

## **The Ada Beater: Improving the Quality of Handmade Paper in Ghana**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The School Progression Policy is an intervention strategy to decrease unnecessary, high dropout rates in the South African Education system. It allows learners to move from one grade to another and thus advance in their careers and exit the basic education school system with a qualification. However, due to this intervention, some learners have experienced social and emotional problems at school, which may affect their wellbeing. This study explored the effects of the School Progression Policy on the progressed Grade 12 learners' well-being in schools. It adopted a qualitative research methodology within a constructivist paradigm and used a case study research design. Thirty-seven learners (23 females and 14 males) and fifteen teachers and SMTs were purposively selected from four schools in the Motheo Education District. Semistructured interviews were employed for data collection. Thematic results revealed that this policy implementation positively and negatively affected progressed Grade 12 learners' well-being. This study recommended constant empowerment and motivation for the progressed learners and comprehensive orientation at the beginning of the year to prepare and capacitate them to handle the expectations and challenges of Grade 12. Handmade paper has been around for centuries. In Asia, Europe, and other parts of the world, the means of creating handmade paper depend largely on traditional equipment and other industrial machines. In Ghana, the means of creating handmade paper is through a tedious process of hand beating the bast fiber of the *Kyenkyen* tree. This resulted in the production of a proto-paper known as the bark cloth. This traditional method has almost become extinct with the influx of imported industrial papers. Therefore the purpose of this study was to seek a solution to this problem through the possible design and fabrication of a paper pulp-making machine daubed the Ada Beater. Thus getting vital tools for making art, print, and papermaking. The paper explored practice-based research methodology to fabricate a papermaking machine known as the Ada Beater. The results showed that the machine can be fabricated and made to produce improved papers of archival quality derived from various plant sources in Ghana. It is recommended that this homegrown know-how should be made available to artists and art teachers for the teaching and use of handmade paper for artistic purposes.

**Keywords:** Beater, Fibrillation, Flocculate, Roller, Blades, Maceration, Pulp