

Transportation Development in Ghana Revisited

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ABSTRACT:

This paper examines issues on transportation development in Ghana. Gould (1960) and Taaffe, Morrill and Gould (1963) proposed several years ago an ideal model of transportation development in Ghana. According to these authors, transportation development in Ghana would occur in six linear phases. The six phases are (1) scattered ports, (2) penetration lines and port concentration, (3) development of feeders, (4) beginnings of interconnection, (5) complete interconnection and (6) emergence of high priority main streets. While the model provides a useful theoretical explanation of transportation development in developing countries, the attainment of the six stages has not occurred in Ghana. Several factors have inhibited transportation development in Ghana. These factors and the relevance of Gould's model to contemporary transportation issues in Ghana are explored.

INTRODUCTION

The importance of transportation to the development and well being of any economic system cannot be overemphasized. It has been proven both theoretically and empirically that there is a direct relationship between economic growth and the quality of transportation systems (Njoj 2000). Jacobs and Greaves (2003) noted that transportation is an important component of the economic activities of all countries especially developing ones. Following an extensive literature review on transportation and economic development, Gillen (1996) concluded that economic development cannot occur without an efficient transportation system. Efficient transportation not only facilitates spatial interaction and reduces the friction of distance, but it is also a pre-condition for effective economic, social, and political development.

Furthermore, improved transportation networks promote rapid economic exchange of goods and services between the rural and urban areas; opens up inaccessible areas to trade as well as stimulates produc-