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National security implications of the Ghanaian basic school timetable

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Abstract

This paper used data from ethnographic school–based research to discuss the national security implications of the school timetable as a regulatory device. The data were collected from interviews with a critical case sample of 15 students, school–based non–participant observations and document analyses. The data were analysed using critical discourse analysis. The main arguments developed shows the social regulatory effects of the timetable inheres national security risks, including decontextualising citizens and traducing the developmental externalities of formal education. The violent enforcement of the timetable creates two groups of citizens: a) an authoritarian group of national leaders and; b) a docile group of followers, who are unable to support a culture of participatory democracy. The regulation of knowledge production results in: a) the disparagement of Indigeneity by privileging the use of foreign language to the consistent disadvantage of local language; b) the devaluation of citizenship education resulting in the development of citizens with no proper sense of civic commitment and identity as well as social cohesion and national trust. These serious risks require that the Ghanaian nation takes a more critical look at education policy making and curriculum reform.

Keywords: National security, education, citizen, timetable, school

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a principal national security matter. Ghana's National Security Strategy (2020:55) notes that, "education is key in the development of the manpower that the country requires to pursue its national progress." It explains that ensuring "high quality of education is crucial for the attainment of our national security objective of sustainable development." The National Security Strategy (2020:55) notes further that, education forms "the backbone for the development of the required manpower that enables us to realise our national security interests". All socio-economic and political theories position education as a critical development index and as a universal good. Human rights discourses see education as an enabling or multiplier right that promotes human and national security. The leadership of a nation, its work force and quality of life of the citizens are products of the education systems and its virtues. An educational system that is deficient presents a national security risk. However, there are arguments to the effect that education systems in developing country contexts have characteristics that present threats to national survival (Adzahlie-Mensah and Benson, 2018). This calls for analysis that goes beneath the quantitative access figures to questioning educational policies, practices and contents.

One of the main issues that have been consistently highlighted in the education-security nexus in developing countries is the case of persisting institutional colonialism, leading to subject resignation or self-regulation (Dunne and Adzahlie-Mensah, 2016; Adzahlie-Mensah, 2017; Adzahlie-Mensah and Eshun, 2017). A key element of institutional colonialism is constant surveillance instantiated in the school timetable when usually framed as disciplinary device (Foucault, 1977; Asunka et al., 2008; Akyeampong and Adzahlie-Mensah, 2018). In that context, this paper explores school timetable as a key public management device, that is, a vital surveillance tool for checking regularity, punctuality, and bureaucratic orderly arrangements (Foucault, 1995; Adzahlie-Mensah, 2015). I did not follow the pattern of human capital orientations that typically analyse the school timetable in terms of time spent on tasks, economic costs, or productive time use (Asunka et al., 2008). I draw on the works of Foucault (1977) and Bernstein (2000) to explore the school timetable as a national security matter, because, beyond the valorisation of particular knowledge forms (mathematics, science etc.), it promotes values, attitudes, and behaviours such as habits of obedience, order, and punctuality (London, 2002). What is privileged on the timetable and how the structured is operationalized at the school level fundamentally determines the development of the human capital potential and the kind of citizens that are produced through the school system.

This paper draws on critical theory to seek an understanding of the

school timetable from three dimensions: social regulation, knowledge production processes and absences such as the epistemic effects of foreign influences (Adzahlie-Mensah and Gyamfuaa-Abrefa, 2021). *The dimension of social regulation* relates to understanding social practices instantiated by the school timetable. This includes understanding the sources of disparagement and devaluation of some social practices to the consistent advantage of others. It also extends to understanding linguistic imperialism as colonizer: stealer of dreams, swallower of identities, the silencing of a people; the erasure of an identity; and, the cutting of a tongue (Macleod & Bhatia, 2008). As Irvin and Gal (2000:38) suggested, legislating one language constitutes erasure: the process in which ideology simplifies the sociolinguistic field, rendering some persons and their sociolinguistic existence invisible or less important.

The dimension of knowledge production includes examining the place of knowledges emanating from cultural histories and how "colonial constructions affect knowledge production with profound material consequences" (Dei, 2006:13). It encompasses understanding the de-legitimation of indigenous knowledges (cultural heritage and histories). It includes analysis of what and whose knowledge is important in the curricula, what and whose interests such knowledge serves, and how the curriculum and pedagogy serve (or do not serve) differing interests (Dune and Adzahlie-Mensah, 2016). This dimension encompasses understanding how Western theories and knowledges are 'incapable' of presenting a truer description of what influences the arts and politics of people living in ex-colonies and developing countries in general.

The dimension of absences covers understanding of the persisting "vocabulary of power" and discourses "located within traditions of western rationality" (Rizvi et al., 2006:251). This dimension encompasses questioning how international regulation of education has inappropriately de-legitimized and de-privileged Indigenous knowledges by validating only Western knowledge. It includes deep appreciation of the regulatory effects of international development goals on education and the consequences of development aid to education as a result of dependency.

In terms of education in ex-colonies and developing countries such as Ghana, the relevance of analysing the school timetable in terms of three dimensions is to understand the persistence of colonial practices, and the national security consequences. National security in this context is understood as the security policies and the strategies that are in place to achieve national objectives with the multiple dimensions of the global environment, as well as factors such as culture, international and domestic politics, economics, public policy, and advances in technology. My interest in this subject was occasioned

by queries two teachers raised while I was conducting research on schooling in Ghana.

> *You (researchers) are always researching but never questioning the colonial roots of schooling and why education seems to be so irrelevant to our national needs. (Teacher 1)*
> *…what will your research change about our present education system which is still following the colonial system with strong emphasis on only literacy and numeracy and not skill development which we need as a nation; … note that the colonial people emphasised those aspects because they needed only clerical staff to support their own skilled people. (Teacher 2)*

The teachers' comments ask fundamental questions about the privileges accorded to curriculum content on the school timetable. The arguments that the education system has strong focus on the literacy and numeracy are primarily due to the status assigned to English Language and Mathematics on the timetable being implemented in school. Thus, the questions are about curriculum relevance to addressing national security needs. In my reading, the teachers' attack on the 'value content' of the curriculum begs questions of the contents of the prescribed school curriculum and how it is structured on the school timetable. Their argument that the curriculum follows a colonial model suggests perpetration of traces of coloniality in school, and gives face to arguments by anti-colonial theorists that post-colonial education reforms in ex-colonies have not been critical of the bequeathed colonial systems (Adjei, 2007; Dei, 2004; Molteno et al., 2000). As Dei (2006) argues, all education reforms in Ghana have only built on, rather than critically reviewed of the inherited colonial education system. In sum, a curriculum that contributes to the perpetration of colonial modes constitutes a national security risk. Thus, the purpose of this paper was to explore and examine the nature of the school timetable and the national security implications.

The question of national security

National security means different things to different people. There are military understandings as well as non-military understandings that appeared mainly towards the end of the 20th century. As Holmes (2015: 19) puts it, there are all kinds of "national securities", including "economic security; energy security; environmental security; and even health, women's, and food security." There are such things as political security, human security, homeland security, cyber security to the extent that national security can be a dangerously ambiguous concept if used without specification (Cho, 2012).

Traditional military conceptions focused on the protection of national

survival, the desire and capacity for self-defence and the amassment of military armament, personnel and expenditure (Ebeh, 2015). However, the term has developed into what Romm (1993) described as focusing on protection of the state and citizens against all kinds of national crisis through the use of economic power, diplomacy, power projection and political power. For Romm, to possess national security, a nation needs to possess military might, economic security, social security, educational security, energy security, environmental security, health security etc. Therefore, national security has shifted to include purposeful action, which is subdued to the interests of state wellbeing and inner order (Teivāns-Treinovskis & Jefimovs, 2012). For Ebeh (2015). National security is a multidimensional process whose purpose is to safeguard national values. The most fundamental values of any nation are its survival, self-preservation, and self-perpetuation. Thus, national security understandings have moved to the stage where strategies are formulated with an understanding of the nation's values, purpose and strategic culture, including an appraisal of the challenges and opportunities that affect the national interests – as well as the nation's ability to promote and protect them. As Ghana's national security strategy identifies education as a fundamental pillar in national security, it is expected that all measures possible will be implemented to ensure that the education system is free of foreign elements and the school timetable will privilege aspects that promote national values, cultural systems, and national purpose. It is in this context that analysing the national security implications of the school timetable becomes relevant to generating knowledge that adds significantly to national security thinking in Ghana and elsewhere.

About the research and its methodology

This paper is carved out of findings from an institutional ethnographic case study research conducted with qualitative methods (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2014). The case study institution was a hard-to-reach farming and fishing community rural school. The choice was informed by several reasons. First, I wanted a school where the students have deep sense of commitment to Indigeneity. Second, reviews of schooling in Ghana showed that rural schools have weak indicators of quality such as the least number of qualified teachers, the highest pupil-teacher-ratios and high incidence of educational underachievement and high dropout rates (Akyeampong et al., 2007). Third, research in Ghana consistently concludes that hard-to-reach farming and fishing communities have more problems related to schooling (Akyeampong et al, 2007). Fourth, such communities have high illiteracy rates and are inadvertently disconnected from the benefits that usually accrue from formal education.

The main economic activities of the people were fishing and farming.

The community had the three main religions (Traditional, Christian and Islamic religions) in Ghana. The main Ghanaian language used in the community is Fante, which is mostly spoken in the Central Region of Ghana. Although the community is approximately three kilometres from a municipal settlement, it had very poor roads that made access to the school very difficult. Therefore, I selected a hard-to-reach rural school as a typical case sample to understand how the dynamics can inform national security policy and strategy.

The study school defied the characteristics of a regular rural school. The overall GPI in the school was 1.2 in favour of girls. There was a high proportion of over-age enrolment at all grade levels. Daily absenteeism was high between 26% and 33%. The school had the full complement of teacher. This means that there are more females (69%) than males (31%) teachers in the school.

The research participants comprised fifteen (15) students purposively selected from Primary Classes 4, 5 and 6 (aged between 9 and 12 years). Seven (7) males and eight (8) females constituted the critical case sample. The inclusion criteria were students who spent their entire school life in the study school and who have been in the school for a minimum of four years. The sample was selected after longitudinal analysis of school Class Register of the students who were in the fourth, fifth and sixth grades. This was on the basis of previous research findings indicating that, students in those grades most frequently describe school as either "uninteresting or useless" (Akyeampong et al, 2007:43), and that dropout rates were higher in those at those grades (MOE, 2010, 2011).

Before data collection, permission was sought from the gatekeepers of the Ghana Education Service and teachers in the school. Each student was informed about the purpose of the research, their right to withdraw, my obligations to respect their decisions, and my duty to protect anonymity and confidentiality. To assure anonymity, the students were informed that pseudonyms would be used in the recording and analysing the data.

The data were collected using in-depth: unstructured and problem centred interviews, non-observations, and document analysis. I spent time to conduct in-depth, one-on-one, and group interviews with the 15 students. The interview questions were open-ended to allow students to share their experiences with the ways in which the school timetable regulated school life. Also, I spent time with significant others (teachers, the head teacher and other students), engaging them in episodic conversations about the school timetable. I used observation guides to observe everyday school activities at different times of the day: during early morning sessions, during lessons, and during special periods such as break time, library, and physical education periods, until saturation was reached. The documents analysed were the school timetable and the Head teacher's Handbook,

the main policy text that serves as the source of teacher authority.

The data collected using the different methods were not analysed separately but triangulated. Therefore, the data were analysed using critical discourse analysis. I generated organising themes and approached the analysis through inductive and recursive processes: dealing with patterns and categories themes that evolved during the data collection. I chose to analyse the absences within social regulation and knowledge production, instead of creating it as a separate analytical category. The analysis is socio-politically situated, deconstructing how institutionalised power dynamics are connected to national security concerns in the sider world.

Social regulation: producing the docile citizen

This first data analysis section examines the implications of the social regulation inherent in the school timetable. In the research school, I observed that the timetable was the main tool for official regulation. It presents the daily and the weekly series of events (e.g. morning roll call, morning assembly, and subjects to be taught each day) that pinpoint the main surveillance opportunities to check on students and to discipline them. The timetable outlined official daily activities that are to be carried out during school hours (between reporting and closing time). It specified when school opened (6.30am) and when it closes (1.30pm). Other activities specified were a silence period, assembly periods, break periods, registration, and the list of subjects to be taught in what class and at what particular times of the day.

I observed that the routines described in the timetable were key to the running of the school. For students, the timetable dictates when to report, when they are allowed to get out of the classroom for break and when they are allowed to go back home. The bellboys (two male students) constantly monitor the timetable and ring the school bell that prompts all members of the school to act according to the time (table). The first ring of the school bell requires that all students line up for early morning roll call. Students who were not in school by that time were regarded as latecomers. Then all students observe five minutes of silence inside their respective classrooms. During the silence period, no student was allowed to either move or make any sound. The prefects and seniors-on-duty patrolled the corridors and recorded the names of those students breaking the silence. Over time pupils through constant repetition come to perform this as normality and internalise the constructed form through self-regulation. Therefore, the cursory observer may argue, appropriately, that the school timetable provided the framework within which the head teacher and teachers inculcated habits of conformity, obedience, and discipline required of organised working populations. Its application reflected a function of moulding future workers with subordinate

values and behaviours necessary for the modern bureaucratic work place and its social order – regularity, routine, monotonous work, and discipline. However, critical analysis highlights some implications for national security.

Morning Assembly was an important activity outlined on the timetable. I observed that all students line up (form rolls) according to classes. Commands were issued as though students were at inspection parade and undergoing morning military drills. Time was spent during morning assembly to inspect students. Teachers could keep students standing at the Assembly for more than an hour. On one occasion, I observed morning assembly which was to last for 30minutes, started at 7.15am and ended after 8.30am. Before the students filed pass to their classrooms, a teacher–on–duty announced:

> *Head teacher se se owo kroa ka wo a, ye din na nkeka woho. In the classroom, make sure you pin your buttocks to the chair and do not make any move.*

The first part of the command literally translates:

> *Head teacher is commanding that even if a snake bites you, be quiet and do not make any move.*

My reflections on those moments indicated that teachers used the morning assembly to remind and re–assert their power, authority, and surveillance position over students. The threats in the teacher' s comments were dehumanising and unprofessional. It bespeaks imposition of a culture of silence and authoritarianism which traduces the promotion of democracy and a culture of human rights so poignantly proclaimed in the 1992 Constitution.

School worship (expressing collective devotion to God) is another timetable requirement. This happened on Wednesday mornings. Some students expressed their misgivings about school worship in the following comments.

> *...worship is not bad. We all worship in different ways. Sir, the problem is ... Everything is Christianity. If you don't do it, they will cane you. (Student 1, Male)*
>
> *I am not a Christian... but they will force you to do what Christians do when you come to school. (Student 3, Male)*
>
> *Sir, I am a Christian but the teachers don't have to cane people for coming late to worship. ...but here, teachers cane us because it is school. ... the problem is not worship but the teachers will say, 'everyone, close your eyes.' Then they cane people for not closing their eyes... We don't do that at church. (Student 7, Male Prefect)*
>
> *Last term they [teachers] asked me to pray at Assembly. When I started*

> *praying Muslim prayer the teacher asked me to stop. All the students were laughing... The teacher said 'you will pray again.' Then I prayed Christian prayer. (Student 10, Female Prefect)*

From a national security perspective, there are two important questions: Is this how schools sow the seeds of religious fundamentalism? Is it how schools are preparing students for religious intolerance? The comments also show both Christian and non–Christian students had problems with how teachers monitor conformity and regularity to school worship. What the comments reverberates is in two folds: a) how the school timetable is exploited to deny religious freedom in schools; b) the sense of powerlessness to challenge the imposition of Christian religious practices. However, society ought to wonder why a public school could not provide space for religious difference although religious freedom is entrenched as a fundamental human right in Chapter Five of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana.

What usually follows morning assembly was registration: the periods when teachers check student attendance to identify absentees and latecomers. Any student who was not in the class at that time was identified as absent. During instructional hours, class teachers maintain surveillance over students by ensuring that they do not loiter around or make 'noise'. The following interview quote highlights the nature of classroom regulation.

> *Sir, you cannot go out if it is not break time on the timetable. They will not allow you to talk... because they don't want people who are passing by the school to know that they are not teaching us. But teachers would walk around talking to each other even when the timetable say they should teach...*

Implicit in the comment is that compliance with the timetable is more rigidly enforced for students than for teachers. I observed that teachers, as the school management team, could disobey the timetable significantly without being disciplined, at least immediately. Students had little such freedom as the timetable regulated behaviour of students. For the students, contravening the timetable was regulated fiercely whereas the head teacher and teachers contravene with impunity. I observed also, that teachers do not usually follow the school timetable or the ring of the school bell to teach the subjects as required. Teachers chose how many subjects to teach in the day or in the week, and at what time. This shows how the timetable created social classes by empowering one group (teachers) with power over the other group (students). This culture bespeaks how the school system supports the political classism in Ghana where leadership in society governs with impunity.

Several interview comments provided evidence that students did not feel they had the right to question teacher authority. Typical comments included that

> *You mean what can we do or what? You cannot challenge the teachers. … maybe you can only stop school. Even if you talk … you bring more problems to yourself. Eh! You just keep quiet… what are you going to say? Eh! Who are you? Sir, forget… (Student 1, Male)*

> *Sir, you don't know what you are saying … because I told you that some of us the teachers beat us because we talk. If anyone talk or do anything they will cane him every day. Me every day they cane me. Even today Sir will cane me when we go to class, I know. (Student 2, Female)*

> *… if any student talk they will die. The teacher will cane you and cane you. Eeee! Maybe you can talk because you are not here or you are old but … no, we cannot talk. (Student 12, Male)*

Thus, the practical exercise of teacher authority in classroom discourse includes telling students not to talk in class (even when the teacher was absent from school). Any sound considered 'noise' was severely punished. Students would remain quiet in their respective classrooms until the bell rings and the bellboy announces, "closing please." The effects of such schooling has been the validation of violence by the powerful (teachers) against the powerless (students), culminating in the production of docile citizens that do not support the promotion of participatory democratic culture (London, 2002; Molteno, 2000; Harber, 2004). It undermines the production of critical democratic citizens who can speak back to authority, thereby supporting a culture of silence in a society where leadership authoritarianism is encouraged and established. These characteristics pose great threat to the survival of Ghana's democratic culture while providing pointers to how the school timetable contributes to some of the current challenges with the Ghanaian nation's democratic experiment.

Knowledge production: disparaging national identity and cohesion

This section explores the knowledge production practices and processes inherent in time allowed for the various approved national curriculum subjects on the school timetable. What is noted is that the Ghanaian school system uses a nationally delivered curriculum where knowledge is pre–determined and forwarded to schools. This national curriculum is a statement of the knowledge that all students attending school from five (5) to sixteen (16) years should learn in school (Adzahlie–Mensah, 2014). My analysis here does not seek to challenge the use of national curriculum as

> …the highest achieving systems – almost without exception – express this entitlement in the form of subjects. It is subjects which give stability to

> a curriculum and provide the boundaries within which teachers establish their professional identities and pupils [students] develop their identities as learners. This does not mean that all such curricula are the same: they vary in content to reflect different countries' history and culture. (Institute of Ideas Education Forum, 2012:4)

What I did was to follow traditions of curriculum analysis by exploring students' and teachers' perspectives on the curriculum relevance in terms of content emphasised – approved subjects on the school timetable and time allotted to the various subjects.

In terms of approved subjects, I looked at the subjects allowed on the school timetable. At the time of the research, the school timetable indicated that the approved subjects for the Lower primary were Creative Arts, English Language (including Library), Ghanaian Language, Mathematics, Natural Science, Religious and Moral Education (RME), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and Physical education (PE). The Upper Primary subjects were Creative Arts, Citizenship Education, English Language, Ghanaian Language, Mathematics, Integrated Science, ICT, RME, and PE. The essential contents (broad themes, topics, sub–topics, and specific objectives for each lesson) to be taught in each of these subjects is detailed in an approved teaching syllabus for various subjects.

One clarification to put forward is that, listing the subjects to be taught draws the contours between 'sacred' and 'profane' knowledge (Bernstein, 2000), occasioning 'insulation' (Muller & Taylor, 1995) where the standard or delivered curriculum prohibits transgression. Insulation is a curriculum model which presents some knowledge as sacred, in that, it stresses purity (Muller & Taylor, 1995) by invalidating other knowledges that are not recognised because what should be taught is pre–determined. Even when a standard curriculum is used, it eulogises particular systems of knowledge, and the forms and standards of judgement proper to them. Teachers become retailers of knowledge with a responsibility to peddle the formal curriculum. This positions teachers as authoritarian transmitters. This is because, in the social theory of Emile Durkheim, the sacred represents the interest of a group while the profane represents mundane concerns. From a security perspective, the delivered curriculum subject privileged on the timetable must be carefully evaluated and linked to national goals.

However, students' comments of the curriculum did not support that the delivered curriculum addressed national goals. Some student comments on the curriculum subjects were:

> *Sir, we need subjects that help us to know our community! (Student 5, Male)*

Please Sir, some of the subjects are not useful to us. Why can't we learn about agriculture? (Student 9, Male)

Why should we learn in English? Why is it that only Fante teacher teach in Fante? (Student 14, Female)

These comments concern curriculum relevance and the marginalisation of Indigenous knowledge. The comments are identical to traditional findings about the Ghanaian curriculum in which it is argued that students are disenfranchised and disengaged from the knowledge that is being produced, validated, and disseminated in schools (Adjei, 2007). Time allotted to various subjects on the timetable of the lower primary classes (Primary One to Three) is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of periods allocated to subjects taught in Lower primary

Subject	Number of Periods per week	Number of Minutes per week	%
Mathematics	10	300	23.2
English Language	11	330	25.5
Natural Science	4	120	9.3
Creative Arts	1	30	2.3
Physical Education	4	120	9.3
Ghanaian Language	3	90	6.9
ICT	5	150	11.5
Religious and Moral Education	5	150	11.5
Total	43	1290	100

Source: Field data from School Timetable

The table shows that in each week, 25.4% of all teaching time is allotted to English Language, Mathematics (23.2%), ICT (11.5%) and RME (11.5%). Natural Science and Physical Education were each allotted 9.3% of all teaching time. Ghanaian language was allotted three (3) periods representing 6.9% of the teaching time whereas Creative Arts was allotted 2.3%. The following table shows the time allotted to subjects in the upper primary.

Table 2: Number of periods allocated to subjects taught in Upper primary

Subject	Number of Periods per week	Number of Minutes per week	%
Mathematics	10	300	23.2
English Language	11	330	25.5
Integrated Science	4	120	9.3
Creative Arts	2	60	4.6
Physical Education	4	120	9.3
Ghanaian Language	4	120	9.3
Citizenship Education	1	30	2.3
ICT	5	150	11.5
Religious and Moral Education	2	60	4.6
Total	43	1290	100

Source: Field data from School Timetable

The table shows that in each week, 25.5% of all teaching time is allotted to English Language, Mathematics (23.2%) and ICT (11.5%). Integrated Science, Physical Education and Ghanaian Language were each allotted 9.3% of all teaching time. Ghanaian language was allotted three (3) periods representing 6.9% of the teaching time. RME and Creative Arts were each allotted 4.6% (30 minutes) of teaching time. Citizenship Education was allotted 30 minutes representing 2.3% of all teaching time.

It is evident that if content coverage is understood as concerned with "the influence of the curriculum on learners' opportunities to learn" (Mereku et al., 2005:10), then the official school curriculum provides about four times more opportunities (25.5%) for the students to learn about English language, culture and identities than their indigenous linguistic and cultural identities (6.9%). At the same time, English language is used as the official language and language of instruction. This suggests, for example that, if language is a carrier of culture and an important component of cultural identity (Fordham, 1998; Bhat, 2008), then the students learn more about English culture and identities than their indigenous culture in school. This is a serious national security risk as it produces citizens that are not connected to ethno-knowledge and national cultural identity as a people. In that sense, the school timetable disparages national identity, destroying cultural forms by imposing a foreign language as the language of instruction.

In terms of Creative Arts and Citizenship Education, the curriculum provides marginal opportunities. It allots only 4.9% representing 60 minutes out of the 1,290 minutes of total teaching time to teaching Creative Arts in the upper primary. The lower primary has less – 30 minutes (2.3%) out of the 1,290 minutes of total teaching time. Citizenship Education – a subject focused on learning about the nation and developing citizenship values, attitudes and skills – is not taught at all in the lower primary. And only 30 minutes or 2.3% of total instructional time per week is allotted for Citizenship Education in the Upper Primary timetable. These would suggest that the basic school curriculum has much less regard for developing creative skills and national consciousness among students. This would suggest that the timetable has national needs (development of national consciousness, citizenship values, national culture, and historical identities etc.) side-stepped.

Religious and Moral Education (RME) which primarily focuses on teaching religious knowledge was allotted 11.5% of the total teaching time in the lower primary. This indicates that there is more concern for developing the religious knowledge to the consistent disadvantage of national consciousness among students.

Overall, the discussions in this section highlight arguments that some of the problems of schooling in Ghana "can be attributed to the dismal failure of the postcolonial state to change the existing system so that it reflects changing times, circumstances and social realities" (Dei 2004:6). The effects are a redaction of the opportunities for education in local systems of thought, the development of citizens with proper sense of Indigeneity, social cohesion and national trust. The time allotted to the delivered curriculum subjects on the timetable have epistemic effects evidenced by the marginalisation of Fante, the local language, in favour of English language. This can set up tensions about the value of formal

education which I have discussed in an earlier paper (See Adzahlie-Mensah et al, 2017). As such, the Ghanaian nation needs to take a more serious look at education policy making and curriculum reform with a sense of national survival, development, and identity.

CONCLUSION – National Security Implications

This paper, highlighting the nature of the timetable makes it a matter of national security concern. In its present form, the Ghanaian Basic School timetable inhabits deficits in knowledge production processes in addition to epistemic effects of privileging a foreign language. The timetable's control over students and the ways it is enforced by authority figures undermine the production of critical democratic citizens. In terms of knowledge production, the time allotted to various subjects constituted a devaluation and disparagement of Citizenship education and Indigenous knowledge. The national security risks are many. The first risk is the production of two oppositional sets of citizens that pose threats to the sustenance of participatory democracy. One group is an authoritarian cluster of national leaders that do not encourage participatory democratic civic engagement. The other group comprises docile followers who are products of a violent school system. These sets of citizens are not the kind of citizens required to sustain Ghana's democratic development. The second is the devaluation of indigeneity, leading to the production of citizens without a civic identity and commitment to the nation. The emphasis on English language on the timetable de-privileges indigeneity, negatively affecting the development of citizens with proper sense of nationhood, social cohesion, and national trust. An education system that produces these outcomes poses great national security risks – decontextualizing beneficiaries and traducing the developmental externalities of formal education as stipulated within Ghana's National Security Strategy (2020). The Ghanaian nation must take a more serious look at the school timetable as part of education policy making and curriculum reform if it hopes to achieve national objectives stated in the National Security Strategy.

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