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## **EFFECTS OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON THE OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF THE GHANA POLICE FORCE**

**Mark Kyei, Oscar Agyemang Opoku**

University of Cape Coast, Ghana

Email: kyeimark1@gmail.com, oscar.opoku@stu.ucc.edu.g

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### **Abstract**

The study was to establish the effect of the financial management practices on the operational performance of the Ghana Police force in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The study used a descriptive survey design of the quantitative approach. It targeted staff of Ghana Police Service in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The study employed census and questionnaire was employed to gather data from them. The questionnaire was analysed descriptively using frequencies and percentages with the aid of Statistical Package for Service Solution version 26. The study found that effective financial management practices have assisted in reducing, crime apprehension and prosecution, crime rate, crime detection and prevention, protection of life and property, as well as peace and tranquility. Factors that hinder the effective financial management practices in the Ghana Police force included; political changes/interference, timeliness of resources and finance, problems of accountability and transparency, and problems of bureaucracy and inefficiency. Therefore, the study recommended that the Ghana Police Service should ensure that liquidity policy is reviewed periodically. Also, the Ghana Police Service should strengthen the system of supervision for cash collection and disbursement. Moreover, the Ghana Police Service should ensure that there is analysis of performance and plans are compared to actual plans with budget. Furthermore, the Ministry of finance in collaboration with the Ghana Police Service should release resources and finance on time. Lastly, the Ghana Police Service should ensure that there is accountability and transparency as well as reducing the bureaucracy and inefficiency.

**Keywords:** financial management practices; operational performance; ghana police force; greater accra region.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Efforts to improve the quality of public financial management are becoming increasingly prominent around the world, with many nations in both the developed and developing world making significant and outstanding strides in improving public financial management and governance. Despite this, there is still more work to be done. A growing emphasis on fiscal management and discipline, priority of expenditure, as well as value for money, is being placed on the public sector landscape, which is fast evolving. As a result, it is even more critical that international donors, governments, national and local institutions, including regulators and professional accounting groups, collaborate in order to achieve long-term gains in public financial management, transparency, and accountability. The improvement of the quality of public service results is dependent on the effectiveness of public financial management. It has an impact on how financing is allocated to address national priorities, the availability of resources for investment, and the cost-effectiveness of public services, among other things.

Furthermore, if there is solid financial stewardship, accountability, and openness in the use of public monies, it is more than likely that the public will have better faith in public sector institutions (Simpson & Weiner, 1989). Governments must do it right since the consequences

will be felt across a wide range of disciplines, including aggregate financial management (AFM). - fiscal sustainability, resource mobilization, and allocation; operational management, including performance, value-for-money, and budget management; government, including transparency and accountability; and fiduciary risk management, including controls compliance, and regulatory oversight.

This study concentrated on finance, which is the lifeblood of every organization. Most at times, public organizations especially those in the government sector are not profit-oriented and, therefore, there is the need for proper financial management practices in those sectors, to ensure efficiency in its operations. Financial management in the public sector may comprise the mobilization of adequate funds from the economy in an appropriate manner, the allocation of these funds, and the disbursement of these monies in an effective and efficient manner. It is vital for a public financial management system to include the functions of revenue generation, resource allocation, and expenditure control (finance usage), among other things (Simpson & Weiner, 1989). The public sector in Ghana does generate a lot of funds and therefore there is the need to study, know and understand how these funds are managed in the public sector to enhance upon its service delivery to the people effectively and efficiently.

Financial management is very important to all organizations, whether private or public sector. In the private sector, financial management is a key aspect of the organization's general management strategy. To them the ability to manage finance effectively increase performance and has a huge impact on the ability to expand. To the public sector organization, Financial Management is equally important and the benefit could be immense. However, due to the main performance criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, and economy that is used to evaluate them, proper financial management in terms of maximization of profit may not be a priority but proper management of funds may increase productivity. The Ghana Police Service is not an exception.

Financial Management and control issues in the public sector have become the focus of increasing attention in recent years. The new philosophy or policy of accountability and management in public organizations advocate for qualified financial managers. For example; the financial resources of the Ghana Police Service until recently were administered rather than managed. They were charged with the responsibility of the delivery of services and Justice by statutory and financial regulations.

It is noted that the Ghana Police Service is solely funded by the government to provide security functions for the smooth running of the state. Therefore, the output they provide cannot be quantified and measured in monetary terms. There will be measure in terms of crime minimization and absolute peace and tranquility in the country and their ability to do so at a reduced cost to the nation. However, the study increase in crime over many years has led the government to consider and implement various means and measures designed to protect life and property deter and prevent, detect, punish and rehabilitate criminals. The frontline organization war against lawlessness is carried on by the police service. Such a major and high-profile service is worthy of closer examination which needs financial managers to involve themselves in planning, organizing, controlling, and strategizing limited resources.

Financial management in the public sector plays a very important role in the quality of operations and service delivery. It affects resource availability and investment into the operations of the public sector ministries such as the police. Public confidence in the public sector organizations such as the Ghana police force can greatly improve with proper and effective financial accountability, stewardship and transparency (Holtzblatt & Tschakert, 2011).

Factors such as weak financial management practices, gaps between planning, budgeting and implementation, poor accountability and transparency and poor monitoring and oversight affect the effective management of public financial management systems in many African countries including Ghana (KIPRA, 2018). For instance, World Bank (2005) indicates that, information on central government allocations to district assemblies' significant delays including information on resources and the actual transfer of funds to the various services under government including the police which increase the opportunistic tendencies thereby affecting the financial management process. Similarly, the Bank, (2017) identified poor cash planning, lack of liquidity, lack of information on cash balance and poor expenditure control as some of the factors affecting the operational performance of public services in Ghana.

These constraints impact heavily on the operational performance of the various government institutions including the Ghana police. In the police force, poor financial management practices have impact on their operational activities such as security, crime minimization, peace and tranquility in the country. However, many of the previous studies on public financial management practice has focused on the private institutions and other government agencies, furthermore, most have concentrated on the effect of financial management practices on financial performance. Relatively few have concentrated on its effect on the operational activities of the Ghana Police force. It is on this basis that the study seeks to assess the effects of financial management practices such as financial planning, budgeting, and public procurement and financial control practices on the operational performance of the Ghana Police service.

## **METHOD RESEARCH**

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. Hartman et al., (2019) indicated that descriptive survey research involves the collection of data on a sample of individuals by interviews or questionnaires on information such as the attitude, opinion, habits and any other social issues of interest. It is employed to describe the characteristics of the sample or characteristics of interest (Fisher & Marshall, 2009).

Fisher & Marshall, (2009) opined that descriptive study has several advantages; it allows for generalization from sample to the population. In this type of research, only one sample of subjects is studied and based upon characteristics of that sample, generalization is made back to the population where the sample is formerly chosen. it deals with things as they currently are (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore it is the dominant form of collecting data in the social sciences (Miskulin et al., 2002). It paints a picture of a situation by answering questions on who, what, when, where, and how (Zikmund et al., 2013).

The Ghana Police Service has the mission to “deliver services in crime prevention, detection, apprehension and prosecution of offenders consistent with the expectations of Ghana stakeholders. Their key functions include the

- Prevention and detection of crime,
- Apprehension and prosecution of offenders,
- Maintenance of law and order
- Protection of life and property (Almatrooshi et al., 2020)

The Greater Accra region has the smallest area amongst the 16 administrative regions of the country occupying a total land area of 3,245 square kilometres. It forms about 1.4% of the total landed area of Ghana yet the most populated region after the Ashanti region. According

to the Ghana Statistical Service website (2020) the population of the region is about 5,055,883. It is the most urbanized region in the country with about 87.4% of the total population of people living in the urban centers with its capital city being Accra (Odoom, 2020).

The region was created by the Greater Accra Region Law (PNDCL 26) on the 23 July, 1982. It is bordered on the North by the Eastern Region, on the east by the Volta Region, on the south by the Gulf of Guinea, and on the west by the Central Region. The latitude of Greater Accra Region is 5.564540, and the longitude is -0.225710 (Cunningham et al., 2020).

The Accra Police Regional Headquarters is located at Accra Central, near Tudu and Kantamanto. The Accra Regional command is made up of 14 police divisions, 42 districts and 110 police station and posts. All regional divisions have subdivisions to ensure flexibility and effectiveness in service delivery. With reference to this study, the Finance, audit and operations department are located within the regional and divisional offices. Thus, for the greater Accra region, the study concentrated on the divisional offices.

The population for this study consisted of 228 employees in the departments of finance, audit, administration and operations drawn from seven divisional headquarters in the greater Accra region as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Population of Study**

	<b>Finance</b>	<b>Audit</b>	<b>Administration</b>	<b>Operations</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Ministries</b>	8	8	10	9	35
<b>Nima</b>	7	7	8	9	31
<b>Airport</b>	10	8	8	9	35
<b>Tesano</b>	8	7	7	8	30
<b>La Nkwantanang-(Madina)</b>	7	6	8	9	30
<b>Adenta/Abokobi</b>	8	9	9	8	34
<b>Cantonments</b>	8	7	9	9	33
<b>Total</b>	56	52	59	61	228

In this study, census was conducted for the population. Thus, all elements of the population were involved in the study (228 respondents). This helps to captured the perception of all staff from the various department in the Ghana Police Service in order to wholly understand and examine the effect of the financial management practices on the operational performance of the Ghana Police Force.

Sampling is the process of selecting units from a population of interest so that by studying the sample we may fairly generalize our results back to the population from which they were chosen (Oliver, 2013). The simple random sampling method was used to select seven (7) out of the fourteen (14) divisions for the study. This is a technique where a group of samples is chosen from a larger group with each individual chosen entirely by chance and each member has equal opportunity of inclusion in the sample (Easton & McColl, 1997). The names of the division were written on a paper and placed in a bowl; the bowl was shaken to mix after every pick until the seven out of the fourteen divisions were chosen.

The purposive sampling method which is a non-probability sampling method was adopted for the study since it enabled the researcher to administer the questionnaire to respondents who are well versed in the finance and operational matters of the Ghana Police

Service. Head of Departments and employees from the key departments (finance, audit, administration and operations) were sampled purposively to provide the needed information for the study.

Primary data was used for the research; the secondary data was got from on-line studies of articles and publications. Primary data sources provide original first hand data for a specific research work or project. It is one of the most common techniques employed for surveys (Salkind, 2010). Data was gathered using questionnaires which are the main means of collecting quantitative primary data in a standardized way for consistent and coherent analysis. It is usually inexpensive and saves time (Roopa & Rani, 2012).

A structured questionnaire which contained closed ended questions was used to extract the relevant information for the study. According to Krasikova et al., (2011), questionnaire is made up of series of questions or items, which are written down for people to respond and later returned to the researchers. The questionnaire contained closed ended items and has responses from which respondents were asked to choose the one that applied to them. Section A of the questionnaire sought to elicit detailed information about respondent's demographic background as well as general information based on the parameters that define the respondent's background and which helped the researcher to carry out the required analysis. Parameters in this section include, gender, age, qualification, department and years of experience. Section B discusses financial planning practices, section C discusses financial control practices, D discusses financial reporting practices, cash management practices and F, the operational performance.

The variables were based on the research question to be answered. They were based on the factors that explain financial management practices and operations performance with respect to the study. The variable "Demographic factors" were measured using a multi-choice method which required the respondent to tick the desired option. The variables financial planning practices, financial control practices, financial reporting practices, cash management practices and operational performance were measured on a 5-point likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (DA) and Strongly Disagree (SA). The dependent variable (operational performance) was also measured using 5-point likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (DA) and Strongly Disagree (SA).

Bryman and Bell (2005) refers to validity as "a measure of how well a specific measurement of a concept, really gives an accurate picture of the concept" or the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure (Mason & Bramble, 1978). The reliability of a research instrument concerns the extent to which the instrument yields the same results on repeated trials (Mason & Bramble, 1978). To ensure that data collected for the study was reliable and valid independent review by supervisor and colleagues were used to judge and review the tool (Krause et al., 2001). Responses were used to update the questionnaire before the commencement of the study. Sampling error was minimized by using adequate sample size for the study. Response error was reduced by carefully constructing the questionnaire and non-response error was reduced because respondents willingly participated in the study.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to analyze the data. Responses from each item of the questionnaire were edited and coded for easy

classification. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented using frequency tables, percentages, measure of central tendency and measure of dispersion.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Characteristics of the Respondents

The study recorded some basic information or characteristics of the respondents. These variables included; sex, age, marital status, years worked in the organization, as well as qualification. There were 228 respondents as response rate. Out of this, females were 105 (46%) while males form 54 percent (123). Thus, males were little higher as compared to the females. This may be due to the male domination in the security service of Ghana. Also, majority (77%) of the respondents were found below 46 years. On marital status, a greater number of respondents (49%) were married, followed by 98 (42.9%) who were singled. Though, none of the respondent was a widowed, but 18 respondents were separated. Regards to the total number of years been in the organization, half of the respondents have served for more than 10 years while majority of the respondents have been in the Ghana Police Service for more than 5 years. This means that majority of the respondents have been working with the Ghana Police Service for long and were abreast with the issues regarding financial management and operational performance of GPS in Greater Accra Region. On the qualification of the respondents, Table 2 shows that most (140, 60%) of the respondents have first degree, followed by 70 respondents with masters degree and diploma (18, 8%). However, none of the respondent has a PhD or professional certificate.

### Financial management practices in the Ghana Police force in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana

Objective of the study sought to explore the various financial management practices in the Ghana Police force. In view of that, respondents' views or perception was examined on the various financial management practices of the Ghana Police force. Data from these respondents were analysed and presented in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that among the cash management practices in Ghana Police force, 35 (15.4%) strongly agreed that organizational prepares cash budget on monthly basis and this was supported by 153 (69.3%) of the respondents who agreed to this notion. However, 17 (7.5%) of the respondents disagreed to the statement that "organization prepares cash budget on monthly basis". Thus, majority of the respondents perceived that the organization prepares cash budget on the monthly basis.

**Table 2: Cash Management Practices in Ghana Police Force**

	SA	A	N	DA	SD
Organization prepares cash budget on monthly basis	35 15.4%	158 69.3%	18 7.9%	17 7.5%	0 0.0%
Organization analysis and forecasts cash flows	18 7.9%	158 69.3%	18 7.9%	34 14.9%	0 0.0%
Organization has effective billing and cash collection system	18 8.0%	105 46.0%	69 30.0%	36 16.0%	0 0.0%
Effective supervision of cash collection and disbursement	35 15.4%	53 23.2%	18 7.9%	88 38.6%	34 14.9%
liquidity policy is reviewed frequently	35 15.4%	53 23.3%	18 7.9%	105 46.1%	17 7.5%

On the analysis and forecasts cash flows, 18(7.9%) strongly agreed that the organization conduct analysis and forecasts cash flows and this was agreed by 158(69.3%) of the respondents. Nevertheless, only 36(14.9%) of the respondents disagreed to this notion “organization analysis and forecasts cash flows”.

Also, 18(8%) of the respondents strongly agreed that organization has effective billing and cash collection system, 105(46%) of the respondents agreed to this notion while 69(30%) of the respondents could not decide on it. However, 36(16%) of the respondents disagreed that the organization has effective billing and cash collection system. Therefore, most of the respondents perceived the organization as having effective billing and cash collection system.

Regarding supervision, 35(15.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed that there was an effective supervision of cash collection and disbursement, 53(23.2%) agreed to this notion while 18 of the respondents were indecisive. Nevertheless, 88 (38.6%) of the respondents disagreed to this notion and 34 of the respondents strongly disagreed that there was an effective supervision of cash collection and disbursement in the Ghana Police force. Thus, more than half of the respondents perceived weak system of supervision on cash collection and disbursement.

On liquidity policy, 35 (15.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed that it was reviewed frequently, 53 of the respondents agreed that it was reviewed frequently whereas 18 of the respondents could not tell whether it was frequent review or not. On the other hand, 105 of the respondents disagreed to this notion. In view of that, it can be said that more than half of the respondents disagreed that liquidity policy is reviewed frequently. This means that liquidity policy is not reviewed frequently.

Despite the fact that liquidity policy was not reviewed periodically, the study found that other equally important factors were put in place to ensure that cash management practices are properly done. This confirms the study by Agyei-Mensah, (2010) which shows that having a cash policy promote effective cash budgeting and helps the business invest surplus cash. This is supported by Kotut, (2003) who established that cash budgeting affects the financial and operational performance of organizations because it helps plan for the shortage and surplus of cash. Ross, (2011) also asserted that efficient cash management practices in improves business performance.

**Table 3: Financial Control Practices**

	SA	A	N	DA	SD
Budgeting techniques are used to achieve financial control	88 38.6%	105 46.1%	35 15.4%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Use of financial controls to detect financial malpractice and errors	35 15.4%	123 53.9%	53 23.2%	17 7.5%	0 0.0%
Sound internal audit system for internal control	70 30.7%	102 44.7%	9 3.95%	47 20.6%	0 0.0%
Analysis of budgets and reports for proper monitoring and control of activities	70 30.7%	158 69.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Regular checks and assessment of projects for efficient execution	53 23.2%	140 61.4%	35 15.4%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%

Table 3 shows that among the financial control practices in Ghana Police force, 88 (38.6%) strongly agreed that budgeting techniques are used to achieve financial control and this was supported by 105 (46.1%) of the respondents who agreed to this notion. However, 35 (15.4%) of the respondents could not decide on this notion. Thus, majority of the respondents perceived that the organization employed budgeting techniques in achieving financial control.

On detecting of financial malpractices and errors, 35(15.4%) strongly agreed that financial controls are used to detect financial malpractice and errors and this was agreed by 123(53.9%) of the respondents. Nevertheless, only 17(7.5%) of the respondents disagreed to this notion “use of financial controls to detect financial malpractice and errors”.

Moreover, 70(30.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed that organization has sound internal audit system for internal control, 102(46%) of the respondents agreed to this notion while 9(3.95%) of the respondents could not decide on it. However, 47(20.6%) of the respondents disagreed that the organization has sound internal audit system for internal control. Therefore, most of the respondents perceived the organization as having sound internal audit system for internal control.

Regarding budgets and reports, all (100%) the respondents agreed that there is analysis of budgets and reports for proper monitoring and control of activities. On regular checks and assessment of projects, 53 (23.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed that it was regularly check for efficient execution whereas 35 of the respondents could not tell whether it was regularly check or not. No respondent disagreed to this notion. Thus, majority of the respondents perceived that there is regular checks and assessment of projects for efficient execution.

The outcome of this study is in line with a similar study conducted by Rotich (2018) on the influence of financial management practices on profitability of government funded youth group businesses in kuresoi, kenya and established a positive significant relationship between financial controls and financial performance of government funded youth groups in Kenya.

**Table 4: Financial Reporting Practices**

	SA	A	N	DA	SD
Proper financial records are kept	35 15.4%	140 61.4%	35 15.4%	18 7.9%	0 0.0%
Annual financial statements and reports are produced on time	35 15.4%	158 69.3%	18 7.9%	17 7.5%	0 0.0%
Regular Upgrade of Financial reporting Systems	70 30.7%	70 30.7%	35 15.4%	53 23.2%	0 0.0%
Qualified and trained accounting and finance staff	70 30.7%	88 38.6%	70 30.7%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Openness and clarity of process and procedure of financial reporting	88 38.6%	105 46.1%	18 7.9%	17 7.5%	0 0.0%

Table 4 shows that among the financial reporting practices in Ghana Police force, 35 (15.4%) strongly agreed that proper financial records are kept, and this was supported by 140 (61.4%) of the respondents who agreed to this notion. However, 35 (15.4%) of the respondents could not decide on this notion. Thus, majority of the respondents perceived that the organization kept proper financial records.

On annual financial statements and reports, 35(15.4%) strongly agreed that they were produced on time and this was agreed by 158(69.3%) of the respondents. Nevertheless, only 17(7.5%) of the respondents disagreed to this notion “annual financial statements and reports are produced on time”.

Moreover, 70(30.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed that organization has regular upgrade of financial reporting systems, 70(30.7%) of the respondents agreed to this notion while 35(15.4%) of the respondents could not decide on it. However, 53(23.2%) of the respondents disagreed that the organization has regular upgrade of financial reporting systems.



Therefore, most of the respondents perceived the organization as having regular upgrade of financial reporting systems.

Regarding qualification and training of staff, 70(30.7%) the respondents strongly agreed that there is qualified and trained accounting and finance staff in the Ghana Police force, 88(38.6%) of the respondents agreed to this notion. Nevertheless, 70(30.7%) could not decide on it.

On openness and clarity of process and procedure of financial reporting, 88 (38.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed that there was openness and clarity of process and procedure of financial reporting whereas 18 of the respondents could not tell whether it was open and clear or not. No respondent disagreed to this notion. Thus, majority of the respondents perceived that there is regular checks and assessment of projects for efficient execution.

The study therefore, revealed that there is an effective financial reporting standards or practices observed in the Ghana Police force. This confirms a study in Tanzania to assess the role of financial reporting in enhancing financial accountability in the public sector in local government by Chalam & Ng’eni, (2017) that found that the quality of financial reporting significantly enhanced the financial accountability of government.

**Table 5: Financial Planning Practices**

	SA	A	N	DA	SD
Financial planning process considers stakeholders priority and participation	88 38.6%	70 30.7%	35 15.4%	35 15.4%	0 0.0%
Department allocation is based on priorities	70 30.7%	35 15.4%	70 30.7%	53 23.2%	0 0.0%
Budget legislation and plans are well executed to avoid financial challenges	53 23.0%	158 69.0%	17 8.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Budgets of police is implemented as approved	18 7.9%	158 69.3%	18 7.9%	34 14.9%	0 0.0%
Analysis of performance by comparing actual plans with budgeted is done	35 15.0%	70 31.0%	105 46.0%	18 8%	0 0.0%

Table 5 shows that among the financial planning practices in Ghana Police force, 88 (38.6%) strongly agreed that financial planning process considers stakeholders priority and participation, and this was supported by 70 (30.7%) of the respondents who agreed to this notion. However, 35 (15.4%) of the respondents could not decide on this notion. Thus, most of the respondents perceived that the organization has financial planning process which considers stakeholders priority and participation.

On department allocation, 70(30.7%) strongly agreed that department allocation is based on priorities, and this was agreed by 35(15.4%) of the respondents. Nevertheless, a greater number of respondents (70, 30.7%) could not decide on it while 53 of the respondents disagreed to this notion “department allocation is based on priorities”.

Moreover, 53(23%) of the respondents strongly agreed that budget legislation and plans are well executed to avoid financial challenges, 158(69%) of the respondents agreed to this notion while 17(8%) of the respondents could not decide on it. Therefore, majority of the respondents perceived the organization as having budget legislation and plans well executed to avoid financial challenges.

Regarding budget of police, 18(7.9%) the respondents strongly agreed that budget of police is implemented as approved, 158(69.3%) of the respondents agreed to this notion. Nevertheless, 34(14.9%) of the respondents disagreed to this notion. On the analysis of performance and plans, a greater number of respondents (105, 46%) could not decide whether such analysis was compared to actual plans with budgeted or not. However, 46 percent of the respondents agreed to this notion as compared to 8 percent who disagreed.

The study finds that majority of the respondents agreed to all the factors that form Financial Planning Practices including; Financial planning process considers stakeholders priority and participation; Department allocation is based on priorities; Budget legislation and plans are well executed to avoid financial challenges; Budgets of police is implemented as approved and Analysis of performance by comparing actual plans with budgeted is done.

Mogaka et al., (2016) explained that financial planning and budgeting activities include assessing the current financial position of government agencies, analyzing future growth prospects, appraising development practices, estimating fund requirements and financing options and comparing actual performance against planned performance. The financial planning and budgeting activities includes preparing budgets and forecasting practices and financing decisions. This study finding is in support of the study of Isaboke and Kwasira (2016) who observed a strong relationship between the budgetary process and financial performance of an organization. They further found that a good budgetary process is one which establishes possible links to organizational goals are focused on results and outcomes and effectively promotes communication with the stakeholders.

**Explore the effect of the financial management practices on the operational performance of the Ghana Police force in the Greater Accra Region**

It is perceived that financial management practices affect the operational performance of Ghana Police force, therefore, data were gathered from the respondents on how they perceived this effect to be and the result is presented in Table 6. This was meant to achieve the objective three set for the study.

**Table 6: Effect of the Financial Management Practices on The Operational Performance Of The Ghana Police Force In The Greater Accra Region Of Ghana**

	SA	A	N	DA	SD
The district has experienced a decline in crime	53 23.2%	123 53.9%	35 15.4%	17 7.5%	0 0.0%
Improved protection of life and property	53 23.0%	123 54.0%	52 23.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Improved crime detection and prevention	35 15.4%	140 61.4%	53 23.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Improved criminal apprehension and prosecution	35 15%	150 66%	43 19%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Improved peace and tranquility	53 23.0%	88 39.0%	53 23.0%	18 8.0%	16 7.0%

Table 6 depicts the effect of financial management practices on the operational performance of the Ghana Police force. It shows that 53(23.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the organization has experienced a decline in crime and this was supported by 123 (53.9%) of the respondents who agreed to this notion. However, 17 (7.54%) of the respondents disagreed to the statement that “district has experienced a decline in crime”. Thus, majority of

the respondents perceived that the district has experienced a decline in crime rate due to financial management practices in Ghana Police force.

On the protection of life and property, 53(23%) strongly agreed that there has been some improvement in the protection of life and property and this was agreed by 125(54.8%) of the respondents. Nevertheless, 52(23%) of the respondents could not decide on this notion. Thus, majority of the respondents perceived that financial management practices have improved upon the protection of life and property.

Regarding crime detection and prevention, 35(15.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed that there has been some improvement on crime detection and prevention, 140(61.4%) of the respondents agreed to this notion while 53(23.2%) of the respondents could not decide on it. Thus, majority of the respondents perceived improvement in crime detection and prevention due to the practices of effective financial management in the Ghana Police force.

On criminal apprehension and prosecution, 35(15%) of the respondents strongly agreed that there is improved criminal apprehension and prosecution, 150(66%) of the respondents agreed to this notion. Nevertheless, 43 of the respondents did not decide on it. This means that majority of the respondents agreed that there has been improvement in criminal apprehension and prosecution due to proper financial management practices in the Ghana Police force.

With regards to peace and tranquility, 53 (23%) of the respondents strongly agreed that there has been some improvement in peace and tranquility, 88(39%) of the respondents agreed to this notion. On the other hand, 18 of the respondents strongly disagreed to this notion while it was supported by 16 respondents who disagreed to the notion that “there is improved peace and tranquility”. It can be deduced that most of the respondents perceived improvement in peace and tranquility in the Ghana Police force due to effective financial management practices.

The study finds that majority of the respondents agreed that financial management practices have helped to reduce crime rate; improved protection of life and property; improved crime detection and prevention; improved criminal apprehension and prosecution; and improved peace and tranquility. Thus, these factors have been improved by effective financial management practices in order to enhanced operational performance of Ghana Police force. This finding is similar to that of Abanis et al., (2013) that looked at working capital management, investment, financing, financial reporting and analysis and accounting information systems. Their findings point to the fact that failure to comply with sound financial management practices has dire consequences on firms operations and performance.

Dambala et al., (2021) also researched on the effects of Public Financial Management Practices on the Financial Performance of Mombasa County Government – Kenya. The study concluded that financial planning, revenue mobilization; financial reporting and financial control had positive and significant relationship with financial performance of Mombasa County Government. They argued that improved public financial management practices would lead to improved financial performance. Thus, having sound financial management practices improves upon the firm operations and performance.

### **Assess hindrances which tend to affect the financial management practices in the Ghana Police force in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana**

Objective four of the study sought to examine the challenges of financial management practices of Ghana Police force in the Greater Accra Region. Data were gathered from the respondents on their views concerning those challenges and the result is presented in Table 7.

**Table 7: Assess hindrances which tend to affect the financial management practices in the Ghana Police force in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana**

	SA	A	N	DA	SD
Political changes/interference	70 30.7%	88 38.6%	35 15.4%	35 15.4%	0 0.0%
Timeliness of resources and finance	70 30.7%	125 54.8%	18 7.9%	15 6.6%	0 0.0%
Problems of Accountability and transparency	70 31.0%	105 46.0%	35 15.0%	18 8.0%	0 0.0%
Inadequate training for staff	0 0.0%	35 15.4%	35 15.4%	105 46.1%	53 23.3%
Problems of bureaucracy and inefficiency	88 38.6%	105 46.1%	18 7.9%	17 7.5%	0 0.0%

Table 7 shows that among the factors that hinder the effective financial management practices in the Ghana Police force, 70 (30.74%) strongly agreed that political changes/interference and this was supported by 88 (38.6%) of the respondents who agreed to this notion. However, 35 (15.4%) of the respondents disagreed to the statement that political changes/interference affect effective financial management practices. Thus, majority of the respondents perceived that the political changes/interference hinders smooth financial management practices.

On the timeliness of resources and finance, 70(30.7%) strongly agreed that the timeliness of resources and finance hinders smooth financial management practices and this was agreed by 125(54.8%) of the respondents. Nevertheless, only 15(6.6%) of the respondents disagreed to this notion. Thus, majority of the respondents perceived that timeliness of resources and finance affect effective financial management practices of Ghana Police forces.

Regarding accountability and transparency, 70(31%) of the respondents strongly agreed that problems of accountability and transparency hinders effective financial management practice, 105(46%) of the respondents agreed to this notion while 35(15%) of the respondents could not decide on it. However, 18(8%) of the respondents disagreed that problems of accountability and transparency is challenge for effective financial management practices. Thus, majority of the respondents perceived the accountability and transparency as key to effective financial management practices.

On training for staff, only 35 (15.4%) of the respondents agreed that inadequate training for staff is a problem for effective financial management practices. On the other hand, 105(46.1%) strongly disagreed to this notion and this was supported by 53(23.3%) who disagreed that inadequate training of staff is a blockade to effective financial management. This means that staff are given the needed and required training for effective financial management practice in the Ghana Police force.

With regards to bureaucracy and inefficiency, 88 (38.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed that problems of bureaucracy and inefficiency affect the smooth financial management practices, 105(46.1%) of the respondents agreed to this notion whereas 17 of the respondents disagreed. It can be deduced that there is problem of bureaucracy and inefficiency in the Ghana Police force that hinder effective financial management practices.

The study outcome shows that majority of the respondents agreed to factors such as political changes/interference, timeliness of resources and finance, problems of accountability and transparency as well as problems of bureaucracy and inefficiency that hinder the financial management practices in the Ghana Police force.

## **CONCLUSION**

The descriptive survey was well conducted through appropriate methodology (quantitative approach), and the following inferences were made over the findings based on the objectives of the study. Among the cash management practices in Ghana Police force, organization prepares cash budget on the monthly basis; organization conduct analysis and forecasts cash flow organization has effective billing and cash collection system. However, liquidity policy was not review frequently and there was weak system of supervision on cash collection and disbursement. Also, among the financial control practices in Ghana Police force, organization employed budgeting techniques in achieving financial control; financial controls are used to detect financial malpractice and errors; organization has a sound internal audit system for internal control; there is analysis of budgets and reports for proper monitoring and control of activities; and there is regular checks and assessment of projects for efficient execution. Moreover, regarding the financial reporting practices in Ghana Police force, proper financial records are kept; annual financial statements and reports were produced on time; organization has regular upgrade of financial reporting systems, however, organization did not regular upgrade of financial reporting systems. There was qualified and trained accounting and finance staff in the Ghana Police force; and there is regular checks and assessment of projects for efficient execution as well as openness and clarity of process and procedure of financial reporting. Furthermore, among the financial planning practices in Ghana Police force, organization has financial planning process which considers stakeholders priority and participation; department allocation was not based on priorities; budget legislation and plans are well executed to avoid financial challenges; budget of police is implemented as approved; and analysis of performance and plans was not compared to actual plans with budgeted.

Effective financial management practices have assisted in reducing; crime apprehension and prosecution, crime rate, crime detection and prevention, protection of life and property, as well as peace and tranquility. Factors that hinder the effective financial management practices in the Ghana Police force included; political changes/interference, timeliness of resources and finance, problems of accountability and transparency, and problems of bureaucracy and inefficiency.

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