



**GHANA CHAMBER OF
TELECOMMUNICATIONS**
M-Powering People. SIMpacting Lives

**GUEST OF HONOUR REMARKS BY DR. ING. KENNETH ASHIGBEY, CEO OF
GHANA CHAMBER OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS, AT Brain Battle Quiz Grand
Finale AT KEMPISKY CHRIST THE KING PARISH HALL, ACCRA ON SUNDAY
MARCH 15, 2020.**

My Grace the Archbishop Most Rev John B. Kwofie

My parents, brothers & sisters in Christ

My brothers & sisters of the Media

Distinguished Ladies & Gentlemen

Introduction

Some say the world revolves around mathematics. Others say the fundamentals of science should be set down before all else.

Either way, it is evident that both mathematics and science are important subjects essential to all aspects of life.

From attempting to push a circle through a square hole to displaying disgust and delight at the sour tang of a lemon, we are unconsciously exposed to the concepts of mathematics and science from a young age.

I studied to be an electrical engineer, but eventually my life path brought me here, as former MD of Graphic Communications, former COO at Multimedia and now CEO OF Ghana Chamber of Telecommunications. I can confidently say that I am using my skills in mathematics and science to make a strategic difference in my place of work today.

Throughout your basic and Junior High years, you are taught to count whilst learning how to speak as well as being trained to distinguish between a dog and a cat all at the same time.

Even in the sapping junior years of high school, emphasis is constantly being placed on the 'big three subjects' English, mathematics and science being taught simultaneously, with the latter two, at times, having more importance than the former.



So why is it that the importance of mathematics and science suddenly diminishes (to an extent, even disappears) in the most crucial years of secondary education?

Science, technology and mathematics are key skills

It is understandable that in a society as ours where the English language is dominant that the subject should be compulsory, but through which perspective does mathematics and science seemingly lose all credibility? Where, in the messy, chaotic corridors of high school, does the stress of managing finance and understanding the basics of life disappear to?

Today we live in a very fast world! Our society is evolving every day, every minute, every second with new technological advancement churning out by the clock. Yet these incredible scientific and technological discoveries also nudge a wide gap between the rich, the middle class and the poor as well as the developed, developing and under-developed countries. The inequality of economic resources too often imprisons young brains, even if they have the same capabilities as others. It is in line with the afore-mentions that STEM be made appealing to students to embrace to help bridge the technological gap we witnessing in Ghana and the African region as a whole.

Students are actors of development and hope

Students need to learn how-to live-in harmony with others and with nature. Whatever their differences in socio-economic class, religion or ideology, each can be a powerful actor of development.

I am happy to be part of those continuously creating an enabling environment that allow students to develop self-confidence, to feel the desire to learn and the duty to build together a world that has a solid foundation, in the face of the obstacles that appear every day in our societies.

I am happy with the continued implementation of mathematics and science as core subjects for students at the senior high school level, we need to teach the subject such we reverse the trend where some students cannot wait to complete SHS to drop the 2 subjects, with many adults and academics voicing concerns about the threatening shadow of mathematics and science illiteracy in Ghana looming over the horizon.

As the number of students losing interest in these subjects increase, so do opportunities in fields currently highly sought after in modern society; engineers, medical officers, health



practitioners, researchers and, most importantly, teachers, as after all, to improve education quality one must first educate the educators.

Educational systems must adapt to offer the same opportunities to succeed to all.

Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) is a big part of what students need to learn to get a chance at that success.

The teaching of mathematics is helpful for many other skills, such as implementing mathematical logic, analytical reading of texts, arguing, validating and correcting an approach, mathematical modelling, organization and data management, project management, personal and collective finance, entrepreneurial development...

Furthermore, teaching sciences and technology helps with creativity, development of a scientific culture, analytical research, logical suites (observation, questioning, experimentation, argumentation, production, practical achievements, concrete evaluation). It can also have an impact on society, through for example the protection of the environment. (Galamsey)

A large proportion of degrees being offered to high school leavers require the basic knowledge of mathematics and science which is nurtured throughout basic and high school, particularly in the senior years.

Even for degrees which do not require such pre-knowledge, it is only common sense that upon graduating from university, the student must find their own way in life depending on no one but themselves in order to gain independence. If this is the case, how will aspects of life such as budgeting and understanding the harmful effects of chemicals work out for the individuals who have shunned mathematics and science, believing them to be a 'waste of time'?

Finding ways to bring everyone along

Needless to say, mathematics and science should definitely be integrated in all we learn and study as they are vital to understanding how the world works as well as boosting the potential to succeed in life. Although there are arguments that students who do not enjoy these subjects will not benefit from forced education, so we need to make the teaching and learning fun and interesting. It should not be taught as rote subjects to chew pour pass and forget, but thought in ways to apply them in our daily lives .



I would recommend that teaching strategies need to be adjusted so that we democratize access to these subjects and give everyone an equal opportunity to innovate. Educational modelling makes difficult subjects much easier to understand.

Conclusion

On that note, I wish to extend my Congratulations to the winning team and would urge you all to apply what you learn in class to address critical needs in your community.

Knowledge is a means, not the end. As students take an active role in your community, learn from early age the necessary skills of teamwork, creativity, and self-confidence to lead positive change throughout your adult life.

Thank you all. God Bless Our Homeland Ghana

Tswa Omanyeye Abla Wo