

Evaluation of Colleges of Education “OUT” Programmes in Ghana

Cecilia Ofosua Odame^{1, *}, Bismark Kwasi Osei², Veronica Serwaa Ofosu¹, Wisdom Blackson Agbanyo¹

¹Department of Languages, Seventh Day Adventist College of Education, Asokore-Koforidua, Ghana

²Department of Social Science, Seventh Day Adventist College of Education, Asokore-Koforidua, Ghana

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the “OUT” programme section of the Colleges of Education in Ghana. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The study was carried out in three out of six colleges of education in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The population of the study were mentees, mentors, link tutors, community leaders, headteachers, principals and directors of education. Stratified and random sampling techniques were used to select the respondents of the study. Questionnaire was the main instrument used for the data collection in the study. Findings of the study revealed that, some of the challenges on the OUT programme included accommodation problems for mentees, inadequate allowances for mentees, immoral lifestyle of some of the mentees, poor mentee-community members’ relationship, wrong accusations and financial problems. It is therefore, recommended that accommodation should be provided for mentees on the OUT programme. Community members should provide accommodation free of charge or at reduced rate for mentees at their various stations. It is also recommended that, all examinations for mentees should be written before they leave campus for the OUT programme.

Keywords

Evaluation, Colleges of Education, “OUT” Programmes, Ghana

Received: September 23, 2019 / Accepted: November 26, 2019 / Published online: December 27, 2019

© 2019 The Authors. Published by American Institute of Science. This Open Access article is under the CC BY license.

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

1. Introduction and Background

This paper presents the outcome of the evaluation, Colleges of Education, “OUT” Programmes, in Ghana. The paper is structured into five (5) main sections namely; the Introduction and Background, Review of the Literature, Methodology, Findings and Discussion, Conclusion and recommendations. The first section introduces the structure of the paper, the background and aims and objectives of the paper. The literature review section reviews the relevant literature on issues pertaining to the teaching practice issues for effective assessment in teacher education in Ghana. The methodology section presents a broad description of the

methodology and procedures adopted in the conduct of the study on evaluation of challenges and possible solutions mentees in the Colleges of Education faced during teaching practice in Ghana. Findings resulting from the study are presented and discussed in the section following the methodology and conclusion, and recommendations.

Teacher education reformers in Africa is to give more attention to the preparation and practice of teacher educators. In the context of Ghana, that could serve as the basis for policy attention in African countries and elsewhere [1]. The quality of education in every society is largely determined by the quality of its teachers. Conversely, the quality of teachers is determined by the level of their subject matter mastery and how they pass on that subject matter to their learners, among

* Corresponding author

E-mail address: bordohility@yahoo.co.uk (C. O. Odame)

many other factors. Teachers' ability to do this depends on how the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) prepares them for teaching. The ITE should provide teachers with intellectual and professional background through the study of academic content, professional and pedagogical studies, and create the opportunity for student teachers to practise teaching. In many contexts, it is this foundation that informs teachers' practice the most [2].

Teaching practice is an essential component of all ITE programmes. During teaching practice, Student Teachers are placed under the guidance of qualified professionals (Mentors, College

Tutors, District Education Officers, etc.) who introduce them to teaching and its routines in order

to develop in them the required professional skills and competencies, and a positive attitude towards the teaching profession. Teaching practice also provides the right environment for Student Teachers to familiarise themselves with all the processes of the school setting, and to observe examples of good practices [2].

The initial teacher education in Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa particularly, has been criticised for failing to prepare teachers adequately for the conditions they face in the field [3, 4]. In some cases, weaknesses in teachers' capabilities in promoting effective learning at the classroom level have been cited. There is also the argument that the ITE curricula in many African countries, including Ghana, is too theoretical, with little emphasis on practical knowledge and practice [5]. To address these issues, the ITE programme must be reformed to make it practice-based, giving student teachers a number of opportunities to observe and practise a variety of different forms of professional knowledge and skills through direct practical experience in schools. It is expected that by the end of the three-year Diploma in Basic Education programme at the Colleges of Education, having gone through the three structured teaching practice sessions, Student Teachers will be competent and capable of providing quality education for children in basic schools across Ghana [2]. The main purpose of the study was to evaluate the 'Out programme' in the three-year teacher training programme in the Colleges of Education, Ghana. The study sought to answer these questions (1) What are some of the challenges of the OUT programme? (2) How can the OUT programme be improved?

2. Review of the Literature

Policy makers and researchers often make the assumption that the teacher education reform of incorporating practicum would provide better learning opportunities for pre-service

teachers to learn how to practice learner-centered pedagogy in real classroom contexts [1]. This points to the fact that, teacher educators' practice and vision of good teaching continue to influence pre-service teachers' practice despite the incorporation of practicum. This points to the importance of understanding teacher educators' role in improving pre-service teachers' instruction [1]. The vision of good teaching is not based on deep knowledge of what it is like to teach in schools because it excludes knowledge derived from critical and reflective dialogue with pre-service teachers and mentors [1].

Basically, during teaching practice Student Teachers will be able to demonstrate questioning and communication skills in their lesson delivery. They will exhibit knowledge of appropriate use of TLMs and be able to assess their pupils' learning effectively after teaching. The Student Teachers should arrange to meet with their mentor each morning for planning and each evening for review and exchange of information gathered. At the end of each week, Reflective Practice meetings will be scheduled on a regular basis throughout the year three (3) Teaching Practice period. The Lead Mentors/Head Teachers will be aware of their supervisory roles. The Mentors will be aware of their responsibilities to support Student Teachers in working to achieve the goals of the Off-Campus Teaching Practice programme. The Colleges of Education Tutors will visit practice schools to supervise, evaluate and support Student Teachers. The Teaching Practice Coordinator will be the liaison officer of the College of Education, District Education Office and Teaching Practice schools and will organise training for Lead Mentors, Mentors and Link Tutors. The Ghana Education Officers and Circuit Supervisors' will represent the District Directorate through visits to Teaching Practice schools to monitor the activities of Student Teachers and Mentors [2].

Beginning teachers should welcome supervision as a means to develop professionally [6]. Indeed, in most schools, the purpose of supervision or observation and conferences is to increase morale and effective teaching ability by mentees. The author further identifies clinical supervision as one in which the supervisor observes a complete lesson after preliminary interactions between members of the supervisory and administrative staff and teachers. This normally happens at the beginning of the school year to acquaint teachers with school policies and programmes. Such supervisions are planned in conjunction with a pre-observation conference to talk over the plans for the lesson and a post observation conference to discuss the observation and evaluation of the lesson [6]. This three-tier process viz pre-observation conference, observation and post-observation conference has been enlarged into eight phases in a book titled Clinical

supervision, a major theorist in the area of supervision of teachers. These are:

- i. Establishing a teacher-supervisor relationship
- ii. Planning a lesson with the teacher
- iii. Planning the strategy of observation
- iv. Observing instruction
- v. Analyzing the teaching-learning process
- vi. Planning the strategy of the conference
- vii. The conference
- viii. Renewed planning [7].

A similar model consisting of five “stages”, namely:

- i. Pre-observation conference
- ii. Observation
- iii. Analysis and strategy
- iv. Supervision Conference; and
- v. Post-conference analysis [8].

In both models, the teacher’s behaviour and techniques are observed, analyzed, interpreted and decisions are made in order to improve the teachers’ effectiveness. The study on supervision is very relevant not only to the “out” segment of teacher trainees which formed the subject of this study but also as a roadmap for all professional teachers who face the evaluation of work, at one time or other, throughout their career. The hierarchy of mentors, referred to earlier, constitutes a collaborative partnership model which encourages shared responsibilities among all players in areas of mentoring, supervision, co-ordination and assessment of trainees [7, 8].

Principally, Total Quality Management is defined as a commitment to continuous improvement of quality not just in the education industry but also totally in society. The concept of the total quality management in the “OUT” segment of colleges of education in Ghana can be divided into three basic headings. These are;

- i. Public satisfaction of performance of mentees
- ii. Defect prevention in mentee’s work
- iii. Teacher/employee participation

In order to achieve the above objectives, the following steps have to be taken.

- i. Focusing on the expectation of the public
- ii. Identifying root causes of problems of mentee’s
- iii. Employee/mentee motivation

Focusing on the expectations of the public, the mentees are expected to teach under the supervision of the mentors. They

are expected to learn from their mentors and co-operate with them. The public expects them to make a positive contribution towards society. Some challenges facing the mentees include lack of clean accommodation, financial problems, wrong perception from the public and hostile attitude from the public. Employee/mentee motivation may be viewed as a causative factor, an incentive or drive for job performance. It may also be explained as the process of moving oneself and others to work towards the attainment of individual and organizational objectives. Motivation is not behaviour, it is a complex internal state that cannot be observed directly but which affect behaviour. There are two types of motivation:

- i. Intrinsic motivation is derived from within the person. It refers to the relationship between a worker and the task and it is usually self-applied.
- ii. Extrinsic motivation is derived from the environment external to the person and his work. Here, a different person usually applied if good salary, fringe benefits, and this practice and various forms of supervision are good examples of extrinsic motivation.

Commitment for change comes as a result of motivation only a strong commitment can help break down barriers preventing implementation. In spite of the real or perceived problems that may arise from staff participation in school affairs, it is very essential that every individual member of staff participates actively in all school activities, both academic and co-curricular. Staff participation in school administration should begin at staff meetings. Notice of a regular staff meeting should be circulated among all members about a week for member to plan ahead [7, 8].

There are various levels in which every school head may permits his/her staff to participate in managing the school, these are:

- i. Recommend: the teaching staff as a group act in an advisory, capacity to the headmaster, suggests policies and ideas.
- ii. Information: the staff are informed of the headmaster’s decisions and what is acquired of the teachers by way of action and implementation
- iii. Consultation: the staff are consulted by the headmaster for their recommendation before the headmaster takes action
- iv. Approval: the staff are consulted about decisions and have the right to alter, approve or reject decisions of the headmaster

In response to Transforming Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL’s) analysis of the strengths and challenges of teaching practice for student teachers in Ghana, the programme

intervention was based on several important principles. The intervention was designed to:

- i. Support the current teaching practice structure within the Diploma Basic Education (DBE).
- ii. Build on existing University of Cape Coast (UCC) guidelines to CoE for teaching practice.
- iii. Support CoE to do what they are already mandated to do in the DBE, but to do it better.
- iv. Augment existing resources 1 with new resources that provide pedagogic support students, mentors and tutors
- v. Provide a programme of activities that emphasise the role, and build capacity, of mentors to provide structured learning opportunities within the teaching practice experience
- vi. Provide a programme of learning that would enable student teachers to meet the UCC assessment competencies
- vii. Strengthen partnerships between CoE and their partner schools [2].

In evaluating the “Out” programme of teacher training colleges, relevant materials written by eminent writers have been examined. Principles propounding the essence of academic knowledge savoured by practical on the job experience have been tutored as a sine qua non for trainees into the field of professional teaching career. Some of these writers’ works have been referred to in this chapter. The Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service (TED), the principal initiators of the new programme, have also been acknowledged for designing the programme in the best interest of the nation as well as in consonance with the principles of education worldwide [2].

3. Methodology

The study made use of the descriptive survey method. The population was made up of 296 respondents comprising mentees, mentors, link tutors, community leaders,

headteachers, principals and directors of education were used for the study. Two sampling procedures, stratified and random sampling were used to select respondents and the three (3) out of six (6) Colleges of

Education in the Eastern region of Ghana. There was a sample size of one hundred and sixty-eight (168) teacher trainees, another sample size of thirty-five (35) mentors and link tutors, as well as seventeen (17) community leaders, headteachers, principals and directors of education from the selected schools of attachment. The main instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. Data collected from the study were edited, coded and analysed using the Scientific Package for Service Solution software version 12 (SPSS Software). The portions of the questionnaires that dealt with the opinion of respondents were also coded and summarized and the relevant themes identified.

4. Findings and Discussions

The evaluation of teacher education programmes has a lot to offer to a wide variety of audience. Evaluation information can be used by regulatory bodies for recognizing good and week programmes. OUT programmes offer trainees the opportunity to develop their practical skills in teaching, school management, disciplinary procedures, staff relations as well as appropriate professional behaviour development both inside and outside the class room [9]

4.1. Challenges of the OUT Programme

The training of teachers in teaching training colleges came with its own challenges and this has been coupled with the OUT programme. All things being equal, there might be some challenges that the stakeholders of the OUT programme might face. These challenges may vary depending on the position of the stakeholder in the OUT programme. Mentees challenges were found to mostly centre on accommodation, finance and relationship with community members, wrong accusations, project work and lack of certain facilities and items (Table 1).

Table 1. Challenges mentees face in the OUT programme.

Types of challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Accommodation	20	11.9
Financial	98	58.3
Poor relationship with the community members	20	11.9
Wrong accusations	8	4.8
Project work	5	3.0
Lack of certain facilities and items	17	10.1
Total	168	100.0

Source: Fieldwork 2016

From table 1 above 11.9% of the mentees faced accommodation problems which makes it difficult for them

to concentrate on their out programme. Financial constraints is the major impediment for mentees to get them

decent accommodation. However, 98 mentees which constitutes 58% indicted money is their main headache during the teaching practice. Also 4.8% of the mentees duly responded they were wrongly accused of the crime they did not committed. As on teaching practice, these mentees are to carry out a research work, 3.0% of them indicted is very cumbersome to attach examination to the action research whiles teaching. Basically, 10.1% also itemized that certain basic facilities that they are not getting access to, don't makes them feel comfortable whiles on teaching practices. The community also faced some challenges in hosting the mentees. The challenges from the communities have been summarized in table 2.

Table 2. Challenges community face in hosting mentees.

Types of challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Accommodation problem	7	41.2
Immoral lifestyle of some mentees	2	11.8
Financial problems	2	11.8
Some are not sociable in the community	6	35.3
Total	17	100.0

Source: Fieldwork 2016

Table 2 outlined the challenges the mentees faced and some lifestyles they lived whiles on practice by stakeholders. The stakeholders also revealed that 41.2% of the mentees faces accommodation problems, 11.8% exhibits immoral lifestyle, 11.8% of them always complain of financial problems, 35.3% of the mentees are not sociable in the community. The mentors saw themselves as part of the OUT programme and as such played the role of monitoring and supervisory. It sometimes becomes difficult on how to monitor and supervise the activities of the mentees. Motivations from stakeholders and punctuality to school on the side of the mentees were additional issues identified to contribute to the challenges of the OUT programme. On the part of the link tutors, some of the challenges that they could identified from the OUT concerned mentees' allowances which cannot meet their daily expenses. There were also financial challenges on the part of the link tutors which make it impossible for them to visit all the schools that they are supposed to visit and some mentors do not attend school at all. The principals and District Directors of Education also commented on the accommodation problem, hostile communities, indiscipline among some of the mentees and the fact that mentees were difficult to control outside instructional hours.

4.2. Suggestions to Improve the OUT Programme

However, the success of an educational programme depends on the quality of the instructional, management and supervisory staff [10]. This, in turn, depends on the adequacy

of the training provided. The study was done to evaluate the Out programme in the colleges of education in Ghana, if there is need for changes, suggestions and recommendations could be made. Stakeholders who were involved in the study were made to suggest some ways of improving the programme. Mentees suggestions have been presented in Table 3. Thirty-nine per cent of the mentees respondents suggested that accommodation facilities should be provided for mentees, 19.5 per cent of them said their monthly allowances should be increased to help them meet the expenses on the out programme and 20.1 per cent suggested that the period for the out programme was too long and should be reduced.

Table 3. Suggestions from mentees to improve the OUT programme.

Types of suggestions	Frequency	Percentage
Accommodation should be provided	62	39.0
All exams should be written on campus	7	4.4
Allowances should be increased	31	19.5
Teaching materials should be provided	20	12.6
The period for the OUT programme is too long	32	20.1
Other	7	4.4
Total	159	100.0

Source: Fieldwork 2016

While accommodation issue, length of the programme and writing of examinations on campus ran through almost all the suggestions made by the stakeholders, mentors added that, there should be proper supervision of mentees on the programme so that the aims of the programme could be achieved at the end of the OUT programme. Suggestions from mentors to improving the out programme have been shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Suggestions from mentors to improving the OUT programme.

Types of suggestions	Frequency	Percentage
Accommodation	4	11.4
The period of the OUT programme should be reduced	16	45.7
Proper supervision by all stakeholders	10	28.6
All exams should be written while in school	5	14.5
Total	35	100.0

Source: Fieldwork 2016

Link tutors also gave suggestions on how to improve the programme. Among some of the suggestions were: better accommodation for mentee at their various stations, completion of syllabus before the OUT programme, motivation of link tutors and a reduction in the period of the OUT programme. The community also made suggestions that might help improve the OUT programme. Most of the suggestions centred on how well to host mentees in the various communities. Community suggestions have been presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Suggestions from community to improve the OUT programme.

Types of suggestion	Frequency	Percentage
Community members should assist in hosting them	5	29.4
Government and PTA should help provide accommodation	6	35.3
Mentees should be visited and counselled all the time	6	35.3
Total	17	100.0

Source: Fieldwork 2016

Table 5 above presented good suggestion given the community members to help mentees to be committed in their teaching practice to improve the quality teacher education in the country. 29.4% of the community members were with views that the communities should assist in hosting the mentees during the teaching practice. 35.3% community members also indicted that Government and PTA should help provide accommodation to the mentees. 35.3% of the Community members were with the view that Colleges of Education leaders should aid the colleges counsellors visit their mentees on practice to help them solve psychological, emotional and other problems they are facing out there. When all these measures are instituted in the colleges and communities of attachment of the mentees, it will improve the quality of teacher education in Ghana.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Findings of the study revealed that, some of the challenges on the OUT programme included accommodation problems for mentees, inadequate allowances for mentees, immoral lifestyle of some of the mentees, poor mentee-community member's relationship, wrong accusations and financial problems. It is therefore, recommended that accommodation should be provided for mentees on the OUT programme. Community members should find ways and means of providing accommodation free of charge or at reduced rate for mentees at their various stations.

It is also recommended that, Teacher Education Unit under the Ghana Education Service should ensure that all examinations for mentees should be written before they leave campus for the Out programme. This would help reduce the

burden on mentees to fully concentrate on the OUT programme and their action research work.

References

- [1] Akyeampong, K. (2017) Teacher educators' practice and vision of good teaching in teacher education reform context in Ghana. *Educational Researcher*, 46 (4), 194-203.
- [2] Ministry of Education. (2016). *T-TEL Schools Partnership Programme: Mentor Handbook for Teaching Practice*. Accra: Ghana.
- [3] Lewin, K. M., & Stuart, J. M. (2003). Insights into the Policy and Practice of Teacher Education in Low-Income Countries: The Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project. *British Education*, 29, 691707.
- [4] Weber, S. (2017). The Impact of Service Learning on Pre-service Teachers Preconceptions of Urban Education. *Journal of Inquiry & Action in Education*, 8 (2), 21-33.
- [5] Akyeampong, K., Lussier, K., Pryor, J., & Westbrook, J. (2012). Improving teaching and learning of basic school mathematics and reading in Africa: Does teacher preparation count?. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 33 (3), 272-282.
- [6] Ornstein, A. C. (1995). *Strategies for effective teaching*. 2nd ed, Longman, London.
- [7] Cogan, M. (1973). *Clinical supervision*. Houghton Mifflin, Bratton.
- [8] Goldhammer, R. (1980). *Clinical supervision: Special methods for the supervision of teachers*. (2nd ed) New York: Holt Rinehart.
- [9] Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) (2006). *The District Sponsorship Scheme for teacher training*. Cape Coast: University of Cape Coast.
- [10] Dove, L. A. (1983). Teacher training universal primary education in Bangladesh. 1981-1986. *International Review of Education*. 29 (2), 215-227.