

Full educational opportunities for all

There are certain points in time when simple decisions can be life changing for a child. For me, the decision to continue with a certain trajectory of education was one such turning point. I consider myself to be privileged in getting all the educational opportunities that I have had. While my parents are not well off by any standard, they did make the education of their children a priority. It was only after Senior High School that financial constraints pushed my parents to make important decisions on which trajectory their children would take.

Looking back I realise that the crucial altering point in my life journey so far was when I had the option of going to university or to teacher training college. I gained admission to both the university and teaching training college, but my parents did not quite have the financial means to pay for the costs of going to university. The decision of my parents (my mum especially) **to take out a loan to finance my admission and first year university fees has proven to be path defining for me.**

After completing my undergraduate degree programme, my parents have not had to spend any more money on the three masters level degree programmes I have studied on, nor on my current PhD education – as all of those have been funded through scholarships. As grateful as I am for these scholarships **I know that this all would have never been possible without the loan that financed my university admission fees.**

My parents managed to give me an opportunity that I seized with both hands. However many families in Ghana are less fortunate and are unable to provide such opportunities to their children. Many are not able to even put their children through Junior or Senior High School. For these students **one unpaid school fee tends to be a decisive moment that leads to drop-out of school.** Once children drop-out even for one term it becomes difficult for them to get back into the school system.

Families should be given support to enable their children to continue their education. This can provide the break badly needed, so that a child does not end up on the streets or fails to achieve their full potential. I strongly believe that **if all Ghanaian children of school-going age had the opportunity to complete education up to at least SHS level, it will have a big transformative effect** on the socio-economic and political fortunes of the country.

Hopefully we can one day achieve this; full educational opportunities for all.

2015 - *By E. A. Adu-Ampong*
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