

## **Challenges of Single Spine Salary Structure in Ghana**

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### **Abstract**

*The Single Spine Salary Structure is one of the major components of the Single Spine Pay Policy introduced by the Government of Ghana and implemented in 2010, to regulate the payment of public service workers especially those under article 190 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. Notwithstanding the well-crafted nature and the objectives of the policy, its implementation has suffered challenges. Analysis of data collected in 2015 reveals some of these challenges including high public expectations, dissatisfaction with the grading structure by some workers, inadequate financial and human resources facing the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission, and inadequate education on the policy and allowances of workers. This has generated a lot of conflict among competing stakeholders including suspicions, disagreement and strikes in the process. The challenges indicated above have undermined the full realization of the policy. The article offers some recommendations to address the challenges including high collaboration by the stakeholders, de-politicization of the process, financial availability by government to handle accommodation, massive education and among others.*

**Keywords:** Ghana, fair wages, single spine salary policy, salary

### **Introduction**

In many developed and developing countries especially the democratic ones where political power resides with the people, government's actions and inactions either increase governments' popularity and support or electoral defeat, hence the need for public policies to help solve societal problems or

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challenges. In other words, implementation of policies is very paramount in sustaining various governments in many countries. Policy implementation is often considered as an aspect of the policy making process (Hill, 1997:215) and these processes are interconnected to the extent that change in one stage may affect the outcome of another (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984).

Before 1970s, policy implementation was seen as direct activity without much difficulty. This is because it was assumed that once a policy was made, implementation would follow suit (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995). The study of Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) came to nullify this idea and brought implementation issue to the lime light. Implementation therefore came to be seen as a complex activity and as such could not be 'simply classified as a technical exercise involving calculated choices of appropriate techniques' (Turner and Hulme, 1997).

Matland (1995) is of the view that the literature on implementation theories has moved through three phases. The first phase ranged from the 1970s to 1980s then followed by the second phase from 1980s to 1990s. The third phase of research is from 1990 and onwards (Goggin et al, 1990; Hill and Hupe, 2002; Howlett and Ramesh, 2003; Schofield and Sausman, 2004). Goggin et al. (1990) were of the opinion that the first phase focused specifically on 'how authoritative decision was carried out, either at a single location or at multiple places.' The works of Pressman and Wildavsky (1973), Bardach (1977) and others played a significant role in the first phase of implementation studies.

The second phase of writing focused on searching for useful theoretical perspectives and frameworks on implementation. The work of Elmore (1978) was important during this phase. The third phase of implementation studies was championed by the work of Goggin et al. (1990). This phase was concerned with making implementation process more scientific by testing for empirical evidence rather than building of theories.

It is interesting to note that, for policy implementation to be effective there is the need to consider clear goals or objectives, implementation design, and adequate resources for the entire program. Some problems of policy implementation failure include "inability of principals to formulate clear policy outcomes or to adequately supervise the implementation of their goals" (Spillane et al, 2002:390). In many developing countries in which Ghana, Togo and Nigeria are not exceptions, there have been bad records of policy

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implementation due to inadequate political commitment, inadequate resources, inadequate involvement of agencies and beneficiaries expected to implement the plan (Kjaer, 2004). In countries of Latin America, Africa and Asia, public policies most of the times do not get implemented. However, those projects which get implemented often are different from the original framers' intentions (Aye, 1994).

Even though these obstacles have not been well addressed, Rondinelli (1982:52-54) indicated that in developing countries policy objectives are mostly imprecisely defined; policies are based on guess work; imaginative accounting in the absence of enough knowledge about the effect of programs; and political consideration. This process of policy implementation in developing countries becomes a competition due to their political systems, remoteness of policy making process to the people and scarce resources (Theleyani, 1990; Yeboah, 1990). According to Riggs (1970), political activity is focused on the input stage of the policy process in developed countries, but in developing countries they occur at the output stage. To Kjaer (2004), because the clientele is unable to exercise political influence to change the rules, its primary strategy involves direct pressure upon the officials concerned with policy implementation.

Countries implement policies to help solve societal problems in which Ghana is not an exception. Policies cut across education, health, environment and salaries to mention but few. According to Co-EN Consulting<sup>1</sup>, some of the countries that practice SSSS include Zambia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, United Kingdom (UK), Hong Kong, Thailand, Cambodia, India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Ghana is among developing countries that face implementation challenges as far as the Single Spine Salary Structure (SSSS) is concerned, hence the selection of Ghana.

The SSSS is the salary and one of the major components of the Single Spine Pay Policy (SSPP). The SSPP has four components out of which the SSSS forms part. Out of the four components, it is only the SSSS that has been implemented. The SSSS has a 25-level grade structure with 189 pay notches. If this pay points are arranged like one block on the other, it looks like human spine hence the name 'Single Spine.' The SSSS involves all public service workers irrespective of the type of public organization and area of specialization, to be placed on one common salary structure

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The SSSS includes public service workers who fall under article 190 of the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana. These include those in the Civil Service, the Judicial Service, the Audit Service, the Education Service, the Prisons Service, the Parliamentary Service, the Health Service, the Statistical Service, the National Fire Service, the Ghana Revenue Authority (the Customs, Excise and Preventive Service & Internal Revenue Service), the Immigration Service, the Legal Service, public corporations other than those set up as commercial ventures, public services established by the Constitution and such other public services as Parliament may by law prescribe (Constitution of Republic of Ghana, 1992). It has a common base pay and common pay-point relativity across all the levels.<sup>2</sup> The base pay for the SSSS was GHS (Ghana cedis) 1,108.08 per annum when it started in 2010 (Daily Graphic, July 1, 2010). The base pay increased to GHS 1,898.55 in 2014 (Baah, 2015).

The importance of SSSS cannot be overemphasized. It eliminates multiple pay structures and places all public service workers on the same spine. If properly and fully implemented the SSSS would reduce disparity and distortions in the salary of public workers, and better management of salaries making it easier to estimate emoluments. Before the implementation it was hoped by stakeholders that the SSSS if fully implemented, would help improve the living standards of public service workers in Ghana. According to the then president of the Republic of Ghana, J.E.A. Mills “the near implementation of the Single Spine Pay Policy (SSPP) is a clear manifestation that the government is committed to improving the lot of teachers here on earth” (Daily Graphic 2010:1&3).

Prior to the adoption of the SSSS, various governments since independence in 1957 set up commissions and committees with the ultimate objective of addressing distortions and disparities in the salaries of public service workers. However, after the introduction and implementation of the SSSS the problem of inequities for which the SSSS was to address still exists. This has generated agitations and strike actions by the various labour unions. These agitations have evolved to become a complicated one and present no easy solution. Government in collaboration with Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC) has also held numerous meetings, conferences and workshops to find lasting solution to these agitations. There has been an establishment of Public Services Joint Standing Negotiating Committee (PSJSNC)<sup>3</sup> since 2010 to resolve conditions of service, pay negotiation on base pay, common allowances and other conditions of service between government and organized labour.

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This article assesses the implementation of the SSSS which is the salary component of the Single Spine Pay Policy (SSPP) after the introduction in 2010. It will also look at the reasons for the challenges in its implementation. The article ascertains the impact of the SSSS as a pay policy. Finally the article suggests solutions and recommendations to the success of the policy.

Methodologically, this study employed collection of data from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data involves data gathered by researchers for analysis. Secondary data for the study comprises of literature on official publications, articles, seminar papers, Daily Graphic newspaper, University dissertations that cover policy implementation and pay policy relevant to the topic, textbooks and internet. The article adopted purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is adopted to discover, understand and gain in depth knowledge (Merriam, 2000; Tagoe, 2009).

With respect to the sampling technique indicated above, there was the need to identify certain individuals with in-depth knowledge on the formulation and implementation of the SSSS in Ghana. Due to this data was collected from the major stakeholders including Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC), Ministry of Finance (MoF), Controller and Accountant's General Department (CAGD), Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR), Trades Union Congress (TUC), National Labour Commission (NLC), Ghana Employers' Association (GEA), and other Labour Unions (Ghana Medical Association, University Teachers Association of Ghana, and the Ghana National Association of Teachers ), all in the Greater Accra Region. This is because all the labour unions and the other bodies have their headquarters in the Greater Accra Region. Again all the agitations have been circulating around them.

The data collected was analyzed qualitatively. Specifically, a qualitative content analysis of the data collected was carried out. This kind of analysis according to Bogdan and Biklen (1992:145 cited in Tagoe,2009) involves " working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what to tell others." To Creswell (2007), it involves preparing and organizing data for analysis, and then reducing data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and then representing data in figures, tables, or a discussion. This type of analysis was developed initially to analyze and interpret texts. It was recently applied to verbal data including emails, archival materials, interview transcript to mention but few. This implies that qualitative

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content analysis is employed in dealing with data that involves interpretation. When the materials have been translated into the categories of coding frame by the researchers, then classification of the successive parts of the material based on the categories was carried out. One of the importance of using qualitative content analysis is that large quantum of data is analyzed systematically and precisely. In other words, it makes data to be flexible, systematic and also reduce it into manageable size for analysis (Burnham et al., 2004). In this article data collected through interview were categorized in a form of description, narration with the use of words, field notes and quotations from respondents voices (Creswell, 2003). And they were organized into themes that reflect the objectives of the study.

**Theoretical Framework**

This article adopts the theory of Complexity of Joint Action. The proponents of this theory are Jeffrey L. Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky. It involves many actors with multiple decisions and clearance points in order to ensure successful implementation. This theory originates from their classic study of Economic Development Agency (EDA) project in Oakland, California, in 1973. In any policy formulation and implementation which involves a lot of actors, there exist different interests. These interests may be channelled to be included in one way or the other into the policy process. This makes the dimensions of the policy complex and frustrates the achievement of the policy goals due to delays, obstructions and bureaucracy. Policy implementation becomes complex due to “changing actors, diverse perspective and multiple clearances” (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984:93). Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) observed that the Oakland project depends on complex joint action involving a lot of actors, with diverse viewpoints (because of their preferences, available resources and the extent to which they commit themselves), and many decision points.

This article aims at assessing the implementation of SSSS in Ghana and the inherent challenges connected to it. By using the variables by Pressman and Wildavsky in the theory of Complexity of Joint action to ascertain if the SSSS has achieved its results, it will help identify the main actors and participants in the implementation of the SSSS and the challenges they faced. Again, it will help us determine the impact of the SSSS on public service workers. Also, it will help to find out the effects of SSSS on public service workers through their Labour Unions about the challenges they faced during the implementation.

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### **Results and Discussions**

The SSSS is one of the well-crafted policies towards improvement in salaries of public service workers in Ghana. Its objective is to ensure equity. However, the implementation has received setbacks. This section presents the findings from the field carried out in 2015 and discusses the findings alongside the literature related to this study. The findings of the article were extracted from the opinions of experts in the field through interviews and secondary source of data.

### **Actors and Institutions**

Actors and institutions play an important role in the policy process. It is important to note that some roles may be considered higher than others depending on a particular point in time. Stakeholders in the policy process have their own interests but these interests are shaped by institutional factors (Sapru, 2010). The key institutions and actors in the implementation of the SSSS are Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC), Ministry of Finance (MoF), Labor Unions, Controller and Accountant General's Department (CAJD), Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations (MELR), National Labor Commission (NLC), Public Service Organizations and Ghana Employers' Association (GEA).

Critical analysis of the interactions between the institutions in the implementation of the SSSS is paramount to all the stakeholders. The interactions help to unravel the challenges in the process of implementation. For the purpose of this article, this part looks at the interactions between the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC), MoF, and Public Service Organizations, and Organized Labour and the NLC. The FWSC is the government agency responsible for the implementation of the SSSS.

### ***FWSC, MoF and Public Service Organizations***

The FWSC is the main institution mandated to implement policies with respect to salaries in the public service especially those under article 190 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. The FWSC cannot work alone without the assistance of the MoF and the various public service organizations. This is due to the fact that the SSSS as a financial instrument is supposed to be drawn from the Consolidated Fund<sup>4</sup> for the payment of the public service workers. The government has the duty of releasing these monies through the MoF and then the Controller and Accountant Generals Department (CAGD).

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The FWSC meet these public service organizations to review and confirm the correctness of individualized employee information, compare individual consolidated salary amount with the amount corresponding to their pay point, determine if individual's consolidated pay is within, higher, or lower than the pay point for the jobs' designated grade, and finally review the individual and institutional allowances and conditions of service. It is after this validation that payments can be done. With respect to SSSS, the Human Resource (HR) managers in the various organizations were trained to migrate their members onto the SSSS and submit the data to the FWSC for validation. There were instances where forms that were given to the HR managers had delayed in return to the FWSC without the knowledge of their members. This made the members to agitate for those whose details have delayed to be placed on the new pay structure. An official at the FWSC had this to say with respect to the reasons for the agitation. According to him,

So when they submit it, our people verify what they bring about every public service worker. So they check your staff ID (developed by CAGD); so once it is entered every information about you will come out. Why do we check ID? We check it because at the time we were migrating people, some institutions who employed some staff and used their internally generated fund to pay them, wanted to transfer them. For example in the health services and many schools, most of their accountants, cleaners, and cooking staff are not on the Controller payroll. So when we were migrating people, some institutions saw it as an opportunity to offload that burden of their staff to government. Some were also paying allowances that have not been approved by Ministry of Finance and Controller through their internally generated fund. So when we realized that you are paying allowances that you are not supposed to pay, we take it off. So you see the reason why we incurred the anger of some institutions and they keep insulting us?<sup>5</sup>

Interviews with staff of the MoF and CAGD also reinforced this challenge. From the interviews, it was gathered that the delay was not only due to the inability of the HR managers of some public service organizations but also delay or outright non-release of monies for payment purposes. A lot of implementation studies have revealed the consequence of resource constraint on implementation (Grindle and Thomas 1991). Grindle and Thomas (1991) indicated that resources- managerial, political, technical, and finance –are the ingredients for successful policy implementation. In view of the Single Spine

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Salary Structure, finance and managerial resources are the major resources for its operations.

Additional interviews with an official of the FWSC revealed that various attempts by the institution to resolve the issue of delay and disagreement have proved futile with some public services. However, the FWSC has not given up on performing their duties. He stated; *...the civil servants have maintained a combative stance and have refused to attend meetings to discuss issues. However we are not going to relent on our efforts to curb this delay.*<sup>6</sup>

In a bid to find the reasons for the delay and sometimes non-payments of salaries, an interview with an official of the Ministry of Finance (MoF) revealed that the red-tape of the public service was the factor hindering the fast delivery of migration and subsequent payment of salaries on the SSSS.<sup>7</sup> This notwithstanding, other factors such as using the money to finance other governmental projects have been revealed in interviews with other respondents.<sup>8</sup>

#### ***FWSC, Organized Labour and the NLC***

There have been confrontations between the FWSC and the various unions over the salaries of their members before and after the implementation started in 2010. This happened when some unions realized that their members have been wrongly placed on the grade structure after the job evaluation. They therefore sent petitions to the FWSC for their jobs to be re-evaluated. The Price Water House Coopers began the re-evaluation of about 350 jobs in 2010. In situations where the unions are unable to resolve their issues with the FWSC, they present their petition to the NLC for redress. For instance, Civil and Local Government Staff Association of Ghana (CLOGSAG) threatened not to be part of the process of the implementation of SSSS because their members would be made worse off (Daily Graphic, March 3, 2010: 24-25). Attempts to settle some of the differences with the FWSC were very difficult. In another instance, CLOGSAG staged a demonstration against the FWSC on the negotiation of the 2010 salary and conditions of service. A Daily Graphic report captured the mood of the demonstration: "It was peaceful but later turned into confusion when they refused to wait for their leaders at Independence Square. The leaders were conveyed to the Castle to present their case. The Deputy Chief of Staff, Mr. Alex Segbefia received the petition on behalf of the president and assured them the government would give it a due consideration". An interview with officials also confirmed it.<sup>9</sup>

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Another issue in point was the disagreement between Ghana Medical Association (GMA) and FWSC over the payment of Conversion Difference (CD),<sup>10</sup> GMA took the case to NLC for settlement. NLC issued a directive to FWSC to restore the CD of the members of the GMA. When the FWSC was aggrieved and dissatisfied with the directive of the NLC, on 6 June 2013, it filed an application at the Fast Track Division of the High Court to seek a Judicial Review to annul the directive. The NLC and GMA failed to file any response in opposition to the application, even though they were served with the court processes.<sup>11</sup>

Failure of the Respondent (NLC) and the interested party (GMA) to oppose the application within the limited time by law implied that GMA and NLC had admitted the allegations contained in FWSC's affidavit which was attached to the application. Finally the court annulled the directives of the NLC. This deadlock between FWSC and the GMA showed up for deliberations at the Public Service Joint Standing Negotiating Committee (PSJSNC), but it was agreed the case should be allowed to exhaust all the court processes for lasting solution.

In another instance, Ghana Hospital and Pharmacists Association (GHOSPA) in their disagreement with the FWSC over their salaries presented their case to the NLC. The case was sent to the High Court when the NLC wanted to compel the FWSC to implement the ruling made in favor of GHOSPA by the NLC. In the end, the NLC and GHOSPA lost the case. The FWSC also met the unions under the PSJSNC to negotiate on issues of common interest.<sup>12</sup>

Other unions with similar challenges were not left out. For instance, the Federation of Universities' Senior Staff Association of Ghana (FUSSAG) and the University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG), embarked on industrial strike after migration onto the SSSS because their market premium was not extended and research allowances were not extended respectively. Health workers raised the issue of internal relativity distortions and lack of transparency in the placement of their job on the SSSS, though re-evaluation of jobs has been made, it has not improved the situation for the better (Ankomah, 2010). Ghana Prison Service Staff spoke about inequity and distortions in the process (Daily Graphic, July 9, 2010: 9).

This is an indication that most labour unions are not committed to help ensure smooth implementation of the SSSS. This is because if most of them had genuine case, they would have followed the due process in the court of law to resolve their challenges. On the other hand, all the labour unions cannot be

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wrong for only FWSC to be right with respect to salaries administration in the country.

#### **Effects of power play on the Implementation of the SSSS**

Resources availability is important for the success of every policy implementation and SSSS is not an exception. Therefore if the allocation of any resource (technical, managerial and finance) delays, it may affect the entire process. Throwing light on the implications of delays, another interviewee had this to say:

It has serious implications for us here. Since the entire policy is being implemented in phases within a given period of time, what it means is that a delay in one area would affect the entire program. We need to migrate everybody into the structure. When this doesn't happen the rippling effect is that section of workers may not receive their salaries on time.<sup>13</sup>

For workers to be migrated successfully into the new salary structure there is the need for the HR managers to do the migration of their staff and submit the letters to the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC) for validation. There have been instances where many HRs managers have failed to do the migration within the period of time given by FWSC. Delay in migration done by some individual institutions meant delay to be placed on the new structure.

After the migration is done, the documents are sent to the FWSC for mapping and validation, which also takes time to be accomplished. When this is done, the FWSC put a seal on the letter and sends it to MoF for another check. When the Ministry of Finance (MoF) is satisfied, they forward the letter to the CAGD for payment to be made. Time is needed for the entire processes. Therefore delay in any of the process has the tendency to raise agitations. These agitations need to be resolved to ensure smooth implementation of policies. These complaints do not affect the salary structure alone but has national security ramifications on the country. Coordination is significant in the successful implementation of every policy (Pachierie, 2012). Therefore confrontations and disagreements, for instance, between some of the key actors specifically FWSC, MoF and public service organizations on one hand and FWSC, Organized Labour and the National Labour Commission (NLC) on the other hand, hinder the implementation success of the SSSS. This is because all the actors must come

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into agreement and play their respective roles for the policy to succeed (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984).

#### **Challenges in the Implementation of SSSS**

The first challenge in the implementation of SSSS was high public expectation. It was observed that the issue of high public expectation was very critical. Before the implementation of the policy, unions were given promises by politicians that the new pay regime was going to change their lives. For this reason, workers had very high expectation that they would get very high salaries. This happened when the Ghana Police Service, being the first institution to be migrated onto the SSSS, experienced appreciable increase in their salaries. This fuelled the speculations that the policy was to make every worker better off. In an interview with an official of the FWSC, he noted, "...But as we started migrating everybody, they realized that this was a rationalization salary increases then they became disappointed."<sup>14</sup>

It is interesting to note that, apart from the high public expectations, the interviews revealed that many workers had problems with the grading structure as was developed by the Consultant. Job evaluation results were something some of the unions and institutions disagreed. The disagreement was to be expected because before a major pay reform of this nature would be undertaken, there was the need for massive job evaluation in the public service to make sure that the job content and the job descriptions of every worker were spelt out. This was not done. This means that job evaluation was done on the same weak structures that existed. An official of FWSC had this to say;

Somebody would say he is a driver so he should earn the same salary as another driver in another organization. But when you do an analysis of the job, because it's not about the individuals but the jobs, you notice that although there are some few roles that they are supposed to play, for several years and months, he hasn't got a vehicle. He will just come to office and sit down. This is somebody who on daily basis is overstretched. The key issue to be done was, once this driver is no longer needed, what they should have done was redeploy him to another area within the organization for him to work instead of still keep him as a driver. So when you do job content analysis of the two, you realize that they are not the same although they are all drivers. And they also do comparison of one organization to the other using job titles so that also brought about the

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challenges and agitations. They cannot use the job title to say that they have to be on the same level because the job content is not the same.<sup>15</sup>

In some instances, some workers did not accept the fact that other workers are on the same grade with them. And it brought some agitations and strike actions. Another official also had this to say;

...if you are a pharmacist and you always thought that if doctors are not there, am the next in line. You have always thought like that, but that one is perception. The reality comes and the score comes, and shows that you are at par with the nurses, will you take it easy? They don't understand that the nurses that do four (4) year course, post-secondary school course are at par with them. But they are all science base course, not that the nurse is doing say art course, they are all science students.<sup>16</sup>

This is an indication that if massive education had been conducted on job evaluation to make sure that job content and the job descriptions of every worker were spelt out in the public service, a lot of the agitations would not have occurred. It is important to point out at this juncture that, although there have been an increment in the salaries of Public Sector workers in Ghana which has led to increase in the Government of Ghana (GOG) wage bill, the SSSS is not the sole responsible factor but other government workers especially emoluments of article 71 office holders under the 1992 Constitution of Ghana.

Another challenge is inadequate financial, technical and human resources. The FWSC lacks logistics and adequate human resources that will help facilitate smooth implementation of pay policies in the country. The FWSC is the institution mandated by law (Act 737, 2007) to implement salary policies in the country. The implementation of the SSSS came at the point when the institution was trying to put its structures in place. Inadequate financial and human resources have been a big challenge to the institution. Lack of funds makes it difficult to employ highly technical officials both from the country and outside to manage critical aspects of the policy, and also to provide basic needs in the offices.

From the interview it was observed that the FWSC has no permanent apartment. They operate in a rented apartment and there have been instances where the institution has been in arrears of payment in rent. An official of FWSC had this to say; "The structures for the commission itself was not ready and once it was not in place, the required number of staff we needed were not in

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place but we were supposed to do this massive reforms. And when that happens it means that whiles you are working on the reforms, you are also trying to more or less put your structures in place” (Personal Communication, 2015).

One would think that an organization with this function would be equipped with all the resources to facilitate smooth running of salary related issues in the country. If any aspect of their functions is undermined, the entire policies related to salaries would be affected. On finance, the SSSS has led to an increase in government expenditure. The government of Ghana spends more than 60% of its current expenditure on salaries of workers in the country. The table 1 below shows the increment of salaries from 2010 in Ghana Cedis (GHS)<sup>17</sup> when the policy began.

**Table 1: 1 Analysis of Single Spine Salary Structure (2010-2014)**

Year	Base Pay(GHS) per annum	% increase	CPI Average	Real Wages(Index)
2010	1,108.08	-	336.5	3.29
2011	1,329.7	20%	365.8	3.63
2012	1,569.04	18%	399.3	3.92
2013	1,725.95	10%	445.9	3.87
2014	1,898.55	10%	515.0	3.68

Source: Paper delivered by TUC at the 2nd National Forum of the SSPP at Takoradi from 7 to 9 May, 2015.

For the purpose of this analysis, the year, base pay and the percentage increase would be relevant. From the table above, in 2010 when the implementation started, the base pay, i.e. the minimum pay on the structure, was GHS 1, 108.08. This means no worker could be paid below this figure on the SSSS. This figure however rose to GHS 1, 329.7 in 2011 at 20% increase on the previous year. With 18% increase, the 2012 base pay rose to GHS 1, 569.04. In 2013, the

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base pay also showed some level of appreciation over the previous year by GHS 1, 725.95 at 10% increase. And lastly, in 2014, the base pay rose to GHS 1, 898.55 at 10% increase. This indicates a significant increase in annual salary of workers on the SSSS even though the rate of percentages differs. It is important to point out that, the rate of increase in the base pay has been below inflation since 2012. Increase in government expenditure on salaries makes it difficult for the government to embark on other important projects across the country.

The payment on the SSSS is seen as a burden on the economy of Ghana which makes its sustainability difficult. According to Mr. Seth Terkper, a former Finance Minister, "the implementation of the Single Spine Salary Structure (SSSS) was to be cost neutral, but our research has shown that since July 2010 there has been a divergence of GHC 8 billion within the period and something needs to be done about this"(Daily Graphic, February 10, 2014:23).

It is important to point out at this juncture that, although there have been an increment in the salaries of public service workers in Ghana which has led to increase in the Government of Ghana (GOG) wage bill, the SSSS is not the sole responsible factor but other government workers especially emoluments of article 71 office holders<sup>18</sup> under the 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana and the Ghana Armed Forces. Another challenge was inadequate education. Some level of public education was done but did not get down well. How the various components were to be determined was not addressed. When some benefits like interim Market Premium (MP)<sup>19</sup> was introduced, virtually everybody felt that they were entitled to it. In point of fact, not all public service workers are entitled to MP. Its objective is to attract and retain critical skills in short supply to enhance service delivery and effectiveness in productivity.

It is interesting to note that, mostly in the public service, once one benefit is approved and somebody is enjoying, every worker wants to enjoy that benefit. In areas where some level of education was done, it is important to stress that, it was inadequate. The leadership of the unions was engaged. The leadership had to inform their members who fall under them. It was realized during the interview that some leaders told their members only things that are palatable and therefore arose their hopes for the policy. This was necessary especially in areas where the executives of the unions were seeking re-election. They sometimes started agitations in the interest of their members in order to pull other union members to their side. This was obvious in the education and health organizations that have a lot of unions.

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Another challenge was the issue of conditions of service and allowances. Majority of the workers' conditions of service had expired. Some expired as far back as 2007 and had not been renewed. And so the figures they saw as their conditions of service were very low and they (workers) wanted the figures to be renewed but that was not possible. This was because the reform was being implemented in phases. The FWSC wanted to migrate all workers before entering into allowances. So it delayed the implementation of the allowances. Another official also indicated, "this offered management to take unilateral decision in which they were not having the patience to wait which also created a lot of problems".<sup>20</sup>

**Conclusion**

In relation to general studies on implementation, the study identified that many studies have been done after the studies by Pressman and Wildavsky in 1984. Implementation was categorised into three phases. While the first focuses on research especially case studies, the other aspects focus on deficit in implementation and the reasons that account for that. Additionally, with regard to implementation in developing countries, the literature has shown some of the challenges that affect implementation. It was identified that leadership problems, lack of commitment by civil servants and politicians, inadequate resources, numerous actors, and lack of time are some of the challenges in the implementation. Moreover, the literature review revealed lack of political will, conflict and inadequate human resource as some factors affecting implementation in Ghana.

The Single Spine Salary Structure (SSSS) is the salary component of the Single Spine Pay Policy (SSPP) which has a 25-level grade structure with 189 pay notches. The SSSS is made up of all public service workers to be placed on one common salary structure. These workers fall under article 190 of the constitution of the Republic of Ghana. Among them include those in the Civil Service, the Judicial Service, the Audit Service, the Education Service, the Prisons Service, the Parliamentary Service, the Health Service, the Statistical Service, the National Fire Service, the Ghana Revenue Authority (the Customs, Excise and Preventive Service & Internal Revenue Service), the Immigration Service, the Legal Service, public corporations other than those set up as commercial ventures, public services established by the Constitution and such other public services as Parliament may by law prescribe. The SSSS has a common base pay and common relativity across all the levels. The base pay is the minimum pay on

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the SSSS, and the pay-point relativity is the percentage differentials between successive pay points.

However the SSSS excludes the Ghana Armed Forces and article 71 office holders of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana including the President, the Vice President, the Chairman and Members of Council of State, Ministers of State and their Deputies, the Speaker and Deputy Speakers and Members of Parliament to mention but a few. The SSSS eliminates multiple pay structures and places all public sector workers on the same spine. It also reduces disparity and distortions in the salary of public service workers, and better management of salaries making it easier to estimate emoluments in accordance with 'equal pay for work of equal value.

The article identified the main actors and their roles in the implementation of the SSSS. The key institutions and actors in the implementation of the SSSS are FWSC, Ministry of Finance (MoF), Labour Unions, Controller and Accountant General's Department (CAJD), Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR), National Labour Commission (NLC), Individual institutions and Ghana Employers' Association (GEA).

The actors have confrontations among and between themselves. These confrontations have some effect on the policy outcome of the SSSS which is settled through coordination. The result of the study confirms the Complexity of Joint Action model, in that, many actors as well as diverse perspectives, conflicts and multiplicity of decision points have contributed to the gap between the stated aims and the outcome of the SSSS (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984:93).

From the findings of the study, the following policy recommendations as well as recommendations for future research are made. The findings of the study indicated that not all the phases of the entire pay reform have been implemented. There is the need to look at the other phases of the policy and should be implemented with caution to avoid further disagreements and agitations. This means that all the process must be transparent and there should be a lot of engagement with the unions. Also, there should be provision of financial resources to enable the FWSC embark on massive public education for workers to know that it is not about salary increases but salary rationalization.

Another recommendation is in the area of provision of logistics like vehicles, stationary and computers. Institution of such nature must be equipped with modern technology to help in their operations. In many cases staff use their

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own laptops for office work. Government should also help in the effort to address the needed human resource constraints that affect the Commission. The Commission should recruit competent staff with requisite training and assisting in training the existing ones to better handle the technicalities of the policy. In addition, the researchers recommend that politicians should totally stay off the work of the Commission. Even though they do not dictate to the Commission per say, the tendency of promising labour unions is very high.

Further, the FWSC should get a library stocked with relevant materials to help staff and researchers with information on salaries and pay issues. The researchers realized in the process of the interview that some institutions are still paying some allowances that have not been approved by the MoF, so the FWSC should work hard to ensure that punitive measures are taken against such institutions in order to manage it or if possible be eliminated. The researchers further recommend that, there should be additional studies on the SSSS and its policy implementation. The studies should be done quantitatively to ascertain the progress of the SSPP and the challenges in the implementation with respect to the other phases.

**Notes**

1. CoEN consulting is the consultant that was appointed to advise government on a sustainable pay structure in 2006.
2. The base pay involves the minimum pay on the SSSS, while the pay- point relativity is the percentage differentials between successive pay points.
3. Public Services Joint Standing Negotiating Committee (PSJSNC) comprises of Government, represented by the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC), Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, on one hand, and Organized Labour on the other hand.
4. Consolidated Fund is where all revenues or other moneys raised or received for purposes of, or on behalf of the government).
5. Interview with the Chief Executive officer of Fair Wages and Salaries Commission, from February to May 2015 in Accra.
6. Interview with the Human Resource Manager of the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission, from February to May 2015 in Accra.
7. Interview with the Director, Grievance, Negotiations and Collective Bargaining of Fair Wages and Salaries Commission, from February to May 2015 in Accra.
8. Interview with representatives of Trade Union Congress (TUC), and the Ministry of Finance (MoF), from February to May 2015 in Accra.

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9. Interview with the representative of Civil and Local Government Staff Association of Ghana (CLOGSAG), from February to May 2015 in Accra.
10. Conversion Difference (CD) is the amount of money that are paid to workers to ensure that they earn at least their existing salaries, should the spine dictate an otherwise lower salary at the pay point.
11. Interview with the General Secretary of the Ghana Medical Association (GMA), on March 2015 in Accra.
12. Interview with the Chief Executive Officer of Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC), from February to May 2015 in Accra.
13. Interviews with representatives of Ministry of Finance, Trades Union Congress (TUC) and Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC), from February to May 2015 in Accra.
14. Interview with the Chief Executive Officer of Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC), from February to May 2015 in Accra.
15. Interview with the Human Resource Manager of Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC), from February to May 2015 in Accra.
16. Interview with the Human Resource Manager of Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC), from February to May in Accra.
17. Ghana Cedis (GHS) is the official currency of the Republic of Ghana One cedi is equivalent to about 4.5 dollars (GHS1 -\$4.5).
18. Article 71 office holders include: President, Vice President, Chief Justice, Speaker of Parliament, Cabinet Minister (MP) ,Cabinet Minister (Non MP),Minister of State (MP),Minister of State (Non MP),Regional Minister (MP),Regional Minister (Non-MP), Deputy Minister (MP), Deputy Regional Minister (MP),Deputy Minister (Non-MP),Dep. Regional Minister (Non-MP), Chairman and Members of the Council of State.
19. Market Premium (MP) is an allowance paid to employees whose services are technical but in short supply.
20. Interview with the Chief Executive Officer of Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC), from February to May 2015 in Accra.

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