awareness to enable consultants, policy makers and managers encourage its use in development programmes. Specifically, the following objectives were explored:

a) Determine the impact of consultancy methods on development programmes.
b) Find out how OD values could benefit development programmes.
c) To determine the implementation challenges of OD practice and how they could be addressed.

To achieve the objectives, the study sought to answer the main question: How could the benefits of OD, as an alternative consultancy methodology, that could effectively facilitate the desired outcomes of development programmes, be made acceptable to policy makers by addressing identified challenges of OD practice?

Further, the following specific questions were answered:

a) How do consultancy methods impact development programmes?
b) What are the benefits of OD to development programmes?
c) What are the implementing challenges of OD and how could they be addressed?

The rationale for the study was that it provided awareness to policy makers, consultants and managers of the beneficial role OD practice could play in the effective implementation of development projects in Ghana.

Section 2 of the study examines the theoretical context of development programmes and OD values. Section 3 outlines the study approach,

backed by justification of the qualitative method used. Section 4 presents findings and discussion. Section 5 draws conclusions and implications of the study to policy makers, consultants and managers and also for future research.

THE THEORETICAL CONTEXT OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AND OD

2.1   Meaning of Development

The background to this paper leads one to pursue a path that can conveniently bring out what development means. Development connotes different meanings to different people. As a prelude to a search for what development means to organisation development, Burke, (1994, p. 11) in an attempt to clarify and confirm the definition of development, quotes this powerful description by Ackoff:

> *Growth can take place with or without development (and vice versa). For example, a cemetery can grow without developing; so can a rubbish heap. A nation, corporation, or an individual can develop without growing...(Development) is an increase in capacity and potential, not an increase in attainment... It has less to do with how much one has than with how much one can do with whatever one has. (Ackoff, 1981:34-35 quoted in Burke, 1994. p. 11)*

Here, development implies a change that aims at increasing capacity and potential of the individual or the organisation, to be able to achieve with whatever means available. This is what OD practice advocates in part. At a conference in Arusha, Tanzania, in December, 2005, the World Bank produced a concept note on social development that among other things, described *social development* as 'process of increasing the assets and capabilities of individuals to improve their well being' (World Bank, 2005). It also mentioned the capacity of social groups to exercise agency, transform their relationships with other groups, and participate in development process. Further, effective management of change was stated as a key element to change.

As to whether the objectives of development as described have been achieved over the years, brings to mind how development programmes had been implemented in the past. The Operations Evaluation Department of the World Bank, in its evaluation documents highlighted various conceptual issues that inhibit the development processes, ranging from need for choices of interventions to lack of country-specific private sector development strategies (World Bank, 2001(a), 2001(b) 2001(c); 2002) The World Bank and its affiliates, through these documents have shown concern about issues on how to enhance capacity of the recipients of development programmes so that they could sustain the programmes.

2.2   Development Programmes in Ghana

Kumawu and Kraus' (2007, p.8) belief that, 'OD is well suited for the African environment because it fosters ownership within the organisation, builds internal capacity inside, equips the organisation and its members to continue to grow and respond to changing demands in the market place and the population', makes OD practice a suitable match for the issues raised in the evaluation documents of the Operations and Evaluation Department of the World Bank.

The literature on development programmes in the 1980s is unambiguous on the apparent unsuitability of the methods adopted by some World Bank consultants. They mentioned issues ranging from "expert" consultants insisting Ghanaian managers in the public sector to accept ready-made programmes and, particularly, approaches that were not suitable for the Ghanaian environment-Hutchful, (2002, p. 96); Aryeetey et. al, (2000, p. 1-2); Brydon and Legge (1996, pp. 88-102); (Uddin & Tsamenyi, 2005, pp. 667-668). Some of these writers confirmed that the people whose capacities were supposed to be built were ignored in designing the process of capacity building. For example, Hutchful, (2002) pointed out that managing directors of state-owned enterprises were not happy with the situation where they had to work with corporate plans they did not prepare themselves as part of a programme of restructuring the state-owned enterprises.   In a separate

development, Ngouo(2000) asked a thought provoking question: 'How effectively did these consultants play their role of responsible agent of change in view, inter alia, of the special nature of different organisational cultures that characterised the African public administrators concerned?' Ngouo was writing on the challenges of the OD consultants in the context of structural adjustments in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The above impressions by these writers, who were mostly writing from economic point of view of development programmes, give insights that call the attention of OD practitioners to offer an alternative, because the "how" of implementation was not fully considered as a major issue, as far as the humanistic, culture, collaboration and other aspects of implementation which constitute the OD agenda were concerned.

We, however, need to remind ourselves at this point that OD has moved from the mainly humanistic approach in the 1950s/1970s. Newman et al, (1999, p.,216) from the Tavistock Institute, London, argue that changes since the 1970s challenge OD consultants to develop a portfolio of consultancy methods that enable them not only to address cultural changes but also structural changes. They further offer that, ' OD practitioners need to increase their ability to understand and work with change managers, and their consultants, who see the world predominantly through technological and economic years.' Recent challenges of OD, arising out of global economic upheavals have brought about an awakening for OD to be relevant. For example, of late, there have been challenging headlines such as OD in Crisis; Wanted: OD More Alive than Dead. (Karakas,2009; Boyd,2008; Greiner and Cummings, 2004; Worley and Feyerherm, 2003;) These show that OD may not be a perfect methodology but its humanistic values are still relevant, once they are properly related to emerging economic issues.

2.3 The Journey of Development Programmes so Far

The challenges that faced consultants in facilitating development programmes could be better captured

if a catalogue of the journey development programmes have gone through in Ghana since the 1980s is given. This approach also helps to give a clear picture to the context of this study.

Vordzorgbe & Caiquo, (2001) in their status review report on Ghana, submitted to the National Development Planning Commission of Ghana and International Institute for Environment, London give coherent catalogue of development programmes at the national level. The Guggisberg Plan of 1919-1926, which was the first of such initiatives, was seen more as a national investment programme. The first ten-year development plan was condensed into a 5 year plan (1951-1956). A consolidated development plan (1957-1959 was initiated at independence. The second development plan was implemented from 1959 to1964. The government of Dr Kwame Nkrumah promulgated the seven year development plan (1963-1970), which though was short-lived because the government was toppled by the military in 1966, achieved some successes in terms of infrastructural development. There were other shorter plans (1970-71) introduced by other governments. Subsequent military regimes introduced their own brands of development plans. Other plans were the 5 year development plan (1975-1980). Though the World Bank and the IMF had entered the scene earlier, it was in the 1980s that their presence became intense. Conditions were introduced to "heal" an ailing economy. The years 1984-1986 saw the impact of the operations of the economic recovery programme of the World Bank. This situation was not peculiar to Ghana; other developing nations were having their fair share of what came to be known later as "World Bank conditionalities." Kumawu, (2006) confirms that the World Bank at this stage introduced OD consultants. Having gone through the structural adjustment, economic recovery, public sector reform, (1994), and related programmes, reflections unveiled numerous lessons. A report catalogues the following:

- Very few development programmes were fully implemented over their planned time frames;
- Stakeholder participation in the design of development plans was either non-existent or very low and ineffective;

- There was little commitment by most previous governments to development programmes they formulated.
- Concept of implementing development programmes within the long term framework was relatively new.(Vordzorgbe and Caiquo 2001)

The above concerns evoke a need for a more human centred approach, from which recent development programmes are picking valuable lessons. Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 1 of the Ghanaian Government emphasised five areas namely:
- Macroeconomic stability;
- Production and gainful employment;
- Human Development and Basic services;
- Vulnerability and exclusion.
- Governance.
  This was reviewed under GPRS 2 to conform to international agreements such as the Millennium Development Goals aimed at the following areas:
- Private sector competitiveness;
- Human Resource Development;
- Good governance and civic responsibility

The GPRS 2 aims at bringing income of average Ghanaian to the level of middle-income countries by 2015(NPDC, 2008).

In terms of infrastructural development, some successes were achieved. However, we are few years away from 2015. An examination of the 'success story' may be worthwhile.

2.4 "The Success Story"
An International Development Association document reporting on Ghana stated that:

Ghana is one of the best-performing economies in Africa. By improving policies and institutions, and investing in basic infrastructure and basic services, Ghana has brought down poverty levels from 52 percent in 1992 to 35 percent in 2003. It is likely to surpass the Millennium Development Goal of

halving poverty by 2015. Economic growth has averaged 4.5 percent from 1983 through 2000, but accelerated to 5.8 percent in 2004 and 6 percent in 2005 in response to the government's programs of reforms. Ghana's access to electricity is the highest in Sub-Saharan Africa outside South Africa. All of this augurs well for Ghana to achieve middle-income country by 2015.(IDA, 2007)

It is on record that there has been marked improvement in the implementation of development programmes in Ghana. In sharing the Ghanaian experience on harmonizing national development programmes, Gyan-Baffour (2003) explains that Ghana has been able to synchronise the Ghana Poverty Reduction Programme and the Millennium Challenge Goals. This confirms how far Ghana has come in managing development programmes. Nonetheless, the concerns raised in World Bank documents cited in this study show a gap in the implementation of the development programmes. The attainment of infrastructural development would not necessarily ensure sustainability. The issue of the human factor that empowers and achieves sustainability of development in the public interest (Uddin & Tsamenyi, 2005. p. 648) continues to be a major concern in Ghana.

The 'credit crunch, the latest challenge to the development efforts require sober reflection. In less than 6 years to 2015, Ghana is caught in an economic web, which requires another approach that counts the worth of the human being rather than the theories that are known over the years but has not been able to solve the challenges. As at now, experts are not sure as to the extent the credit crunch would affect the Ghanaian economy. However, recently the business section of the Ghanaian Times reported that, 'The volume of remittances from Ghanaian abroad has dropped by some 16 per cent, in line with general expectation of a possible dip.'(The Ghanaian Times. April 14 2009 p 27). This could be a possible effect of the global credit crunch, which development programmes need a structured approach to handle. What about the inflation which

has gone up to over 20 per cent? This may need to be handled in a different way.

The issue is: Could a consultancy approach which is devoid of collaboration, humanistic and cultural elements be able to handle this? Here, we are talking of the process of the development programmes and not the content, which had been the focus of consultants in the past. OD's approach to consultancy in such circumstance is focusing on the human capital, but at the same time recognising contemporary issues in business. For example, OD needs to add some speed to its humane and cultural sensitivity. Darling and Heller(2009) provide blue prints for OD practice in the current era of the economic challenges, such as the credit crunch. They deal with issues such as self-perception and purpose fulfilment; internal power versus external force and adaptive managerial leadership. They further introduce what they term values of joy and hope, which should be set and achieved. They make interesting additions to the OD consultant's tool kit, which could make OD more relevant in the current economic conditions. This should include the delivery of development programmes, the focus of this study.

2.5 OD, Culture and Development Programmes

At a recent national conference of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ghana, three prominent Ghanaian citizens speaking on the main theme, *Ghana at 50 years: The Journey to Middle Income Status;* from the backgrounds of culture, industry and science and technology were unanimous on the fact that Ghana's quest for middle income status could only be achieved if the present cultural orientation which is not pragmatic enough is transformed to suit a culture of commitment and transparency. After giving their professional views on the topic, one trend that cut across their submissions was the *"how"* of achieving middle income status as a nation by the year 2015-the target of the Millennium Challenge Goals of the United Nations which most developing nations are working hard to achieve. (Oteng-Gyasi, 2007; Sarpong, 2007; Andam, 2007). If an OD practitioner

were to have spoken at this conference, he/she would have shared the views of the speakers. The endemic problem of effective implementation of development programmes arise from a culture that does not encourage shared responsibility, open communication, and in fact stifles open communication. The social structure of Africa and for that matter, Ghana, requires a reorientation that the OD literature provides in the following paragraphs.

Kumawu & Kraus, (2007) describe the social structures of the society, while encouraging the advantages of the extended family system that helps the African to look after her elderly population; they recount the disadvantage of using this same good structure to encourage the appointment of family members who may not be qualified to public positions. They give the following as bedrock of democracy, (not political democracy) cherished by OD:

- open participation in decision making;
- shared power;
- open communication and information;
- willingness to collaborate; and
- citizens taking responsibility for their own action.

The writer of this paper shares Kumawu and Kraus' view that OD teaches individuals and organisations (and I add, nations) to practice the above mentioned virtues of democracy. OD definitely has values that can stem the tide of implementation challenges of development programmes in the Ghanaian context. What OD does; the results OD seeks to achieve, and how these results are achieved are summarised in the following definitions of OD:

a) Organisation development: Collaborating with organizational leaders and their groups to create a systematic change and root-cause problem-solving on behalf of improving productivity and employee satisfaction through improving the human processes through which they get work done. (Broom.2007, p. 1)

b) OD involves facilitating an organisation's ability to self-reflect, self-regulate, and take control of its own processes of improvement and learning with a view to effectively achieving its reason for existence.(Kumawu and Kraus, 2007 p. 21)

c) ...a participatory and process-oriented approach which is in line with general participative approaches to development itself and also the methods used....(James, 1998,. P.16)

D) Organisation development is a long-term effort, led and supported by top management, to improve an organisation's visioning , empowerment, learning, and problem-solving processes, through an ongoing, collaborative management of organisation culture-with special emphasis on culture of intact work teams and other configurations-utilising the consultant-facilitator role and the theory and technology of applied behavioural science, including action research(French and Bell, 1995, p. 28)

The above definitions inform what OD is about. It is not uncommon to come across numerous definitions of OD in the literature, which build on existing definitions or even attempt to introduce something new to OD. This could be because probably, challenges of the World economy continue to provoke OD to find a new bearing as a consultancy practice. However, the spectrum of what OD stands for is broadened by Grieves' (2000. p. 396) work on the origins of OD. In his attempt to recapture the origins of OD in contemporary context, he identifies OD with "personal development, organizational learning, analyses based on meanings informed by newer methodological approaches (e.g. Symbolic interactionism, discourse analysis, than simply systems, concerns with ethical and green issues." (Grieves, 2000). In all this, the humanistic and cultural relevance of OD consultancy practice remains intact.

2.6 Change and OD

Generally, OD practice applies action research, participation, organisational culture, humanistic values, and organisational learning to effect change. (Burke, 1994; French & Bell 1995; Grieves, 2000). Further, Schein, (1998. p. 1) sees the OD way as process consultation, which basically aims at helping individuals, groups, organisations and communities to help themselves. He confirms that the ultimate aim of process consultation results in the establishment of effective helping relationship. Schein's idea of the three types of consultancy roles of *expert, pair of hands and collaborative* has been simplified by Peter Block in his book, Flawless Consulting (Block, 2000, pp. 21-27) This paper assesses collaborative role as a solution to delivering effective development programmes in Ghana. The benefits of OD are embedded in the values/characteristics of the consultancy approach being advocated by the above mentioned writers. However, as the values of OD seek to establish OD as a profession, it is bound to face implementation difficulties as an approach to consultancy which is less known in Ghana. It stands to battle with the cultural orientation of the implementers of development programmes.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual thinking arising out of the review of the literature could be a strong collaboration among stakeholders in development programmes, based on the understanding that culture is relevant for effective implementation of development programmes. Once this is achieved through normative re-education, beneficiaries would collaborate with other stakeholders. Participation would, therefore, improve and the programmes would be implemented in a humane manner. These values would assume understanding among the experts, OD consultants who would be leading the process, the policy makers and the managers of the project. In other words, linking culture, collaboration, participation and humane approach in a network; 'expert' and OD consultants, policy makers and managers in a similar network could produce the required development. Actualising this concept would yield sustainable development. (See Figure 1 below)
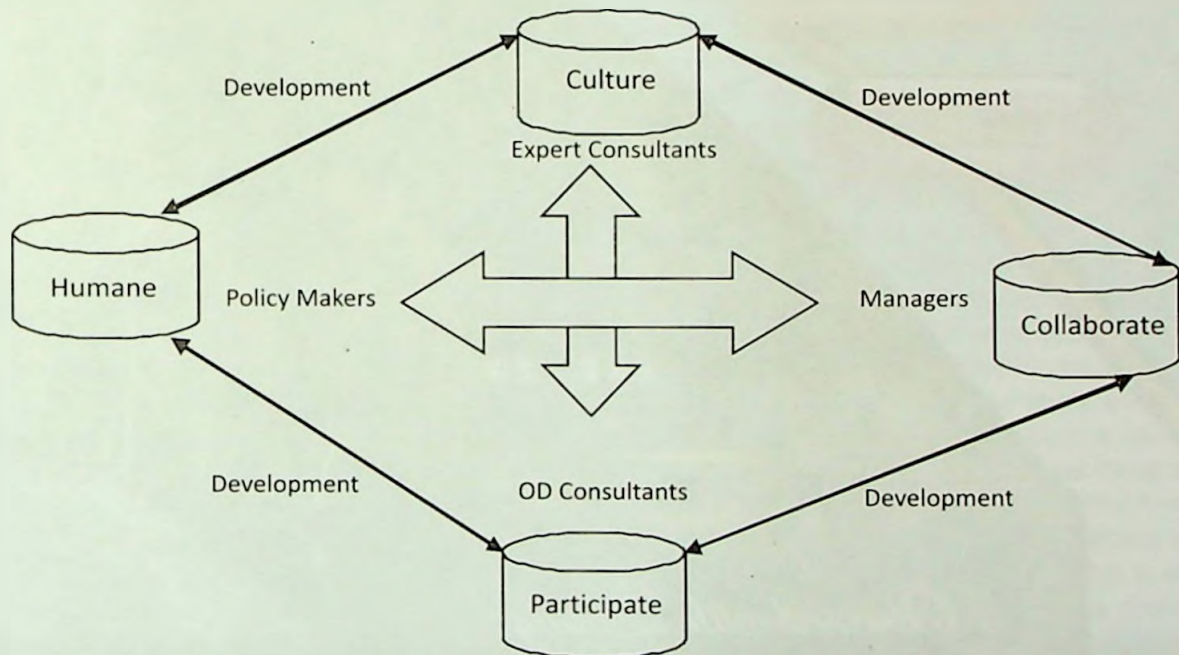

Figure 1: The stakeholders- values network model to produce sustainable development. Source: Research notes.

3.0 STUDY APPROACH

The potency of a research approach in a particular study context could be determined by the relevance of the approach to the research objectives and questions. The main purpose of this study was to assess the benefits and challenges of OD as consultancy practice and create the needed awareness to enable consultants, policy makers and managers encourage its use in development programmes. It was mainly a qualitative study. Given the exploratory nature of the study, it was not meant to measure or test any theory; the positivist deductive approach was, therefore, not relevant here. Rather, the study involved the examination of "complexity, context and persona and their multitude of factors relationship and fuzzy phenomena, which conventional statistics may not be able to handle," (Gummerson, 2006). Thus, the personal involvement of the researcher in interpreting meanings was more relevant than passive involvement as required by positivist approach. However, when analysing the data, use was made of some inferential statistics to drive home some points. This confirms that research methodologies, either qualitative or quantitative could depend on one another.

3.1 Sample

The study was interested in the rich stories Eisenhardt (1989) of respondents' perceptions of what OD consultancy could offer to development programmes, given its values and challenges in the Ghanaian context. Identifying the 35 cases was the challenging aspect of the study. This was because the sample required could not be collected at one point. The study, therefore, used two main clusters as the basis for selecting sample cases. The first cluster of the sample was 19 persons who have never had any experience of OD consultancy, but were aware of OD as a consultancy method. Another 16 respondents, who had various levels of OD consultancy experience, were selected. The samples from these two clusters were selected through the snowball approach of data collection. Respondents directed the researcher to prospective respondents as defined by the study.

3.2 Data Collection

The main data collection instrument was a three-page semi-structured interview protocol that collected data through face-to-face, and telephone interviews. The interview protocol specifically solicited perceptions of respondents on the following:

a) Impact of consultancy method on development programmes.
b) Benefits of OD consultancy to development programmes.
c) Challenges of OD consultancy and how they could be overcome.

In the case of some of the respondents, who had experience of OD consultancy, they were given the interview protocols to answer the questions. In some cases, respondents offered vary helpful insights which had not been solicited for in the interview protocol.

To ensure the reliability of data collected, investigator triangulation was adopted (Mangan et al. 2004. p.569) Further, two different groups were interviewed, those exposed to OD and those who had little or no involvement in OD. This helped in producing very objective results, which could be likened to the use of controlled subjects and uncontrolled subjects in a quantitative research approach. Construct validity was achieved by ensuring that the respondents understood what was being measured so their answers were not out of the way. That notwithstanding construct validity is difficult to achieve in a case study, since it is vulnerable to subjectivity in data collection. Responses which could not address the issues were not used, and persons who were approached and did not seem to have interest in the study were replaced with others. Since the study was not to measure any causal effect, as in pure quantitative study, internal validity was not an issue. Being a case study, it was not meant to generalise the findings. However, given the number of individuals which formed the unit of analysis, it was possible to expect analytic generalisation: 'This is when a previously developed theory is used as a template to compare the empirical results of the case study' (Yin 2008 p. 38)

3.3 Data Analysis

The data collected was coded according to a pre-coded legend to enable the findings to be grouped into the appropriate categories. The questionnaire provided space for a few questions that solicited quantitative information on respondents and in some cases, their perceptions. For example, the question on the level of impact of consultancy method used a 5 point Likert-like scale to collect the data. Respondents were asked to rank the extent to which the methods used by consultants affect development programmes(Where 1 was less critical and 5 was extremely critical) However, this was an exception for the purpose of measuring the impact but it provided insightful support to the narrations given by the respondents. By using the Statistical Package for Social Science, the data was analysed into categories, which enabled accurate interpretation of the findings. In a few cases from adequate tabulation, statistical inferences were deduced. However, the study was mainly a qualitative study. From the codes, very relevant quotations, which represented the majority perception on an issue were presented. This is because qualitative research does not just represent only frequencies and percentages of the findings but the intended meanings that produced the percentages.

3.4 Limitations

Despite the assurance of trustworthiness, credibility and data dependability built into the research approach, there were a few limitations that need to be taken into consideration when interpreting the findings and implications.

The first limitation was that, employers of OD consultants were not isolated to assess their response to the benefits of OD in their organisations. This could have given another perspective of the benefits of OD.

Secondly, the small number of OD consultants in Ghana made it difficult to select a large sample within the period of the study. A large sample could have given more informed aspects of the practice of OD in Ghana.

Thirdly, the study could not find very specific empirical study in this nascent area of research.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Background Information on Respondents

A total of 35 responses were recorded and coded. The background information about the respondents included their sex, age, type of organisation they are working with, and their positions in the organisations. In terms of sex, 88.6 percent were males and 8.6 percent were females with one respondent not indicating his/her sex. On the question of age, the responses show that majority of them (about 63 percent) were between the ages of 35 and 54, while 22.9 percent were aged between 25 and 34 years and 5.7 percent were aged 55 years and above. Three respondents (8.6 percent) did not indicate their age.

About the type of organisation, 71.4 percent of the respondents were from public sector organisations, while 8.6 percent were from private sector organisations and 17.1 percent were from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). One respondent did not respond to this question. The distribution is as shown in Table 1.

The positions of the respondents in their respective organisations ranged from Chief Executive Officer (1), Director (3), Deputy Director (3), Coordinator (2), Head of Department (3), Chief Director (1) and Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (1). Others include Operations Officer (1), Systems Analyst (1) and Training Officer (1). The rest were in other managerial/senior positions.

In terms of the selection of respondents for this study, no deliberate attempt was made to use the sex, age or organisation as a criterion. Rather, the choice of respondents was informed by their position, knowledge and influence as far as consultancy issues in the context of development programmes were concerned. They were located through peer referencing. Respondents from the public sector were in the majority, apparently because most development programmes have been managed by the public sector. The specific findings were:

a) Majority of the respondents(71 percent, who were mostly experienced) confirmed that methods of consultancy are very important to the delivery of developments programme

Table 1: Distribution of Background Information of Respondents

Characteristic	Frequency	Percent
Sex		
Male	31	88.6
Female	3	8.6
Non response	1	2.8
Total	35	100.0
Age		
25-34	8	22.9
35-44	12	34.3
45-54	10	28.6
55+	2	5.7
Non response	3	8.6
Total	35	100.0
Organisation		
Public	25	71.4
Private	3	8.6
NGO	6	17.1
Non-response	1	2.9
Total	35	100.0

b)   All the respondents agreed that OD consultancy would provide benefits. But the relevance of the benefits to OD consultancy they mentioned depended on their level of experience with OD

c)   All respondents accepted the existence of barriers to OD practice in development programmes, including, corruption, nature of OD practice, resistance from top management. They, however, felt this could be overcome through awareness creation, collaboration and education to be initiated by OD consultants.

4.2 Majority of respondents (71 per cent) confirmed methods of consultancy are very important to the delivery of development programmes

It was confirmed that methods of consultancy are very important to the delivery of development programmes. Only 5.7 percent of respondents rated

the impact of consultancy methods on development programmes as being less critical. Eight respondents (22.9 percent) rated the impact of consultancy on the performance of development programmes as fairly critical, 28.6 percent rated it as critical and 31.4 percent of them rated it as very critical. Another 5.7 percent rated it as extremely critical. Overall, 71.4 percent rated how consultancy methods affect performance of development programmes as critical, very critical or extremely critical (see Table 2).

Table 2: Rankings of how the methods used by Consultants affect the Performance of Development Programmes

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Less critical	2	5.7
Fairly critical	8	22.9
Critical	10	28.6
Very critical	11	31.4
Extremely critical	2	5.7
Non response	2	5.7
Total	35	100.0

The responses on how methods used by consultants affect the performance of development programmes were cross tabulated with the duration for which respondents have been dealing with consultants. The results show that the two respondents who ranked the impact of consultancy method on development programmes as less critical have both dealt with consultants for only up to three years. All the respondents who have been dealing with consultants for 10 or more years ranked the impact of the contribution of consultants to development programmes as very critical or extremely critical. In this circumstance, critical means influence on development programmes was substantial. The level of association between the two variables was, however, not significant (chi-square =12.09, p = 0.438). The distribution of the responses is as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Rankings of the impact of consultancy methods on development programmes and duration of dealing with consultants

Rankings	Duration of dealing with consultants (years)				Total
	0-3	4.7	8-10	10+	
Less critical	2	0	0	0	2
Fairly critical	4	3	1	0	8
Critical	4	2	3	0	9
Very critical	3	3	1	2	9
Extremely critical	1	0	0	1	2
Total	14	8	5	3	30

Considering that 71 per cent of respondents who come from various backgrounds ranked the impact of consultancy methods as critical, it is obvious that the development programmes cannot just be implemented without the help of consultants. Further, it becomes clear from the findings that those who ranked the impact as critical, have been in consultancy or associated with consultancy for some time. Their experience and knowledge inform their ranking. Could this mean that some of these experienced consultants have been in the system since the advent of OD consultancy in the 1980s? From table 3 it could be gleaned that at least 8 of these have worked for between 8 years and above in the consultancy field, which has given them such a strong perception of the impact of consultancy methods. If they were aware of this important fact, then they must have seen the loopholes in other consultancy methods. On the other hand, a valid argument could be that once the consultants or associates of consultants understand their trade, they are able to tell the impact of the consultancy methods. It therefore, informs this study that, with time, all consultants or their associates would see the impact as very critical. The argument was further confirmed by the body language of the experienced consultants and the way they sounded. In most cases their voices were very assuring. They sounded like this: 'oh yes, consultancy methods have very important impact on development programmes....'
As to why they had that strong conviction about the role of consultancy in the implementation of development programmes, this depended mainly on their involvement. Their own involvement in development programmes could have exposed them to challenges development programmes encounter at every stage. It was, therefore, not strange that the majority had a strong opinion about the impact question. This goes to confirm again that once an issue is considered to be of critical impact; absence of its role could affect effectiveness. Respondents appeared to know more about various consultancy methods, hence they would be able to determine which method may have critical impact.

4.3 All the respondents agreed that OD consultancy provides benefits. But the relevance of the benefits to OD consultancy they mentioned depended on their level of experience with OD consultancy.

Following the above analysis, it was confirmed that respondents who have not had much dealings with OD practice (n=10) could not clearly spell out the benefits of OD to development programmes as compared to other known methods of consultancy. The responses they gave in connection with the benefits of OD consultancy were rather general benefits that can be derived from 'expert' consultancy as well. These included:

- facilitation of greater understanding of problems;
- increased productivity;
- reduced conflicts;
- enhanced output;
- successful completion of projects.
  Those who were familiar with OD practice (n=6), but not necessarily OD practitioners admitted the under mentioned benefits of OD:
- encouragement of mutual respect through collaboration;
- exposure of the private sector to human resource development;
- solutions are custom-made;
- positive impact on the bottom-line employees;
- OD will lead to new way of doing things;
- encourages ownership in implementation;
- prepares organisations to manage the future;
- develops organisational, team and individual capabilities.
- develops operational and process capability.

However, those who have been involved in od(n=16) confirmed that their od training(mainly from ocic-ucc partnership programme) has had a positive impact on their attitudes towards problem solving and diagnosis within their organisations, which will enable them to better handle future challenges without recourse to consultants. Specifically, they gave the following as benefits of OD:

- client focused, enhances delivery and aims at achieving targets;
- enhances team effectiveness and effective monitoring and control;
- keeps the public sector focused;
- builds capacity of staff;
- enables organisations solve their problems by self diagnosing and self reflecting;
- encourages collaboration;
- brings a positive change in the work ethic in the public sector;
- focuses organisations one their visions;
- improves interpersonal relationship;
- helps organisations to learn.

Box 1 captures some interesting comments made by respondents
BOX I

The OD consultancy skills training has helped me to be tolerant to divergent views and enhanced my awareness of continuous self assessment. I have also become more aware of relationship with clients, especially the entry phase.(Expert consultant who later trained as OD consultant*)*

It has impacted a lot on my value system, allowing me to change some of my attitudes such as, listening, honesty and transparency. (OD consultancy skills trainee)

The above benefits were made clear by both OD practitioners and non-OD practitioners, apparently because the values of OD are easy to understand. They evoke a humanistic approach to consultancy, which is not consciously promoted in the "expert" consultancy approach. Stakeholders definitely agree with a method of consultancy that will facilitate them to achieve their objectives in a supportive manner. (Burke, 1994, p. 179; French & Bell, 1995, p. 33; Schein, 1998. p. 1; Grieves, 2000, p396).

The findings confirm the unanimous conviction of the respondents of the obvious benefits of OD consultancy methods to development programmes.

But a careful analysis of the way the benefits were presented depended on the respondent's level of understanding of OD values. Table 4 presents the various categories. Those who had little dealing with OD(mostly less experienced people in the consultancy business) formed 31 per cent of the respondents. The benefits they gave reflected values which are common to 'expert consultancy.' They were rather general than specific to OD values. The second category was those who are experienced consultants with full knowledge of OD but do not practice OD. They formed 19 per cent of the respondents. They provide much detailed information as to how OD could be helpful. The last category is the OD practitioners. Because of their knowledge and experience in OD, the benefits they gave were very specific and insightful to this study. They formed 50 per cent of the respondents. This categorisation of the analysis brings rather insightful meaning to the study because it immediately informs policy makers about how the exposure of OD to a group of people will influence their thinking. This, probably, might have informed the general disregard for OD value because of lack of information of OD.

Table 4: Level of respondents' dealings with OD

Category of consultants	Frequency	Percent
Little dealing with OD	10	31
Aware of OD but no practice	6	19
OD practitioners	16	50
Total	32	100

However, the finding as regards to how OD could benefit development appears to have more prospects when it comes to awareness creation. It goes to confirm that once awareness is created among the remaining 31 per cent who have little knowledge of OD then they, as well, would be more specific in their understanding of the benefits of OD consultancy practice. It gives assurance of how the benefits could easily be projected with the aim of ensuring that all other consultants appreciate its use. Given that OD has been practiced for over 20 years in Ghana (Kumawu, 2006) evokes two issues: a) It seems to

have been forgotten easily to the extent that its involvement in consultancy practice is very small, b) Notwithstanding the values expressed by all respondents, most of the proponents of OD, who were trained outside Ghana were not able leave a solid mark for continuity of OD practice. Further, one may want to know how successful the OD consultants were in their practice?

The above analysis rather suggests that benefit is relative, according to a person's understanding of the phenomenon. The finding seems to confirm this. It goes without saying that, the more one experiences the results of a consultancy practice, the more one feels its benefits. Could this be better done by OD practice or awareness creation. Probably the two have to be done together for the benefit to be understood. The findings further imply that the OD agenda appears not well presented by the OD practitioners. Once this is known then the OD practitioners need to make the OD agenda very clear by using the very methods of OD to collaborate with their 'expert' colleagues for effective delivery of development programmes.

All respondents accepted the existence of barriers to OD practice in development programmes, including, corruption, nature of OD practice, resistance by top management. They, however, felt this could be overcome through awareness creation, collaboration and education to be initiated by OD consultants.

4.4 All respondents felt the barriers to OD practice include lack of transparency, corruption and managers interest in the traditional expert consultancy. They however, suggested education, collaboration and awareness creation as the solution

Having identified the benefits arising out of the values OD practice holds for delivery of development programmes in Ghana, respondents were asked about the implementation difficulties that could pose challenges to the practice of OD in Ghana, with regard to development programmes. The respondents mentioned several of these challenges. These responses included:

- executive preference and expert advice;
- time consuming nature of OD consultancy;
- lack of data;
- unwillingness of top executive to divulge certain vital information to OD consultants;
- lack of cooperation;
- corruption;
- poor organisational culture and generally poor resistance to change;
- tendency to force recommendations;
- resistance of OD consultancy by "expert" consultants;
- lack of adequate political will to cooperate with OD consultants
- lack of adequate expertise on the part of some "OD consultants"

Of these factors, the poor organisational culture, lack of adequate political will and the time consuming nature of OD consultancy came up clearly as the most potential implementation difficulties that will face the practice of OD in Ghana.

The aspect of OD, which respondents felt will be most challenged in Ghana is the lack of data and lack of honesty on the part of those in authority to cooperate fully with the OD Consultants. Others also thought OD consultancy, being a form of action research, would be hampered by authenticity and openness in the dealings between top executives and the OD Consultants. This is because these values are at variance with the work culture.

The responses given on how the problems or challenges can be overcome included the need to promote the option of OD Consultancy in Ghana, and to educate top executives of organisations on the benefits they stand to derive from the utilization of OD Consultancy.

Further to the above findings, some respondents who are familiar with OD but are not necessarily OD practitioners had some thoughts as captured in box 2.

> *"OD practice is new in Ghana. Practitioners should examine patiently, the following elements: structure, process, and the situational climate, using the "rich picture" approach"* (Accounting and Management Consultant with over 30 years experience)
>
> *" Extent to which people are involved should be very well worked out . Do not give too much when they are not ready*(Health planning Consultant with over 20 years experience)

These pieces of advice could be issues for thought for OD consultancy practice in Ghana. These experienced expert consultants have mostly been involved in the delivery of development programmes in Ghana and understand the terrain. Collaboration with this group of consultants could be a good learning experience for OD practice in Ghana.

The study also sought to find out the extent to which the respondents assessed the involvement of OD consultants in the delivery of development programmes and the responses obtained show that close to half of the respondents (48.6 percent) ranked OD consultants as having little involvement in the delivery of development programmes. This number comprised 10 who do not know about OD Consultancy and 7 who are aware of OD Consultancy.

An additional 2 respondents ranked the involvement of OD Consultants in the delivery of development programmes as fair, while six respondents ranked the involvement of OD consultants in the delivery of development programmes as high (see Table 5)

Table 5: Responses on the Extent of OD Consultants' Involvement in the Delivery of Development Programmes and Familiarity with OD Consultancy

Involvement of OD Consultants in development programmes	Are you familiar with OD?		Total
	Yes	No	
Little	7	10	17
Fair	2	0	2
Average	5	0	5
High	4	2	6
Very High	2	1	3
Total	20	13	33

Arising from the findings in table 5, the involvement of OD consultants in the delivery of development programmes is below average; it therefore confirms that the values of OD practice are yet to be experienced in the delivery of development programmes in Ghana. The impact of OD, as an alternative to consultancy methods is not well understood in Ghana. 'Organisation Development is still not a highly understood and appreciated concept in most African countries...' (Kumawu & Kraus 2007). This fact is known to both stakeholders who are familiar with OD methods/approach and those who are not familiar with OD methods/approach to consultancy.

The findings informed the study of the extent of challenges OD encounters in development programmes in Ghana. Every new methodology starts as an alien concept to the recipients. The fact that OD is relatively new in Ghana could pose a major challenge. People may be entrenched in their traditional way of doing things. As expressed by some of the respondents, managers and policy makers may have worked so long with the 'expert consultants'; that they therefore find it difficult to embrace a new methodology-OD practice. This could be especially so when OD consultancy emphasises transparency, honesty, collaboration and normative re-education, which could be easy to propagate but very difficult to implement. This is because perception of corruption about public officials is high in Ghana; and this perception is at variance with the values of OD. There is, therefore, a high probability that the little involvement of OD in development programmes is coloured by the very work culture of the stakeholders in development programmes. The agenda of OD for development programmes, therefore, becomes very difficult to be listened to, let alone be implemented,

The response on the implementation challenges clearly brings out some of the cultural orientation mentioned in the literature, which is embedded in the society. Oteng-Gyasi, (2007); Kumawu & Kraus (2007); Sarpong (2007) provide very recent examples of challenges in the culture that could pose a problem to OD. Further, Schein's (1998, pp. 7-17) description of known consultancy models as, *purchase of information* and *the doctor-patient* as against the collaborative model appears to have been recognised

by the respondents. The very social structure that development programmes seek to help is perceived to be corrupt. This definitely will be at variance with OD values of transparency, authenticity and democracy which aid genuine collaboration. Since respondents were worried about action research as a collaborative approach with its focus on openness and authenticity, it becomes clear that the human aspect that is needed for the success of OD practice is greatly challenged.

The key to this challenge remains the work of the OD practitioner, to use himself/herself as an instrument of change in a helping relationship to make the benefits of OD known. The core values of OD, therefore, come to play again in this situation (Yaeger, 2002)

At this point, it is important to restate the three specific objectives of the study:
a) To determine the impact of consultancy methods on development programmes.
b) To find out how OD values could benefit development programmes.
c) To determine the implementation challenges of OD practice and how they could be addressed.

The findings and the related discussion bring out a key link which cuts across the three specific objectives of the study: the level of awareness of OD methodology. The finding that respondents were aware of the important impact of consultancy methods on development programmes, but the depth of their assessment depended on how long they have been associated with OD as well as how experienced they were was very clear. This same phenomenon was noticed in the respondents understanding of the benefits OD could offer to development programmes. Here again their level of knowledge and experience determined the type of benefits they associated with OD. The less experienced respondents gave rather general benefits. The experienced respondents gave benefits which were very relevant to OD practice but unlike the OD practitioners, they were not very specific. The same responses related to challenges and how to deal with them. Here, the experienced respondents called for care in introducing OD to development

programmes This goes to confirm that the more effort made to get non-OD practitioners to understand what OD stands for, the better it would be appreciated. What is needed here is incremental knowledge of the values of OD to stakeholders, which could better be pioneered by OD practitioners. This finding agrees with Boyd (2008) who asserts that 'if the top-executive team is to take direct leadership responsibilities for change efforts, they will need educational and functional experience in change management to achieve success.'(p.21). This assertion informs the contribution of this study to the literature as stated below.

The contribution of this study to the literature is that, OD values could help make development programmes in Ghana more effective. But for OD to achieve its rightful role in development programmes, practitioners do not just have to create awareness but find the various categories of stakeholders in the implementation of development programmes and provide custom-made incremental knowledge of OD values. This could be achieved by making OD education part of the process of the development programmes. The OD agenda to development programmes could then be made clear to all stakeholders.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1   Need to create awareness to ensure very effective impact of OD on development programmes.

The findings and discussion confirm that the impact of consultancy methodology on development programmes is critical, This perception is shared by all respondents but the differences as to the how critical consultancy methodology impacts development programmes depends on the experience of respondents with consultancy. It could, therefore, be concluded that once people get to understand a particular methodology, they would surely be able to appreciate its values and adopt it. Regarding what is on the OD agenda, in terms of values that could improve development programmes, awareness creation need to be increased.

The implications for OD consultants are that they have to use themselves as instruments of change. Their collaboration with 'expert' consultants, as is common in development programmes in Ghana is not to see themselves as a special breed of consultants that possess higher consultancy skills, but to share their skills with 'expert' consultants as a means of creating awareness of the OD agenda for effective development.

Policy makers should allocate consultancy method with the view of allowing 'expert' consultants and OD consultants to blend towards effective. Requests for expression of interest in consultancy contracts should be designed in a manner that would encourage proposals to respect the worth of each consultant as a way of achieving the needed impact. In this way, what is in OD and the OD methods of consultancy would come out for effective impact. Managers of development programmes should also monitor the programmes with an eye for effective impact. The monitoring standards should make this very clear to consultants from the onset of the programmes.

5.2   Benefits of the values of OD should be fully exploited

The study's findings show that all respondents were of the view that OD has values that need to be exploited. If people who have less knowledge about OD appear to believe that OD has benefits then these benefits must be fully exploited. The exploitation by the stakeholders could lead to effective development programmes in Ghana. According to the level of understanding of the benefits of OD and how they could improve development programmes, OD consultants seem to be leading. It is, therefore, important that OD consultants make conscious efforts in their practice to model the values of OD so that the cultural challenges do not reduce their efforts. This can only be achieved by deliberate collaboration by OD consultants in their practice. This collaboration should be extended to policy makers, managers and expert consultants of development programmes.

The knowledge base of OD need to be increased through further training that would cover other stakeholders, according to their level of understanding of OD. It should not be a generic approach for all. This is where partnerships such as OCIC-University of Cape Coast OD Consulting skills training programmes are very important. This is the only accredited OD programme that offers post-graduate diplomas, masters and doctoral qualifications in OD in Ghana. There are other quality OD training being offered by Ibis, the OD Centre and a few others. Policy makers may want to build the capacity of such programmes. Managers may have to recommend such programmes to their coordinators of development programmes. The contact with such institutions by policy makers and other stakeholders could expand the awareness creation in a very short time. This is because knowledge of OD benefits is rather very low.

5.3 Overcoming Implementation Challenges

It has been established that the very mindset of the Ghanaian society makes it difficult for OD practice to benefit development programmes. Lack of transparency, corruption, and nepotism are just a few of the challenges to OD practice. Various governments have attempted to eradicate such challenges, which they at times call vices. It is rather unfortunate that even people in high places have at one time or the other been convicted on account of their involvement in such unhealthy practices, but these vices continue to be practiced. This confirms that making rules alone would not end these practices. It calls for continuous education. It calls for change of attitudes that are acquired through normative re-education of the stakeholders in development programmes.

There should be a planned effort by policy makers to deliberately unleash distinguishing characteristics of OD on development programmes implementation. Stakeholders need to understand that, apart from the substantive issues of development programmes, the following values should be considered if the objectives of the development programmes could be achieved:

- Culture and processes are important
- Collaboration among OD consultants, expert consultants, policy makers and managers
- Teams at various levels are very important
- Social and the human factor matters
- Participation and involvement in problem solving
- Total system approach
- OD practitioners as facilitators, collaborators, co-learners with the client
- Enabling the client system to solve its own problems
- Reliance on action research
- Seeking the betterment of both the organisation and the individuals(French and Bell 1995 p.33)

The above list appears rather a tall order to pass on to stakeholders but this is what it takes for the average individual to see their worth in implementing development programmes. If policy makers had considered these values, there would not have been so many markets built for communities in Ghana that the beneficiaries refused to use. This is a common evidence of development programme that lacked collaboration.

Although current development may require some additions to the above, for example speed and the influence of technology in contemporary society, the values of OD, which constitute the agenda of OD to development programmes remain a potent force for delivery of effective development programmes in Ghana. This study makes a contribution as a solution to this phenomenon.

The contribution of this study to the literature is that, OD values could help make development programmes in Ghana more effective. But for OD to achieve its rightful role in development programmes, practitioners must not just create awareness but find the various categories of stakeholders in the implementation of development programmes and provide custom-made incremental knowledge of OD values. This could be achieved by making OD

education part of the process of the development programmes.

Implications for further research arising out of this study could be finding out the impact of OD on a specific development programme in recent times. Further, a study may explore the perceptions of employers of how OD practitioners have imbibed the values of OD in effecting effectiveness in development programmes.

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